

THE CONCEPT OF SELF

and Self Identity in
Contemporary Philosophy



DR.
ABSAR
AHMAD

Iqbal
Academy

Concept of Self

And

Self - Identity

(in Contemporary Philosophy)

An Affirmation of Iqbal's Doctrine

By

Dr. Absar Ahmad

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FOREWORD

The present study on the concept of self by Dr. Absar Ahmad is an extensive, patient and critical account of the published doctrines of an interesting group of thinkers currently active in Philosophical scene. I have read it more than once with enlightenment to myself and I think it desirable that its aid should be available to both students and teachers of Philosophy in general and to students of Iqbal's thought in particular.

In recent discussions of "the mind-body problem", a position called Cartesian dualism is frequently mentioned as a principal alternative to the various forms of materialism. What seems to be most often intended in such references to Cartesian dualism is the view that mental events — the most discussed examples in these contexts being sensations — are not identical with events in the body (brain, CNS or Whatever). Dr. Ahmad convincingly vindicates that the basic position of Cartesianism is correct and that within the Cartesian system proper the ontological distinction of mental and physical events is rightly understood as involving a distinction of substances or logical types of subjects. That is, sensations (understood as conscious states) are to be construed as belonging to, as modes of, mental substance or self; while physical states or occurrences, such as neural discharge, are ascribed to, or modally depend on, body or corporeal substance. By contrast, a materialist holds (for example) that the sensation of pain is nothing but the firing of certain neurons under the proper circumstances; that these are no irreducible mental occurrences and *a fortiori* no self or mental particular that has or owns such occurrences. Dr. Ahmad, during the course of his painstaking and critical discussion shows that the position of the materialist does not stand philosophical scrutiny. He calls attention to serious flaws in the reasoning of his opponents and furnishes grounds worthy of consideration in extending his own position. He maintains that every-

thing commonly identified as an experience or a conscious occurrence is conceivable independently of a physical or bodily occurrence or state. That is, one can introspect a pain, and form a clear conception of it, without being aware of or conceiving any physical state at all. He argues that just because there is no conceptual connection between physical states on the one hand, and experiences or mental states on the other, we must conclude that experiences are never the same thing as physical states and that experiences and physical states are had by two different sorts of substantial particulars.

Dr. Ahmad further argues that the immediate data of our consciousness reveal to us in the same way a single and continuous self, assuring us that in spite of changes we are the same person that we were in our childhood. This consciousness of the permanent nature of our self that enters into all our actions is just as empirical a datum as the one that tells us of the coming and going of experiences. Nevertheless, though still an immediate datum, it is a more complex one and is more difficult to reconcile with the interpretation of atomistic empiricism. It is inconceivable that experiences could exist in themselves, for all activity presupposes a subject. The self is not something that can be divided in pieces, but an organic, indissoluble substantial unity. There is, in the self, a note of novelty and creativity, a free will, an ability to control the eventual course of our experiences. This means that Dr. Ahmad is strictly against reductionism and analyticism — the philosophical legacy of Hume's atomism. He believes that analysis involves the disarticulation of a complex and profound reality whose unity is destroyed when its component members are separated.

Allama Mohammad Iqbal too in his poetry and philosophical writings supports a dualistic view of man. He raises the question: How could man become capable of analysing and mastering nature if he was nothing but a part of nature? He

maintains that only his body i.e. the material side of his being, belongs to natural material elements and hence obeys the laws of nature. But his inner self, the spiritual element within him, stands apart and tries to subdue nature and its compelling forces. Of course, for Iqbal, the problem of self is not merely a metaphysical one. He also addresses himself to the practical methods of achieving a self, a human existence realising its full ego and becoming really one, a single whole, a substantial subject. Indeed, exactly a similar moral position was maintained by the eminent British philosopher, F.H. Bradley, when he wrote: "Are we not forced to look on the self as a whole, which is not merely the sum of its parts? And must we not say that to realize self is always to realize a whole, and the question in morals is to find the true whole, realizing which will practically realize the true self" (Ethical Studies, p. 69).

Dr. Ahmad's book is both analytical as well as constructive in approach. It covers a good many topics which are currently under discussion in academic philosophy. His survey will greatly help both teachers and students of philosophy, as also the interested readers, by saving them a great deal of trouble which otherwise they would have to undertake for themselves in familiarizing with variegated discussions in contemporary Anglo-American mental philosophy.

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PREFACE

This book is a critical study of some of the problems relating to the concept of self or mind. A positive attempt has been made to substantiate and advance the case for the plausibility of an essentially Cartesian view of the self. There are three types of discussions in the present-day philosophical scene and it is with these that the present book is concerned. Firstly, there have been advanced forceful views to the effect that the characteristic mental events or states are in fact bits of bodily behaviour or brain states and processes. The third and fourth chapters form a critical review of Ryle and the leading exponents of the so-called Identity theory, and try to vindicate the ontologically distinct, nonphysical character of mental items or predicates. Secondly there has been a persistent strain of serialist or 'bundle-view' of the self stemming historically from Hume. Chapters 5-7 are devoted to criticisms of this type of theories. Chapter 5 argues for the self as a substantial subject of all sorts of mental experiences, rejecting all serialist or logical construction views of the analysis of self as the cognizing subject. In chapter 6 it is maintained that memory, contrary to views held by most recent philosophers, itself requires a persistent and identical self for its explanation. Chapter 7 on Self-knowledge is also a criticism of the essentially Hume-type positions against the awareness of self. Finally, there have been voiced many-faced views, among others; by Wittgenstein and Strawson — Conveniently grouped under the 'person approach', that repudiate the theory of the self this book defends. The last chapter deals with these and related topics and brings out their limitations and shortcomings.

Philosophy in general is an extremely private discipline of sensibility and intellectual effort. In particular, my pre-occupation and deliberation on the concept of self and my predilection for the Cartesian view of it multiplied this privacy into a specialized and subtle relationship between two selves within me: the 'I' as the subject, and the 'me' as the object thought about. I must publicly confess that, as a consequence of this, the three long years (1970-73) which I spent in London while doing research for my doctorate were both psychically extremely painful and intellectually most rewarding. This work is a slightly revised, and in some parts expanded, version of the thoughts of those years.

It has been my earnest endeavour to be objective, that is, to occupy myself exclusively with the arguments and the determination of their cogency, and to avoid the spirit of polemics. Biting remarks and humour make a book perhaps more readable, but do not help to promote truth and scholarly research. In this work I present a survey of modern Anglo-American philosophy concentrating on the arguments and conclusion of its principal exponents. The book is designed, not only for students of philosophy, but also for those whose interests, whether or not academic, have caused them to be curious about its subject matter. The reader will find in the bibliography a list of the works discussed.

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It is a pleasure for me to make acknowledgement of my obligations to numerous teachers and friends. This study would not have seen the light of day had it not been for the kind and affectionate teaching and guidance of my teachers at the universities of Karachi, Reading and London. My chief debt (a massive one) is to Professor H. D. Lewis, whose counsel and criticism at every stage of the work's progress have been quite invaluable. I only hope that the heavy inroads he allowed me to make upon his time and indulgence have not hampered in any way the better ideas on this theme which he is so obviously able to write himself. I am also particularly indebted to Professor H.A. Hodges who, at an earlier stage of my reserach work, tutored me with compassion and generosity, and made me realize the importance of the subject of this book in contemporary philosophy. I have also profitted much from comments upon particular sections of the work by friends and colleagues at King's College (University of London) and outside, notably Mr. Russell, Dr. S. Rashid, Mr. J. Fisher, Dr. H. Z. Arif and others.

For the financial support during my stay in England I am particularly indebted to my elder brother, Mr. Iqtedar Ahmed, who cheerfully endured the burden of monthly remittances for many years. Of course, in addition, to him, I am grateful to all of my brothers who cared for my education and mental development.

Last but not the least, I gratefully acknowledge the splendid cooperation and encouragement of Prof. Muhammad Munawwar, Director of the Iqbal Academy. Without his support, the contents of this study would not have reached the printed page. I also wish to thank the Academy's Board

of Governors who very kindly approved the publication of this work.

In the end, I also deem it my duty to acknowledge with thanks the courtesy of the editors of journals and publishers of books from which quotations have been made in the course of discussion. I would also thank Mr. S. W. Zaman for going through the proofs as well as compiling the index of this book.

Chapter 1

IQBAL'S THOUGHT AND THE PRESENT STUDY

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IQBAL'S THOUGHT AND THE PRESENT STUDY

1.1 DUALISTIC STRAIN IN IQBAL

There is no denying the fact that in the post Sayyid Ahmad Khan period (d.1898) no dynamic intellectual figure influenced the Muslim mind of the South East Asian region as profoundly as Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. The main source of his thought is undoubtedly the Quran and the Islamic philosophical thought, but in developing his ideas and in presenting them in the current academic jargon he drew upon the wealth of thought available to him from Western thinkers. He gained strength and parallels for his thought from the study of Kant, Bergson, Nietzsche, McTaggart and many others. This led him to accept the reality of the self and the force of the will as fundamental and *sui generis*. He affirms the intuitive knowledge of God (the Infinite Self), the human ego or soul (finite self) and the intuitive knowledge of its freedom and immortality. The concept of self constitutes, to my mind, the pivot around which Iqbal's entire philosophy revolves. His philosophical thought, in its main strain, is the philosophy of the self. There are no doubt a number of lacunae in his thought which he did not find time to present as a systematic and consistent whole. Yet it does not mean that his thought is a collection of disjointed and at times contradictory propositions. I strongly believe that even though Iqbal's preoccupation with the concept of human self as a metaphysical entity has a religious motif, he in his *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* makes perfectly plausible and convincing arguments for its existence and reality.

Iqbal commences his chapter on the nature of human ego by noting the emphasis the Quran lays on the individuality and uniqueness of man as a unity of life. He is the

trustee of a free personality. Man does not flower or flourish out of a combination of atomic or nonliving elements, explicable in physico-chemical terms. He is a spiritual reality in his ultimate essence, and it is only because of this that he can fulfill the divinely destined role. Iqbal vehemently repudiates the view of those evolutionary philosophers who regard man as a mere accident or insignificant episode in the gigantic evolutionary process. Man in reality is a finite self. He ascribes utmost importance to the distinctness of persons and shows how much this is overlooked or belied in various forms of materialistic monism, that is in systems of thought which treat the individual as a phase or element in some physical whole of being.

Earlier on, he asserts that consciousness may be imagined as a deflection from life. Its function is to provide a luminous point in order to enlighten the forward rush of life. He categorically states that consciousness cannot be regarded as a by-product or off-shoot of material conditions. I quote the relevant passage in full:

“To describe it (i.e., consciousness) as an epiphenomenon of the processes of matter is to deny it as an independent activity, and to deny it as an independent activity is to deny the validity of all knowledge which is only a systematized expression of consciousness. Thus consciousness is. a specific mode of behaviour of an externally worked machine. Since, however, we cannot conceive of a purely spiritual energy, except in association with a definite combination of sensible elements through which it reveals itself, we are apt to take this combination as the ultimate ground of spiritual energy.”¹

This means that Iqbal rejects the concept of mechanism - a purely physical concept - claimed by the materialist philo-

sophers to be the all-embracing explanation of Nature. He is particularly against the application of this principle of explanation in the domain of Biology and social sciences. The following lines also clearly indicate the dualistic view which Iqbal holds with regard to physical nature on the one hand and mind and consciousness on the other:

"The concept of 'cause', for instance, the essential feature of which is temporal priority to the effect, is relative to the subject-matter of physical science which studies one special kind of activity to the exclusion of other forms of activity observed by others. When we rise to the level of life and mind, the concept of cause fails us, and we stand in need of concepts of a different order of thought. The action of living organisms initiated and planned in view of an end, is totally different to causal action. The subject matter of our inquiry, therefore, demands the concepts of 'end' and 'purpose' which act from within unlike the concept of cause which is external to the effect and acts from without."

Thus, for Iqbal, consciousness is a unique phenomenon and the concept of mechanism is totally inadequate for its analysis. A conscious being possesses such qualities as are unthinkable in the case of a machine. In another passage the dualistic strain in Iqbal comes out unmistakably thus:

"The ontological problem before us is how to define the ultimate nature of existence. That the universe persists in time is not open to doubt. Yet since it is external to us, it is possible to be sceptical about its existence. In order completely to grasp the meaning of this persistence in time we must be in a position to study some privileged case of existence which is absolutely unquestionable and gives us the further assurance of a direct

vision of duration. *Now my perception of things that confront me is superficial and external; but my perception of my own self is internal, intimate and profound.*"³

Here the duality of two types of objects known has been mentioned in very clear terms. Our knowledge of external things and persons has been regarded as indirect, inferential and therefore superficial; on the other hand, we know our own selves and minds directly, intimately and, as it were, from within. This distinction has subtle resemblance with the distinction Bertrand Russell makes between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. Again, Iqbal maintains an almost Cartesian-like dualism between mental states and physical/bodily states or events. He states:

"Mental states do not exist in mutual isolation. They mean and involve one another. They exist as phases of a complex whole, called mind. The organic unity, however, of these inter-related states, or let us say, events is a special kind of unity. It fundamentally differs from the unity of a material thing; for the parts of a material thing can exist in mutual isolation. Mental unity is absolutely unique. We cannot say that one of my beliefs is situated on the right or left of my other belief. Nor is it possible to say that my appreciation of the beauty of the Taj varies with my distance from Agra. My thought of space is not spatially related to space."⁴

Physical or material bodies, for Iqbal, occupy space and for them there can be but a single space. The unity of mental events, i.e. the ego, however, is not space-bound and localized in the sense in which physical bodies are space-bound. Again, quite in line with the Cartesian dualistic view,

Iqbal maintains that mental and physical events are both in time, but the time-span of the ego is fundamentally different from the time-span of physical events. The duration of the physical event is stretched out in space as a present fact; it is measurable and clockable. The time in which ego lives and moves is, however, of a very different nature. Ego's duration is concentrated within it and linked with its present and future in a unique manner.

According to the dualistic premises, mental events have another distinguishing characteristic. Mental events and states like sensing, pain feelings, imagination, thinking, willing, resolving etc., are taken to be directly inspected inner states of consciousness. This means that, as against physical bodies and events which are publically observable, mental states and occurrences are private and known only by the subject or self which has these states. There seems to be little doubt that there are mental processes quite distinct from observable behaviour and that each individual has an access to his own experiences in having them which is not possible for the most favoured observer. Iqbal frankly accepts this essential feature of mental entities in these words:

“Another important characteristic of the unity of the ego is its essential privacy which reveals the uniqueness of every ego. In order to reach a certain conclusion all the premises of a syllogism must be believed in by one and the same mind. If I believe in the proposition ‘all men are mortal’, and another mind believes in the proposition ‘Socrates is a man’, no inference is possible. It is possible only if both the propositions are believed in by me. Again, my desire for a certain thing is essentially mine. Its satisfaction means my private enjoyment. If all mankind happen to desire the same thing, the satisfaction of their desire will not mean the satis-

faction of my desire when I do not get the thing desired. The dentist may sympathize with my toothache, but cannot experience the feeling of my toothache. *My pleasures, pains, and desires are exclusively mine, forming a part and parcel of my private ego alone. My feelings, hates and loves, judgements and resolutions, are exclusively mine.*"⁵

Physical events and processes occur, and mental events and processes occur, regardless of how we may interpret substance-words about the physical and the mental. A vitally important question here arises: What is the relation of these events and processes to each other? Do they affect each other, and if so, how? Students of the history of modern philosophy know very well that this problem is the crux of metaphysics and mental philosophy. It is well-known that philosophers who maintain a mind-body dualistic view usually support the theory of "interactionism" in this context. Interactionism begins as a simple "common-sense" view. Indeed, what would be more obvious than that physical events cause mental events and that mental events in turn cause physical events? You receive a blow on the head (physical event) and you feel pain (mental event), light-waves impinge upon your retina (physical event) and you experience a visual sensation (mental event). Every time a physical stimulus causes something to register in consciousness, we have positive proof that physical events cause mental events. And it is equally clear that mental events cause physical events e.g., you feel frightened (mental event) and your heart beats faster (physical event). Examples of this can be multiplied; and the general conclusion which appeals to most philosophers is that there is a two-way causal relationship between the self or mind and the body, despite the question of the exact nature of this relationship and its complex and intricate details. Iqbal entirely endorses this

view when he writes:

"It is further clear that stream of causality flow into it (i.e. the ego) from Nature and from it to Nature."⁶

The term 'flow into' as used here is significant. It is hard to avoid using some metaphor in describing the relation of mind and body. It suggests very strongly that he is thinking of mental processes and physical processes, as envisaged in the Cartesian position, as influencing causally each other. Surely, the relation of mind and body is a unique one and not to be assimilated at all to the relation of physical things to one another. Here no doubt one is reminded of the difficulty which many have felt of acknowledging the influence on one another of entities so essentially different from one another as mind and body are supposed to be on the dualist thesis. Those who do not agree with this thesis usually raise the question: Does not causal efficacy require some common nature? To this Iqbal has replied, very properly in my view, that we only learn about specific causal relations from experience of them, this being something which empiricists like Hume have themselves helped us to realize. We cannot on dogmatic *a priori* grounds rule out causal relations, however peculiar, if we find in fact that they do occur. Similarly, Iqbal does not agree with those philosophers who take a mechanistic view of personal causality. He completely repudiates the view that ego-activity is a succession of thoughts and ideas, ultimately resolvable to units of sensations. To him, this is only another form of atomic materialism which forms the basis of modern science and philosophical materialism. Such a view could not but raise a strong presumption in favour of a mechanistic interpretation of mental states or consciousness. And this type of interpretation or analysis is vehemently rejected by Iqbal.

1.2 SELF—AN INTUITIVE DATUM

The self, according to Iqbal, is a veritable reality. It exists and exists in its own right. It is through intuition that we know its reality and nature. Intuition or what he calls "deeper thought" gives us a direct and an unflinching conviction of the reality of our own self. Intuition not only affirms the reality of the self, it discloses to us its essence and nature also. The self, as known through intuition, is essentially directive, free and immortal. Iqbal cites the case of F.H. Bradley in support of his view. According to Bradley, the test of reality is freedom from contradiction and since his criticism discovers the finite centre of experience to be infected with irreconcilable oppositions of change and permanence, unity and diversity, the ego is a mere illusion.⁷ Yet in spite of the fact that his ruthless logic has shown the ego to be a mass of confusion, Bradley has to admit that the self must be 'in some sense real', 'in some sense an indubitable fact'. Iqbal writes:-

"However thought may dissect and analyse, our feeling of egohood is ultimate and is powerful enough to extract from Professor Bradley the reluctant admission of its reality. . . . The finite centre of experience, therefore, is real though its reality is too profound to be intellectualized."⁸

Iqbal does not agree with those philosophical theories which explicitly aim at eliminating the self from the cognitive situation. Their argument generally takes the form of phenomenistic replacement of the cognizing self by the complexes of suitably interrelated events. For example, William James attempted to retain the function of cognizing subject (or the self) viz., the activity of cognizing, while replacing the subject itself by a complex of cognitive events.⁹ Criticizing William James, Iqbal very rightly observes:

"This description of our mental life is extremely ingenious; but not, I venture to think, true to consciousness as we find it in ourselves. Consciousness is something single, presupposed in all mental life, and not bits of consciousness mutually reporting to one another. This view of consciousness, far from giving us any clue to the ego, entirely ignores the relatively permanent element in experience. There is no continuity of being between the passing thoughts. When one of these is present, the other has totally disappeared; and how can the passing thought, which is irrevocably lost, be known and appropriated by this present thought?"¹⁰

Indeed our selfhood is the most real thing we can know. We directly apprehend it and affirm its reality on the basis of a direct intuition of it. This intuition, however, is possible only in moments of great decision, action and deep feeling. Action, effort and struggle open to us the deep recesses of our own true being. The knowledge of the existence of the ego is in no way an inference: we enjoy a direct perception of the self itself. Intuition alone thus, gives the surest ground for the existence and the reality of the self. "Intuition" in philosophy stands for the knowledge we sometimes have without adducing further reasons for it, seeing each step in an argument, for instance, and the soundness of the principle of contradiction.

Iqbal's notion of intuition can also be explained to some extent with reference to his intellectual preference for vitalistic philosophy. He quotes approvingly Spengler's theory according to which there are two ways of knowing and appropriating the world. The one is intellectual; the other may be called vital. The intellectual way consists in understanding and knowing objects as a rigid system of cause and effect. The vital way on the other hand is the direct

acquaintance and feel of the inevitable necessities of life and our reality as subjects of experience or egos. The broadest definition of the term 'intuition' is immediate apprehension. 'Immediate' has as many senses as there are kinds of mediation: it may be used to signify the absence of inference, the absence of causes, the absence of the ability to define a term, the absence of justification, or the absence of discursive thought. In its principal meaning, intuition stands for nonpropositional and noninferential knowledge of an entity — knowledge that may be a necessary condition for, but is not identical with, intuitive knowledge of the truth of proposition about the entity. This sense of intuition is exemplified par excellence by mystical or inexpressible intuitions (as partly in Kant and more fully in Bergson) of such insensible particulars as self, duration, Transcendental Ego etc.

speaks of them as two aspects or sides of the self. He maintains that a keener insight into the nature of conscious experience reveals that the self in its inner life moves from the centre outwards. On its efficient side, it enters into relation with what is called the world of space. The efficient self is the subject of associationist psychology — the practical self of daily life in its dealing with the external order of things which determine our passing states of consciousness and stamp on these states their own spatial features of isolation. The self here lives outside itself as it were, and while retaining its unity as a totality, discloses itself as nothing more than a series of specific and consequently numerable states. The time in which the efficient self lives is, accordingly, the time of which we predicate long and short. It is hardly distinguishable from space.

In other words, experience shows us that the self in its efficient aspect does not depend upon any obscure or hidden core but depends upon what it does, has done, proposes to do, or is able to do. This self is revealed in its action; it reveals itself and constitutes itself by acting. It is nothing before acting, and nothing remains of it if experiences cease completely. One is not given a readymade self in this sense; one creates one's self daily by what one does, what one experiences. Our behaviour is not an expression of our efficient self but the very stuff which constitutes it. From the side of efficient self, then, what holds experiences together, what gives us personality is not a substantial bond but a functional one, a coordinated structure of activities. Being never a finished product, the efficient self is always in the making. It is formed throughout the course of its life. The efficient self, so to say, has no aboriginal nucleus of its own that exists prior to its action; it arises and takes on existence as it acts, as it undergoes experiences. In modern terminology, the efficient self may be called the functional self. The

concept of function, in this case, connotes the concepts of activity, process, and relation.

A deeper analysis of conscious experience, however, reveals to us what Iqbal calls the appreciative side of the self. With our absorption in the external order of things, necessitated by the contingencies of daily life, it is extremely difficult to catch a glimpse of the appreciative self. He says that in our constant pursuit after external things we weave a kind of veil round the appreciative self which thus becomes completely alien to us. It is only in the moments of profound meditation, when the efficient self is in abeyance, that we sink into our deeper self and reach the inner centre of experience. In the life-process of this deeper ego the states of consciousness melt into each other. The unity of the appreciative ego is like the unity of the germ in which the experiences of its individual ancestors exist, not as a plurality, but as a unity in which every experience permeates the whole. There is no numerical distinctness of states in the totality of the ego, the multiplicity of whose elements is, unlike that of the efficient self, wholly qualitative. There is change and movement, but this change and movement are indivisible; their elements interpenetrate and are wholly non-serial in character. The appreciative self lives in pure duration, i.e. change without succession.

A keen and perceptive student of Iqbal's thought will note that he uses the expression "self" (pp. 47-48 of *The Reconstruction*) for both efficient and appreciative variety of it, but he uses the expression "ego" exclusively for the appreciative self — the 'deeper' self or what he calls the 'inner' centre of experience. Similarly in the title of the lecture of *The Reconstruction* in which he makes a philosophical inquiry into the essential nature of man, his freedom and immortality, he uses the locutions "Ego," "egohood" or

“soul” but not self. And, of course, Iqbal makes a perfectly plausible explanation for the substantial reality of self or ego. He argues that the atomists (acolytes of Hume and others), in their eagerness to criticize substance as a metaphysical postulate, discarded the self, leaving our inner life entirely disintegrated. They tried to reconstitute the unity and continuity of the self by a process of summation in which only the relationship of member to member is taken into account. Thus they finally conceived of the self as a chain of experiences. All the links are united because each one of them is joined to the one that precedes it and to the one that follows. The result was a mechanized self that seemed more like a robot than a real metaphysical self, for it lacked spontaneous reactions, creative direction, and permanence. At best, they conceived of the self as a passive movie screen upon which is projected an uninterrupted stream of images which have little or no effect upon the screen.

Experience reveals the ego or the deeper self as directive and appreciative reality which creates values and is directed towards ends and purposes. What holds experiences together, what gives us personality, is not, therefore, something functional or a coordinated structure of activities. It must be a substantial bond; a persistent metaphysical agent who acts, judges and experiences mental states.

I shall briefly mention here a case that seems to be typical — that of an acute thinker who is familiar with the empirical or serialist doctrine of self extending from Hume to William James and who, after making all sorts of concessions to this doctrine, seizes upon a substantial nucleus in man in a manner which greatly resembles Iqbal's approach. I refer to an American philosopher DeWitt H. Parker. I shall state his doctrine as it is presented in his work, *Experi-*

*ence and Substance.*¹¹ This is not the only book in which Parker has been concerned with the problems of the self. He devoted to the same problem a good portion of an earlier book of his entitled *The Self and Nature.*¹² Parker states that he is adopting from the very beginning an empirical method and promises to discard all theory of the self as something that exists outside of experience. In his first treatment of the subject he adopts an attitude similar to that of Hume, James and Mach. In the following lines, however, we see his objection:

“But to all such views there is this important objection that they seem to reduce the self, which is intuitively a unity, to a bare multiplicity of factors. For, whether these factors be denominated thoughts, activities, elements, or impressions, they are many, and if we view the self as made up out of them it appears to be, as Plato said of it, a society rather than a unity, in fact almost a crowd.”¹³

Such an objection leads to what Parker calls “a crisis in the analysis of the self”. On the one hand we have the multiplicity of experiences, on the other hand the unity and “endurance” of the self. Parker decides upon the second alternative and, although the process is a slow one, we can anticipate the result as soon as we know the route he has chosen. He distinguishes between what he calls “focal self” and “matrix self”. The former consists of the activity or the aggregate of activities going on at a given moment—present thought, impulse, etc. The focal self is an event, a coming and going, one in the series of events that appear and disappear. These events, however, do not arise from nothingness; they are oriented with reference to something deeper and more stable than they. Every intelligible relationship that they have with one another is derived from the

matrix from which they have arisen.

The matrix self, according to Parker, supplies the stability that the self possesses and which cannot be found in the focal self. But the question arises: Is this matrix self changing or immutable for Parker? His answer is: "I do not wish to imply that the matrix self is changeless; but the fact is that it moves more slowly than the pulse of focal activities". And he adds that each focal activity alters the matrix self by enriching it and causing in it an inner adjustment. What one does not see is how he is going to manage to explain in this way unity and permanence, which is what he had set out to do. The author, too, seems to notice this difficulty, for he suddenly changes tactics and chooses a course which in its own way will assure him of unity and permanence. So he writes: "The matrix self never changes entirely — there is a core which remains the same over long periods of time, indeed as long as the person endures." ¹⁴ This core or unchanging nucleus of the matrix self Parker calls the "essential self."

What is this central core but the acceptance of a metaphysical being in order to stave off an infinite regress and to provide an ultimate anchor for the activities of the self? Parker's focal self is changeable and finds its stability in the matrix self; but as the matrix self must also change since the activities of the focal self modify it, it becomes necessary for him to admit the reality of another self—as support of the matrix self—for the stability being sought after. What is the "essential self" but a metaphysical entity which serves to give stability to the matrix self? It is not difficult, however, to understand the reason that Parker, Iqbal and many other like-minded philosophers have in admitting an irreducible metaphysical core. It arises from the need to solve the crisis of which they both speak, to end,

once and for all, the process of dissolution which seems to threaten to reduce the self to a mere bundle or assemblage of its successive states. In other words, they feel the need to save at any cost the unity and permanence of the self which are threatened by an unjustified abhorrence for metaphysical entities.

It is true that certain passages appearing in Iqbal's lecture under discussion, if superficially read and taken exclusively on their own terms, lead one to think that Iqbal maintained a serialist or phenomenalist view of self and not the Cartesian or metaphysical entity view of it as I have laboured to show in the above lines. For example, at one place Iqbal writes: "I do not mean to say that the ego is over and above the mutually penetrating multiplicity we call experience. Inner experience is the ego at work."¹⁵ At another place one reads: "Thus my real personality is not a thing, it is an act. My experience is only a series of acts, mutually referring to one another, and held together by the unity of a directive purpose. My whole reality lies in my directive attitude. You cannot perceive me like a thing in space, or a set of experiences in temporal order; you must interpret, understand and appreciate me in my judgments, in my will-attitudes, aims, and aspirations."¹⁶ I, however, venture to think that interpreting these lines on the pattern of bundle or serialist view of self would be tantamount to negating the whole spirit of Iqbal's metaphysical philosophy. It is only to an untrained and unsophisticated mind that his approach may look like crude behaviourism or phenomenism. Here we can appreciate the deeper significance of Iqbal's position only if we see it against the powerful background of Suhrawardi's influence on him. That is the reason why at a higher level act and agent do not appear different to him; they become the same thing. Iqbal's interpretation in fact spiritualizes the whole

complex by eliminating the distinction between the doer and the doing, the maker and the making, the actor and the acting. Yet surely it cannot be said that he did not maintain the reality of a non-physical particular (distinct from the body) as the persistent subject of experience.

In the following chapters of this book, through an analysis of contemporary philosophical theories, an attempt has been made to put Iqbal's theory of the self in bold relief by affirming an essentially Cartesian conception of it.¹⁷

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp.40–41, (Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore).
2. *Ibid.*, p.42.
3. *Ibid.*, p.46 (italics mine).
4. *Ibid.*, p.99.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100 (italics mine).
6. *Ibid.*, p.107.
7. Cf. his *Appearance and Reality*, (Clarendon Press, Oxford).
8. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p.98, (Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore).
9. I have discussed his theory in detail in Chapter 5, Section 2 below.
10. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p.102, (Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore).
11. *Experience and Substance*, p. 28, (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1941).
12. *The Self and Nature*, (Harward University Press, Cambridge.)
13. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
15. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 102, (Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore).
16. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
17. I am much indebted to Mr. A.H. Kamali for enlightenment on this point. See his excellent article "The Heritage of Islamic Thought" in *Iqbal—Poet—Philosopher of Pakistan*, (Ed.) Hafeez Malik, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1971).

Chapter 2

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PRELIMINARIES

2.1 CARTESIAN DUALISM

In the philosophical writings of recent times there has been a marked tendency to minimize and to obscure the distinction between the two fundamental types of particulars: the mental and the physical. Among the leading philosophers of present day the distinction of physical and mental has gradually become blurred and uncertain — sometimes almost to the point of obliteration. Even where it is in some sense frankly recognized, it is not accorded fundamental ontological significance. Reality, it is assumed, must be taken as altogether one; but, it is said, we may take it differently in different contexts. In the analyses offered by most analytic and linguistic philosophers, mental occurrences and processes are either completely repudiated or these and manifest behaviour and physical operations come successively into view, but only as theoretically distinguishable aspects of one identical reality.¹

The great constructive systems of thought from Plato on, however, have on the whole been marked by a profound consciousness of the duality of nature and spirit, subject and object, self and not-self. Even some of the modern philosophers who lean towards an eventual monism, have done so in ways which imply no abatement, but rather a heightened appreciation of this distinction. Descartes, at the dawn of the modern period, was of course the arch dualist. Even in Spinoza the two known attributes of God are among the necessities of the Divine nature, and since each of them expresses that nature in its complete extent, and expresses it differently, they are for ever irreducible to one another. In

the case of Leibnitz, it is true that in his *Monadology* he attained a point of view from which the antithesis of soul and body loses much of its force, but a consciousness of that antithesis is closely interwoven with the motives that led him to formulate the doctrine of monads. It is in relation to the problem of body and mind that his suggestions of the conception of a pre-established harmony appears. And although the significance of body-mind problem fades away as a dualistic becomes a pluralistic universe, nonetheless the distinction of spirit and matter is maintained in the hierarchy of monads. In a world where all being takes the monadic form, the dominant and unique status is assigned to the entelechy or soul. Kant's Critical Philosophy turns upon the cleavage between a natural world of causally determined appearances and a world of ideal possibilities, of which the active principle is the free will of a moral agent.

The problem of self and mind has occupied a vital place in philosophical thought throughout its different stages. It would indeed be true to say that this problem and its cognate themes have constituted the main crux of philosophical studies insofar as they lie at the nexus of ontological, epistemological and ethical discussions. There is a vast variety of problems that are directly or tangentially connected with the views about mind and its nature. Considered ontologically, the dualism of mind and body has been so familiar and recurrent in philosophical circles that Professor Ryle has called it the "official doctrine."² The epistemological questions deal, among others, with the theories concerning the existence and nature of mind as the subject of cognition and its relation with the object. And, finally, no ethical and theological discussion of the philosophical doctrines of immortality of soul and freedom of the human will is possible without at the same time considering the status and nature of the self as a non-physical reality. Indeed the

problem of self and mind can be thought of as large network of roads that crisscross at many points with other fields of inquiry.

The substantival view of the self in the modern sense begins with Descartes' discovery of the *cogito*, and it is to him that the self-body dualistic position with variegated shades is traced back in modern discussions of the subject. The doctrine that the self is an immaterial substance contains all the greatness of the cartesian conception. This illustrates a substantival reality that can be seen from within, the self being the substance that can give a view of its inner nature. Descartes believed that he had directly and immediately made evident, without conceptual evasions and complications, the existence of the self as something non-physical and immaterial substance: as something that needs only itself in order to exist. In Descartes the ontological distinction between mind and body plays a very important role throughout his writings. Body is a substance and mind or self is a substance and both are therefore by definition distinct. The dualism is grounded not only in their patent and utter dissimilarity but also in the irreducibility of their different natures. Thus, consistently interpreted, cartesianism maintains bodies and minds to be irreducibly heterogeneous in their intrinsic essences or characteristics. Mind, self, or spiritual reality is diametrically opposed to corporeal or physical reality. The attribute of body is extension: bodies are spatial and passive; the attribute of mind or self is thinking: it is active and free. The two substances are absolutely distinct: mind is absolutely without extension, and no material thing can think. According to Descartes, "I" has a clear and distinct idea of himself insofar as "I" is only a thinking and unextended thing. Here it is certain that 'I', that is the mind or self through which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from my body, and may exist without it. He tells us in the *Discourse*

*on Method*³ that a thinking thing is one that doubts, understands, conceives, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, imagines as well as feels. 'Thought' is by no means restricted to the intellectual or even cognitive activities of the mind. It embraces everything which we now term as 'conscious' states and events.

As is well-known, Descartes employed the methodic doubt with a view to discovering whether there was any indubitable truth. His scepticism was at last halted by the certainty of his own existence, which he summed up in the famous dictum: *cogito ergo sum*. His line of reasoning in the *Discourse on Method*, although set forth in a more synthetic form, is similar to that found in the *Meditations*. The central passage reads:

But immediately afterwards I noticed that whilst I thus wished to think all things false, it was absolutely essential that the 'I' who thought this should be something, and remarking that this truth 'I think therefore I am' was so certain and so assured that all the most extravagant suppositions brought forward by the sceptics were incapable of shaking it, I came to the conclusion that I could receive it without scruple as the first principle of the Philosophy for which I was seeking.

And then, examining attentively that which I was, I saw that I could conceive that I had no body, and that there was no world nor place where I might be; but yet that I could not for all that conceive that I was not. On the contrary, I saw from the very fact that I thought of doubting the truth of other things, it very evidently and certainly followed that I was; on the other hand if I had only ceased from thinking, even if all the rest of what I had ever imagined had really existed, I should have no reason for thinking that I had existed. From that I knew that I was a substance the whole essence or nature of which is to think. . . .

However much I doubt, so Descartes argues, I must exist; otherwise I could not doubt. It is indeed a contradiction to suppose that which thinks does not exist. Though the '*cogit*' does not seem to convey any novel information, yet it is of the very greatest importance for Descartes on account of the central position it occupies in his philosophy, and because it does satisfy the three stipulated requirements, viz., (a) it is perceived clearly and distinctly, (b) it does essentially refer to something existing (myself), and (c) one cannot contemplate it at all without knowing it to be certainly true. The reason why the self, as the subject of thought, must be admitted as real is that it is not an object. That which is objective and external is always exposed to metaphysical doubt; but that which thinks is the condition of metaphysical doubt itself. Here we have a privileged truth which is immune not only from the doubt which one may feel concerning material objects, but also of the 'hyperbolical' doubt caused by the fictitious assumption of the evil genius.

From the form of the proposition '*cogit. . . .*' and from the presence of '*ergo*' (therefore) in it, it can be assumed that Descartes expressed it in an inferential form, and therefore it was intended as an argument. That is, the existence of the 'I' or the thinker is deduced or inferred from the fact of thought. But in reply to Second Objection, Descartes makes the explanation in these words: "When we observe that we are thinking beings, this is a sort of primary notion, which is not the conclusion of any syllogism: and moreover, when somebody says, 'I think therefore I am or exist', he is not using a syllogism to deduce his existence from his thought, but recognizes this as something self-evident, in a simple mental intuition."⁵ The certainty and indubitability of the thinker's existence i.e. the self, is implied or given in the very act of thought; it is known immediately and directly. I intuit, for example, in my own case the necessary connection

between my thinking a thought and my existence. That is to say, I intuit in a concrete case the impossibility of my thinking thought a, b, c, etc. and my existence as the subject of it.

As is obvious from the foregoing, Descartes did not propose to base his philosophy on an abstract logical principle. Even though he has often been lampooned for being primarily concerned with essences or possibilities, the plain truth is that he tried to get at the most indubitable and existential proposition. The testimony for the 'I' — the substantial self, is direct and based on first-person experience, and only this personal and subjective affirmation could meet the test of absolute certitude. It is certain that thinking cannot exist without a thinking "thing," or generally, that any activity cannot occur without a substance of which it is the activity. The 'thing which thinks' or 'the ego' is thus a substantial existent or a persistent particular. A simple inspection of mind or a direct act of intuition gives us knowledge of the substantial self and certain knowledge about its nature. Its existence is disclosed through its activity: if we could never be aware of our own activities or mental states, we could never be aware of our own existence as the subject of them. I cognize my mental states or activities as being *mine*. I am acquainted not only with my conscious states, but also with *my self* as their subject. The awareness in which I am acquainted with my present thought is an awareness in which I am acquainted with myself as the thinker of it. There is here no inference from my present thought taken as datum to the conclusion that this datum depends upon an existent which is not co-datum with it. The existence of the self or thinking subject is not discovered by inference, neither is it assumed: it is directly perceived with, and inseparable from, one's present mental state.

In short, according to Descartes, the self is a single, continuing, non-material substantival particular. There can be no mental state or activity without a subject, no thought — in the cartesian sense — without a thinking self.

2.2 'SELF' LINGUISTICALLY CONSIDERED⁶

The word "self" has no well-defined contours, its etymology being lost in darkness. What seems to be fairly well established is the original pronominal use of the expression. As a matter of fact the notion of 'sameness' is basic in the pronominal, as well as in the adjectival (self-same) usage, though the gradual disappearance of the adjectival sense is symptomatic of the force inherent in the original pronominal usage. Self is just the *sameness*, the *oneness*, the *identity* of some individual. This by itself shows that the reference must be to something with an identity sufficiently real and prolonged. Hence selfhood is most appropriately attributable, not to transient appearances or phases of the flux, but to entities which are capable of sustaining more or less permanent and substantial character. On closer consideration it is seen that even among the pronouns the word 'self' is chiefly notable as stressing the latter notion. Since this sort of inquiry is in line with the contemporary fashion of linguistic and etymological investigations, it is worth-while pausing to get a rather detailed perspective on the word 'self'.

I think it is one of the cases in which a philosophical question is inseparably associated with language and linguistic practice. It is perfectly legitimate to ask as to what substantives the pronouns "I", "you" and "he" etc. could be the substitutes. Among parts of speech the pronouns, or to use Strawson's phrase, person-referring expressions, belong to the class which, so far as can be gathered from the evidence, goes back to the rudiments of vocal self-expression.⁷ It cannot be traced to anything beyond itself, because the idea

which is purported to convey, or, to be more exact, the subjective impulse of which it is the release, is primitive and aboriginal. When the human mind first sought to vent itself in the common medium of sound-symbols, experts of linguistics tell us, it must have first minted the personal and demonstrative pronouns. But even at this stage there would inevitably be a certain difference of motive and function between the personal and the demonstrative forms. The first of these were used to symbolize the subjectivity of the speaker, the listener or the person referred to; the second, to point out the object upon which it was desired to concentrate attention.

Now pronouns have no vestige of anything descriptive about them; they have no connotation of their own, and the entities to which they refer are so indefinitely variable that endless possibilities of misunderstanding may arise in the attempt to identify them. It is this very circumstance that gives rise to the need for pronouns of emphasis or fixation. While in their origin they are unmistakably pronouns, and not nouns, nonetheless since it is their function to draw attention to entities, the notion of identity tends to acquire the force of a definite connotation in these forms of speech. At this stage, they cease to be mere pronouns and become nouns. It is so that the pronominal becomes the substantival "self", the self which is the soul or personality and which figures so prominently in the language of philosophy.

