THE TREATMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF PRIVACY IN WITTGENSTEIN'S LATER WRITINGS

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by

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ABBREVIATIONS

In the footnotes at the bottom of pages, the following abbreviations of the titles of Wittgenstein's works have been used:

Tractatus = Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus
B.B. = Blue and Brown Books
F.M. = Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics
P.I. = Philosophical Investigations
O.C. = On Certainty
Z. = Zettel

My practice in referring to the Philosophical Investigations has been to give section numbers for Part I and page numbers for Part II.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

In the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus Wittgenstein wrote: 4.112 "Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity." This is a thought which to a lesser or greater extent governs all his work. Its full implications only became apparent to him after he first enunciated the maxim, and it could be said I think, that his life's work in philosophy consisted in recognizing these implications and in scrupulously and ultimately successfully following them through in his practice. To do this he had to give up the idea that philosophy could give us any knowledge about the world which we had not possessed before, and in fact to stress the opposite: that it could only give us insight into what we have always known. Its function was to render the obvious acceptable to the philosopher or rather to enable the philosopher to see the obvious clearly. Such a role for philosophy could not have been as readily palatable as this rather anodyne description makes it sound. The radical nature of his redefinition only begins to strike home when it becomes apparent that there will no longer be any place in philosophy for theory or hypothesis, discovery of new facts or denial of the truth of old theories. We may assert nothing "philosophically" and when we do assert that such and such is the case the assertion does not derive its authority from philosophy. Both the discovery of new facts and explanations of the workings of nature fall outside the competence of philosophy. "One might also give the name 'philosophy' to what is possible BEFORE all new discoveries and inventions." [1.] Wittgenstein states in the Philosophical Investigations: "If one tried to advance THESES in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them." [2.] Philosophy is neither scientific nor super-scientific and is powerless to impart new information.

The seeds of this insight are already to be found in Hume but the fruit which they bear in his writings are a strange

1. P.I. 126
2. P.I. 128

inedible hybrid. When Hume advises us to commit to the flames "any volume of divinity or school metaphysics," which does not "contain any reasoning concerning quantity or number", nor "any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence,"[3]. he unwittingly condemns his own Treatise to the fire. His greatness consists in having seen the connection between the growth of knowledge and the practice of experimentation. The tragic flaw in his work is the confusion between science and philosophy - a confusion which Wittgenstein penetrated. On the one hand Hume wanted experimentation to provide us with the sort of certainty proper only to logical investigations and Kolakowski argues, correctly I feel, that in opposing the pretensions of 17th. Century metaphysics he unsuccessfully attempted to show that experiment produces a higher degree of certainty than did metaphysical speculation. He writes, "The destruction of knowledge which Hume's doctrine was lead to by its own premises is thus accounted for by his striving to endow 'true' knowledge with the very character that the seventeenth century metaphysicians had claimed for it, namely, an absolutely compelling character." [4]. On the other hand the success of the experiments he performed were more or less guaranteed a priori, so undercutting the whole point of any empirical methodology. Jean Piaget has remarked on this score, "If empiricism thus opened the way to a whole group of fundamental and extremely useful enquiries, it has itself proceeded somewhat apace, remaining satisfied with a minimum of effort. In fact the kind of observations and experiments which it was looking for only started in a methodological fashion in the 19th. Century and it is still for most of the important questions at the phase of a first approximation. The empiricists were themselves contented to proceed more philosophico, i.e. reflecting much and appealing to facts by way of examples and justification: in such cases the facts,

3. Hume, "Inquiry concerning Human Understanding." Section XII. Part III.
4. Kolakowski "Positivist Philosophy". Page 53

of course, always confirm the hypotheses." [5] So Hume advanced in the name of philosophy a quasi-empirical psychology, which, though brilliantly and penetratingly formulated, could only result in a welter of conceptual confusion and a mass of assertions poorly supported by insufficient experimental evidence.

The point that I am trying to make with respect to Wittgenstein is that when he says that philosophy is an activity unproductive of theories he breaks once and for all with metaphysics, Humes postivist metaphysics included, and with all the debates, nominalist - realist, empiricist - idealist, etc., internal to metaphysics. But what does he leave us with? Is philosphy to be self justifying activity in vacuo? Is it to contain nothing but great, simple and beautifully expressed statements of the obvious? In Zettel Wittgenstein answers both questions as to the point and structure of philosophy: "How does it come about that philosophy is so complicated a structure? It surely ought to be completely simple, if it is the ultimate thing, independent of all experience, that you make it out to be. Philosophy unties knots in our thinking; hence its results must be simple, but philosophising has to be as complicated as the knots it unties." [6] Strictly speaking its results are not philosophical - they are statements of what we have always known but what we come at one time or another to doubt or to misunderstand. "Philosophical" is an adjective descriptive of an activity not of a result. The concept of philosophy has been so transformed by Wittgenstein that "philosophising" in his sense of the word is an activity which largely concerns itself, not with answering the questions raised by metaphysics but with dissolving the problems and confusions belonging to "philosophising" in the old, metaphysical sense. These problems are never factual, although metaphysics conceives them to be so, but they are always conceptual, or, as Wittgenstein sometimes prefers to

5. Piaget, "Insights and Illusions in Philosophy", Page 53.
6. Zettel 452.

put it, grammatical. They never turn on an insufficient testing of data nor on a simple paucity of factual evidence. They arise out of a confusion about the way we use language.

Wittgenstein's recognition of this fact was an essential precursor to the development of his philosophical technique. One could say that he made philosophers aware that the very nature of their traditional activity was largely a result of conceptual confusion. In other words, not only were there confusions about traditional philosophic problems, like the mind-body problem, but the philosophers concept of the practice whereby he attempted to resolve these problems was itself confused. Hence, in the case of Hume for example: the unsatisfactory amalgamation of logical and empirical investigation leading to a radical scepticism and the loneliness of solipsism.

I use Hume as an example because the revolution which Wittgenstein achieved through a reconceptualization of philosophy and through a new kind of practice (his "treatment" of philosophic problems) to a large extent took the form of a break from and a critical engagement with "philosophical psychology" which had received considerable impetus from Hume's writing. His concern with the other-minds problem, the question of the privacy of sensation, the concept of intention and volition is evidence of this. He talks of the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language and finds this bewitchment particularly prevalent in philosophies which are involved with concepts pertaining to psychology or to our use of psychological predicates. Chief cause of this puzzlement is a tendency to seek out a physical object to which psychological terms are thought to refer. There are many metaphorical and analogical uses of ordinary language which reinforce this tendency. Take for example the instance he gives us in Zettel: "The soul is said to LEAVE the body. Then, in order to exclude any similarity to the body, any sort of idea that some gaseous thing is meant, the soul is said to

be incorporeal, non-spatial; but with that word 'leave' one has already said it all. Show me how you use the word 'spiritual' and I shall see whether the soul is non-corporeal and what you understand by 'spirit'."[7].

The tone of this remark is as important as its content. The last sentence especially has the tone of a doctor about to treat a patient, and, as is well known, Wittgenstein conceived of metaphysical problems as symptoms of a kind of illness - an illness deep-seated in the grammar of our language. But his intention was never to present his investigations as the final cures of all philosophic illnesses. Rather, he wanted those who read them to treat that reading as a sort of apprenticeship during which the skills and techniques requisite for the treatment of problems could be acquired.

My attempt in this thesis will therefore be twofold. I shall try to outline the problem of the privacy of sensation as a special case of philosophical scepticism of our having knowledge of other minds. Certain ramifications of this question, particularly the problems of linguistic meaning, and intentional action will also be discussed. Secondly I shall try, in discussing Wittgenstein's treatment of this problem, to show that his technique is a satisfactory one, not only for "curing" this problem, but for handling all philosophic problems. In other words the unity of Wittgenstein's philosophy will be stressed. This unity is not the one which is receiving a great deal of attention at the moment, viz. the unity of the Tractatus and the later works. But I refer rather to the fittedness of Wittgenstein's philosophical activity to his domain of interest - conceptual investigations. In these investigations he discovers no new fact, gives no new piece of information. What he does is to practice philosophy in a new way and initiate us into a new form of activity. In this, it seems to me, his work is supremely original and greatly valuable.

7. Zettel 127

PART I

THE OPENING SECTIONS OF THE "PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS"

The opening sections of the Investigations contain a number of themes which are central to the later thought of Wittgenstein and which deserve lengthy and detailed treatment in their own right. At the same time this first part - up to paragraph 243 - is an indispensible introduction to the discussion of privacy and sensation which immediately follows it. A large part of the section is concerned with breaking the spell of the atomistic conception of language which Wittgenstein had formulated in the Tractatus. The importance of this for the treatment of sensation emerges later when Wittgenstein proposes that sensation - language is expressive and not descriptive and that there can be no such thing as an isomorphism [1.] between a sentence such as "I have a toothache" and some "state of affairs." By breaking with the atomistic theory Wittgenstein achieves a second result, equally important for the treatment of the problem of sensation: he dispels the force of that Lockean variant of the theory which suggests that the problem of meaning can be overcome by interposing a mental object or image between a word and the world.[2.] Wittgenstein continually points out the fruitlessness of this device in explaining the meaning of words, and begins to point to the dangers of the mental picture being treated as a private object - a metaphysical peg on which to hang a variety of philosophic problems including the problems of sensation.

Two other important topics are dealt with. He gives a valuable insight into what he considers to be the character of a philosophic problem : the impression it gives of having an unplumbable depth and the apparent conflict between the aim of a philosophic inquiry and the nature of the object of the

1. Erik Stenius, "Wittgenstein's 'Tractatus' ", pp.91-96
2. Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding", Bk. III, Ch. I.

inquiry, the latter seeming to resist the attempts of the former to penetrate its essence. His discussion of this topic is not only important as a statement of his position with respect to philosophy, it also gives us the atmosphere of a philosophic "disquietude" - such as can lead to a man striking his breast and crying "But surely another person can't have THIS pain". [3.] (Both Wittgenstein and Wisdom place great store on capturing the psychological atmosphere of a philosophical perplexity.) He also suggests here that the solution to the "Problem" of sensation may well be grammatical and not empirical.

Thirdly he discusses what is involved in "following a rule", and this is extremely important because it prepares the ground for his refutation of the private-language argument which forms one of the underpinnings of the theory that sensations are private. The discussion shows once again how the understanding as a generator of private mental images is fruitlessly employed as a device whereby philosophers try to explain how we learn rules and how we follow them. We find that his discussion recurs at a number of points in the Investigations and is pursued in the "Foundation of Mathematics" (F.M. 1-5) and I shall treat it at some length.

My method of dealing with the first section will be to stick as closely to Wittgenstein's text as possible, giving something in the nature of a running commentary on it.

3. P.I. 253

C H A P T E R I

THE ATOMISTIC CONCEPT OF LANGUAGE

"4.01 A proposition is a picture of reality
A proposition is a model of reality as we imagine it

4.0311 One name stands for one thing, another for another thing, and they are combined with one another. In this way the whole group - like a tableau vivant - presents a state of affairs.

4.032 It is only in so far as a proposition is logically segmented that it is a picture of a situation." 1.

Wittgenstein begins the Investigations by trying to discourage certain rigid and artificial ways of treating language. He shows that language always transcends the confines drawn for it by an atomistic theory. The philosophical idea that language is made up of words which name objects can, he argues, be made a definition of language only if we are prepared to accept that a great deal of what in the ordinary way we call language, will be excluded by the definition. And even if we invent a language which conforms to this definition we can see that a great deal more is involved in teaching, learning and using this language than is suggested by a theory of simple name-object correlation.

Let us take for example the language-game described in Philosophical Investigations 2 and 8. Here a builder A calls out words "block", "pillar", "slab" and "beam" and his assistant is trained to bring him the appropriate object. In addition, the language contains numerals, (the letters of the alphabet); also the words "this" and "there" used with a pointing gesture; and a chart of colour samples. A gives an order like: "d - slab - there." At the same time he shows the assistant a colour sample, and when he says "there" he points

1. Tractatus.

to a place on the building site. From the stock of slabs B takes one for each letter of the alphabet up to "d", of the same colour as the sample, and brings them to the place indicated by A..." [2].

Even in a primitive language as simple as this one a diversity of operations is to be found. For instance it can easily be seen that the meaning of the names can only be discovered by seeing how they are used and how they are taught. "Block" and "slab" are neither used nor taught in the same way as the names of the numbers of the stones "a", "b", "c", "d" are. The context of linguistic usage and the type of training employed to teach the use of words, determines the meaning of the word. This is what Wittgenstein is driving at when he employs one of his favourite illustrations: "'I set the break up by connecting up rod and lever' - Yes, given the whole of the rest of the mechanism. Only in conjunction with that is it a break-lever; it may be anything or nothing." [3].

At this stage his position seems to be stated rather than argued, but its force comes out if we consider whether the command "Slab!" is a word or a sentence. The expression can function in either way - which way will be determined by how it is used. We might say that it was a degenerate sentence but if this tempts us into saying that it must be a contraction of our sentence "Bring me a slab!" then we should remember that there is no reason why the latter expression should not be considered an expansion of the former. When we say that "Slab!" means "Bring me a slab!" then all we are asserting is that it can sometimes be used in the same way and applied in the same context. The expressions differ when "Bring me a slab!" is used "as four words" in order to distinguish it from other combinations such as, "Bring <u>him</u> a slab!" etc. But here too lurks a temptation to think that when we

2. P.I. 8
3. P.I. 6

use it by contrast, the other sentences float before our minds, as do the birds in Plato's aviary in the Theaetetus,[4.] and that we "mean" this one by singling out in thought and taking hold of it with the immaterial hands of the understanding. In fact the contrast can be made because of the context of "Bring me a slab" in our language. Because we have a mastery of English the other contrasting combinations exist as possibilities in our language. Someone lacking this mastery and so being unaware of the possibility of using the expression as a contrast to others might always utter "Bring me a slab!" as one word. His doing this NEED not involve his having any different mental concomitant from ours - need not involve anything mental happening at all. The same sense and different senses depend on the use in the context of the language.

The focus of his discussion has changed somewhat and he is now concerned to settle accounts with the idea that psychological processes are a necessary and sufficient hypothesis for the explanation of how words mean. He is aiming overtly at Frege's theory that every sentence contains an assumption which is asserted. Frege states his position as follows:

> "An interrogative sentence and an indicative one contain the same thought; but the indicative contains something else as well, namely, the assertion... Therefore two things must be distinguished in an indicative sentence: the content which it has in common with the corresponding sentence question, and the assertion. The former is the thought, or at least contains the thought. So it is possible to express the thought without laying it down as true ... Consequently we must distinguish:
>
> 1. the apprehension of a thought - thinking
> 2. the recognition of the truth of a thought - judgement
> 3. the manifestation of this judgement - assertion". 5.

This implies that something takes place in the mind which is expressed by the assertion sign (a vertical bar) [6.] in <u>addition</u> to the words: "such and such is the case." Wittgenstein

4. Theaetetus 199.
5. Frege, "The Thought: A Logical Enquiry" Mind Vol. LXV No. 259
6. Frege, "Begriffsschrift"S2 trans. P.T. Geach.

replies: "And if I write not 'It is asserted that ...', but 'It is asserted: such and such is the case,' the words 'It is asserted simply become superfluous." [7.] So the game of asserting something does not require a mental state - the "asserting state" - if it is to be played, anymore than a particular set of mental pictures are necessary to playing a game of chess.

And here Wittgenstein introduces the concept of the language-game in order, "to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity or of a form of life." [8.] Just as a form of life contains a diversity of practices, so with language. The primitive language game which we described earlier, belies a fairly complex set of practices which are necessary in order that the language may be used and another set in order that it may be taught. Wittgenstein considers the teaching practice an important linguistic feature to be described in an investigation into meaning. "I used at one time to say that in order to get clear how a certain sentence is used, it was a good idea to ask oneself the question, 'How could one verify such an assertion.' But this is just one way among others of getting clear about the use of a word or a sentence. For example another question which is often very useful to ask oneself is, 'How is this word learned? How would people set about teaching a child this word?'" [9.]

One type of teaching which the builder's assistant might need will involve the giving of ostensive definitions and even the ostensive definition game presupposes a knowledge of the meaning of certain words on the part of the pupil. e.g. If I define 'two' by pointing to two objects then this might be taken as referring to just these particular objects, or to their colour. I can then say "This number is called 'two' ", but then 'number' must be understood or it too needs

7. P.I. 22
8. P.I. 23
9. From, "Ludwig Wittgenstein" by D.A.T.G. and A.C.J., The Australasian Journal of Philosophy XXIX, 2, P.79, quoted by Hartnack.

to be defined. The series of definitions will vary in length according to whether the pupil "gets" a definition or requires a further one which will depend on what one might call his linguistic experience. "So one might say: the ostensive definition explains the use - the meaning - of the word when the overall role of the word in language is clear". [10.]

If it is argued that such prior knowledge is unnecessary and that the meaning can be learnt by seeing or guessing what is being pointed to, then descriptions must be given of what, for example, "pointing to the shape" or "pointing to the colour" consists in. One might answer by saying, "I fix my attention on the colour", but this can involve doing very different things and the "mental act of attention" is not sufficient for us to be able to say that someone is attending. The criteria of someone's attending will be his actions within a certain context - moves in a game. Similarly we can say that someone is "solving a chess problem" not by hypothesising about his inward state but by watching what he does and referring that to the context of his actions. Further, if "meaning the colour" always involves my doing just these things (moving my eyes in this way, gesturing like that) and having just these sensations, it is still quite conceivable that the person whom I am teaching may observe my movements, feel my sensations, and yet interpret my ostensive definition in a way I had not foreseen. And here Wittgenstein enunciates in the clearest possible terms one of the great philosophic temptations to nonsense .... "because we cannot specify any one bodily action which we call pointing to the shape (as opposed for example to the colour) we say that a spiritual (mental, intellectual) activity corresponds to these words. Where our language suggests a body and there is none: there, we should like to say is a spirit." [11.]

Closely connected with the giving of ostensive definitions is the use and teaching of names and the temptations to oversimplify and to spiritualise are as powerful, here as there. A name may be related to a thing in various ways.

10. P.I. 30 B.B. p.12
11. P.I. 35

The relation comes out in the use, and is not "some remarkable act of the mind, as it were, a baptism of the object". This view makes us think that this state of mind is expressed by the words 'this' and 'that' since they are always used in naming ("This is called ...") and so are thought to signify a necessary mental correlate - a nomenative state of mind one might say. We should remember Wittgenstein argues that 'this' and 'that' are not used as names - we don't say "That is called 'this'."

The other form of over simplification - and the more persuasive one, I think - is that a name signifies a simple to which it corresponds, or that if it signifies a structure, and the elements of this structure become detached from each other, then the name stands for these simple elements - this one, this one, and that one. This view is one which I take to be held by Russell [12.] and which is illustrated by his following statements on the topic:

> "When I say that an unspecified member of a class occurred, my statement is significant provided I know what class is meant; but in the case of a true proper name, the name is meaningless unless it names something, and <u>if it names something, that something must occur</u>. This may seem reminiscent of the ontological argument, but it is really only part of the definition of "name". A proper name names something of which there are not a plurality of instances, and names it by a convention ad hoc, not by a description composed of words with previously assigned meanings. Unless, therefore, the name names something, it is an empty noise, not a word." 13.

This position, says Wittgenstein, confounds the meaning of a name with the bearer of a name. "When Mr. N.N. dies one says that the bearer of the name dies, not that the meaning dies. And it would be nonsensical to say that, for if the name ceased to have meaning it would not make sense to say 'Mr. N.N. is dead'." [14.] In very many cases the meaning of

12. Stenius, op. cit. p.119
13. Russell, "An Enquiry into Meaning and Truth", Pelican, p.30
14. P.I. 40.

a word is its use, and at most we can say that the meaning of a name is sometimes taught by pointing to its bearer. The rôle of naming is such that it makes the language-game of description possible - but the actual naming is not a move in the language-game but a preparation for the game. When one names an element one makes it a paradigm which serves as a means of representation in a language, rather like any standard of measurement does in measuring (the standard metre rule in Paris). The element itself has no extraordinary properties such as its being eternal and indestructible, rather one might say that it has grammatical properties assigned to it in order that it may serve as a representative paradigm. "And to say, 'If it did not exist, it could have no name' is to say as much and as little as: if this thing did not exist we could not use it in our language game ...." [15.]

So a man can die and his name still mean something; therefore the so-called 'indestructible elements' must be construed as paradigms used in the language-game without which the name would have no meaning because it would have no use. This conclusion however, can tempt one into thinking that if no paradigm exists as part of the language - (as a patch on a colour chart, say) - then it flashes before the mind the same every time, and is in this sense indestructible. But since we often remember incorrectly, or alternatively, since memories fade, the mental picture is no more permanent and indestructible than the physical picture. The "solution" to the "problem" of finding an indestructible paradigm is attempted on the basis of a misconception. When we say that one cannot say "Red exists" because if there were no red it could not be spoken at all, we think we are talking about a particular property of red - its eternal and indestructible character. In fact we are making what Wittgenstein will later call a grammatical proposition about the way the word is used in the language-game.

What he has shown so far is that (a) language involves far more than a combination of names (b) that "naming" and

15. P.I. 50

ostensively defining are different but related practices, (c) that names do not "stand for" indestructible simples, (individuals, objects) but that these objects are paradigms and there paradigmatic rôle is indicated by the way the names of the objects are used, and by the grammatical nature of the propositions which we make about paradigms such as "red" or "blue".

The material we have dealt with so far has been collected in order to launch an attack at one of the strongest citadels of logical atomism, namely the contention that analysis always yields a more fundamental form of sentence. The atomist says that the names in sentences correspond to indestructible elements of reality. Wittgenstein points out how odd this idea is since we have no notion of what such an element would be like. All we have seen are components of structures. e.g. the legs, arms and back of a chair. In the Tractatus he had written - "Every statement about complexes can be resolved into a statement about their constituents and into propositions that describe the complexes completely (2.0201). Objects make up the substance of the world. That is why they cannot be composite (2.021). Objects are what is unalterable and subsistent; their configuration is what is changing and unstable" (2.0271) and a little further on "A proposition has one and only one complete analysis" (3.25). He now calls this theory into questions with the famous "broom in the corner" example, which has aroused the ire of Professor Marcuse [16.] whose force of attack on it seems to me to be in inverse proportion to his understanding the point he is attacking. We can analyse the sentence, "My broom is in the corner" into statements about the broomstick and the brush, but this should not lead us to think that the two sentences are contained implicitly in the one sentence. As Wittgenstein says one would probably reply to a request for "the broomstick and the brush which is fitted into it" with "Do you want the broom? Why do you put it so oddly?"

One might want to say that in the unanalysed sentence one missed the analysis, but the reverse might be equally true.

16. Marcuse, "One Dimensional Man", p.175.

A description of a configuration of red, white and blue stripes just would not have the same point or meaning as the words "The Union Jack".

Behind the idea of the complete analysis lurks another: that the essence of language can be revealed by the dissection of sentences and can be expressed in terms of a theory of the general forms of all propositions. This general form is supposed to be revealed in the component arguments of a truth functional compound. But as we have just seen, the sentences of an analysed sentence and the "same" unanalysed sentence, often belong to different language games. How then are we to find the essence of language? Wittgenstein argues that the essentialist endeavour is misguided. Instead of searching (in vain) for the essence of language we should recognise that languages are related, as games are, by family resemblances. The hopelessness of a search for the essence of language might lead us into saying such nonsense as, that the disjunction of all the properties of language games is what is common to them. "Something runs through the whole thread - namely the continuous overlapping of those fibres." [17.] Wittgenstein caustically remarks.

Of course I can give the term 'game' a rigid definition if I decide to draw a boundary. The boundary cannot however be found, it can only be drawn. Stace deals with this point very well in his defence of empiricism. He writes:

> "For all classification, and therefore all definition, is relative to some purpose, which may be justifiable but may also be founded on mere prejudice. The decision to draw the line at any particular point is not dictated by the set of facts being classified, though of course it cannot ignore facts." 18.

We might teach someone how to use the word "game" by telling him about the games we know - we could not perhaps do better

17. P.I. 67.
18. Stace, "Some Misinterpretations of Empiricism". Mind VOL. LXVII, Oct. 1958.

than this, "But this is not ignorance. We do not know the boundaries because none have been drawn." [19.]

When I "see what is common" to a number of instances I may have a picture of something which I use as a paradigm of essence. But the picture needs to be used in a certain way in order to be a paradigm of essence. i.e. it is by convention, or by my decision that THIS is considered to be the essence. "Essence is expressed by grammar." [20.] When I say I know what a game is, but can't say exactly, this does not mean that I have a vague picture which will eventually become trimmed to the exactness of a definition. My knowledge <u>is</u> in fact expressed in all the possible examples I could give. "Vagueness" writes Waismann, "should be distinguished from open texture... Open texture.. is something like a possibility of vagueness. Vagueness can be remedied by giving more accurate rules, open texture cannot. An alternative way of stating this would be to say that definitions of open terms are always corrigible or amendable" [21.] He goes on to explain what he means by the open texture of a definition, and his account summarises Wittgenstein's point so exactly that I should like to quote from it at some lenth:

"Suppose for a moment that we were able to describe situations completely without omitting anything (as in chess), then we could produce an exhaustive list of all the circumstances in which the term is to be used so that nothing is left to doubt; in other words we could construct a complete definition i.e. a thought model which anticipates and settles once for all every possible question of usage. As, in fact, we can never eliminate the possibility of some unforeseen factor emerging, we can never be quite sure that we have included in our definition everything that should be included, and thus the process of defining and redefining an idea will go on without ever reaching a final stage. In other words, every definition stretches into an open horizon... Thus the result is the in-

19. P.I. 68.
20. P.I. 371.
21. Waismann, "Verifiability", Logic and Language First Series.

completeness of the definition of the terms involved, and the incompleteness of the definition is rooted in the incompleteness of empirical description; that is one of the grounds why a material object statement p cannot be verified conclusively nor be resolved into statements $S, S_2 \ldots S_n$ which describe evidences for it. [22.]

