

Rationalism and Empiricism

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Classics and “Depth”

- Before we get going today, try out this question:
- What makes something a classic text? (whether it’s a work of fiction, poetry, philosophy, etc)



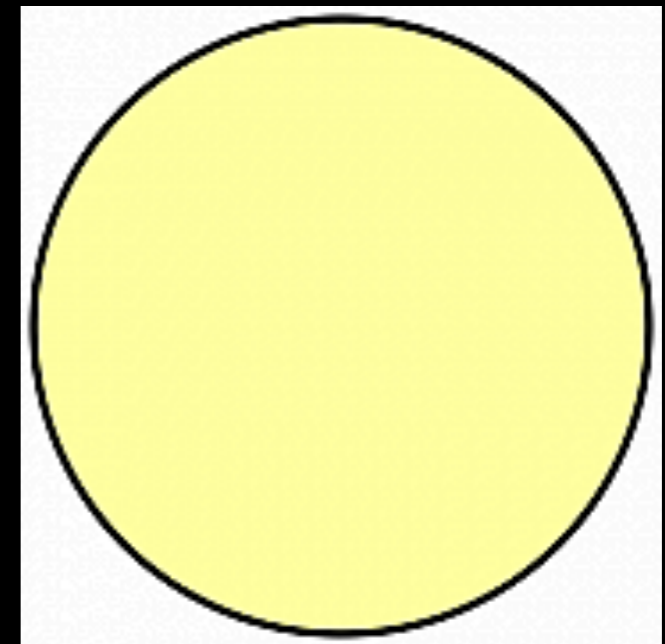
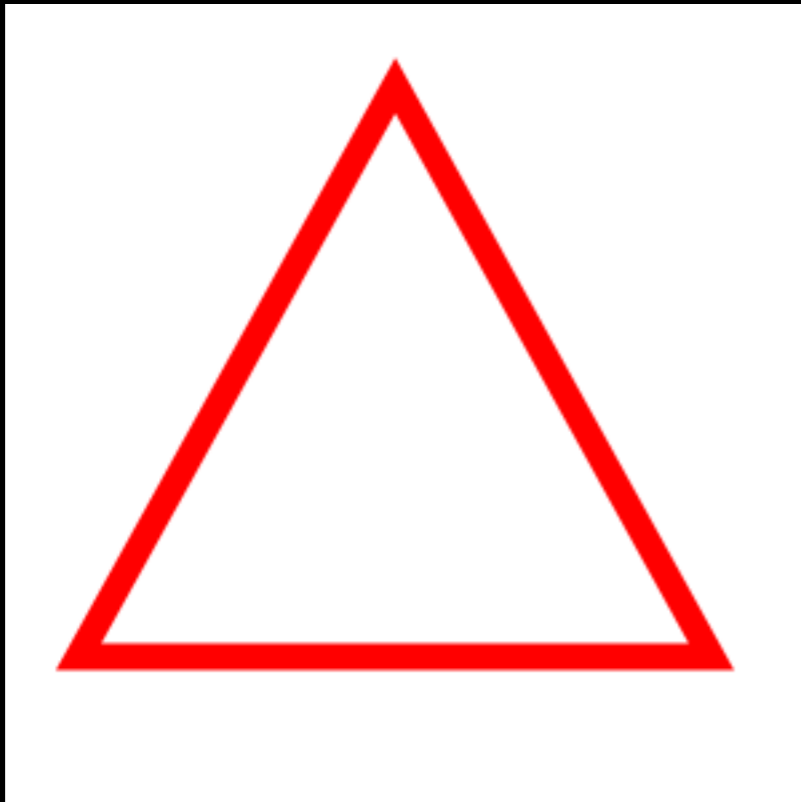
Meditation 6

- In Meditation 6, Descartes says he will show that material things exist, and that the mind and body are distinct.
- This is also an opportunity to take stock and ask ourselves to what extent Descartes has been successful overall.

- Descartes begins Meditation 6 by noting two things
 - 1) If I clearly and distinctly perceive something, God is such as to make it so
 - By distinguishing the imagination from the intellect

- What does Descartes say about the mind's ability to distinguish a triangle from a chiliagon?
- (Notice that this is also a false-start. Why can't he prove the existence of the body from the fact that the imagination exists?)

Triangle vs. Chiliagon



- On p. 41 Descartes lays out his plan...