Some writers, however, are severely critical of this approach. Bernard Mayo, for instance, holds that "the notion of the self . . . does not give rise to any genuine problem, because it is very largely a mistaken notion based on bad grammar."⁸ The proper use of the word 'self', he maintains, is merely as a suffix attached to a personal pronoun which is not the subject of a verb. In a similar vein, Antony Flew regards the talk of self as "bizarre" and "the most extraordi-

nary and artificial deviation from ordinary standard English." He substantiates his assertion by claiming that it is only the philosophers who use "self" as an independent word rather than as an assimilated reflexive suffix. The plain man may hurt himself: he never hurts his self. He believes that 'self' or 'selves' should be used as synonym for terms like 'persons' and 'people': that 'this person' can always be substituted for "I" without loss of meaning.

I cannot understand why Antony Flew should think this usage 'bizarre'. Examples of its nominative form abound in modern philosophical and semi-technical discussions. In fact there is a deeper reason for the philosopher's use of term 'self'. Antony Flew would, I take it, have no objection to my talking about my being 'conscious of myself'. Nor should he object to the assumption that everyone is 'conscious of himself' in some sense. Now the philosophers who employ the 'self' as a substantive consider the situation which may be described as a person's being conscious of himself from a point of view at which this situation becomes inspectively witnessable.¹⁰ This may be called the 'introspective point of view', and there is a sense, however oblique, in which the point of view from which "he" is being considered *is his own*. But from his *own* point of view a person thinks of himself primarily as "I" or "myself". He is only secondarily, or only for certain specific purposes "Ahmed" or "Jones". And I feel sure that, under no circumstances, can 'this person' be substituted for 'myself'. 'Persons' and 'people' are in fact terms of which by far the greater part of the denotation is covered pronominally by the third person of the personal pronoun. For this reason they are essentially third person expressions; and my contention is that third person expressions tend to conceal that character of persons in which their peculiarity is that they are all 'myselfes'. In this sense the word 'self' is, so to say, an introspection-word

which designates private, substantial identity underlying conscious experiences. The philosophers who hold a serialist or logical construction view of self, on the other hand, maintain that our sense of self is reducible to a relation between certain successive mental events. In the subsequent chapters of this book I shall, along with a critical examination of the serialist theories, make a positive case for the view that the self is a substantial and abiding subject of all mental experiences.

2.3 SELF AND COMMON SENSE

Is the distinction between self and body valid? To begin with, it is generally agreed, by common sense at any rate, that we must distinguish two sorts of statements about people. There are those statements which describe a person's body, his bodily states and location, and events that occur in and to his body. It is characteristic of such statements that they can be made of any physical object whatsoever. There are, however, statements that are made exclusively about human beings (and, in some cases, animals). These statements describe thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears, memories and expectations, moods and humours, features of personality and character, acts of deliberating, judging, and choosing, motives and intentions and so on. It is to such things as these that importance is attached in any discussion of self and mind.

It is appropriate to clear up some points here, and perhaps to apologize for the title of this section. Common sense, it must be observed, is a blanket term and can be appropriated by widely differing opinions and views and for a variety of purposes. Paradoxical though it may seem, appeal to common sense has been made even for philosophical pronouncements that fly in the face of common experience and belief.¹¹ By commonsense views, on the other hand, I

shall mean views upheld by educated men who are the defenders of enlightened common sense. And this firmly supports the view that talking in the two distinct types of predicates seems to us an essential part of human life, that is, the predicates which signify bodily states or activities and predicates which signify the having of sense-experience, emotion, thoughts, etc. But it is an historical fact that while respect for common sense views has been widespread and abundant in philosophical circles, it has not been continuous. There have been philosophers who have denied this dualism and attempted to provide translation or reduction of the mental into the physical or vice versa. Thus, Berkeley argued that physicalistic statements should be construed as mentalistic statements. More recently the physicalists and most logical behaviourists have argued the reverse, maintaining that mentalistic statements should be construed as physicalistic statements. No one, however, has provided a translation schema that has stood up under criticism. Even so formidable a foe of any mental-physical dualism as Professor Gilbert Ryle; who analyzes many mentalistic statements in terms of physicalistic ones, has maintained that, at least, reports of sensations and feelings cannot be so analyzed.

Common sense is a kind of thinking. The philosopher must reckon with it. He must recognize that common sense has usually some cogent grounds for its opinions and that these grounds are very likely to be correct. Its principal failing is that it is incompetent to express its grounds clearly and fully. In the first place, there are some parts of mental life, in particular imagination and abstract thought, which have no obvious connection with the working of bodily organs. We now believe that certain mental states depend in some way upon the functioning of the brain, and we sometimes speak of using our brain in thought as we speak of using our eyes in vision, but this is a custom of recent origin,

derived from science rather than from common experience. We cannot literally, the autocerebroscopic evidence notwithstanding, bring our brains to bear on a problem as we bring our eyes to bear on something when we look at it. Moreover, our mental life could be reduced to simple sensations like wincing or tickles only at the risk of gross distortion because, to quote Prof. Lewis,¹² '(it) is rarely, if ever, restricted to discrete simple items of that sort. It is much more elaborate, alive and subtle. It is constantly changing. How do we establish the full rich character of mental states with sufficient precision in a variety of situations to examine the close correlation between them and the concurrent physiological states?' Long before the days of philosophy, primitive men were impressed by the occurrence of dreams during bodily rest, and it was reasonably supposed that belief in souls which are separable from bodies might have been entertained to explain these phenomena.¹³ In a similar vein philosophers have attached great importance to the occurrence of intellectual activities without observable correlations in the body. In our own times G.E. Moore was a great exponent of mind-body dualism. He puts forward his view in these words:¹⁴ "Common sense believes that there are in the universe at least two different kinds of things. There are, to begin with, enormous number of material objects; and there are also very great number of mental acts or acts of consciousness." He further explains, "... And one of the chief things which we mean, by saying we have minds, is, I think this: namely, that we perform certain mental acts, or acts of consciousness. That is to say we hear and feel and remember and imagine and think and believe and desire and like or dislike and love, and are angry, etc. These things that we do are all of them mental acts — acts of mind or acts of consciousness; whenever we do any of them, we are conscious of something in some way or other: and it seems to me that things of which we are most certain, when we say we are

certain we have minds, is that we do these things. . . . It is, I think, certainly common sense to believe all this."

Even though Moore is not to be taken to maintain a strict cartesian dualism, he yet holds a minimal dualism in the sense of clearly distinguishing between two types of phenomena, the physical and the mental. Indeed at one place he clearly admitted the substantival view of mind or self as a reasonable and possible view. "The view, therefore that 'my mind' is a mental entity, distinct from any one of my mental acts and from all of them, seems to me to be only one among several possible alternatives, against none of which I have ever seen or can find conclusive arguments. . . . it would be 'mental' in the sense that it was something, *not* the body, of which certain mental acts were the acts — that it was that which is conscious whenever anyone is conscious."¹⁵

Secondly, it is queer and unnatural, indeed a travesty of truth, to attribute experiences of any kind to material bodies as such. Consider, for example, the following proposition:

'David was in Oxford when he heard a lecture on ethics.'

It seems plausible on first consideration to maintain that the word 'he' in the second clause must refer to the same thing as the word 'David' in the first clause, namely to a certain organism with ears. But if we try to insert 'David's body' as the grammatical subject in each clause, we find a very interesting difference between the two contexts. Although it may be a little unusual, it is nevertheless quite sensible to say that David's body was in Oxford at a certain time. And we do legitimately and meaningfully use such complex subject-phrase, if we wish to say idiomatically that David's mind (or thoughts) was elsewhere. On the other hand it is plainly absurd to say that David's body heard the lecture on ethics. No doubt David used his ears when he listened to the speaker,

but neither his hearing and comprehension nor his admiration was literally in his ears. From this it is easy to conclude that words such as 'David' and 'he' are sometimes used to signify a body and sometimes to signify a self or mind.

Thirdly, each of us can speak and think about his essential identity through time without investigating the continuity of the existence of his body. When a man says to a friend 'I have found the answer to the problem that has been worrying me all through the past week', he identifies himself, the present speaker, with the person who formerly had a worry or an expectation a week ago. If questioned, he will no doubt maintain that the earlier experiences occurred in connection with the body that now speaks: for the possibility of using the locution 'I' as used in the intersubjective language depends on the constancy of such connections. But it is not through consideration of evidence about his body that he comes to say what he does. This clearly shows that we have some notion of self-identity independent of bodily continuity. It is in this sense that Thomas Reid says that the estate, health, bodily strength that one possesses, do not constitute any part of one's personality: "A person is something indivisible, and is what Leibnitz called a monad. My personal identity, therefore, implies the continued existence of that indivisible thing which I call myself, Whatever this self may be, it is something which thinks, and deliberates and resolves, and acts and suffers. I am not thought, I am not action, I am not feeling; I am something that thinks, and acts, and suffers. My thoughts, and actions, and feelings change every moment — they have no continued, but a successive existence; but that self or I to which they belong is permanent, and has the same relation to all the succeeding thoughts, actions and feelings which I call mine."¹⁶

Another mental phenomenon, closely related with the inner sense of one's identity, is the awareness of a special kind of unity or internal connectedness which characterizes human experience. We must admit that a good many rich and complex experiences which we have in normal life, can hardly be reduced to discrete and simple stimulus-response pattern of the behavioursits. Although we see with our eyes and we hear with our ears, yet our awareness of sights and sounds together in such an experience as that of watching a ballet is not a use of these or any other bodily organs of sense. We may describe this sort of experiential unity as the *compresence of items in consciousness*, or, in Kantian language, as the unity of apperception. It should be clearly understood here that it is not mere simultaniety; for a blind man and a deaf man cannot produce it by attending a ballet together. And clearly it is not adequately explained by the existence of a micro-neural connection between eyes and ears detected by an encephalogram; though, of course, this may be a necessary condition for its occurrence in the case I have cited. In the terminology of Gestalt psychologists, we may say that a man's total experience at a moment is not an aggregate formed by addition of experiences corresponding to various distinguishable elements of his nervous system, e.g., neurones of his sensory cortex. The experiential unity of experiences, therefore, necessitates the recognition of the self — the noncorporeal subject of experiences.

Fourthly, every one of us will admit that there are two types of causation involved in the course of daily life. There are, on the one hand, external or physical causes which produce mental effects. As examples of these one can claim blows that cause dull aches, flashes of light that cause a person to have certain afterimages, pieces of music that cause a person to have certain feelings or memories.

On the other hand, mental events, that is, one's thoughts, intentions etc., cause bodily behaviour or changes in the external world. For instance, pain causes wincing and writhing, dreadful thoughts cause the heart to pound or a man to take to his heels, and feelings cause a person to tremble. This dual causal process, experienced by all, explains sufficiently why interactionist theories of mind and body were maintained by a large majority of educated people. It was Descartes who gave interactionism its classical formulation. He claimed that there are two sorts of substances in the world, mental substances and corporeal substances. Man is composed of both substances so intimately combined that events in the one can affect events in the other. Although interactionism has been censured by many, it still enjoys considerable currency among philosophers, scientists and biologists.¹⁷

Finally, all the materialistic or behaviouristic views that reject the free and spiritual agency in man i.e. the self, leave a vacuum at the heart of our moral and practical life. They make us out to be hollow men in a wasteland. They tell us that we are machines—enormously complicated machines, but in the end nothing more. Enlightened common sense has always rejected these views, and maintained that human behaviour can only be understood in terms of such distinctive concepts as purpose, intention, consciousness, nationality, and morality. And these concepts rule out the possibility of causal explanation, in the sense in which mechanical explanations are causal explanations. A.I. Meldon, among others, holds this view when he writes:

“absolutely nothing about any matter of human conduct follows logically from any account of the physiological conditions of bodily movements.”¹⁸

Without self-identity, no sense can be made of moral responsibility. No serious philosophers have disputed it. The philosophers who have resolved personal identity into a serial identity, do not mean the same thing by the 'same person'. The personal identity implied by the moral responsibility is the identity of the same individual being throughout time — the identity presupposed in the identity of 'substance'. The personal identity which consists in the unity of a series is inadequate for moral responsibility. A series is not the sort of thing that can do things and is held responsible for them. Philosophers who have argued to dispossess the self of reality have done so only by taking too abstract a view of it. For there is one context in which we must admit the self: that is, in morality. On any view either the self is a necessary element in it, or its existence is a necessary presupposition of moral experience. So we must either deny morality — which is unthinkable; or else admit the self. Another connected issue is the possibility of survival. If the determinant of a person's identity, i.e. his self, is not necessarily connected with the continuance of his body through time, then it is logically possible for a person to survive the death of his body. If a person is an entity, distinct from the series of experiences and the physical body, that is to say, if bodily identity is not a necessary criterion of personal identity, perhaps bodily death is merely one major event in a person's history and not the end of him. This clearly supports a doctrine held by millions, and is thoroughly familiar. So the problem of the nature of the self has a religious, theoretical and personal value which depends in part on whether the self be ontologically capable of surviving the death of its body. If for example the mind and certain parts of the brain or its functioning could be shown to be identical, then one could not reasonably hope that one might outlast the destruction of one's brain (or of the relevant parts thereof). The religious belief in survival is clearly intelligible on the cartesian view of self.¹⁹

2.4 SELF AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

The fundamental question about personal identity has seemed to many philosophers, to be the question of what makes a given set of experiences, experiences of one and the same person. The problem of personal identity, as discussed from Locke to the present day, is that of clarifying the principle that determines one's identity amidst changing experiences, that is to say, what it is that helps to identify, in spite of a lapse of time and the changes it may have wrought, a person as the same particular one we knew before. The problem, in other words, can be reduced to the question: in what sense is the mind a unity? what makes a person A who owns experiences CDE the same person who owns experiences XYZ? What justifies us in calling two sets of experiences, separated by an interval of time, experiences of one and the same mind. The short and most convincing answer to this problem is that there is a single persisting self which owns both experiences. The cartesian substantial self explains this in the most convincing way, and also in a manner which validates the experience of identity felt by each person in his own case. The self as the non-bodily substantial subject of experiences and mental states constitutes the core or nucleus of a man's continued identity. This also explains the quite familiar employment of the word 'person' in the sense of a possession, as when we speak of 'my person', 'his person' etc. Locke defined 'person' as "a thinking, intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking being in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and seems to me essential to it."²⁰ For him, accordingly, 'person' and 'self' became nearly synonymous in their meaning and usage. It is to one and the same entity that we refer when we use the locutions self, mind, soul, subject of experience and conscious agent. According to Locke, identity of a person

is simply identity of consciousness, so that I remain the same person if I am conscious of being so, even though my body should change drastically and be diminished through age, disease or amputation. A man, as against the person, is a certain sort of living (physical) organism whose identity depends on its biological organization and physical attributes. He draws the conclusion that if it is possible for the same man (that is, a man who is the same man in the sense that there is bodily continuity) to have at time t_1 , one distinct consciousness and at time t_2 another distinct consciousness, we could not speak of the man as being the same 'person' at time t_2 as he was at time t_1 . It is, therefore, the identity of soul or self that makes a man the same man.

Since the thoughts, feelings, images and other mental experiences a person or self has, are transitory and keep changing, philosophers who maintain a serial or Humean view face the problem of explaining what Hume calls the "bond that unites them."²¹ Hume's view is known as the 'bundle' view, since it maintains that the mind is 'nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement'. The problem is to say how events are related so as to belong to one bundle rather than another. Hume suggested that they are related by resemblance, contiguity and causation, but in the Appendix to his *Treatise* he admitted that he had failed to account for the real simplicity and identity of the mind. As a matter of fact there is a curious unreality about Hume's discussion of whether we can observe any real bond between the perceptions (experiences and mental states) of a person. Obviously this question cannot be raised unless one can already distinguish himself from others, i.e. has consciousness of his own self-identity. In other words, Hume was asking whether there is any uniting bond among those

perceptions that belonged to one person. But why should this question puzzle him if he can already distinguish between those perceptions that belong to, are owned by, one person and those that belong to another? In asking his question, Hume was assuming that the perceptions which persons are alleged to consist of are somehow known to be in parallel strings, so that the only question remaining is what unites those perceptions that belong to any one string.

From the standpoint of cartesian self as the persistent subject of experiences, the problem of the unity of a person is a spurious problem. There is a unique and simple 'self' which each person is able to detect and observe within himself; it is the determinant of one's personal identity. The identity of a person is the identity of an abiding substantial self. There is in the self, a note of novelty and creativity, a free will, an ability to control the eventual course of one's experience. The self is intuitively given and is a simple particular; it is irreducible and defies analysis. The unity of the self is not to be found in the sum of its states. The contemporary analytic philosophy which sprang from Hume's atomism or associationism stresses the changing nature of the self and altogether ignores its permanence and substantial unity. Analysis involves the disarticulation of a reality whose unitary character is destroyed when its components are separated. It is like the little boy who wants to find out what makes his toy work and ends up defiantly facing a heap of loose nuts and bolts. On the contrary, when we use such phrases as 'same person as me', 'I', 'my mind', we mean that there is such a thing as one identical mind, and not that there are only series of feelings and experiences. The person or mind is one and the same entity, the substantial subject of experiences. We certainly talk as if it were my mind which hears, my mind which thinks,

my mind which wills; in short my mind is some entity *of* which my mental states and acts are states and acts. Hume's view of the self is clearly wrong and misleading. On Hume's view, we should have to hold that, when I say that I or my mind, am seeing this paper or thinking those thoughts, what I mean is that my seeing and my thinking are, each of them, one among the mental acts which constitute me or mind. And it does not seem to me that this is what I do mean. When I say that I am seeing this room now and saw another yesterday (and I am sure that I really am and really did), I mean to assert quite a different sort of relation between *me* and my seeing, from that the latter is a part of me—one member of a collection of acts which constitutes me.

Moreover, even on Hume's view of personal identity, there still remains the problem of saying what kind of relation it is that all my mental acts have to one another, which constitutes them '*mine*'. They most certainly have some relation to one another, which we express by saying that they are all '*mine*', some relation which distinguishes them from the mental acts and states of other people. And, if we consider what this relation can be, this consideration also seems to me to point to the falsity of Hume's theory. What I seem to know, when I know that all my mental acts are mental acts of *mine* is that they all have a peculiar relation to some other entity which is me. I seem to know that their relation to one another consists in the fact that they all have the same relation to this other entity, viz., myself, I do not seem to be directly aware of any other relation which they all have to one another.

No bundle theory has yet withstood criticism. Accounts of personal identity in terms of resemblance, contiguity, or causation are too weak because it is merely an empirical

fact that only events in the same mind tend to be so related; it is not impossible for mental events to be so related and still be states of, or events in, different minds. A brief mention of Ayer's position will elucidate my point here. In *The Problems of Knowledge Ayer*, while considering the question of the relation that unites mental events to individual selves, states that "on the one hand, I am inclined to hold that personal identity can be constituted by the presence of a certain factual relation between experiences. On the other hand, I doubt if it is meaningful to talk of experiences except as the experiences of a person; or at least of an animate creature of some kind" ²² Ayer does not think that the circularity involved here is vicious. It shows, he thinks, "that we could not understand what is meant by an experience unless we could not understand what is meant by being a person; but . . . to understand what is meant by an expression does not entail that we can give a satisfactory analysis of its use." In my view, however, Ayer's account is not only incoherent but also gravely misconceived. The incoherence is apparent from the fact which he himself notes that in his account, "the relation between experiences . . . must be logically necessary" since the position which he is here trying to establish as conceivable entails the theory that a person *is* a bundle or collection of experiences or properties, which, as he correctly notes earlier in the chapter, ²³ any property which individuates a person can be denied to this person without contradiction, and so, he thinks, belongs to the person only contingently. Despite denying that the circularity involved in his account is vicious, Ayer concludes towards the end of his discussion that he has "not succeeded in discovering any relation by which the constituents of Hume's bundles would be adequately held together." ²⁴ I think, therefore, that the only plausible view is that I am an entity, distinct from every one of my mental acts and from all of them put

together: an entity, whose acts they are; which is that which is conscious when I am conscious; and that what I mean by calling them all 'mine', is that they all of them are acts or states of this same entity. It is the ego, the 'me', the subject which is conscious and active while experiencing.

The facts clearly favour the cartesian substantialist view. It is actually observed that the self has a degree of stability that contrasts with the constant flux of experiences. These experiences seem to be states of the self. The observation of the permanent character of the self has rightly been considered proof of its substantial nature. Its permanence, in the sense of constant presence, seems to be an undeniable fact; we can actually never discover an experience that does not belong to a subject self. Despite changes of moods, we say that we are dealing with the same person whom we met last year. We mean that, though our friend has changed a great deal in appearance (something bodily or physical), he has not been replaced by another individual. So the unity and continuity of the same individual seems to require a persistent self. And indeed the immediate data of our consciousness does reveal to us a single and continuous self, assuring us that in spite of the changes we are the same person. Our intimate intuitions tell us that the self is a unity, a substantial particular, and not an amorphous mass of a disconnected experiences — an identical real particular, and not an intermittent series of transitory states.

Many of the best philosophers writing today in the field of mental philosophy would strongly resist an attempt such as this to insert a wedge between the concepts 'person' and 'self'. Indeed they would prefer to avoid the word 'self' altogether, and discuss the problem exclusively in terms of the word 'person'. Their approach is based on the conten-

tion that there is no distinction between identity in one's own case and identity in the case of others, and hence that an understanding of the identity of persons in general is *eo ipso* an understanding of one's own identity. This approach — let me call it the 'person-approach'—is part and parcel of a programme of deliberate reversal of Descartes' approach to epistemology. According to the philosophers of person-approach, we learn all there is to know about self-identity by understanding in what the identity of other persons consists. It connects personal identity with questions of identification. Its point of view is exhibited in the question, 'what must we take a person to be if we are to achieve successful referential identification (as we are)?' It would follow on this approach that if referential identification of persons depended on identification of their bodies, then we must take a person to be at least a bodily X. It is clear, however, that this approach is primarily concerned with the identity of *other* persons and only derivatively concerned with the identity of one oneself. As persons we are aware of each other, but we are also aware of ourselves. We possess self-awareness. The problem of self-identity, then, is the problem of the identity of the self of which each has this awareness. For an external observer to identify me as a person is to note some of my bodily or physical characteristic. But for *me* the matter is quite different. The fact is that to myself I am more than just this particular ϕ ' — a mere instantiation of a general description. To view me in such a way is to de-individualize me, in the sense that my significant individuality is reduced to a general description. From my own point of view, therefore, the most important element in my individuality is not my characteristic (something physical), but rather what *has* them, namely, myself. The problem of personal identity then, as I see it, is the problem of accounting for the identity of the conscious subject qua conscious subject. On this

theory, in each person there is to be found a mental (or spiritual) substance which is the subject of his mental states and the bearer of his personal identity. The self or soul is not only logically distinct from a particular human body with which it is associated; it is also what a person fundamentally is.

I should like, in the end of this introductory chapter, to sketch the general lines on which I think the basic insight of Descartes', namely, that we as selves are incorporeal, substantial subjects of experiences, can be shown to be sound as well as philosophically plausible. In this book I shall argue that the Humean or phenomenalist account of self and the person-approach philosophies, are both radically at fault. The serialist accounts make it difficult to understand the self *qua* subject: they give no intuitively acceptable account of the unity and the endurance of the self. On the other hand, the latter theories are misguided in their view that identification in terms of spatio-temporal relations is an exhaustive index of reality. A critical reader may say that I have in making these claims, bitten off more than I can, or propose to, chew. But I shall only submit that it will take the rest of the book to cash them. Let us then begin at the beginning.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. I have here in mind particularly neutral monism of James and Russell, Professor Ryle's linguo-behavioural thesis, the mind-body identity theorists, and their acolytes.
2. Ryle, G., *The Concept of Mind*, Hutchinson, (1966), p. 11.
3. *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, translated by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, (Cambridge University Press, 1969), Vol. I, p. 153.
4. *Discourse on Method*, translated by S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
5. *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, translated by S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross, Vol. 2, p. 38.
6. Even though the present book is not linguistic in its argument and style in the sense of the current linguistic philosophy, I think a brief exploration of the word 'self' itself lends support to the view of it maintained and argued for in this book.
7. Cf. Otto Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar*, p. 82.
8. Mayo, Bernard, *The Logic of Personality*, (Jonathan Cape, London: 1952) p. 93.
9. See his article "Selves", *Mind*, Vol. LVIII (1949) pp. 355-57.
10. Indeed I shall later on maintain that even 'introspection' in the usual psychological sense does not explain the most direct and intuitive way in which we are acquainted with our selves. See chapter 6 below.
11. For instance, A. Flew's much advertised dictum 'People are what you meet' (vide a symposium on 'Death', *University* Vol. II, no. 2, p. 38) and S. Hampshire's thesis that 'Every observer is aware of himself as one item in the furniture of the world' (vide, *Thought and Action*, p. 45 *Passim*), and a host of other variants of 'one world view' have been advanced in the name of common sense and general assent. That is to say, they hold that there are only one type of entities and states or events, and they are physical or material in nature.
12. Lewis, H.D., *The Elusive Mind*, George Allen and Unwin (1969) p.182

13. See Cornford, F.M., *From Religion to Philosophy*, Harper Torch Books (157), pp. 109 ff.
14. Moore, G.E., *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*; George Allen and Unwin Ltd., (1966) p.4. He expressed identical views in an earlier article, 'The Subject-Matter of Psychology', *PAS*, 1909-10.
15. Moore, G.E., 'The Subject-Matter of Psychology', included in *Body and Mind*, ed. G N. A. Vesey (George Allen, London 1964), p. 245.
16. Reid, Thomas, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, (ed.) A. D. Woozley (London, Macmillan, 1941) p. 203.
17. Eccles, J.C. , in *The Neurophysiological Basis of Mind* (Oxford 1953), notes on p. 265 'many scientists (for example Eddington, Sherrington, Adrian, Le Gros Clark) find in dualism and interaction the most acceptable initial postulate in a scientific approach to the problem of mind and brain.'
18. Meldon, A. I., *Free Action*, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1961), p.201.
19. Concerning the view that survival of bodily death is logically possible I shall cite the paper by H. H. Price 'Survival and the Idea of Another World, *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* (1952), reprinted in J. R. Smythies (ed.) *Brain and Mind*, (London 1965) pp. 1-24. Price has shown, with great ingenuity and persuasiveness, that we can actually imagine, and perforce conceive, a disembodied continuation of our present embodied life.
20. Locke, John, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, (ed.) A. C. Fraser (Oxford University Press, 1894) Chapter 27, para. 9.
21. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L.A.Selby-Bigge, (Oxford University Press, reprinted 1955) Book I, Part iv, sec. 6.
22. Ayer, A. J., *The Problems of Knowledge*, (Penguin Books, 1956) Ch. 5. Sec. II. pp. 196-198. Other quotations in this paragraph are also drawn from the same section.
23. Ayer, A.J. *op. cit.*, p. 184.
24. Ayer, A.J. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

Chapter 3

**MENTAL EVENTS ARE NOT BITS OF BEHAVIOUR:
G. RYLE**

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MENTAL EVENTS ARE NOT BITS OF BEHAVIOUR

G. RYLE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated briefly in the previous chapter, the main argument for the ontological reality of the self is that it is the subject of all sorts of mental predicates, i.e., the subject to which mental events, states and processes like sensing, knowing, imagining, feeling and so on, are ascribed or attributed. Now in the history of philosophy there has been a continuous strand of thought that has denied the distinct, mental or non-physical character of these states. Recently the logical or analytical behaviourism of Ryle has tried to maintain that all references to the mental must be understood in terms of, in principle, witnessable bodily activities—that is, we must explain all mental life in terms of the publicly observable behaviour. It is, therefore, central for the purposes of this book to show that the mental and the physical or bodily are two radically different kinds of events and processes, and that besides the bodily events there is a series of distinctly different series of mental events, viz., feelings, thoughts, images, intentions etc.

According to the cartesian dualist theory, the material and the mental are irreducibly different from one another, so different indeed as to be polar opposites, since extendedness or spatiality is commonly regarded as defintory characteristic of the one, and unextendedness as defintory characteristic of the other. A familiar quotation from Descartes' works reads :

Extension in length, breadth and depth constitutes the nature of corporeal substance; and thought the nature

of the thinking substance. For every other thing that can be attributed to body presupposes extension and is only some mode of an extended thing; as all properties we discover in the mind are only diverse modes of thinking.¹

Corporeal things or material objects, and, therefore, physical events too, are extended; that is, they must be spatially located. Incorporeal or spiritual things and mental phenomena are nonspatial and unextended. The above quotation is the classical and most explicit formulation of the distinction of *res cogitans* and *res extensa*—the mental and the physical, and as I shall show in the sequel, it is on this very point that the present-day materialists have mounted their attack.² Descartes' reason that the mental i.e., mental states and items, are not spatial is that the objects of direct, introspective awareness do not reveal any spatial or extension characteristics. It clearly sounds absurd to ask: How much room does his imagination take up? How long is her pain feeling? These embarrassing questions are variants of Hume's enquiry 'can anyone conceive of a passion of a yard in length, a foot in breadth, or an inch in thickness'? They imply, as it does, that it is nonsense to ascribe spatial position to mental realities.

Another important point, also stressed by Descartes, that marks off the mental from the physical or bodily occurrences is the so-called 'asymmetry' of first person and third person reports which results from the fact that each person has, in Ryle's terms, a 'privileged access' to his own mental events. When you say of me that I am in pain you say it on the basis of observation you make of me, my behaviour, and the situation I am in; when I say I am in pain, I do not say this on the basis of such observations. To put this more precisely, in saying that an event is mental I mean that it is

an event the reporting of which is for one and only one person (namely, the person to whom the event occurs), not grounded in any external observation. I am directly and immediately aware of my own images and thoughts, doubts, certainties, volitions, fears and hopes, pleasures and pains, etc. By saying that the mental phenomenon is 'not grounded in any observation' is meant that no appeal to observation is necessary to show that a first person mental report is true. Even Wittgenstein at one time is reported to have held this asymmetry of mental and physical phenomena³ He maintained that propositions 'He has toothache' and 'I have toothache', are not two values of the single propositional function 'X has toothache.' When I say sincerely that I have a pain, it makes no sense to doubt or wonder whether or not I am in pain. But I may doubt or wonder whether or not another individual is in pain, the knowledge of other person's mind always being based on analogical inference from manifest symptoms and behaviour. Alternatively phrased, this means that the two realms are known to us in sharply contrasting ways. In respect of the material reality and event, there is direct access of a 'public' nature, through the medium of the senses common to all of us. But in respect of mental particulars and happenings, direct access is a privilege reserved for the individual in whom or to whom they happen. In this sense, then, and to use Ryle's terminology, mental events on the cartesian theory are 'occult' and only physical events or processes are 'overt' or publicly observable.

The mental and the physical are very different qualitatively, a difference which can easily be recognized empirically when we compare a throb of pain felt by ourselves to a nervous reaction observed by a physiologist, or a thought in our mind to the movements of the larynx on which behaviourists enlarge. That these experiences are not to be identified with behaviour (physical or linguistic) is not a philosophically far-fetched hypothesis but a plain matter of fact

empirically known. Ryle, on the other hand, has argued not only that many psychological terms do not stand for definite introspectable realities — states, occurrences, events, etc., but that the dualist theories of consciousness and introspection are logical muddles and their supposed objects 'myths'. He wishes to deny that there are mental occurrences over and above the bodily behaviour. Since Ryle has attracted a large number of camp-followers in current discussions of mental philosophy, I propose in this chapter to examine critically his onslaught on the reality of mental events at some length.

3.2 CATEGORY—MISTAKE ARGUMENT

Ryle in his *The Concept of Mind*⁴ has stigmatized the traditional cartesian notion of mind and mental states as a 'dogma of the ghost in the machine'. He has attacked the dogma broadly in two ways — firstly by advancing the argument of category — mistake and, secondly, by analysing the mental concepts into physical or bodily occurrences. In this section, I shall deal with the first.

Ryle thinks that the cartesian dualist theory is a bundle of confusion because there has occurred and improper juxtaposition of the terms of different order or categories. As such terms, according to Ryle, are incapable of being brought into intelligible relation with one another, he believes that their mixing up has resulted in incoherence and confusion. 'Mind' and 'Matter' are terms of different orders or categories. They cannot as such be legitimately conjoined or disjoined. The conjunctive phrase 'body and mind' is, for Ryle, a meaningless phrase. He asserts that the dualists have committed a category mistake by describing mind in terms which are suitable only to the body. However neither in

The Concept of Mind nor elsewhere is any serious attempt made by Ryle to give a rigorous account of the notion of a category itself. Roughly speaking, the essential thesis seems to be that there is a special kind of confusion which can be illustrated by that of taking team spirit as an element in a game as being on equal footing with serving or receiving, or of taking Oxford University as an institution as being on equal footing with its constituent colleges. Ryle then goes on to claim that dualism treats the mind or self as an entity on equal footing with the body and mental operations and events as being on equal footing with bodily activities, and that this is a confusion of the same kind as those in the two illustrative cases.

Now, with regard to Ryle's thesis that the ghost of the self and the mental is born of illegitimate mixing up of the terms of different orders or categories, we may point out that Ryle does not give us any criterion in his published work to distinguish such orders or categories. The rejection of the ghost on the basis of category mistake should have been preceded by a prior definition and criteria of categories. Unless the reader knows what exactly Ryle understands by a category, he will be ill at ease to appreciate the so-called category mistake. It is true that when Ryle illustrates the category mistake with the help of a few examples, he makes the reader feel that something has gone wrong. But in order that one may be familiar with the mistake and criticize it fully, one ought to be equipped with an adequate criterion to determine the category differences. This is what Ryle has failed to provide in *The Concept of Mind*. Warnock has therefore rightly objected:

“ If one is not prepared, and indeed is deliberately unwilling, to say just what a category is, and what categories there are, can one really be entitled to employ

the term category"?⁵

In an earlier paper on categories, however, Ryle briefly discusses categories and category differences, though even there he is not explicit about the test that will determine concepts into different categories. The test he there provides is: "Two proposition-factors are of different categories or types if there are sentence-frames such that when the expressions from those factors are imported as alternative complements to the same gap-signs, the resultant sentences are significant in the one case and absurd in the other."⁶ Obviously, the category of which Ryle is talking here is, like that of Aristotle, a logical or a grammatical one. Even as to the appropriateness and adequacy of Ryle's characterization of category, it may be pointed out that it has not generally found favour with the critics. Elsewhere he has himself preferred not to take the term 'category' so seriously. For example, in *Dilemmas* he says that he recommends it 'not for the usual reason, namely, that there exists an exact, professional way of using it, in which like a skeleton key, it will turn all our locks for us; but rather for the unusual reason that there is an inexact, amateurish way of using it in which like a coal hammer, it will make a satisfactory noise on doors which we want opened to us'.⁷

Now, whatever inherent merit or drawback Ryle's concept of 'category' might have, I am here not so much concerned with it as with his more important assertion that 'mental' and 'material' when conjoined or disjoined make no sense. If, on the contrary, ordinary language is to be trusted, we certainly find that the structure of this language is dualistic. Mental and physical concepts are freely used together and they convey significant information to us. For example, statements like.

'I was trembling with anxiety'.

'An attack of flue left me discouraged and depressed'.

'Eagerness was written all over his face'.

'A resolute decision finally enabled me to overcome my addiction', are a few illustrations which indicate that ordinarily language unhesitatingly combines mental and physical terms in its description and explanation of human behaviour. Ryle will, of course, interpret the meaning of these sentences in his own usual behaviouristic way. For him mental concepts always mean some externally recognizable behaviour. But clearly when I report my moods, feelings, emotions, sentiments, thoughts, images, dreams, etc. that I *experience*, I am not reporting my behaviour, be it actually occurring or likely to occur under certain conditions. I am reporting those states or processes of my direct experience which I live through (enjoy or suffer). Also in the case of others, when I report their thoughts, feelings and other mental happenings, I do not report their behaviour. I report their mental states and processes, which I know indirectly through inference from their behaviour. Though this inferential knowledge of other mind may, at times, turn out to be false, still it works out well and justifies itself in the practical conduct of our life. There are evidently conscious mental states, quite distinct from bodily changes. Experience of pain, to be sure, is not the same thing as a physical movement of any kind. To think that one can be reduced to, or identified with, the other is radically mistaken, because their properties are different. If a pain were any kind of physical motion, we could ask what its direction and velocity were, nor it makes sense to talk of the direction or velocity of a toothache. On the other hand, we speak of the pain as dull or excruciating, while a dull or excruciating motion is meaningless again. So, says Ryle, we are quite justified in characterizing and treating them as categorially or ontologically

different. Categorical impropriety in such cases has not been proved by Ryle's examples mentioned earlier.

3.3 DISPOSITIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL ANALYSIS OF MENTAL EVENTS

As to the second line of attack on mental states and occurrences, we find Ryle maintaining that the meaning of mental terms such as 'thinking', 'anger', 'intention', etc., can be explained wholly in terms of bodily behaviour and the physical circumstances in which they occur. He thinks that dispositional or behaviouristic analysis of such concepts enables him to say that they primarily mean some bodily behaviour, actual or possible. Intelligent action, for example, is for him only a manner of doing things in certain ways. Similarly, 'anger' 'joy' and the like mental states mean only characteristic behaviour patterns. Thinking means silent speech or soliloquy . It is simply saying in a certain frame of mind.

Let me first make a few observations about the general aims of Ryle's main work. In the introduction to *The Concept of Mind* Ryle declares that his aim in the book is not to 'give new information about minds'. It is not to 'increase what we already know about minds', but simply to 'rectify the logical geography of the knowledge which we already possess'. He thus seems to think that the rectification of the logical geography does not amount to a contribution to our knowledge of mind. But can a reader of *The Concept of Mind* escape the impression that Ryle has indeed sought to advance a new theory of mind and mental events? The central aim of the book has been to explode the cartesian view of mind or self and to erect on its ruins a new theory—the theory of dispositional or behavioural account of it. Throughout the book, his fire has been directed against the cartesian dualism, and he argues to the effect that mind

is nothing but a bundle of dispositions to behave in certain ways. This is certainly presenting a new picture of the mind. His method is primarily linguistic and not factual. So even when he has engaged himself with the programme of conceptual re-mapping of the language in which we talk about, its effect has been to present an altogether new map in which the self or mind is left out in order to make room for dispositions and behavioural tendencies. Ryle's statement of the avowed aim is, therefore, extremely confusing and disturbing. A pertinent question that arises here is whether a rectification or re-mapping of mental-conduct concepts is possible without any regard to our knowledge of mental operations. It is needless to say that a talk having no consideration for facts will be destitute of useful logic, that is to say it would be without any significance.⁸

The sum and substance of Ryle's position is that "to talk of a person's mind is not to talk of a repository which is permitted to house objects that something called 'physical world' is forbidden to house, it is to talk of the person's abilities, liabilities and inclinations to do and undergo certain sorts of things, and of doing and undergoing of these things in the ordinary world".⁹ Mind and mental events are thus denied any reality over and above the body and bodily states. Mind is thought to be a disposition, a set, a style, an *einstellung* or an organic state of readiness to do and undergo certain public things in their appropriate situations. A disposition, however, is not an occult or inner quality or potentiality. It is nothing actual. It simply signifies a tendency for certain events to occur if some conditions are realized. When a glass is said to be brittle, it does not mean that brittleness is a property secretly present in the glass. It only means that when a certain situation obtains, e.g. when it is hit with a stone, a certain event takes place, i.e. the glass breaks into pieces. Similar is the case with the feeling of

vanity or other emotional feelings. When an individual is said to be vain, it does not mean that there is an inner element of vanity in him which he feels or experiences. It simply means that he is prone to behave in certain ways under specific circumstances. Ryle thus believes that disposition-words are not the names of actual psychological characteristics. Dispositional statements are not the categorical report of some actual inner state or occurrence. They have only a hypothetical import. To say this man knows French, is to say that if, for example, he is ever addressed in French or shown any French newspaper, he responds pertinently in French, acts appropriately or translates it correctly in his tongue. This in brief is an account of Ryle's idea of disposition into which he has sought to reduce many mental concepts. Sentences like 'Jones is vain', 'Jones is a careful driver', 'Jones knows French or German' do not invite an invisible cartesian 'peep-show'; they are formulations of law-like statements about tendencies, about one of Jones's tendencies, which have been inductively arrived at by observing Jones and can be tested for their truth or falsity by further observations. Before proceeding further, I shall make a few comments on this theory.