These quotations from Stace and Waismann express the two ideas which Wittgenstein has used all through his attack on the atomist theory of language. Firstly, the definitional lines which mark off what is essential from what is non-essential are drawn by us, not found in the object. Secondly, the nature of all descriptions and definitions which apply to empirical objects is such that they are never complete. The philosophers' failure to remember these points results in a problem or "disquietude", for "in philosophy we often compare the use of words with games and calculi which have fixed rules," [23.] and then forget that the rules of linguistic usage are not nearly as strictly predetermined as are the rules of the propositional calculus, or the rules of poker. It is, therefore, with these philosophic problems that Wittgenstein goes on to deal, in order to throw more light on what causes them and how they are to be treated.

22. Ibid.
23. P.I. 81.

CHAPTER II

PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS AND GRAMMATICAL ILLUSIONS

"Indeed, can't we define a philosophical discussion as a discussion as to whether any of us know what all of us know we all know."

"Other Minds" - 111 Pages 60 & 61.

Wittgenstein's approach to the discussion of the character and causes of philosophical problems seem at first reading a little odd. He does not say explicitly that he is beginning a new section and so my division is perhaps a bit artificial. What he does say is that before we can achieve any clarity on the question of the aim and method of a logico-philosophic investigation we must examine what is involved in meaning, understanding and thinking something. The reasons for this will become clearer later but, anticipating a little, I should say that these topics are used as "reminders" of the attractiveness and compulsion of philosophical misconceptions - particularly the so-called essentialist misconception which Wittgenstein constantly attacks. The idea that there is only one way - one process - one interpretation, and that this one way is the way it must be, exercises a power over the intelligence which can only be removed by reminding ourselves of alternative ways, processes and interpretations, etc. which can also be.

So he starts by discussing what it means to understand or follow a rule. The "rule by which someone proceeds" could mean: (a) the description we are able to give of this method after observing what he does (b) the table of the rules he consults (c) the answer he gives when we ask what rule he uses. But (a*) we might not be able to observe any clear rule by watching what he does (b*) he might consult no table (c*) he might have no answer to our question or be prepared to alter the one he has. Rules then, seem "queer" or "intangible": Both

expressions would indicate to Wittgenstein that one was in the grip of a philosophical problem and that one was about to talk in an extraordinary (nonsensical?) way. A situation in which (a)*, (b)* & (c)* apply might seem to be one in which there was no certain way of knowing what rules are being employed, if any, and whether they are being employed correctly. One might want to say that this particular game was a very loose one - hardly a game at all. In fact this situation applies to a lesser or greater degree in every game. In some games we make up the rules or alter them as we go along. And even in a game tightly bounded by rules such as chess or poker we can imagine a doubt as to how to apply the rules, i.e. we can imagine the need for rules for the use of rules. Whether this need arises is an empirical matter: some rules leave room for doubt, others do not.

Every definition, for example, might itself stand in need of definition, but not everyone does. An explanation only requires to be explained if a misunderstanding occurs. This applies to orders as well e.g. "Stand roughly here" might achieve its purpose very satisfactorily. If one is tempted to say "But it is inexact - it leaves too much leeway for misunderstanding" then we must see what we mean by "inexact" in this context, and what the point of a greater exactitude would be. A thin line might be drawn on the ground but it still has breadth. Delicate instruments might be used to measure when someone had crossed the edge of the line. "But has exactness still got a function here: isn't the engine idling?" [1]. "Exactness" is used as a term of praise when a particular goal is in mind, so it is the goal which determines what exactness will mean. One might say that the logic of "exactness" varied according to the circumstances in which the term was used, and that the logic of the word revealed the meaning of the word.

This last statement about the logic of the word (vague as it is) has a strong attraction, in Wittgenstein's opinion, for the philosopher. Logical investigations seem to

1. P.I. 88.

penetrate deep into things and to lay bare a necessary foundation which explains why things must be as they are. This sort of investigation does not involve the discovery of causal connections but rather the illumination of a priori patterns within things themselves, somewhat on the lines of Leibniz's "Mondology". Logic seems to lie at the heart of phenomena which need only to be penetrated for their natures to be revealed and their necessity made plain. And yet logical investigations are not like those of natural science. The character of their problems, what Althusser calls their "problematic", is toto coelo different. As an example Wittgenstein asks us to compare Augustin's problem with "the nature of time": (si nemo ex me querat scio, si quaerenti explicare velim, nescio") with any empirical problem. Augustin's problem seems, as Wittgenstein often says, to have the character of depth. [2.] Its solution dangles before our noses and yet we do not come any closer to solving it. Why is this?

Wittgenstein suggests that this state of affairs arises when the nature of the investigation is mistaken. "We feel as if we had to penetrate phenomena: our investigation, however, is not directed towards phenomena, but, as one might say, towards the 'possibilities' of phenomena. We remind ourselves, that is to say, of the kind of statement we make about phenomena". [3.] From this one can see that philosophical investigations are not concerned with natural science, but the grammar of their problems makes it look as if they were problems of natural science. It is this very similarity of grammatical form which Wittgenstein holds to be responsible for many of the misconceptions in philosophy and which should itself be the object of an investigation. So telling is this insight that it is illustrated by the very practice of philosophy itself which misconstrues its own rôle because the grammar of its problems is, on the surface, similar to that of natural science.

2. P.I. 111
3. P.I. 90

"Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one. Such an investigation sheds light on our problem by clearing misunderstandings away. Misunderstandings concerning the use of words, caused among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of language. - Some of them can be removed by substituting one form of expression for another: This may be called an 'analysis' of our forms of expression for the process is sometimes like one of taking things apart." [4.] The mistake of the Tractatus is to think that there is something like a complete analysis which will give the meaning of an expression without any possibility of ambiguity arising. To think this is to make the same mistake as we saw could be made with, "Stand roughly here". It is to seek what Aristotle warns against in the Ethics: an exactitude and precision which is out of place in the subject matter under consideration: "For example it is absurd to demand logical demonstrations from a professional speaker; we might as well accept mere probabilities from a mathematician." [5.]

Logical precision seems to stand before us as an ideal. Our philosophical investigations must leave no room for "inexactness" or undefined terms. But when language is approached philosophically from this point of view it appears in a strange half light: on the one hand all the words and sentences are familiar, and on the other, they seem to have a hidden core which is what they are "in essence". We begin to look for the general form of a proposition, or we think that a proposition must be, "a pure intermediary between the propositional signs and the facts. Or we even try to sublime the signs themselves." [6.] Thought too is treated in this way. Thoughts seem to be pictorial correlates of the world whose logical form they share. If this logical order did not obtain how could words have fixed meanings? Wittgenstein replies, "this order is a super-order between - so to speak - superconcepts. Whereas, of course, if the words 'language', 'experience', 'world', have a use it must be as humble a one as the words, 'table', 'lamp', 'door'." [7.]

4. P.I. 90
5. Aristotle "Nicomachean Ethics", Bk. I, trans. J.A.K. Thomson.
6. P.I. 94
7. P.I. 97

This is the bewildering ambiguity of a philosophical perplexity. On the one hand we see that our ordinary sentences, sometimes vague, sometimes open-textured, have just the order they have, and operate pretty successfully. But on the other hand we want to say that if they have sense then the sense must be complete and perfect. "An enclosure with a hole in it is as good as none. - But is that true?" [8]. This is a brilliant analogy and if it is pursued it makes the point all the better. Fish nets for example are made with holes of varying sizes, depending on what they are used to catch. A fish net of tightly woven canvas or better still, of plastic sheeting (the plastic's texture conforming to the ideal of "perfect sense") would not be of very much use and might be so cumbersome as to be useless. The idea of "the perfect sense" is the same as the ideal of the perfect game, one completely bounded by rules. But this misconstrues the part that the ideal plays in language. It leads us to say that, "Stand roughly here" has no sense. We think that the ideal must be found in the language (in the signs) but since we do not find it there we come to think that the pure sense exists in the medium of the understanding, which is then conceived of as the intermediary between the propositional signs and the world. [9]. Thoughts, as it were, float between the inner and the outer worlds, being grasped by the former (the understanding) and reflecting the latter. Thus Frege writes:

> "So the result seems to be thoughts are neither things of the outer world nor ideas.
>
> A third realm must be recognised. What belongs to this corresponds with ideas, in that it cannot be perceived by the senses, but with things, in that it needs no bearer to the contents of whose consciousness to belong .... When one apprehends or thinks a thought one does not create it but only comes to stand in a certain relation, which is different from seeing a thing or having an idea, to what already existed beforehand." 10.

Here we have one form, a very sophisticated one, of trying to reduce thought and meaning to a bed-rock, to a level

8. P.I. 99
9. B.B. p.3
10. Frege, "The Thought; A Logical Enquiry."

where we can say, "Well it must be like that otherwise language and thought are impossible." "The ideal as we think of it is unshakeable ..... Where does this idea come from? It is like a pair of glasses on our nose through which we see whatever we look at. It never occurs to us to take them off." [11.] Now of course glasses can be very useful, but not if we don't require them, and not if we are given reading glasses when we are rather short sighted. Wittgenstein treats the philosophic problem as a conflict between the requirements of the investigation and the object of the investigation. The general form of the conflict emerges in the specific case of the philosophy of language out of the attempt to distil a crystalline logical purity out of the set of grammatical analogies and vague similarities which are found in ordinary language. The result is that language is tailored to the requirements of the investigation. "We have got on to slippery ice where there is no friction and so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. Back to the rough ground." [12.] i.e. back from the ideal of "perfect language" to ordinary language, language at work, in use. He goes on to make a rather enigmatic and highly compressed statement, "The preconceived idea of crystalline purity can only be removed by turning our examination round. (One might say: the axis of reference of our examination must be rotated, but about the fixed point of our real need)" [13.] This implies, I think, an almost literal Copernican revolution in philosophy. The axis of reference of our investigation is indeed that clarity of which he speaks later. But our real need is to remove the puzzles which occur in philosophy because of misleading surface similarities between the grammars of sentences in ordinary language. The mistake hitherto has been to "perfect" language in various ways or to invent "ideal" languages so ignoring our real need and leaving the philosophical problems untreated.

Philosophical problems he argues, are to be solved, "by looking into the workings of our language." [14.] They seem to be deep problems, incapable of ordinary solution, and our

11. P.I. 103
12. P.I. 107
13. P.I. 108
14. P.I. 109

inability to come up with extraordinary solutions leads to a frustration which Wittgenstein describes when he writes, " 'But THIS isn't how it is,' we say. 'Yet THIS is how it has to be.' "[15]. When we read the phrases, "the branch of the tree" and "the top of the tree" in the ordinary way, we know perfectly well what they mean (we know "how things are" with each phrase). But when we are doing philosophy we are 'disquieted' by the fact that there is nothing in the tree which we could cut off and take home as "the top". We don't seem to know our way about any more.[16] If we look into the workings of the phrases when they are used in ordinary language we see "That though we can use quasi-descriptive phrases to enable us to state where something is, that the thing is there is a relational character of the thing and not itself a subject of characters"[17]. So that what appeared as a problem is shown up as a mistake about grammar.

The most pervasively misleading mistake in the philosophy of language is to construe all sentences as being fundamentally propositional in character. The reduction of language to one general form of propositions becomes a requirement of the investigation which blinkers the philosopher to the extent that "One thinks that one is tracing the outline of the thing's nature over and over again and one is merely tracing round the frame through which we look at it."[18] An alternative way of stating this which Wittgenstein uses in the Blue Book and again here is to say that we derive a picture from a linguistic expression which we try to transpose into another area of language, when in fact no application has been found for the picture there. Pole interprets this form of argument as being an attack on all pictorial ways of thinking. "Wittgenstein," he writes, "seems to recognise no positive rôle at all as belonging to them; they are nonfunctional themselves, but block our vision of the functioning of words. He constantly appeals to us to ignore the pictures which we associate with our words and look instead at their use."[19] He goes on to say that he finds this approach

15. P.I. 112
16. P.I. 123
17. Ryle, "Systematically Misleading Expressions". Logic of Language, First Series.
18. P.I. 114
19. Pole, "The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein", p.91

implausible but that it is in line with Wittgenstein's "trade" which is demolition.

Pole's argument is persuasive at first but it seems to me that it is neither accurate nor consistent. It is inaccurate for the reason that Wittgenstein distinguishes between "idle pictures" and pictures which have particular uses. [20.] It is therefore incorrect to say that he considers all pictures to be non-functional. Furthermore, he is not concerned to disguise the fact that we constantly operate with pictures in the course of our "calculating" with words. The argument is inconsistent because Pole has earlier correctly stated that it is not with pictures as such but with their application or lack of application which Wittgenstein is concerned. He explicitly says, "To achieve his end, to wean us from our preconceptions and break the power of those pictures which have come to dominate our thinking, Wittgenstein also employs various imaginative devices." [21.]

These devices are used to show us cases of linguistic usage which might not otherwise have occurred to us. They aid us in our attempts adequately to describe the workings of language, for it is Wittgenstein's contention that philosophical problems cease to puzzle us when we get a clear view of these workings. So we must give "perspicuous representations" of our language by "finding and inventing intermediate cases." [22.] In doing this one does not so much solve problems as dissolve them, by seeing them for what they are. What is required is that the problem be adequately described. When for example we lay down rules for a game and then find that things do not turn out in the game quite as we had expected (when we make logical purity a criterion of what makes sense in language) then it is our entanglement in the rules that we must get a clear look at. The WHOLE entanglement must be clearly seen.

20. P.I. 291
21. Pole, op. cit. p.28.
22. P.I. 122

As Wisdom notes, this point was made by Freud and I think that the psycho-analytic method throws quite a bit of light on what Wittgenstein means when he says that "... the clarity we are aiming at is indeed complete clarity. But this means that the philosophical problems should completely disappear." [23.] This clarity is to be achieved by "assembling reminders for a particular purpose." [24.] That is, by pointing to examples which simply do run against what we are inclined in philosophy to say, must be the case.

Wisdom remarks, in a note to the Black-White debate, on how we come to know the invisible and what meaning is attached to, "knows what's going on in the mind of another," "The whole difficulty arises like a difficulty in a neurotic; The forces are conflicting but nearly equal. The philosopher remains in a state of confused tension unless he makes the effort necessary to bring them all out by speaking of them together. It isn't that people can't resolve philosophical difficulties but that they won't. In philosophy it is not a matter of making sure that one has got hold of the right theory but of making sure that one has got hold of them all. Like psychoanalysis it is not a matter of selecting from all our inclinations some which are right, but of bringing them all to light by mentioning them and in this process creating some which are right for this individual in these circumstances." [25.]

To bring the various theories to light may of course require various techniques - some theories lending themselves to diagrammatic representation and others not, for example. This is I think what Wittgenstein means when he says, "There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies." [26.] These therapies cannot themselves be characterised as forms of theorising or of explanation - they merely put before us what we have always known.

23. P.I. 133
24. P.I. 127
25. John Wisdom, "Other Minds", p.124
26. P.I. 133

CHAPTER III

FOLLOWING RULES

> "Why are people so strongly drawn to believe, in the face of their own daily experience, that the intelligent execution of an operation must embody two processes, one of doing and another of theorising? Part of the answer is that they are wedded to the dogma of the ghost in the machine. Since doing is often an overt muscular affair, it is written off as a merely physical process. On the assumption of the antithesis between 'physical' and 'mental', it follows that muscular doing cannot itself be a mental operation. To earn the title 'skilful,' 'cunning,' or 'humorous,' it must therefore get it by transfer from another counterpart act occurring not 'in the machine' but 'in the ghost;' for 'skilful,' 'cunning,' and 'humorous' are certainly mental predicates."
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> Gilbert Ryle. "The Concept of Mind" P.32

The discussion of what is involved in following a rule, serves a variety of purposes. (a) It throws light on what sorts of things rules are and so clarifies how a philosophical entanglement with rules may come about. (b) It shows the inadequacy of the hypothesis of a mental mechanism to explain what Ryle calls "intelligent execution and operation". (c) It strengthens Wittgenstein's argument that the meanings of signs are to be found in the way they are used. (d) It introduces the discussion of privacy by attacking the notion that it makes sense to talk of obeying a rule privately.

Puzzled by "the nature of language" the philosopher tries to ease his discomfort by introducing a rule in the guise of a definition. He says that the general form of propositions is, "This is how things are". He argues that

although this is itself an English sentence it is used as the propositional variable "p" is, in symbolic logic. But we can see immediately that we do not say that "p" is the general form of propositions because part of our concept of a proposition is that it should sound like an English sentence. The correct thing to say is that there are many kind of propositions and we can give examples of these different kinds. But the question still nags at us, "How do you know whether they are all propositions? Isn't one of the tests of a proposition that it must fit the concepts of true or false?" This says Wittgenstein is a misleading picture. "True" and "False" might belong to our concept of a proposition just as "sounding like a proposition" belongs to it, but they do not "fit" it. They are not the forms into which the wordy matter is fitted so as to make that matter propositional in essence. "This is how things are," fits in the way that L fits after K when we recite the alphabet. And we might say to a child when teaching it to pick out a proposition," 'Ask yourself if you can say "is true," after it. If these words fit then it is a proposition.'" [1].

Another tack would be to say that the meaning of a word fits the sense of a sentence which I understand. If the meaning of a word is the way it is used then this statement obviously makes no sense: the picture of something fitting something else is inappropriate. A tendency to think of meaning as some sort of shadowy picture grasped by the understanding is revealed here. This way of thinking ignores that every picture can be applied and interpreted in various ways. For example, I may seem to misuse the picture of a cube if I point from it to a triangular prism, but with a suitable method of projection the picture does "fit" the prism.

Even when a schema is supplied to represent how a picture is to be interpreted the possibility of the schema itself being interpreted remains wide open. When I teach someone an interpretation I judge whether he has understood me by the use he makes of the diagrammatic schema. I give him

1. P.I. 137

or of the image he carries in his head. Either my expectations are fulfilled or they are not. Only in the normal case, where he has "got my meaning" is there no doubt as to the interpretation and just because of this the abnormal case illuminates the normal case.

Wittgenstein now moves to attack the idea of a mental process which is supposed to explain understanding. He suggests the following language-game:

A teaches B the series of natural numbers. What does it mean to say that B understands the teaching of A? This, that he consistently writes down the series in the correct order. - Suppose I teach someone a series and he eventually continues it. How far must he go before I say that he's got it - the thousandth place? One is tempted to say that continuing is only applying the understanding and that "understanding is a state which is a source of the correct use," [2.] just as an algebraic formula may be thought of as the source of the series.

If we have the idea that we know the series or the application of derivation rules apart from actual derivations, then we can be asked when we know the application - always? Sometimes? only when we think of the rule? We can only answer by saying that knowledge is a state of mind, a condition of a mental apparatus which explains our knowing. But as Ryle points out, "to possess a propositional property is not to be in a particular state, or to undergo a particular change; it is to be bound or liable to be in a particular state, or to undergo a particular change, when a particular condition is realised." [3.] And besides as Wittgenstein says," .... there are objections to speaking of a state of mind here, in as much as there ought to be two different criteria for such a state: a knowledge of the construction of the apparatus, quite apart from what it does," [4.] and a knowledge of the

2. P.I. 146
3. Ryle, "The Concept of Mind", p.43
4. P.I. 149

former is lacking to most of us.

A more fruitful approach is yielded by his insight that the word "knows" is often used like "can" or "is able to," and that its grammar is also closely related to that of "understands". And here he uses a very good example. When I understand how to continue this series 1, 5, 11, 19, 29, the following things might happen:

(a) I try various algebraic formula and light on $a_n = n^2 + n - 1$ which is confirmed to be correct.

(b) I find the series of differences 4,6,8,10, and say "Now I can go on" and do so.

(c) I say, "Yes, I know that series as well as I know the series 1, 2, 3, 4, 5" and I continue.

(d) I say nothing but simply continue the series with the feeling, "that's easy."

But are these possibilities really understanding? We feel that there is something hidden behind (a), (b), (c) & (d) which is "understanding THE PRINCIPLE of the series," and yet we cannot find this process. We don't know how or where to look for it. Wittgenstein suggests, "Try not to think of understanding as a 'mental process' at all. - For THAT is the expression which confuses you. But ask yourself: in what sort of case, in what kind of circumstances, do we say, 'Now I know how to go on,' when, that is, the formula HAS occurred to me?" [5]. It is the circumstances under which we have the experience which justify us in saying we understand. Strawson enters a caution here against exactly the sort of misinterpretation which Wittgenstein would want us to avoid. He writes, "This obviously does not mean that the words 'Now I can go on!' are short for a description of all these circumstances, or that they mean 'I have had an experience which I know empirically to lead to the continuation of the series;'

5. P.I. 154

my certainty that I can go on is not a matter of induction. What we need (here I interpret a little) is to look at such first person utterances in a radically different way from the way in which we look at the corresponding third person utterances: to see them not as reports about myself for giving which I have to apply criteria, but rather as 'exclamations' or 'signals', naturally and appropriately made or given in certain circumstances." [6.]

The attractiveness of the hypothesis of a mental mechanism as it is used in philosophy is very clearly illustrated in the case of explanations as to what reading consists in. We want to say that the difference between a fluent reader and a child who guesses correctly at words or knows the passage by heart is that there must be a different mechanism at work in each of them. Now in the case of a reading machine we could say that it was reading when its mechanism was correctly adjusted, but in the case where we teach someone to read our criterion will be whether he consistently reads correctly and the concept of reading here will be independent of any hypothesis of a mechanism. "The change when the pupil began to read was a change in his behaviour." [7.] If we fall prey to saying that the criterion of a person's reading is the presence of a certain conscious process with its various accompaniments such as hesitating, looking more closely, misreading, etc. then Wittgenstein asks us to remember that it is conceivable that someone should read an unfamiliar passage with a feeling that he knew it by heart.

A slightly different but equally inadequate approach would be to say that in reading we derived sounds from letters according to a rule and that it is this derivation which is characteristic of reading. But this only reproduces our difficulty for there is no one feature which is essential to

6. Strawson, "Review of Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations," Mind Vol. LXIII (1954) reprinted in Pitcher, p.36.

7. P.I. 157

deriving. A derivation schema can take all sorts of forms. In the same way there are a number of cases for which we use the word "reading".

The psychological hypothesis reasserts itself with the suggestion that reading is characterised by the feeling of being guided by the letters. When we read English we "feel the influence of the letters" in a way in which we do not when we scan Linear B: "... that is really meant to imply that I, as it were feel the movement of the lever which connects seeing the letters with speaking." [8]. This feeling is of course not always or even often present in the case of fluent readers, so that it is quite impossible that it should be a criterion of reading. Saying that it is there unconsciously, or that closer inspection will reveal it is irrelevant as Wittgenstein shows when he says, "If I am supposed to describe how an object looks from far off, I don't make the description more accurate by saying what can be noticed about the object on closer inspection." [9]. What in fact happens in this case is that we latch on to one out of a variety of cases of being guided and refer to this as "the essence of being guided". So we think perhaps of rails guiding a train, or of the sensation we get when we are led blind-folded and we try to apply these pictures in the case of reading or writing. Since these pictures do not really apply at all in this case we get the idea that the guiding takes place, - but not in a visible or tangible way. "'For surely,' I tell myself, 'I was being guided.' - Only then does the idea of that ethereal, intangible instance arise." [10].

This discussion of "being guided" is extremely important to his treatment of following rule and of understanding and meaning something, to which we must now return. The idea of a guiding influence is closely related to the idea that when we mean someone to follow a rule, the steps he must

8. P.I. 170
9. P.I. 171 (An argument with similar force is used by Berkeley in "A New Theory of Vision").
10. P.I. 175

carry out are predetermined by our order to him, in the sense that all possible steps in accordance with the order are somehow present in our minds, "As if they were in some unique way predetermined, anticipated - as only the act of meaning can anticipate reality." [11]. The meaning is something like a final cause which determines the "end product in the beginning". This Aristotelian - Hegelian idea, can be illustrated by the example of a machine, the movements of which may seem to someone with a metaphysical squint to be in it before ever it moves. One is apt in this case to forget the possibilities of the machine's melting, breaking, etc.; or at least the philosopher forgets them, - the mechanic does not. It begins to seem as if the "possibilities of movement" are something very close to real movement. The possibility of a movement is "supposed to be like a shadow of the movement itself". [12]. It is not sufficient that the possibilities of movement be represented by a diagrammatic drawing for this can be interpreted in various ways. No, the movements must be represented by what Wittgenstein calls in the Blue Book, a "picture by similarity". [13]. Such a picture permits of no interpretation and so is thought to determine movement with the rigidity of the "logical must". This is an idea which is beautifully developed in the Foundations of Mathematics: "Suppose we represented the movement of the 'perfectly rigid' mechanism by a cinematographic picture, a cartoon film. Suppose the picture was said to be PERFECTLY HARD, and this meant that we had taken this picture as our method of description - whatever the facts may be, however the parts of the real mechanism may bend or expand." [14]. And he goes on to say "The connection which is not supposed to be a causal, experiential one, but much stricter and harder, so rigid even, that the one somehow already is the other, is always a connection of grammar." [15].

11. P.I. 188
12. P.I. 194
13. B.B. p.36
14. F.M. 121
15. F.M. 128

In just this way one wants to say that when someone grasps what we mean, all the steps which we mean him to take are somehow determined. Wittgenstein objects to the "somehow" because this makes it look as though there is a "queer" mysterious connection between what we say when we mean someone to do something (continue a series, play a game of chess) and what he does; when in fact there is no strange, super-rigid, mental shadow which determines what is to be done. The connection between my intention and the thing intended, when I say, "Let's play a game of chess," exists, "... in the rules of the game, in the teaching of it, in the day to day practice of playing." [16.] This brings us to a clear view of the puzzle. It had begun to look as though any rule could be interpreted in an unlimited number of ways, each perfectly justifiable, with the result that the idea of obeying a rule or following a rule became evacuated of meaning: "... no course of action could be determined by a rule because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule." [17.]

What Wittgenstein has led us to see is that a rule and an interpretation of it do not constitute what we call obeying the rule, or following it correctly. A rule can only be obeyed in so far as the practice of doing so is part of an established system of such practices. This indicates two things, (a) "obeying a rule is a practice" [18.] different from interpreting a rule (Wittgenstein prefers to reserve the latter for the expression of the rule); (b) a rule cannot be obeyed privately so that, "to think one is obeying a rule is not to obey it". [19.] He asks whether, if mankind never played games, I could invent a game which nobody ever played. The answer is 'no', because part of what we mean by a game is that it should have publicly ascertainable rules which are obeyed.