- Remember, whenever I clearly and distinctly perceive that two things are distinct, God is such as to make it so that this is the case
- Therefore, the mind and body are really distinct.

How the Mind and Body are Distinct

- On p. 43-44 we get the argument
- What happens when I think of mind?
- What happens when I think of body?

Mind

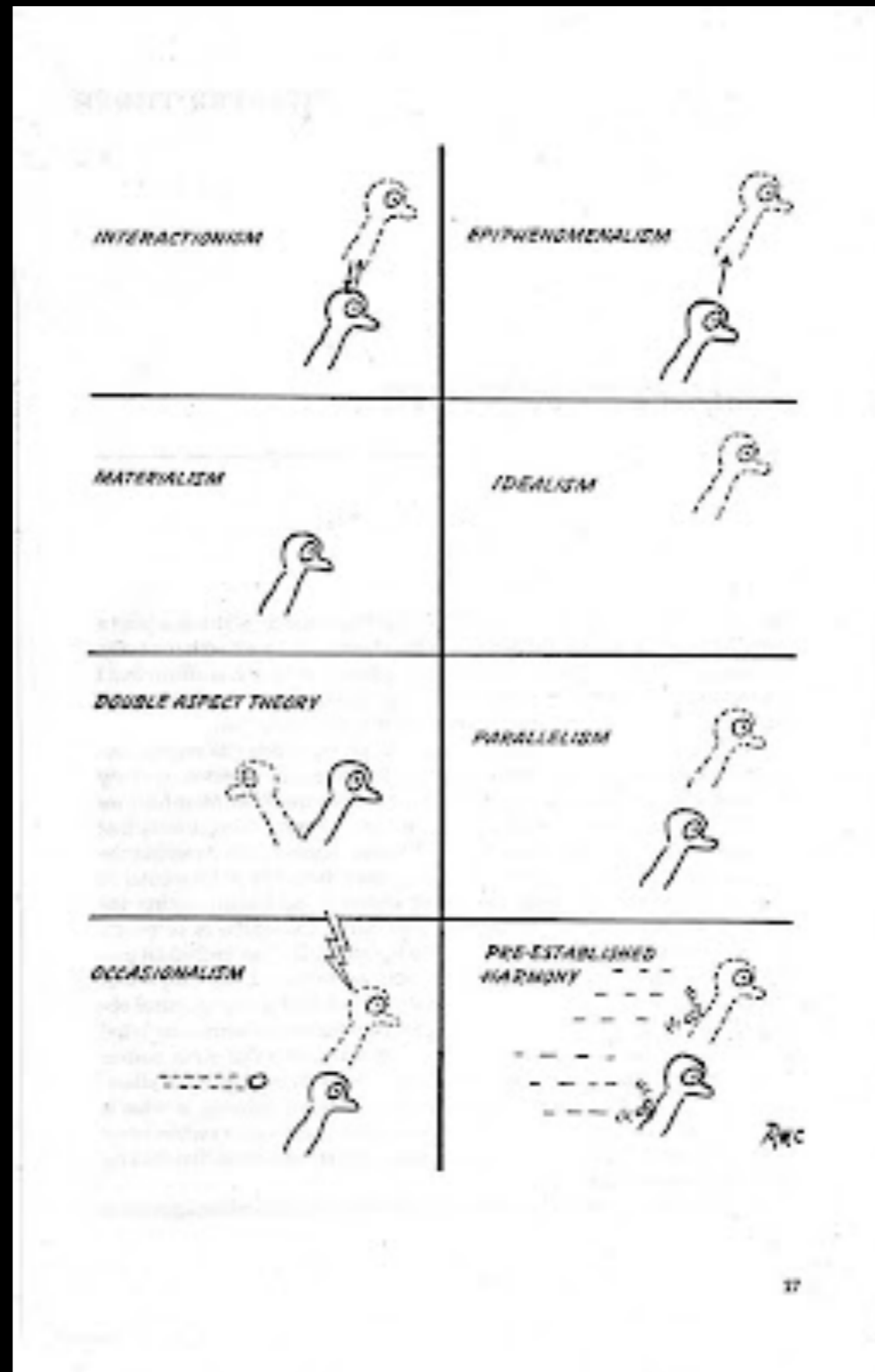
- Thinking
- non-extended

Bodies

- Extended
- non-thinking

- How does the argument for the distinction between mind and body go?