Ryle's theory of disposition raises a number of questions. First of all, why should Ryle think that a disposition is primarily a tendency to behave overtly? Why should 'knowing French' mean only such overt acts as replying in French, or reading a newspaper and so on? (Even these cannot be unconscious or unmindful activities). Why should it not also mean a covert feeling of confidence in tackling whatever there is in French and 'understanding' what he reads in French? Why should 'vanity' mean only the overt act of boasting or a peculiar type of behaviour alone? Why should it not also mean a private experience of annoyance when it is touched? Ryle's account of disposition lays an over-

emphasis on overt acts, but dispositions may be dispositions to act outwardly as well as to feel and experience inwardly. Sibly makes similar remark when he observes '... he inclines to say that disposition-statements are not only hypotheticals about possible acts (which is true) but about (at least predominantly) overt acts. Why then this emphasis on the overt'.¹⁰ Besides, the limitation imposed on mental concepts of signifying only some bits of behaviour, is beset with further difficulty. If vanity means only the possibility of doing this and that, then on seeing that somebody does just that, we may infer for certain that he is vain. But can anybody be so confident of his finding? There is no contradiction involved in the assertion that a man does all that a vain man would normally do but still he is not vain. He might not be doing those things out of vanity but for some other motive. The same can be illustrated with the help of what Ryle calls a family concept — the concept of 'intelligence'. Ryle thinks that intelligence is a disposition of doing things in certain ways. He equates intelligent action with a certain manner or procedure, so that if somebody is intelligent, he will do certain acts in that manner and if he does them in that manner, he is intelligent and thoughtful. An intelligent student, however, might do worse at the examination. Conversely, somebody might do well at times but he may not be intelligent. His so-called intelligent action (externally observed) may be only a chance performance. This shows that intelligence cannot be identified with the manner of doing things, though it is closely connected with such manner or procedure. Ryle's reduction of mental concepts into dispositions and overt behaviour is clearly mistaken. Many of the logical problems that Ryle's analysis of mental concepts has raised are due to his failure to distinguish the inner, mental experience from the external or public evidence. It might be that for elucidating the essence of mental concepts, some reference to their public correlates is necessary.

but "it is one thing to insist that the terms in which we appraise mental qualities are unintelligible without reference to what the subject of those qualities do and quite another to say that we can find the whole meaning of such terms in overt actions".¹¹ It is indeed too much to say that mental events like reflection, deliberation and intelligent thinking are completely and exhaustively reducible into behaviour. Ryle's assertion that the thoughts of a circus clown are completely objectified in his trippings and tumblings is unacceptable because besides the idea of amusement, there might be several other thoughts (the thought or motive of profit etc.,) present in the clown's mind. His reduction of the meaning or significance of mental events in terms of merely publicly observable behaviour is therefore radically misguided.

As a matter of empirical fact most psychological terms refer to occurrences and not to mere disposition or tendency to behave in a particular way. For example, 'reading carefully' or 'minding what one is doing'. Here 'reading carefully', refers to two types of components involved— a mental and a physical one. The physical posture of the reader, open eyes, and holding of the book, all refer to the physical factors while exercising carefulness or attention is a mental activity, irreducible to any physical descriptions. The suggestion however that there must, in addition to dispositions of knowing and believing, be episodes or occurrences in which the dispositions are actualized is countered by Ryle in terms of the concept of 'heeding'. While discussing what heeding or minding is, Ryle says that a driver's minding of his driving consists in his preparedness to meet certain sorts of emergencies. If he is prepared or disposed to handle the expected and unexpected emergencies, if he is alert to chuck-holes and pedestrians, if he foresees that the donkey standing there might bolt out the street etc. etc. he is certainly minding

what he is doing. This is true. But, Ryle is here using the term 'minding' in the sense of 'doing carefully'. If a driver is disposed to drive his car carefully, his disposition or preparedness only shows how very attentive (something mental) he is. For a driver who is not disposed to drive carefully may also be minding what he is doing as he might (he must!) be driving consciously, not just mechanically or out of habit. The word 'minding' may mean both 'doing carefully' and 'doing consciously' of which the first implies the second though the second does not imply the first. A driver, therefore, has to mind first in the sense of 'doing consciously' before he can mind in the sense of 'doing carefully'. So, when Ryle explains the driver's minding in terms of his disposition to meet the emergencies, he is only pointing out to a mental activity on the part of the driver, i.e. that he is taking care to avoid accidents. He would not say all that he says unless it were also assumed that the driver is continuously purposing to do all he is doing as part of an ongoing mental process which would be equally genuine and distinct from the bodily movements involved in the driving. Attending to driving, like other mental states and occurrences, seems obviously something the driver feels or experiences in a way that cannot be reduced at all to any mode of his dispositional or bodily states.

Ryle has himself realized that concepts of heed, e.g., noticing, concentrating, caring, attending etc., are not fully explicable in dispositional terms. In the case of these concepts, Ryle has to take recourse to the characterizations, of 'mongrel-categorical', or 'Semi-dispositional'. Such concepts, he maintains, are half-dispositional and half-episodic. They have both an episodic and a dispositional reference. To say that 'X is reading carefully' is to say

- (1) that he is doing something now (the incident is datable or clockable and certain adverbs which

are applicable to occurrences are applicable to his fact of reading) and

- (2) he would be able to answer questions about the subject of his study, if he is called upon to do so in future.

Obviously, (1) makes it episodic and (2) dispositional. The proposition 'X is reading carefully' containing the heed concept 'carefully' is therefore, neither fully dispositional nor fully episodic. It is in the language of Ryle, mongrel-categorical or semi-dispositional.

Now by introducing the concept of 'mongrel-categorical' for elucidating the meaning of heed concept, Ryle is gradually modifying his original position to an extent that it hardly appears to survive. His case against the dualist is that they interpret all mentalistic sentences as categorical reports about the happenings of an inner world. By so doing, he holds, the dualist has misunderstood the logic of mental concepts. Mental concepts, according to Ryle, do not report any happening or episode for "there are no such happenings; there are no occurrences taking place in a second-status world" ¹² He appears to hold firmly that mental concepts are dispositional and not episodic in import; that categorical statements about mental events are to be interpreted as hypothetical statements about possible behaviour; and that the logic of disposition-words is different from the logic of episode-words. But when the question of explaining the logic of 'heed' verbs arises, the occurrence-disposition dichotomy proves for him a great handicap. He then yields to maintain that the logic of occurrence and disposition words meet in the heed words: they are at once dispositional and episodic or occurrent. This obviously weakens his original thesis considerably.

Certainly when we apply a heed concept to a person's actions, we are, in Ryle's words, describing 'one operation with a special character'; but this 'special character' is surely a conscious or mental side of it, and not, as he suggests, just a disposition. The 'complication' may need an inductive test to be ascertained by an external observer; it is directly and immediately evident to the performer himself. Again, since cases arise in which intelligent (intentionally directed) actions are outwardly indistinguishable from non-intelligent actions, it appears that we must, in Ryle's words, often 'look beyond the performance itself' in determining whether an act is or is not a working of mind. But where do we look? Surely the answer lies in the fact that we look to some 'inner performance' inaccessible to the external observer, which clearly also seems to admit what Ryle is disposed not to admit, namely, what he calls a performer's 'private or privileged access' to his own inner, mental occurrences and states.

It can legitimately be concluded from the above that no satisfactory account of mental states and events can be given, without invoking the inner experienced content, in terms of such things as style of performance, disposition to certain characteristic performances, and acquired skills or habits.

In the rest of this section I shall state briefly Ryle's behaviouristic and quasi-behaviouristic treatment of individual mental phenomena like volition, emotion, sensation, imagination and images, intellectual activities and consciousness. His explicit aim throughout is an attempt to remove the mentalistic bite from all these by reducing them into witnessable, public activities.

Ryle discusses the concept of volition or the 'will' and argues strongly that there is nothing like volition or the will. No man is seen using this term in his everyday conversation. The cartesians maintain that unless the mental episode of volition occurs, the body cannot move to act. In order that the action may be actually performed, a prior act of will has to be performed by the mind. But Ryle does not find any evidence of 'inner, mysterious thrust' in the common talk of people. Nobody ever speaks of having a volition at 10 A.M., or having five quick or slow volitions between breakfast and lunch. Novelists have never described volitions of their characters. But all the same Ryle does not want to discard the concepts 'voluntary' and 'involuntary'. These terms are used in practical life, but they do not mean adjectives relating to an occult phenomenon called volition. The question of voluntary or involuntary is not decided with reference to a private act of will. It is decided with reference to 'could have avoided' or 'could not have avoided.' If somebody could have avoided doing something, the action is called voluntary, otherwise not. Moreover, these terms are only used with reference to a man who is suspected of a guilty action. Proceeding further, Ryle explains those idioms of everyday use which may appear to refer to the mental states of volitions, for example, 'behaving resolutely', 'strength of will', 'effort of will' and so on. Behaving resolutely, for him, means not getting back in effort, strength of will is sticking to a task, and effort of will means acting in face of other stronger temptations.

How about emotions which, on the dualist theory, are defined as experiences of turbulence in the private stream of consciousness? Ryle maintains that this explanation is another extension of the dogma of the ghost. He makes a list of the senses in which the term emotion is used, and it appears to him that it is used either for feelings, or

for motives (inclinations) or for moods or agitations (commotion). He takes them one by one and tries to show that none of them has any reference to an inner state or occurrence. Bodily feelings like itches, tinglings, throbbings, aches, etc. are completely translatable into bodily terms. The feeling of despair can be located in the pit of the stomach. The tense feeling of anger can be located in muscles of the jaw and the fist. Those which cannot be so located pervade the whole body. So, in effect, Ryle maintains that feelings refer to bodily sensations. There is nothing secret or mental about them. Theorists (Ryle's term for the dualists) confuse motive words as feeling words. By so confusing them, they come to believe that motive terms are names of internal experiences called emotions. All motive words are names of propensities or dispositions. Patriotism, for example, is not a feeling; it is a disposition of a patriot to behave in certain special ways when appropriate occasions arise. Similarly mood words cannot be taken to designate feelings; they refer to certain frames or bent of mind. When somebody happens to be in a certain mood, he is likely to do many things, which usually he would not do. For example, if somebody is in a hilarious mood, he would not talk harsh, he would not give serious consideration to the defects of others, he would be more benevolent, etc. So, instead of referring to actual feelings, they refer to short term, monopolizing tendencies of the individual. They cannot be understood as pointing to the episodes of feeling occurring in the mind. Words standing for agitation, e.g. 'worried', 'excited', 'embarrassed', etc., are names of moods or susceptibilities to moods. Ryle calls agitations as bodily conditions. They are liability conditions because when one gets into the agitated frame of mind, one is liable or bound to behave in typical ways. That is, they have only dispositional use, not episodic; they do not stand for any occurrent feeling.

The mental status of sensations and perceptions is likewise rejected. 'Sensation', for Ryle, is used merely for tactual and kinaesthetic perceptions. Sensation is not a species of perception; it is not an ingredient in perception. It is wrong to suppose that seeing, hearing and smelling are comprised of sensations. Nobody says that he has first visual sensations and then seeing or he has first auditory sensation and then hearing. The case of seeing, hearing or smelling is decided without reference to the cartesian notion of sensation. There is no neat sensation vocabulary, and as such sensations cannot be described in unambiguous language. Whenever a sensation is described, it is described with the aid of the vocabulary of common physical objects e.g. it looks as such and such and sounds like such and such. Sensations are never the objects of observation: we do not observe sensations as such. Sensations may only be noticed but not observed just as alphabets may only be written but not spelled. If sensations would have been observed, we would require the sensation of a sensation and the series would go on ad infinitum. He emphatically asserts that "it is robins and games that we observe, and it is sensation that we never could observe".¹³ Perception itself is reduced to recognition and identification. Recognition consists in the utilization of the previous knowledge which is learnt by practice as we learn bicycling. "The verb 'to see' does not signify an experience, i.e., something that I go through, am engaged in. It does not signify a sub-stretch of my life-story."¹⁴ When we fail to utilize our previous knowledge of the objects, we get a mistaken perception. Ryle thus concludes that there is nothing mental or 'other-wordly' about sensations and perceptions.

What about images and imagination which we report in sentences like 'Jones imagines he is in Germany,' 'He has an image of an ideal leader' About sensations it is indeed true

to a certain extent that they are closely connected with the physical, physiological or neurological factors. But images are decidedly mental and non-physical. Ryle's central thesis in his chapter on 'Imagination' is that there are no images or internal pictures and afortiori, therefore, there is no mind to have them. He accepts that picturing or visualizing or imaging does occur but he denies that there are images to be seen. Picturing or imaging is only pretending or fancying to see (which in fact one does not see). When the child imagines her doll smiling, there is neither an actual smile nor a copy of the smile. The child simply fancies that her doll is smiling. Just as in a game she can fancy herself to be a bear, so she can fancy her doll to be smiling. Ryle observes: "Imaging is not having shadowy pictures before some show-organ called the 'mind's eye'; but having paper pictures before the eyes in one's face is a familiar stimulus to imaging".¹⁵ Imaging or picturing or seeing in imagination is not seeing, not even sham-seeing.

Let us now see what Ryle says about cognition and intellectual activities. Statements like 'Jones solved the puzzle', 'He inferred a wrong conclusion' 'Cathy looked for her cat', on the cartesian view, are held to describe typical mental operations. But Ryle rejects this account. He asserts that judging, conceiving, inferring, etc. are in principle quite akin to the operations of tying knots, following tunes, or playing hide-and-seek; that is, there is nothing occultly private about them. He goes on to say that we have no fixed criteria to settle as to what human actions are intellectual. If thinking thoughts leading to discoveries is an intellectual occupation, playing chess, constructing bridges, introducing bills in parliament are no less so. Thinking thoughts is not doing something on a hidden mental stage; it is using words and sentences either silently or aloud according to con-

venience in a certain frame of mind. Ryle distinguishes between the two senses of thought and thinking. In one sense thought is an activity; in another it is the product of such an activity. When we say this man is engaged in thinking something out, we certainly mean an activity, because thought in this sense may be hard, protracted, interrupted or careless. But when we say 'so and so is what he thinks', thinking or thought here refers to the result of an activity for thought in this sense may be true or false, valid or fallacious, published or unpublished. He accuses the cartesians of confusing the vocabulary of thought as products with the vocabulary of thoughts as activities. Ryle believes that the terms 'judgment', 'abstraction', 'subsumption', 'deduction', 'predication', etc., are meant for the description of thoughts as products and not for the description of thoughts as activities. Had they reported internal happenings or episodes, Ryle would require them to reply certain queries. If asked how many cognitive operations did one make while exploring the solution of a problem, one should be able to answer. Were those operations easy-going or tiring? Was the going over to the conclusion from the premises enjoyable or painful? Was his conceiving quick or gradual, slow or difficult? These questions make him mute, for Ryle, not because they are difficult to be answered, but because they are meaningless, since no intellectual acts are to be found on the mental plane. While writing or speaking anything significant or meaningful, we are never in the know of two operations, one taking place externally either with pen or tongue and the other occurring internally in the mind. Thinking, according to Ryle, is not the mental act of doing something in a secret chamber: "To say something significant, in awareness of its significance, is not to do two things, . . . It is to do one thing with a certain drill and in a certain frame of mind, . . . Saying something in this specific frame of mind, whether aloud or

in one's head, is thinking."¹⁶ Meaning of an idiom or sentence is simultaneous with its use. It does not lead expression; it goes with it. No antecedent act of occult thinking is required to fill in meaning in the subsequent verbal pronouncements.¹⁷ The verbs 'conclude', 'prove', 'arrive at', etc., are achievement or "got it" verbs. Question of time about achievement is invalid, though it is valid for processes. We can safely ask how much time one took to run a race but we cannot ask how much time one took to win it. So, argues Ryle, we cannot logically describe an argument with the help of temporal characterization—either as quick or slow or in a flash. Of course, when an argument is expounded or an exposition is made, it takes time. In the case of 'knowing how' we are not having knowledge of this or that truth, but simply displaying the ability to do certain sort of things. Knowing how to do things, being able to perform intelligently, is logically independent of any interior theorizing: it involves only a display of intelligence that others can witness.

Finally, consciousness and introspection are attacked on similarly argued conceptual and behaviouristic grounds. Consciousness, on the cartesian view, is the constant element of all mental events and processes. Owing to consciousness and introspection, any mental happening is instantaneously revealed to the agent. Ryle, on the contrary, declares that this theory of consciousness and introspection is a logical muddle: a product of misconceived notion and confused convictions. Here too he advances the strictly linguistic argument that people never speak of 'knowing through consciousness' or getting some truth as 'a direct deliverance of consciousness.' Further, if the mental would be known by consciousness, consciousness itself being mental must be known by another consciousness and so on ad infinitum. His radical objection to the cartesian theory of consciousness is that there are no occult or secret objects to be illumined by consciousness.

He asserts, "The radical objection to the theory that minds must know what they are about, because mental happenings are by definition conscious, or metaphysically self-luminous, is that there are no such happenings; there are no occurrences taking place in a second status world, since there is no such status and no such world and consequently no need for special modes of acquainting ourselves with the denizens of such a world".¹⁸ Introspection also is repudiated on similar grounds. It requires us to attend to two things at once which is logically impossible. The object of introspection and the act of introspection, both being mental, must be attended all at once. Again, introspection must be known by another introspection; we cannot in that case avoid the infinite regress.

Another general strategy Ryle employs in rejecting the mental occurrences and states of consciousness, cognition, moods and feelings, etc., is known as the 'avowal' theory. According to this theory, sentences like 'I feel bored', 'I am depressed', have meaning all right, but are not used to make statements, i.e., they are not used to describe or report or assert anything. They are simply bits of behaviour, the effects of certain inner (physical) condition. If I feel pain, twiddle my thumb, or say 'Ho hum', I am not describing, reporting or asserting anything; I am not making a statement which is either true or false. The avowal theory takes the utterance 'I feel bored' to be a (learned) bit of behaviour, like 'Ho hum', which results from certain inner (physical) conditions, and not a statement, description, report or assertion at all. And the same goes for the utterances of the form 'I just had the thought that', 'I wish that', and the like. Ryle writes:

“In its primary employment ‘I want. . . .’ is not used to convey information, but to make a request or demand. It is no more meant as a contribution to general knowledge than ‘please’. To respond with ‘do you?’ or ‘how do you know?’ would be glaringly inappropriate. Nor in their primary employment, are ‘I hate. . .’ and ‘I intend’ used for the purpose of telling the hearer facts about the speaker”¹⁹

The fundamental contention here is that despite the assertoric form of the grammar of these sentences they cannot be used and understood to make assertions. Avowals are not assertions, nor are they descriptions. They bear no truth-values, and hence it makes no sense to speak of knowledge or ignorance, doubt or certainty in respect of them. Sentences like ‘I have pain’ ‘I am afraid’ ‘I want (wish, believe, feel). . .’ are non-cognitive avowals: that is to say, they bear no truth-values because they describe no proper objects of cognition. Saying ‘I have pain’ though not a natural pain expression, is not an object of possible knowledge, is not a description, is not true or false: it is an acquired kind of pain behaviour, no different from an ejaculation ‘ouch’ wrenched out of me. The doctrine of avowals is also prominent in the later writings of Wittgenstein. Especially in the *Philosophical Investigations*, it is asserted many times in numerous different ways. The thesis is generalized to cover all psychological verbs, and is used to repudiate the distinct character of mental states and occurrences. The expressive or non-cognitive view of mental concepts run through all of his later writings. In the *Blue Book* he wrote:

“The difference between the propositions ‘I have pain’ and ‘he has pain’ is not of ‘L.W. has pain’ and ‘Smith has pain’. Rather it corresponds to the difference between moaning and saying that someone moans.”²⁰

The same argument appears in a variety of ways at many places in the *Investigations*. Statements of mental states and experiences are construed as extensions of natural expressive behaviour. The following two quotations bring out the thesis clearly :

“Words are connected with the primitive, the natural, expressions of the sensation and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain behaviour.”²¹

“It cannot 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 that I *am* in pain.”²²

To sum up the avowal theory: philosophical behaviourists like Ryle, Wittgenstein and others emphasize that a great deal of ordinary speech involving the mental concepts does not have a descriptive function, because if the utterances cited above are taken as reports, it is easy to think that they are reports of inner mental occurrences. The utterances rather function as a piece of behaviour: something within language which serve as conventional substitute for behaviour that, for example, naturally expresses pain: a sophisticated linguistic substitute for a wince or a groan. They are exclamations, warnings or signals — in other words, bits of behaviour publicly exhibited.

In summary, according to logical or analytical behaviourism of Ryle, psychological or mental statements of all sorts are always translatable into physical language, that is, into sentences about physical occurrences and physical states. The meaning of different terms like volition, emotion, sensation, cognition, imagination, is entirely exhausted by

their reference to observable behaviour. By means of introducing a number of philosophical distinctions, such as 'task and achievement', 'avowals', 'mongrel-categorical' etc., he has tried to show that when we attribute some mental predicate to someone, we are attributing to him some bit of behaviour (either its performance or its outcome) or a disposition toward some behaviour or both.

3.4 CRITICISMS OF RYLE'S THESIS

In the preceding section a brief resume of Rylean attempts to dispense with all specifically mental happenings (acts of will, sensation, volition, etc.) was taken to show how he supports a materialistic or neo-behaviourist view of mental events and states. G.J. Warnock very aptly sums up his theory when he says: "This is the thesis that there really exist only bodies and other physical objects, that there really occur only physical events or processes, and that all statements ostensibly referring to minds are really categorical statements about current bodily behaviour, or more commonly hypothetical statements about predicted bodily behaviour; that, hence, there is really no such thing as private inner life at all, and that in principle every thing about every individual could be known by sufficiently protracted observation of his bodily doings."^{2 3}

One very general, but a sharp, criticism that I shall bring against Ryle's theory is that a man's statements about his own intentions, thoughts and feelings, are (by and large) not based on his observation of his own behaviour. Thus the philosophical behaviourist's conception of the 'content' of psychological terms is grossly mistaken and erroneous. Ryle thinks that my statement 'I am excited' obtains its meaning from observations such as would be expressed by the sentences 'I see my hands trembling', 'I hear my voice quavering'

and so on. But reflection on the use of these sentences reveals that this is not so. If you did not believe that I am excited, I might try to convince you by making you take note of how my hands are trembling and my voice quavering or choking. But I do not undertake to convince myself that I am excited by such an observation; or if I did, it would be a very untypical case. If I say 'I am annoyed with Anne because of her misdemeanour', my statement will not normally be based on my observation of my own physical (bodily) expressions of annoyance. Nor do I say that I am angry because I see my face is flushed or my fists are clenched, or because I hear myself shouting. So in normal cases I do not say any such thing on the basis of the observation of external, publicly witnessable bodily changes. The strangeness of Ryle's departure from what is an empirically evident fact shows that logical or philosophical behaviourism does not give a true account of the way mental concepts are actually employed and the inner occurrences to which they refer. As a matter of fact, we do not base our intentions and knowledge of other mental states on our awareness of events in our bodies. No one knows what these internal physical occurrences would be which are supposed to precede or accompany my different actions, thinking, imagining and so on. It is certain, therefore, that Rylean theory about the mental events is wildly remote from the facts.

The Concept of Mind is anti-cartesian and anti-dualistic, which leaves no room for inherent privacy in the mental life of the individual. But though the general trend of the book is a downright condemnation of inner mental events, there are statements in the book which, if closely viewed, lend support to the theory of their distinct ontological character. A few paragraphs which establish this observation are the following:

'Much of our ordinary thinking is conducted in internal monologue or silent soliloquy, usually accompanied by an internal cinematograph-show of visual imagery.'²⁴

'It makes no difference in theory if the performances we are apprising are operations executed silently in the agent's head. . . . of course it makes a lot of difference in practice, for the examiner cannot award marks to operations which the candidate successfully keeps to himself.'²⁵

'If you do not divulge the contents of your silent soliloquies and other imaginings, I have no other sure way of finding out what you have been saying or picturing to yourself.'²⁶

Ryle himself admits that Boswell's description of Johnson's mind was incomplete, 'since there were notoriously some thoughts which Johnson kept carefully to himself and there must have been many dreams, day dreams and silent babblings, which only Johnson could have recorded and only a James Joyce would wish him to have recorded.'²⁷

Ryle thus apparently at some places accepts that there are silent thoughts and imaginings; that is, they are not to be reduced to outward bodily changes or behaviour concurrently going on with those thoughts and imaginings. He also accepts that if the person is unwilling to reveal them they may not be known to others. Such statements are clearly inconsistent with the wider aim of the book and smack of some concession to the view that mental events are not to be identified with, or reduced into, bodily states and external behaviour. It is obvious that a person who is conscious or who is in some particular conscious state, may not be

behaving in any noticeable way. He may just be flat on his back, eyes shut. Yet he may still be conscious, having sensations and thoughts, and so on. He may be in pain, for example, without wrihting, groaning, complaining. How is the logical behaviourist of the Rylean type to take this into account in his theory?

The analytic behaviourist may hold that future behaviour is relevant, for example, what a person will write in his diary tonight, what he will confess under torture tomorrow, what he will say on his deathbed. But it is clear that this is not sufficient, for the person in pain now may never show future behaviour appropriate to his being in pain now. Again, some behaviourists distinguish between overt and covert behaviour, the latter being movements that are not noticed, either because they are so very slight or because they occur inside the body where they cannot be observed very easily. Thus thinking has been associated with very slight movements of the lips or with slight movements of the tongue or vocal chords. However, this attempt to evade the difficulty raises new difficulties. Firstly, recent work with the drug curare, which produces temporary paralysis, indicates that even covert behaviour may be absent during mental events. Patients with enough curare to produce complete muscular paralysis report, after the drug has worn off, that there is no absence of consciousness, thoughts, sensations, ability to think, images or the like, during the paralysis.²⁸ So it is not possible to identify mental events with behaviour in any sense, either overt or covert. Secondly, suppose we did find certain slight muscular movements in the vocal cords when people think. Could it be possibly argued that when we say of someone that he just has a thought, we *mean* by those words something about muscular movements in his vocal chords? Surely not. One could fully understand such a remark without the

slightest knowledge of the muscles of the vocal chords. So it is not at all plausible to hold that the mental terms can be analysed in terms of actual or possible behaviour. A paralysed man may be completely incapable of any behaviour, but he is still conscious and aware of his mental states. Conversely a robot may behave as perfectly as a human being, but it is not for that matter capable of having conscious experiences.

By analogizing thoughts with speaking,²⁹ Ryle is clearly in the tradition of behaviourists like J.B. Watson and Skinner who took thinking to be 'sub-vocal speech' or 'laryngeal behaviour'. In one sense, however, he differs from them, in that he is not doing empirical psychology when he makes these claims. Perhaps he would not be disconcerted in the least by the empirical discovery that thinking can and does go on even when there is complete paralysis of all the organs and muscles involved in talking. But then the fact of the matter is that thinking and talking are quite different concepts. Talking necessitates public and overt behaviour; thinking does not. So the assimilation of thinking to overt activity involved in talking is incorrect. Again, the desperate move of taking thoughts and other mental phenomena to be dispositions (to talk and behave in various ways) is no better hypothesis either. Even Ryle himself concedes that at least some mental words refer to genuine occurrent events and not to dispositional states. This point needs some elaboration.

Ryle gives a special status to two classes of mental predicates, those which refer to bodily sensations such as itches, tinglings, throbbings, aches, etc., and those which refer to feelings, of which he gives as examples, 'a throb of compassion', 'a shock of surprise', 'a thrill of anticipation', 'a twinge of remorse', 'a qualm of apprehension', 'a pricking of

conscience', 'a glow of pride'³⁰ These are obviously not bits of behaviour. Nor are they, Ryle admits, dispositions or propensities to behave. They are genuine non-behavioural events experienced by persons. As Ryle says, "'I have a twinge' asserts that an episode took place."³¹ of course, it could be either a bodily sensation like a twinge of rheumatism or a feeling like a twinge of remorse, "though the word 'twinge' is not necessarily being used in quite the same sense in the alternative contexts." Similarly he insists on the occurrent, episodic nature of feelings as against some emotional states, which he interprets as dispositions: 'inclinations and moods, including agitations, (which) are not occurrences and do not therefore take place either publicly or privately. They are propensities, not acts or states. . . . Feelings, on the other hand, are occurrences'. The relegation of some of our emotional predicates to dispositions is held while admitting that feelings and sensations, at least, are not dispositions.³² And since they clearly are not items of behaviour either, they must have some special status. Ryle does not himself draw this conclusion but it is inescapable. The predicates which refer to feelings and sensations of the sort indicated above are not analysable or reducible into public, overt pieces of behaviour, nor propensities towards such acts; therefore they must signify something private and covert, something mental and non-physical.

One ground on which Ryle denies the mental events is that they are not datable or clockable. But is there any truth in this contention? It appears to me, on the contrary, that mental occurrences or states that we experience take place at a particular moment of time. They do occur at some datable time. Not that it is always possible to say *exactly* when they occurred. It is quite clear that it would be odd to ask Rylean question about a thought which occurred to you, 'For how long did that thought occur to you?'

Yet it clearly does make sense to ask, 'When did that thought occur to you?' In this respect having thoughts is like arriving at the station; one's arriving is an event which occurs at some datable time but does not take time. Since most of our thoughts occur instantaneously and quickly and occupy a very small moment or duration of time, it has led Ryle to deny incorrectly that they are datable occurrences like walking, gardening, etc. I think it is quite sensible to argue that at least we can say that a particular thought occurred at a certain temporal boundary. For the occurrence represents, in Rylean terms, an 'achievement'; and most achievements do not refer to what fills a duration, but to what happens at a certain boundary of time. So it could be said that my thought, a b or c occurred in time in the way that my walk in the garden occurred in time; and that we quite properly refer to them by saying 'I had it last week, yesterday or this morning'. Ryle's allegation that mental events and episodes cannot be dated or clocked is, therefore, without any point or substance. Whenever we report the occurrence of thoughts or mental states in sentences like 'At midnight the thought crossed my mind that ' 'It suddenly came to me that ' 'Just then I recollected that ' we report the occurrence of an event which took place at a particular time.

Ryle's behaviourist treatment of imagination and sensation is very curious indeed. He has devoted a whole chapter to imagination, but I entirely fail to understand how anyone can be satisfied by what he says. He says that operations of imagining are exercises of mental powers expressed through picturing or fancying. I should have thought, on the other hand, that it is as obvious as anything can be that something inner (mental) is happening when I imagine something, which cannot be known to anybody else unless I do something overt to let it be known. Ryle's thesis against the experiential reality of imaging and imagination is challen

ged not only by common reports of people but also by experimental evidence. J. R. Smythies speaks of his experiment with normal persons who were administered hallucinogenic drugs to have hallucinations. While under the spell of hallucination, these persons, he reports, were particularly impressed by how similar 'seeing' is to seeing.³³ As a matter, of fact, the seeing of an image in the mind's eye is so crystal clear and tangible that a writer has gone to the length of saying that Ryle's non-seeing of images might be due to the peculiar constitution of his brain.³⁴ In fact, Ryle's departure from common experience reported by all about imagination is so evident that we cannot but agree with Morris Weits when he says that 'Ryle's denial of images rested upon a proposed new use of an expression and not upon the elucidation of a regular one'.³⁵

In the case of sensations and observation, one is agreeably surprised to find Ryle expressing candidly dissatisfaction with his own theory. He observes ". . . . I am not satisfied with this chapter. I have fallen in with the official theory that perceiving involves having sensations. But this is a sophisticated use of 'sensation'."³⁶ Indeed he again and again finds himself helpless with regard to the concept of sensations. In his separate article on sensations, Ryle confesses the weakness of his thesis when he writes: 'One of the things that worries me is the notion of sensation or sense-impression'.³⁷ In the same article there is a bold and frank statement again where he appears to yield in favour of the dualistic notion of sensation. It reads: 'However, after all this has been said, I confess to a residual embarrassment. There is something common between having an after-image and seeing a misprint. Both are visual affairs. How ought we to describe their affinity with one another, without falling back on to some account very much like a part of the orthodox theories of sense-impressions? To this I am stumped

for an answer'. These confessions clearly go against the programme of Ryle, namely, the behaviouristic analysis of sensations and other mental states. Since consciousness and sensation is the precondition of all assertions and denials, I do not see how it can itself be denied and repudiated. To deny the non-physical experienced mental content or 'datum of consciousness' is to commit the philosophical error of denying the obvious. And Ryle surely is doing just that. While speaking of awareness as something radically distinct from the body or the bodily, H. H. Price observes 'It is too fundamental, and if any one says he cannot understand what I am talking about, I do not know how I can help him.'³⁸

Ryle has advanced 'infinite regress' argument against the cartesian notions of volition, introspection and cognition. He asks whether volitions are themselves voluntary or involuntary. Questions like this are taken to constitute a *reductio ad absurdum* of dualist view of mental states of volition and introspection, etc. But I find that Ryle is astonishingly slap-dash in rejecting mental experience through verbal trivialities. No one talks of voluntary or involuntary volitions. If a 'voluntary action' is defined in terms of volition, this would itself be a good reason for saying that the person is aware and freely willing a particular action. There could be no freedom of will without distinct mental processes. Will is involved in, is in fact the essential ingredient in, all our actions. We cannot give a proper account of what is meant by doing things on purpose without recourse to the notion of some non-physical activity of volition. It is certain that we do talk about decisions and efforts of will. I may say—'I decided to reply in this way as soon as I heard Mr. A's argument' or 'Before going to bed I decided that I should return to Oxford as soon as possible', and since the decision in cases like these precedes any overt action it obviously

cannot be identified with carrying out the decision. And, of course, I instantaneously know these decisions the moment I entertain them in my mind. Indeed Ryle's infinite regress argument against mental events presupposes that he takes observation or perception of external objects as paradigm of knowing (in his case 'noticing' only). Mental events and states like volition, conation etc. are not, however, external objects. They are known by the person himself when he is engaged in them, and, as a matter of fact, this knowledge does not involve the logical difficulty of infinite regress to which Ryle refers. H.D. Lewis, among others, brings out this point clearly when he writes:

'The insistence on distinct mental processes of which each is aware in the first instance does not imply that we are 'watching', 'inspecting' or 'monitoring' what we do. We might be doing that for some psychological purposes perhaps. But we do not normally monitor what we do. Nor do we normally engage in retrospection either. But this in no way precludes our being aware of what we are doing (or thinking) in the very process of doing it. This is not an additional 'piece of theorizing', to suppose that it is the wildest travesty, it is not theorizing but being aware of what we are about in the very process of being engaged in it. Whatever problems may be involved in describing this, they cannot be burked or explained away by directing attention to something quite different.'³⁹

Lastly, as I noted in the preceding section, one important theory in the array of varied arguments Ryle brings against mental states and occurrences is the non-cognitive avowal or expressive view of psychological statements. Reports of experience-occurrences are assimilated to avowals, that is, to gestures and mere expressions of moods:

my sentences about my present sensations and other experiences have the same logical status as my outcries and facial expressions. Since avowals do not describe, report, or assert anything mental or experiential, they are neither true nor false.

Now the theory of avowals seems to me as far from actual facts as any theory can be. The fundamental feature around which my counter-argument revolves concerns the fact that 'I am in pain' has, after all, a structure, and as such it is complex or articulated. My use of this sentence is only intelligible in so far as I know what 'pain' means, i.e. know how to apply the predicate on the basis of inner experiential context which constitutes its meaning; for this is a precondition for my ascribing it to myself with justification and truth. The following points against the truth-valueless thesis involves exploring the consequences of this feature of the sentence 'I am in pain'.

Firstly, a point from common everyday intelligible discourse. 'I am in pain' is a base for sentence-forming operations upon sentences. Thus, for example: 'He thinks (knows, believes, hopes, fears, etc.) that I am in pain'. Such complex sentences are thought of as true or false; no such operations could be carried out upon mere ejaculations.

Secondly, Ryle and Wittgenstein have apparently never extended their thesis to denying truth-values to 'I was in pain' or 'I will be in pain'. But these are the past and future tense transformations of the sentence in question. Moreover if it is now the case that I was in pain, then it was the case that I was in pain, and if it is the case that I will be in pain then it will be the case that I am in pain; none of which can be the case if 'I am in pain' has the logical status of an outcry or facial expression.

Thirdly, 'I have been in pain for hours' is not plausibly analysable into a past tense sentence conjoined with an assertoric expression of pain, but it does imply the statement of an occurrent on-going pain experience — 'I am in pain'.

Fourthly, the avowal thesis appears to make assertion of identity such as 'The pain I have now is the same throbbing pain I had yesterday' unintelligible.

Fifthly, 'I am in pain' can appear in molecular sentences, e.g. 'I am in pain and the doctor has not come', without the molecular sentence lacking a truth-value. This means 'I am in pain' refers to an experience actually felt by me. Similarly, 'I have pain' can appear as a premise in a valid argument, e.g. 'All persons with pain of such and such a kind suffer from disease D, I have a pain of such and such a kind, therefore, I suffer from disease D'.

Sixthly, one is not only able to say that he has pain, but also to describe with precision its phenomenological features, e.g. that it is dull or sharp, throbbing or nagging, searing or stinging, etc. Indeed we have a rich vocabulary for the phenomenological descriptions of sensation and other experiences. These descriptions are informative and supply important diagnostic data. They are ordinarily conceived of as true or false. Moreover there is, by and large, no natural expressive behaviour which manifests those phenomenological features, and our descriptions of them do not replace any primitive behaviour.

Finally, 'I am not in pain' is the negation of 'I am in pain'. It is, like the sentence it negates, asserted with justification and truthfully. But it is normally informative rather than expressive, and it cannot, I am sure, be said to be a learnt substitute for a natural form of 'absence-of-pain' behaviour.

These seven points strongly suggest that 'I am in pain' said by A is used to make an assertion, bears truth-value and is meaningful, i.e., reports an inner mental experience that A is really having. Avowal theory of Ryle, Wittgenstein and others is therefore clearly wrong in denying the inner mental happenings described and reported by psychological statements.

The positive points which have emerged from the foregoing can be summed up in the following propositions:

1. Logical or analytical behaviourism of Ryle in reducing or characterizing mental events and states as observable bodily behaviour and dispositions to perform certain activities is based on mistaken assumptions and wrong arguments about them.
2. Mental events and states like sensing, pain feelings, imagination, thinking, willing, resolving, *et al.*, are the directly inspected inner states of consciousness in the cartesian sense.

Let us now move on to some other recent attempts which are purported to reject the distinct reality of mental states.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Descartes, 'Principle of Philosophy', *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, ed. Haldane and Ross, (Cambridge University Press, 1969) Vol.1 p. 240.
2. See below Chapter 3, where I deal with the leading exponents of the Mind-Body Identity theory.
3. Moore, G. E., 'Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33' parts 1-2, *Mind*, Vol. LXII, (1954). Wittgenstein later abandons this, when he adopted avowal or behaviourist view of mental states. See below pp. 49-51 and Ch. 7.
4. *The Concept of Mind*, Hutchinson, London, 1949.
5. Warnock, G. J., *English Philosophy Since 1900*, Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 96.
6. Ryle, G., 'Categories', published in *Logic and Language*, second series, ed. A. Flew (Blackwell, Oxford) pp. 77-78.
7. *Dilemmas*, Cambridge University Press (1962) p. 9.
8. While elucidating his point of view, Ryle has often to depend on analogies, which he draws from facts. To give one such instance, I may refer to Ryle's comparison of the privacy of our experience with the privacy of a diary kept under lock and key: (p. 185). Ryle himself appears to be conscious of giving the impression of going over to facts for he observes: "In attempting to explode this myth, I shall probably be taken to be denying well-known facts about the mental life of human beings, and my plea that I aim at doing nothing more than rectify the logic of mental-conduct concepts will probably be disallowed as mere subterfuge", (p.16). This observation also reveals his anxiety to remove the misconception that he is in any way 'denying well-known facts about the mental life of human beings'. But one can hardly escape the uneasy feeling that this in general is the case.
9. Ryle, G., *The Concept of Mind*, p. 199.
10. Sibly, Frank, 'A Theory of Mind', *Review of Metaphysics*, (1950) p. 267. A. G. Ewing also feels the same way when he

writes that a disposition may not primarily be a disposition to behave in a certain way, but a disposition to have private experiences of a certain kind' vide his "Ryle's attack on Dualism" *Proceedings of the Aristotlelian Society*, 1952-55 Vol LIII, p. 50.

11. Walsh, W.H., *Metaphysics*, (Hutchinson, London, (1963) p. 52.
12. *Op. cit.*, p. 161.
13. Ryle, G., *Concept of Mind*, p. 224.
14. *Dilemmas*, p. 103.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 254.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 297.
17. Ryle, along with many behaviouristically-inclined writers, holds an anti-cartesian theory of meaning. It is words that are the bearers of meaning, whose meaning have to be taught and learned. To learn a language is merely to acquire a vocabulary and a syntax; this language is then used which is an activity that one performs by means of a language.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
20. Wittgenstein, L. *The Blue and Brown Books* (Blackwell, Oxford) 1958. p. 68.
21. *Philosophical Investigations*, ed. G.E.M. Auscombe, R. Rees, trans., by G.E.M. Auscombe (Blackwell, Oxford, 1953) see. p. 244.
22. *Ibid.* sec. 246 (italics in the original).
I have mentioned Wittgenstein in this discussion purposely because a large number of philosophers today who write on the subject of self and self-identity have been influenced by him, and maintain a person-approach theory which is entailed by 'avowal' view of mental events and states. Notably among these are: Sydney Shoemaker (*Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*, Ithaca, New York 1963), Norman Malcolm (*Problems of Mind, Descartes to Wittgenstein*, Harper Essays in Philosophy, New

- York, 1971) *et al.*
23. *English Philosophy*, Oxford University Press pp. 100-101.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
 27. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
 28. See S.M. Smith, H. O. Brown, and L. S. Goodman, 'The Lack of Cerebral Effects of d-Tubocurarine', *Anesthesiology*, Vol. 8, pp.1-14.
 29. He maintains that the basic GENUS is talking, the differentia being the amount of sound and conspicuous lip-movement produced. See *The Concept of Mind*, *op. cit.*, p.34.
 30. *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
 32. I have already argued earlier on (see pp. 36-41 above) that even 'dispositions' are not to be taken in Ryle's sense of the word i.e., as tendencies exclusively for behaviour and overt activity. Moreover bodily sensations are 'bodily' only so far as they are usually localized or 'pervade' a particular point of the body. The subject's consciousness of them is equally non-spatial and mental like feelings and other occurrences.
 33. 'On Some Properties and Reflections of Images', *Philosophical Review*, (1958) p.390.
 34. Cf. A.C., Danto, 'Concerning Mental Pictures', *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. LV, (1958) p. 18.
 35. 'Oxford Philosophy', *Philosophical Review*, (1953) p. 220.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
 37. 'Sensation', *Contemporary British Philosophy*, III series, ed. H. D. Lewis (George Allen and Unwin, London), p. 427.
 38. 'Some Objections to Behaviourism', *Dimensions of Mind*, A Symposium, ed. Sidney Hook (Collier Books, New York) p. 79.
 39. *Elusive Mind*, (George Allen and Unwin, London), 1969, p. 78.