So it is by reference to the common behaviour of mankind that languages, games and systems of rules generally,

16. P.I. 197
17. P.I. 201
18. P.I. 202
19. P.I. 202

are interpreted. And when we teach someone what a rule is we employ such words as "regular", "same", "uniform", the meanings of which we teach by reference to that system of behaviour. We give in other words, "examples and practice" [20.] as the groundwork of our teaching. We cannot do more than this, for we know no more of the matter than this. A point is always reached in teaching a rule where either the lesson is understood or we say, "Well I can't give you any more teaching than I've given, this is simply what I do when I obey the rules." All attempts at inventing an unambiguous way for teaching rules are futile. The voice of intuition for example also has to be understood before it can be obeyed, just as an ordinary teacher must be understood. Intuition does not provide us with a reason for obeying a rule which is somehow more fundamental than any other sort of reason. Similarly to say that when a pupil merely has to do the SAME every time there can be no failure to follow the rule correctly, is really to say nothing at all. For example, we might say that in the series in 2, 2, 2, 2 ..... every step is the same and so there is no room for an interpretation: when you see a thing you see an identity. Wittgenstein's answer is quite devastating: "Then are two things the same when they are what one thing is? And how am I to apply what the one thing shows me to the case of two things?" [21.]

This discussion of identity is extremely important for the treatment of whether two people can have the same pain, and we will return to it in a later chapter. For the moment what he is concerned to show is that the law of identity is a blind alley as far as the question of teaching rules is concerned.

Ultimately the teaching of a rule is a practical matter. Rules are grounded in a customary system of practices. The reasons I give for how I know how to obey a rule will come to an end some time and my practice alone will remain. In

20. Cf. P.I. 337 on "intending".
21. P.I. 215

this sense my practice is "groundless". I take this way of putting it from On Certainty in which Wittgenstein says a great deal which is significant for the concepts of understanding, doubting and making a mistake. Particularly important for the present discussion is the emphasis he lays there on established structures on beliefs and practices, [22.] and on the way that these structures are grounded on what is itself groundless. The close connection between what he is saying in the Investigations and what he is saying in On Certainty can be seen from these two quotations. "How can he know that he is to continue a pattern by himself - whatever instructions you give him? - Well, how do I know? - If that means 'Have I reasons?' The answer is: my reasons will soon give out. Then I shall act, without reasons. [23.] "Our rules leave loop-holes open, and the practice has to speak for itself." [24.]

22. O.C. 102 to 111
23. P.I. 211
24. O.C. 139

PART II

PRIVACY

The next five chapters are devoted specifically to discussion of certain aspects of the other-minds problem - aspects which Wittgenstein comes to grips with in his later writings. My method of handling this part of the thesis will be rather different from Part I. I shall not follow the text of any particular work of Wittgenstein although the source material for these chapters, whether remoulded by other philosophers or not, comes in the main from the Blue and Brown Books, the Philosophical Investigations, Zettel and On Certainty. For instance, though the chapter on communication and intention is largely a summary of Professor Strawson's inaugural lecture, my justification for using it in a thesis on Wittgenstein is that, as I am sure Strawson would admit, the ideas and arguments which he marshals so efficiently are ones which spring from Wittgenstein's philosophising.

I think a fairly close textual commentary on the middle sections of the Investigations, in which the private-language argument and the argument for private mental objects are discussed, would be possible. Wittgenstein's remarks only appear to have a certain randomness about them. In fact they are more often than not extremely closely integrated and it is the compactness rather than the looseness of his writing which makes the drift of his thought hard to follow. Instances of this seeming looseness and incongruity are in part attributable to his remarkable use of examples. Norman Malcolm says in his memoir that Wittgenstein was often amused by the bizarre examples with which he illustrated the points he was making, but that he would become concerned if his students were similarly amused. He wanted them to see the relevance of these examples to the topic under discussion. It is frequently very difficult not to mistake a fantastic example of his illustrative of one topic, for the beginning of a completely new topic. So I have decided not to use the commentary method of Part I, not because

such a commentary is not possible but because for one thing I want to discuss a number of arguments and points of view which have appeared in the literature subsequent to the publication of the Investigations e.g. Strawson on meaning and truth, Ayer and Rhees on private language, Wisdom on doubt (although his essays pre-date the Investigations) etc.

For another thing I have found reference to Wittgenstein's latest writings in Zettel and On Certainty very valuable in trying to give an account of his dealing with problems arising out of the philosophical debate on privacy. They provide fresh examples and even an invigorated vocabulary (e.g. the use of"ground/groundless"; and "system of convictions" in On Certainty) from which I have drawn. Also they contain further developments of his views on the character of conceptual, as opposed to factual, investigations.

In what follows Wittgenstein's views on language-meaning and the nature of philosophy, which were discussed in Part I will be constantly adverted to. In this way I hope Part I will serve as "stage-setting" for Part II.

C H A P T E R IV

THE CONCEPT OF A CRITERION

Hastings: His grace looks cheerfully and smooth this morning;
There's some conceit or other likes him well
When that he bids good-morrow with such spirit
I think there's neer a man in Christendom
Can lesser hide his love or hate than he;
For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

Stanley: What of his heart perceived you in his face
By any livlihood he showed to-day?

Hastings: Marry, that with no man he is offended;
for were he he'd have shown it in his looks.

Shakespeare. Richard 111. Act 111 Sc.IV

One of the most important and at the same time most elusive concepts in Wittgenstein's post-Tractatus writings is that of a criterion. Its importance lies, for one thing, in the fact that it helps to clarify how we can know the sensations of another person. I shall, however, argue in Chapter 10 that the role which the concept of a criterion plays in the problem of other minds has been badly misinterpreted. It is an elusive concept because Wittgenstein typically does not devote himself to a sustained theoretical discussion of criteria and what he means by them. The most direct statement from him on this topic occurs on pages twenty-four and five of the "Blue Book", and there is good reason to think that his notion of a criterion changed significantly in the "Investigations" from what it had been in the "Blue and Brown Books". Albritton writing on the notion of criterion in the "Blue and Brown Books" says that Wittgenstein's ways of speaking there "imply that to be a criterion of X is just to BE (what is called) X, in case

there is only one criterion of X, or to be (what is called) X, under certain circumstances, in case there is more than one criterion of X". [1.] He quotes a large number of instances where Wittgenstein speaks that way of criteria. Later he suggests that, "The dominant conception of a criterion in the 'Remarks on the Foundation of Mathematics' and the 'Investigations' is ....: A criterion for a given thing's being so is something that can show the thing to be so and show by its absence that the thing is not so; it is something by which one may be justified in saying that the thing is so and by whose absence one may be justified in saying that the thing is not so". [2.] This seems to me to be an accurate description of what happens to the notion of a criterion and it shows that Wittgenstein was not from the first entirely clear as to how the term should be used, or at any rate it indicates that he chose to use it more than one way.

In order to get some bearings on the question of what is meant by a criterion I should like to take as a starting point the following characterisation of Wittgenstein's notion of criterion by Chihara and Fodor, although in the nature of the case it can be no more than a starting point. "X is a criterion of Y in situations of type S if the very meaning of definition of 'Y' (or as Wittgenstein might have put it, if the grammatical rules for the use of 'Y') justify the claim that one can recognise, see, detect or determine the applicability of 'Y' on the basis of X in NORMAL situations of type S. Hence, if the above relation obtains between X and Y, and if someone admits that X but denies Y, the burdon of proof is upon him to show that something is abnormal in the situation. In a normal situation, the problem of gathering evidence which justifies concluding Y from X, simply does not arise." [3.]

Now this characterisation, which they say is only "rough and schematic", is not sufficiently detailed to provide

1. Albritton, "On Wittgenstein's Use of the Term 'Criterion'" The Journal of Philosophy, VOL. LVI (1959)
2. (Albritton) Ibid.
3. Chihara and Fodor, "Operationalism and Ordinary Language American Philosophical Quarterly VOL. II (1965).

the answer to a number of difficulties which arise out of the concept of a criterion, although coupled with Albritton's statement it gives a very neat account of the concept. The difficulties in discovering how Wittgenstein uses the words "criterion" and "criteria" can I think be listed as follows:

(a) If X is the criterion of Y, then is X, Y? i.e. is the criterion identical with that of which it is the criterion?

(b) If a criterion is not of type (a) then what is its relation to Y? Does asserting that X entail asserting that Y?

(c) If a criterion X is not of type (a) and its relation to Y is that of entailment, how does it come to be related in that way?

(d) Is there always only one criterion X or one set of criteria for Y or is there no one criterion or set of criteria which is both a necessary and sufficient condition for Y?

(e) What is the difference between a criterion and a symptom?

Before I attempt to come to grips with these problems I should note that it is completely foreign to the spirit and intentions of the 'Investigations' to propound a completed theory. I partly agree with Anthony Manser that the notion of criterion presents a difficulty, ".... only if it is assumed that Wittgenstein had a fully worked out doctrine of criteria which has to be discovered from the scattered remarks in the 'Investigations'. If instead it is treated merely as a useful way of expressing certain insights there is less danger of puzzlement." [4]. On the other hand his statement (directed against Professor Norman Malcolm) is unhelpful from two view

4. Manser, "Pain and Private Language" Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein. ed. Peter Winch.

points. Firstly, the problem with the concept is to discover how it is employed to "express certain insights" - what the function of a criterion is in Wittgenstein's thoughts. Secondly, it is misleading to talk of "a useful way" when there seem to be a variety of ways in which "criterion" is used. And despite the fact that the remarks on criteria are scattered in the 'Investigations', they are sufficiently liberally scattered to warrant serious attention. [5.]

At a number of points in the 'Investigations' Wittgenstein talks of a criterion of identity and of identifying something by criteria. What precisely does he mean? Is the criterion of anything that, by virtue of which, it is what it is. To take an example adapted from Wisdom. Suppose a housewife goes in to the larder, sees two objects there, feels them, smells them and tastes them and then comes out and says, with no intention of deceiving, "Yes, there are two loaves of bread there alright". Now as Professor Austin says, she has not discovered the signs or symptoms of bread, but the bread itself. [6.] And in the "Other Mind" debate White quite correctly concludes, ".... there is no way of finding out whether there are two loaves in the larder superior to that of going and having a look, there is no other process suitable for this purpose which it is proper to dignify with the name of 'coming to know', in opposition to mere 'concluding from the testimony of' our senses which happens in seeing". [7.] The question we must ask is whether that set of features of the object in the larder which (we will assume for the sake of the example) make up bread, and which the careful housewife checked on before she made her statement, could be called "criteria of bread" in any Wittgensteinian use of the term "criteria". In other words is there a use of the words "criterion of Y" which makes them synonomous with "Y", so that where I say "He knows what the criteria of Y are" I could just as well have said, "He knows what Y is"?

5. At a rough count the word is used about fifty times.
6. Austin, "Other Minds", Philosophical Papers 2nd. ed.
7. Wisdom. "Other Minds". p.66

I suggest that this is how Wittgenstein uses the words when he talks about a criterion of identity. But if this is the only use he makes of the concept then its importance is considerably diminished since we can only say that X is a criterion of Y when X is Y, which is comparatively trivial. It is not trivial to decide what we are going to call "Y" but we have not said very much when we state that what we call "Y" is also the criterion of Y. In fact this use of "criterion" makes giving the criterion for Y the same as giving a definition of Y. Wittgenstein himself relates criteria and definitions when he talks about "meaning": "For a large class of cases - though not for all - in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined thus: "The meaning of a word is its use in a language." [8.] Then later he writes, "What is the criterion for the way the formula is meant? It is for example the kind of way we always use it, the way we are taught to use it." [9.]

At this point it seems to me, it is possible to make a serious oversight in interpreting Wittgenstein. If one says that the relationship between a criterion and that of which it is the criterion is one of logical entailment, or if, in even more fasionable terms, one says that any statement giving the criterion of anything is a grammatical statement, and if one leaves it at that, then one glosses over and disguises another use of the term "criterion". This second use is certainly very closely related to the one I have just discussed in the previous paragraph but at the same time it is subtly and importantly different from it. It is vital, I hope to show, to make this distinction in order to answer the question of whether Wittgenstein is a behaviourist and in order to deal with his attitude towards mental states and processes. A discussion of the second usage also serves as a good introduction to his "theory" of the relationship between certainty and language-games. This is important for its bearing on sceptical doubts about other minds.

8. P.I. 43
9. P.I. 190

To make the distinction clearly I want to consider the difference between the following two cases. (a) Smith goes for a walk and sees sheets of water pouring from a cloudy sky. He goes back home and in answer to his wife's question as to why his clothes are wet he says, "It's been raining again". (b) Jones goes for a walk and sees that the streets are wet, that all the trees are dripping, that the houses are wet, that there are pools of water in the fields, that the sky is an ominous grey, and he hears peals of thunder in the distance. He goes back home and in answer to his wife's question as to why his shoes are muddy he says, "It's been raining again."

Now one could argue that Smith had the criterion for saying that it had been raining, viz. the fact that there were drops of water falling from the clouds, but that Jones had no criterion. Smith saw that it was raining, while Jones only assumed that it had been raining. And the argument might continue that while one circumstance justified Smith in saying that it was raining, however far Jones extends his description of dripping trees, puddles, etc., so long as he missed seeing the falling drops, he does not have a criterion for saying that it was raining. At best what Jones has is an experience of a very convincing set of symptoms from which it is possible to make the hypothesis that it had been raining. Here one could quote Wittgenstein in the Blue Book when he says, "I call a 'symptom' a phenomenom of which experience has taught us that it coincided in some way or other, with the phenomenom which is our defining criterion. Then to say, 'A man has angina if this bacillus is found in him,' is a tautology or it is a loose way of stating the definition of 'angina'. But to say, 'A man has angina whenever he has an inflamed throat' is to make an hypothesis."

The argument outlined in the previous paragraph is in line I think with the concept of a criterion which seems to have been most prominent in Wittgenstein's thought at the time

of the lectures which form the "Blue and Brown Books". But when we look at this argument in the light of his subsequent writings, particularly in the Investigations, then we can see that it is based on a concept of a criterion different from that which he later developed. He would not have said that his first usage was wrong (he seldom says that about a form of expression) but he clearly thought that it was too limiting, and found the need for another use.

With the second use of 'criteria' it would be proper to say that Jones, having given a suitably detailed description of his surroundings, had criteria for saying that it had rained. Given the prevailing climatic conditions (cloud, low pressure, etc.) it would be absurd to ask Jones, "Are you sure that it had been raining?" Jones is not making an hypothesis which is more or less probably correct. He is fully justified in saying that it had rained even though he did not see what Smith saw. Jones can be certain that it had rained. In the Investigations, when the knowledge of other peoples sensations is under discussion, Wittgenstein makes the sceptic ask, "'But if you are certain, isn't it that you are shutting your eyes in the face of doubt?' " His reply is apt and curiously simple: "They are shut." [10.] We must interpret this to mean that they are shut by the blinkers of the language-game. It is only in the context of a language-game that "certainty" has a meaning. (The break lever is such only given the rest of the mechanism.) This implies further that what is to count as a criterion will depend entirely on the language-game which we happen to be playing.

Having said this we are in a position to raise the question of the nature of a criterion in a slightly different way, and a problem which I have avoided dealing with up till now must be raised. It is this: does a proposition describing criteria entail (in the technical sense) a proposition asserting the occurence of that of which they are the criteria. This is

10. P.I. Page 224

the question which Professor Malcolm raises with respect to the behavioural criteria of pain. He writes, "Do the propositions which describe the criterion of his being in pain logically imply the proposition, 'He is in pain'? Wittgenstein's answer is clearly negative. A criterion is only satisfied in certain circumstances. If we come upon a man exhibiting violent pain behaviour, couldn't something show that he is not in pain? Of course. For example, he is rehearsing for a play; or he has been hypnotised ....." [11]. This is a strong point but it is unfortunate that Malcolm defines a criterion in terms of the circumstances in which it is found: "The expressions of pain are a criterion of pain in certain 'surroundings' not in others." [12]. He should not, therefore, say that a criterion is satisfied in certain circumstances, but rather that something IS a criterion of Y only in certain circumstances. Having made the concept of a criterion dependent by definition on the situation S, he goes on to argue that we can never know the totality of circumstances in which a criterion (in this case pain behaviour) occurs. This argument is obviously circular since something IS a criterion only given the situation S. If, therefore, we can never know for certain when S is prevailing, we can never know for certain when a criterion X is present, and it makes no sense to talk as he does, of X occurring, as though X were independent of S. Finally he emerges with the conclusion that because the list of circumstances which make up the situation, is indefinite in length no entailment conditions for the criterion can be formulated. There are no such entailment conditions.

In fact his argument, as it stands, has nothing to do with entailment conditions. It has to do with how we can know when a criterion occurs. Patently he asks what the criterion for a criterion is, so reproducing the original problem by pushing it back a step and making the concept X (what we normally call a criterion) dependent on the open textured concept of a situation, S. The conclusion which, as I have said, one

11. Malcolm, "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations" in "Wittgenstein", ed. George Pitcher 1968.
12. Ibid.

would expect him to come to, is that we cannot know for certain what a criterion is, nor whether it is occurring. But this conclusion is strictly opposed to a statement he makes earlier about criteria viz. "What makes something into a symptom of Y is that experience teaches that it is always or usually associated with Y; that so-and-so is the criterion of Y is not a matter of experience but of definition. The satisfaction of the criterion of Y establishes the existence of Y beyond question." [13]. This certainly implies that there are cases in which we can say that the criterion is occurring, and say so with certainty. If the concept of a criterion is not an empirical but a grammatical concept, and if the definition of any criterion is to serve the purpose of linking it with that of which it is the criterion, then the definition must include a statement that the occurrence of the criterion, X, entails the occurrence of Y. The confusion in Malcolm's argument arises because he does not seem to be sure whether the concept of a criterion is an empirical, or as I would rather say, open-textured concept, or one given by a stipulative definition. When he makes knowing the criteria dependent on knowing the whole situation (which is impossible) then he treats criteria as open-textured concepts. When he contrasts criteria with symptoms then he treats the concept as one delimited by a stipulative definition.

Wittgenstein is well aware of the possibility of this confusion occurring. He says that, "The fluctuation of grammar between criteria and symptoms makes it look as if there were nothing at all but symptoms." [14]. This leads us to say for example that since we can only know a phenomenon through sense impressions and since our sense impressions are corrigible we can only form hypotheses as to whether Y will occur when X has occurred. In fact we can only say that it is "highly likely" that X itself has occurred since our impression of 'X' could have been faulty. So that in the case of say rain, we fail to see "that the fact that the false appearance is

13. Ibid.
14. P.I. 354

precisely one of rain is founded on a definition. The point here is not that our sense impressions can lie, but that we understand their language. (And this language like any other is founded on convention.)" [15]. This seems to me strongly to argue for there being a relationship of entailment between X and Y. But the problem still remains as to how this entailment can be known, or makes itself apparent, in experience.

It might seem as though there was a way out of this difficulty which happily combined the empirical and stipulative elements. It might be argued that the definition told one what the criterion of Y is, but whether the criterion was occurring was something which could only be empirically determined. But this seeming way out is a cul-de-sac. It represents precisely the kind of argument which Wittgenstein attacks in the 'Investigations' and in 'On Certainty'. In effect it leads to arguments such as the following:

"We come across the victim of a motor accident who has a smashed kneecap. He is screaming in what sounds like agony. We know that his behaviour and his injury are in normal situations of this type, criteria of pain. What we do not and cannot know for certain, is whether this situation is normal. So we give him a pain-killer because there is a high probability that this is a normal situation, that therefore his behaviour is a criterion of pain, and we assume in consequence that he is in pain."

There are two things wrong with this argument. Firstly and most importantly it is nonsense. Secondly it implies that only symptoms really occur in the world, - criteria never. Malcolm does not suggest that we employ the above argument as a way out. He shows quite correctly, I think, that it is inimical to Wittgenstein's approach and quotes the following passage from the 'Investigations' to prove the point:

15. P.I. 354-5

"A doctor asks: 'How is he feeling?' The nurse says, 'he is groaning.' A report on his behaviour. But need there be any question of whether the groaning is really genuine, is really the expression of anything. Might they not, for example, draw the conclusion 'If he groans, we must give him more analgesic' - without suppressing a middle term? Isn't the point the service to which they put the description of his behaviour? [16].

It is important to add to this the next little paragraph (Malcolm doesn't do this) because it makes the link between the notions of criteria, certainty and language-games. Wittgenstein makes his interlocutor say: " 'But then they make a tacit presupposition.' " To which he replies, "Then what we do in our language-game always rests on a tacit presupposition." [17].

A large portion of Wittgenstein's writing in both the 'Investigations' and in 'On Certainty' centres very closely around this theme, and is characterised by his saying "The kind of certainty is the kind of language-game." [18]. This idea is linked with another, perhaps the most important in Wittgenstein's philosophy, namely that, "What has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - forms of life." [19]. I shall return to this topic later particularly in Chapters 10 and 11, but for the moment I should like to take up the Smith and Jones example again in order to characterise the second use of "criteria" more fully.

If Jones did not see a shower but could give a full description of certain circumstances, then he did not see rain but was justified in saying that it had rained. He was justified in so saying because the question: 'Are you sure?' has no place when once he has given his description. "This doubt

16. P.I. page 179
17. P.I. page 179
18. P.I. page 224 Also O.C. 370 and 328-9
19. P.I. page 226

isn't one of the doubts in our game." [20] We reach the bedrock of conventions, and the conventions are such that a doubt is simply out of place in the circumstances we have described.

In this case as in most others Jones makes the statement "It has been raining" on the basis of a number of criteria. This is another important point to notice. Most interpreters of the notion of a criterion seem to agree that there is not always one criterion which must be satisfied, but rather that, ".... we apply descriptive terms on the basis of several criteria which may be present or absent in varying degrees and no set of which is both necessary and sufficient condition for the application of the term." [21]. This statement, however, is true of both the uses of "criterion". What distinguishes the second notion (developed in the Investigations) from the first is the fact that the criteria are not necessarily parts of the phenomenon. The phenomenon need not be present to us for us to be able to say that it is occurring or has occurred. The phenomenon is not necessarily reducible to its criteria.

The importance of this second usage for the discussion of sensation and privacy is that it enables Wittgenstein to describe how human behaviour, and this includes a certain form of, what for want of a better expression I shall call verbal behaviour, is a criterion of sensation. When once this has been clearly described, he argues, then we can by-pass the theory that the only way of knowing whether a sensation is occurring is by introspection. This theory leads to scepticism since we cannot introspect another's pain, nor for the matter of that any of the other mental events and processes which the sceptic claims to identify in himself. As we shall see, Wittgenstein discounts this claim by the sceptic to be able to know from his own case, but in dismissing it he does not

20. P.I. 288
21. Wellman, "Wittgenstein's Concept of a Criterion", The Philosophical Review, VOL. LXXI No. 4. 1962.

dismiss the hypothesis that there are mental states and processes. He expressly says that he does not want to deny these states and processes, he merely considers them irrelevant to the use (the grammar) of such terms as "consciousness", "understanding", "sensing", "feeling", etc. When he says that "An inner process stands in need of outward criteria," [22.] he is pointing to the fact that without human behaviour which is publicly observable all talk of these inner phenomena is senseless. The grammar of inner states is such that it involves reference to outward, behavioural criteria, which means that, ".... in order to understand the grammar of these states it is necessary to ask: 'What counts as a criterion for anyone's being in such a state?' " [23.] For example we verify that someone understands the principle of a series by getting him to continue it; or we verify that Jack has a sore knee by seeing how he winces when it is pressed. "Asking when and how a proposition can be verified is only a particular way of asking 'How d'you mean?' The answer is a contribution to the grammar of the proposition." [24.]

Again one is tempted by these and similar passages to ask whether he is denying the reality of inner states - trying to reduce them to the criteria by which they are verified. Are there in fact two sets of phenomena, the inner and the outer, and if there are, is Wittgenstein guilty of saying that the inner are fictions? "If I do speak of a fiction," he says, "it is a grammatical fiction." [25.] It is a grammatical fiction in so far as the inner process is nothing without its criteria. Or to put it less dramatically and less misleadingly; we could say nothing about it were it not for its criteria. It only makes sense to say that I am feeling this, thinking that (even thinking it to myself) because there are behavioural criteria for this thinking and feeling. Wittgenstein argues that it makes no sense to give oneself a

22. P.I. 580
23. P.I. 572
24. P.I. 353
25. P.I. 307

direct, private exhibition of pain itself through introspection. It is not so much that when we look in this way we find nothing but that we don't know how to look for it in the first place. (I shall deal with this more fully in later chapters)

Of course this makes the case of inner states and their criteria different from our example of the criteria which we would normally accept for the statement that it had been raining. It is possible to see rain falling whereas it is nonsense to say that we observe a sensation. (There is a use of sensation words in which we talk of seeing a sensation; "I saw the pain in his face" but this is not the use I have in mind here) We say, "I saw a shower of rain," but never say "I observed a pain." As Ryle puts it, "To have a sensation is not to be in a cognitive relation with any object." [26]. The point of my example was to show that Y is not always synonomous with its criteria. Wittgenstein does not want to say that pain behaviour is synonomous with pain, and he does not want to deny that there are mental states of that mental processes take place. He merely argues that to talk about the mental state as though it was the sort of thing we could become acquainted with through closer observation of our sensations, is not to talk about what is physically impossible, but to misconstrue the grammar of "mental state". A mental state is not something like a frozen state. The same goes for mental processes. We construe the mental process on the model of such processes as take place when an acid reacts with a base. We can come to learn how a salt is produced by observing what happens when the acid and the base react together, and so we think that we can observe the mental process in a similar way, when in fact the nature of that process is totally different. Wittgenstein gives a brilliantly lucid account of how the resultant puzzlement occurs:

"How does the philosophical problem about mental processes and about behaviourism arise? - The first step is the

26. Ryle, "The Concept of Mind"

one which altogether escapes notice. We talk of processes and states and leave their nature undecided. Sometime we shall know more about them - we think. But that is just what commits us to a particular way of looking at the matter. For we have a definite concept of what it means to know a process better. (The decisive move in the conjuring trick has been made, and it was the very one that we thought was quite innocent) - And now the analogy which was to make us understand our thoughts falls to pieces. So we have to deny the yet uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium. And naturally we don't want to deny them." [27.]