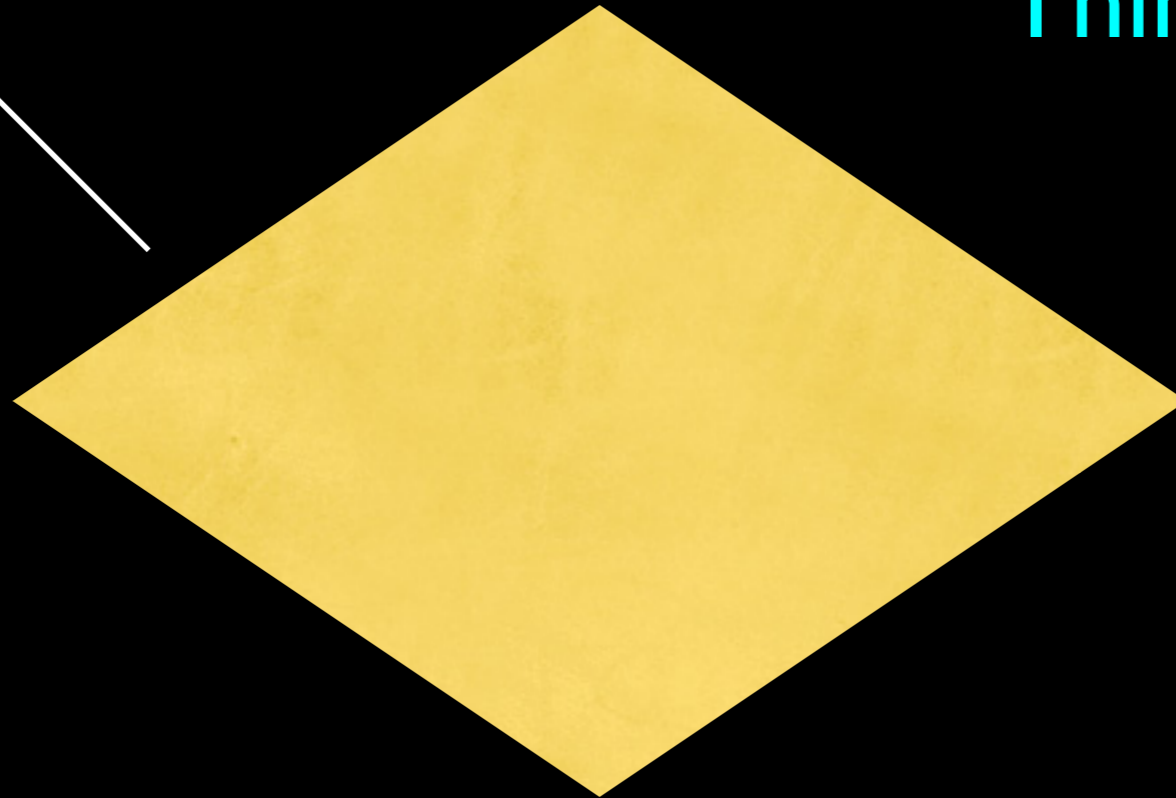
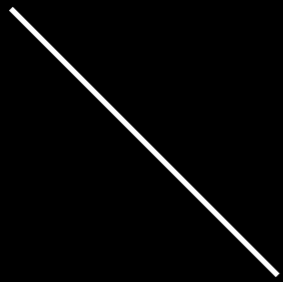
Some views
on
the
relationship
between
mind and
body



From Richard
Taylor,
Metaphysics

- The mind is a thinking, non-extended thing.
- The body is an extended, non-thinking thing.
- Question: how do they interact with each other?

Pineal Gland,
Bodily



Thinking

The Sailor and the Ship

- p. 45 “By means of these sensations of pain, hunger, thirst, and so on, nature teaches that I am present in my body not merely in the way a sailor is present in a ship, but that I am most tightly joined, and, so to speak, commingled with it, so much so that I and the body constitute one single thing.



- Next we get the argument for the existence of material things.
- How does this argument go? (And does it remind you of any other arguments we have seen in the Meditations?)

From Meditation 3



“... nor heat be introduced into a subject which was not already hot unless it is done by something that is of at least as perfect an order as heat...”

From Meditation 3

- ...“but it is also true that there can be in me no idea of heat, or of a stone, unless it is placed in me by some cause that has at least as much reality as I conceive to be in the heat or in the stone.”