SOME REPUDIATIONS OF MENTAL EVENTS :
IDENTITY THEORISTS

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SOME REPUDIATIONS OF MENTAL EVENTS :

IDENTITY THEORISTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A version of materialism, currently the most seriously discussed and attracting interest in a scientific ethos, is known as the Identity Theory. It is the view that thoughts, feelings, wishes and the rest of mental phenomena are identical with, one and the same thing as, states and processes of the body (and, more specifically, states and processes of the nervous system, or even of the brain alone). Thus the having of a thought is identical with having such and such bodily cells in such and such states, other cells in other states. Such a theory has already been attractive to many psychologists, but until recent years most philosophers had thought that there are obvious and conclusive objections to this sort of theory. In the last decade or so, however, the Identity theory has been revived by philosophers arguing in closely allied ways. The revival is associated with such names as Herbert Feigl, Quinon, U. T. Place, J.J.C. Smart, Armstrong, Paul Feyerabend, *et al.* Whereas Feigl has called it the Central-state theory,¹ other philosophers speak of it as the Identity theory, that is the theory which identifies mental states with purely physical states of the central nervous system. This label is less explicit than 'Central-state theory' although it is briefer. The materialism of this theory is very appropriately called 'scientific' because it holds that everything consists, in the last resort, of the ultimate entities of physics.

The exponents of identity theory maintain that there is a plausibility in regarding some characteristics, e.g. vanity, anger, or fear as mere "behaviour pattern". But they also think there are 'inner experiences' — sensations, images, etc. that cannot legitimately be analysed in terms of behaviour. These experiences are kept within the scheme of materialism by holding that they are *brain processes*. The identity theorists use the familiar philosophical distinction between significance and reference or connotation and denotation to make the claim that mentalistic expressions and physicalistic expressions differ in significance or connotation but will turn out as a matter of empirical fact to refer to or denote one and the same thing, namely physical states or phenomena. Examples generally cited of this kind of *de facto* identity are those of the morning star and the evening star, water and H₂O, and lightning and a particular sort of electrical discharge. In all these cases the discovery of identity is claimed not merely as a philosophical one but, at least in part, an empirical discovery. Formulated in terms of *de facto* or contingent rather than logical identity, this theory is supposed to survive many of the standard refutations of older materialism and behaviourism. For example, it is quite correctly argued *by the dualists* that a thought cannot be identical with a brain event because a man can know very well what his thought is without knowing anything about his brain. But, according to mental-physical identity philosophers, this shows only that there is no logical identity; the identity must be an empirical one, it must be conceived of as purely contingent, not as logically necessary. They believe that what goes on the occasions we make experience reports like.

'I am thinking about his proposal' or
'I see an after-image', et cetera,

is in fact a physical event. The general idea is, then, that mental terms, descriptions or predicates do not have the same sense as physical ones, but they do have the same reference as certain physical predicates: that is they do not mean the same as these physical predicates but they do apply to, they are true of, the very same thing, namely certain physical events, states or processes. Thoughts, feelings, wishes and the like are identical with physical states. Not 'identical' in the sense that mentalistic terms are synonymous in meaning with physicalistic terms but 'identical in the sense that the actual events picked out by mentalistic terms are one and the same events as those picked out by physicalistic terms. Let me elaborate this theory a bit by giving here the salient features of Feigl's position.

Feigl begins by accepting many points regarding the dualism of mental and physical events: he acknowledges in a most firm and uncompromising way, the distinctive and irreducible character of the direct experience itself, as 'lived through, enjoyed or suffered'² and even more in speaking of 'the privacy of immediate experience'.³ It is also insisted that there are 'immediate data of first person experience' or conscious events or processes, e.g. directly experienced sensations, thoughts, feelings, emotions, etc. —described in many places as 'raw feels'. In spite of conceding all this, Feigl thinks that the main issues must be capable of settlement, in the last analysis, in a scientific way providing a coherent and adequate descriptive and explanatory account of the spatio-temporal-causal world, and the answers must come within 'the intersubjective observation language of common life'. This is indeed how the enterprise becomes respectably scientific. Cartesian view of mental events and states must be dismissed by just invoking the rule of parsimony which warns one not to multiply entities (factors, variables) beyond necessity.

Proceeding on these assumptions, Feigl sets out to identify 'raw feels' with neurophysiological processes. He declares that if there should be any mental states not inferable on the basis of intersubjectively accessible neurophysiological states, then their role is suspicious. Again, he questions the non-spatial character of mental events, contending that many mental terms, e.g. motherly love, is a universal and as such the question of location does not arise; though he admits that these terms or concepts may be applied to individuals. There is, for example, the fact of someone feeling depressed. 'In this case', Feigl asserts, 'there is quite clearly a location for the feeling of depression. It is^e in the person concerned'.⁵ The referents of what is directly presented in experience, raw feels or 'acquaintance terms', are identical with the referents of 'objective' or physical terms having to do with a state of affair in the world: they are empirically identifiable with the referents of some neurophysiological concepts of molar behaviour theory. In other words, 'what is had-in-experience and knowable by acquaintance, is identical with the object of knowledge by description provided first by molar behaviour theory and this is in turn identical with what the science of neurophysiology describes (or, rather will describe when sufficient progress has been achieved) as processes in the central nervous system'.⁶

In this chapter I shall be concerned to show that there appears little justification in the writings of the leading Identity philosophers for the view that mental events and states as directly experienced and phenomenally described are one and the same or identical with, physical states of the nervous system including brain. My contention will be that the arguments of philosophers who deny the distinct and irreducible reality of mental events are not valid arguments, and rest upon a series of mistaken assumptions which I shall in turn expose. Let me here state in bare

outline the main points on which I shall base my criticisms of individual Identity philosophers in subsequent sections of this chapter.

The identity theory is, in part at least, an empirical theory hypothesizing that each particular mental event occurs if and only if some particular brain event occurs. It is still too early to say whether this hypothesis is even probable or not. Indeed I shall provide evidence from the views of recent eminent scientists and neurophysiologists who hold exactly the opposite view.⁷ However, even if this hypothesis per impossible turns out to be true, it would not establish the identity theory, which holds not just that mental and neural events are correlated in some regular, lawful way but that they are one and the same event, and, moreover, that these events are, basically, physical. One general objection to the identity theory comes from the fact that it makes sense to ask of neural event where it occurred in the body (even if the answer is that it occurred in no local place but throughout the nervous system), whereas it makes no sense to ask where in the body the thought occurred. Feigl's assertion that—'it [the feeling of depression] is in the person concerned'—is extremely odd and unhelpful. Since two putatively different things can turn out to be one and the same only if they have the same location, it cannot be the case that mental events like thoughts, feelings, sensations, etc. and neural events are identical. Another objection to the identity theory is that it cannot account for essential feature of the mental, namely the privileged position of the subject with respect to his mental events. If they were ordinary physical events, why should the subject be in a position to report their occurrence without having to make the observations or inferences others have to make? That they can be known, but not in the way physical events can be known, suggests that they are not physical events.

I shall now proceed with a critical examination of the views of three leading Identity philosophers—Quinton, J.J. C. Smart and Armstrong, and try to argue that their attempts do not stand up under philosophical scrutiny.

4.2 SPATIAL LOCATION ARGUMENT: QUINTON

Anthony Quinton is an Oxford philosopher who among others challenges the distinct character of mental reality and events. Even though he concedes a great deal to the standard dualist views of mental and bodily states, he eventually comes to hold a position very similar to that of Identity theorists. Quinton, for example, concedes that it has been widely held by philosophers as a matter of explicit belief that there are two realms of mental and physical realities, and that room must be found, in any adequate and plausible theory, for that consciousness of ourselves which we all enjoy. Again, he is prepared to accept that there are at least some mental states which are private and of which each one 'has direct awareness in the psychological sense'.⁸ His examples of the two different types of realities also fit neatly the strict cartesian dualist scheme—'It would be generally agreed that mountains, clouds, snowflakes and protein molecules are physical and that a farmer's hope for rain, a man's image of Salisbury Cathedral and someone's feeling of embarrassment are mental'.⁹

One wonders then as to how, in spite of these frank dualistic admissions, can Quinton maintain that mental states are also physical and externally observable? His *modus operandi* for the alleged identification of the mental with the physical, like others, lies in the view that spatial characteristics can be applied without ambiguity to mental and bodily alike. Quinton makes a number of interesting and illuminating remarks during the course of his article,

but in the end he entirely fails to be convincing regarding the spatiality claim of mental events and experiences. Generally speaking, spatial location of mental states is most apparent to him in the case of bodily sensations, which seem to be 'at' or pervade a certain region of the body. But in these cases, as also in dreams and vivid imaginings, the spatiality is, in his own words, of 'a suspect or at any rate marginal, kind.' Take, for instance, the pain I claim to have in my right ankle. Is this claim rebutted if there is no injury to my right ankle or if I have no right ankle at all? If it is not, then what I have claimed is that I have a pain and that it feels as if there were an injury to my right ankle. Quinton's answer with regard to this is that "in this case the pain has only a courtesy position. . . . it cannot have a real position since there may not be such a place as 'in my right ankle' ".¹⁰

He further says that in neither case i.e., in real or hallucinatory pain, is pain itself literally in the right ankle in the way that my right ankle-bone is. It seems therefore that he here makes substantial concessions to the dualist views regarding the 'inner', non-physical character of sensations. So far so good.

But we have yet to see Quinton's major and 'further reason' for maintaining that mental states and events must have a real position. He writes:—

" That unless experiences have a position in space they cannot be individuated. Suppose that two people, A and B, have qualitatively indistinguishable feelings of annoyance at a high whistling noise in their immediate neighbourhood, being at the same time and persisting for the same period. How in these circumstances are we to justify the belief we are very strongly inclined to hold that there are two experiences going on here and not just one." ¹¹

His argument, in effect, is that if two experiences have exactly the same introspective content, or are qualitatively indistinguishable, there is no way in which we could distinguish between these except on the basis of spatial location. The conclusion he draws from this is that 'in our ordinary understanding of the matter an experience is where the body of the person who has it is'.¹² He goes much further than this simple and perhaps innocuous statement, and in the closing part of the article he identifies the mental reality with the physical — 'the criterion of the mental is the cerebral'.¹³

Quinton's argument, though seemingly conclusive against the dualistic non-spatial view of mental experience, is open to several criticisms.

In the first place, the hypothetical situation described in the argument raises difficult practical questions about the sense in which experiences could be qualitatively indistinguishable. It is hard to believe that this condition can ever be achieved insofar as even the most simple experiences are bound to be affected by the context of other experiences in which they occur, by the experient's dispositions, past history and so on. This consideration clearly is a serious limitation to Quinton's imaginary situation on which his argument is so heavily based.

Secondly, Quinton's notion of the 'individuation of experiences' involves a serious conceptual confusion. He is approaching the problem of experiences from a third person point of view or, as it were, from outside. Whereas it is important to realize here that the criterion of the individuation of experiences in the first person is radically different from those employed in the case of other persons. Professor H.D. Lewis also drew attention to this point when he wrote:

“We have to distinguish between the way in which we identify or recognize some experience in its particularity, when it is the experience of someone other than ourselves, and the identification of some experience as an experience of one’s own, or the ‘individuation’ of it in a particular person’s experience.”¹⁴

It is difficult to see why Quinton advanced this sort of argument after he had himself (as I pointed out above) accepted the private and direct awareness of mental states and experiences. His alleged spatiality requirement is only relevant for learning about other people’s experiences and discovering that a particular experience is had by some individual. This, of course, is done through observation of a person’s body and behaviour. Does not Quinton here take a dogmatic and unjustified approach to the subject according to which there must be some kind of observable criteria for all meaningful claims? His other strictures on the dualist’s positions—like e.g., “can the dualist attach any sense to the idea that two experiences of disembodied persons that are strictly contemporaneous and indistinguishable in introspective content are really distinct and not one and the same experience,”¹⁵ and “(it could never be) shown that a single experience cannot be owned by two such substances”¹⁶ bear witness to the same uncritical adoption of the essentially third person point of view. The simple fact is that the experiencing person himself does not require any spatial criteria for individuating or discovering an experience as his own. In other words, in having any particular experience, one is bound to be aware of it as belonging to oneself, in a way that is completely different from ways used in dealing with other persons. Indeed it seems to me that the very talk of experiences in abstracto, as it were, is patently false. An experience is *ipso facto* known to be the experience of an agent who has it the very moment it occurs.¹⁷ It is admit-

tedly not easy to philosophically characterize and determine the nature of this quite peculiar way by means of which a self, as an indivisible being, owns or appropriates an experience. But surely this is no pretext for accepting the considerations adduced by Quinton about the necessity of spatial reference for identification of experiences.

Finally, by his own declaration, Quinton has tried to associate himself with the Identity theorists in their supposed complete identity of the mental and the physical. However, his argument, if examined closely, does not in any sense warrant the conclusion that mental events or experiences as such are spatial or physical. What it really brings out, and a strict cartesian will go with him, is that in all normal situations at least we are all embodied persons. Descartes himself stressed the peculiarly intimate relation of mind and body and to this day the dualists have insisted on the close interdependence of minds and physical bodies in the normal human existence. As a result of this, we intersubjectively ascertain each other's experiences with reference to the bodies. But that does not imply that the nature of the experiences themselves or the agent who has them, is spatial or physical. The admission of mental-physical correlation does not gainsay the distinctively mental and non-physical reality of experiences. Quinton's argument only shows that the physical correlates of a certain experience, say, a feeling of pain, may be located at a particular place on the body, and not that the experiences themselves are spatial. Even if it were held that most of the mental processes require a bodily organism, that one could not have perceptual experience and identify objects in space without having a body, it does not follow at all that the experient himself be the body which makes that possible. My distinctive perceptual experiences are as a matter of fact made possible for me by the body I have, I see the books in front of me now be-

cause this is where (at the study table) my body is and so on; my brain and nervous system must be in a certain state and the light must be adequate in the room. But the perceiving itself is not a physical process, my eyes and my brain have a spatial location, but the perceiving itself is not spatial or physical; and thus the fact that I could not have ordinary perceptions and identify objects in space without the body I have, does not in any way make me, as the subject having these experiences, a physical entity in relation to which other things are placed, nor is the perceiving a physical process. We are able to determine that a person had a certain thought at a certain time by perceiving some expression of the thought in utterance or action. And this is conceptually independent of the investigation of brain processes. But this way of determining the occurrence of a thought tells us nothing about a bodily location of the thought. We do not understand what the bodily location of a thought, or of thinking, would mean. Jerome Shaffer puts the point as follows:

“The physical events which are intimately connected with my having particular mental events have definite location, probably in the brain. . . . However, so far as thoughts are concerned, it makes no sense to talk about a thought’s being located in some place or places in the body. If I report having suddenly thought something, the question where in my body that thought occurred would be utterly senseless. It would be as absurd to wonder whether that thought had occurred in my foot, throat, earlobe as it would be to wonder whether that thought might have been cubical or a micron in diameter”.¹⁸

4.3 SMART’S TOPIC—NEUTRAL STRATEGY

J.J. C. Smart¹⁹ begins by noting the limitations of behaviouristic analyses of psychological concepts. He does not

agree with Rylean type of behaviourist or quasi-behaviourist elucidation of all mental concepts. Especially in the reports of after-images and pains, he maintains, it seems clear that the content of a report cannot be exclusively a set of purely behavioural facts. There does seem to be some element of what he calls 'pure inner experience', which is being reported and to which only the utterer has direct access. Even though the notion of pain seems essentially to involve the notion of distress i.e., externally observable disturbed behaviour pattern, this is not all there is to it: ' . . . there is an immediately felt sensation.'²⁰ Unlike some pain reports which do have an emotional component of distress, the reports of after-images definitely seem to refer to 'neat' inner experiences. They clearly seem to be reporting a private occurrence, different from those which the physicist or the neurophysiologist can observe. Smart is also not satisfied by Wittgenstein's and Ryle's solution of mental reports such as 'I am having a yellowish-orange after-image' by altogether denying its status as a report. For example, Ryle would say that in reporting the occurrence of an after-image I am in fact expressing some sort of temptation to say that there is a roundish yellowish-orange patch on the wall. Similarly, in reporting a pain I am not reporting anything at all but doing a sort of wince. Nor is Smart sure that all reports of psychological occurrences are explicable in terms of avowals, that is, construing of a pain report as more like 'ouch' or 'oh dear' or the report of an after-image as the expression of a temptation to say that there is a yellowish-orange something on the wall. Smart is unambiguously emphatic about the genuineness of first-person psychological reports:

'It does seem simply obvious, as a matter of fact, that we do report something in a perfectly full-blooded sense of 'report', when we tell the dentist that we have a pain or the psychologist that we are having an after-image'.²¹

It is at this point that the reader is given a big jolt by asserting that the events or goings on which are reported in psychological reports are in fact brain processes. Smart's procedure for identifying the inner experiences with the brain processes is extremely complicated and confused. I shall first briefly state his views, disentangling complex theses in his writings.

Smart, like other materialist philosophers, sets out with an initial bias in favour of a physicalist world-view. This preference is justified; it is assumed, on the grounds of Occam's razor and scientific plausibility. If materialism is true, the entire mentalistic idiom must be interpreted as a scheme of predication wherein the only entities denoted are those embraced by physical theory, viz., bodies and concrete parts of bodies. Smart's position, in brief, is that even though reports of states of consciousness like pain and after-image are genuine reports, what they report are not irreducibly psychical or mental objects. Since an introspective report is a genuine report, Smart reasons, there must be something that it reports, which he identifies with the brain process. The reason that Smart feels called upon to provide for topic-neutral reformulations of sensation reports is that he believes that these reports contain implicit reference to some sort of inner process or state. The topic-neutral statement is supposed to make the referential character of these reports explicit.

His explanations of the nature of the thesis that sensations are brain processes can be summed up as follows:—

- (1) It is not the thesis that, for example, after-image or ache *means* the same as brain process of sort X (where X is replaced by a description of a certain type of brain process). Similarly, it is explicitly maintained that mental events and brain processes are not synonymous.

- (2) It is that, in so far as after-image or ache is a report of a process, it is a report of a process that happens to be a brain process.
- (3) All it claims is that in so far as a sensation statement is a report of something, that something is in fact a brain process. Sensations are nothing over and above brain processes.

Smart maintains a 'strict' identity of mental occurrences like sensations and the brain processes. He writes: 'When I say that a sensation is a brain process or that lighting is an electric discharge, I am using 'is' in the sense of strict identity'.²²

About those mental descriptions which resist behavioural treatment (i.e. being in pain, seeing a colour, feeling depressed, etc.) it is claimed that the application of those descriptions is to assert that there is within the organism some state which typically arises from a given stimulus and/or typically issues in a characteristic kind of behaviour. Mental predicates of this kind have been called topic-neutral because they do not specify as physical or mental the nature of the inner state whose cause and/or effect we encounter. To say a man is in pain, the argument runs, does not of itself imply that he has an irreducibly mental state of consciousness. It implies that he is in a certain state, which arises from the state of his sensory system and issues in a certain behaviour pattern. When we explore this state, we find reason to believe that it is a state of the organism's central nervous system. Let us see how Smart elaborates the topic-neutral formula. He explains:

The man who reports a yellowish-orange after-image does so in effect as follows: 'What is going on in me is like what is going on in me when my eyes are open,

the lighting is normal, etc. etc. and there is a yellowish-orange patch on the wall.' Notice that the italicized words 'what is going on in me is like what is going on in me when. . . are topic-neutral. A dualist will think that what is going on in him when he reports an experience is in fact a non-physical process. . . . The report itself is neutral to all these possibilities. This extreme openness and topic-neutrality of reports of experiences perhaps explain why the 'raw feels' or immediate qualia of internal experience have seemed so elusive. 'What is going on in me is like what is going on in me when. . .' is a colourless phrase, just as the word 'somebody' is colourless.^{2 3}

Smart thinks that the formula is expressed in all quasi-logical or topic-neutral words. It is meant to express in an 'informal way' what a sensation report purports to be about.

I shall first discuss Smart's view of 'strict identity' of sensations and brain processes and see how far he is justified to claim it. There are two points of clarification to be made here. The first is that Smart does not claim that sensation means, or can be translated as, or is synonymous with, brain process. He is quite emphatic on this point, and many of his replies to the standard philosophical objections to his thesis depend on this. The second point concerns Smart's use of the word "is" in his statement 'A sensation is a brain process'. Now 'is' is used in various senses, the predicative sense (in 'the table is brown') being one of them. But Smart uses it in the sense of 'strictly identical with' which requires severe logical conditions to be satisfied. His main thesis is that sensations are strictly identical with brain processes. But what does it mean to say that 'X is strictly identical with Y'. The logical meaning of this is that X is strictly identical with Y only if every property of X is a property of Y and

conversely. But Smart wishes to assert at least the following two propositions.

- (1) 'Sensation' is not synonymous with brain process or any other word in the materialists' preferred vocabulary.
- (2) Sensations are strictly identical with brain processes.

Now by insisting that sensations are not synonymous with brain processes, he is clearly assigning to sensations some properties other than those connoted by brain processes. And this shows that he has not got rid of the 'danglers' (to use Feigl's term).

I shall now examine the proposed topic-neutral strategy and see how far it can help Smart substantiate the brain-process theory.

In the first place, one major problem with an account of this sort is that it divests introspection of its distinctive significance: the 'mental' turns out to be simply that which is manifested in certain kinds of reports. Let us grant for the sake of argument that the formula Smart proposes for rendering first-person sensation reports into topic-neutral language (i.e., neutral with respect to the kinds of entities or processes they characterize) viz., 'what is going on in me is like what is going on in me when. . . .' produces reformulations that do not apparently depend for their adequacy upon their being anything that makes these reports distinctively mental. What is lacking in this account, however, is a notion of what it is that makes introspective reports different from certain other utterances that we would not wish to classify as reports of conscious mental states at all. Smart

himself at one stage recognizes that it would be impossible to provide translations of all first-person mentalistic utterances into the topic-neutral idiom. There is in ordinary language, he acknowledges:—

'a dualistic overtone: to some extent it enshrines the plain man's metaphysics, which is a dualism of body and soul. We cannot. . . hope. . . to reconcile all of ordinary language with a materialist metaphysics.'²⁴

Thus he concedes that it cannot be maintained that a topic-neutral sentence is in any strict sense a translation or reformulation of a corresponding sensation report.

Secondly, Smart gives a topic-neutral account by saying that the experient of an after-image can report in the formula. He does not question the status of the 'reporting' itself. Would he say that the reporter's words are like child's babbling, or that they express his meaning. Perhaps Smart would find it difficult either way.

Thirdly, the topic-neutral version of mental descriptions, say, a pain statement seems to lack the force, the full-blooded sense, that belongs to the original statement. It appears that a statement like 'I have a shooting pain in my arm' is not in any sense topic-neutral or metaphysically non-committal. It does describe a genuinely mental state suffered by me. Smart contends that the topic-neutral formula is rather meant to give in an informal way what a sensation report purports to be about. It is questionable how far such 'informal' ways of speaking or reporting can help settle problems of such grave importance.

Fourthly, the failure of the topic-neutral quasi-reductionist strategy can also be seen when we deal with the Prob-

lem of the truth or otherwise of sensation reports. This clearly induces a difficulty. For we are now to take the 'general purport' of 'I have a pain in my leg' to be given by the allegedly topicneutral rendering 'something is going on (1) which is like what goes on when a pin is struck in my leg etc. etc. and (2) which can, in certain circumstances, be the causal condition of true sensation reports made because of the occurrence of the sensation'.

This rendering is involved in flagrant circularity and clearly exhibits the weakness of Smart's thesis.

Finally, according to Smart, the underlying reality is physical throughout; the basic referent of both neurological and mental expressions is the brain. Mentalistic or introspective expressions form what is merely a different language for talking about physical events. Here the pertinent problem becomes that of explaining the relation between the two languages. It is generally agreed that the mentalistic and physicalistic languages are not alternative languages for talking about the same things in the way that, for example, German and English are. For in the case of German and English, suitably chosen pairs of expressions mean the same, they are synonymous. But the Identity theorists do not hold, and indeed it would be foolish to hold, that certain mental and physical expressions are synonymous. Smart takes a more tolerant view of our ordinary mentalistic language. He takes it to be a way of talking about brain events, but an inexact, indefinite, vague way. But the plain fact is that even if we could possibly manage Smart's suggested topic-neutral language, it would not do many things that our mentalistic language does. For example, when I report that I suddenly remembered that Elan stood first in the F.U.E., the intentionality of this report, i.e., that it is about Elan and her success, is an essential part of it. This intentional feature is

lost if we simply report that a particular neural event had suddenly occurred; such a report would not be about Elan, but only about a brain event.²⁵ Smart's topic-neutral version fares equally bad. He would perhaps reformulate it in some such words: Something went on which is like what goes on when someone says to me 'Let me remind you that Elan stood first in the F.U.E.' As a matter of fact, this points only to the circumstances which typically tend to cause the event and to the effects. The reported experience itself does not seem to be neutral or open at all in the way Smart takes it to be. To abandon mentalistic expressions, and that is what Smart wants to do, is to render us incapable of talking about events which clearly and undeniably occur viz., mental events.²⁶

A short digression on the appraisal of Smart's view of 'meaning' is not out of place here. The heart of his topic-neutral strategy lies in the suggestion that mental events are definable as the concomitants or products of certain physical stimulus conditions or anything that is just like those concomitants or products. Now the important question is what leads Smart to think that mental events can be defined in terms of the stimulus conditions that are their causes? His reason is that "sensation talk must be learned by reference to some environmental stimulus situation or another".²⁷ While this latter claim seems sensible to a certain extent, it does not follow that *what* is learned in some environmental stimulus situation is definable in terms of that environmental stimulus situation. We might learn what the expression 'anger' or 'pain' means by being hit on the head, but to know how the expression is learned is not to know the meaning. Especially in the case of sensations and other mental occurrences, the experienced qualia is an integral ingredient of their meaning and cannot strictly be reduced to the external stimulus conditions. Smart's purported analyses of the meanings of mental terms are, at best, instructions for coming to learn the

usages of these terms. A person who has never felt pain cannot obviously know the meaning of the word "pain"- that is, it would be impossible for him to give himself an ostensive definition of pain. Therefore he would never know to *what* the word 'pain' refers. He might be skillful at imitating the behaviour of a person in pain: he could be very good at discerning whether others were in pain (by observation of their circumstances and behaviour); somehow or other he might even be distressed by the sufferings of others; but still he would not know what pain is. He would not have experienced a direct awareness of pain. Thus he could not have connected the word 'pain' with *pain itself*. The most he could understand the word to mean would be certain behaviour in certain circumstances. The ostensive definition must be inward and private. For each of us it provides the word 'pain' with a direct reference to pain itself, not merely to its manifestations or causes or consequences in behaviour. From the first-person point of view, sensation-words must be learned by ostensive definition, i.e., by being presented with examples of particular sensations, and the element of privacy is an essential part of the meanings of sensation-words.

It was noted earlier on that Smart maintains that many items of mental phenomena do not yield to behaviouristic or dispositional reduction, because they are intractably 'inner'. He says about his report of a pain: "It seems clear that the content of my report cannot be exclusively a set of purely behavioural facts. There seems to be some element of 'pure inner experience' which is being reported, and to which only I have direct access".²⁸ Now surely it would be punning to say that brain processes and experiences are both 'inner'. Obviously this word is used literally in the first case and figuratively in the second. 'Experience is inner' is intended to mean something like this: experience is known only to the subject of experience. Or, as Smart put it, only I have 'direct

access' to my experience. Can the notion that the experience of pain is 'inner' be reconciled with the assertion that it is a brain process? I am supposed to have 'direct access' to my 'inner' experience. But I do not even have access to my brain processes. Therefore, they cannot be that which was presumed to be inner'. Smart's theory as to what his experience of having a pain *is* conflicts with his original inclination to think that he is the only person who has direct access to his own experience. For neither thing would be true if his experience were a brain process.

The upshot of this discussion is that Smart's brain-process theory via the topic-neutral strategy can be seen to be hopelessly wrong. It is impossible that the claimed contingent or strict identity of mental events with brain processes could be proved empirically. Thoughts, 'inner experiences', states of consciousness, can never turn out to be brain states or brain events. The theory that the two kinds of occurrences might prove to be identical is not only false but also meaningless.

4.4 CENTRAL STATE MATERIALISM: ARMSTRONG

D.M. Armstrong's version of the Identity Theory, the doctrine of Central-state Materialism, is much more radical and tough-minded in identifying conscious experiences with the brain. The crux of his theory is that it does away entirely with conscious mental states, insofar as they are very crudely equated and identified with the brain states. The substance of Armstrong's view can be put briefly and not too misleadingly in the proposition: 'The mind is nothing but the brain'. He expounds his theory in a very detailed and comprehensive work *A Materialist Theory of The Mind*. Like other Identity theorists, Armstrong too bases his argument on extremely misleading analogies. Before proceeding with an

examination of his main position, we must look here carefully with a view to establishing the soundness or otherwise of the analogies that he gives to elucidate the mind-brain identity. He, for example, writes:

'If it is true that the mind is the brain, a model must be found among contingent statements of identity. We must compare the statement to 'The morning star is the evening star' or 'The gene is the DNA molecule,' or some other contingent statement of identity'.²⁹

Armstrong then goes on to argue, quite correctly, "But if 'The mind is the brain' is a contingent statement, then it follows that it must be possible to give logically independent explanations (or alternatively, ostensive definitions) of the meaning of the two words 'mind' and 'brain'."³⁰

It seems to me that Armstrong's premise that his two examples of contingent identity are comparable analogies to the thesis that 'the mind is the brain' is fundamentally mistaken. This becomes clear when we analyse the three cases.

- (1) The morning star and the evening star are one and the same physical object.
- (2) The gene is a theoretical concept; the DNA molecule is a chemical entity.
- (3) The mind is a person's lived conscious agency, i.e., it is given before we can begin any analysis, etc. If it is regarded as a theoretical concept it still refers to the experience or psyche. The brain is an organ of the body.

Now there are obviously very big differences between these three cases and it is glib and unincisive to consider them as analogous statements. Only in the first case (morning star and evening star) can the two things be regarded as one and the same thing.³¹ The concept of identity as applied in the supposed gene concept is indeed very loose and naive. The discovery of DNA, the elucidation and analysis of its structure, etc. has not altered the conceptual status of the gene in any way. The word 'gene' continues to represent a principle (or a theoretical concept) which is temporally prior and logically distinct from the chemical entity to which, we now know, it refers—the DNA molecule. It is therefore fallacious to talk of the identification of the gene with the DNA molecule. But apart from the fact whether or not the identification in this case is justifiably maintained, it surely has no parallel to the mind-brain case.

The problem in relation to mental is not simply one of finding out (through science as in the case of the gene) what the empirical referent of a particular theoretical concept is. It is in fact the far more considerable one of establishing that an already existing 'empirical' referent of the concept 'mental state', viz., conscious experience, is identical with a hypothesized brain state. Armstrong, with other central-state materialists, is in fact asserting that conscious experience and neurophysiological processes are one and the same thing; to equate this with the gene-DNA example is grossly inaccurate and therefore very misleading. This also shows the philosophical futility of the idea of 'contingent identity' on which the Identity theorists base their argument so heavily. If two apparently distinct things are thought to be one and the same thing there can be no question of any kind of identity until the issue has been decided one way or the other by critical inquiry and investigation. When identity is established it is logically necessary that the two things are in fact one and the same thing a (tautology).

We now move on to the second stage of Armstrong's argument—the idea that if 'the mind is the brain' is a meaningful statement, then it must be possible to give a logically independent explanation of the words 'mind' and 'brain'. He says:

"The word 'brain' gives no trouble. . . . the problem is posed by the word 'mind.' What verbal explanation or ostensive definition can be given of this word without implying a departure from the physicalistic view of the world? This seems to be the great problem, or, at any rate, one great problem, faced by a Central-state theory. Central-state Materialism holds that when we are *aware* of our own mental states what we are aware of are mere physical states of the brain. But we are certainly not aware of the mental states *as* states of the brain. What then are we aware of mental states as? Are we not aware of them as states of a quite peculiar, mental sort".³²

Conscious experience does have this 'quite peculiar, mental quality' and Armstrong is undoubtedly right in seeing this as a formidable problem for a materialistic programme. This problem has led some physicalists to the extreme and therefore clearly paradoxical position of not allowing the statements that assert or imply the existence of mind. A true physicalistic world-view would simply talk about the operations of the central nervous system, and will completely write off talk about the mind and mental processes.³³ Armstrong does not accept this approach. Despite the difficulties, he attempts to sketch out a solution of the word 'mind' in the form of a physical, quasi-behaviourist explanation:

"Psychologists very often present us with the following picture. Man is an object continually acted upon by certain physical stimuli. These stimuli elicit from him

certain behaviour, that is to say, a certain physical response. In the causal chain between the stimulus and the response, falls the mind. The mind is that what causally mediates our response to stimuli. As a first approximation we can say that what we mean when we talk about the mind, or about particular mental processes, is *nothing but* the effect within a man of a certain stimuli, and the cause within a man of certain responses".³⁴

This line of reasoning is certainly a very desperate one indeed: an outstanding example of pure question-begging nothing-buttery. Man has conveniently been turned into a machine and his conscious experience reduced to the 'effect of certain stimuli and the cause of certain responses.' A dualist certainly takes effects and responses into consideration, but he would not maintain with Armstrong that the brain processes as such cause human purposive activities. Armstrong is here very wrongly desiring a materialist ontological conclusion from the psychologists' methodological behaviourism. Experimental psychologists undoubtedly talk of mind as a sequence of stimulus-effect-response in a rough and tentative manner, but that surely does not warrant a philosophical theory about the nature of the conscious subject or mind in itself and the mental states.

Armstrong goes on: "The concept of a mental state is the concept of that, whatever it may turn out to be, which is brought about in a man by certain stimuli and which in turn brings about certain responses. What it is in its own nature is something for science to discover".³⁵

I find this position implausible on two counts. First, the naivety with which he allows the facile equation of 'the concept of mental state' with 'whatever it turns out to be' when in fact he clearly envisages that it will turn out to be a phy-

sical process in the brain. Is there not a profound theoretical problem here: how will it ever be possible to say or to demonstrate that the conscious experience and a neurophysiological process are as a matter of fact one and the same thing? Secondly, if indeed this is 'something for science to discover' why not deal with this scientifically, i.e., by producing supportive scientific evidence and devising ways of examining the theory as a scientific hypothesis by actual neurophysiological experimentation.³⁶ Armstrong, instead of giving any positive evidence, dogmatically asserts:

"Modern science declares that this mediator between stimulus and response is in fact the central nervous system, or more crudely and inaccurately, but more simply, the brain".³⁷

More question-begging. The sole mediator is the central nervous system only in reflex activity. If Armstrong or for that matter any neurophysiologist wants to include mind and mental states in his conception of the central nervous system, clearly the burden of proof is on him to show how conscious experience can be equated or identified with the brain. In any case 'modern science' cannot 'declare' anything because it is not a person.

By far the largest part of Armstrong's book is devoted to a philosophical analysis of the concept of mind in which he tries to show that the ordinary meaning of 'mental' can be summarized adequately in the formula 'apt for the production of bodily behaviour'. Though Armstrong separates himself from the earlier positions of Feigl, Smart and others who tried to take behaviourism, as far as it could go, yet his amended position is also heavily indebted to behaviourism. Put succinctly, it is this:

“The concept of a mental state is primarily the concept of a state of the person apt for bringing about a certain sort of behaviour”.³⁸

What differentiates this from behaviourism is that the mental state is not absorbed into behaviour. It is left with its separate existence. But it is characterized in a topic neutral way, for it is only identified extrinsically through its consequences. It is further asserted that in reality it can be identified with physico-chemical states of the brain. But here the confusion starts. Armstrong elaborates on some of the terms used in the above formula in some detail but all the hedging around only reinforces one's feeling that the formula (and the whole approach it entails) is fundamentally unsound. The issue is clinched by a statement of Armstrong which can be regarded as a major concession of the weakness of his position.

“It will be seen that our formula ‘state of the person apt for bringing about a certain sort of behaviour’ is something that must be handled with care. *Perhaps it is best conceived of as a slogan or catch phrase* which indicates the general line along which accounts of the individual mental concepts are to be sought, but does no more than this”.³⁹

Slogans and catch-phrases invariably involve considerable over-simplification, if not distortion, and it is surely significant that Central-state materialism is driven in desperation to devise a formula that is, in principle, liable to be found so crude and misleading.

Let us take a closer look at the two main components of the formula:

- (1) A state of the person (apt for bringing about the corresponding behaviour).

(2) Behaviour.

(1) If 'mental states' are to be equated or identified with 'states of the person', let us see where the consistent application of the formula leads. I take two examples. (a) A completely unconscious person may show behaviour of various kinds—both reflex and spontaneous. Here 'a state of the person. . . .' is in fact the physiological state which is apt for the production of the kind of behaviour exhibited. A specific example of this would be the sort of physiological change that a clinical neurologist infers following his examination of an unconscious patient who has had a stroke. Now on Armstrong's formula the particular physiological state concerned is in fact the person's 'mental state'. (b) Disordered behaviour in a conscious person may be the specific expression of an actually demonstrable organic lesion in his brain, say, a brain tumour. If we are to follow Armstrong now the brain tumour is the person's 'mental state', since it is that state of the person which is apt for the production of corresponding behaviour.

(2) Behaviour. There are two objections regarding this. Firstly, behaviour is too limited and superficial a concept (even the extremely complicated behaviour of an artist painting a picture) to allow of any simple equation with the corresponding 'mental state'. Take, for instance, the example of a novelist for closer examination. His behaviour, which on a superficial view is relatively uniform, in fact turns out to be very complex on minute scrutiny: consider one aspect of this—the fine movements of his hands and fingers as he writes. This behaviour may be very complex, qua behaviour, but it yet remains a fragmented, erratic external expression of the novelist's actual succession of 'mental states' as experienced by him. Here one has only to think of the wealth of imagery a novelist's imagination must call forth when he is at work. Secondly, to the extent that there is any corres-

pondence between mental states and behaviour surely it is the former that must have priority. So that we need to invert Armstrong, and we get: some items of behaviour may be apt for allowing an inference about the mental state which produces them.

An examination of Armstrong's analysis of various mind-related concepts like secondary qualities, will, perception, imagination, etc. makes it clear that he does not in fact allow us to use these mental words in the way to which we are accustomed. He too like Smart falls back upon some sort of translation schema. He tells us, for example,

"I have a pain in my hand' may be rendered somewhat as follows: 'It feels to me that a certain sort of disturbance is occurring in my hand, a perception that evokes in me the peremptory desire that the perception should cease'. What is meant by 'a certain sort of disturbance, here? If we simply consult our experience of physical pain it's nature cannot be further specified".⁴⁰

But is there any point in purging the mental through attempts like this? Once we have admitted introspective language, that is, language describing how things are for the experiencing person, then we have accepted in some sense an 'inner reality', for we accept talk about states and occurrences as they are experienced by an agent. Armstrong shows a lot of ingenuity in adopting his scheme to make room for such difficult notions as those of imagination and perception, but on the points of central importance he seems to be more anxious to cling dogmatically to his identity thesis than to report and accept the facts as he finds them. To give one example, although much of the language he uses (e.g. 'seeing', 'hearing') suggests very strongly that perceptual learning depends on the occurrence of sense experience

which is 'something quite different from the acquiring of beliefs about the environment', he shies away from admitting this uncomfortable conclusion because (as he tells us frankly on page 217), 'he has been unable to see how' it can be made 'compatible with a causal analysis of all the mental concepts'.

Before closing this section, I shall try to show that Armstrong has not been able consistently to maintain the strict identity of the mental states with the cerebral ones. My argument would be based on the consideration of an objection against identity thesis which Armstrong himself formulates in a very precise manner thus:

'I begin with the relatively frivolous objections: those that are based on a failure to understand the position being attacked. In the first place, it may be objected that the theory has the absurd consequence that, when a person is aware of having a pain and at the same time a brain-surgeon looks at his brain, the two of them may be aware of the same thing.