Just how important this passage is, particularly the underlined sentence, I hope to show when dealing with Wittgenstein's investigation of the concept of a human being. (Ch. 10) I point out there that he never intended to give out that the other-minds debate could be resolved by a behavioural criteriology, as Chihara and Fodor seem to think. The importance of the concept of a criterion is not that it serves to bridge the Cartesian gap between body and mind, but rather that it show that the gap is a metaphysical fiction.

27. P.I. 308

C H A P T E R V

PRIVATE LANGUAGE

Professor Norman Malcolm writing on Wittgenstein's treatment of the private language argument says, "In order to appreciate the depth and power of Wittgenstein's assault upon this idea you must partly be its captive. You must feel the strong grip of it. The passionate intensity of Wittgenstein's treatment of it is due to the fact that he lets this idea take possession of him, drawing out of himself the thoughts and imagery by which it is expressed and defended - and then subjecting those thoughts and pictures to fiercest scrutiny." [1]. Not only is this a very accurate description of the character of Wittgenstein's attack on private language, it also gives a good insight into his method and recalls strongly what Wisdom says about the treatment of a philosophical problem. The difficulty is not to hit on the right theory but to gather together all the theories and that in such a way as to be able to get a clear view of them. Wittgenstein puts it very graphically in a down to earth metaphor: "A main cause of philosophical disease - a one sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example." [2].

In those parts of the Investigations in which private languages are discussed it is difficult to decide at first just where Wittgenstein stands - which of the voices which ask questions, make suggestions, argue for and argue against, is his. This initial difficulty in locating Wittgenstein's position is an index of the mastery with which he practiced his philosophy. He assembles the <u>whole</u> problem by presenting all the arguments which have, each in their own way, constituted the problem, and the very moment the problem is completely assembled it falls down. I don't think it

1. Malcolm, "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations". p.67
2. P.I. 593

would be unduly stretching his analogy (Investigations 118) if we said that the houses of cards which he destroys fall because they are built too completely: the moment the card house is extended to the desired proportions it collapses. The same holds for the philosophical problem - no sooner are all the arguments which go to constitute it as a problem assembled, than the problem collapses into nonsense. "My aim," he says, "is to teach you to pass from a piece of disguised nonsense to something which is patent nonsense." [3]. Whether the nonsense is disguised or not depends on the completeness with which the philosophical problem is presented.

In the case of private language the point of Wittgenstein's method is often lost and to talk, as Wellman does of his "refutation" of the private language argument [4]. does not make it any easier to find. To say that he "refutes the argument" rather makes it sound as though he shows that a set of perfectly sensible statements are simply false, as though private languages do not happen to exist because they are clumsy, or hard to learn, or confined in usefulness, etc. But the effectiveness of Wittgenstein's treatment resides just in this, that it is a grammatical and not an empirical treatment. He is trying to get us and himself to reject a way of talking. He is not saying that that way of talking as such is false, "What could 'false' mean here?" we can imagine him asking. Rather he wants to show that it is a nonsensical way. This needs to be shown since in philosophy nonsense parades as sense, and words which have every semblance of having a meaning have none. As we saw in Chapter 2, what frequently happens is that we try to apply sentences and the pictures they suggest in areas where they have no application. The sentence appears to be in use when in fact it has no function at all. A somewhat analogous situation would arise if we put an animal in an evacuated box. It would be odd to say that there is something wrong with its breathing, when we have put it in a situation where breathing is impossible. In a

3. P.I. 464
4. Wellman, op. cit.

similar way it would be incorrect to say that propositions asserting the feasibility of private language are false since the propositional signs are not really in use ('The engine is idling'). "Truth-or-falsity, are characteristics of a use of a sentence." [5]. The sentences are being placed in an environment in which they cannot function. Sometimes the uselessness of the expressions we are using strikes us without our being able to 'get a clear view' of what the matter is. "So in the end when one is doing philosophy one gets to the point where one would just like to emit an inarticulate sound" [6]. But of course this is not enough - a cure for our puzzlement needs to be effected, and the cure is grammatical and not empirical.

For the reasons sketched above it is mistaken to accuse Wittgenstein of ambiguity, obscurity or of creating confusions. He does not create the confusions he merely describes them. Strawson, for instance, says that when Wittgenstein deals with private language and sensation, "one may well feel one's capacity to learn coming to an end." [7]. This feeling seems to me to result from a misunderstanding of Wittgenstein's intentions. It makes it seem as though the unclarity were his fault, whereas it is his achievement. Professor Cook argues quite correctly, I think, that Wittgenstein does not try to make the notion of a private language clear, "because the idea under investigation turns out to be irremediably confused and hence can only be suggested, not clearly explained." [8].

The idea of a private language is very closely linked by Wittgenstein with the idea of a private object, and he links the latter idea with the notion that sensations are private: he describes a theory in which sensations are treated as

5. Strawson, "On Referring", Logico Linquistic Papers, p.9-10
6. P.I. 261
7. Strawson, "Review of Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations," Pitcher p.41
8. Cook, "Wittgenstein on Privacy", Pitcher p.286

private objects. Professor Cook gives a brilliant and clear account of Wittgenstein's position on private language from the point of view of his treatment of the privacy of sensations. This is what one might call an organic account, explaining and illuminating Wittgenstein's thoughts on private language as they actually develop in the Investigations. Another method of dealing with private language is to show that it rests on an untenable theory of linguistic meaning. This method can only give an incomplete account of his treatment and needs to be connected, as Cook argues, with a treatment of the notion that sensations are private. In this chapter, however, I shall stick to the first point, viz. that the notion of private language is in part the result of a mistake about language. In the following chapter I shall connect this with the notion of the privacy of sensation.

Anyone who tries to present the Wittgensteinian position with respect to private language, and who tries to present it as the correct position, is immediately faced with the insoluble problem of trying to give an intelligible account of a notion which he holds is nonsensical. As far as Wittgenstein is concerned the words "private language" have as little meaning as the words "square circle". One cannot then try to make sense of the descriptions of private languages offered by the protagonists of the notion, nor out of their arguments, because they are nonsensical. Wittgenstein warns us against the absurdity of trying to force sense out of nonsense when he writes, "When a sentence is called senseless, it is not as it were the sense that is senseless. But a combination of words is being excluded from the language, withdrawn from circulation." [9.] So in this instance the only recourse is simply to describe and exemplify the arguments of the private language protagonists, and in so doing try to show "the bumps which the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language." [10.]

9. P.I. 500
10. P.I. 119

How then might a private language theoretician define a private language? Possibly like this: a language L is private if, when it is used by an individual I, the meaning of what is said in L by I is necessarily unintelligible to anybody but I. The point of adding "necessarily" is to distinguish this use of "private language" from the one where it is used to refer to some secret code or esoteric set of signs. When "private language" is used philosophically it is used in such a way as to make it nonsensical to say that what is said in it is understood by more than one person viz. the speaker. It is "logically" private and not merely contingently so. This obviously means that it is impossible to describe or exemplify such a language. A description of a language must include a description of the rules for the use of the language, and this it is impossible to do in the case of a private language. Ayer in his well known essay "Can there be a private language" purports to describe such a language as used by a solitary individual, but when we examine this description and the linguistic presuppositions on which it is based we come to see that the attempt to make clear what a private language is, is misguided.

Ayer's Robinson Crusoe uses this language to describe fauna and flora as well as using some of the words in it to "stand for his sensations". In the latter case Ayer says ".... where these sensations are entirely private, in the sense that they have no 'natural expressions' which Man Friday can identify, it may well be that Crusoe fails to find any way of teaching him the use of the words which he employs to stand for them. But from the fact that he cannot teach this part of his language to Man Friday it by no means follows that he has no use for it himself. In a context of this sort, one can teach only what one already understands. The ability to teach, or rather the ability of someone else to learn, cannot therefore be a prerequisite for understanding." [11]. For the moment I

11. Ayer, "Can There Be A Private Language?", reprinted from Proceedings of the Aristotelian Soc. VOL. XXVIII (1954) in Pitcher p.261

want to ignore what he says about the objects referred to in the language, whether palm trees or pains, and concentrate on just those features of our definition which he reproduces in his example.

Firstly, we are told that Crusoe uses the language to describe things and therefore he must use it in a certain way i.e. according to some rule of description. Secondly, he says things to himself which he and only he can understand i.e. the meanings of the signs in the language are private.

Accordingly the first question to ask is whether it makes sense to say that one can follow a private rule? How does one know one is following it correctly? Wittgenstein asks how we undertake to use the word in a rule-governed way. "Is it to be assumed that you invent the technique of using the word; or that you found it ready made?" [12]. It might seem as though one could answer quite straightforwardly "Yes of course, I invent the technique," but such an answer only sets the problem back to the question of what could be meant by a technique here. If it is used in the ordinary way then, "using a technique" means, among other things, working to a rule, and the meaning of "rule" is related, as we saw in Chapter 3 to words like "same", "regular" and "uniform". The meanings of these words is, in turn, taught by making reference to the "common behaviour of mankind" [13]. But in the case of a private rule there can be no question of any reference to any pattern of human behaviour. What this means is that the combination of the words "private" and "rule" into a phrase is not a move in the language-game - it is like trying to promote a pawn to a king in chess.

It is of course possible to invent a new word, but it is absurd to say that somebody has invented a customary usage of that word. The word comes to be used in this or that way, but its so being used is not something that an

12. P.I. 262
13. P.I. 206

individual can invent. The point may be put in another way by saying that dictionaries primarily describe rather than prescribe uses of words. The contents of a dictionary are derived from the practices of those who speak and write the language. The lexicographer can prescribe how a word ought to be used only on the basis of a description of how it has been used. If someone invents a new word, and not just a new sound, then he must invent a use for this word. Or if he wishes to retain a familiar word, but give it a new meaning then he must prescribe a new use for this word. This might seem contrary to what I have just said about the lexicographer but it is not. Everyone (lexicographers included) can invent new words and new uses of words, but no one can invent a custom of linguistic usage.

To make what I have just said a bit clearer I shall take an example from Lewis Carrol: Humpty Dumpty and Alice are discussing the former's peculiar use of the word "glory":

> ' "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less."
>
> "The question is," said Alice, "whether you CAN make words mean different things."
>
> "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all." '

He goes on to discuss the "temperaments" of different parts of speech and then exclaims:

> ' "... Impenetrability! That's what I say!"
> "Would you tell me please," said Alice, "what that means?"
>
> "Now you talk like a sensible child," said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. "I meant by 'impenetrability' that we've had enough of that

> subject, and it would be just as well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don't intend to stop here all the rest of your life." [14.]

So not only does Humpty Dumpty know the meanings of new words, such as those in Jabberwocky, but he invents uses for old words, and what is more, he teaches them to Alice, who understands them. What he does not and cannot do, is invent the technique of usage. He can invent languages but he cannot invent language. And he cannot do that because it makes no sense to say that someone invents a custom of using words, or that someone invents an established practice of usage. What enables him to use a word in a new way, according to a rule different from the normal rule, is the fact that there exists a practice which is the practice of following rules. Within that practice enormous varieties of uses of words are possible. The problem is that we are too apt to forget what is involved in the phrase "within that practice." We forget that all particular uses of language, such as naming, describing, lying, asserting, asking questions, etc. presuppose "a great deal of stage setting." [15.] This stage setting is one or other form of social life. Social life is the terminus a quo for language. Language is part of a social practice. This is what Wittgenstein means by saying that when human beings agree in the language they use, "this is not agreement in opinions but in forms of life." [16.] It is one thing to invent words and uses for them, it is another to invent forms of life. As Rush Rhees argues, one can invent a vocabulary, "in circumstances of a social life which has in fact grown up with language and could no more be invented than language could." [17.]

The private language argument must exclude the possibility of the language being part of a social practice. The consequence of this exclusion is that it can make no sense to talk of following the rules of the language for the simple

14. Lewis Carrol, "Through the Looking Glass."
15. P.I. 257
16. P.I. 241
17. Rhees, "Can There Be a Private Language?" Pitcher p.276

reason that there is nothing which could count as a correct or as a mistaken application of the rule. Being private, in the sense of the definition, means that there can be no checking by another on whether a word is being used correctly or not. In fact the notion of correct and incorrect is out of place here. With private languages there is no criterion of what is correct. "One would like to say: whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we can't talk about 'right'." [18] From this we must conclude that the statement that a private language is used in a particular, rule governed way, is nonsense. The basis for this conclusion has been laid by Wittgenstein in his treatment of rules: where any action can be made to accord with a rule, no course of action can be said to be prescribed by the rule and the concept of a rule becomes inappropriate in these circumstances.

The stock objection to Wittgenstein's argument is that it IS quite possible for an individual to check his own use of a private word. The protagonists of this argument, like Ayer for example, usually concentrate on private languages which they treat as descriptive of private mental states and processes, namely sensations and/or sense data. They argue that the private language user can check whether he is using his private word correctly by remembering the circumstances in which he "undertook" to use the word in the first place. Wittgenstein's reply, so often quoted, is that such a man is like someone who buys several copies of the same newspaper in order to check that what the first copy said was true. This is meant to show that as long as there is no standard against which to check the use of a word on any particular occasion, it makes no sense to talk of "checking" at all. Ayer's reply does not really seem to me to be a counter to those he is attempting to refute. First, he admits that the important difference between private usages and newspaper reports is that, "... the facts which the newspaper reports are independently verifiable, in theory if not always in

18. P.I. 258

practice. But," he continues, "verification must stop somewhere. As I have already argued, unless something is recognised, without being referred to a further test, nothing can be tested. In the case of Crusoe's sensations, we are supposing that beyond his memory there is no further test. It does not follow that he has no means of identifying it, or that it does not make sense to say that he identifies it right or wrong." [19.] But a memory must surely be a memory of some object or event, the existence or occurrence of which must be capable of a verification other than the testimony of that memory. And I do not mean that the object or event must IN FACT be independently verified but that is possible in principle to verify it. If this is not so then whatever one remembers to have been the case must have been the case - memory would be incorrigible. We do not treat memory this way, however.

Wellman formulates the same argument as Ayer's slightly differently. Like Ayer he argues that one memory can be used to check another, "provided that each has some initial probability." [20.] Now one would expect this to mean: provided each is a memory of some objective, publicly observable event. But apparently this is not what Wellman has in mind. The criterion for the correctness of the memory need not, in his view, be independent of the memory - the memory is its own sufficient warrant: "Wittgenstein seems to assume that any genuine criterion must be something independent of that of which it is the criterion, external to the person using the criterion, and accessible to all persons equally. Until some reasons are produced for this view it remains a dogmatic assumption which must be questioned." [21.] He then goes on to restate Ayer's argument that Wittgenstein's view results in an infinite regress since each act of checking the use of a sign, itself stands in need of checking. "Are there standards for the use of standards? Unless at some point there is no longer

19. Ayer, op.cit. pp.260-61
20. Wellman, op.cit. p.
21. Wellman, op.cit.

any need for an external standard all criteria become pointless." [22.]

Both Ayer and Wellman seem to imply (a) that Wittgenstein has given no justification for insisting upon the publicity of criterial standards; (b) that he is unaware of the problem of regressive verifications; (c) that their view, which I shall call sense datum empiricism is not beset by any of the difficulties with which Wittgenstein argues it is beset. Leaving aside the last point for the while we should notice that both (a) and (b) are major topics of interest in the Investigations and in On Certainty. The fact that the latter was only published in 1969 perhaps accounts for their overlooking Wittgenstein's treatment of these topics.

In On Certainty Wittgenstein constantly stresses that verifications always take place within a structure of "convictions". [23.] Unless this system is given, no judgments are possible, because no confirmation of hypotheses would be possible. [24.] This system of convictions arises out of specific conditions of existence - it is a function of a specific societal practice. Language is a part of this practice. In a language-game some judgments are not put into question, they are the groundless grounds which make the practice of language possible.. Our assent to these grounds is not primarily an intellectual assent - the ultimate criterion for what we accept as certain is what we do: "Sure evidence is what we accept as sure, it is evidence that we go by in acting surely, acting without any doubt." [25.] Thus a language-game can only be played on the basis of a form of life in which certain things are not put into question: "I really want to say that the language-game is possible if one trusts something (I did not say 'can trust something')" [26.]

22. Wellman, op. cit.
23. O.C. 102
24. O.C. 105 (This theme recurs throughout the book).
25. O.C.
26. O.C. and 344 and 524.

The parenthetical remark is very important. It shows, I think, that Wittgenstein is not committing himself to a static and idealistic theory of knowledge. He is not saying that human knowledge constitutes reality i.e. that what we take to be the case (what we "trust")becomes the case. All he is asserting is that that knowledge can only be knowledge within a structure. The structure itself may change when what served as foundations are put into question and a new set of evidences take their place. The structure is what he calls a world picture. Propositions describing the world picture are from one point of view prescriptive: "... their rôle is like that of rules of a game; and the game can be learned purely practically, without learning any explicit rules." [27]. The game is the abstract expression of a practice. When the game changes, the practice changes. That at any rate is the way the change is thought, in theory. In practice the division does not really exist.

These themes need a development which is beyond the scope of this chapter. What I wish to establish as far as the present discussion is concerned is that the regression of doubts must come to a halt if a language-game is to be played. But further, that it cannot come to a halt in private experience. If the word "true" could only be used on the basis of private experience then there could be no sense in talking about agreement in judgments. If the verification of whether a word has been used correctly is ultimately a private affair then it is very hard to see how language (public as opposed to private) functions. Wittgenstein's remarks in the Investigations are intimately connected with those in On Certainty. His reply to critics such as Ayer and Wellman comes in the form of a question which he puts to himself: " 'So are you saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?' " and an answer: "It is what human beings SAY that is true and false; and they agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life. If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as it may seem) in judgments." [28].

27. O.C.
28. P.I. 241

Another line of objection to Wittgenstein's treatment of rule-following and checkability, is that taken by Judith Jarvis Thomson in her essay, "Private Languages". The essay is interesting in its own right, but her criticisms also make necessary a close examination of Wittgenstein on privacy and rules, and this re-examination requires, I think, that the interpretation of his thought given by Malcolm be, if not revised, then made somewhat more rigorous. The view which she is attacking and which she attributes to the Wittgensteinians, particularly to Malcolm, is the following: "A man's use of a sign is not governed by a rule unless it is not merely possible that he should violate the rule but more that he should violate it unwittingly. That is it must be possible that he should think he is following the rule and not in fact be following it; from the fact that he thinks he is following the rule, it musn't follow that he really is following it." [29]. Now it certainly does seem to be part of Wittgenstein's conception of a rule that it must be logically possible for the rule to be broken, and the possibility must therefore remain open, in some cases, for someone to think he is following a certain rule and to be mistaken. I say "in come cases" because Thomson tries to show that there are rules which it would be impossible to break without knowing one was doing so. This sort of rule is meant to provide the exception to the maxim that it must always be possible to think one is obeying a rule and not be doing so. As an example she gives: "Always decide to do what you think at the time it would be most fun to do." [30]. It is obviously impossible to think one is deciding when one isn't, and one can accordingly classify under this heading all rules of the type: "Think X whenever ....", "Decide Y whenever....", "Imagine Z whenever ...." and so on. Generalising these into a formula one might say that there was a class of rules which were of the type: "Do X, which it is impossible to do without being aware that one is doing it whenever ...."

29. Thomson
30. Thomson, op. cit.

Now Malcolm's statements on rules imply that cases such as the above are not rules. He says that, "... the concept of a rule implies that there be a difference between, 'He is following a rule' and 'He is under the impression that he is following a rule' ...." [31]. I suspect that Malcolm overlooked cases such as those put forward by Thomson, and that he had only those rules in mind, obedience to which can be checked independently of a report by the person who is supposed to be following the rule. This is quite a large oversight but it is not mortally damaging to Malcolm, Cook and Rhees's arguments against private rules and private languages. The possibility of a rule of this type 't' being broken still remains open. For instance, if the rule is: "Remember me when I am gone away", it is surely possible that it should be broken? Whether or not it has been, can be discovered by asking the person who is supposed to have followed the rule. But Thomson disagrees. She formulates her counter argument as a dilemma. Either, she argues, it is not possible to break such a rule knowingly, or, (should this not be thought a serious objection) that such a rule cannot be broken at all, it can only be forgotten. She writes, "for notice that one can't even violate this rule unwittingly unless one has, in a sense forgotten the rule. And now what rules - however private - can't be violated in this way?" [32]. I do not see that the first horn of her proposed dilemma really constitutes a problem. No one (except Malcolm through an oversight) has claimed that one must be able to know one is breaking a rule at the moment of breaking it. Wittgenstein certainly never argued that it must be possible in all cases to think one is obeying a rule and not be. The second horn seem a bit trivial: if the rule is, "Remember X whenever ...." then to say that the only way of failing to remember X is to fail to remember the rule is nonsense. In such a case the person involved has simply forgotten X i.e. failed to follow what the rule lays down he should do. It is true that it is

31. Malcolm, op. cit. p.68
32. Thomson, op. cit. p.

not possible to remember the rule and still break it unwittingly but it is none the less perfectly sensible to make a distinction between the fulfilment of what the rule lays down and remembering the rule.

In Investigations 201 and 202 Wittgenstein distinguishes between the expression of a rule and obedience to the rule. And Thomson herself says that it is possible for any rule to be forgotten, and rules of type 't' are not peculiar in this. If, therefore, she means to recommend that we never talk of breaking a rule of type 't' but only of forgetting it, then she is prescribing a new usage, contrary to the ordinary one, but she is not really attacking the Wittgensteinian position that it must be possible for a rule to be broken. It is possible to verify whether a rule of type 't' has been kept or broken by asking the individual involved, "Did you think, decide, remember, imagine, etc. ..... as it is laid down that you should?" And it is possible to find out whether the meaning of the rule has been grasped by the individual by his answer to this and to further questions.

What then is the distinction between these cases and those of the so-called private rule following? After all Wittgenstein does say, "to think one is obeying a rule is not to obey a rule" and this could be reformulated, "Saying one has obeyed a rule is not to have obeyed a rule." The difference is this: we know what is meant by, "Imagine the picture whenever ....". "Think of cheese whenever ....", "Remember Rosy whenever ....", and we can verify whether these things have or have not been done. We know what must be done and we know the conditions under which it must be done. But the problem with private rules, whether private language rules or private rules for any other practice, is not so much that obedience to them can't be verified but that the rules can't be intelligibly formulated in the first place. Private Rule: "Do X whenever Y occurs." Qua private, obedience to this rule cannot be verified because conditions for following the rule cannot be

formulated. We cannot say what is going to constitute an occurence of Y because we have no language in which to say this. So the private rule cannot be formulated.

Talking about the private rules for a private language Rush Rhees says, "I say I cannot know a language privately, for what would there be to KNOW? In language it makes a difference what you say. But how can it make any difference what you say privately? (I do not mean talking to yourself) It seems that in a private language everything would have to be at once a statement and a definition. I suppose I may define a mark in any way I wish. And if every use of the mark is also a definition - if there is no way of discovering that I am wrong, in fact no sense in suggesting that I might be wrong - then it does not matter what mark I use or when I use it." [33]. Now in the case of rules of type 't' (the ones which were beginning to seem indistinguishable from private rules) it does make a difference what is done by the person to whom the rule has been given. What he does whenever .... is either in accordance with the rule or it isn't. This is not so with private rules.

The point which Wittgenstein establishes is that a "private rule" only seems to be a rule. It is not so much that a private rule is a rule which one can't break. To put it that way is misleading because it makes it look as though there WAS such a thing as a private rule which had this peculiar quality about it: it can't be broken. If we say that a private rule can't be broken then we should add as qualification, that neither can it be obeyed, because it cannot be formulated i.e. conditions for rule governed behaviour cannot be formulated. As I said at the beginning of the chapter, the words "private rule" can have no intelligible meaning if we are attempting to use them in the ordinary way. This particular combination is being excluded from the language.

33. Rhees, op. cit. p. 274

Much of the confusion about, and resulting disagreement on, Wittgenstein's treatment of privacy has resulted from failing to distinguish between two statements in the Investigations. The statements are 202 (about thinking one is obeying a rule) and 259: "Are the rules of the private language impressions of rules? - The balance on which impressions are made is not the impression of a balance." I formulate the distinction between them in this way: the reasons why thinking one is obeying a public rule not of type 't', and thinking one is obeying a private rule, do not constitute obedience to a rule, are different. Thinking one is obeying a public rule is not the same as obeying it because there are objective criteria for deciding whether the rule has been followed, and thus the possibility remains open that one may think one has obeyed the rule and yet be correctly judged not to have obeyed it. Thinking one is obeying a private rule involves a mistake of a different sort. In this case one mistakenly thinks that there IS a rule to be obeyed. The "rules" of the private language are not rules although they may appear to be. So when we try to use a private language we think we are obeying rules, only there are no rules to be obeyed. When we use ordinary language the possibility exists that we may think we are obeying its rules, and not be. In a private language nothing can be said.

CHAPTER VI

LINGUISTIC FORMALISM AND THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATION-INTENTION

In the chapter on private languages I have tried to show that the idea that it is possible to follow a private rule has unacceptable consequences. It is not possible, I have argued, to enunciate clearly what one means by "following a rule privately," any more than it is possible to say what measuring is if the measuring is being done with a piece of elastic. Or perhaps I should put it another way by saying that it is possible to say what "following a rule privately" means, or what "measuring with an elastic ruler" means, provided one accepts that the words are not being used in the ordinary way. The game of measuring with a meter rule is not like the game of measuring with a piece of elastic.

The conclusion I came to in that chapter is pretty disasterous for any theory of language which claims that the rules of a language need not be public, and my concern there was chiefly to examine the arguments of philosophers who think that private rules for private languages do not entail such consequences. Now I want to take a look at a semantic theory which seems to me to result in the positing of private rules. My purpose in doing this is not simply to try to reject this theory because of its untenable consequences but (a) to show how these consequences follow from the nature of the theory (b) to suggest an alternative approach to language and linguistic meaning which is opposed to the first and which does not entail the privacy consequence (c) to show that the alternative is (i) Wittgensteinian, (ii) that it needs to be supplemented as Wittgenstein saw by an account of intention and (iii) that it involves the notion of language as social practice - a notion implicit in Wittgenstein's later work.