- Here is a question to consider:
 - The argument for the existence of corporeal things seems to mirror the argument for the existence of God in Meditation 3.
 - Why is Descartes not able to also conclude that material things exist in Meditation 3?

How Bodily Errors Occur

- What it means to be “taught something by nature”
- p. 46

Ethics with Descartes

Descartes compares the structure of knowledge to a tree...

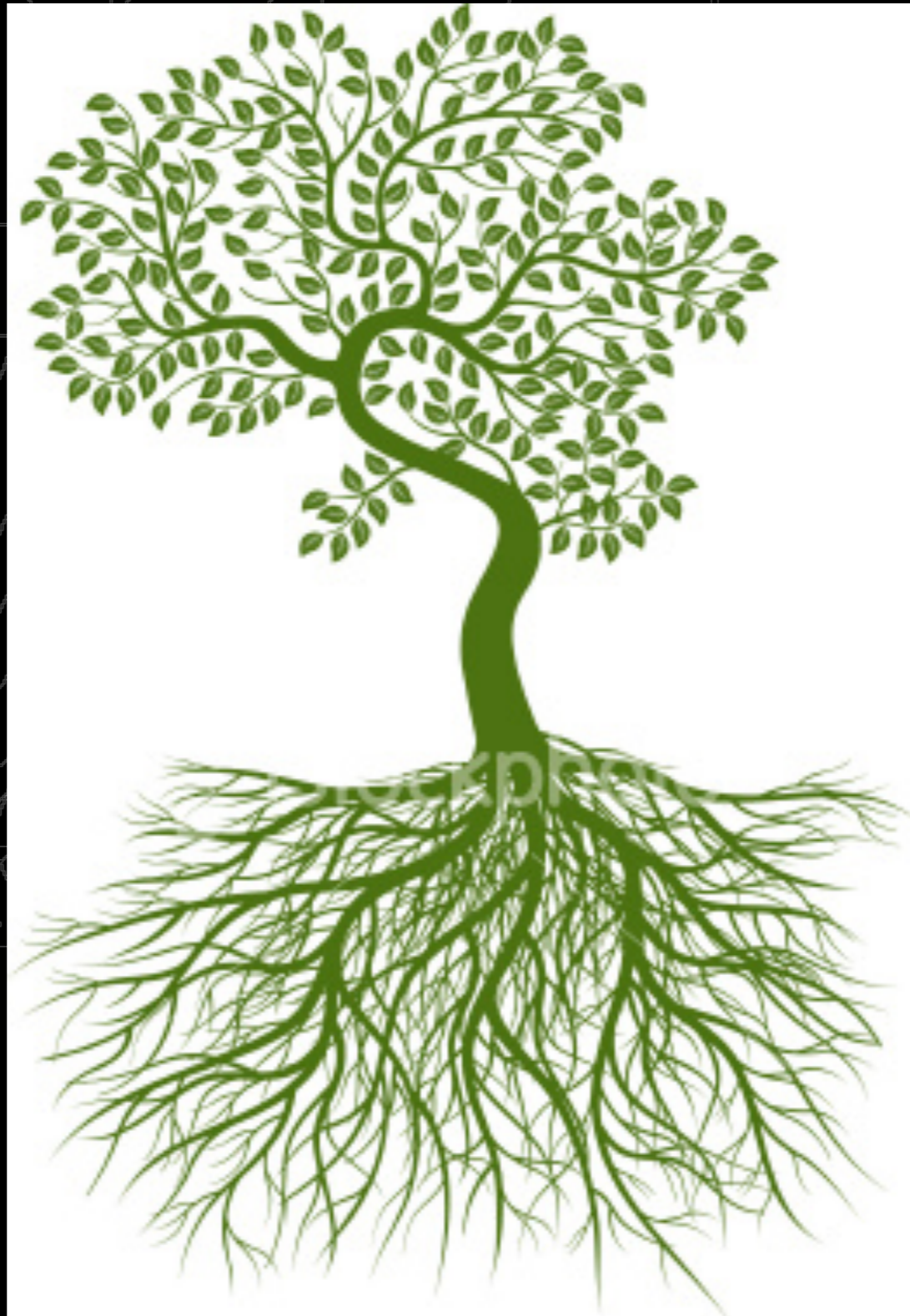
Ethics

Medicine

Mechanics

Physics

Metaphysics



The Hellenistic Schema

- Step 1: Understand the nature of the Universe
- Step 2: (based on step 1) Understand the nature of human beings in relationship to the world
- Step 3: derive conclusions about the good for human beings by understanding step 1 and step 2