'The objection is frivolous, because the consequence is not absurd at all. The patient and the surgeon may be aware of the same thing, but they are aware of very different characteristics of it. An analogy would be: one person smells the cheese, but does not taste it; the other tastes it but does not smell it. The patient is aware that there is something within him apt for the production of certain behaviour, the surgeon is aware of certain intrinsic characteristics of this something. And, unlike the case of the cheese, it needs a theoretical scientific argument to show that what each is aware of is in fact one and the same thing'.⁴¹

Far from being frivolous, the essence of this objection is probably the most weighty single counter-argument to Central-state materialism. The theory most certainly does have the absurd consequence that a conscious experience is identified with a neural process in precisely the way indicated in Armstrong's example. It is simply a logical consequence of the thesis that mental states and brain states are one and the same thing. The argument used to counter this criticism is fundamentally inconsistent with his main thesis; indeed, it destroys his whole theory. The essential point here is that the statement that mental states and brain states 'are one and the same thing' has now become: they are 'very different characteristics of it', i.e., of one thing. There is a very great difference between the two statements, and it turns out to be crucial. Take Armstrong's own analogy of smelling and tasting the cheese. The consideration here is that the taste and the smell are different characteristics of, but by no means one and the same thing as, the cheese. They are properties, in fact emergent properties, of the cheese: these emergent properties are logically, epistemologically and physiologically distinct from that of which they are properties, i.e., the cheese. Indeed I would say that there is no strict analogy between our sensations pertaining to cheese and the awareness of pain. The patient's experience of pain is not as such related with the brain state as smelling and tasting are related with the cheese. The absurd consequence that what the patient feels is what the surgeon sees is not 'based on a failure to understand the position being attacked'; it is a direct consequence (logically necessary) of Armstrong's position. We must therefore conclude that the absurdity is the result of a consistent application of the theory: a *reductio ad absurdum* of Central-state materialism itself.

The argument adduced by Armstrong in order to save his theory introduces a distinct notion altogether, that of

'very distinct characteristics' of one thing, and is clearly inconsistent with his main theory. To assert that the patient's pain, i.e., the conscious experience of pain, is a property (or Armstrong's 'characteristic') of the neural process, quite different from the property of the same process seen by the surgeon, is in fact to hold a dualist position—at least in its 'double-aspect' version. I would myself however not agree with Armstrong even in maintaining that the experience of pain is an aspect of the underlying brain state. From the point of view of the patient surely the conscious experience of pain itself is quite distinct from the physical state of his brain. I cannot see how this conclusion can be avoided. We are left with no less a position than the consciousness-brain dualism itself. Armstrong's attempted defence of identity theory is a very question-begging undertaking indeed. It is mere window-dressing to talk of 'a theoretical scientific argument to show that what each is aware of is in fact one and the same thing'. The experience of pain is a distinct mental occurrence radically different in nature from anything we can observe externally through our senses. We do not feel sensations in our brains—(Brain tissues are actually insensitive). Therefore sensations and experiences are not states of the brain or central nervous system. No kind of observation, or of investigation with instruments could determine the presence of thinking inside the skull, unless the investigation was conceived of as determining the occurrence of some physical process inside the skull, the occurrence of which was itself to be used as the criterion of the occurrence of thinking. But if the investigation was so conceived the theory would not be that of mental-brain identity.

4.5 OPINION OF EMINENT SCIENTISTS

The identity theorists have generally buttressed their arguments by citing the alleged scientific support in their

favour. They have assumed that, by invoking the principle of parsimony which warns against the multiplying of entities beyond necessity, they are the better claimants of scientific plausibility. I have no qualms about the utility and philosophical value of the so-called Occam's razor as such, but surely it has to be used with utmost care and discernment. I reckon that the mind-body identity theorists, in identifying the mental with the physical, have used this principle very arbitrarily and tendentiously. In so doing they have gone against the plain facts of experience which tell us that what we find in experience is not at all physical in nature. The fact is that we are aware of our own mental processes directly, as almost all the identity philosophers allow, and we are aware of them as being different in nature from the physical objects and processes which we observe in the world around us. Occam's razor should not be an instrument for pruning away just anything we do not like or which does not suit our theory.

Contrary to their assumptions, a number of leading scientists, including neurophysiologists and experimental psychologists, have held views exactly the opposite of what the identity theorists claim in the name of scientific plausibility. In the following pages I shall mention views of some of the eminent scientists. Their pronouncements clearly go against any factual or contingent identity of mental events or states with events or physico-chemical changes in the brain and the central nervous system.

Charles Sherrington (1857-1952) the greatest neurophysiologist among the English-speaking scientists clearly recognized the ontological duality and irreducibility of the mental and the physical. He writes:—

“The psychical, creates from psychical data a percipient, thinking and endeavouring mental individual. Though

our exposition kept these two systems and their integrations apart, they are largely complimentary and life brings them co-operatively together at innumerable points. . . . ”⁴²

Talking of mind-body interaction, he says:—

“But theoretically it has to overcome a difficulty of no ordinary kind. It has to combine two incommensurables; it has to unite two disparate entities. . . . Enough has been said to stress that in the sequence of events [in Sherrington’s example ‘I see the sun’] a step is reached where a physical situation in the brain leads to a psychical, which however contains no hint of the brain or any other bodily part. . . . The supposition has to be, it would seem, two continuous series of events, one physico-chemical, the other psychical, and at times interaction between them.”

“That our being should consist of *two* fundamental elements offers I suppose no greater inherent improbability than it should rest on one only”.

Similar views are expressed by Professor Wilder Penfield of Montreal, who writes:—

“It is the ‘physical basis of the mind’, this hypothetical mechanism of nerve cell connections. . . .

“What is the real relationship of this mechanism to the mind? Can we visualize a spiritual element of different essence capable of controlling this mechanism? When a patient is asked about a movement which he carried out as the result of cortical stimulation, he never is in any doubt about it. He knows he did not will the action. He knows there is a difference between automatic action

and voluntary action. He would agree that something else finds its dwelling-place between the sensory complex and the motor mechanism, that there is a switchboard operator as well as a switchboard".⁴³

Another eminent scientist of Cambridge, W.H. Thorpe maintains;

"One final point: if the evolution of consciousness was indeed an evolutionary necessity as brains got larger, does this not imply that *consciousness is something other than brain action*⁴⁴ ?"

Professor John Eccles, an outstanding neurophysiologist recently expressed the following views in his Eddington Memorial Lecture:—

"Nor do I believe with the physicalists that my conscious experiences are *nothing but* the operation of the physiological mechanisms of my brain. It may be noted in passing that this extraordinary belief cannot be accommodated to the fact that only a minute amount of cortical activity finds expression in conscious experience. Contrary to this physicalist creed I believe that the prime reality of my experiencing self cannot with propriety be *identified* with some aspects of its experiences and its imaginings—such as brains and neurones and nerve impulses and even complex spatio-temporal patterns of impulses. The evidence presented in this lecture shows that these events in the material world are necessary but not sufficient causes for experiences and for my consciously experiencing self".⁴⁵

The current status of scientific evidence in relation to the problem of consciousness and mental events has been comprehensively reviewed by Cyril Burt.⁴⁶ Though himself

a very distinguished psychologist, Burt was in fact a collaborator of Sherrington's and worked as his assistant and participated in many of his experiments. He has therefore been able to use insights acquired at that time in the present review, the survey itself conducted from the neurological standpoint. It is convenient to present the essence of his conclusions in four sections.

(1) The physical structure, chemical composition, and activities of the nerve cell body, the cell fibre, and the cell junction are reviewed. There are no essential differences between the parts of the nervous system which, like spinal cord, are invariably unconscious and these which, like the cortex, are at times accompanied by consciousness. Accordingly, it would seem impossible to suppose, as so many physiologists used to do when all this was still wrapped in mystery, that these very chemical processes can 'generate' anything like conscious experience.

(2) Attention is next turned to the way in the structural units of the brain are organized. Various specific hypotheses are examined. Berger (1940) proposed the idea that the electrical potential of nerve conduction was converted into a field of psychic force. Wertheimer, Kohler, and other Gestalt psychologists had suggested that the older 'switchboard theory' should be replaced by an 'electro-physiological theory'. Burt's conclusion is that 'There is evidently nothing in the nature of such fields to explain how they could acquire a psychical aspect or engender conscious experience. The differences which produce 'patterns' within an electrical field are all quantitative; the differences which characterize consciousness are irreducibly qualitative'. Kohler went on to introduce the concept of 'isomorphism' between a psychical or 'phenomenal' field and electrophysiological field. Experimental findings have completely failed to support this

hypothesis; there are also various theoretical difficulties about it. Burt concludes that the supposed electrophysiological field can safely be dismissed 'as an entirely gratuitous assumption'.

(3) 'If then we are to attempt anything like an intelligent account of conscious experience, we seem driven to postulate some kind of mental component interacting with the physical component we call the brain or the nervous system. Such a component would have two functions to fulfil'. Consciousness is regarded as a two-term relation so that '... we must assume not only a cognitive field to serve as the object of the relation but also something very like a pure ego to serve as the subject — a witness of the field, in short, what Sherrington described as an 'I' that counts itself as a cause'. The same subject not only perceives; it also apparently wills. If so, we must suppose that this 'active factor' interacts with the brain rather like a system of non-physical forces; in that case we may conceive this active factor also as a kind of mental field.

(4) The crucial question now is — 'what are the special conditions in which conscious experience arises'? The answer attempted by Eccles is that in the ordinary state of waking consciousness 'a considerable proportion of the neurons will be passing through levels of excitation at which the discharge of an impulse would be problematical, such neurons being *critically poised*'. Burt comments — 'The device of a critically poised agent is a principle regularly exploited in physical instruments constructed to function as detectors and amplifiers'. He therefore concludes that consciousness is dependent on the existence of a sufficient number of such critically poised neurons: only in such conditions are willing and perceiving possible. The spatio-temporal activity of the cortex he says, would seem to be determined by three factors:

(a) the afferent input;

- (b) the microstructure of the neural net (partly modified by previous experience); and
- (c) the postulated field of extraneous (mental) influence.

Burt maintains that though this influence is detected and amplified by the working of the brain, it is far too slight for any physical instrument to detect. Thus the brain apparently functions as a two-way detector and transmitter. It is, in short, on the physiologists' own confession, 'just such a machine as a ghost might operate'.

Burt concludes his survey with these words: 'I conclude therefore that, although the events within the living brain provide (or seem to provide) the *necessary* condition for conscious activities, they cannot constitute the *sole and sufficient* conditions. The other conditions must be sought in the dispositional properties—cognitive, affective, and conative— of the hypothetical psychical component. . . On the higher metascientific plane I should be prepared to allow that the apparent dichotomy might be overcome by a monistic synthesis, 'with matter perhaps appearing as an epiphenomenon of mind rather than mind of matter.'⁴⁷

The above lines clearly show that the Identity theorists are quite wrong in their assumption that in equating or identifying conscious experiences and mental states with brain states, they have the scientific evidence on their side.

4.6 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 3,4 AND SUBSEQUENT ARGUMENT

In many respects the identity theory and logical behaviourism are very much alike. This comes out when one asks what the 'dispositions' of the behaviourists are? If an object has a 'disposition', then it is in a particular state such

that when certain things happen to it, other things will happen to it. Thus if an object is brittle, it is in a particular state such that when subject to a sudden force it will shatter. And similarly, according to Ryle, dispositions of a body to behave in a particular way are states of that body. So it is fair to say that both identity theorists and behaviourists identify the mental with bodily states. But one important way in which they differ concerns how those states are to be defined or characterized. As we have seen, Ryle wishes to define those states in terms of what changes they result in when certain specifiable conditions obtain. Identity theorists wish to define them in terms of identifiable structures of the body, ongoing processes and states of the bodily organs, and, in the final analysis, the very cells that go to make up those organs.

In the above chapters I have effectively refuted both logical behaviourism and currently flourishing identity theory in all its multifarious forms, viz., by means of philosophical considerations and the weight of current scientific knowledge on the mind-brain problem. On two key points the analytic or logical behaviourists (like Ryle, Wittgenstein and others) have not been entirely convincing. First if mental states are names of particular patterns of behaviour, they cannot cause the behaviour in question; it cannot be said that a man's anger made him shout or that his pride made him stubborn. It is hard to believe that expressions like these must be illegitimate. Second the occurrence of some inner episodes—afterimages, pains, flashes of illumination, thoughts—resist any plausible dispositional or behavioural analysis. There are undeniably mental states, items or events in addition to a syndrome of dispositions or external behaviour. A radical distinction between private or inner experience and outward behaviour must be made. The main argument which identity theorists bring against this total difference of the

nature of these two processes turns on the close correlation of mental and neurophysiological processes. No one need question these facts. But surely correlation is one thing, identity another. The difference between what we know directly in the processes of our thought, imagination, volition etc. and what we observe in our bodies, including the brain, is so fundamental that we cannot pronounce them to be strictly identical. There is more to mental states and personal actions than molecular biology or neurology can tell us.

But I am still only setting the stage, on which further moves must be made. And this indeed is my aim in the following chapters of this book. I have maintained that no full and exhaustive account of mental states and experiences can be given in terms of observable or scientific terms—they can neither be translated into behaviour nor reduced to the brain. Since experiences are something essentially inner and non-physical, it follows that they cannot be events in, or attributes of, something physical, e.g. of the body or the brain. If the brain is the coloured, irritable, convoluted pulp that physiologists study, then this quivering indented thing is not the mind or the subject of experiences; and to say that it may also be conscious is only a quibble. This contention totally rejects all views according to which persons are nothing more than their physical bodies and what their scientific and social behaviour displays. Feigl, for instance, maintained that

‘Whatever role the self may play in the determination of human conduct, it may very well be explained by a more or less stable structure of dispositions due to some constitutionally inherited, maturationally modified, and continually modulated structure of the organism (especially the nervous and endocrine systems)’.⁴⁸

Our problem, then, is to determine *what* it is that has the thought, feels the sensation, images the mental pictures, entertains the wish, etc; in a word, *what* is the subject of conscious mental states. I submit that the subject of conscious states is the mind or the self, a non-physical substantial entity distinct from the body. Experiences are ascribed to, and owned by the subject self referred to by the pronouns like 'I' 'he' and 'you'. It is to the self as an abiding incorporeal entity that total temporary mental states belong. (Mental life obviously does not take the form of easily isolable episodes.) The self is not only logically distinct from any particular human body, with which it is associated, it is also what a person fundamentally is, i.e. the determinant of one's continued personal identity.

As is well known, Hume's phenomenalist analysis of personal identity is the major rival to the view of self suggested here. The phenomenologists or empiricists subscribe to a basic principle of methodology which strongly predisposes them to seek for an account of self and cognition free from any reference to a subject mind: the principle, namely that nothing should be accepted as real which is not an object of experience. I shall argue in the sequel that the alternative (serialist theories) of equating the conscious subject with the series of his experiences leaves us without any explanation of the nature of self-identity. Not only is it not clear how the individual experiences are to be identified, but there appears to be no principle according to which they can be grouped together; there is no answer to the question what makes two experiences, which are separated in time, the experiences of the same person. How is it to be explained that two memory experiences which occur at different times are members of the same bundle? The self, I shall argue, cannot be simply the result of the confluence of a number of components destitute of any substantial centre. Moreover, a mind that is

aware of objective reality is always also in some degree aware of itself as subject. We have intuitive awareness of ourselves which is not an 'object'.

We must first turn to the recent epistemological theories for a closer look at the self as the cognizing subject of mental states. That is the task of the following chapter.

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1. Feigl, H.: *The 'Mental' and The 'Physical'*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967) p.138. This monograph was first published under the same title in *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. II, (1958).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
4. *ibid.*, p. 45.
5. *Op. cit.*, p. 46.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
7. See below sec. 3.5.
8. Quinton, A.: 'Mind and Matter' in *Brain and Mind*, edited by J. R. Smythies (London, Kegan Paul 1965) p.233.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 203.
10. *Op. cit.*, p. 209.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
13. *Ibid.*; p.233.
14. Lewis, H.D.: *The Elusive Mind*, (George Allen & Unwin, London 1969) p.204. See also below Chapter 7 sections, 1, 2 and 3, where this point is discussed in detail.
15. Quinton, A.: *op. cit.*, p. 211.
16. *Op. cit.*, p. 212.
17. This is the central argument which I make for the reality of self, namely, experiences or mental states are identifiability-dependent: they are always owned or cognized by subject selves. See Chapter 4 below.

18. Shaffer, J.A.: 'Recent Work on the Mind-Body Problem', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1965) p. 97.
19. The principle writings in which Smart has developed his position are: 'Sensation and Brain Process', *Philosophical Review*, Vol. LXVIII (1959) pp.141-56, his *Philosophy and Scientific Realism* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1963) Ch. V. Passim, and 'Materialism', *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. LX (1963) pp.651-62.
20. *Philosophy and Scientific Realism*, p. 90.
21. *Op. cit.*, p. 91.
22. 'Sensations and Brain Process', *Philosophical Review*. (1959) p.145.
23. *Philosophy and Scientific Realism*, *Op. cit.*, p. 94-95.
24. Smart, J.J.C. 'Materialism', *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. LX (1963) p. 661.
25. That is to say, there is an irreducibly mentalistic language (i.e. language describing mental states and occurrences) which could not be reproduced in terms of physical behaviour and organic changes alone. W.V.Quine is very clear about this conclusion in his *Word and Object* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1960), p.222. Since he does not like the conclusion (it goes against this ontic decision), he argues that we ought to dispense with intentionalistic discourse altogether.
26. Shaffer Jerome has criticized Identity Theory on similar grounds; that is, our language and conceptual scheme does not allow us to identify mental states or events with processes in the brain. See his excellent articles: 'Could Mental States Be Brain Processes?' *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 58 (1961); pp. 813-22 and 'Mental Events And The Brain', *Ibid.*, Vol. 60 (1963) pp. 160-66.
27. Smart: 'Brain Processes and Incorrigeability', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* (1962) p. 69.
28. *Philosophy and Scientific Realism*, *Op. cit.* p. 89.
29. Armstrong, D.M.: 'A Materialist Theory of The Mind', (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1968) p.77.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

31. Even here, it must be observed, the identity of the mental with the physical is not exactly of this sort, since it is held to be simultaneous identity rather than the identity of a thing at one time with same thing at a later time. If an object did not have two distinct aspects or phases, it would not be a *discovery* that they are indeed one and the same body. My essential point here is that the analogies usually cited by Identity Philosophers are not at all relevant or helpful in this context.
32. *Op. cit.*, p. 78.
33. See, for example, Paul Feyerabend: 'Mental Events and the Brain', *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. LX (1963). He proposes that mentalistic language be abandoned completely, at least for scientific and philosophical purposes. Similarly B.A. Farrell suggests that mentalistic language involves an irrational, unempirical theory carried over from a primitive and superstitious past. Cf. his 'Experience', *Mind*, Vol. 59.(1950) p. 195 *passim*.
34. Armstrong: *Op. cit.* p. 79 (my italics).
35. *Op. cit.* p. 79.
36. I am, however, not sure if scientific experimentation can help in this area at all. If scientific instruments gave a neurologist access to my brain processes, this would not be the 'direct' access which I have to my experience.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
38. Armstrong: *Op. cit.* , p. 82.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 84 (italics not in the original).
40. *Op.cit.*, p. 314.
41. *Op. cit.*, p.112.
42. Sherrington, C.: *The Integrative Action of The Nervous System*, (Yale University Press, 2nd ed. 1947), Foreward pp. XV, XVI, XVII, XX.
43. *The Physical Basis of Mind*, ed. P. Laslett (Blackwell, Oxford) 1957, p.64.
44. 'Brain and Conscious Experience', *Ethology and Consciousness*, Ch. 19, p. 494, edited by J. C. Eccles, New Yourk, 1966.

45. Eccles, John: *The Brain and the Unity of Consciousness*, (Cambridge University Press, 1965) p. 42.
46. Burt, Cyril, 'Brain and Consciousness', *British Journal of Psychology* (1968), pp. 55-69.
47. *Op. cit.*, (italics in the original).
48. Feigl: *The 'Mental' And The 'Physical'*, *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

SELF AS THE COGNIZING SUBJECT

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SELF AS THE COGNIZING SUBJECT

5.1 SERIALIST ANALYSIS OF COGNITION

It would be clear by now that in this book my aim is to make a case for the substantival theory of self, that is, the theory according to which the self is an entity for which 'I' is used as a logically proper name. It could further be explained by saying, following Broad and others, that the contemporaneous mental events which are parts of the same total temporary state stand in a common asymmetrical relation to a certain particular for which 'I' and other pronouns are used as logical designations. In this sense, the self is a persistent particular, the common owner of concurrent and successive mental states. Now, the serialist theories of the self, according to which the self is reduced to a complex of perishing mental events, generally deal with the analysis of the characteristic relationships which so unify these coexistent and successive mental occurrences as to give the impression of a continued identity for which the cartesian's entity-self is a better candidate. I shall not here enquire into the way the logical construction or serialist philosophers have tried to get round this so vitally important issue in mental philosophy.¹ In this chapter I rather want to call attention and discuss what I think is a serious fault in the way the serialists commonly conceive of their task. It seems to me that they tend to take the terms of a self-series, the individual mental events themselves as unanalysed units: with the result that they give little or no consideration to the question of a *felt complexity* in the internal structure of every single mental event which justifies a belief in the common owner or subject of mental events. The self or the 'I' seems to be involved in any *one* of the mental events: it is, so to say, a subjective referent to which each mental state is presented. Alternatively expressed,

a self is whatever is designated by the grammatical subject of psychological statements like 'I feel pain in my arm', 'I see a red patch in my visual field', etc. It is given in each mental event as its cognizing subject.

The serialists clearly do not reckon with this fact. They think that to admit the above analysis of each mental event would involve admitting a subject (or the self) and its acts in a metaphysical and unverifiable sense, to perform the act of sensing. For example, Russell maintains that "the person is not an ingredient in the single thought, he is rather constituted by relations of the thoughts to each other."² This quotation from Russell is typical of the present-day writings on the problem. Most of the analytic philosophers think that there is no necessity to make the sort of analysis of each individual mental event as explained above, for the property of being sensed might consist in a relation between the given sense-datum and something similar, e.g., another sense-datum. This, I think, is the view adopted also by Professor Ayer, who writes, . . . "a given sense-datum can legitimately be said to be experienced by a particular subject: but we shall see that this relation of being experienced by a particular subject is to be analysed in terms of the relation of sense-contents to one another, and not in terms of a substantival ego and its mysterious acts."³ Unfortunately Professor Ayer gives nowhere a detailed answer as to what these relations between sense-data are supposed to be to generate the sense of the subject. Apart from that, Russell, Ayer and other serialists forget the simple truth that every individual sense-content or experience is assigned to, and owned by, a subject self; and thus their theories fly in the face of common experience.

Let me briefly explain the position I shall be maintaining in this chapter regarding the self as the subjective referent in all sorts of mental processes, by citing from two philosophers who hold views very similar to my own.

In his contribution to a symposium on the nature of the self, Alan Dorward proposes to "consider the internal structure of a mental event" as well as determine "the kind of relation which relates mental events among themselves."⁴ He concludes from an example that when the internal structure of a cognitive event is in question, there is clearly involved a relation between the object cognized and something else which cognizes it. Now of this 'something else' which he symbolizes by S, he thinks, we can at least say that it "must be a particular existent". Accordingly when he proceeds to ask how mental events which belong to the same self must be supposed to be related together, the most natural answer is, that the required relation consists of the fact that "S is a constituent of all the mental events belonging to the same biography."⁵

The other philosopher whom I want to mention is James Ward. "The form of consciousness", Ward insisted, "cannot be expressed by any single term which does not recognize the duality of subject and object."⁶ Those who propose to "take the word soul simply as a name for the series of mental phenomena. . ." should ask themselves ". . . series of mental phenomena for whom?"⁷ For "when a phenomena or appearance is actual, there must also be someone to whom it appears, for whom it is a fact."⁸ Here the self has been taken to be a subject of awareness, that is, an immaterial persistent particular whose function it is to perform the activity of being aware of something.

Now with regard to the views of Dorward and Ward, three things appear to me to be perfectly true. In the first place, the cognitive events of the kind of which an instance would be my seeing a coloured patch or my hearing a noise, do patently consist in the holding of a relation between a sensum and something else. In the second place, I feel sure that this complexity of sensory cognitions is a *prima facie*

presumption in favour of the analysis of the unity of a biography in terms of a persistent particular i.e. the self, which Dorward took to be a natural inference from it. It follows therefore, finally, that in treating all mental events as unanalysed units, serialists are ignoring a complexity in cognitive events which is a *prima facie* presumption against what they believe to be the correct analysis of the subjecthood of mental events or the unit of a biography. The serialists, as I stated earlier on, generally claim that the fact that there appears to be an entity for which I am using 'I' as a logical designation when I say that 'I am seeing a coloured patch or hearing a noise' is precisely the fact which they think is explained by the inclusion of these cognitive events in a series of suitably interrelated non-contemporaneous total temporary states. But I believe the serialist's approach is fundamentally unsound and misguided. Surely a person never says 'I am seeing this coloured patch', or 'I am hearing this noise' *merely* as an expression of the fact that this seeing and this hearing are related to other non-contemporaneous mental events in certain characteristic ways. I at any rate am perfectly certain that there is something contemporaneous with my seeing the coloured patch or my hearing the noise to which I mean to relate these objects when I say that it is "I" who am seeing the patch or hearing the noise. The present author proposes to call this 'I' a subjective referent or a self, and maintains that a subjective referent is involved in each sensory cognition as a constituent that is contemporary with and complementary to its objective constituent. It is a peculiar kind of substantive particular; therefore it is not of the same nature as the events which it owns or unifies. My theory also rejects out of hand the 'half-way house' Central Event theory put forward by Broad⁹ for the very same reason as it does the other serialist accounts of the self. Since the so-called 'central event' is itself an atomic constituent of a mental history, it cannot possibly own other mental events.

It seems to me that, as a matter of truth, the self is presupposed in all experience. It is logically impossible to be conscious at all and not at the same time to experience the self as subject. Experience and the metaphysical scheme embedded in our language both presuppose an 'I' that is not itself an event or presentation but the subject that has these and all other presentations. It seems to me that 'to be conscious' always means 'to be conscious of' and there can be no sense of 'being conscious' which is not 'being conscious of'. In short, that the fundamental mental state is 'cognizing' or 'acquaintance', and as such it requires both a subject, the cognizing self, and the object known or the sense content. From this point of view, all mental processes and events whether actively experienced cognitions, thoughts, deliberations etc., and the not so actively entertained beliefs, images, itches and tingles, are objects or contents owned by the subject self. When the serialists contend that the self is a construction out of mental events, they imply that individual mental events can happen without being cognized or owned. But it is clearly a very wrong-headed idea, as it is inconceivable that experiences or events a, b, c, d, should occur without at the same time being mine, yours or Llewlyn's.

Philosophers have usually played down the role of cognition in mental life with the explicit aim of denying the necessity of an active agent required for its explanation. But as I observed in the above paragraph, cognition or acquaintance seems to be the fundamental modality in which human consciousness manifests itself. In the next two sections of this chapter I shall critically examine some of the philosophical attempts at giving alternative explanations of the cognitive mental occurrences i.e., theories that try to explain mental life in general and cognition in particular without accepting the self as the substantial subject.

5.2 THE ELIMINATION OF THE SUBJECT

Thinkers of various philosophical persuasions have put forward a wide variety of theories with the explicit aim of eliminating the self from the common view paradigm of the cognitive situation. Their operations generally take the form of phenomenalist replacement of the persistent particular i.e. the cognizing self, by the complexes of suitably interrelated events. In the present section of the chapter, I propose to examine critically some of these theories and see how far they help their exponents achieve their avowed goal.

Historically considered, there have been two distinct stages in the reduction of the cognitive subject to a series of mental events. At the earliest and less radical stage, an attempt was made to retain the function of the subject, viz., the activity of cognizing, while replacing the subject itself by a complex of cognitive events. This stage is characterized by its retention of the fact of consciousness and its reification of this fact into a substitute for the subject in the analysis of individual mental events. A later and more radical form of reductive analysis is, by contrast, characterized by the complete repudiation of 'consciousness' and the replacement of the mental 'acts' as the constituents of mind by events which are common to both mental and physical complexes. I shall first take up the views that represent the earlier of these two stages.

The general schema adopted by the representatives of this stage can be expressed as follows. It is maintained that the mental events may themselves have the capability to 'cognize' objects and thus to have eliminated the reference to their 'being cognized by a self' by simply supposing the mind to consist a collocation of such cognitive events. The views of William James and Samuel Alexander are elaborate working out of this formula. Let us begin by discussing James' position at some length.

James' view regarding the self are often conflicting, if not contradictory, and therefore difficult to formulate with full precision.¹⁰ The distance between the "perishing thought" of *The Principles* and "the full self" of *A Pluralistic Universe* is considerable. In the first period, we find consciousness floating over a limited region on the brain, following passively the shifting maximum of the physiological excitation along the neural paths; it is a perishing pulse of thought about which we are not even certain whether it has its own autonomous and causally efficient reality or is simply an epiphenomenon of the brain. In the last period, he talks about a genuinely creative activity whose conscious moment is only a limited manifestation of the total personal life. Nevertheless, the views expressed in *The Principles* and *Essays in Radical Empiricism* can be safely taken as a fair representative of the main and dominant strain of his thought. James' own statements are too lengthy and obscure for verbatim quotation here, so I must give their substance only.

For James, in brief, the self is nothing but a 'perishing thought'. Consciousness, as a psychological fact, can be fully described without supposing any other agent (or subject) than a succession of perishing thoughts endowed with the functions of appropriation and rejection, and of which some can know and appropriate or reject others. He is a stern critic of every form of psychological atomism, the associationism of Hume as well as the 'realism' of Herbart — he devotes a whole chapter to its criticisms.¹¹ A sheer plurality of distinct states cannot possibly generate the sense of one's persistent identity. The associationists, James thinks, give a very distorted and inadequate description of the peculiar type of organization which he himself calls the 'stream of consciousness'. If one holds, with the Humeans, that the stream of passing thoughts is all, one runs against the entire common sense of mankind, of which the belief in a distinct principle of selfhood seems an integral part. After

having castigated empiricists for their failure to provide a unifying link, a medium between all individual thoughts and feelings, he claimed that in his account "the medium is fully assigned in the shape of something not among the things collected, but superior to them all, namely, the real present onlooking, remembering, 'judging thought', or identifying 'section' of the stream." Thus the agent which unifies the stream of one's experiences and represents them as the experiences of one and the same self is itself a particular chunk of thought from amongst the stream of thought. It is, however, not at all explained how and in what way it is different from the others whom it knows and appropriates in a deus-ex-machina fashion.

The principles on which the knowing and appropriating thought operates are not made very explicit; it is said to be partly a matter of felt continuity, and partly of the present thought's finding 'warmth' in its remembered predecessors that it does not find in its conception of experience which it does not claim to own. James likens the experiences of a single person to a herd of cattle all of which bear the same brand: but whereas in the case of the cattle, the brand signifies that they have a common owner who is not identical with any one of them, in the case of the experiences, the 'title' of ownership is passed around among themselves. A thought which appropriates those which have gone before it is itself appropriated by a later one. In fact, it is only by a later thought that any thought is cognized. "It may feel its own existence", says James, thought he does not think that introspection shows this to be more than a possibility, "but nothing can be known about it till it be gone and dead. Its appropriations are therefore less to itself than to the most intimately felt parts of its present object, the body, and the central adjustments, which accompany the fact of thinking, in the head. These are the real nucleus of our personal identity, and it is their actual existence, realized as a solid present

fact, which makes us say 'as sure as I exist, those facts were part of myself'. They are the kernel to which the represented parts of the Self are assimilated, accreted, and knit on; and event were Thought entirely unconscious of itself in the act of thinking, these 'warm' parts of its present object would be a firm basis on which the consciousness of personal identity would rest."¹³

Hence, James' nominalistic conclusion: the passing thought is the only thinker', superimposed in some mysterious way on the brain-process. Every cognition is due to one integral pulse of thought. "The reality of such pulses of thought, with their function of knowing . . . (is) simply assumed as the-ultimate kind of fact that the psychologist must admit to exist."¹⁴ In *The Principles* James gives well over a score of slightly diverse descriptions of how the perishing pulse of thought plays the role of cognitive connective tissue. One of these reads: "Each later Thought, knowing and including thus the Thoughts which went before, is the final receptacle — and appropriating them is the final owner — of all that they contain and own. Each Thought is thus born an owner, and dies owned, transmitting whatever it realized its self to its own later proprietor."¹⁵ Picturesque some of these descriptions as may be they, however, hardly help us understand how one pulse of thought cognizes and owns the earlier mental states. Indeed it seems to me as if James has attributed all those qualities and functions to 'thought' which, according to the present thesis, are attributable only to the personal self as the cognitive subject of each mental event. It appears that James is closer to his sensualistic opponents than he realized; he merely replaced the atoms of Hume by his own, so to speak, psychical molecules, which, though presumably having a larger temporal span, remain essentially as external to each other as the elements of the associationist 'bundle theory'. Assuming that the present pulse of the stream is able to exercise all the functions attribu-

ted to the self or ego at any moment, the question arises, How are we to account for its special characteristics, and for the selection made out of the total complex presented at any moment, and thus account for the concrete unity then manifested. The 'passing thought' cannot possibly be made to explain this, for it has no substantial identity with it.

Another typical representative of the first stage in the elimination of the subject is S. Alexander. He can also be said to have believed in the possibility that, like James' theory, mental events may themselves cognize objects and thus do away with a persistent and substantial self. I shall here deal only with that part of Alexander's thought that most concerns the interests of this chapter.

In contrast to dualistic views, Alexander regards mind as, in one sense, identical with an organized structure of physiological and neural processes, there being no purely 'mental' factor over and above these. But in another sense, mind could be looked upon as a new 'emergent' — when neural processes are organized in a certain way, they manifest a new quality; consciousness or awareness. At the basis of nature Alexander set space-time as a continuum of interrelated complexes of notion. It is of the essence of his theory that there is no peculiar relation which can be called the cognitive relation. There is one common relation between all finite parts of space-time, however high or low they may be in the hierarchy of complexes. This is called 'compresence'. Alexander preserves the subject's function of cognizing in his description of the mental events which take over this function as 'cognitive acts'. "There is nothing in the mind but acts."¹⁶ For "the subject in all our experiences is what is called consciousness,"¹⁷ a 'mind' being "the substantial continuum of certain processes which have the conscious quality."¹⁸ Accordingly, in any cognitive event, the mental partner is the act of mind which apprehends the object, an

act continuous with the whole tissue of mental processes which, considered as a whole, is the mind. Both 'act' and 'object' in this partnership are experienced, though in radically different ways. The object is 'contemplated' while the act of cognizing is 'lived through' or 'enjoyed'.

Now by an 'act' of mind in this analysis Alexander makes perfectly clear that he does not mean the special activity which is felt in certain mental processes or acts like desire or endeavour or willing. His description of a process as an act is as applicable to passive acts of sense as to activities of volition. He is claiming, in short, that when one looks inattentively at, e.g., a blue object, one is not only aware of a patch of blue but also 'enjoys' this awareness as being a nature of its own distinct from the nature of the object which it reveals. The object is given in contemplation as a blue object, but the awareness of it is not enjoyed as blue. What then is it enjoyed as? Alexander sometimes speaks vaguely of acts of cognition being enjoyed as 'streaks and shoots of consciousness'. But his actual analysis is much more definite than this. By relating consciousness to its underlying neural basis, he is able to claim that acts of awareness are enjoyed as movements of a literal spatio-temporal character having actual location in an enjoyed or mental space. The arguments by which he arrives at this conclusion may be summarised in the following three propositions.¹⁹ Mental processes, including processes of awareness, are correlated to neural processes which are in the nature of literal movements along paths in the brain. (2) The spatio-temporal coincidence of mental processes and their neural correlates implies that we have to "go beyond the mere correlation of the mental with these neural processes and *identify* them." (3) The fact that there is thus "but one process, which, being of a specific complexity, has the quality of consciousness,"²⁰ may be expressed by saying that mental processes simply are the enjoyment in mental space of the neural

movements that occur in the brain space. His view, in sum, therefore, is that the mind is just the enjoyed brain, and its 'acts' the enjoyment of brain movements.

"Mind is the connected totality of its mental processes, and, therefore, identical with the connected totality of physiological processes of which they are the presence in enjoyment".²¹ The place vacated by the cognizing subject is here taken over by a 'consciousness' which is in no way equatable with the complexity of its variegated 'field' though vaguely correlative to this. The substantial persistent self, in short, no longer needed to account for the unity of a mind, leaves an attenuated relic of itself in each of the latter's individual cognitive events.

Alexander's account as expounded above seems to me to lie open to the following three objections. (1) First of all, it is not borne out by introspection. At any rate it has never seemed to me, on the minutest scrutiny, that, when I am aware of anything, I am aware of this as a movement at a place which may be identified as locally coincident with my head or, therefore, as different in position and direction from the awareness of any other object that I may be aware of at the same time.

(2) In any case the assumption that the neural correlate of a psychical event consists of a perceptible movement along strands of nervous tissue is a highly questionable one. Even if we suppose that the transmission of nervous impulses through nerve fibre is not merely accompanied, but also somehow effected, by a change of electrical potential, this will not give us the experienced or 'enjoyed' movement which Alexander's theory requires.

(3) The theory contradicts one of its own fundamental presuppositions. It presupposes that one and the same

conscious process is related to its neural basis in two ways, both as conditioned by it and as the enjoyment of it. And, while in both characters the underlying neural event is a movement, it is not the same sort of movement in the two cases. For, whereas it must condition consciousness as a physical movement, it is revealed in it as a mental or 'enjoyed' movement. But it is presupposed in Alexander's theory of perception that consciousness can never cause an object to seem different from what it is. Enjoyment, however, is an awareness which radically distorts its 'object' if on the one hand, it is an awareness of brain movements and, on the other hand, an awareness in which these brain movements appear as acts of cognition.

Alexander's philosophy is an impressive system of realistic metaphysics, and it is just possible that I have not understood him sufficiently. His account of 'enjoyment' is admittedly an advance in the elucidation of mind's knowledge of its own workings. I disagree with him and find his analysis inadequate only where he brings mental process and neural process too close, almost to the point of denying them the status of two separate existences. Again, his assertion that there is nothing in the mind but the cognitive acts, it seems to me, does not do full justice to the actual experiencing of the person in cognition. A person undoubtedly knows himself as active mind or self while performing cognitive and conative acts.

In spite of many important differences, James and Alexander can be considered as very similar in maintaining that while conscious states and thoughts exist, there is no subject of those states and acts. Their attempts to exorcise the self or the subject from mental life seems to me utterly misconceived. An apprehending clearly cannot be *that* which apprehends. What is 'known' cannot be known to the operation of cognizing or apprehending. It can only be known

to a subject which, while engaged in the knowing, is not itself identical with the knowing.

Let us now deal with the second and more radical stage in the elimination of the subject. At this stage the subject disappears without leaving any vestigial trace in the form of cognitive acts. The reductive analysis of statements about selves reached this stage, when under the influence of the Occam's razor, certain philosophers came to the conclusion that the alleged elusiveness of a subject-self was simply due to its not being there at all. Where Alexander believed he could dismiss the subject while retaining an activity of 'consciousness', Russell eliminates the acts of consciousness as "unnecessary and fictitious" on the ground that it presupposes a subject for which experience does not vouch. I shall here first briefly mention the views held by Russell prior to the philosophical doctrine known as neutral monism.

Russell began his philosophical career as an idealist, so far as ontological analysis is concerned. By the turn of the century, he became a dualist, contending that mind and matter are ultimate entities. He held this position until 1921 in which year he published his version of neutral monism in *Analysis of Mind* thereby giving up the earlier dualism. The dualistic views find clearest expression in *The Problems of Philosophy*. In the first place, the knowing mind is the self, i.e., that which is aware of things in sensation and of universals in conception; and it is also that which believes, and thinks and desires. The central problem regarding the self, he thinks, is whether we know it by description, that is, do we know it immediately as an object of experience, or by means of a true proposition of the form 'The one and only one thing which is acquainted with certain sense-datum'. Russell acknowledges the difficulty of the problem but holds that we do know the self by acquaintance :

“When I am acquainted with ‘my seeing the sun’, it seems plain that I am acquainted with two different things in relation to each other. On the one hand there is the sense-datum which represents the sun to me, on the other hand there is that which sees this sense-datum We know the truth ‘I am acquainted with this sense datum’. It is hard to see how we could know this truth, or even understand what is meant by it, unless we are acquainted with something which we call ‘I.’”²²

In other writings of that period Russell maintains the same thought as stated above. He finds that, as an empirical truth, the simplest and most pervading aspect of experience is acquaintance. It “. is a dual relation between a subject and an object which need not have any community of nature. The subject is mental, the object is not known to be mental except in introspection.”²³ He further explains at another place: “Before 1918 I still thought that sensation is a fundamentally relational occurrence in which a subject is ‘aware’ of an object. I had used the word ‘awareness’ or ‘acquaintance’ to express this relation of subject and object, and had regarded it as fundamental in the theory of empirical knowledge, but I gradually became doubtful as to this relational character of mental occurrences.”²⁴ It is fairly clear from the above lines that Russell maintained for a considerable time a position quite similar, or at any rate quite favourable, to the present thesis.