A further, more general, intention behind this chapter is that it should serve to link up the main points made in the thesis so far. The discussion will involve the ubiquitous notion of rules, their function and what it means to follow them, the concept of a criterion will be invoked in dealing with the question of how we know when something has been said, and perhaps most important of all, semantic theories of the formal type found in the Tractatus, will be criticised from the stand point of another theory. But before I go on with the discussion a word of explanation is necessary. A few lines earlier I spoke of an 'alternative approach' to language, thus assiduously avoiding the imputation of advancing a theory, but now it may look as though I have come out in the open, so to speak and talked of criticising one theory from the standpoint of another theory. How is this second, seemingly more ingenuous way of putting it to be made to square with Wittgenstein's intention not to "advance any kind of theory." [1.] The answer lies I think in the descriptive character of the Wittgensteinian treatment ("theory") of language. He is not advancing an hypothesis as to how language is produced by us. He is saying that if by 'language' we mean what we ordinarily mean (if we use the word in the ordinary way) then his is an accurate description of what using a language, or what saying something consists in. He is trying to give us the concept of language. He is not trying to EXPLAIN how language is acquired, or to explain the workings of the mechanism which enables us to use it. Such explanations are the business of the scientist, particularly the psychologist and the genetic epistemologist. In so far as they employ a hypothetico-deductive method, and in so far as their explanatory theories are subject to verification at the descriptive and predictive level, Wittgenstein's treatment cannot be applied to them. As he so often stresses, his treatment is a grammatical treatment, his aim is "to bring words back from their metaphysical to their every day use." [2.] Pole can see nothing in this but destruction and the halt of all speculation, and in a way

1. P.I. 109
2. P.I. 116

he is right. Metaphysical systems are being destroyed and metaphysical speculation is being halted. But it is quite incorrect, it seems to me, to contrast ordinary language with the technical languages of the sciences, in an attempt to show that Wittgenstein wants to stop scientific investigation. He has no wish to make a contrast between ordinary and technical language, in fact he points out that the, "symbolism of chemistry and the notation of the infintesimal calculus" [3]. have become part of our language. The contrast he makes is between ordinary language and metaphysical language. The latter is extraordinary not because its terms are technical or outré but because the language bears the mark of conceptual confusion and itself perpetuates and elaborates this confusion. Wittgenstein's technique is geared to the purpose of enabling "the reader to shift for himself when he encounters conceptual confusions." [4]. And in line with this, his aim in dealing with language is not to dispute any scientific hypothesis about how in fact language is acquired, but rather to clear away certain conceptual problems which arise in the discussion of language.

For these reasons "Wittgenstein's <u>theory</u> of language," is something of a misnomer. His general intention is to describe the actual use of language, which description will include the use of the word "language" in the language of every day. [5]. One of the things involved in this is a description of "meaning": the meaning of a word comes out in its use and so a description of the use of words involves talking about meaning. A semantic theory which separates word, use and meaning will result in the conceptual confusion which he warns against when he writes: "You say: the point isn't the word but its meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow that you can buy with it. (But contrast: money,

3. P.I. 18
4. P.I. page 206
5. P.I. 120 and 124

and its use.)" [6]. When we think about semantics in one w it seems as though the signs we use in language were lifel in themselves and that we put life, i.e. meaning, into them, through using them according to the rules dictated by the nature of a linguistic mechanism. The gap between word and meaning, is, as it were, closed by a mental mechanism which connects sign and syntax with meaning. Wittgenstein is concerned to show that the hypothesis of a mental mechanism (which might or might not exist) will not help us in getting a clear view of the concept of meaning in language. In so far as he believes that his treatment of confusions about language and meaning enable us to get a clear view of this concept, it may, I suppose, be regarded as a theory of semantics.

The two theories which I have in mind are those discussed by Strawson in his inaugural lecture on "Meaning and Truth" [7]. and I shall follow his argument through here in some detail.

The meaning of a sentence depends, in a systematic way, on the meanings of the words which compose it. Conversely a word has meaning if it contributes systematically to the meaning of any sentence in which it occurs. So far there is pretty common agreement among all schools of thought on the topic. But at this point disagreement breaks out between what Strawson calls the theorists of communication-intention and the theorists of formal semantics. The former argue that there can be no account given of meaning without reference to an audience directed intention to communicate something, on the part of the speaker. They are quite willing to grant that words and sentences are bounded by, or used according to, rules, but they insist that these rules can only be understood as rules for communicating and must therefore be understood in terms of an intention to do so.

6. P.I. 120
7. Strawson, "Meaning and Truth" Logico Linguistic Papers.

The formal semanticists on the other hand, say that the intention to communicate, far from being essential to the concept of linguistic rules, is quite incidental to them. For them, linguistic competence can be dealt with, without any mention of communication.

Taking these points of view in turn and starting with the communication-intention theorist, we must ask what sort of account is required of him. Firstly he must elucidate the concept of communication-intention without making any reference to linguistic meaning. Then he must show that linguistic meaning must be explained in terms of an intentional communication act, and this of course further implies that the theory must contain as primary and essential, the concept of a speaker's meaning something by an audience directed utterance. What the speaker means is related essentially (conceptually) to what he intends. Finally, since we speak according to rules, and since utterer's meaning, as Strawson calls it, is in this sense governed by rules, it must be analysed in terms of these rules of grammar. But the rules are rules for communicating and their nature can only be understood if they are seen as rules which enable those who follow them to get across some or other belief or wish or puzzlement or annoyance, etc. to an audience.

Here the formal semanticist might object that since we communicate very complex things we must have very complex intentions to communicate, which, if we are to avoid circularity must be posited independent of any means of communicating them. We are called upon to posit a Shakespeare with the intention to communicate the ideas found in Hamlet, or an Einstein with the intention to tell the world about relativity, but with no means of actually communicating. This, it might be argued is absurd. But the answer to this is that no such positing is required. All that is required is the concept of a primitive, pre-conventional (pre-rule governed) communication.

This concept of a pre-conventional utterance fits into what Strawson calls an account of the analytic-genetic variety. Such an account might run as follows: An utterer who has an audience directed intention successfully communicates pre-conventionally by an utterance x. Let's say he meant P by x. On the next occasion upon which a communication intention arises the utterer utters 'x' in order to communicate P. So 'x' is uttered and works, then it is uttered because it works, and finally it works because it has become an established utterance.

But what of syntactic structure, since the meaning of a sentence depends on the arrangement of its parts? Well a pre-conventional utterance could have a structure such that the utterer might go on to have another communication success by retaining one part and varying another, thus saying something which is partly the same and partly different from what was meant by the first communication.

If we step back at this stage of the discussion and make a general reconnoitre of the ground covered we can see the areas disputed by the two parties. They agree (i) that the meaning of a sentence is determined by semantic and syntactic rules of language; (ii) that all members of a community with linguistic competence can communicate with and influence one another; (iii) that communication is determined by convention, in that, what is intended one utterance should communicate is related to the conventional meaning of that utterance. They differ on the relationship between meaning-determining rules of language and the function of communication: Communication-intention theorists insisting that the nature of these rules can only be determined by making reference to communication-intention and formal semanticists denying this.

Formal semanticists define meaning in terms of the conditions under which any sentence is true, and even those

forms of expression such as imperatives, optatives, etc. which are not propositional in character can be dealt with in terms of some related set of conditions as Hare shows in "Meaning and Speech Acts" [8]. So when an account has been given of all the possible transformations (from truth conditional statements to say fulfilment conditional statements, in the case of optatives), then the framework of semantic theory will be complete. The difficulty, that the sentences that we are talking about are type sentences, sentences not actually in use, and as such cannot be true or false, can be overcome by relativising their truth conditions to the particular conditions of utterance i.e. a general statement can be given of the type of conditions in which a sentence may be uttered truly.

The obvious move now for the formal semanticists is to say what truth is, in order to be able to understand what meaning is. He cannot evade this by saying truth is what is laid down in the rules governing truth conditions in a language - this is just circular. As account of truth must therefore be given in terms of existing states of affairs. Strawson has in mind here, I think, the sort of account which Wittgenstein gives in the Tractatus: 4.062 "Can we not make ourselves understood with false propositions just as we have done up till now with true ones? - So long as it is known that they are meant to be false. - No! For a proposition is true if we use it to say that things stand in a certain way, and they do; and if by 'p' we mean -p and things stand as we mean that they do, then construed in the new way, 'p' is true and not false."

So we must say that "true" in the expression "true statement" refers to the circumstance that things are as the utterer of the statement states them to be. And the meaning of a sentence is determined by the rules for how things are stated to be by one who makes a statement, (or by rules by how things are expressly supposed to be by one

8. Hare, "Meaning and Speech Acts" In "Practical Inference"

who expresses a supposition) etc. The concept of a statement only makes sense in terms of conditions of truth and falsity - a sentence which is neither true nor false is not a statement. These truth conditions coupled with a rule or set of rules for the formation of sentence-statement, determine the meaning of the sentence. But as we have noted, sentence types are by their nature not subject to truth conditions and so we must relativise the formation rules for statements, to contexts, so that "truth" and "falsity" may become applicable. The meaning of a sentence must be determined by those rules which state WHAT statement is made by one who in uttering a sentence in certain conditions makes a statement. (And a similar formulation of meaning can be given in the case of wishes, orders, questions, etc.)

In case this is too abstract and unclear lets take this example. In overcast conditions if I want to make a statement about the colour of the heavens then I must utter the sentence, "The sky is grey", which sentence is composed of words put together in a way determined by the rules of syntax. Unless we are given a set of circumstances we cannot determine what sentence must be uttered if a true statement is to be made, and for this reason truth conditions cannot be formulated for type sentences. In this way, the formal semanticist argues, the meaning of the statement is determined by rules which specify what sentence is to be uttered in given circumstances and rules which specify how such a sentence is to be put together. Were there not such rules then the utterance "The sky is grey" would be a random string of phones arbitrarily uttered, and as such would have no linguistic meaning.

And of course they are right in what they say. The weakness in their position is more in the nature of an ommission. Their theory is partial in a way which makes a conceptual account of language in terms of it, impossible. The protagonists of communication intention would point out that when

once reference has been made to the content of a speech act (what is said) we must refer also to some audience directed intention. For example, in the case of assertions: we have said that their meaning is determined by rules which say what statement is made by one who, in uttering a sentence in given circumstances, makes a statement. Thus the rule would go something like this: "If you want to state that you are sweating and state it truly then in circumstances in which perspiration forms on your body you must say, "I am sweating", which string of words is arranged according to the following rules of syntax ....." In this case, as in the case of the cloudy sky, included in the rule must be a reference to some intention to state something on the part of the utterer. If the intention to communicate is excluded from the antecedent or if the rule is not stated in the form of a hypothetical such as we have invented, then it does not fulfil the requirement of a meaning-giving rule. Further reasons for this will come out shortly. [9.]

Two ways of meeting this objection are open to the formal semanticists (a) he can make meaning dependant on truth conditions without giving any further account of the latter. This we have seen is unsatisfactory. (b) Truth conditions can be subsumed under the notion of correlation, i.e. the elements of any given sentence can be correlated with any actual state of affairs. This notion of correlation, however, is too unspecific to be useful. There are many kinds of behaviour which are correlated to states of affairs, without this correlation conferring on the behaviour the character of truth or falsity. The notion of correlation alone is insufficient for the formulation of truth conditions. Secondly the hoary problem of the false sentence arises. Strawson gives the example of the sentences, "I am tired" and "I am not tired" both of which can be correlated to the same possible state of affairs viz. that of my being tired. Granted the

9. Waismann, "The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy" The Chapter on "The Causal Interpreation of Language contains an excellent treatment of language, meaning and intention.

correlations would be different the one yielding a true and the other a false assertion. But this only shows that the notion of correlation alone is not sufficiently specific to give an account of what makes a sentence have the meaning of a true statement. And in the case of a sentence which can be correlated with many different states of affairs in which case it will have many different meanings, the notion of correlation is again insufficient. We need to be able to specify how, in each particular case, a true statement can be uttered. That is to say we need a method for correlating sentences with states of affairs in such a way as to yield a true statement every time. The notion of correlation alone does not equip us to do this.

Strawson formulates the formal semanticists dilemma at this point like this, "he sees that he cannot stop now with the idea of truth. That idea leads straight to the idea of what is said. The content of what is said, when utterances are made; and that in turn to the question of what is being done when utterances are made", viz. to the idea of the communication of some belief (in the case of assertions which we are taking as our model case).

The only way out for the formal semanticists now would seem to be to give an account of truth conditions which involve the notion of an assertion, since correlation alone will not do. In other words he must use the idea that a true assertion is made when things are as one states them to be. He must go along with the theorists of communication intention in accounting for assertion in terms of belief, saying that an assertion is made when a belief is expressed. But he must stop short of saying that a belief-expression need in any way be linked with the intention to communicate the belief. And he might justify his stopping short here on the grounds that an audience directed intention to communicate a belief is merely an appendage to the expression of belief; what we do WITH the intention to communicate, we can do without such an

intention.

But these grounds are unsatisfactory. If there is a concept of belief expression independent of communication intention then we must be able to give an account of it, and how are we to give such an account when the expression may not be considered as having any communication goal? The striking lacuna in the formal semanticists theory becomes evident when we consider that asking, "What is Jack trying to say?" is another way of asking "What does he mean?" which is another way of asking "What is he trying to tell us?" Saying something is different from uttering a series of signs, which series might or might not be subsumable under a set of rules. Which brings us to a second, extremely closely related point, namely that the behaviour we are dealing with should be capable of being formalized in terms of rules, and these must be rules for the expression of something. What the utterer does must be recognisable as an expression of belief if we are going to be able to ascribe to him the practice of following the rules for the expression of belief i.e. for making statements. But the formal semanticists theory makes it impossible for us to have the notion of belief expression since there is nothing in terms of which we can say that the utterer intends to express belief. To take Strawson's example: Say a man hoots whenever the sun rises. We can say that his practice might be systematically be related to his belief that it is rising (compare the case of a dog salivating when food is presented to it) but we could not say that he was expressing his belief. He might simply salute the rising sun in this way - why he does what he does we don't and can't know. Of course we might answer why having interpreted the question as one requiring an explanation similar to the kind of explanation a zoologist would give to a dog salivating, or that a botanist would give for the behaviour of plants with respect to sunlight. Such an explanation would have nothing to do with a concept of linguistic practice - language is not a pattern of organismic

responses to stimuli. This is what I think Rhees is driving at in a rather mysterious sounding way, when he writes of the people using Wittgenstein's primitive language-games, "Those people are not just going through a complicated trick; what they say depends on what they find. They are not just carrying out orders. They use the expressions they do because they have something to say and because that use is understood by all parties. Whereas you may train animals to make the 'correct' responses to different words or signs, the animals themselves do not use different words." [10]. When a dog salivates or wags his tail, when he barks or when his hackles rise, he does not know what he means nor does he mean what he says because he does not say anything. If we say that he is telling us something then we say this by construing the behaviour of the dog on the model of intentional human behaviour and his meaning something by salivating or barking, is only intelligible if we think that he is communicating with us. The question of whether it makes sense to attribute intentions, and by implication communication intentions to a dog, we will deal with later.

Now if despite all this we stick to the formal semanticists theory then it must follow that we believe that the rules that are employed in language are private. There must be nothing in the concept of a rule of language which makes it impossible conceptually for a speaker to speak a language which he and only he understands or can understand. Since this is so we must ask as we have asked before in what sense an utterer follows these rules, and in fact we must deny that these rules are linguistic rules at all - language is something more than mere patterns of regularity which we describe.

10. Rhees, op. cit. p.276

CHAPTER VII

SCEPTICAL DOUBTS: THE INNER-OUTER DOUBT

In the last chapter I mentioned that the discussion of private language takes place in the Investigations, in the broader context of a discussion of the notion of privacy itself - in particular of the notion that sensations are private. In order to see the full significance of the treatment of private language and in order to get a fuller understanding of what that treatment is, we must examine what the notion of privacy involves. More particularly we will concentrate attention on the question, "In what sense are my sensations private?" [1]. From a scrutiny of this question the outlines of its various senses will emerge as well I hope, as its various non senses. The statement that my sensations are private, when made by someone not doing philosophy (and it is seldom if ever made in that case) is quite prosaic, unexciting, platitudinous and easily translatable into a sentence which makes no use of the word "private". Furthermore the sentence makes sense. When it is made philosophically it seems revelatory, profound and slightly puzzling. Unfortunately it makes no sense or at any rate very odd sense. To pass from non sense to sense in the case of the notion of privacy means to pass from profundity to platitude. This is the price which we must pay for getting rid of philosophical perplexity. From one point of view the investigation "seems only to destroy everything interesting, that is, all that is great and important." [2]. The reward of the investigation is, that it makes it possible for us to stop bumping our heads against the limits of language.

In order to get a clear look at the philosophical idea of privacy we must follow the notion to its source in a

1. P.I. 246
2. P.I. 118

disquietude. This disquietude is perhaps THE disquietude in philosophy. It is the disquietude produced by doubt. The argument that all sensations are private is used to bolster the argument that there is no way of knowing what sensations another has, if he has any at all. Scepticism with respect to other minds goes hand in hand with the notion of private sensations.

In this chapter I shall, therefore, try to do three things: (a) discuss the character of the philosophical doubt; (b) deal with a specific form of this doubt, i.e. with the doubt about sensations of others; (c) show how this leads to the idea that sensations must be private and show precisely how this notion of privacy differs from, and how it is similar to, the ordinary notion of privacy. A fourth point will I hope emerge out of the other three, viz., the integral connection between the private language argument and the private sensation argument. This will mitigate somewhat the artificiality of my having dealt with private language in a separate chapter.

In chapter 4 we discussed the problem of how criteria for Y are related to Y. What, we tried to find out, would constitute such an evidence for Y and how could it come about that anything should become an evidence. In chapter 3 the question arose as to how we could ever know that a rule would be followed correctly. Would one perhaps need rules for the use of rules for the use of rules etc.? And again in chapter 5 a question came up as to what would constitute a sufficient verification of an empirical assertion, a problem which we had mentioned in chapter 1. The answer to these questions tended to come in the form of a discussion of language-games and the way they are embedded in social forms of life. This way of finding a solution might not seem very satisfactory, it has been too briefly and too vaguely stated at this stage even to merit the name of a solution. I shall try to remedy this in a later chapter. For the present I

want to ignore the solution aspect of these problems and concentrate on the problems themselves. They form part of a family of philosophic problems characterised by doubt, we may call them accordingly "philosophic doubts."

This term indicates that philosophic doubts must be distinguished from the doubts that we ordinarily have. For instance, philosophic doubts seem, when we are not doing philosophy, to be pointless. I may doubt, whether the creature I have glimpsed in the fading bushveld light was a lion or a cheetah - this is a quite natural doubt. But if I went into a zoo at noon and doubted whether what I was seeing was a lion then there would be grounds for thinking that I might be in the grip of a philosophical doubt. And here it is impossible not to invoke the name of Descartes and with the name the spectre of those amazing doubts which he sets out so methodically in his writings. Take this passage from the Discourse:

"(A)s I then desired to give my attention solely to the search after truth, I thought ..... that I ought to reject as absolutely false all opinions in regard to which I could suppose the least ground for doubt, in order to ascertain whether after that there remained aught in my belief that was wholly indubitable. Accordingly, seeing that our senses sometimes deceive us, I was willing to suppose that there existed nothing really such as they presented to us; and because some men err in reasoning, and fall into paralogisms even on the simplest matters of geometry, I, convinced that I was as open to error as any other, rejected as false all the reasonings I had hitherto taken as demonstrations; and finally when I consider that the very same thoughts which we experience when we are awake may also be experienced when we are asleep, while there is at that time not one of them true I supposed that all the objects that had ever entered into my mind when awake, had in them no more truth than the illusions of my dreams." [3.]

3. Descartes, "Discourse on Method."

For our purposes this quotation is interesting in two respects. For one thing it is the preface to Descartes' theory of the Cogitatio, a sense datum theory which is basic, as Kenny has shown [4.] to the Cartesian theory of privacy. Secondly, and this is the aspect I want to concentrate on now, the doubts which Descartes expresses in the passage quoted, are such as no one in their right mind would, in the ordinary course of events, entertain. And yet in philosophy they came to be accepted as perfectly understandable doubts - doubts all of which not every philosopher actually entertained or thought he should entertain, but doubts which, nevertheless did not seem out of place. This is so much the case that people who are not doing philosophy often tend to think (quite rightly) that philosophers spend most of their time wondering whether "the table is really there". And this has become something of a standing joke about philosophy.

So one of the characteristics of the philosophic doubt is that it appears to question things which it ordinarily makes no sense to question. It, as it were, holds up the process of learning and of knowledge, by putting artificial barriers in the way. It is almost as if the philosopher does not know what it means to know, and therefore by implication, what it means to learn anything. Wittgenstein gives the example of a school boy who holds up the history class with doubts as to whether the earth has existed for more than a hundred years. "The teacher", he says "would feel that this was only holding them up, that this way the pupil would only get stuck and make no progress. - And he would be right. It would be as if someone were looking for some object in a room; he opens the drawer and does not see it there; then he closes it again, waits, and opens it once more to see if perhaps it is not there now, and keeps on like that. He has not learned to look for things. And in the same way this pupil has not learned how to ask questions. He has not learned the game we are trying to teach him." [5.] When once the teacher gets

4. Kenny, "Cartesian Privacy" Pitcher.
5. O.C. 315.

the pupil to stop asking these questions, to stop having these doubts, and makes him see that they are pointless and obstructive, then he has also put him in a position to understand what learning and knowing is. The pupil can then continue or begin his course of education.

The description which Wittgenstein gives is strongly reminiscent of Freud's description of the situation which often occurs during psychoanalytic therapy in which the patient obstructs the course of an apparently smooth-running analysis by refusing to believe what he is telling the analyst: "Then we discover that the resistance has fallen back on the doubts characteristic of the obsessional neurosis and is holding it successfully at bay from this vantage point." [6.] In a similar way the philosopher obstructs the course of knowledge by questioning and in fact doubting whether we know what we all know we know. It is interesting to notice how Descartes almost exactly reproduces Freud and Wittgenstein's portraits in his own actions. In part three of the Discourse he describes how he follows certain opinions and maxims in his daily life while suspending his judgment as to their truth. As soon as he begins to meditate, however, his normal practices including the acquisition of scientific knowledge comes to a halt, obstructed by the doubt.

What I have been saying here clearly takes its inspiration from Wisdom, and ultimately from Wittgenstein. Wisdom points out both the similarities and differences between the purely psychogenic case of neurosis and the case of philosophical perplexity. The philosopher like the neurotic clings to the problem or disquietude which is disturbing him so that, "in spite of his evident unhappiness and desire to come from hesitation to decision he also desires the discussion never to end and dreads its ending." [7.] But unlike the neurotic what the philosopher says about the cause of his doubts and problems

6. Freud, "Twenty Eight Lectures on Psycho-Analysis". page 244.
7. Wisdom, "Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis", page 172.

does not so much have the savour of an empty rationalisation. Instead he gives something very much more like reasons, and impressive reasons at that. Only, the reasons he gives for holding a position can be countered by equally convincing reasons against his holding it. His position is thus paradoxical - now one horn of the dilemma appeals to him, and now the other. Like Buridan's ass he stands between two equally attractive alternatives and just because of this he cannot move at all. He becomes a victim of what Wittgenstein so aptly called "mental cramp."

The paradoxes of philosophy are, Wisdom argues, [8.] rather more like riddle problems than like mathematical problems. Their solution lies in "seeing the point", grinning and then forgetting about the whole story. I think a fairly good model of a philosophical perplexity is provided by the following problem:

Before setting out on a flight from Jan Smuts all the passengers take out life insurance policies with an international insurance company. The aircraft tragically crashes exactly on the border between South Africa and Botswana, so that the tail part falls into South African territory and the front section falls into Botswanan territory. Must the South African or the Botswanan branch of the company pay out the survivors?

A decision seems to be called for and yet any reasons one could advance for the answer that the South African branch must pay, could equally be advanced for the Botswanan branch having to pay. But of course the dilemma only remains for as long as one does not notice that the problem is a joke; for no one has to pay the survivors anything since they took out life insurance policies and since they have survived.

This example is slightly off centre, although it is so in quite an illuminating way. There is a fact in the story

8. Wisdom, op. cit. pp.176-7

itself which, when noted, enables us to see that no decision is called for and that the problem is a trick. In a philosophical problem, the doubt as to which answer should be given cannot be resolved by noticing any stated fact internal to the problem itself. So it is not so much as though we overlook one vital sentence or phrase in the statement of the problem, as that we overlook the jokelike character of the problem as such. All analogous examples of the philosophical problem limp in one or another important respect it seems to me and the statements of the problems themselves, in the long run, best illustrate their own peculiar character.

The doubt about the existence of other minds, like most philosophic doubts is criteriological in character. It is a doubt as to how from the knowledge that X I can know that Y: "Do I have sufficient - can I ever have sufficient, criteria for Y, short of being given Y itself?" "What constitutes my having sufficient criteria?" "How can I make the leap from the criteria of Y to Y?"[9]. In the case of sensations: Given that Jack is groaning, writhing, etc. - are these not after all the outward manifestations of what I HYPOTHESISE to be some inward state of Jack's?" As far as the other-minds empiricist is concerned the evidence for Jack's being in pain i.e. for his inward state, is always some behaviour which is in principle observable by someone else. Now as Paul Ziff points out in his short article "About Behaviourism" [10]. a phrase, "you can in principle find out" does not have a very clear meaning. I will attempt a few translations of it which more or less bring out what I think those who use the phrase mean by it. "You can in principle find out" - "it is not inconceivable that you should find out" or "it is not logically impossible that you should find out" or "it is not self contradictory to say that you can find out" or "it makes sense (it is not absurd) to say that you can find out."

9. Wisdom, "Other Minds," pp.1-2 (notes)
10. Ziff, "About Behaviourism", Analysis XVIII (1957-58) reprinted in The Philosophy of Mind" ed. by V.C. Chappell, page 148.