- For more on Descartes' conception of Ethics, see: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/descartes-ethics/>

Descartes

Hume

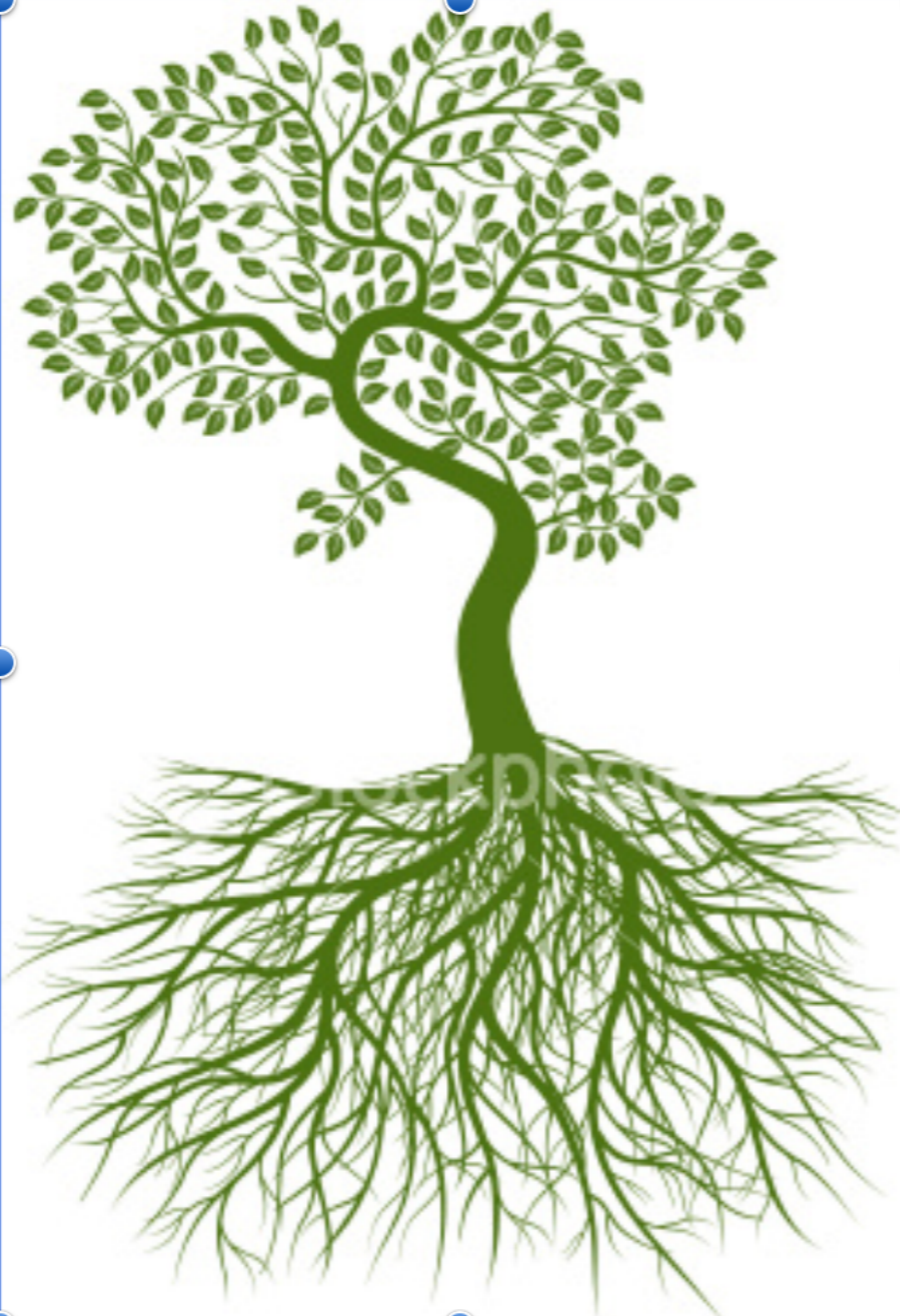
Ethics

Medicine

Mechanics

Physics

Metaphysics



Matters of Fact

Cause and Effect

Experience

Custom/Habit