Turning now to the views which are of concern for the present discussion, Russell later on maintained that if a sensation were itself a cognition, it would demand the admission of a Subject. For the object cognized would have to be related to a Subject by the sort of relation we call awareness. As the spirit of logical constructionism took increasing hold of Russell, he came to believe that there

was no real warrant for maintaining a subject of awareness. He became convinced that one cannot really find any such constituent of the experience. "The Subject, however, appears to be a logical fiction introduced not because observation reveals it, but because it is linguistically convenient and apparently demanded by grammar".²⁵ If, however, "to avoid a perfectly gratuitous assumption", we dispense with the Subject, it will no longer be possible to distinguish a sensation from the sense-datum, and we shall have to say that the sensation which we have when we see a patch of colour simply is that patch of colour, an actual constituent of the physical world and part of what physics is concerned with. Thus, by the elimination of consciousness, sensation becomes "what is common to the mental and physical worlds and may be defined as the intersection of mind and matter"²⁶ This position is known as neutral monism and Russell develops his version of it as follows. Collections of sensations, as above defined, constitute *objects* at a certain type of 'place' and *minds* at places of another type. Thus my sensation of a star is associated both with the place where I am and with the place where the star is. In so far as it is associated with the latter place, my sensation forms part of the collection of what common-sense would call 'appearances of the same star from different places' which, according to Russell, collectively constitute the star. But, in so far as it is associated with the former place, my sensation forms part of the collection of what common-sense would call 'appearances of different objects from the same place', such a place having the characteristic of 'subjectivity in the point of view', which, however, is "not a distinctive peculiarity of mind" because the dualism of the two places "exist in exactly the same sense if I am replaced by a photographic plate".²⁷ The places which objects appear to occupy he calls 'active places' and the places from which the objects appear, whether to percipients or photographic plates, 'passive places'. Collections of sensations constitute minds

at 'passive places where there are brains'. Following the lead of William James who had called the neutral stuff pure experience, Russell introduced the term 'sensibilia' and argued that mind and matter were logical constructions out of sensibilia.

Now according to the view expressed at the beginning of this chapter, there is something lacking in the Russellian analysis. As I pointed out, we naturally report the occurrence of sense-experiences by saying that 'I am hearing, or seeing or touching something'. This clearly shows that there is a subject to whom what is seen or heard or touched is presented. Our invariable mode of expression strongly suggests that we experience our sensations as standing in an asymmetrical relation to a subjective referent for which we are using 'I' as a designation. It seems to me that Russell makes no provision for this fact in his analysis of the collections of sensations which constitute a mind. There is no subjective referent at his 'passive place where there is a brain'. He might reply that he retains the 'I' in the form of the whole collection of interrelated 'appearances' at that place. But then he obviously glosses over the fact that I habitually refer any *one* such appearance to myself as something, which I am seeing or hearing or touching. Again, to suggest that the conscious experience of a percipient is identical with the reflection of a photographic plate is not only paradoxical but also plainly absurd. Neutral monistic theories are beset with grave difficulties; in fact no variety of it has yet withstood criticism. First there is the problem of neutral entities themselves. Discussions of them are very obscure. These neutral entities must be capable of being both elements of my mind and elements of objects outside my mind at the same time. How could anything be that neutral? But even if it were possible to give a clear account of these neutral things, there would still be the problem of establishing the conditions for their being elements of one and the

same physical object. Much ingenuity has gone into this endeavour, but no account has yet succeeded. Russell himself is not to be considered a consistent neutral monist insofar as he believed at least images to be purely psychical and mental entities and not neutral. Moreover, when Russell abandoned his earlier view that the self or ego is a particular and accepted neutral monism, he had to admit that two persons might conceivably have exactly similar psychological histories, and that is tantamount to admitting that a 'collection' or 'bundle' theory does not provide an adequate way of identifying or characterizing the individual selves.

I shall now move on to a discussion of theories which try, unsuccessfully as I shall maintain, to assign the role of a subject-self to somatic feelings that are supposed to be contemporaneously going on with cognitive acts such as the perceptual event of seeing a table, a book etc.

5.3 SOMATIC-FIELD THEORIES

Some philosophers have made attempts at explaining away the subject in the knowledge-process, and tried to expound models of theories in which the role of the self as the subject of sensing or awareness is instead assigned to bodily feelings or something equivalent to these. Since the notion of a somatic or sense field or a variant of this is integral to these views, they can generally be referred to as the 'somatic-field theories'. As far as I know, at least half a dozen philosophers amongst the recent analytical writers have explicitly maintained and elaborately expounded this type of theories.²⁸

I shall start off by stating C.D. Broad's position regarding the subjective factor, that is, the role of the self in perceptual situation. He rejects the self as a perceiving subject and holds the view that "getting sensed" may just mean "coming into such relations with the somatic sense history to form

with it a general sense history" Broad explains: "On this view a sensation of a red patch would be a red sensum, so related to a somatic field that they form together a general field in a certain sense-history. A contemporary auditory sensation would consist of a noise-sensum, related in the same kind of way to the same somatic field. The somatic field itself would consist of feelings or presentations, which are not objects of acts of sensing, but are unanalysable mental states. It will thus form the subjective factor in all true sensations".²⁹ A sensum is thought to be a differentiated part of a bigger and a more enduring whole, viz., of a sense-field which is itself a mere cross-section of a sense-history. In *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* Broad further elaborates the view hinted at in the above quotation from his earlier book. Here he reiterates the relational characteristic of sensing or intuitive apprehension, i.e., that it consists in the establishment of a certain asymmetrical relation R between the sensum and something else. He also makes a clear distinction between 'to be apprehended' and 'to belong to a sense-field'. He insists that there is a difference between the two propositions: 'This is a round patch in a visual field', and 'This round patch is apprehended by so and so'. A sensum which is part of a sense-field which is not apprehended would not itself be apprehended. Here he apparently comes very close to the acceptance of an apprehender, the subject of awareness. But unfortunately Broad falls victim to the position often adopted by the serialist — that is, he tries to explain 'apprehended by so and so' in a relational way, through the union of a datum with certain other data by a certain relation R. R, he thinks, might be a quite unique relation, incapable of further analysis. But he himself observes that the moment we attempt to identify R with some familiar relation, such as compresence in a sense-field or a direct relation of simultaneity, it becomes plainly false on account of the fact that it is logically possible that a set of sensa should be directly simultaneous with each other and

yet none of them is apprehended. On the other hand, if the relation R is taken as unanalysable and indefinable, as the most serialists do, it surely becomes as metaphysical as the self as the apprehending subject. Broad, realizing the grave difficulty in keeping the self out of the arena of epistemology, makes a very desperate move and says that the subjective factor ". . . . might be, and I believe is, a mass of bodily feeling".³⁰ He explains, ". . . . when a visual, tactual or auditory sensum is apprehended it stands in a unique kind of relation to something which is not an auditory, tactual or visual sensation. And I believe this 'something' to be the mass of general bodily feeling of the percipient at the time".³¹

Now I move on to an exposition of the views of Ian Gallie and J.R.Jones regarding the analysis of the subject of sensation and other experiences.

Gallie agrees with the upholder of 'mental acts' that the statement that a sense-datum is sensed by *me* as Q says more than is said by 'The sense-datum is characterized by Q', but he is not prepared to admit its logical corollary: a subject and its acts to perform the process of sensing. For what is expressed by 'is sensed by me' may consist, he claims, in a relation between the given sense-datum and certain other parts of the collection of sensations at some part of the body, presumably the brain.

To avoid an irreducibly mental notion as the subjective referent of sensation, Gallie resorts, it seems to me, to be a very dubious procedure. He undertakes to show that the relations which relate mental events together in the 'state of affairs known as experiences' do not differ essentially from the relations of physical facts, viz., some determinate form of spatio-temporal relation. Briefly summarized his argument is as follows. He takes "the spatio-temporal compresence of

one's somatic sense-data within a single field" as a primary datum, and describes the 'somatic field' thus constituted as "a voluminous spatial whole, extended in three dimensions which has, in normal circumstances, a continuous outer surface which can be said to be coincident with the surface of one's skin and an internal though discontinuous filling. On occasion particular areas on the surface are pervaded, or volumes inside are filled, by specific qualities which stand out from the undifferentiated background".³² Now Gallie suggests that when I say that I am experiencing a certain somatic sensation, for instance, that I am having a pain in my arm, the fact I am recording is "simply the fact that some region of this somatic field is pervaded or occupied by a certain sensible quality".³³ And so he thinks that the common sense notion of a sensation being experienced by a subject "reduces to the notion of the spatio-temporal inclusion of a somatic sense-datum within a somatic field".³⁴

My visual, auditory and other outer sensations are not, of course, spatially included in my somatic field. But these too, Gallie maintains, can be shown to have an indirect spatio-temporal relation to this field. Thus the coloured patch I am seeing is directly included in a visual field and "there is clearly some sense in which parts of this visual field and parts of the contemporary somatic field are spatially related".³⁵ This situation will differ for situations in which the coloured patch and parts of my own body are simultaneously perceived and for those in which the former alone appears. In the former case, data of minimal depth in my visual field, viz., what I take to be manifestations of certain parts of my own body, will be coincident with parts of the outer surface of the voluminous mass which is my somatic field. He thinks there is clearly some sense in which, if I am seeing my arm and my arm is itching, a 'visual and a somatic sense-quality are spatially compresent'. In the more unusual case in which I do not perceive any part of my

own body, it will still be true that my present visual field is spatially and temporally continuous with a 'a possible or obtainable visual field' (viz., the field I would obtain if parts of my own body were brought into view) which would, if actualized, be coincident at its extreme front, in the manner explained, with parts of the surface of my somatic field. Gallie's thesis is, then, "that the statement 'I am now seeing a red patch' simply records that 'This somatic field is spatially continuous, in one of the above senses, with a contemporary visual field, which is pervaded in some part by a certain shade of red'."³⁶

In Gallie's theory, the expression 'this somatic field' and 'my somatic field' are synonymous: in relating a visual datum to myself as something which is experienced 'by me' I am relating it to a certain field of somatic sense-data which I designate as '*this* somatic field', using 'this' as a logically proper name. To sum up, what Gallie is maintaining is the view that :

- (a) an event in a certain somatic sense-history, namely, a certain somatic sense-field, will be contemporaneous with an event in, for example, a visual sense-history with which the somatic sense-history is spatio-temporally continuous;
- (b) the latter event is the visual field in which a given coloured patch occurs, and
- (c) that the former event is the subjective referent, contemporaneous with the coloured patch, to which I relate the latter when I say that I am seeing it.

Thus 'I' or the self in the analysis of 'I see' stands for an event contemporaneous with the event of seeing. As

such it may act as the centre to which this and other contemporaneous events which are differentiations of the same total mental state are related. A similar theory has been maintained by Jones which I shall mention now briefly.

J. R. Jones' theory can roughly be described as the 'fact of presentedness' or 'fact of appearing' theory. Though basically of the same sort as Gallie's, it is more radically misguided insofar as it questions the basic truism of epistemological framework. It was taken for granted by a large majority of philosophers, justifiably I believe, that the awareness of sensory experience involves the relation of 'presentation' to something else, i.e., some sensum is presented to, or cognized by, something else commonly believed to be a subjective referent for which we use 'I' as a designation. Now Jones repudiates this relational character of sensory presentation and maintains, "I find no logical impossibility in the notion that what we assume to be a relation which relates content to something else actually reduces to a *fact about content*. The fact which I mean is not strictly describable. I can only direct the reader's attention to it by the use of such metaphorical expressions as that content appears, comes to light or is presented or 'revealed' ".³⁷ Jones thinks that Gallie's theory, in maintaining the concept of a sense-field, only partly eliminates consciousness as the persistent subject to which the sense-contents are presented. It is therefore not neutralist to the extent that he wants to see it. He complains that occurring in a sense-field on Gallie's view will be distinctively and irreducibly mental because it is impossible that relation to an unsensed somatic field should give the sensed contents of, say a visual field, the added characteristic of being 'sensed by me'. Since he holds that a visual sense datum is sensed *by me* in so far as it occurs in a visual field that is spatially continuous with a certain somatic field, he must be assuming that the datum is sensed, in the first place, by direct inclusion in the visual field. For,

if he supposed that a datum owed to the spatial continuity of its field with a certain somatic field the bare fact of being sensed, and not merely its involvement in a relation which enables it to be described as sensed *by me*, he would have no right to assume that the contents of the somatic field are sensed at all. Jones is dissatisfied with Gallie's analysis and asserts that 'occurring in a sense-field' implies nothing but that a datum 'appears', or 'comes to light'. He writes:

"The analysis which I accept may be expressed in the following three propositions. (1) What that happens to a visual sensible which I call its 'coming to light' and Mr. Gallie its inclusion in a visual field, the visual sense history in which this presentation occurs, or of which this visual field is a cross section, will be spatio-temporally continuous with a certain somatic sense history. (2) A certain somatic field, which is a cross section of this somatic sense-history, will be contemporaneous with the event described by me as the 'appearing' in the associated visual sense-history of a certain sensible, and by Mr. Gallie as the inclusion of a certain sense-datum in a visual field. (3) The somatic field in question is the subjective referent to which the visual datum is related when its occurrence is reported in the sentence 'I am seeing such and such a coloured patch'."³⁸

What Jones does, in effect, is that he accepts a more neutralist Russellian version of sensations and replaces the 'datum' of Gallie by 'sensibilia' which are supposed to be more neutral and common between physical and mental events. He maintains the rest of the paraphernalia of somatic-field theories, contending that the statement 'I am seeing a red patch' is replaceable without loss of meaning by the statement that part of a visual field which is spatially con-

tinuous with 'this' somatic field is pervaded by a certain shade of red. I shall now proceed to make a detailed critical review of these theories.

5.4 CRITICISMS OF THE SOMATIC-FIELD THEORIES

Somatic field theories, as expounded in the above section, have been put forward as an alternative to the view that there is a subject of awareness, a view the exponents of them regard as too metaphysical. While rejecting the subject, these theories hold that there is such a thing as awareness and that things can be said to be objects of awareness. What they have done is to analyse the notion of 'being an object of awareness' into the notion 'occurring in a somatic field' and in this way, it is thought, dispense with the need for positing the existence of an unverifiable subject. A person or a self is reduced to a somatic field, i.e., he *is* his somatic field in a sense in which he is not, but only has, his other sense-field.

My fundamental difficulty with these theories is that the notion of a somatic field is a highly problematic one. It seems to me that much more weight is put on it than it can possibly bear. It is not made very explicit how, if a somatic field or the sense history (Broad's usage) is not itself apprehended or owned by a subject, can it take the place of a subject of awareness. Broad, indeed, of all is more frank in this respect and goes on to say: "Of course, later on, questions must be raised about the ownership of this mass of feeling; and then we might find that the Ego theory explained the facts better than any other".³⁹

This admission affirms the fact that the proposed analyses of the Subject in terms of somatic field or a mass of feelings cannot generate the sense of personal awareness of contents unless they themselves are owned or appropriated by an ultimate subject. Something which is itself an experien-

ced content, and not just the fact that it 'appears' or 'comes to light', is reported in personal statements like 'I feel or see such and such a thing'. I shall now try to show how these theories lead to absurd conclusions.

Let us first take the analysis of the class of sentences which report the occurrence of somatic sensations. In these sentences too the sensum is described as sensed by something called 'I', and, if in saying that I am seeing a red patch I am really relating the red patch to my somatic field, the question immediately arises: To what am I relating my somatic sensation when I say, for example, that I have a pain in my arm? The exponents of the theories under review reply that the subjective referent to which I am referring the pain in my arm is the vague totality of my somatic experiences. In other words, the notion of bodily sensation being 'sensed by me' is reduced to the notion of its direct spatial inclusion in my somatic field. But this clearly implies that my somatic field as a whole cannot have the character, which parts of it may have, of appearing as if sensed by me. For anything that is 'sensed by me' is related to me and, as such, is a distinct existent from myself. It is impossible, therefore, that that should be sensed by me what is meant by 'myself'.

Secondly, the expressions 'this somatic field' and 'my somatic field' are, according to these theories, synonymous, and the statement 'This somatic field is my somatic field' is a tautology. But the expressions 'this visual field' and 'my visual field' are not synonymous, and the statement 'This visual field is my visual field' is translated as that the visual field referred to stands in some sort of spatio-temporal contiguity to the somatic field that the speaker refers to as 'this somatic field'. Now this is plainly ridiculous. The notion of 'this', a logically proper name, is an expression that can be significantly used to refer to something only if the speaker is acquainted with, or directly aware of, that

thing. So if I use the word 'this' as the logically proper name of a sense field, I am directly aware of the sense field. But these theories propose to analyse the notion of being an object of awareness into the notion of being included within a sense field. Therefore if I am aware of a sense field, it must be included within a sense field, perhaps some sense field other than itself. But the sense field in which it is included would have to be a sense field of mine (since it is I that am aware of the sense field included in it), and therefore a sense field that I can designate 'this somatic field'. So I would have to be aware of it as well, which means that it would have to be included in still another sense-field. And so on *ad infinitum*. Sydney Shoemaker, referring to this criticism in his detailed critical survey of these theories, writes: "If 'this' is used as a logically proper name to refer to sense fields, it can refer to a sense field only if the speaker is 'acquainted with' that sense field. Presumably, however, a person cannot be acquainted with a sense field that is not his *own* sense field. So the statement 'This visual field is my visual field' must be as much a tautology as the statement 'This somatic field is my somatic field'."⁴⁰ This point clearly brings out the misguided character of these theories.

Again, the theories fare very badly in the case of sensations which one sometimes feels in amputated limbs. The important point here is that it makes no sense to speak of the boundaries of a sense field. Gallie, on the other hand, claims that a person's somatic sense field has a boundary, an "outer surface", which is in normal circumstances coincident with the surface of the person's skin. Now surely a person, who reports a pain sensation in the amputated limb, will locate the pain outside his body. Gallie holds that in such cases one's somatic sense field extends beyond the area enclosed by one's skin; in such a case the circumstances are no longer "normal circumstances". This improvisation betrays the weakness of his theory. If a person did feel a pain in

a phantom limb, common as this occurrence is, this would not show that the pain was not felt by him, rather it would show that his somatic field extends beyond the area enclosed by his skin. It follows, therefore that I cannot locate the boundary of my somatic field and then observe that something lies within it. There is no point at all in the assertion that I can establish empirically that the boundaries of my somatic field exclude a certain area.

There is another point worth mentioning. Serialists like Gallie and Jones and others reject the subject of awareness on the ground that it is not empirically given i.e., it is not verifiable. But, paradoxical though it may sound, the sense field in terms of which they undertake to explain the cognitive situation, is in no sense observable either. By analysing awareness of sense-contents into occurrence in, or inclusion within, a sense field, the exponents of these theories do not succeed in making the fact verbalized in a statement like 'I see a red patch' any more empirically accessible than does the view that awareness consists in a two-term relationship between an object of awareness and a subject. Indeed I shall later on maintain in another chapter of this book that the serialist's contention regarding the non-observability of self is completely unfounded and mistaken, and hence there is nothing metaphysically mysterious involved in its acceptance.

Moreover, the argument of these theories is much strained in so far as they necessitate the continued existence of bodily feelings and sensations. For in case they were intermittent, an experience that occurs during a time at which the somatic field was empty of sensations, would remain subjectless. But that clearly is impossible. C.O. Evans also recognized this point when he observed: 'The theory rests entirely on the questionable empirical premise that some bodily sensation is contemporaneous with every experience'.⁴¹

Finally, there are clearly two quite easily distinguished ways in which *sensa* may come into the required relations to somatic histories. The one case is that in which the initiative comes from the somatic core, that is the case in which some act of 'adjustment' in this core facilitates the process of coming into relation. This is an act in the ordinary sense of the word and it is an act of the self. The other is the case in which the *sensum* obtrudes itself without obvious cooperation on the part of the observer. Philosophers who repudiate the self and self-activity allege that if this be an act it appears as an act on the part of the obtrusive *sensum*, and as an act of the observer only in the extended sense in which mere acceptance of the unavoidable can be described as an act. While there is some truth in the latter contention, it is difficult to see how the affirmation of the self can be escaped in the first case. I shall develop arguments for this in the next section. In brief I shall maintain that acts of awareness are sensibly present not as cerebral or somatic adjustments but as acts of the self; and these are the most characteristically 'mental' occurrences in our experiences, implying a cognizing subject.

5.5 THE COGNIZING SUBJECT

In the preceding sections of this chapter I have laboured through a critical appraisal of the theories which have been advanced to explain how the process of sensory cognition can be achieved within an essentially Humean or associationist framework. All these attempts can be characterized, not very misleadingly I believe, as 'naturalistic', for the method or procedure in all these views is based throughout on the assumption that there is no spiritual or mental existent i.e., the self or soul, that is required for the activity of cognizing. It is the uncritical and dogmatic adherence to the naturalistic standpoint that has led a good many recent philosophers to reject the essential subjectivity pertaining to all sorts of

mental phenomena. The subjectivity and agency is felt by the experiencing subject in having any thought, sensory awareness, or willing of a movement or action. The naturalistic standpoint is bound to be inadequate to the study of that which is something not merely for an external observer but also for itself. The theories considered above, on the other hand, treat mental events of sensory cognition etc., as very much like physical items which they can juxtapose to generate a sense of unity and subjecthood. Indeed this approach has led only to grave distortion and travesty of the whole matter. It seems to me that the naturalistic approach to the study of mind, abstracting completely from the standpoint of the experiencing subject, is in principle incapable of revealing to us the nature of mental experience as it really is. The simple truth is that an appeal to one's own experience is the only method adopted profitably in dealing with this phenomenon.

In the introductory section of this chapter I observed that a serious fault is involved in the way the serialists and the like-minded philosophers conceive their whole enterprise. The individual mental events themselves are taken as unanalysed, with the result that no notice is taken of a felt complexity in the structure of every single mental event or state, which justifies a belief in the common owner or subject of experiences. When an appeal is made to the direct experience of the reporter of a sensory awareness, say, seeing a butterfly sitting on the flower, the self as the experiencing subject is experienced along with the sense content. The self is, so to say, a subjective referent to which the sensum or the mental state of sensing is presented. From this point of view, the serialist's attempt to resolve the self in some inter-related set of particular states and events is fundamentally wrong and mistaken. Common human experience is clearly found to imply a unitary and relatively enduring subject, a being not reducible to experiences, but manifesting itself in experiences as their owner or subject.

The self is an empirical reality, and our explanation of it must have an empirical basis.⁴² The talk of cognitive events such as awareness of a table, a tree, etc., is meaningless, a mere empty talk denoting nonentity, unless it be an elliptical expression for 'awareness of something by something'. Once mental events of various sorts are admitted to be unique items irreducibly distinct from bodily events, it becomes an almost analytical proposition to assert: every mental event involves or implies a subject. The reality of the subject has been hushed up by philosophers who either give a serialist account of it, or analyse a cognitive situation into object and act of awareness, but shyly refrain from admitting that acts involve subjects and are not themselves subjects. Whenever there is an occurrence of a conscious state, be it a passing sensation like e.g. a somatic feeling, or a more complex state of cognizing a state of affairs, that experience involves an experient i.e. a cognizing subject or the self. A subjectless experience is a complete misnomer: not only a contradiction in meaning, but also a contradiction in terms. If 'the thoughts are the thinkers' (James and Alexander), then it is but to say they are subjects, because within a thought itself there is a duality of subject and object. Similarly when it is asserted that an object 'appears' or 'content is presented', the existence of the subject, as distinct from what appears to it or is presented to it, is incapable of gainsaying. Regarded as an unowned mental fact, an event or sense content is an abstraction; it does not exist independently. Always coupled with the self or experiencing subject the moment it occurs, it is a part of a psychic whole or gestalt. The self is not only empirically given in immediate experience, it is also a logical necessity insofar as it is inconceivable that mental occurrences or states could exist in themselves. Surely, the 'stream of consciousness' or any other notions of undifferentiated pure experience or feeling do not reflect the facts truly and adequately. Although the distinction between subject and object may not always be explicit, as is probably the case

in faint and peripheral sensations or dim and vague impressions, it nevertheless always exists. F.R. Tennant expressed an identical view very forcefully in these words: "'Consciousness' is an abstract noun; and it is always well to translate abstract propositions into concrete form, before assuming them to be significant. When the abstraction is hypostatized, it does but reaffirm, while it superficially conceals, the concrete conscious subject which it is often used to suppress. To say 'consciousness feels', is simply to speak untruth. It follows that expressions such as 'conscious states', as used by writers to whom the concept of subject is obnoxious, are strictly nonsensical; and that unless by 'content of consciousness' we denote an object apprehended by a subject, the phrase means nothing."⁴³

The series of impressions or events is not a row of conscious states in the abstract, but of definitely qualified acts of a subject, each with a filling of its own. The activity of the self, in other words, is the converse of the presentation of object or sense content. The conception of object-for-subject is a conception found in our experience, the two terms forming the correlative elements which we analyse out of given experiential wholes. And every conception we have of our knowledge, perception, beliefs etc., being formed on this basis, it is clear that the two conceptions viz., the subject and object, are implicitly contained even when not clearly expressed.

The reduction of the cognizing subject or self to a somatic field is equally misguided for the reasons above explained. Let us assume for the sake of argument that certain somatic experiences are in some special sense mine, and the various images that attend a process of thinking. Many of these images may, for all practical purposes, be treated as somatic sensations for they are pretty well indistinguishable from them, or at any rate, so like them, that

they are sensational, namely, the images in our tongue and lips in connection with imaging words. Now it may look plausible to assert that it is these themselves that are active in the thinking of a problem. They change and disappear and the activity or agency of thinking may be said to belong to them. But is that really true?

Let us look at the matter more closely and examine the somatic sensations and images themselves. When, in thinking, we concentrate our attention on any question, there are muscular sensations in our eyes, what we call a feeling of strain, there are clearly inspectable images of speech on our tongue, and, in some cases, all sorts of muscular and kinaesthetic images in various parts of our body, and a sense of something going on in our head. There are also sensations within the ear, I do not mean auditory sensations, but a kind of tingling. Generally, there is a feeling of strain and change going on in the sensations in the eye, ear and head, with a strong kinaesthetic imagery in other parts of the body. On closer inspection I find that when my thought is progressing, there is an easy feeling of movement in the sensations from the eye, and when it is not a sense of resistance of the movement from what I should normally term the inside of my head. One is tempted to say that these sensations and images are fighting it out among themselves. But the more the matter is considered, the more it is discovered that this is not the case, that there is something in addition, central and clearly felt, a 'felt me', which so far as I can discover is not resolvable into any sensations or images, organic, muscular or otherwise, but something that seems to be partly mixed up in them, and sometimes very definitely changing their course. In this latter connection, it is perfectly easy to verify the definite switch, for example, which this 'felt me' directs, when we switch from introspecting the series of sensations and images and turn to consider the problem at hand. Sometimes I deliberately put aside irrele-

vant associates which appear and distract me from the main topic under consideration and sometimes, in thinking about possible alternative lines of direction I deliberately choose one because it appears to be more hopeful. There is no denying the fact that various cognitive processes are accompanied by, or experienced as, strenuous bodily efforts. But closer attention to the matter will surely make us hesitant with regard to the philosophical interpretation of the whole matter. Clearly what ought to be said is that I experience my body striving when I think hard or perceive different situations. It would be foolish and misleading to identify the experiencing subject or 'I' with the somatic sensations.⁴⁴

Present-day positivistically inclined philosophers have generally aimed at getting rid of metaphysics on the ground of economy and elegance; but parsimony has its dangers as well as extravagance, and, on the matter of both self and mental activity, they have been parsimonious to an entirely unwarranted extent if we are to be fair to the facts. Philosophers who think about the mind and its nature generally find themselves doing three things: they introspect, analyse and consider the nature of knowledge as such. Frequently, however, what they say they discover on introspection is biased by what they expect to discover on analysis or by their prepossessions about the nature of mind and knowledge. But, I venture to think, it is not difficult to get counter-checks of our introspection. When, for example, Russell insists that in sensing red there is just the red,⁴⁵ we might consider that we can check this statement or counter it by saying that there could have been red without anyone being aware of it and that in sensing somebody is certainly aware of it, so that sensing red is definitely more than 'just the red'. Now Russell and his followers can retort that this is simply a bias about knowledge. But is there really a point in their allegation?

The situation as it stands is that a philosopher who agrees with my own position saying that he intuits the self and his activity is charged of being humbugged by pre-conceived views. But I am sure there is a check, the check of the uninitiated and the a-philosophical (if that term can be permitted). Professor C.A. Campbell, among a host of eminent philosophers, has made a remarkably convincing and impressive case for the reality of the substantial self and its activity. He bases his analysis of the problem on a paragraph that can be regarded as an excellent piece of phenomenological description of a typical cognitive situation. The paragraph reads:

“Let us suppose ourselves to be lying out on the open hillside on a fine summer day, completely absorbed in our private thoughts. All sorts of sights and sounds and smells assail our sense, but they ‘mean nothing’ to us. So far as awareness of our physical surroundings is concerned, we might as well be sitting before our study fire. Suddenly something occurs to arouse us abruptly from our reverie — perhaps the scream of a low-flying jet. We ‘come back to life’ (as the saying is) and begin to notice what is before us and about us. What we were previously looking at, but without awareness, now ‘registers’ in our conscious mind. It has now, in sharp contrast with a moment ago, what it is natural to call a meaning for us.

I take it that everyone will allow that we have here a case in which the mind passes from a non-cognitive to a cognitive state with respect to our physical environment.”⁴⁶

Campbell argues that unless and until experience involves apprehension or judgment of something as characterizing the cognized object, it cannot have the status of cognition.

The element of affirmation or acceptance proper to the judgment (that S is P) is easily detectable in all cognitive awareness. Philosophers like Hume and Russell, who repudiate the active role of mind in knowledge, assert on the contrary that in knowing we simply receive or accept what is sensibly given. In so maintaining, they often want to explain cognition in terms of feelings or images and the like.⁴⁷ But I am at a loss to guess what sort of entity can a 'felt experience' be if it is not a cognized experience. On reflection it appears that even 'acceptance' is not as passive as the empiricists think it to be. It is not different in principle from affirmation in which the registering of the data is clearly experienced. Mental acceptance differs from mental affirmation only in that in the former the consciousness of affirmation is relatively inexplicit. Thus, people talk of 'feeling pleased' 'feeling surprised' or 'I felt dreadful' and so on. It seems to me perfectly clear here that when they say they 'feel pleased' or 'feel miserable', they mean that they are conscious of their pleasure and misery. It is a cognizing of their pleasure and their misery which they are stressing. Nobody in fact could even say that he 'feels pleased' unless he cognized this. It might be replied that what is expressed is 'that a pleasure is felt', and that this expression includes nothing about cognizing. I agree that it does not explicitly, but what I should urge is that in these statements the cognizing is included in the use of the word 'I', that in statements of the sort 'I feel pleased' the word 'I' stands for that which is cognizing, and that what is implicit in the assertion is that, in this case, the cognizing 'I' is also the affected 'I'. In all mental states, we have direct insight into the nature of that state, and, further, that the state of, for example, 'feeling miserable' entails somebody's being conscious or cognizing of it.

I, for one, am sure that the above account of cognition and mental occurrences, described graphically by Campbell, would not be rejected by a philosopher provided he has no

a priori presumptions about the matter. It rightly places emphasis upon the activity aspect of awareness, and thus emphasizing the activity aspect it at the same time draws attention to something which becomes obscure in serialist accounts of mental life, namely, that there can be no cognition apart from a cognizing subject.

I am well aware that the predominant trend in today's philosophical scene is strictly against the view I am maintaining of mental acts and occurrences experienced by the subject. Russell, as I noted above, held that mental acts are not empirically discoverable. Similarly Ryle and all his acolytes who are most prominent in current writings on the subject, contend that there are no 'occult' episodes or occurrences involved in mental-conduct concepts. On closer examination however it comes out that they have completely divorced their theories from the actual facts. To cite a factual statement from Myer's *Text-Book of Experimental Psychology*, Part I, p. 327: "There is general agreement that in addition to the object thought of, in addition to feelings, there is a specific act of thinking, which is totally devoid of sensory content," and, again, p. 329: "Usually there is no difficulty in separating the 'content' of thought from the 'act' of thinking."⁴⁸

There is no dearth of contrary philosophical opinions too. Ewing, for example, has made penetrating and illuminating analyses of different cognitive processes including believing, imagining, etc., and has affirmed the reality of mental acts. Especially in knowing and thinking, he holds, the presence of mental acts is unmistakable. He writes: "There are . . . some psychological terms which do seem to stand, at least sometimes, for mental acts. Thus the word 'see' in the non-physical sense of 'see' stands for a definite experience which would seem to be detectable introspectively when we say after a period of puzzlement 'Ah, this is clear

to me now'. Whether this experience is best described as an act is another question, but there does seem to be a definite experience which we can get hold of these."⁴⁹ The reduction of knowing or thinking to beliefs or images is patently false. The mere fact that imagery can only be used as meaning something, and that this something in very many cases cannot itself be translated in terms of imagery should be sufficient to show that we must admit over and above the images mental acts or process involving the apprehension of what is itself not an image but the meaning of an image. Likewise beliefs require not merely imagery but assent to what is conveyed by the imagery, that is, conscious acceptance or appropriation of the meaning of the images involved.

Since the argument of this chapter for the reality of subject or self is based on mental occurrences and acts, it seems appropriate here to relate it with Ryle's rejection of them. My main contention about him is that he always, by adding qualifications generally in the form of adverbs, reinstates surreptitiously what he sets out to renounce. It is only when facts are overlooked completely, and dogmatic adherence to 'one-world' theory is upheld at all costs, that he can make a show of success in rejecting the mental acts and occurrences. For example, in his account of the thought in the speaker's mind, the thought is contended to be indistinguishable from the expression itself. It may be a covert rather than an overt expressing. But that, for Ryle, makes no difference, since silent speech is in principle, if not in practice, publicly observable just as audible speech is. "The thought is . . . just a soliloquized or muttered rehearsal of overt statement itself."⁵⁰ But then he immediately afterwards adds that in order to express oneself significantly, one must utter them 'in a certain frame of mind' viz., 'on purpose, with a method, carefully, seriously, and on the *qui vive*'.⁵¹ Do not all of these adverbial qualifications get their meaning from the very occurrences or acts they are

supposed to be helping to define? It must be admitted that these adverbial qualifications cannot possibly be understood as denoting publicly observable features of behaviour. Far from it. They are inner events or acts involved in the thinking of the person.

This back-door readmission is also manifest in Ryle's treatment of the so-called 'heed concepts', namely, 'noticing', 'taking care', 'concentrating', 'attending', and the like. It is difficult to see how they can be reconciled with the theory that there is nothing going on in the 'mind' of the agent save externally observable and publicly cashable happenings. They set a problem for the 'one-world' theory as he himself puts it, "When a man is described as driving carefully, whistling with concentration or eating absent-mindedly, the special character of this activity seems to elude the observer, the camera, and the dictaphone."⁵² He goes on to acknowledge that we seem "forced to say either that it is some hidden concomitant of the operation to which it is ascribed, or that it is some merely dispositional property of the agent."⁵³ But Ryle is very much aware of the trouble inherent in any dispositional interpretation, as he himself observes "... to accept the dispositional account would apparently involve us in saying that though a person may properly be described as whistling now, he cannot be properly described as concentrating or taking care now; and we know quite well that such descriptions are legitimate."⁵⁴ The matter is clinched conclusively by another paragraph:

'To say that someone has done something, paying some heed to what he was doing, is not only to say that he was, e.g., ready for any of a variety of associated tasks and tests which might have cropped up but perhaps did not; it is also to say that he was ready for the task with which he actually coped. He was in the mood

or frame of mind to do, if required, lots of things which we may not have been actually required; and he was, *ipso facto* in the mood or frame of mind to do at least this one thing which was actually required.'⁵⁵

The description 'ready for the task with which he actually coped' clearly shows that heed concepts seem to have something episodic and occurrent not covered by the 'straight' dispositional analysis. The crucial point here lies in the mention of phrases like 'readiness' or 'proper frame of mind' which determine the heedful act itself. There are, admittedly, certain observable physical concomitants or signs associated closely with minding, caring, concentrating etc., But Ryle himself agrees that these do not constitute what we mean by the heed-terms. As he puts it, "Perhaps knitted brows, taciturnity and fixity of gaze may be evidence of intentness; but these can be simulated, or they can be purely habitual."⁵⁶

The only conclusion that can be drawn from the above lines is that Ryle cannot carry out his programme consistently, as he has to leave some reports of mental acts standing without offering any analysis of them into hypothetical or semi-hypothetical statements about overt behaviour. The mental acts in question are referred to throughout in a highly depreciatory style, as 'itches', 'tingles', 'agitations' etc., but this rhetoric trick proves nothing. Heedful activities inevitably imply mental occurrences or states of attention on the part of the subject.⁵⁷

I shall conclude this chapter by suggesting that the substantival-subject view of the self argued for in this section helps us out of many problems that attend all serialist conceptions of self and cognition. Ayer's position provides a good example of these. In *Language, Truth and Logic*, he rejects the 'substantial' self on the ground that it is analyzable into a number of sense-experiences in the sense that to say

anything about the self is always to say something about sense experiences. This, however, brings up the difficulty constituted by Ayer's denial that the sense-experiences which constitute the self are in any sense part of it. But, then what is the relation between sense-experiences and the self? Ayer apparently is unable to get out of this quandary. Indeed at one point in his account the notion of the self as a single, unifying agent creeps back unnoticed. Thus we are told that "all sense-experiences and the sense-contents which form part of them, are private to a single self."⁵⁸ If the self is a construction out of sense-experiences, it follows that some sense-contents, namely, those which form part of the set of sense-experiences which "are private to a single self" belong to that set and to no other set. Assuming that the word 'belong' here means 'are elements of', how is Ayer going to account for the assertion that a sense-content may be an element of more than one object or biography? And why should those sense-contents which form part of the particular set of sense-experiences which 'are private to a single self' be distinguished from others by reason of the fact that they can belong to *one* object, the self, and one only? The answer, in the light of the foregoing discussion, can only be that they are so distinguished because they are related in a particular way, viz., which is described by saying that they belong to a self, the sense in which the self can be said to *have* or *cognize* each experience or sense-content. And this is precisely the way in which Ayer does think is indicated by such phrases as "the activity of theorizing is a creative activity", and "scientific laws are often discovered through a process of intuition"⁵⁹ etc. What, it may be asked, does create and intuit? A set of sense-contents? Obviously not. It is obvious that these expressions of Ayer's presuppose the notion of a substantial self which has experiences, which intuits and is active.

I shall now turn to a particular type of mental events viz., memory-experiences and recollection, and try to argue

that memory is only explicable on a substantival, perisistent particular view of self, and not on the serialist or bundle-view.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Serialists usually invoke 'memory-relations' to explain the continued identity or unity of the mind. In the next chapter I shall argue that memory experience itself remains inexplicable on strictly serialist positions.
2. B. Russell, *The Analysis of Mind*, p. 18.
3. A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (London, Victor Gollanez Ltd., 1967) p. 122.
4. Alan Dorward: "The Nature of the self and self-Consciousness", *Arist. Soc. Supp.*, Vol. VIII, p. 215.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 217.
6. James Ward: *Psychological Principles*, (Cambridge University Press), p. 24.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 16. See also his: 'The Nature of Mental Activity', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Soc.*, Vol. VIII New Series, p. 234.
9. Cf. C. D. Broad: *The Mind and its Place in Nature*, pp. 566-568.
10. William James' views as presented here are based on his '*The Principles of Psychology*' Vol. I, Dover Publications (New York), his articles, 'Does Consciousness Exist', and 'The Experience of Activity', both reprinted in *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, and *Some Problems of Philosophy*.
11. *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol, I, Ch.6 'The Mind-Stuff Theory'.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 338. (italics mine).
13. *Ibid.*, p. 341.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 338.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 339.
16. S. Alexander, *Space, Time, and Deity* (London, 1920) Vol. 2. p. 118. This book shall hereafter be referred to as S.T.D.
17. S. Alexander, 'The Self as Subject and as Person', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, (1911), p. 6.
18. S. T. D., Vol. 2, p. 81.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 5. (italics mine).