The implication of this sort of talk is that in principle you CANNOT directly find out what Jack's INWARD state is. Our knowledge of one another's sensations is mediated by our knowledge of one another's behaviour and the situation is conceived to be something like that in which an uncle jingles a few coins in his fist and then asks his nieces and nephews to guess what coins are there. But this fist cannot only not be prised open by nieces and nephews, it cannot be opened by all the energy in the universe, it is kept clenched by the muscles and sinews of logical necessity.[11] So the children can only guess at the number and the value of the coins but they can never KNOW unless their uncle tells them. Their guesses might become more and more informed as they play the game more and more often, but these guesses will only be based on inductions from past jingling of the coins and subsequent confirmations or corrections of guesses.

For some sceptics this analogy is more strictly correct than for others. But all protagonists of scepticism with respect to a knowledge of another's mind would agree on the logical impossibility of the contents of another's mind ever becoming patent to anyone else. This of course raises the problem of how the mental objects ever got into the mind in the first place (the uncle must at some stage take the coins from his pocket). This is an objection which I will not pursue. It has traditionally been met by say that the sensations i.e. the mental contents are the effects of the exterior causes. The welter of confusions and difficulties which this answer raises, and the various critiques and sophistications of it by empiricists themselves, I also shall not deal with. The main point is that the contents of other minds are hidden from me and can only be inferred by me from behaviour.

Where the empiricist's argument leads into scepticism is just the point at which the analogy with the uncle's

11. See Wittgenstein on "the hardness of the logical must" in F.M. 113-141

logically tight fist can be made to break down. We said that the children could never know the number of coins unless he told them and just so one may think that the really only satisfactory way to know the mind of another is through what she tells us. But of course the radical philosophic doubt cannot stop short at a verbal report and there is no good reason why it should. It is quite natural for the philosopher, hell bent for certainties, to ask, "How do I know that she means what I mean by pain, ache, tingle, warm, blue, black, green, etc.?" or "True he CALLS it red, but how do I know he does not see it as green?" These and a host of similar doubts begin to crowd in until the gentle but persistent question can no longer be drowned out or circumvented: "How do I know that there <u>are</u> any other minds?" And with that question as John Wisdom so poignantly puts it we, " 'look down that lonely road' which leads past abandoned illusions to the security of Solipsism". [12.]

Clearly there is no valid case to be made for an induction from a set of behaviours, where "behaviour" is used in the very broadest sense to mean observable movements, to the existence of a mind. What sort of probability could these observations yield if in principle there is no possibility of an independent confirmation of the existence of another's mind? [13.] To the sceptic there can be no reason for thinking that what he calls "another person" is anything more than a very complicated machine which responds in ways more or less predictable to various stimuli. For instance, when he observes a human organism responding to a stimulus such as a low temperature by shivering and saying, "it is freezing", this response is strictly on a par with the flashing of a light on a car dashboard indicating that the radiator is about to boil over. And just as it is possible to open the car bonnet and measure the temperature of the cooling system with a thermometer so it is, in theory, possible to

12. Wisdom, "Other Minds," p.141
13. See Malcolm "Knowledge of Other Minds", Pitcher p.371

correlate the verbal and non verbal behaviour of the human organism with some state possibly a brain state, of that human organism. Now while this correlation of the sensation responses of a human organism with a brain process might de facto be possible [14]. the firing of synapses the passage of neurons, the messages from the afferent and efferent nerves are not what we ordinarily refer to when we say of someone that she is in pain. We do not use the word "pain" like this. Wittgenstein puts it this way:

"Could a machine think? - Could it be in pain? - Well, is the human body to be called such a machine? It surely comes as close as possible to being such a machine. But a machine surely cannot think! - Is that an empirical statement? No. We only say of a human being and what is like one that it thinks. We also say it of dolls and no doubt of spirits too. Look at the word "to think" as a tool." [15].

And in the Philosophical Investigations Part 2 he elaborates on the attitude we take up when we use sensation words about others, such as "Paddy is in pain" and writes:

"Suppose I say of a friend: 'He is not an automaton'. - What information is conveyed by this, and to whom would it be information? To a HUMAN BEING who meets him in ordinary circumstances? What information COULD it give him? (at the very most that this man always behaved like a human being and not occasionally like a thing.) 'I believe that he is not an automaton,' just like that, so far makes no sense. My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul. I am not of the OPINION that he has a soul". [16].

I shall go on to deal with Wittgenstein's position on this problem in the next chapter and I merely intersperse

14. See U.T. Place "Is Consciousness a Brain Process" reprinted from The British Journal of Psychology in Chappel p.101.
15. P.I. 359-60
16. P.I. page 178

these two remarks of his to show what the argument of the empiricist driven to scepticism comes to - how odd it can be made to sound.

But if the mind and more particularly the sensations of others are hypothetical objects the existence of which it is logically impossible for me to verify, then by that very fact, I make no real hypothesis. What I assert about another's pain can be neither proved true nor false and so, to put it strongly, I assert nothing, or to put it less strongly, I say something which we would nor ordinarily describe as an assertion.

From where then do we derive the concepts of mind, of consciousness, of sensation?

And now the sceptic is ready with an answer which is both a solution to that last problem and, I think, the cause of his scepticism. It is in a sense, the alpha and omega of sceptical doubt about other minds. He says that he does and can only know about these things FROM HIS OWN CASE. This is not only true, he argues, but necessarily true. The only sensations he can know are his own, and what is more, he is the only one who can know them. He can hypothesise about the behaviour of others that they have THE SAME as he has when he is in pain, but he can have no direct awareness of their pain. He can perceive their behaviour but in his own case he can CONCENTRATE HIS ATTENTION INWARDS and directly and immediately know that he is in pain. His sensations are private in the sense that only he can have THEM.

When these things have been said then any resemblance between the ordinary (though infrequent) statement that sensations are private and the philosophical statement disappears. Imagine a doctor walking into his waiting rooms and saying, "Well, whose aches and pains want attention first?" at which Robinson desperate for a pain killer groans, "Mine!" - That

is a perfectly ordinary use of the possessive adjective: his pain will not be alleviated by the doctor treating Smith or Jones, and because his pain is severe he wants it attended to before the doctor attends to the alleviation of Smith and Jones' pain. In this rather trivial sense Robinson's pain is private. He can identify himself as the one who is in pain, and the relief of his pain is not the relief of anyone else's. (Even this last point has to be very carefully watched)

How would this example be handled by the sceptic. He would have to say that when Robinson said that his pain was most deserving of treatment, then the doctor, who proceded to treat him was trying to eliminate a certain behaviour in Robinson, viz. his groaning, saying that he is in pain, calling for an analgesic, etc. If he was a behaviourist then he would say that third person descriptions of pain were descriptions of certain measurable behaviours, and in this he would be correct to a certain and rather misleading extent. But he cannot be content to rest here, for the problem of the first person statement has to be met with by him. What, he must ask, is the meaning of Robinson's description to Robinson, for clearly he does not decide on the basis of an observation of his own behaviour that he is in pain. It must be that the first person sensation statement is a description of Robinson's private inward state. So, when Robinson uses the word 'pain' of himself he uses a name which refers to a private object the existence and character of which only he can know. Of course here one wants to ask how someone else could know that Robinson was describing any inward, private state, and as usual the question drives the sceptic into solipsism. He then grants that he can't KNOW that Robinson describes his inward state, or for that matter that he has any inward state to describe, strictly all he can say is that this is what HE HIMSELF does. When he turns his attention inwards he recognises something which he knows to be pain.

Although the question is premature (I want to reserve

any criticism until the next chapter) one wants to ask the sceptical philosopher what this "something" is that he recognises.

"If you say that he sees a private picture before him which he is describing, you have still made an assumption about what he has before him. And that means that you can describe it or do describe it more closely. If you admit that you haven't any notion what kind of thing it might be that you have before him - then what leads you into saying in spite of that, that he has something before him? Isn't it as if I were to say of someone: 'He HAS something. But I don't know if its money, or debts, or an empty till.'" [17.]

The reply to this is usually, that we do know what our own private pain is like and can describe it to our own satisfaction although this description is in a language as private as that which we described in chapter 5. In fact, he argues, this knowledge is one of the best examples of knowledge which we have, for here, when I say I know I am in pain then I can't be wrong. I make an identification of my inner state to which I attach a name - "pain," "hot", "itchy", etc. These names when used about another are descriptions of overt behaviour, used of myself they are names in a private language. Whether they mean for others what they mean for me I can never know. And in an attempt to be fully consistent the privacy argument has been extended by some philosophers, Hume for example, to cover descriptions of the external world including those very descriptions of the behaviour of others. For when I have an experience of the blue sky there is no way for me to know whether any other organism has the same experience which I have or any experience at all. The language I use about the "outside world" is as private as that which I use to describe my sensations. This, it goes without saying is an extremely "philosophical" idea. Wittgenstein both sketches its outlines very vividly and captures its atmosphere in these paragraphs from the Investigations:

17. P.I. 294

"Look at the blue of the sky and say to yourself 'How blue the sky is!' - When you do it spontaneously - without philosophical intentions - the idea never crosses your mind that this impression of colour belongs only to you. And you have no hesitation in exclaiming that to someone else. And if you point at anything as you say the words you point at the sky. I am saying: you have not the feeling of pointing-into-yourself, which accompanies 'naming the sensation' when one is thinking about 'private language'. Nor do you think that really you ought not to point to the colour with your hand, but with your attention. (Consider what it means 'to point to something with the attention'.)

"But don't we at least MEAN something quite definite when we look at a colour and name our colour-impression? It is as if we detached the colour-IMPRESSION from the object, like a membrane. (This ought to arouse our suspicions) ..... it is easier to produce this experience when one is looking at a bright colour, or at an impressive colour-scheme." [18.]

Of particular significance in this passage is his reference to "naming the sensation" which takes place in private language. This idea marks the reappearance of that atomistic theory of language which he deals with right at the outset of the Investigations. (see Ch. 1) According to this theory the meanings of my words are the objects for which these words stand. Only propositions have sense, and there is only one way in which a proposition can be taken; the elements of a proposition must be correlated with the world in such a way that there is a one-to-one correspondence between those elements (names) and the objects which occur in the fact (the state of affairs) which the proposition depicts. There is only one way in which a proposition can be projected onto a state of affairs if it is to be meaningful, and that way is such that the names in the proposition must stand for objects: "A name means an object. The object is its meaning." [19.]

18. P.I. 275-6
19. Tractatus, 3.203

No cognisance is taken here of the way in which the words are used. If the objects are private then the meanings of the words are private. The connection between my words and the world will be private if I construe the world as somehow inside me i.e. as an internal possession.

But to use Wittgenstein's favourite way of putting it there is no way in which this connection can be set up. And this statement, to use another typically Wittgensteinian expression does not refer to an empirical difficulty but to a grammatical impossibility viz. to the fact that there can be no intelligibly formulable rule for the correlation of names with private sensation and to the further fact that the concept of a private sensation is not intelligible. There may seem to the philosopher in the grip of a disquietude to be a gap between my words and the mental objects to which they are supposed by the private language argument to refer. But as Melden remarks in another context ".... the appearance of a gap is symptomatic of confusion." [20]. And in this case the conceptual confusion results from mixing up the categories of physical objects and sensations. This confusion makes it seem as though there is an unbridgable gap between the names I use for sensations and the sensations themselves (a quasi physical gap). Of course there does'nt appear to be a gap to the uncritical exponent of the private language argument, but there is a paradoxical position in the philosophical twilight between acceptance and rejection of that argument, in which the attempt to use language to describe private mental objects does seem unsatisfactory, - there IS a gap between the name of a pain and the painful sensation, but the nature of the gap and why it is there is not clear.

20. Melden, "Free Action", p.57

C H A P T E R VIII

SCEPTICAL DOUBTS: WITTGENSTEIN'S "TREATMENT"

I have attempted to outline the argument that sensations must be private without saying what is objectionable about it. Apart from one or two quotations from the Investigations which put the argument in a rather odd light I have given no systematic critique of it as such. The critique of the private language argument, though closely connected with the problem of private sensations, will not entirely serve as therapy for the latter. In fact all the compelling force of the idea of a private language comes back into play when the ground is switched from the rather abstract discussion of rule-following, speech acts and linguistic meaning to sensations and the language we use in connection with them. So long as the idea of private sensations has a hold on us we will never really rid ourselves of the hankering to propose that sensation language must in some way be private. When we come to think about sensations then we are shocked back into a way of thinking about language, which, to use Wisdom's Freudian idiom,we unsuccessfully repressed when we countered the private language argument. There still lingers in our philosophical unconscious a desire to resurrect private language, and the notion that sensations must be private serves as an opportunity for bringing the old arguments into the light. "After all", we want to say, "Peter knows his pain in a way which Susan does'nt simply because Peter is Peter and Susan isn't Peter. And of course the converse applies which only makes the gulf between his and her pain the more obvious." If we have thought quite hard about the problem and have read the current literature on it we will even dismiss with sophisticated scorn the naive idea that the barriers to Susan knowing Peter's pain are physical or even psychological. Ayer, for example, referring to Stace's empiricist arguments in favour of privacy says that

his criticism of Stace's propositions, " .... is not that they are false, or even dubious, but that they are trivial. For what is it after all, that prevents one person from having the experiences of another? .... This is not a case of physical incapacity, like my inability to see through a brick wall, or of a psychological incapacity, such as my inability to remember the events of my childhood. The barriers that prevent us from enjoying one anothers experiences are not natural but logical." [1].

There is something peculiarly subtle and at the same time particularly dangerous about this suggestion. It represents what might be termed a false advance on the problem. As though one had gone through all the motions of taking a great stride forward while being unaware that one was trying to ascend a down-going escalator. I shall try to show that Ayer and those who argue like him have not really freed themselves from the power of the physical metaphor (which clearly has a strong hold on Russell); that had they done so they would not speak of a "logical barrier" preventing us from enjoying one anothers sensations. Instead they would have investigated the grammar of our sensation languages as is actually used and discovered in that the sources of confusion which lead to the privacy argument, for it is an argument which Wittgenstein has shown, I think, to be irremediably confused. It is permeated by analogies and metaphors which often cease to be what they were intended to be and become instead the very basis of the argument. And the difficulties of dealing critically with these sorts of argument are increased by the fact that they DO give important insight into the nature of our thinking, feeling, talking and the things we think, talk about and feel. This means that to dismiss them for the wrong reasons is as bad and possibly worse than accepting them.

The argument with which Wittgenstein deals in the Investigations is well summarised by Cook in the following

1. Ayer, "The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge", page 138

three premises:

(Pi) No one can feel (experience, be acquainted with) another person's sensations.

(Pii) The proper and necessary means of coming to know what sensations another person is having is to feel that person's sensations.

(Piii) Anyone who has a sensation knows that he has it because he feels it, and whatever can be known to exist by being felt cannot be known (in the same sense of "known") to exist in any other way.

Conclusion: No one can know what sensations another person is having. [2.]

These premises are countered by Wittgenstein in the much quoted section 246 of the Investigations:

"In what sense are my sensations private? - Well, I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise it. - In one way this is wrong, and in another nonsense. If we are using the word 'to know' as it is normally used (and how else are we to use it?) then other people very often know when I am in pain. - Yes, but all the same not with the certainty with which I know it myself! - It can't be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I KNOW I am in pain. What is it supposed to mean - except perhaps that I AM in pain?

"Other people cannot be said to learn of my sensations ONLY from my behaviour, - for I cannot be said to learn of them. I HAVE them.

"The truth is: it makes sense to say about other people that they doubt whether I am in pain; but not to say it about myself."

2. Cook, "Wittgenstein on Privacy" in Pitcher pages 289-90

This then is the crux of Wittgenstein's position. Where "I know" is used as an expression of the fact that information has been acquired (and not as an expression of exasperation, "Damn it I know I've got a headache but I can't go running off to the doctor for that") then it makes sense to say, (i) that I came to know through the exercise of certain perceptual and cognitive faculties; (ii) that I was in a good position to experience the object of knowledge; (iii) that I have learned to recognize this object as an ...; (iv) that I could on this occasion correctly identify this as an .... These instances recall the variety of meaningful answers which Austin suggests can be given to the question "How do you know?" In his example the question put is, "How do you know there's a bittern at the bottom of the garden?" and he lists the possible answers as:

(a) I was brought up in the fens.
(b) I heard it.
(c) The keeper reported it.
(d) By its booming.
(e) From the booming noise.
(f) Because it is booming. 3.

I would suggest a further retort (g) which emphasises (i) above, namely (g) I've got eyes in my head haven't I?

The first three answers and (g) say how one is in a position to know and the last three say how one can tell at the time i.e. how one justifies the identification of this particular instance as an instance of X.

But the central point to notice, it seems to me, is that Austin's philosophic and verbal acumen can only be exercised here because there is a primitive sense of "to know" which implies, "Where I know I can be mistaken," or better "Where I thought (said) I knew, I could have been mistaken."

3. Austin, "Other Minds" in Philosophical Papers, page 79.

Just because of this it makes sense to justify that one knows in ways (a) to (g) above. I would not go so far as to say that where "I know" means "I can't be wrong" then it is an incorrect employment of "know", but it is, at any rate, a use carefully to be distinguished from the primitive one. Where "I know" means "I can't be wrong" then there is clearly nothing like an objective test of whether I DO know: I say I know and in this case rule out the possibility of a falsification and therefore of verification. This use of "I know" occurs in Moore's "Proof of an External World", and Wittgenstein gives a most brilliant illumination to this use in "On Certainty" where he says:

"Moore's view really comes down to this: the concept 'know' is analogous to the concepts 'believe', 'surmise,' 'doubt', 'be convinced', in that the statement 'I know ...' can't be a mistake. And if this IS so, then there can be an inference from such an utterance to the truth of an assertion. And here the form 'I thought I knew' is being overlooked. - But if this latter is inadmissible, then a mistake in the assertion must be logically impossible too. And anyone who is acquainted with the language-game must realize this - an assurance from a reliable man that he knows cannot contribute anything." [4] In the game which Moore is playing with "I know" there is no move which is discovering that he is mistaken, and so far his use of "I know" is something in the nature of an emphasis.

The case is somewhat similar with "I know" used in first person sensation statements. Here there is no room for "I doubt". Doubt makes no sense here and neither therefore does knowledge in the ordinary use of that word. It is just this which makes (Piii) unsatisfactory, and which destroys the whole ediface of sceptical argument against knowledge of another's sensations. What am I adding when I preface "I am in pain" with "I know", - nothing. Pain is neither discovered

4. O.C. 21

nor observed by the one who is in pain. He may well observe how long it lasts, remember that it was worse last time, notice the ravages it produces in his constitution, but none of these constitute "knowing pain" and none of them could because, as far as the sufferer is concerned, that latter concept makes no sense. If I can identify my pain then I can also misidentify it, but neither concept makes sense in the first person language-game of pain. Of course this does not mean that self-diagnosis is infallible, but then diagnosis does not consist in identifying pain but in tracing its causes. I might well diagnose a pain in the ear as earache and mean by this that there is something wrong with my ear when in fact the pain is alleviated by treatment of an infected molar. However, it is quite absurd to imagine that I make any sort of identification error in my first person pain language. And this is not because I am in a very good position to judge, or because I have superbly sharp and reliable introspective faculties, but because WHAT I SAY is the criterion of the intensity, nature, duration and location of my pain.

Pain language in the first person is not descriptive in character. When I say, "I've a stabbing tooth ache" I am in no way identifying, naming and describing anything. I am, Wittgenstein maintains, replacing a primitive pain behaviour, such as crying and clutching my cheek, with a new, verbal, behaviour which expresses my pain. [5.] And this should not be taken to mean that "pain" means crying, since it does not describe it but replaces it. Nor should it be taken that the behaviour is the pain, as certain sorts of behaviourists, bent on reductionism, might argue. But why should it not be taken in that way? Can there be any safe passage between the Scylla of private pain and the Charybdis of mechanistic reductionism?

When a physicist says that terrestial bodies have weight, or fall because of gravity they use these terms to

5. P.I. 244

describe the behaviour of bodies near the earth e.g. that the acceleration of their fall is 9,8 m sec^2. When we say of someone that he is in pain why should we not mean that he is behaving in a certain way.

What I shall call the strong behaviourist might answer in this way: When we say of someone that he is in pain we mean no more than that he exhibits specified behaviours which are in principle publicly observable. The supposition that "pain" refers to a mental process or event, or to the presence in the person of a mental object, is logically impossible to verify and is, therefore, unintelligible as an hypothesis. Among the behaviours which form the class "pain behaviour" are the verbal behaviours in which the person says "I am in pain" etc. The latter is not a report on a mental state (and here they agree with Wittgenstein). Furthermore our understanding of "pain" is neither dependent on our having had pain, in the sense of being in a certain mental condition, since this is unintelligible, nor is it dependent on our ever having exhibited any pain behaviour ourselves, any more than our understanding of the behaviour of a billiard ball is dependent on our having rolled around a table. Pain simply means a response of a certain type to a stimulus.

The mistake in this theory is that it ignores the fact that one who has never been in pain does NOT understand the statement "I am in pain" in exactly the way that one who does feel pain does. This might seem to beg the question since the strong behaviourist denies that feeling pain means anything more than exhibiting pain behaviour, which can include among other things electro-chemical and neurological behaviour in the nerves and brain. It is not question-begging however. This criticism of strong behaviourism merely points to the inability of that theory to adequately distinguish between first person and third person pain language. When I say "I am in pain" I am not describing a mental event nor am I describing my behaviour. There are cases in which one could

imagine "I am in pain" being an intelligible description of his behaviour by one who utters the sentence. Say a drama teacher walks into a room in which a student is rehearsing Claudius' death agonies in Hamlet. He stops the scene and says to the student, "What in God's name are you doing?" and receives as an explanation the offended reply, "I am in pain", meaning, "I am portraying Claudius' pain ... am behaving in a way appropriate to an imitation of someone's death agonies." Here the surface grammar is identical with the grammar of the statement uttered by someone who is in pain, but that is where the similarities end. The function of the sentence in the latter case is expressive not descriptive, and as far as the depth grammar goes the former use is more correctly assimilable to the third person statement, "He is in pain."

But how far does this take us? Left at that, not very far. What I am presenting as the Wittgensteinian alternative to behaviourism is still open to objections both from behaviourists and mentalists. When Wittgenstein says that first person pain language is expressive the behaviourists counter with, "Well, if you say it is expressive then the verbal behaviour which consists in saying, 'I am in pain' must be taken by you as the expression of something else viz. the presence of some mental object, process or event. And the private-mental-sensation faction will say the words which Wittgenstein puts into their mouths: " 'But you will surely admit that there is a difference between pain-behaviour accompanied by pain and pain-behaviour without pain?' - Admit it? What greater difference could there be? - And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation is a nothing." [6.] ...."Are you not really a behaviourist in disguise?" [7.]

Now is the time to take stock of the position. I said earlier that we were trying to steer between behaviourism

6. P.I. 304
7. P.I. 307

and the theory that sensations are private affairs in the mind. In fact putting it like that makes the difference between them appear too great. Both positions suffer from too restricted a diet. Both have the ideè fixe that either one denies sensations or one thinks of them as etherial things existing in the medium of a mind. But as Wittgenstein might have said, the first mistake is to ask the question as to what sort of things sensations are, and the second is to try to answer it. His actual remark about pain is, "It is not a SOMETHING, but not a NOTHING either! The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said. We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself upon us here". [8] This grammar suggests to us that pain must be a something (another entity) accompanying pain-behaviour. If we have this idea then the rejection of the behaviourists in the last paragraph but one, in which it was said that someone A who has never himself had pain, will not understand another B saying 'I am in pain', in the same way as someone C who has felt pain, will be misunderstood by us. We will take it that the difference lies in A's having something which B has not got and never had, but which C has got or has had. To obviate this misunderstanding we must reiterate that pain is not something. When we say, "his pain" or "her pain" we are not using the possessive pronoun in the way it is used when we say "his hat" or "her room". It is just this which, if ignored, leads philosophers to say either that pain IS behaviour, or that pain is a logically private object.

When it is said, as Ayer does, that it is logically impossible literally to have another's pain, the grammatical confusion about the way the genitive is used is clearly in evidence. Cook argues quite correctly that to say what Ayer says is equivalent to saying that the SENSE of "I have her pain" is SENSELESS. The meaning of "the literal sense" is usually explained he says through, "presenting the parts of

8. P.I. 304. See also P.I. 293 - "the beetle in the box" example.

the sentence (either words or expressions) in some familiar context in which they have the desired meaning and then specifying that it is when the sentence in question combines the words or expressions as used in these contexts that it has its literal sense. But what could it mean to speak of transferring a word or expression AND ITS MEANING from a context in which it has a particular use to a sentence in which it has no use at all (except as a part of speech) - and certainly not the use it had in the context from which it was allegedly transferred". [9] In a most effective reductio ad absurdum he shows that saying that I logically cannot, literally have another's pain, for the reason that they have got something which I haven't, is equivalent to saying that I cannot have my father's build. His argument is that if builds are assimilated grammaticallyto say overcoats then it will seem that since it is possible to misidentify the owner of an overcoat, and since it is impossible to misidentify the owner of a build, builds must be things like overcoats which we possess but unlike overcoats whey must be among the most clearly marked and inviolable forms of private property. (This is an extreme compression of his most lucid argument) The obvious absurdity resulting from this assimilation of the grammars of possessives (his coat/his build) reduces us to saying that no one can have anyone else's build. Now what should be strongly noted is, that if it is senseless to say that I have anyone else's build then it is equally senseless to say that I have my own build, in which case it is senseless also to say that a build is some private possession of mine. This can all be applied mutatis mutandis to "my pain" where this is taken to mean a "logically private" possession of mine.

In the language-game played with pain it makes sense to say that I have a pain, but not to say that I possess a pain. It makes sense to talk of my pain, her pain and their pain. It also makes sense to talk of her having the same pain as I have, provided this is not taken to mean that

9. Cook, op. cit. page 301. See also Zettel 448.

she and I possess the same object. Pain, like joy, is not a thing in the sense of an object, which is why Wittgenstein writes in Zettel:

" 'But I do have a real feeling of joy!' Yes, when you are glad you really are glad. And of course joy is not joyful behaviour, nor yet a feeling round the corners of the mouth and eyes.

" ' But "joy" surely designates an inward thing (etwas Inneres) ' - No. 'Joy' designates nothing at all. Neither any inward nor any outward thing." 10.

The suggestions put forward here dispose once for all, I think, of the idea that pain is an object and consequently of the argument that it is a private object. It still remains to deal with the question of whether pain is pain behaviour, since it would seem that having shown pain not to be an object one is committed to the view that it must be a behaviour. And yet as the quotations from Wittgenstein have shown he does not say this.

To deal with this problem I should like to turn to Wittgenstein's writings in Zettel, which to date, possibly due to their comparatively recent publication, have received far less attention than have the Investigations. In this work the character of his philosophical technique is more explicitly stated than anywhere else. He says for example: "Philosophical investigations: conceptual investigations. The essential thing about metaphysics: it obliterates the distinction between factual and conceptual investigations." 11. As is evident from the way he treats the problems of the philosophy of mind in this book, he means by "conceptual investigation" an examination of how words are used in ordinary language. It is vital to keep this in mind when dealing with the question of sensations and behaviour. Wittgenstein is not concerned to answer the question, "What is pain?", he

10. Zettel 487
11. Z. 458

would characteristically follow this with another, far more philosophically viable question, "How is the word 'pain' used?" Now we have already said that in first person statements it is used expressively, and have further argued against the picture of pain as an inward process or object. If we say in addition that it is not behaviour then the temptation to ask, "Well, WHAT is it?" becomes almost irresistible. The hardest thing as Wittgenstein says on a number of occasions is to stop asking a particular sort of question, and yet this is what we must do if we are to make any progress in clearing up the philosophical problem about the concept of pain.

A remark in Zettel about fear (in the section on emotion - predicates which immediately preceeds the remarks on pain-language) is extremely useful in coming to grips with this problem. He says: "It might be asked whether this word would realy relate simply to behaviour, simply to bodily changes. And this may be denied. There is no future in simplifying the use of this word in this way. It relates to the behaviour under certain circumstances. If we observe these circumstances and that behaviour we say that a man is .... or has ....."[12.] This remark drives out the idea that the concept of pain is simply related to bodily movements. Only in appropriate circumstances is human behaviour expressive of pain: "The concept of pain is characterised by its peculiar function in our life". [13.] "Pain has THIS position in our life; has THESE connections; (that is to say: we only call 'pain' what has THIS position, THESE connections)" [14.] "Only surrounded by certain normal manifestations of life, is there such a thing as an expression of pain. Only surrounded by an even more far reaching manifestation of life such a thing as the expression of sorrow or affection. And so on." [15.] These statements give an important insight into what Wittgenstein means by language-games being part of a form of life, and their

12. Z.523
13. Z.532
14. Z.533
15. Z.534

theme is taken up a few pages further on: "Being sure that someone is in pain, doubting whether he is, and so on, are so many natural, instinctive, kinds of behaviour towards other human beings, and our language is merely an auxiliary to, and further extension of, this relation. Our language-game is an extension of primitive behaviour. (For our language-game is behaviour)"[16].

What disquiets us about the statement that "pain" means pain-behaviour (and it is a well founded disquietude) is that it is possible to simulate pain behaviour. Someone can exhibit pain behaviour without being in pain, and yet we do not want to say that in that case there is an ingredient, pain, lacking, for to say that would be to reintroduce the idle picture of pain and the idea that you can give yourself a private exhibition of it. The quotations from Zettel above imply that the CONTEXT in which behaviour occurs is a vitally important factor in differentiating between someone who is in pain (the victim of a motor smash) and someone simulating pain, but at first sight context may seem relatively unimportant - everyone can be in pain anywhere, anytime, or all the time. But is this so? - Is it conceptually possible?

To answer this I suggest the following case: Let us suppose that the world is a vast stage and that all the people in the world are superlatively good actors, with the exception of one or two who comprise the "audience". Suppose that you fall into the latter group. You watch the scenes of life as you watch the scenes of a play. You come upon a motor accident where a man is lying writhing on the ground, moaning and sometimes screaming "O my leg, my leg." Let us assume you are a doctor. Do you give the man a morphine injection? Well you might, but it would be a mistaken thing to do - one might say that the script didn't call for it. No play script calls for the audience to act in the play! But say you did what the script didn't call for and administered a pain-killer, and say the actor

16. Z. 545

stopped his writhings - then we would also make a mistake. He would have forgotten that the play must go on.

But would he be mistaken in all circumstances? What if the play were performed in order to get you, the audience to do something? ("The Murder of Gonzago" in "Hamlet") What if the playwright and players intended you to think that the play was reality? In that case the actor would have missed his cue if he did not respond to your treatment. But note also that if he does respond then it begins to be uncertain who is directing the play - the play is ceasing to be a play. The mal genie has been fired from his job as director. If you strike someone and she goes on laughing and chatting as the script demands, then you will know that she is acting. Her behaviour is not normal.

The point of this example is to show the primary importance of context for the grammar of pain language. (It has other, broader implications for our notions of concept, grammar and forms of life, which will be discussed in Part III). In certain problematic cases only the context can enable us to decide whether someone is in pain. If an actor is playing the part of someone who has a headache and he has a very, very bad headache himself then only the further context of his off-stage behaviour will enable us to say of him, "He wasn't acting after all." So while it is true that someone can be in pain at any time, the question of how it is to be decided whether he is in pain cannot be answered without reference to context. And further, it is obvious that we couldn't all be in pain all the time. - It is not conceptually possible. Similarly it is nonsense to say that we could all simulate pain all the time. The language-game of lying, or acting has to be learned, and the preparation for learning it consists partly in acquiring the concept of pain, which means among other things, understanding the difference between suffering pain and not suffering it.

The sceptical argument, whether of the "private sensation" type or of the "strong behaviourist" type, turns on the refusal to supply any criterian for the correct ascription of pain predicates to a person. The rules of ordinary language are abrogated by the sceptic who then finds to his surprise that the game cannot be played. He is rather like someone who, whenever shown something which is claimed to be a diamond always declares it to be a fake, and who says, even when shown the Cullinan that it is glass.

PART THREE

LANGUAGE AS INTENTIONAL ACTION

Having tried to show the Wittgensteinian technique at work in the field of arguments for and against the privacy of sensation, it is necessary that certain other but related investigations of his should be briefly covered. In the following three chapters I propose to deal with the topics of (a) meaning and intentional action; (b) the concept of a person; and (c) language-games and forms of life. The choice of these topics was guided by a number of considerations.

Firstly, they all feature prominently in Wittgenstein's later writings. The investigation of intention forms a large part of the end sections of Investigations Part 1 and re-appears frequently in Part II. Considerable attention is also given to intention in Zettel (227ff and 570ff). The importance and fertility of these investigations can in part be gauged by the amount of literature on the topic of intention and human action which has appeared since the publication of the Philosophical Investigations. Very much the same applies to his treatment of the concept of a person - and I think here particularly of Strawson's work in this area. Wittgenstein is hard to pin down textually here and the importance of the subject in his thought is more often implicit than explicit, but it does seem pretty clear that as far as his conceptual studies in the philosophy of mind are concerned he held the investigation of the concept of a person to be of very considerable importance. As for the third topic, its importance is apparent even from the most cursory reading of the later works. Not only is the technique of using language-games as illuminating examples employed in the Investigations, Zettel and On Certainty, but the relationship between these games and what Wittgenstein calls forms of life, is constantly adverted to by him.

In the second place I have selected these topics because of the close connection which they have with one another. I might for instance have chosen the quite lengthy treatments of colour concepts or emotion-predicates in Zettel, but they do not have the same intimate and fundamentally important relationship with each other or with any of the three chosen topics which the latter have with each other. That human action and the concept of a person are related is obvious from the very phrases themselves, but their connection with the third topic may seem at first a little tenuous. I hope to show, however, that the investigation of language-games and the conceptual structure which they imply greatly facilitates the investigation of the concepts dealt with in the other two chapters.

Thirdly my choice was dictated by certain important lacunas in Part 11. To be specific: in Chapter six I spoke constantly of intentions in connection with communication in order to suggest an alternative to what Waismann calls the causal interpretation of language, but it was beyond the scope of that chapter to deal with the concept of intention as such. Consequently the question of the meaning of sentences such as, "I intended he should leave when I said 'Get out'", or, "I mean THAT table not that one", or "Her words mean nothing she is just babbling," still remain largely unclarified, and I hope to go some way in remedying this. Another loose end which needs to be tied up is the problem raised by Wellman and Ayer which I mentioned in Chapter five, of where a verification stops, why it must stop somewhere, etc. This is part of a more general problem - I shall call it the problem of conceptual limits - which greatly occupied Wittgenstein and which we have mentioned in discussing rules for the use of rules for the use of rules ....., and explanations of explanations ....., and similar problems. This area will be dealt with in discussing language-games and forms of life. The chapter on the concept of a person is meant to supplement the discussion of sensation particularly where it touched on the behavioural criteria of

sensation. It will also be used to give another slant on the problem of conceptual limits in that it will deal with the question of why we do not predicate psychological terms of amoebae or even of worms, whereas we do use some of them of dogs and employ the full range,of human beings.

One further point might be made before I begin: these chapters, like those in the other two parts of the thesis are meant, above everything, to illustrate the strictly conceptual character of Wittgensteinian philosophising. Toulmin,[1.] in stressing the unity of Wittgenstein's thought, makes this point strongly. He argues, for example, that the transition from the Tractatus to the position in the Investigations was a shift in the method of handling conceptual problems in their connection with language - the shift from the conception of language-as-Gleichnis to the concept of language-as-Handlung. In my opinion the radical nature of this split should not be underestimated or clouded by an unbalanced emphasis on the unity of Wittgenstein's thought, but this much at any rate is clear: in the Tractatus he had already broken with the conception of philosophy as a supra-scientific discipline which dealt with factual matters of a subtle and rarified kind: He writes there:

> 4.111 Philosophy is not one of the natural sciences.
>
> 4.112 Philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts.
>
> Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity.
>
> A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations.
>
> Philosophy does not result in philosophical propositions but rather in the clarification of propositions.

Van Peursen who presents an account of the rupture in Wittgenstein's work [2.] at the same time never suggests that Wittgenstein had at one time regarded his philosophy as a

1. Toulmin, "Ludwig Wittgenstein", Encounter VOL.XXXII No.1. Jan.'69
2. van Peursen, "Ludwig Wittgenstein. An Introduction to his Philosophy.

metaphysic and then later decided to reject that view. So however different, and significantly so, his later work was from his earlier, he was all the time working within the framework of philosophy as a conceptual discipline. In this way Wittgenstein's practice reflects Engels' conviction that philosophy has been "expelled from nature and history" [3]. and that its proper task was conceptual and logical investigations.

3. Engels' "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", Part 4.

C H A P T E R IX

INTENTION

We have said in Chapter 6 that the meaning of a word is given by the rules for its use. But this, as we saw, needs further qualifications. In general a word can only be said to mean something when it is combined with other words to form a sentence. Therefore the rules which determine the meaning of a word can be divided into two sorts: formation rules from which sentence schemata can be derived i.e. the formal rules of syntax; and rules for the actual employment of the sentence in a given context. We saw further that the formulation of this latter sort of rules is only possible if reference is made to what the utterer wishes to communicate. Together these two sorts of rules determine the meaning of what is said by an utterer. Thus a machine so constructed as to articulate sentences in accordance with the formal rules of syntax cannot yet be described as SAYING anything, since in this case no reference is possible to the intention with which the sentences are articulated. We may say of the man that he means what he says. We do not say of a machine that it says anything at all or that it means anything by the sounds which it articulates.

But is this true? Don't we often say things like, "The clock tells me it's time to leave", or "According to the speedometer we're hitting 90", or "The pressure gauge says that the locomotive has got up a good head of steam". How is the meaning of such sentences, which are grammatically similar to a sentence such as "He tells me it is time to leave", to be distinguished from a sentence of this last sort? Here it would only be a partially satisfactory answer to say that the difference lay in the different objects to which the words "the clock" and "he" referred: we have not yet dealt with the difference between the concept of a person and the concept of a machine. Before we can make that distinction

we must clear the conceptual ground by making certain others. We will approach this task by way of investigating the logic or grammar of the two sentences, "He tells me ....." and "the clock tells me ...."

The first major difference between these sentences is that there is a certain sense of the question "Why?" [1.] in which it is proper to ask, "Why does he tell me ....?" and in which it is not proper to ask, "Why does the clock tell me .....?" in order to clarify this difference, and at the risk of cluttering the investigation with prior qualifications, we must first distinguish the use of the question "Why?" in which it <u>can</u> properly be asked of both statements. The sense in which it can be used in both cases is what is being called "the causal sense". If I ask, "Why does the clock tell me it is time to leave?" and mean by this, "How do the clock's workings come to be poised in this way", then someone might answer, "Because it has been running fast for ages", or "Because the workings have just been adjusted". In other words he gives a causal explanation in order to satisfy my question. Similarly in answer to "Why does he tell me it is time to leave?" someone might say, "Well a certain set of synapses have just fired in his brain", or even "Poor chap, he has just had a brain operation you know, and he keeps coming out with these embarrassing orders".

Now explanations of this sort are usually called causal in order to distinguish them from explanations which, it is said, give <u>a reason</u> as opposed to a cause. But this is not quite good enough because there is a use of "reason" in which it is proper to say that "He has just had brain surgery" IS giving a reason for his behaviour. At the same time it is necessary to distinguish between what, to be pedantic, we might then term "causal reasons" and reasons of another sort, and having done this we will find that the distinction corresponds to the distinction between our two uses of the

1. Anscombe, "Intention".

question "Why?" How is this distinction to be made?

Wittgenstein invented a technique for solving this type of grammatical problem (which occupied a great deal of his attention). "What is the difference between cause and motive?" he asked, and he then suggested a method for answering by putting a further question: "How is the motive DISCOVERED, and how the cause?" [2.] (Unfortunately however, the introduction of a concept of a motive raises a number of thorny problems which it is beyond the scope of this chapter to cope with;[3.] for instance, we might ask questions as to the relation of motive to intention. But we will not deal with this area of problem) Turning to Wittgenstein's remark and following through its implications we can come up with the following points:

One of the ways in which we discover the difference between an intentional behaviour and an unintentional one is by asking why it occurred. (a) If the explanation given in answer to the question is of a sort which says that the particular behaviour is the effect of a prior cause then it is always logically possible (i.e. it makes sense) to ask why the cause occurred. So the question "Why?" interpreted causally can, in principle, generate an infinite series of questions of a similar causal nature. (b) But if the question is interpreted as an attempt to discover the intention with which the behaviour occurred (and I use the awkward locution "intention and behaviour occurring" with a purpose) then it does not always make sense to continue asking "Why?" of the explanations given.

Here are two examples which illustrate (a) and (b) but which also show the inadequacy of (a) and (b) for establishing how we discover the difference between causal reasons and that other sort of reasons which are bound up with intention and motive.

2. P.I. page 224
3. See Kenny, "Action, Emotion and Will", pages 76-99.

Example (a): A steam pressure gauge registers a high pressure

Q. Why does the gauge register so high?

A. Because the steam is exerting great pressure in the boiler.

Q. Why is it doing that?

A. Because the fire has been burning for many hours.

Q. Why has it been?

A. Because the stoker lit it early.

Q. Why did he do that?

A. Because his brain behaves in a certain way.

Q. Why?

A. ..... (this leads off into a series of questions as to the causes and effects of neurological phenomena.)

Now this does not, of course, constitute a proof that the series can be infinite, but it does indicate how misplaced it would be to look for an explanation of this sort which could stop all further questions.

Let us look at another question and answer series -

Example (b): Jack shakes his fist at Jill.

Q. Why did Jack do that?

A. I don't know, ask him.

Q. Jack, why did you shake your fist at Jill?

A. O, I don't know, I just wanted to.

Q. Thank you Jack. I simply was curious to know why.

In example (b) the questioner might have pressed on with, "Why did you want to?" If Jack answers quite soberly, "You know I really can't say, but I DID want to shake my fist at her," then the questioner will realise that nothing more can be done by way of question and answer to find out from Jack why he wanted to.

But is this true? Yes and no. And it is precisely in the ambiguity of this answer that the inadequacy of (a) and

(b) for distinguishing between causal reasons and intention reasons comes out. For let us assume that the questioner is a psychiatrist, then he might either go on to ask Jack's friends and family why he wanted to shake his fist or ask Jack, not why he wanted to shake his fist, but why say he keeps staring at a paper knife lying on the table! But now an important difference between example (a) and example (b) comes out. In order to continue asking "why" in example (b) the focus of interest has to be changed and with it the direction of the question asked. The questioner cannot sensibly persist with the question, "Why did you want to shake your fist Jack?" When once Jack has said he doesn't know. But at this stage somebody might counter that it would not be sensible of someone to persist in questioning Jack as to why volcanos erupt when once he has said he doesn't know. Yet here one wants to say "But this is different" i.e. the difference between sensibly persisting with the question about volcanos and not sensibly persisting with it is different from the difference between sensibly persisting in the question "Why did you do X?" and not sensibly persisting with it. How is it different?

When we said that there had to be a change in the direction of the question "Why?" if the series of question and answer was to continue in example (b) we said something which was slightly but very importantly inaccurate. It is not so much that the change in direction enables the original series to continue but that it enables a new sort of series to begin. Having elicited from Jack that he shook his fist because he wanted to, we have established the connection between two things, his wanting to and his shaking his fist, which is not of a causal sort. We have satisfied ourselves from the point of view of finding out whether Jack's action was intended that it was so intended. Having discovered this we can go on to discover the causes of this intention, but then the kind of explanation given will be of a different sort.

For instance, an important difference between c... explanations and the giving of intention-type reasons is t... it is quite possible to give a mistaken causal explanation whereas it is not possible for someone telling the intention with which his action was performed to make a mistake. That is why we want to say that the series in example (a) comes to a halt, even when more information can still be [illegible]. The information acquired about why Jack wanted to shake fist, if it is in the form of causal explanations, w... a corrigible nature, whereas it makes no sense to say ... is in error when he tells us the intention or motive be... his action.So if we want to find out whether someone me... do something and what it was they meant to do, we want ... out something different from what we want to find out ... ask what caused him to do it.

There is another difference between the two ... explanation. In example (a) it is always possible to ... stitute "How?" for "Why?" and further to put the interr... into the third person passive. Thus:

Q. How is the needle on the gauge moved to ...
A. By the pressure of the steam in the cylinder.
Q. How is that pressure exerted?
A. By the motion of molecules.
Q. How ..... etc.

But, and this point is made by Melden,[4] when we to discover whether an action was intentional and what the ... tentions were we cannot sensibly ask questions like, "How ... your fist clenched?" The answer to this question is a mat... for a physiologist. Still less can we ask, "How did you clench your fist?" This question is only intelligible if th... is something the matter with the fist e.g. that the person ... painful arthritis in the joints of his fingers. Or, in another case, it can be asked when there is an obstacle in ... way of the fist being clenched - powerful springs holding ...

4. Melden, "Free Action", p. 26 ff.

fingers out straight. In these cases "How did you clench your fist?" can always be substituted by, "How did you manage to clench your fist?" But when we want to know the intention with which the fist was clenched we neither have to consult a physiologist (nor even a psycho-physiologist) nor do we want to know how the fist clenching was achieved. So when we enquire about intentions we enquire after reasons which, as Waismann puts it, will JUSTIFY the action. [5.] This is very important for our discussion of what it means to say of someone that he says something, as opposed to saying this of a clock. It connects for one thing with the rules for the actual, contextual use of a sentence.

To sum up so far: (i) there are different senses of the question "Why?" (ii) the ones we are interested in are the causal use and the use in which a reason is demanded; (iii) the series of causal questions and answers cannot be terminated in the way that the series demanding a reason can be; (iv) answers to questions about causes are corrigible in a way in which first person giving of reasons are not; (v) the causal use of "Why?" permits of a translation which is effected by substituting "How" for "Why" and putting the rest of the sentence into the passive voice.

There is another feature which we must examine which differentiates the two uses of "Why?" namely the difference between the relation of cause to effect, and the relation of intention to action. This, of all the differences we have dealt with, is the most important and the most obvious - for which reason, as so often happens, it is the most easily overlooked. Wittgenstein treats the problem like this:

"I should not say of the movement of my arm, for example; it comes when it comes, etc. And this is the region in which we say significantly, that a thing doesn't simply happen to us, but that we DO it. I don't need to wait for

5. Waismann, "The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy, page 122.

my arm to go up - I can raise it." And here I am making a contrast between the movement of my arm and say, the fact that the violent thudding of my heart will subside.

"In the sense in which I can ever bring anything about, (such as stomach-ache through overeating), I can also bring about an act of willing. In this sense I bring about the act of willing to swim by jumping into the water. Doubtless I was trying to say: I can't will willing; that is it makes no sense to speak of willing willing. "Willing" is not the name of an action; and so not the name of any voluntary action either. And my use of wrong expression came from our wanting to think of willing as an immediate non-causal bringing about. A misleading analogy lies at the root of this idea; the causal nexus seems to be established by a mechanism connecting two parts of a machine. The connection may be broken if the mechanism is disturbed". (P.I.) [6].

If we think of the connection between the intention to do something and the doing, as being of a quasi-causal sort then the matter becomes extremely puzzling. The difficulties in Pritchard's treatment of voluntary action [7]. all arise from his approaching the subject in this way. If the intention is construed as operating as a causal agency for action then there seems to be a miraculously invariant relationship between intention and action. And yet this harmony seems queer and uncanny. For instance, why is it in the case of intentions that when we ask someone the intention with which he performed an action, his answer can never be wrong? Is it because his introspections have yielded him overwhelmingly strong empirical evidence that whenever he intends to do X, the intention results in the action x? No - this is incorrect for two reasons. Firstly we quite often intend to do, or say something and yet do not do or say it. Secondly, no amount of empirical evidence of the relation of a cause to its effect can be so overwhelming

6. P.I. 612-13
7. Pritchard, "Duty and Ignorance of Fact", and "Acting, Willing, Desiring" in "Moral Obligation".

that it is not possible to correct the statement that in a given case an effect e is the result of a cause c.

So take the first point. When I intend to do something I may or may not do it. I may intend to go to the beach and not manage to get there. But if I do go it is not as though I inferred from my intention that it was likely that I would go. The intention to go doesn't produce the action of going, in the way that the action of the cue produces a movement in the billiard ball. If we are tempted to think of "willing" as a sort of producing - not however as a case of causation, but I should like to say, as a direct, non-causal producing [8]. then we should try to give up this picture by remembering Wittgenstein's little example:

"If someone meets me in the street and asks 'Where are you going?' and I reply 'I don't know,' he assumes I have no definite INTENTION, not that I do not know whether I shall be able to carry out my intention". [8]. The case where I do not know whether I shall be able to carry out my intention is one where someone at the snooker table asks "Are you going to get position on the black?" and I say "I don't know". And here the uncertainty arises because causality is involved, viz. my inexpert use of the cue to propel the white ball towards the red, etc.

The second point is connected with the first. In the case of cause and effect I DISCOVER that THIS is the effect of THAT, through observation of a more or less sophisticated kind. In the case of voluntary action I do not discover that this action of mine is the result of that intention of mine (I DISCOVER this about other people.) That this must be so we can see from the grammar of the language-game played with intentions. Certain grammatical features mark it off from the language-game of causality. For example I cannot sensibly say "I intend" but I can say "I push". Even though "intend" is a finite verb when considered as a part of speech, it must always be completed by an object - "I intend to push". Thus no description can be given of an intention independent of what

8. Z.580

is intended. Whereas I can describe my action of pushing independent of whether I am pushing a rock over a cliff or a mower over a lawn. This grammatical rule accounts for the "queer" feeling that one gets if one thinks about intentions as being ACTIONS which CAUSE movements: there seems to be such a wonderful harmony between the cause and the effect - as though the effect was already "in some way" present in the cause. But the harmony between the two, like all metaphysical harmonies is found in the grammar of the language. The connection between intention and action is logical not causal [9]. So we can say "I intend to write" and "I write intentionally" and "I intend to write a letter of thanks." We do not discover that we are doing something intentionally. Were we to do this there would be occasions on which we were surprised or astonished that THIS action was intentional. This is what Wittgenstein means when he says:

"Writing is certainly a voluntary movement and yet an automatic one. And of course there is no question of a feeling in each movement of writing. One feels something, but could not possibly analyse the feeling. One's hand writes; it does not write because one wills, but one wills what it writes.

One does not watch it in astonishment or with interest while writing, does not think 'what will it write now?' But not because one had a wish it should write that. For that it writes what I want might well throw me into astonishment." [10].

The intention is neither a feeling which accompanies the action nor is it any other peculiar experience, although it would be psychologically interesting if certain feelings occurred in someone who acted intentionally or if certain immages occurred to him.

9. See Melden's treatment of this topic in "Free Action".
10. Z. 586. See also P.I. page 185 on anaesthetic sensations.

We are now in a better position to return to our original problem of what it means to say of someone, that he means what he says or, to put it in the form in which the question was first posed, of what the difference is between a man telling me something and a clock telling me something.

Quite simply the difference is this: the reason why the clock shows eleven o'clock is that it is caused to function in a particular way by the construction and adjustment of its mechanism; the reason why a man tells me this might be that he intends that I shouldn't miss my train. Because we say of a man that he has intentions to communicate we teach him ways to use language, we teach him strategy of verbal action. We do not teach these to a clock because a clock does not act, it moves. So when we ask a man why he says what he says, he answers by giving a justification in terms of what he intends by his utterance (what he wants the utterance to achieve) and by connecting this intention with the rules for the actual employment of the sentence which he is uttering (communication-intentions rules). This is a way of discovering the meaning of an utterance which for some or other reason we don't understand.

This discussion has in a sense brought us full circle. Through an analysis of the difference between the two senses of the question "Why?" we have seen why the notion of intention is essentially connected with the language-game in which we say of people that they mean something by what they utter. But having come back to the original point we are forced into a new topic.

Earlier I said that the locution "such - and - such and intentional behaviour occurred in someone" was odd. We do not normally say this. We say "He DID such-and-such" or "Such-and-such an ACTION was performed." Clearly there is something in this which connects with the fact that we cannot translate the intention-seeking question into the "How?" form.