20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
22. Bertrand Russell: *The Problems of Philosophy*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1964). pp. 50-51.
23. B. Russell: 'On the Nature of Acquaintance', reprinted in *Logic and Knowledge*, ed., R. C. Marsh (London, 1956) p. 127.
24. B. Russell: *My Philosophical Development*, (George Allen & Unwin, 1959), p. 134.
25. B. Russell: *The Analysis of Mind*, (George Allen & Unwin, 1921), p. 22. At an other place he wrote: "The theory which analyses a presentation into act and object no longer satisfies me. The act, or subject, is schematically convenient, but not empirically discoverable." *vide* 'On Propositions', reprinted in *Logic and Knowledge*, *op. cit.*, p. 305.
26. B. Russell: *The Analysis of Mind*, p. 144.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
28. C. A. Mace put forward a theory like this in his contribution to the symposium on self-identity, *Arist. Soc. Supp.*, Vol. XVIII (1939). Similar position was held by D. R. Price-William. See his article 'Proprioception and Personal Identity', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, (1957), pp. 536-45.
29. C. D. Broad, *Scientific Thought*, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London). He, however, himself observes a little later on that 'Of course, it may well be that something further than this is needed, but at any rate this seems to be the most noticeable feature in the relation [of sensing]'. p. 522.
30. C. D. Broad, *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* (London: Kegan Paul) p. 214.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 215.
32. Ian Gallie, "Mental facts", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, N. S. xxxvii. (1936-37), p. 198.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, p. 201.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 202.
37. J. R. Jones, "The Self in Sensory Cognition", *Mind*, Jan. 1949, (*italics his*). p. 55.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 59-60.
39. Broad, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

40. S. Shoemaker: *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*. (Cornell University Press, New York, 1964) p. 112 (italics by the author). see also pp. 113-116.
41. In his book *The Subject of Consciousness*, (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1970), p. 153.
42. Alternatively in my view, the self is not an empty or theoretical concept, a mere postulate, a 'je ne sais quoi' or unknowable support for personal identity.
43. F. R. Tennant: *Philosophical Theology*, Vol. I, (Cambridge University Press) pp. 17-18.
44. I have discussed this in the context of a particular mental state of thinking. This will hold *mutatis mutandis* of all cognitive operations including sensory awareness, etc.,
45. See above. p. 121.
46. C. A. Campbell: *On Selfhood and Godhood*, (George Allen and Unwin, London), p. 40. See also his article 'Sense-data and Judgment in Sensory Cognition', *Mind*, Vol. LVI, pp. 289-310.
47. Hume was debarred from writing of acts of cognizing by his very method. The mind being a "theatre of perceptions", could include no cognizings of any sort. He is, however, driven sometimes to use language which shows him to be inconsistent. The following passage is the clearest example of Hume's verbal inconsistency: "We may observe that there are two relations, both of them resemblances, which contribute to our mistaking the succession of our uninterrupted perceptions of an identical object. The first is, the resemblance of the perceptions; the second is the resemblance, which *the act of mind* in surveying a succession of resembling objects bears to that in surveying an identical object". *Hume's Treatise*, ed. Selby-Bigge (Oxford University Press) p. 205 (italics mine).
48. These references have been taken from J. N. Wright: 'Mind and the Concept of Mind', *Aristotelian Soc. Suppl. Volume* (1959) p.3.
49. A. C. Ewing: 'Mental Acts', *Mind*, Vol. LVII, (1948) p. 203.
50. G. Ryle: *The Concept of Mind*, p. 296.
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
56. *Op. cit.*, p. 138.
57. Campbell in an excellent article writes: ". . . there is no need whatsoever for all this mystery. Puzzles arise only if our pre-conceptions compel the attempt to interpret 'readiness of mind' in terms which exclude 'inner' happenings directly knowable only by the subject of them". Vid., his article 'Ryle on The Intellect', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. III, 1953. Also see in this connection A. C. Ewing: 'Prof. Ryle's Attack on Dualism', *Proceedings of The Aristotelian Soc.*, 1952-53, Vol, LIII.
58. *Op. cit.*, p. 128.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

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THE SELF AND MEMORY

6.1 SELF-IDENTITY AND ANALYSIS OF MEMORY

In this chapter I shall undertake to consider whether, if the substantival and enduring nature of the self is denied, a satisfactory account can be given of memory and remembering, i.e., the mnemonic phenomena, which *prima facie* involve a reference to the past. It is a commonplace of recent discussions of self-identity that a serialist account of it can be constructed on, or founded in, memory. Grice, for example, maintained that the self is a logical construction, and is to be defined in terms of memory.¹ Similarly Ayer holds: 'that one's awareness of one's own identity through time depends on memory is not, I think to be disputed.'² I shall, on the contrary argue, that memory itself presupposes a particular unity of experiences which is only provided by a persistent substantival view of self.

The verb 'remember' is used in various locutions, the most common of these being expressed in the phrase 'to remember so-and-so'. I shall here deal only with the form of memory generally called the 'personal memory', that is, remembering of events from one's own past. Everyone would agree that what we can remember is not just any past event or fact, but a certain kind of past event or fact, namely those that form part of one's own previous experience. As against the different types of habit-memory (retention of skill, etc.), personal and occurrent memory is conscious recall of an event, person or place experienced in one's past, for example my remembering meeting Jones at Oxford last Tuesday or your recalling the last summer vacations you spent in the Lake District. Remembering obviously consists in a mental experience involving the having of mental images. It is because we have these experiences, these memory-images,

that we know various facts 'from memory', i.e., memory-knowledge is knowledge based on or derived from the memory-experience or memory-image. What is immediately before the mind in an act of remembering is an image or series of images, which somehow or other represent the past event remembered. Borrowing the terminology of Broad, we can say that the objective constituent in a memory-situation are the images, whereas the epistemological object is the actual event experienced in the past. Memory is clearly distinguished from mere imagination or imaginal-images. The distinguishing characteristics have been variously described as 'superior force and vivacity' possessed by the memory-images (Hume) and 'warmth and intimacy' (William James). Similarly Russell and Broad maintain that a feeling of familiarity marks off memory-images from mere imagining.

I can summarize the main points relevant to my discussion as follows:

- (a) the event remembered is not what is immediately before the mind in remembering;
- (b) what is immediately before the mind in remembering is an image;
- (c) the image in some sense represents or symbolizes the events of which it is an image.

The chief reason that induces us to believe the representative theory of memory is the temporal reason, namely the event remembered belongs to the past and cannot be part of another event (the remembering) which belongs to the present. The naive realistic view of memory, according to which we are directly acquainted with the past event, leads to awkward difficulties over time and over errors: how can there now be present to my mind an event which occurred and

ended several years ago? The central problem in all discussions about memory is, how can I possibly have before my mind literally an event, or part of it, which occurred, say, ten years ago? When the event happened, it ceased to exist; and in any case, how could an event in my mind which is occurring now (the act of remembering) bridge the time interval so as to have for its object another event which is not occurring now, but finished occurring ten years ago?³

It is not my purpose in this chapter to examine particular theories of memory (namely, representative or naive realistic) as they bear upon the problem, or to do justice to the literature in the field by subjecting it to detailed criticism. The main argument which I shall develop is that recollection or remembering of events, whether they be of very recent or remote past, involves a perceived quality of 'pastness' in addition to the present image which requires a time-spanning consciousness on the part of the person remembering. Though memory is not an infallible knowledge of past events — an indication that the event, or something very like the event, actually occurred, the occasions on which we find reason to believe that our memory is playing us wholly false are comparatively rare. And as such it constitutes an important source of knowledge for us. It is indeed a direct and irreducible source of knowing the past events. I shall argue in the sequel that the fact of memory can only be explained if we accept the mind or self as a unitary and a persistent particular and not on a view according to which it is a bundle or series of discrete impressions or mental events. Since experiences presses on from moment to moment, it is the substantial self that supplies the basis of retentiveness. It is a distinguishing mark of mental states belonging to a single and continuing self that some later members of the series are not only modified by earlier ones, but are explicit memories of them. The relation of co-personality (which is entailed by memory) is therefore internal to its terms;

it cannot possibly be replaced by resemblance, contiguity, or any other external relation holding between the individual mental states or impressions. Let us see how Hume explains memory.

Memory, for Hume, is the faculty by which we repeat our impressions. He says:

"We find by experience, that when any impression has been present with the mind, it again makes its appearance there as an idea; and this it may do after two different ways: either when in its new appearance it retains a considerable degree of its first vivacity, and is somewhat intermediate between an impression and an idea; or when it entirely loses its vivacity, and is a perfect idea. The faculty by which we repeat our impressions in the first manner is called the Memory, and the other Imagination."⁴

Ideas, Hume tells us, are the copies of faint images of impressions in thinking and reasoning. The latter are the immediate data of experience, such as sensations. Hence if we ask: 'What is the immediate object of an act of remembering?' Hume's answer is that it is an image and, as is indicated by the phrase 'repeat our impressions', the image is held to be like the impression from which it is derived. The question to be asked here is: How do we know that any given image is an idea of memory and represents the past and is not either a present impression or an idea of imagination? Hume's only answer is that remembering consists in having images which have a degree of vivacity which is less than the impressions from which they are derived, but greater than an idea of imagination. Further, imagination "is not restrained to the same order and form with the original impressions while the memory is in a manner tied down in that respect, without any power of variation."⁵ In part III

of the first book of the *Treatise*, he says, that the *belief* or assent, which always attends the memory, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present; and that this alone distinguishes them from fancy or illusion.

We have to ask, is Hume's theory of memory adequate to explain the fact? What his theory boils down to is that memory is of images and that we know that these images refer to the past when they have a certain degree of vivacity and we are unable voluntarily to change their order. At once we see that it is open to severe criticism. First, as Hume himself sees, it cannot be a criterion of ideas of memory that I know them to retain the order of the events or things of which they are the images. For, in order to know that the images retained this order, I should have to have direct acquaintance with the past events themselves, and perceive that their order is the same as that present in the images. But on Hume's theory the events are impressions which are "transient"; they occurred in the past and no longer exist in the present. Hence I cannot perceive them in the present and consequently I cannot possibly compare them with images to see that the latter retain the order of the former. Secondly, it is plain that we are left simply with the 'degree of vivacity' as the criterion by which to differentiate between memory-ideas and imagination. It should require little thought to see that this criterion cannot perform the function required of it. A soldier, for example, Nicholas Rostow in *War and Peace*, may, because he wishes he had performed some act of bravery, have a vivid image of the act he would aspire to have performed; he may even come to believe that he has performed it. That will, however, not alter the fact that he did not in fact do so; that is, the vivacity of his present image is no guarantee that it refers to an actual event occurring in the past. Again, we may have faint images, of less vivacity than images of imagination, and yet it may be the case that this image refers to a past event and that we know it to do so.

Hence it seems clear that memory-images have to possess some feature other than their liveliness and that the feature of having reference to the past is one of their distinguishing characteristics.

We may, then, say that Hume's theory of memory cannot account for our present knowledge of past events. The question I shall ask later in this chapter is whether an account of this knowledge can be given by any theory which denies a persistent self and regards it as a series of discrete terms. For the moment we may turn to Hume's theory of the Association of Ideas in terms of which he would account for the other types of mnemonic phenomena exemplified above.

There are, says Hume, certain principles of union or cohesion among simple ideas. These principles are not principles of inseparable connexion, but only of a "kind of attraction, a gentle force which commonly prevails."⁶ According to these principles any idea tends to be followed by other ideas related to the first by resemblance, contiguity in time or place, and cause and effect. These relations are "natural" relations in the sense that they operate as associative principles independently of memory or reflection. Hume holds that we must accept without further questioning the principle that ideas tend to go in bundles or classes and that an idea tends to draw along with it other ideas which are related to it irrespective of any reflective process or active intelligence. Thus if the milkman's face and cart have been perceived together by me in the past, on seeing the one I shall have an image of the other (relation by contiguity), and if I am presented with new clothes, then I shall have images of similar clothes owned by me in the past (relation by resemblance).

As is well-known, Hume regards our belief in causal connection as a particular case of the association of ideas. His reasons for rejecting the view that causality involves

necessary connection are briefly as follows. First, it is not self-evident that there are necessary causal connections, since there is no contradiction involved in supposing a thing to exist and yet be causeless; and, further, reason does not inform us what particular effect will follow any particular cause. To get such information, Hume asserts, we must refer to experience. Secondly, we have no assurance by experience of the connection being necessary. There is only one impression and then the next, and there cannot in the nature of the case be an impression of necessary connection. It follows then there is no such connection in the objective world and that causation refers to an association of ideas only. When impressions have been experienced together on a number of occasions (for example the impression of flame followed by the impression of heat), then the ideas of these impressions become associated and a further impression of flame tends to be followed by the idea of heat. In short, Hume would seek to explain the various mnemonic phenomena in terms of his theories of memory, association of ideas and the regularity view of causality. For example, he would say, I am able to recite a certain poem because the words of the poem have been associated in the mind through past repetition. Again, I can ride a bicycle because the sight of the bicycle has been associated with the correct movements and balance. The burnt child heeds the fire because the sight of the fire calls up images of the burn and pain that followed it. The following observations become relevant here.

Thomas Reid charged, I think correctly, that Hume makes an appeal here to a kind of memory (namely, 'memory in the common acceptance of the word') which is not the kind of memory his theory "defines" and which his theory cannot account for.⁷ To say that we find "by experience" that there is such a relationship between impressions and subsequent ideas can only mean, according to Reid, that we remember that our impressions are frequently followed by

ideas which resemble them. But this would involve having memory knowledge of the past that is not inferred from or grounded on present ideas; unless we could have such 'immediate' and noninferential knowledge, we could never be entitled to infer from present events to past ones. Reid adds that Hume's account of memory, if accepted, "leads us to absolute scepticism with regard to those things which we most distinctly remember."⁸

Memory itself certainly presupposes causality in a sense other than any admitted by the Humean regularity view. If we are to be aware of the past in memory we must think of the past as determining or at least causally affecting our present state in remembering it; if our state is not in any degree determined by the past event we have no genuine memory but a fancy or illusion. We may note here that although on Hume's account flame *cannot* impart heat, an impression *can* impart vivacity. Thus when he says that belief in necessary connection arises when impressions "produce" vivacity in the ideas with which they are associated, he reintroduces the notion of productive causality (of genuine intrinsic connection), our mistaken belief in which he is endeavouring to explain. A memory-image is not about what usually happens but about a particular cognition in a particular self, and it involves a real dependence of my state in remembering on that which is remembered by me. So here again the regularity view of causation proves totally inadequate. Stout summarized this point very succinctly thus: "The whole point of Hume's scepticism is destroyed if it is once admitted that the fainter copy of an impression may be so connected with its original that in perceiving the copy we eo ipso know immediately not only this, but the previous existence of the impression as the original of the copy. For to admit this is to admit necessary connection in matters-of-fact."⁹

In the case of the burnt child heeding the fire, the analysis in terms of the association of ideas is strained, since the association may be due to only one experience; and one would expect on Hume's account that if the child had experienced warmth on many occasions and been burnt only once, then the former associative link would be stronger than the latter. Whereas in actual facts the child may dread the fire as a result of only one occasion on which he has been burnt. Within the theory of impressions, then, there is nothing to connect the present memory datum with the past. My perceptions are momentary and a present impression or idea 'A' cannot lead to the existence of another 'B' simply because there did co-exist ideas or impressions A_1, B_1, A_2, B_2 , etc. The criticism against Humean associationism formulated by Bradley in his *Logic*, was aptly restated by Prichard when he wrote, "It is intelligible to attribute a present change, my passing from thinking of X to thinking of Y, to a certain past event, viz., to my past frequent thoughts of X and Y as being in a certain relation, so long as we presuppose the existence of Mind as that which serves as the link necessary to connect the past with the present".¹⁰

The trouble with any Humean account of memory is that since on this theory our knowledge is limited to the contents of our present experiences, an image considered as a present content, tells us nothing about the past. On the one hand, Hume denied any necessary connection between mental events, he yet admitted 'I am sensible that my account is very defective'¹¹ and confessed that a person 'alone finds personal identity, when reflecting on the train of past perceptions, that composed a mind'. In other words Hume confessed that experience, as and when it involves what he would call a 'feeling' of 'personal identity' cannot be treated in terms of his theory of distinct ideas and impressions. In the subsequent sections of this chapter I shall discuss views of Russell, Ryle and Broad, and examine if their theories can explain

memory.

6.2 MNEMIC—CAUSATION THEORY : RUSSELL

Russel also makes a feeling of pastness an essential constituent of memory. Remembering, he says, "is a present occurrence in some way resembling, or related to , what is remembered".¹² This consist partly in the occurrence of images, but it cannot solely consist in this, "for their mere occurrence, by itself, would not suggest any connection with anything that had gone before". We regard the images as "more or less accurate copies of past occurrences" because they are accompanied by two kinds of feelings, "feelings of familiarity", which lead us to "trust" the images and "feelings of pastness", which lead us to refer the images to the past and to "assign places to them in time order". According to the intensity of the feeling of pastness, we refer the images (or the event represented by it) to more or less remote times in the past. Russell also speaks, as does James, of a "feeling of belief" as a constituent of memory.

Russell emphatically asserts that the most indubitable data in a genuine memory situation is that we have knowledge of the past. ". . . . whatever a sceptic might urge in theory, we cannot practically doubt that we got up this morning, that we did various things yesterday, that a great war has been taking place, and so on".¹³ He makes a clear distinction (like Bergson) between habit-memory and the sort that involves independent recollection of a past occurrence. The recollection of a unique event cannot be wholly constituted by habit, and is in fact something radically different from the memory which is habit. Infact, about habit-memory at one place he says, "This does not deserve to be called memory in the strict sense."¹⁴

Russell is quite explicitly critical of Semon's engram

theory and thinks of it as no more than a hypothesis. In fact, according to Russell, it does not touch memory-knowledge at all closely. Semon's theory gives laws according to which images of past occurrences come into our minds, but do not discuss our belief that these images refer to past occurrences, which is what constitutes memory-knowledge. In the following paragraph he concludes his criticism of the 'engram' theory: "The argument from the connection of brain-lesions with loss of memory is not so strong as it looks, though it has also some weight. What we know is that memory, and mnemonic phenomena generally, can be disturbed or destroyed by changes in the brain. This certainly proves that the brain plays an essential part in the causation of memory, but does not prove that a certain state of the brain is, by itself, a sufficient condition for the existence of memory. Yet it is this last that has to be proved. The theory of the engram, or any similar theory, has to maintain that, given a body and brain in a suitable state, a man will have a certain memory, without the need of any further conditions. What is known, however, is only that he will not have memories if his body and brain are not in a suitable state. That is to say, the appropriate state of body and brain is proved to be necessary for memory, but not to be sufficient. So far, therefore, as our definite knowledge goes, memory may require for its causation a past occurrence as well as a certain present state of the brain."¹⁵

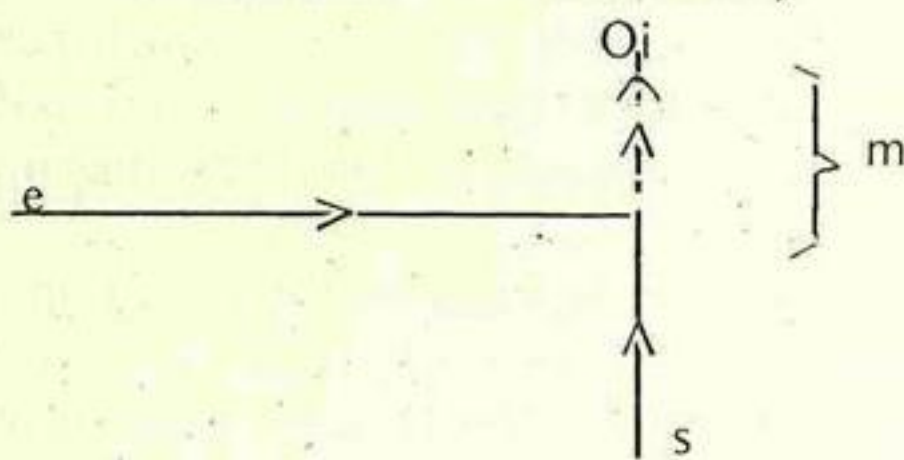
Let us now see how Russell himself undertakes to explain memory. In Lecture IV of 'The Analysis of Mind',¹⁶ he develops a theory of 'mnemonic causation' to account for the present memory-image of the past event. Our remembering, according to Russell, is caused by (a) the present stimulus and (b) the past occurrence. Memory involves a special kind of causation in which an event which is past actually has an effect in the present without producing (as in ordinary causation) a series of intermediate causes and effects to fill

up the interval between the original cause and its present effect. To give an example, I have seen the portrait of Mona Lisa in the Musée du Louvre. Some time later I hear the word 'Mona Lisa', and immediately I remember the Musée du Louvre. The past event together with the present stimulus of the word 'Mona Lisa' produces an awareness of a memory-image which in fact resembles the past event and is accompanied by a 'feeling of familiarity'.

At another place Russell writes: "A, B, C, in the past, together with X now, cause Y now". "We will call A, B, C, the mnemonic cause, X the occasion or stimulus and Y the reaction".¹⁷ Russell also uses the expression 'disposition' for this type of causation, even though he does not anywhere explain it fully. "A disposition", says Russell "is not something actual, but merely the mnemonic portion of a causal law".¹⁸ It is capable of activating a memory image whenever it is itself aroused by a stimulus. We may here note that Russell's concept of a disposition cannot be understood entirely by reference to the analogy of a causal characteristic of a physical object, since the causal characteristics of a thing may have no reference to its past history, and, even if it has, there is a difference in kind between this dependence and the dependence of my act of remembering on my past history.

At any rate, the concept of a disposition, on Russell's view, involves that of a causal law; causal laws are, however, regarded as "merely observed uniformities of sequence."¹⁹ He maintains that there is no difficulty in formulating causal laws in which one part of the cause occurs much earlier in time than the effect. He presupposes a special type of uniformity which relates past events to the present effects, and calls this mnemonic causation. As he writes, "Whenever the effect resulting from a stimulus to an organism differs according to the past history of the organism, without our being

able actually to detect any relevant difference in its present structure, we will speak of 'mnemic causation', provided we can discover laws embodying the influence of the past."²⁰ For example, in the case of my remembering an episode in one of my past holidays, when you mention your holidays, Russell would say that your mention of holidays is the stimulus and that this stimulus evokes a disposition in me which causes my recounting the past holiday. As against Broad's trace-theory, according to which the past experience is not an independently necessary causal condition of the memory of it and has to fill the gap by postulating hypothetical entities viz., traces, the mnemic theory is prepared to accept as an ultimate fact that some of the independently necessary conditions of an event are neither continuous with it nor immediately precede it. It is prepared to bridge the temporal gap by postulating a special kind of causal relation. It will be helpful to reproduce here Broad's diagrammatic illustration of Russell's mnemic causation theory.²¹



Here the past event *e* and the present stimulus *s* together produce by mnemic causation the awareness of a memory-image *i* which in fact resembles *e* and is accompanied by a "feeling of familiarity". This constitutes the memory *m* of the event *e*. The causal conditions are here irreducibly mnemic while the present stimulus (the epistemological condition in Broad's terminology) is non-mnemic. In the diagram the memory-image has been represented by the circle, the causal relation by a full arrow, and the cognitive relation by a dotted arrow.

The following objections may be made against this theory.

Is it possible to consider laws of mnemonic causation as laws of "merely observed uniformities of sequence"? The nub of the problem therefore centres around the nature of causation especially in the field of mental phenomena. First of all, this is an avenue which is not open to the Humean view since the laws of mnemonic causation are not inductive generalizations about observed uniformities of sequence or of co-existence. Indeed the distinctive characteristic of a law of mnemonic causation is precisely that there is no temporal contiguity or uniformity of co-existence between total cause and total effect. According to the theory of mnemonic causation my perception of a town which I visited last year literally produces a memory of this event whenever a suitable stimulus acts on me. But the perception is long past and is in no sense continued into the present. It has ceased to exist itself, and nothing now exists which can be regarded as a continuation of it. How then can it possibly do anything now? H.J. Paton, criticizing this theory in an article wrote:

"(This) theory depends on the invention of an entirely new kind of causation by which a past event is enabled to act directly on the present, apparently without any intermediary to connect the two. This is frankly miraculous."²²

Russell maintains that causation simply means *de facto* regular sequence; and that with this interpretation, there is no a priori objection to mnemonic causation. By saying that C causes E, on his view, we simply mean that C is a set of conditions c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n , such that (a) whenever they are all fulfilled E happens, and (b) whenever E happens they have all been fulfilled. This says nothing about c_1, \dots, c_n being all of the same date and all "immediately preceding" E. Hence,

if this be all that we ever mean by saying that C causes E, mnemic causation is antecedently quite as possible as non-mnemic causation.

But does this view adequately explain the plain man's belief about causality? The plain man is inclined to say, and I think justifiably, that causation involves 'activity' or 'necessity', or both, in addition to regular sequence. Especially in the case of our voluntary movements, we can see clearly that such and such a volition is a necessary condition of such and such a bodily movement. We can be absolutely certain that we do not mean the same thing by "A causes B" and "A is regularly followed by B". For example, we are quite sure that the hooter of a factory in London does not cause the workmen of a factory in Manchester to go to their work, even though the London hooter does always blow just before the Manchester workmen start to wend their way to the Manchester factory.

Even though Russell repudiates the activity-view of causation, he himself cannot completely get rid of the haunting ghost of it. In speaking of the influence of the past on present occurrences, Russell appears to reintroduce the notion of productive causality, for there is the implication that the past events *produce* modifications in present events. Again, in the case of remembering a past occurrence, I cannot say that the stimulus is part cause of the act of remembering, if by cause is meant customary conjunction, since the stimulus may never have been conjoined, let alone customarily conjoined with the effect.

Secondly, Russell's formula for mnemic causal laws, "A B, C in the past, together with X now cause Y now," contains no reference to events occurring after A, B, C, and before X. These events however are relevant to the occurrence of Y since it is only when these events are of a certain nature

(e.g. do not include excessive fatigue or severe shock), that A, B, C in the past together with X now cause Y now. If after A B C and before X, there has been experienced a severe mental shock, then Y may not follow, although both the mnemonic cause existed in the past and an appropriate stimulus was applied. Thus the theory that certain causal factors in the past can be related in a mnemonic causal law to a present effect, the events in the interval being irrelevant to the effect, cannot be maintained.

Finally, there is a still more important criticism of Russell's theory. It is only possible to state a 'mnemonic causal law' as conceived by Russell if we presuppose a certain unity (i.e., a self) within which the law holds. In the case of two elastic wire rings, a similar stimulus will evoke a similar effect, but in the case of mnemonic phenomena, a similar stimulus may evoke a different reaction in me than the one it evokes in you; that is, it is only because my total past history has been what it has that I remember the particular past event I do remember.

I shall now turn to Ryle's account of memory—a rival to the theories of Russell and Broad in which the independent epistemological status of memory is rejected.

6.3 LINGUISTIC 'SHORT WAY' : G. RYLE

Even though the phenomena of memory has traditionally occupied a central position in all discussions of self and self-identity, it is amazing to see how an ingenious thinker like Ryle takes a 'short way' in dealing with it. I think that he is conscious of the logical difficulties inherent in explaining memory on any strictly empiricist epistemology, and that is why he makes a deliberate attempt of trivializing the whole issue. His typical linguistic technique employed here as elsewhere comes out clearly in the following lines:

"If a witness is asked how he knows that something took place, he may reply that he witnessed it, or that he was told of it, or that he inferred to it from what he witnessed or was told. He could not reply that he found out what took place either by not forgetting what he had found out, or by recalling finding it out. . . ." ²³

Does this sort of argument come anywhere near an adequate philosophical treatment of the personal recollection of past events? Far from it. I shall show, later in this section, that Ryle's view turns out to be a disguised naive realistic one and is infected with the difficulties typical of any realistic theory of memory. In the meantime let me briefly mention some of the features of his views about remembering and recollection.

First of all, Ryle repudiates the claim that memory provides us with knowledge, in the sense that we know various facts about the past because of the memory-experience we have. As he puts it, remembering "is like going over something, not getting to something; it is like recounting, not like researching."²⁴ "it is akin not to learning lessons but reciting them."²⁵

Secondly, like Ayer and others, Ryle also maintains that images are not integral to remembering and that it often takes verbal or some other practical form. The plain man and the representative theories, on the other hand, maintain that common to all cases of remembering is some form of mental occurrence, typically thought of as the having of a mental image. We often have imagery when we remember things or events we have experienced. Having an image of something, according to Ryle, is one way of remembering it, but it is not the only way. Other ways are to describe it, or perhaps draw it, informing others or reminding ourselves of what it was like. He writes, "Reminiscence in imagery does

not differ in principle [from such overt performances as describing or physically depicting the remembered thing] though it tends to be superior in speed, if otherwise greatly inferior in efficiency; and it is, of course, of no direct public utility."²⁶

In an other passage, Ryle curiously comes very close to a complete obliteration of the distinctive characteristics of ostensible memory and imagination. The passage reads, "Recalling has certain features in common with imagining. I recall only what I myself have seen, heard, done and felt, just as what I imagine is myself seeing, hearing, doing and noticing things; and I recall as I imagine, relatively vividly, relatively easily and relatively connectedly."²⁷ At another place he says, "The question, 'How can I faithfully describe what I once witnessed?' is no more of a puzzle than the question, 'How can I faithfully visualize what I once witnessed?'"²⁸ But how about the elaborate and precise distinctions philosophers have been at pains to make between mere imagination and remembering and recalling of past occurrences? These distinguishing characteristics, as we have seen above, have been variously described by philosophers, for example, 'superior force and vivacity' (Hume), 'warmth and intimacy' (William James), and 'familiarity' (Russell and Broad). To remember an event occurring is certainly not the same as to imagine or visualize that event occurring, so remembering cannot simply consist in the occurrence of images. Again, according to Hume, whereas in imagination the ideas may come up in the mind in any order, the order of the ideas in memory cannot vary in this respect and must preserve the original order and form of the past impressions. Moreover, the memory presentation, in addition to the feature which marks what it represents as something believed rather than merely imagined or supposed, must have features which mark it as something having occurred in the *past* and as something previously experienced by the rememberer.

In the comparatively short space that Ryle devotes to such an important topic as memory, he is mainly occupied in a futile attempt to reducing remembering and recalling to imagining and visualizing by altogether writing off the problems traditionally faced by philosophers in explaining memory-experience. The nagging question that comes to mind after a perusal of his account is: Is Ryle really addressing himself to the logical difficulty pointed out among others by Reid when he asked as to how we can be justified in inferring the existence of a past event from a present memory datum? But perhaps he is tacitly maintaining a view that seeks to resolve this difficulty by putting forward a counter-thesis about memory-situation. This is the well known position adopted by naive realism. Let us go into it rather briefly. The theory may be roughly stated as follows.

The naive realists have held, as against the representative theories of memory, that in remembering what is produced is not awareness of a memory-image, but direct awareness of a past event. They believe that this move can meet the interminable difficulty allegedly involved in memory regarding the past occurrence and its present recollection. According to naive realism, what one is directly aware of in memory (what is "before the mind") is the remembered event itself and not a mere representation of it. In *Space, Time, and Deity*, Samuel Alexander held that when one remembers something, the object of memory, i.e., the past event remembered is "before the mind, bearing on its face the mark of pastness."²⁹ A little further on he says, "The pastness of the object is a datum of the experience, directly apprehended. The object is compresent with me *as* past."³⁰ Similarly, H.H. Price once held that "some memory is knowledge in the strict sense i.e., . . . is direct or immediate apprehension of past events or situations."³¹ This, however, does not commit the realist to denying the role of mental imagery in remembering. The realist will say that what we call the memory-

image is not a present existent at all, but is the past event or experience itself as it appears to us in our remembering.

Now Ryle makes a number of statements in his discussion of memory which suggest that he also holds a naive realistic view. For example, he writes: "They (the "theorists") are then tempted to suppose that since they can describe such bygone episodes nearly as well now as they could have done during their occurrence, they must be checking their narratives against some present replicas or souvenirs of the vanished scene. . . But this is a gratuitous causal hypothesis."³² In a similar vein, an other passage reads: "Still less is recalling what took place using a piece of evidence from which certain or probable inferences are made to what took place, save in the sense that the jury may infer from what the witness narrates. The witness himself does not argue 'I recall the collision occurring just after the thunder-clap, so probably the collision occurred just after the thunder-clap'. There is no such inference."³³ Ryle is here tacitly assuming that the witness cannot go wrong in recalling the past episode and its time relations with other happenings; and this unjustified optimism about the reliability of memory-claim is based on a naive realistic view, i.e., that what we are directly aware of is the remembered past event itself, and not the 'present replicas or souvenir' of it.

Since the naive realistic view comes in a head-on clash with the theory of memory I earlier on maintained to be more plausible, I shall summarily mention here some of the more serious objections to this theory. C.D. Broad has very ably expounded and criticized it in 'The Mind and its Place in Nature.'³⁴ Firstly, he points out that the memory-image may differ in many respects from the item remembered, which suggests that the image cannot exactly be what is remembered. A second objection of Broad's is that the one thing may be remembered at different times, which suggests

that, according to the realists, images occurring at numerically different times are nevertheless one and the same thing.

The most conclusive objection to the realist theory arises from the fact that we do usually come across cases of delusive or false remembering. The naive realistic view is plainly mistaken if it holds that we are directly aware of past events in precisely the sense in which we are 'directly aware' of such entities as pains and mental images; for in this sense it is logically impossible for a person to be mistaken concerning the character of that of which he is directly aware. If we are directly aware of past events in this sense, there would be memory statements that are, like pain reports, incorrigible, that is, such that it is logically impossible for a sincere assertion of them to be false. But it is evident that no memory statement is incorrigible in this sense, and that the mere fact that someone now has the memory belief that X happened can never entail, by itself, that X happened.

However, the claim of the realists can be interpreted in such a way as to assert that memory knowledge of the past occurrences is "immediate" in the sense of not being inferred from or grounded on private memory data of the sort posited by the representative theory. But if immediacy is all that the naive realists assert, then their theory is completely negative. It does not offer any explanation of how we have knowledge of the past in memory; it simply asserts that we do have such knowledge and rejects a certain kind of explanation (the sort offered by the representative theory) of how we have it. It is clear that the expression 'directly aware' has no explanatory force if it is used in such a way that 'we have direct awareness of past events' means simply 'we have knowledge of past events that is not grounded on present memory image.'

Ryle's denial that memory is a source of knowledge is

in keeping with his main doctrine in *The Concept of Mind*, according to which no 'ghost' is required to account for what is happening when a person remembers. But how can this account be reconciled with the common belief that recollection, at any rate some aspect of it, does constitute a source of knowledge? For, if asked how we know that a certain event took place, we might justifiably reply by saying that we know because we remember it, particularly if we wish to emphasize the fact that our knowledge in this case is not derived from any other source, such as hearsay etc. Even if we admit that recollection implies having learned and not forgotten, we cannot possibly conclude that what is true of the dispositional kind of memory—namely that one can re-perform a past episode or represent it in words, pictures, or actions—is necessarily true of the recollective kind also. Indeed his brief account of memory through 'having learned and not forgotten, does not touch at all the complex issues involved in it.^{3 5}

6.4 BROAD'S TRACE THEORY

As I have been mentioning quite often the salient features of C.D. Broad's thoughts about memory and mnemonic phenomena at various places in this chapter, I shall not here pause to note them again. Rather, I shall straightaway undertake to state his theory which he calls 'a purely mental theory of traces', and by means of which he tries to explain the temporal gap involved in all memory situations.

Let us begin by considering as to what he means by 'traces'. Being severely critical of Russell's mnemonic causation — "a wholly new kind of causation" as he calls it, Broad opts for the other alternative which fills the temporal gap with some hypothetical persistent entity. Broad's technical term for these hypothetical persistents is "trace". It is supposed that experiences leave these traces; that the latter persist;

and that when suitable stimuli excite them; they give rise to states of mind, such as memories etc. Broad simply compares traces and dispositions to the 'unconscious states' of psychologists, without further elucidating the nature of these traces. He writes, "The plain fact is that we know nothing with certainty about the intrinsic nature of traces, and we ought therefore studiously to avoid all phrases which suggest some particular view of their intrinsic nature. I propose to call traces and dispositions by the innocent name of 'mnemic persistents.'"³⁶

I cannot attempt to follow Broad's discussion of the theory in detail, especially as he multiplies subtle but important distinctions between 'causal and non-causal characteristics', 'identity of stuff' and 'the persistence of structure'. The really important thing for our purpose is that he thinks it possible to conceive a theory of mental traces without assuming the persistent particular theory of the self, even though he himself acknowledges that its assumption makes the mnemic persistents quite simple and understandable. On this view the self itself would be the persistent identical 'stuff', and the causal characteristics of the mind will be correlated with various persistent states of the self. The existence of a trace would be the fact that it has a certain determinate non-causal characteristic at every moment within a certain period of time.

While putting forward his own theory, Broad asks us to consider a trace or disposition as analogous to a scar in organic bodies. In the case of the scar, the matter in which the scar is embedded is continually changing and over a substantial period changes completely so that none of the original matter is present in the part of the body bearing the scar, although the scar still exists. On the theory under consideration, mental events are analogous to the flesh and are continually changing through something in the structure of the

individual events or in the relation they bear to one another, which remains qualitatively similar even though numerically the mental events and the particular instances of the relations which bind them together are different.³⁷

Now since the theory supposes that a trace or disposition is something 'handed down', as it were, from one mental event to the next, it will not hold unless mental events are always continuous. Hence it requires the postulation of 'literally unconscious' and 'literally non-introspectible mental' events which fill in periods of mental inactivity. The trace is not itself a mental event, but is a characteristic modification in the qualities of mental events or in the relation which binds contemporary mental events into a single total state of mind. And this characteristic modification of quality or structure is imposed on each total state by the total state which immediately preceds it. Broad's detailed description of the process as to how we can conceive the formation of purely mental traces is rather complicated. I shall therefore quote here at length:

"Just before a certain moment my total state of mind consists of a set of mental events having certain qualities and standing in a certain characteristic relation to each other. Let us call these events e_1, e_2, \dots, e_n , and let us denote the relation which binds them all together into a single state of mind by R . Then the total state of my mind just before t may be symbolized by $R(e_1, e_2, \dots, e_n)$. Let us suppose that at t , a 'new' mental event happens and forms part of my total state of mind at t . We will call this event E . By calling it 'new' I mean that it is not a "continuation" of any of the events e_1, \dots, e_n ; it might, e.g., be a sensation due to someone suddenly sticking a pin into me. Most of the mental events which compose my total state of mind at t will be continuations of events which composed my total state of mind just before t , but probably some of these will not be conti-

nued. Let us suppose that $e_1 \dots e_m$ are continued as $e_1 \dots e_m$, whilst $e_{m+1} \dots e_n$ are not continued. My total state of mind at t may then be symbolized by $R(e_1 \dots e_m E)$. Now I suggest that the presence of E modifies the qualities of $e_1 \dots e_m$, or of some of them, in a characteristic way, so that those of them which are continued into my total state of mind just after t are continued in the specially modified forms $e_{E1} \dots e_{Em}$. It is also possible that there is a characteristic modification in the relation which binds them together, so that it is now R_E instead of R . On this hypothesis my total state of mind just after t is of the form $R_E(e_{E1} \dots e_{Em})$, assuming for the sake of simplicity that no further "new" experience has taken place. . . . We must next assume that this "E-quality" or this "E-relation" is henceforth imposed on the contents or structure of each successive total state by the state that precedes it, very much as the scar is imposed on the new matter which comes into an organism from outside."³⁸

Broad's trace-theory, in sum and substance, boils down to this: the present mental event can and does exercise a modifying influence on future mental events and thus leads to the formation of mnemonic persistent which ultimately explains memory and the temporal unity of mind.

In all fairness to Broad, it must be admitted that he has certainly made a remarkable attempt at rendering the serialist view of the self and mind plausible. The trace-theory is indeed less miraculous than Russell's mnemonic-causation theory. Nevertheless, it involves a great many highly unsatisfactory hypotheses.

The first point to be noted is that if this theory is accepted, the mental events which constitute the mnemonic persistent are parts or elements of an unity, since any given mental event might not be as it in fact is unless it had been

preceded or modified by the particular mental event which did precede and modify it. Hence we may say that on this theory 'internal relations' exist between mental events. In other words, Broad's view that the present mental event may *cause* a modification in those which follow it, is inconsistent with the serialists' view of causation.

Secondly, this theory presupposes a particular unity of mental events in the same way as Russell's theory. Even if we concede to Broad's avowed goal of dispensing with an Ego, it does not enable us to dispense with a particular and unique unity of mental events. As we have seen, the theory presupposes internal relations between mental events, but what are the mental events between which the internal relations hold? The answer can only be: between particular sets of mental events, between one particular set which is *my* set and another particular set which is *yours*. If this were not so, then there would be no reason why you should not act on the basis of my past experiences and I on the basis of yours, and similarly call up each other's past memories.

Thirdly, the nature of the traces remains hypothetical and mysterious. We cannot verify their existence in any way. They are purely hypothetical qualities if, or relations between, mental events which are supposed to be passed continuously from one total state of mind to another.

Lastly, but very importantly, although the theory might be invoked to account for certain phenomena, for example, learning by experience, it does not at all explain personal memory of one's past experiences. What I remember is a state of *myself*, which is recognized by me to be such; and although a mental event, if we could assume it to have cognitive power, or a momentary ego persisting through a short finite period of time, might be supposed to have knowledge of past events which were related to it, but were not states

of itself, it could not remember *past states of itself*. But I in fact do remember not only 'my percept' in the past, but also 'my act of perceiving in the past'. It may well be that on many occasions I disregard the latter and pay attention only to the former, e.g., I try to remember the way to a friend's house and attend not to my memory of my past state, but to my memory of the route. This does not affect the fact that, even in this case, I know that it was I who found the way in the past. Hence memory is a memory of a past state of *myself* and not the cognizing by one momentary event or by one momentary ego of another related event or ego. It is indeed only intelligible to say 'I remember what I did' if there is a an I', that is, an ego or entity which persists.