And this in turn connects with the statement that machines cannot act, but only move. Finally this last point is meant to serve as a contrast to the fact that we only attribute feelings, thoughts and intentions to human beings and what resemble them. So it is to the question of what the concept of a human being involves that we must now turn.

CHAPTER X

HUMAN BEINGS

There frequently appear in Wittgenstein's later writings remarks such as the following:

"We only say of a human being and what is like one that it thinks." [1.]

"Say to yourself, for example: 'The children over there are mere automatons; all their liveliness is mere automatism.' And you will either find these words becoming quite meaningless; or you will produce in yourself some kind of uncanny feeling, or something of the sort." [2.]

"..... only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees; is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious." [3.]

"The human body is the best picture of the human soul." [4.]

"Our criterion of someone's saying something to himself is what he tells us and the rest of his behaviour; and we only say that someone speaks to himself if, in the ordinary sense of the word he CAN SPEAK. And we do not say it of a parrot; nor of a grammaphone." [5.]

How are these remarks and the many others like them to be interpreted? Some philosophers like Chihara and Fodor [6.] have seen in them evidence that Wittgenstein is arguing for a sort of behavioural criteriology with a strong operationalist bias, and in consequence they attack what they term his "logical behaviourism". These interpreters often make the mainstay of their argument Wittgenstein's statement that an

1. P.I. 360
2. P.I. 420
3. P.I. 281
4. P.I. page 178
5. P.I. 344
6. Chihara and Fodor, op. cit.

inward process (a mental process) stands in need of outward criteria. In apparent opposition to this argument, other philosophers have sought to defend Wittgenstein by arguing for the correctness and coherence of what they take to be "theory" of criteria in the field of the problem of other minds. A third school dismiss the whole debate on the grounds that (a) its protagonists pose the problem of other minds and the question of what a human being is in the wrong way (b) that they completely misinterpret Wittgenstein by placing his writings in the Cartesian problematic, when this was just the problematic from which he so radically parted company. Among the proponents of the third view are Strawson [7.] Cook [8.] and Reinhardt. [9.] I take their position to be the correct one.

In "Persons" Strawson discusses the fact that philosophers have found it puzzling that we ascribe both material (M-predicates) and personal psychological (P-predicates) predicates to a certain class of entities, namely human beings. Their ways out of this puzzlement have taken two superficially different forms. The Cartesian way out has been to suggest that since M-predicates are ascribed to both human and non-human entities, but since psychological words are only predicated of human beings, the defining criterion of a human being must be that psychological words can be predicated of him. Therefore, Descartes argued, there is no way of deducing from the fact that there is present to us, what, in the ordinary way we call a human body (the subject of M-predicates) the fact that a person is present. In this, as critiques of Mill's attempt to make such an inference have shown, he was correct. Descartes was thus forced to say that only the thinking subject himself could know that he was a thinking subject, i.e. a person. This knowledge is gained from introspection and is private and incommunicable.

The apparent alternative to this line of approach has been to say that P-predicates have meaning if and only if the statements in which they are used, are translatable into statements containing only M-predicates, i.e. predicates in a

7. Strawson, "Persons" in "Individuals"
8. Cook, "Human Beings" in Studies in the Phil. of Wittgenstein ed. Peter Winch.
9. Reinhardt, "Wittgenstein and Strawson on Other Minds" in Winch.

purely physical description of what we call the human body. This description will, of course, not contain any reference to feeling, intention or action. A behaviourist such as Hull for example, wishes to describe what in the ordinary way we would call "purposive behaviour" as "colourless movements". For him there is a logical and criteriological relationship between P- and M-predicates, which Cook describes when he says: " 'It is Hull's stated aim to begin from colourless movements and mere receptor impulses as such' and build up (or 'deduce') such concepts as purposive action, intelligence, intention and other mental verbs and predicates." [10.]

Both the behaviourist and the Cartesian approaches have a noteable common feature - they involve a radical departure from the ordinary use language. To be fully consistent Descartes should not talk about it, and the behaviourists should not really have to talk (except by way of abbreviating a language of bodily movements constructed in terms of co-ordinate Geometry) of the human mind.

Another feature which the behaviourist shares with the Cartesian is his preparedness to work in a problematic in which the concept of a person is dealt with in terms of a body - mind dichotomy. For the Cartesian the body hides the mind (the person) in the sense that it is an irrelevant and a deceptive appearance. For the behaviourist the mind hides the body in the sense that it is a superfluous unverifiable and confused hypothesis which tends to bar us from seing clearly that all P-predicates are reducible to M-predicates.

Wittgenstein, as we have seen rejects this way of conceiving a human being. Of a human being he says: "My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul." (P.I. page 178) [11.] and " 'I noticed that he was out of humour'. Is this a report about his behaviour or his state of mind? ('The sky looks threatening.' Is this about the present or

10. Cook, "Human Beings", page 131.
11. P.I. page 178.

the future?) Both; not side-by-side however, but about the one via the other." (P.I. page 179) [12.]

From this last quotation as well as from the many about behavioural criteria (P.I. 171,2,3 for example) it would be quite easy to interpret Wittgenstein as a logical behaviourist. But as we tried to indicate in the chapter on criteria that term can be used in an extremely misleading way. Wittgenstein uses it in the other minds problem, NOT for the purposes of showing how we get from what is observable ("colourless movements") to what is hidden. Had he used it in that way his work would still fall within the compass of the Cartesian conception of the human being. Cook and Reinhardt argue explicitly and Strawson implies that the Cartesian approach was precisely the one from which Wittgenstein broke. Cook puts the position most accurately and succinctly when he writes a propos of Investigations (164):

"One point to gather from this passage is that in so far as Wittgenstein uses the concept of criteria to oppose the notion of 'the hidden', this is NOT the notion that arises in the problem of other minds, the problem that grows out of Descartes' metaphysical use of 'body' but rather that notion of the hidden that arises out of looking for a common element and finding none. I take it that Wittgenstein's opposition to this notion of 'the hidden' does not make him a behaviourist." [13.]

This I think is the correct interpretation. The danger of a criteriological argument is firstly that it tends to be simplistic and essentialistic, secondly it often involves a misunderstanding of the role of paradigm cases in language and thirdly it ignores the importance of context in deciding whether this is to count on an instance of that.

I shall illustrate these points by reference to things which we only predicate of human beings.

12. P.I. page 179.
13. Cook, op. cit. page 136.

We only say of a human being that he has an opinion, but there is no strictly determinable set of behavioural signs which enable us to infer "the presence of an opinion in someone" - (the very oddness of the quoted phrase makes one suspicious). That there is no defining criterion or set of criteria, nevertheless this does not mean that all we ever have are symptoms from which we induce more or less probable judgments about the presence of an opinion in someone. Wittgenstein suggests the following questions which will yield criterial answers: "What, in particular cases, do we regard as criteria for someone's being of such-and-such an opinion? When do we say: he reached this opinion at that time? When: he has altered his opinion? And so on. The picture which the answers to these questions give us show what gets treated grammatically as a STATE here.[14] Here we are walking along a knife edge. We have seen that Cook, Reinhardt and Strawson reject the notion, attributed to Wittgenstein by Chihara and Fodor, that there is a criterial relationship between P- and M-predicates, and yet the passage just quoted suggests that we must seek out the behavioural criteria from which we learn (build-up) our concept of human predicate like "being of the opinion". All we can say with assurance at the moment is that Wittgenstein rejects, in most cases in ordinary language, the view that we must discover a defining criterion before we can know what anything is. But there is a further implication that "behaviour" is not used by him to denote one sort of thing. It is not a grammatically homogeneous word. This point is of crucial importance to the whole concept of a human being and we shall return to it later.

As far as paradigm cases are concerned the confusion into which a behavioural criteriology leads occurs like this: Quite often we are taught how to use a word, say "expecting", by being shown a case in which a man consults his appointment book, puts the kettle on, sets out tea cups, and then frequently looks anxiously up and down the street. We are told that

14. P.I. 573

these are the behavioural criteria of the state of expectation. Now if we misconstrue this training in the use of this word, we will come to think of these behaviours as being definitive of a state of expecting someone for tea. So in a case where a man does not behave in an analogous way at all we will be puzzled to hear him or someone else saying that he is expecting someone for tea. And we might justify our puzzlement by referring to Wittgenstein's statement that an inward process stands in need of outward criteria. However, what he means by this is not that in every case in which we predicate an internal state of a man there must be accompanying observable behaviours, but rather that if there never were any publicly observable behaviours which we could point to as cases of say "expecting someone for tea" then the word could not be part of our language. It could neither be taught nor used for communication. This is one of the major points of the argument against private language. The paradigm case is used on the preliminaries of "stage setting". It prepares us for using the word in other cases which bear a family resemblance to this one. It is not conceptually limiting in the sense that it defines once for all the cases in which we may say that a man expects someone for tea.

These two confusions about defining criteria and paradigm are closely tied up with a third blind spot viz. the importance of context for the use of a word. The great temptation in relying too heavily upon a criteriological form of argument is to treat certain behaviours in isolation from the context in which they occur, as being logically adequate criteria for the predication of psychological words. The language-game in which these predicates are used is learned on the basis of contextual behaviours. One might say that the ontological context in which a behaviour occurs finds its grammatical counterpart in the language-game in which we communicate about that behaviour. Just as someone who says when shown a section of an arithmetical progression "Now I can go on" and yet can't, does not know the series, so we do not SAY of such

a person that he knows the series. If we found a tribe of people who did accept the assurance that someone understood the rule of the series, but who never bothered to find out whether he could continue it, we should have to say of them that the language-game which they played with "understanding a rule" was different to ours. Their "concept" of understanding would be different - possibly because their interests were different. They might for instance be interested in the feeling which a section of a numerical series produced in someone, and therefore the context within which the sentence "I understand the rule of the series" occurs in which they were interested would be different from the context in which we were interested. If they did not have our concept, if they never played our language-game, we might say of them that their FORM OF LIFE was different, to this extent, from ours. (Perhaps they do not have our concept because they do not calculate in our way when building roads and bridges and so do not place the significance we do on understanding formulae.)

The importance of context for the use of P-predicates is suggested by Strawson in this passage:

"If one is playing a game of cards, the distinctive markings of a certain card constitute a logically adequate criterion for calling it say, the Queen of Hearts; but in calling it this, in the context of the game, one is ascribing it to properties over and above the possession of these markings. The predicate gets the meaning from the whole structure of the game. Criteria on the strength of which we ascribe P-predicates to others are of a logically adequate kind for this ascription, is not to say that all there is to the ascriptive meaning of these predicates is these criteria. To say this is to forget that they are P-predicates, to forget the rest of the language structure to which they belong." [15.]

15. Strawson, op. cit. page 110.

This passage casts light on Wittgenstein's use of the word "behaviour" and its connection with the concept of criteria and the concept of a person. Strawson's statement is in line, I feel, with method of approach to the investigation of that concept. He does not make the fatal Cartesian mistake of contrasting what is publicly observable - the body, with what is only privately accessible - the mind, and then showing the unbridgable gap between behaviour and the event. He dismisses that conception of the matter. The human body for him is precisely that, a human body, not an elaborate machine from whose MOVEMENTS we either infer the presence of a psychological state or build up the concept of such a state. To see the question of what a person is as answerable solely in the Cartesian way can only result in a conceptual blind alley:

"It seems paradoxical to us that we should make such a medly, mixing physical states and states of consciousness up together in a SINGLE report: 'He suffered great torments and tossed about restlessly'. It is quite usual, so why do we find it paradoxical? Because we want to say that the sentence deals with both tangibles and intangibles at once. But does it worry you if I say: 'These three struts give the building stability'? Are three and stability tangible? - Look at the sentence as an instrument, and at its sense as the employment." 16.

So if we are going to talk about Wittgenstein's use of the notion of criteria in connection with the concept of a person, we will have to say that he uses both bodily and psychological properties as being criteria of human beings. And this surely means that it is quite incorrect to classify him as a logical behaviourist! As far as he is concerned our concept of a person can only be described with any adequacy if we review the language-game as a whole in which we talk about people. And it is characteristic of this language-game that we talk of action as well as of movement. We say both, "He moved his arm" and "His arm was moved". This implies that the body - the subject of M-predicates is conceived quite

16. P.I. 421.

differently from a machine. We do not usually see the movements of an arm as action - we see the movements of a puppet as actions, (and it is grammatically, conceptually, interesting that a human being can imitate a puppet, i.e. act so that the action is seen as the movements of a puppet which is being manipulated so as to seem as to be acting). Wittgenstein says in his investigation of seeing something as something:

" 'Now I see it as a ..... goes with 'I am trying to see it as a ..... or 'I can't see it as a ..... yet.' But I cannot try to see a conventional picture of a lion AS a lion, any more than F as that letter (though I may well try to see it as a gallows, for example.)" [17].

This of course is a conceptual statement. To see something as something requires that one has learned to do certain things. To have the experience of seeing something as ..... involves being the master of a technique. "But how queer for this to be the logical condition of someone's having such and such an experience! After all, you don't say that one only has toothache if one is capable of doing such and such. From this it follows that we cannot be dealing with the same concept of experience here. It is a different though related concept" [18]. A few lines further on Wittgenstein makes a remark directly relevant to the question we are dealing with. He says, "For how could I see this posture was hesitant before I knew it was a posture and not the anatomy of the animal?" His point is that one cannot move from the body, considered anatomically, to "seeing hesitation" in his posture". To do this we should have to see a machine (the body from the anatomist's point of view) AS a human body, and then see in the gestures and postures of that body, hesitation, grief, surprise, horror, etc. This is possible, as in the case of watching puppets, but it is a possibility founded on the giveness of the body as a human body. Or rather, on the giveness of the form

17. P.I. page 208, see also Zettel 208-225.
18. P.I. page 208

of life which determines our concept of the human, and this giveness of forms of life as far as the philosopher is concerned, "has to be accepted." [19] We might possibly be able to imagine a people (one of Wittgenstein's "tribes") who had a different concept of human beings like, say, the tribe he talks about in Zettel whose concept of suffering pain is different from ours. But in order to do that we have to imagine attitudes, projects, methods of dealing with the world rather different from our own. Reinhardt suggests, correctly, I think, that we "grow into a mastery of the system of P-predicates, i.e. into a mastery of the language-game which we play with human beings, and this system is, so to speak, groundless. Its foundation is a form of life." [20]

But it would be a mistake to see the conceptual system of P-predicates as a sharply defined one: the limits of the concept are penumbral. We have what the difference is between a man and a machine, but what would we say of a machine that winced when you hit it? This is the sort of question with which we proposed to deal at the beginning of the chapter on intentional action. That chapter was designed to show that the problems which arise concerning the use of a particular P-predicate (problems concerned with using words like "act", "mean" and "intend") arise when we make a grammatical confusion between two sorts of questions. Similarly here, when trying to indicate the conceptual boundaries between men and machines, a problem arises only if certain sorts of QUESTIONS are uncritically accepted. For instance the question as we raised it a few lines back. Let me repeat it: "We know what the difference is between a man and a machine, but what would we say of a machine that winced when you hit it?" From a Wittgensteinian point of view the question is doubly dangerous because IT LOOKS LIKE A WITTGENSTEINIAN QUESTION. It seems to raise a question about how we talk. In fact it conceals an important confusion, which comes out if the second part of it is reformulated in a truly Wittgenstein way, namely:

19. P.I. page 226.
20. Reinhardt, op. cit. page 157.

".... but would we say of a machine that it winced when you hit it?" The wrong formulation presupposes that the statement, "A machine winces" has an application, but it never supplies one. At most it calls on us to try to imagine something - a machine's wincing. Wittgenstein deals with exactly this demand for images in connection with stones. "Could one imagine a stone's having consciousness?" he asks. "And if one can do so - why should that not merely prove that such image-mongery is of no interest to us?" [21.]

Assuming that we could imagine something - say fragments of the stone flying off, looping the loop, and returning to their original position - we would have advanced no further because we are still faced with the problem of what application this picture is to have. What does it mean? What possible function can it have in the language-game of P-predicates? How can it be integrated into the concept of a person? It is no answer to say that the phenomenon of flying chips of stone are going to count as a criterion of the stone's being conscious, and this, for a previously mentioned reason. A criterion serves as a sort of conceptual marker. It indicates to us that a certain language-game is played here, rather in the way a red robot indicates to us that a certain form of traffic procedure is to be followed. But to say that flying chips of stone are a criterion for the stone's being conscious, so far tells us nothing, or to put it another way, leaves everything of importance unsaid.

Because criteria are conceptual markers, pointing to an area in which a language-game is played, and because, "to imagine a language is to imagine a form of life" [22.] the introduction of a new criterion, or the movement of what formerly counted as a symptom to the role of a criterion, implies an alteration in a form of life (or at least at the speculative level, the imagining of a different form of life.) Criteria,

21. P.I. 390. See also P.I. 282-88.
22. P.I. 19. See also the remark on language-games in P.I. 23.

thought of in this way, cannot be simply introduced not "simply", because their introduction implies either an actual transformation of material conditions of existence or implies the desire to transform these conditions of existence. The picture of a "conscious stone" or of a "machine wincing" is idle until a context (in terms of a form of life) is supplied, either in imagination or in fact, in which it can function. Therefore saying that a stone is conscious is little better than uttering senseless sounds, until we indicate an altered language of P-predicates in which this utterance will have meaning. This, I hope, makes clearer that passage from Wittgenstein quoted earlier, where he says that, in a certain sense of experience, to experience something requires that we do something. A society in which human beings and machines were not distinguished, would not only have a different concept of a person, it would engage in a different <u>form of activity</u> from what we do.

Having said this I am in a slightly better position for trying briefly to point to what seems to me to be one of Wittgenstein's most profound insights.

CHAPTER XI

LANGUAGE-GAMES AND FORMS OF LIFE

It was, I think, Spinoza who once wrote that the concept of a dog could not bark. The remark is extremely pertinent to any discussion of Wittgenstein's writings on language-games and forms of life, because, if suitably interpreted it lays the ghost of a simple "picture" theory of meaning, once for all, and opens the way to a far more viable road of investigation. For a Wittgensteinian the reason why the concept of a dog cannot bark, is not because the concept is an imperfect reproduction of a real dog, or the representation of some shadowy entity called "the class of all dogs." If we take a definition of "concept" such as that given by Geach we can see that it is patently absurd to treat concepts as intellectual mirror-images of things. I am not at all sure that his definition exactly squares with Wittgenstein, but it contains sufficient obviously Wittgensteinian features to make it a useful starting point for this very brief discussion of the relations between concepts, language-games and the given material conditions of existence, which Wittgenstein termed, "forms of life" [1]. Geach writes:

"The ability to express a judgment in words thus presupposes a number of capacities, previously acquired, for intelligently using the several words and phrases that make up the sentence. I shall apply the old term 'concepts' to these special capacities - an application which I think lies fairly close to the historic use of the term. It will be a sufficient condition for James's having the concept of so-and-so that he should have mastered the intelligent use (including the use in made-up sentences) of a word for so-and-so in some language. Thus: if somebody knows how to use the English word 'red' he has a concept of red; if he knows how

1. Stephen Toulmin suggest possible sources for this term. "Encounter", January 1969, p.71.

to use the first-person pronoun, he has a concept of self; if he knows how to use the negative construction in some language, he has a concept of negation." [2.]

So "concept" for Geach as for Wittgenstein means the ability to perform certain actions in certain conditions, and these actions are linguistic and their aim is to communicate (here "communicate" is not confined to the passing on of information, but includes linguistic behaviours such as those which Austin calls "performative utterances"). Little more need be said to establish the connection between concepts and games. When someone can act in accordance with the rules of poker he can play that game, and when someone can exercise his conceptual capacity by using words in accordance with given rules then he can speak a language. So far there is no difficulty.- The problems begin to arise when we ask ourselves where the rules of language come from. We have spoken about "using words in accordance with GIVEN rules" and we must be prepared to face the question of how these rules are given and of why some are given and not others. The answer we give to this question must be directed at illuminating the logical features of language-rules. It might well be enhanced, as far as interest goes, by philological and sociological considerations, but these are empirical sciences which are not directly relevant to the sort of investigation which Wittgenstein made of this problem. In place of accurately described factual social situations we can invent a social situation such as that in Investigations 2 and 8, where we are in a sense, in total control of all the possible variables. From these social situations we can attempt to formulate various linguistic behaviours, suitable to the imagined intentions of the people in our "society", e.g. the builder and his assistant in Investigations 2 and 8, or the primitive tribes which Wittgenstein dreams up in Zettel. But when we do this we come to realise that the logical structure, or grammar, of the language-games which we imagine are not reflections of a logic hypostatised in the material (though imagined) situation. The later Wittgenstein

2. Geach, "Mental Acts," pp.12-13.

rejected the view that logic was a picture of the world: rather he held that the various rule systems in accordance with which we act come into existence because of a dialectic between the given conditions of material existence at one or other point in history and our needs in projects in those conditions.

Taking an example from mathematics - why is it that we count "according to a rule" i.e. in just THIS way and not "anyhow"? "Counting and calculating are not - e.g. - simply a pastime. Counting (and that means counting like this) is a technique that is employed daily in the most various operations of our lives. And that is why we learn to count as we do: with endless practice, with merciless exactitude; that is why it is inexorably insisted that we shall all say 'two' after 'one', 'three' after 'two' and so on - 'But is counting only a use, then; isn't there also some truth corresponding to this sequence?' - The truth is that counting has proved to pay. - 'Then do you want to say that "being true" means: being usable (or useful)?' - No, not that, but that it can't be said of the series of natural numbers - ANY MORE THAN OF OUR LANGUAGE (capitals mine) - that it is true, but: that it is usable, and, above all, it is used." [3.]

The grammar of our language neither mirrors (or shows) the logic of the world, nor is it arbitrarily chosen by us. Language is an instrument - it is either appropriate or inappropriate, useful or useless, used or unused. For instance, (to turn again to mathematics) if objects always multiplied when placed in groups the equations of our arithmetic would prove unusable. It would not be correct so say in such circumstances, that it was no longer true that "2 + 2 = 4." We could only say that those equations were no longer appropriate in that they did not facilitate certain projects which we have.

It is, of course, not necessary to confine our examples to mathematics, as van Peursen points out: "Clearly,

3. F.M. pp. 3,4, Sec. 4.

what has been said here is of importance not only for the understanding of the sciences and their methodology, but also for the understanding of the measures employed in our ordinary language - we too use these words in a variety of ways - and thereby in our thinking." He goes on to mention what I referred to at the end of the last chapter as one of Wittgenstein's greatest insights. He writes: "The implications for epistemology and for philosophy generally will become clearer if we look at two aspects. The first is that a measure, a methodology, must agree with a general feature of the reality that is measured and explained. The second is that reality itself is plastic, because it, in turn, is affected by the manner in which it is measured and approached, and can therefore be remoulded by language and thought. Both aspects will be seen to come together in the theme of the forms of life to which language refers." [4.]

Wittgenstein puts it like this: "If we imagine the facts otherwise than as they are, certain language-games lose some of their importance, while others become important. And in this way there is an alteration - a gradual one - in the use of the vocabulary of a language ..... When language-games change, then there is a change in concepts, and with the concepts the meanings of words change." [5.] There is a constant interplay between what one might call the natural world and the conceptual world. But the interplay does not consist in "deriving by abstraction" concepts from empirical evidence, rather it is of the form suggested by Wittgenstein in his discussion of the relation of concepts to experience:

"It might be imagined that some propositions, of the form of empirical propositions, were hardened and functioned as channels for such empirical propositions as were not hardened but fluid, and that this relation altered with time, in that fluid propositions hardened, and hard ones became fluid.

4. van Peursen, op. cit. p.103
5. O.C. 63, 65.

"The mythology may change back into a state of flux, the river-bed of thoughts may shift. But I distinguish between the movement of the waters on the river-bed and the shift of the bed itself; though there is not a sharp division of the one from the other.

"But if someone were to say "So logic too is an empirical science" he would be wrong. Yet this is right: the same proposition that may get treated at one time as something to test by experience, at another as a rule of testing". [6.]

For example one might test whether two plus two equalled four by putting two pairs of counters together and seeing whether they multiplied; 2 + 2 = 4 then gets treated as an hypothesis and a prediction. On the other hand one might decide that, so to speak, the facts were irrelevant and that four was just to be taken as the sum of two pairs. In which case 2 + 2 = 4 is a rule, and it in no way describes the expected state of affairs. It prescribes a way of talking about the facts of experience, and in this way sets limits on the empirical, by telling us that THIS is going to count as THIS, or that THIS is THIS ("Essence is expressed by grammar .... Grammar tells us what kind of object anything is") [7.]

When once a concept has been formed i.e. when once a particular way of talking is adopted certain limits are set on the world. In the language-game played with "doubt", "knowledge", and "certainty" certain concepts are employed i.e. these words are used in accordance with certain rules. And Wittgenstein says about these ways of using the words that they are "given", i.e. they are groundless to the extent that they can in no way be tested against the facts, in the way we test a scientific hypothesis. The only kind of test which they are subject to is the test of time - in which their usefulness as ways of handling the world is tried.

6. O.C. 96, 97, 98.
7. P.I. 371 and 373.

Time and again throughout his later writings Wittgenstein repeats, in various ways, the remark, which is inseparably connected with his name: "But ordinary language is all right" [8]. This remark has been taken by some critics, as bespeaking, reactionary conservatism, and an uncritical approach. What in fact it indicates is the insight Wittgenstein had into the relationship between concepts and the material conditions in which they appear. When he tells us that we may in no way interfere with the actual uses of language he is cautioning us against an inappropriate method of reform. The logic of ordinary language, and thus the conceptual structure within which we operate cannot be altered by the strokes of a philosopher's pen. Our concepts form the river-bed of our thought and that river-bed depends, for its shape and course on both the waters running along it, and on the geo-morphology of the countryside. Concepts are formed in the dialectic between man and the existing conditions in which he lives. They alter when those conditions alter, and because they are a means by which we come to grips with the world, they often help to effect the alteration of the very conditions which gave rise to them. The analogy with tools and machines i.e. the means of production, is too strong to be avoided, and indeed it was Wittgenstein's favourite way of talking about words and language to compare them with tools, machines and engines. In doing so he was able to establish with great clarity the meaning of that phrase which could so well have been the motto for his later works:

"..... the <u>speaking</u> of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life." [9].

8. B.B. page 28.
9. P.I. 23.

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