I shall observe here in passing that it would be far from true to assume that Broad did not make the 'feeling of pastness' an essential ingredient of genuine memory. In fact he did realize the importance of this feeling and formulated the problem of its explanation in the most clear words. He asks, "If past events be never constituents of memory-situations, or if at any rate they never manifest the characteristic of pastness as sense manifest colours etc., how do we come to have the notion of 'pastness' at all?"³⁹

Broad himself makes an attempt to get over this difficulty by struggling to derive from 'familiarity' the notion of pastness. It is of course admitted by almost all philosophers that the objective constituents of memory-situations, i.e., the images do seem to have a certain characteristic of 'familiarity'. Now Broad suggests that familiarity is an empirical characteristic and pastness is a categorial one; and that we are so constituted that the former 'means' the latter, that is, the feeling of familiarity leads us inevitably to apply the categorial concept of pastness. Personally I should think that two charges can be made against this theory. First of all, the feeling of familiarity will not do the trick that is supposed of

it. As I pointed out in the discussion of Hume, the feeling of familiarity by itself never implies that the imagined events have really taken place in the past. In my imaginings I can easily draw, through repetition, quite familiar images and pictures; but that would never generate the typical feeling of pastness experienced in all cases of veridical remembering. Secondly, Broad's envisaged contention is not in fact effectual, since, even if we inferred, as it were, the existence of a past event like the present image on the ground that the present image 'felt familiar', it is obvious that whatever we had we should not have memory; for memory is different from inference. And indeed the very inference itself rests upon our memory of a discovered resemblance between images felt as familiar and the past events which they resembled.

6.5 MEMORY REQUIRES A PERSISTENT SELF

The theories I have been considering at length in the above sections have all this in common that they appear to regard remembering as possible on the supposition that the mind or self can be simply a series of mental events in interrelation. Neither of them requires that the same enduring subject-self should be present in all its knowings. But, as I have tried to show in detail, these theories cannot explain memory phenomena adequately and satisfactorily. It is sufficiently clear from the foregoing discussions that in event or factual memory it is essential that the subject who sees or experiences a particular object or event at an earlier date must be the same subject who now remembers. This is indeed the crux of the whole question. In order to remember my seeing, or what I saw, heard or experienced etc., I must be the same for both the acts of seeing and the later act of remembering. A collection of separate momentary events, or even momentary selves for that matter, however closely related by miraculous causation or hypothetical traces, could not remember anything. The only thing that can remember is

an identical and persistent subject-self. What the memory-situation claims is that I now remember what I then saw, and that these two 'I's' are one and the same. There could not be a memory-situation at all unless this claim were in fact true.

To remember an experience entails claiming it as an experience of one's own: from which it follows that self-identity (or personal-identity) cannot be founded on memory since it is already presupposed by it. To say that I remember doing or enjoying or attempting something is to say, or to imply, that I remember that I am the same person who did or enjoyed whatever it was. Since memory in this way presupposes personal identity, it is out of the question to analyse the latter in terms of the former. Of course, if a person X says that he can remember his wife running for election to the Rural District council, X is thereby not making a tacit claim to be his wife. But this observation is no help to the defender of self-identity in terms of memory. For the need so to formulate this theory that it does not require us to count the remembered actions and passions of other people as if they had been our own must make it, if anything, even more difficult to conceal the fact that any appeal to memory here presupposes what it purports to explicate. To be sure, our memories about the doings and sufferings of other people do still involve some implicit claims about ourselves. For to say that X can remember his wife running in that election is to say, or at least to imply, that X can remember that he is the same person who saw, heard, or in some other way became cognizant of the fact that his wife was a candidate. The serialist philosophers are therefore quite mistaken in their assumption that it is meaningful to speak of a series of experiences without the implication that they are the experiences of a particular abiding subject. Their attempt to thread them together by supposing that later experiences consist partly in recollections of their

predecessors is clearly false.

On the substantival view of self, the explanation of remembering and recall of past experiences becomes very easy and understandable. Theories of Russell and Broad, as I tried to show in the preceding sections of this chapter, provide instructive illustration of the truly desperate straits to which those philosophers are reduced who conceive it their duty to try to account for the facts of our experience in terms of the serial view. They want to reject the view that the mind is a substantival entity, a relatively permanent and enduring particular of which mental states are states or predicates, and adopt instead the phenomenalist or serial view, according to which the mind or self is just a name for a succession of particular mental events inter-related in certain ways. On the substantival view of self, on the other hand, memory can be explained by saying that the mind's relatively permanent structure bears the traces left by past experiences. And indeed this seems quite obvious and natural. Once we accept the view that the self or mind is a relatively abiding entity not reducible to particular experiences or states, there is no manifest objection in principle to conceiving this entity as having a structure which undergoes continual modification from its experiences.⁴⁰ And although admittedly one does not know *how*, it seems by no means incredible *that* these modifications of the mind's structure should be such that in its future experiences the mind functions in a manner which manifests the traces left by its past experiences. As I observed earlier on, the requirement of memory-experience is that the event remembered and the remembering should each belong to the same mind or self. This condition is clearly necessary, for if two experiences were related by temporal and qualitative continuity, but one was an experience of Smith and the other of Jones, no one would say that one was the remembering of the other. If an event as such requires an ultimate particular as its cognizing

or owning subject, it seems quite plausible to conclude that a strand of experiences would belong to a persistent substantial self, than that it would belong to a number of different transient selves.

'Permanence' is part of what is meant when one speaks of the substantiality of the self or soul. Each of us is an identical ego: a single permanent self is necessary to account for the unity of experiences and remembering. The substantiality of a physical thing, in the current acceptance, implies continuity throughout every moment of time. One believes, and is probably right in believing, that the smallest temporal gap in its existence would annul its identity. The question arises: must the identity of the self be precisely of this type? I think the substantiality of self, at all events, does not require such an interpretation. It is enough if the self, while cognizing or appropriating an experience or mental state, looks before and after. The self as a substantial identity exists when and so far as there is this continuity of experiences. Without the experiential continuity it is apparently nothing, and if there are temporal gaps the explanation may only be that the gaps do not count. William continues to be William (himself) if, when he awakes, his experiences link themselves to that substantial identity which existed at the time when he went to sleep. They link themselves to William's thoughts, i.e., to the personal entity or self William is, and not to Paul's.

Philosophers who attempt to give an account of a continuing self or personal identity in terms of the relations between mental states, either invoke non-unique and external relations such as causality (Humean type) and resemblance, or postulate a new relation such as 'having the same mental position'⁴¹ or 'being copresented.'⁴² I have already argued in this chapter that the relations of qualitative resemblance, contiguity and causal connexions are insufficient to explain

memory experience or the unity (or continuity) of self. The latter ones fare no better. The question to be asked is: what is meant by mental position? and how is co-presentation itself analysed or explained. Mental states clearly have no spatial relations or qualities. Similarly 'co-presentation' does not mean simply temporally contemporaneous any more than 'mental position' mean spatially contiguous. These relations turn out on examination to mean, in truth, nothing other than 'belonging to this particular self' and thus the argument is circular; since in an attempt to explain the self in terms which do not presuppose it, there is tacitly reintroduced a relation 'belonging to this particular self' where the self is the very notion to be explained. In the previous chapter I had argued that the notion of mental events cannot dispense with the notion of a subject, i.e., the owning or cognizing self; but it had no tendency to show that corresponding to each biography there is one persistent self or substantial identity. In this chapter I have endeavoured to argue for the latter contention — namely that the cognitive relation which in memory unites a later state to an earlier mental state, cannot be reduced, as Hume thought, to resemblance and causal connection, and that it constitutes a unique bond between mental events. In this sense memory clearly implies something which is known as the 'unity of consciousness' or self-identity, a numerically identical and persistent subject-self. Indeed Ayer at one place very nearly accepted this conclusion when he wrote: 'Some continuity of memory is necessary, but not, I think, sufficient. It needs to be backed by some other relation of which, perhaps, nothing more illuminating can be said than that it is the relation that holds between experiences when they are constituents of the *same* consciousness.'^{4 3}

The upshot of the above discussion is that memory, instead of constituting personal identity, is itself accountable through a persistent substantial self — a link that explains

the gap between the past event and the present recollection of it.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. H. P. Grice: 'Personal Identity', *Mind*, Vol. L (1941), p. 340.
2. See, *Russell and Moore: The Analytic Heritage*, (McMillan, London), 1971, p. 119.
3. At one level the naive realistic theory seems to be quite plausible. For example, when I remember breaking a tea cup five minutes ago, I do not draw a deduction from the present appearance of the cup. I seem just to remember—that is to say, I look back in a very direct way to the past event. But this leaves it very open whether or not more subtle factors enter into my confident remembering of events I experienced long ago. See section 5.3 below.
4. David Hume: *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford Clarendon Press (1951): Book I, part I, Sec. III, p. 8 *passim*.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
6. *Ibid.*, Bk I, Pt. I, Sect. IV. *passim*.
Reid's *Essays on The Intellectual Powers of Man*, (ed.) A.D. Woozley. MacMillan, London (1941), p. 222.
8. *Op. cit.*, p. 225.
9. G. F. Stout: *Mind and Matter*, Cambridge University Press (1931), pp. 218–219.
10. H. A. Prichard: *Knowledge and Perception*, p. 191.
11. *Ibid.*, Appendix, p. 635.
12. B. Russell: *The Analysis of Mind*, Lecture IX, p. 163.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
14. B. Russell: *An Outline of Philosophy*, (George Allen & Unwin, London) p. 204.
15. B. Russell: *The Analysis of Mind*, pp. 90-91.
16. Lecture IV: Influence of Past History on Present Occurrences in Living Organisms, pp. 85 ff. *passim*.
17. *Op. cit.*, Lecture IV, pp. 87-88.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
21. C. D. Broad: *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* (London, Kegan Paul), pp. 445-446.
22. H.J. Paton: 'Self-Identity', *Mind* Vol. xxxviii (1929) p. 109.
23. G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, Hutchinson, London, p. 275.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 275.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 276.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 275.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 273.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 276.
29. S. Alexander: *Space, Time, and Deity*, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-114.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.
31. H. H. Price: 'Memory Knowledge', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supp. Volume XV (1936) p. 24.
32. *Loc cit.* p. 276.
33. G. Ryle *op. cit.*, p. 274.
34. Cf., Ch. V 'Memory', pp. 252-261.
35. Similar linguistic device to memory is adopted by S. Shoemaker. He maintains that the mere fact that a memory statement is confidently and sincerely made gives reason for believing it to be true. 'My remembering 'that P entails that P'. Vide *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*, p. 134. However, the temporal gap involved in memory cannot be bridged by means of such devices as a 'true' definition or meaning of remembering. It is much more complex and requires deeper consideration of the sort of experience we have in remembering.
36. C. D. Broad: *The Mind and Its Place in Nature*, (Kegan Paul, London) p. 354.
37. Broad compares a trace to a scar in a body which may persist years after every particle of matter which was in the body when it was burnt has left it and been replaced by other matter; it "persists through the same *form* being continually imposed on *fresh matter*".
38. C. D. Broad: *op. cit.*, pp. 465-66.
39. C. D. Broad: *op. cit.*, p. 264.
40. Materialist or physicalist philosophers (including those who think that body can be the basis or criterion of one's personal identity) incline to think that retentiveness is only a function or attribute of the brain. I have already argued in many ways that

the brain is not the self or mind or part of it, and that the principles of explanation sufficient for biology do not touch the essence of conscious experience. Consequently there is no question here of the sufficiency of the brain to account for every feature of the unity and retentiveness of mind. Perhaps it would be instructive in this connection to mention a quote from a recent research paper: 'Another possibility, that memory in some way resides within nucleotide sequences in newly formed DNA (or RNA) is both implausible and has at present no supporting evidence.' G. Horn: 'Experience and the Central Nervous System', *New Scientist* (June, 1970) p. 625.

41. See Broad, *op. cit.*, pp. 599 ff. He thought that with the assumption of a third determinable quality of 'mental position' (in addition to two commonly recognized determinable positional qualities, viz., temporal and spatial position) a mind or self could be definable in serialist terms.
42. McNabb: *op. cit.*, p. 150.
43. A J. Ayer: *The Problem of Knowledge, op. cit.*, pp. 198-199 (italics mine).

Chapter 7

SELF – KNOWLEDGE

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SELF-KNOWLEDGE

7.1 SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND INTROSPECTION

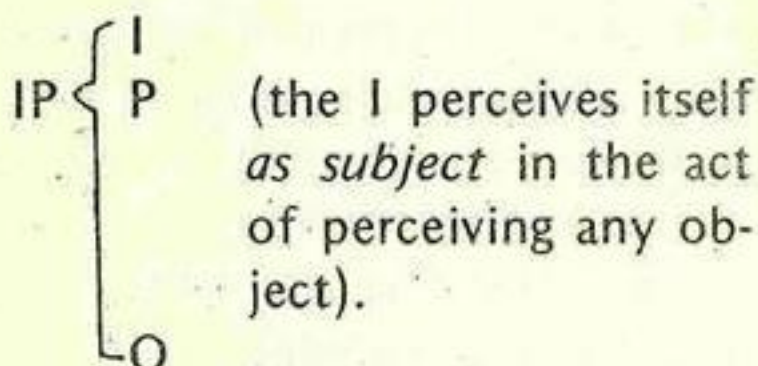
In the last two chapters an attempt was made to develop an argument for the self as the persistent and substantial subject of mental occurrences. As I observed at several places, one of the main reasons of philosophers, especially the phenomenologists and the empiricists, for rejecting the self as a substantial particular is that it is not sensibly given or known as objects and sense-data are known and apprehended. It always escapes introspective scrutiny, and can never be picked out as a sensible particular. My argument for the reality of self as subject of experiences and mental events may make the reader of this book to think that the self which I am defending is the same as the transcendental self or ego of Kantian philosophy. I must make it plain at the outset that I consider the division of selves into transcendental or pure and empirical as an unfortunate legacy of idealistic thought. This notorious division, to my mind, complicates rather than solve any issue.

Self-awareness and self-consciousness is the principle and guarantee of that flexibility which enables a self to live through a variety of changes that would be fatal to the identity of any other object. It is only by self-consciousness, i.e., by internalizing the changing contents, that a self maintains its identity in the maelstrom of events. Memory requires not only a single persistent subject of experiences, but also a subject that is conscious of its own identity, that is, its own self-same character. If the arguments given earlier on in the thesis are correct, it would be clear that there is no mental event which is not in some sense a consciousness of selfhood. If an experience or mental event, say a feeling *F*,

does not reveal the identity of its subject, it would itself be a nonentity. The fact, however, is that F is always experienced as *my* feeling, *your* feeling, *his* or *her* feeling. This means that consciousness of the subject to which it belongs is given with every instance of mental occurrence. The identity of every mental event defines itself for consciousness within the comprehensive identity of a self-conscious subject self. The empiricists' contention that it is possible to be conscious merely of an object and nothing more is clearly misguided. It would be admitted on all hands that along with the consciousness of every object there must go a certain awareness of the subject to which the conscious state in question belongs. Thus an experience which is on the face of it the awareness of an object, feeling, impression etc. less obviously but no less veritably a conscious experience of what it means to be a subject. Consciousness always is (or entails) knowledge that something is the case — that I am understanding', and this makes it evident that consciousness cannot be accounted for apart from the self. Knowledge of an act must necessarily mean knowledge of an act as coming from a subject. The self is grasped (however confusedly) in all consciousness. By consciousness or introspection we know our acts precisely as *our* acts.

The consciousness of the self in any experience can be regarded as more basic than the introspection, self-consciousness generally understood on the pattern of external perception. Whereas in the introspective mode of self-awareness the self as subject confronts the self as object, no such articulation divides the basic or primary self-consciousness, which is subjective through and through. Terminology used to express this peculiar mode of acquaintance creates a lot of misunderstandings here. Linguistic expressions such as 'intuition of the ego', 'knowing one's self', 'self-perception', make the apprehension too objective, as if I were cognizing an object.

Our immediate and direct knowledge of ourselves in the sense above explained, that is in the sense of primary or basic self-consciousness can be represented in the following formula:



Self-knowledge is an ultimate and irreducible fact not further analysable. Nothing further can strictly be said of it. To understand or to conceptualize it is to reduce it to ulterior elements, to go behind the real self. But because we do not observe the self in the ordinary sense of the word, we try to observe it — we try to describe it in terms of objective facts i.e., mental states or experiences, with which we are more familiar. Needless to say, all attempts to explain it in terms of the objective facts are futile. It is not given by sense — sense cannot give it. The mind or self is never its own object, and the object is always other than the mind. Yet it is an undeniable reality that we know or experience ourselves as subjects. Philosophers have usually faced difficulty in describing or elucidating this peculiar mode of knowledge or acquaintance. Samuel Alexander made a very helpful suggestion in this connection. The mind, according to Alexander, “enjoys” or “lives through” its own experiences. It “enjoys” itself in its own acts. ‘Enjoy’ doubtless gives the wrong cue, but ‘living through’ seems to carry something of the suggestion which ‘feeling’ also have of designating a way of *being* which is at the same time a way of being aware.

According to Alexander, the mind or the subject is conscious of its own being as a distinct entity by the side

of the object. Through enjoyment we know ourselves as a definite entity. Through contemplation we know the object as another entity different from us. The difference of the two kinds of knowledge consists in this, that the "of" indicative of the relation of knowledge has a different meaning in each case. In 'knowledge of an object', "of" means reference; in 'knowledge of self', "of" means apposition. In the former it means that the cognitive act is directed upon an object; in the latter that it consists in knowledge. That is, the latter is not the knowledge of self in the ordinary sense in which the self would be an object of knowledge.¹ Knowledge (=immediate apprehension) of self there certainly is; but it is not knowledge of self in the same sense in which knowledge of an object is Knowledge.

It is important to realize that, in order to account for the attainment of self-knowledge, there is no need to postulate any unique or special faculty, that it is acquired in and through the very same process of apprehension by means of which we obtain knowledge of external things or our own inner states. Let us consider an instance of sense-perception. Frequently philosophers are inclined to treat it as though it were simply and solely the cognitive act of discriminating and discerning the features or characteristics of an object. But the slightest reflection is sufficient to convince us that, it takes place in the concrete life of mind, it is an act of greater complexity, that it involves not merely recognition of the qualities of an object, but a change in the state of feeling-tone, and, as resulting from both, a certain tendency for action. The act of perception here is not merely an act of discriminating and observing the object, but likewise of discriminating the object from that which is given along with it and is, in fact, subjective. It is wrong to suppose, however, that it is an act both of external and internal perception. The truth of the matter is that the one object is only deter-

mined by it as an object in contrast with an awareness of a subject which it does not so determine. It need not be two mental acts to perceive a toothache and to be aware that I dislike it. The error of Ryle and a good many other writers regarding self-knowledge is to ignore this simple fact.² Apprehension of external objective data and self-awareness proceed strictly *pari passu* — they are, in fact, complementary side of one process. Introspection, considered in the light of these observations, is a secondary, superadded, process; it is not involved or required in the fundamental and primary sense of being self — conscious. Self-knowledge and introspection should be clearly differentiated. While the latter obviously presupposes the former, it involves, it seems to me, considerably more. Even when we are wholly absorbed in attending to an object, our attention is itself experienced in the sense of being 'lived through', or in Alexander's phrase, 'enjoyed'. But, we certainly need not notice it, i.e. observe or perceive it as we perceive the objects. We take note of it only when we pass from the objective to reflective or self-conscious attitude, which only means paying attention relatively more to the subjective side. However absorbed we may be in an object, it seems to me that we are never wholly incognizant of our selfhood in relation to it. We are aware of it in being aware of the whole of which it is part, without separately discerning it within this whole. From this point of view, self-awareness becomes an aspect of all awareness, and so conceived self-awareness accompanies all our experience. It is this which permits us to view experiences as experiences to the self: only because there is a self-awareness independent of the particular experience holding attention that the experience is *to* such a self, as distinct from being merely *of* the self. It is in this sense that the subject is present alongside of its experiences.

A recurrent argument against self-knowledge in recent writings takes its stance on the supposition that the intros-

pectibility of mental states starts an infinite series of perceptions. That is to say, the occurrence of a particular mental state and the knowledge that it is mine are *supposed* to be two different acts of consciousness. If this were so, we might be exposed to an infinite regress. But, the view of self-knowledge I have explained above steers clear of this difficulty. We know that, as a matter of common experience, no infinite regress is involved in our having experiences and knowing simultaneously that those experiences are ours or that we are their owner. Perception of a perception scarcely ever occurs except when we are engaged in epistemological or psychological investigation. The immediate and intuitive knowledge of our own self-identity was maintained in the history of philosophy, among others, by Descartes, Locke and Berkeley. I shall here briefly mention their views in order to elucidate further my own position.

According to Descartes we know ourselves in a way fundamentally different from that in which we know external objects. Knowledge of the self and its states and occurrences is immediate or direct, whereas physical things are known to us only mediately, through the impressions they make on our senses. Descartes, searching for an absolutely certain premise on which to base the whole structure of knowledge, found it in the dictum *cogito ergo sum*. The fact of thinking (which I cannot doubt) implies the reality of the self: a simple substance continuing identical through its diverse states, a thinking and not an extended thing. The cogit situation discloses, according to Descartes: (i) the existence of some or other determinate conscious state (mode of the self); (ii) the existence of something indicated by 'I'; (iii) the fact of that state being a state of that 'I' and (iv) that the 'I' is a certain thing or substance, i.e., the subject to which particular conscious states directly belong, and which, through these states, manifests its own existence and nature. Descar-

tes uses the word 'intuition' to express the mode of knowing operating in the cogito. It is the most fundamental and non-discursive or direct act of apprehension. The immediate disclosure of intuition alone is sufficient to furnish the most certain knowledge of our own existence as substantial subjects of experiences. Self's existence is disclosed through its activity. What we know intuitively is the fact of the existence of the thinker.

Even among the empiricist camp, Locke, and still more so, Berkeley have had inkling of this truth; thus they show no inclination to deny the existence and knowledge of a subject. Though Locke strictly believes merely in a faculty of reflection which is precisely parallel to external sensation and nothing of an inner intuition, we read these lines in the Essay:

"Every act of sensation, when duly considered, gives us an equal view of both parts of nature, the corporeal and spiritual. For whilst I know, by seeing and hearing etc., that there is some corporeal being without me, the object of that sensation; I do more certainly know, that there is some spiritual being within me, that sees and hears."³

For Berkeley too the self is a spirit, and a spirit is above all an active agent. To know the self we must grasp it in its activities; but that we cannot do if we are confined to knowing it by way of ideas, which are passive and inert. "... mind, soul, spirit do not stand for different ideas, or in truth for any idea at all, but for something which is very different from ideas, and which by being an agent cannot be like unto, or any idea."⁴

And elsewhere he wrote that "I have some knowledge or *notion* of my mind."⁵ The substantial mind (the soul, the

self) is not, for Berkeley, an occult entity whose existence is merely a suppositional necessity. It is not an unknowable substratum of experience but something of which one is, or can become, conscious. ". . . All the unthinking objects of the mind agree, in that they are entirely passive, and their existence consists only in being perceived: whereas a soul or spirit is an active being, whose existence consists not in being perceived, but in perceiving ideas and thinking."⁶

The point which gives plausibility to Berkeley's doctrine is the important one that there is a sense in which we seem to know ourselves from within: as *experiencing* rather than as *experienced*. He is quite right in his insistence that minds are not known by perceptions (understood on the pattern of introspective data) but in the altogether different way of 'notions'. Not that there is anything wrong with introspection as a means of self-knowledge, but only that it gives a partial view of mind and its workings.

Postponing the consideration of Hume's view on self-knowledge until the next section of this chapter, I shall here make a few brief comments on Kant's position about this vexed problem.

According to Kant's "Transcendental Deduction" in the *Critique*,⁷ there can be no knowledge unless there is a subject, self, or knower, unless the presentations come together in a single consciousness, unless the subject of a judgment is the same self that thinks the predicate. A basic condition of our having the sort of knowledge we do have is that everything in our experience should be organized or co-ordinated. This means that the manifold of intuition or perception is incapable of being thought and so becoming an object of knowledge unless perceiving and thinking are so united in one subject that self-consciousness is capable of accompanying

all representations. Kant expresses this by saying that the 'I think' must be capable of accompanying all one's representations. Knowledge, in other words, is a product of our self-activity as thinking subjects spontaneously responding to received sensations. If different experiences are to belong to a single consciousness, there must be the possibility of self-consciousness on the part of the subject of those experiences. Now the unity of consciousness or the "unity of apperception", as he calls it, seems to be quite analogous to, and identical with, the substantial cognizing subject of this book. But, Kant argues, we have no right to claim that we know such a subject as it is in itself, since what we know of it is that what is formally identical in our various acts of cognition. The self, he asserts can only be known as an object. Inner sense, the basis of psychological knowledge, is precisely parallel to outer sense, which provides the material for those sciences which deal with the external world. To explain how knowledge of objects is possible the subject self we require need not be conceived as a substantial entity at all: it is sufficient to think of it as a formal unity. The self can and must be *thought* as subject, but it can only be *known* as object.

"I am conscious of myself neither as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself; I am conscious only that I am. This representation is a thought, not an intuition."⁸

Now in speaking of the unity of consciousness, of the unity of perceiving and thinking in one subject, as a condition of experience, Kant is surely saying something we all affirm in our experience. But still so obvious a fact seems to be slurred over by those who repudiate, as it were, the subject qua the subject and feel justified in dissolving the self into a series of mental events. Kant is therefore drawing

attention to a point of great importance.

At the same time Kant's division of selves into phenomenal (empirically known) and the real or transcendental (as the condition and presupposition of knowledge) is puzzling in many ways. A satisfactory account of the self does not admit any such division of types. As I explained earlier, it is a matter of common experience that we do know ourselves as subjects of all experiences and in this we 'enjoy' our real selves and not the empirical egos as mere temporally extended series of experiences. Kant apparently confines self-knowledge to 'inner sense' or reflection, with the implication that it is nothing more than a kind of internal sensation or introspection. And in this way, surely, we only know a series of inner states — Kant's phenomenal self. But if the self is essentially an active agent, we must know it as subject from the inside, as it were. Indeed I do not see any reason why the knowledge of self as subject should be denied on strict Kantian principles. Kant maintained, as I noted above, that the self qua the subject cannot be known but only thought. The question immediately arises: How are we possibly to think of it? Does not the answer lie only in the fact of intuitive and immediate acquaintance with our own selves as subjects? So Kant's assertion that the real self which is the subject of knowledge and experience, must, if we are to know it at all, itself be determinable as an object of knowledge seems to be quite erroneous. Indeed the possibility of empirical self-ascription of diverse states of consciousness, on Kant's own principles, is possible only by a consciousness capable of knowing its own identity throughout its changing determination. This itself necessitates and in fact guarantees self-awareness in the sense I have maintained in this Chapter.

When I am conscious that I who think A am the I who feel the emotion B and the I who desire C, I regard my 'I'

— my real self — as manifesting itself in these mental operations of thinking, feeling and desiring. My self's being characterized by these operations or states does not mean that the subject self as apprehended in self-consciousness ceases to be the real self. Moreover, it is a strong and convincing counter-argument to Kant that if experience is real, its necessary condition — the 'I' of apperception — must also be real. It cannot itself be merely a logical subject, an empty form without content of its own. The direct testimony of self-conscious experience is to the identity of the self as a substantial, conscious subject.

I shall here in passing make a brief comment on Wittgenstein's views about our knowledge of the self. My reason for bringing in Wittgenstein immediately after Kant is that the ideas of transcendental and empirical egos echo very clearly in Wittgenstein's earlier writings. He employs different expressions, viz. knowing self, the empirical self, the metaphysical self etc; and, following Hume and Kant, asserts that a thinking, knowing, metaphysical self must be rejected.

"There is no such thing as the subject that thinks or entertains ideas."⁹

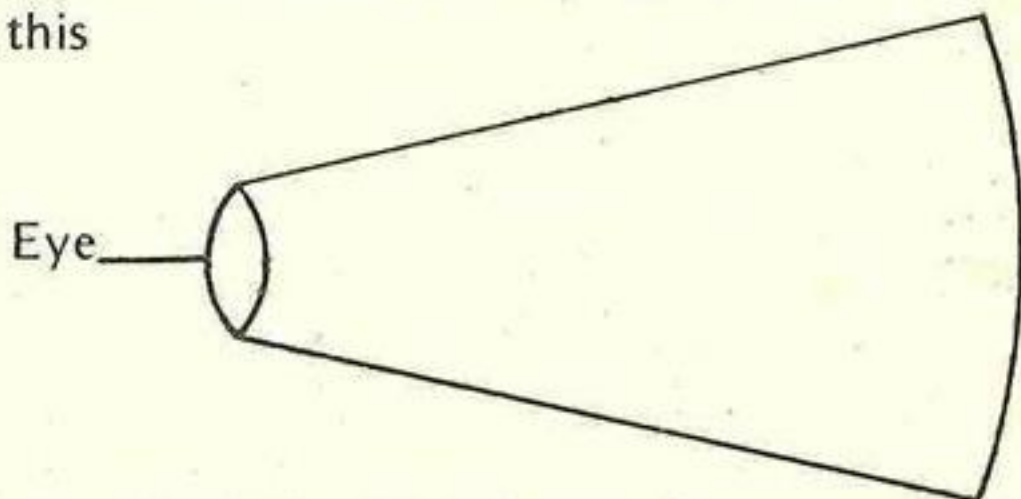
"The philosophical self is not the human body, or the human soul, with which psychology deals, but rather the metaphysical subject, the limit of the world — not a part of it."¹⁰

Wittgenstein is quite right in saying that the 'subject' does not belong to the world, i.e., it is not to be found out like physical objects in the spatio-temporal world. But then the self has never been maintained to be something physical, beatable among the objects in the world. It is the non-physical or spiritual identity of human beings which every one of us knows in his own case in having experience of any sort.

Kantian overtones as to the unknowability of the self are also clear in the following lines.¹¹

“Where in the world is a metaphysical subject to be found? You will say that this is exactly like the case of the eye and the visual field. But really you do not see the eye. And nothing in the visual field allows you to infer that it is seen by an eye.”

“For you the form of the visual field is surely not like this



In the *Notebooks 1914-16* he expresses the same idea in the remark

“The I is not an object.”¹²

Now the ‘I’ — Wittgenstein’s ‘metaphysical subject’ — is not, to be sure, an observable entity like physical objects. It is never perceived by any of the senses, and it could never be, no matter how many powerful instruments we could lay our hands on. I see colour and shapes, but never the ‘I’; I hear sounds but never the ‘I’, and so on. The ‘I’ or the self is not an observable object, any more than the eye is a visual object.

Wittgenstein, incidentally, is quite wrong here in identifying the visual subject with the seeing eye which is used merely as a medium of sight. One’s own eye can be made

a visual object for oneself by looking at it in a mirror; but even so it is being seen by the subject of sight which is not, as such, being seen in the mirror. The subject of vision forever escapes the possibility of being seen, of becoming a visual object, because it is not perceptually visible.

Apparently willing to adopt a neo-Humean analysis of the empirical self, Wittgenstein rejects the subject self. The psychological self, as opposed to the metaphysical subject that does not exist, is nothing more than the series of thoughts, desires, pains and so on, that occur in its history. Yet in a cryptic line of the *Tractatus* he writes: 'Indeed a composite soul would no longer be a soul.'¹³ It is very difficult to understand how Wittgenstein can possibly solve this dilemma on his own premises. On the one hand he seems to maintain that the soul or the self conceived of as a unitary simple subject does not exist, and on the other hand he holds that philosophy must discuss 'I' in a non-psychological sense¹⁴ and that a composite i.e., a Humean soul is not a soul in the real sense. Like Kant he rejects the metaphysical self and still wants to retain it though not as part of the world, but its limit; not as a constituent of the world, but a presupposition of its existence as idea. The enigmatic claims that the self is a presupposition of the existence of the world and that it is the centre of the world do not suggest its illusoriness. Indeed there is a remark in the *Notebooks* that provides the clue that Wittgenstein did in fact accept the reality of self as revealed in volitional activity. The remark reads:

'If the will did not exist, neither would there be that centre of the world, which we call the I. . .'¹⁵

Summing up the arguments of this section, it can be said that the self is known by each person in his own case. He does not or cannot 'introspect' himself as he introspects his

mental states. Self-knowledge is much more immediate and direct; it is the 'enjoyment' or 'living through' of a person's own self-identity as the subject of experiences. Having said this, I shall now turn to Hume's non-observability thesis.

7.2 ANALYSIS OF HUME'S ARGUMENT

The now classic lines of Hume in the *Treatise* regarding self-knowledge epitomize the position taken continuously almost verbatim down to the present day. We do not have, according to Hume, any idea of a simple and identical self—there is no empirical evidence for the existence of such a simple-and continuing substantial principle in us. Mind is nothing but a heap of or collection of different perceptions united together by certain relations, and supposed, though falsely, to be endowed with a perfect simplicity and identity. Hume denies that we have any idea of the self as distinct from our perceptions. If we have any clear and intelligible idea of the self, so he argues, it must be derived from an impression. Yet "self or person is not any one impression, but that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference. If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same, through the whole course of our lives: since self is supposed to exist after that manner. But there is no impression constant and invariable and consequently there is no such idea."¹⁶ All our perceptions are distinguishable and separable, and we can discover no self apart from or underlying these perceptions. Hume's well-known passage reads:

"For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch *myself* at any time without a percep-

tion, and never can observe anything but the perception."¹⁷

Now, on the face of it, one could say that these lines show conclusively that we cannot confront, observe, or know ourselves; and this interpretation has in fact been accepted largely in present times. But has Hume really been unsuccessful in 'finding' the self? I have maintained that the self is known or found in all experiences, and Hume on the other hand seems to tell us that there is no self to be encountered or observed in any experience. Do we have two really incompatible findings? As Price observed very perceptively, it looks very much as though the self that Hume professed to be unable to find is the one that he finds to be stumbling — to be stumbling onto different perceptions.¹⁸ How can he possibly say that he does not find himself — if he is correct in saying that he finds himself to be stumbling and, more fully, that he finds himself to be stumbling on certain things and not to be stumbling on certain other things?

Let us analyse it a bit further. When Hume seeks the self without success, what does he find in fact? He always stumbles on some particular perception or impression and yet he expresses his findings by saying "I always stumble upon some particular perception or other." Hume thus seems to find at least four things. He finds not only

- (i) heat or cold, light, or shade, love or hatred, but also
- (ii) that *someone* finds heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, and moreover
- (iii) that the one who finds heat or cold is the *same as* the one who finds love or hatred and also the same as the one who finds light or shade, and finally

- (iv) that this one does *not* in fact stumble upon himself.¹⁹

On any interpretation of these lines it is certain that he does find these four things. Now if these are the experiential data themselves then they present at least one problem for explanation. How are we to reconcile the second and third of these findings with the fourth? That is to say, how are we to reconcile his positive findings — his finding that *someone* finds light or shade and that this someone is *the same as* as the someone who finds love or hatred — with his negative finding, his finding that he does not stumble upon himself? If Hume finds what he says he finds, that is to say, if he finds not only perceptions, but also that *he* finds them and hence that there is someone who finds them, his premises can in no sense be used to establish the conclusion that he never observes anything but the perceptions.²⁰ How then, the question arises, do we acquire knowledge of the self or mind to which we refer by using 'I' in our first person experience statements. On the view that Hume takes of the nature of 'impressions' or 'ideas', there can obviously be no idea of self. That is to say we can call up in imagination no image or picture of the self, the reason being simply that the 'self' is not an object like other objects which we can observe and lay our hands on. It must therefore be through another avenue than that of 'impressions' that we attain to self-knowledge. And that avenue lies in the way of intuitive and inner reflexion which discloses our self-identity to us in all our activities and thoughts. Even Hume reflecting back in the Appendix to the Treatise, expresses doubts about the rejection of the self in the earlier part of the book. He makes it plain that his conclusion could never be more than the assertion that 'we have no idea of (a continuing self) in that sense',²¹ viz., as an impression. As will be readily admitted, an abiding self always eludes us in the sense that

there is no constant perception of it like the perception of a car or a coloured patch. A little further on Hume admits 'I am sensible, that my account is very defective' and confesses that a person 'alone finds personal identity, when reflecting on the train of past perceptions, that composed a mind'. The 'ideas' of these 'past perceptions' are felt to be connected together'. His difficulty is that 'I cannot discover any theory which gives me satisfaction on this head'.²² In other words, Hume confesses that experience, as and when it involves what he would call a "feeling" of 'personal identity', cannot be treated in terms of his theory of distinct ideas and impressions. According to this theory, if we do perceive or apprehend ourselves in our experiences, then such perception or apprehension must resemble in essential respects the way we perceive or apprehend the familiar external things around us or our own mental states. But as a matter of fact our knowledge of ourselves is quite different from the perception of objects which are always seen in varying perspectives and gestalt. Whenever we perceive — say, whenever we *see* — a spatial object, there are certain parts of the object which we perceive and certain other parts of the object which we do not perceive. I can see the faces of most of the people before me, but not the backs of their heads. One of the results of changes in perspectives is that certain parts become visible which had not been seen before, and certain parts become invisible which had been in sight before. In other words, it is of the essence of a 'perspectival deformation' of a spatial object that certain parts of the object are perceived and certain other parts are not. But our perspective on the self or ego is not of this sort. In thinking, willing etc. I perceive myself to be thinking or willing and know that I am doing so and yet be unable to know whether I am perceiving any proper part of anything that I am perceiving. So there is a well-marked disanalogy between the perception of spatial objects and the perception of oneself. A man cannot be

aware of himself .as experiencing without thereby being aware of himself even though he does not perceive any particular part of himself. Indeed we inwardly feel or 'enjoy' ourselves as subjects without our selves being presented as objects. Prof. Lewis, referring to the error of Hume and all those who write in his fashion, rightly comments.

"Hume was helped to come to his conclusion (regarding the unreality or non-existence of the self) by the firmness of his adherence to in general to a strict empiricism. There is not, however, real justification for scepticism of this kind. We lapse into it, or are manoeuvred into it when we allow our thoughts to be imposed upon in a certain way, when we get ourselves conditioned to looking for something tangible and manageable, as body is, in all our search for reality. It seems absurd to deny that there is thinking about philosophy 'going on', as we say, as part of *my* experience now. It only seems unreal when I set myself to look for the wrong sort of thing or attempt descriptions in terms that are not at all appropriate. That was the trouble with Hume; and it is much more the trouble with his progeny today who have got themselves into a frame of mind in which the only reality they can recognize has to have something of the character of objects we find in the world around us."²³

Hume's fault lies in thinking of the subject-self as being of a piece with the objectively perceived facts or states and to describe it in objective terms relevant only to objective data. The truth is that the self is essentially a subject, and stands subjectively revealed as such. Introspective method as ordinarily understood has very little light to

throw upon the subject — self itself — the self, that is to say, in its aspect of sustained and permanent subjectivity. In self-awareness, the subject though observationally elusive, is yet experienced or 'lived through' immediately with absolute assurance. The self or personal identity is given or felt in an awareness which is not exhausted by observational or perceptual language. It is a mistake to suppose that self-awareness can be exhaustively described by objective data. Indeed the logic of acquaintance-words relevant to self-knowledge is completely different from the logic of perception-words or observation-words. In the words of I. T. Ramsey, 'I' has a logical status all of its own and is not a perception-word."²⁴ Words like 'feeling' 'enjoyment' or 'living through', as was pointed out at the outset of this chapter, are more apt to convey the sense in which the subjective nature of self is not submerged or lost in our ordinary mental life.

Coming now to more recent writers, let us first consider Ryle's position regarding self-knowledge.

7.3 RYLE ON SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Ryle's primary concern in his Chapter on 'Self-Knowledge' is twofold. The first is to dismiss the Cartesian notion of conscious mental states and introspection and the second is to establish the identical nature of knowledge of one's own self and the knowledge of others. He asserts that the dualists' idea of consciousness and introspection is a "logical muddle." I have already dealt with his criticisms of the notion of consciousness and mental states.²⁵ Here I shall mainly concern myself with his treatment of introspection and self-knowledge.

Ryle has one important argument against the concept of introspection. That is the argument of infinite regress.

The view of all dualistic philosophies is that mental events are self-luminous and phosphorescent (to use Ryle's term). They reveal themselves as well as their objects. When I am conscious of something, I am ipso facto conscious of my consciousness of that thing. Consciousness of an object and the consciousness of that consciousness are simultaneous. Ryle, however, argues that the dualist notion of consciousness cannot escape the conclusion that there is an infinite series of consciousness in us. When I infer something, the apprehension or consciousness is expressible in the form, 'because so and so, therefore such and such'. But my consciousness of that apprehension is expressible in the form 'Here I am deducing such and such from so and so'. Since my consciousness of the apprehension is again mental, it must also be self-intimating. That is, I must be aware that 'Here I am spotting the fact that here I am deducing such and such from so and so'. So, Ryle believes, that if this absurd notion of a series of introspective consciousness is to be avoided, the dualist's notion of self-consciousness must be discarded.

Now, with regard to this difficulty of infinite regress foisted on the notion of self-consciousness, it is not difficult to see that this is due to Ryle's failure to distinguish between the two senses of the term 'conscious'. The word 'conscious' is used in the sense of general awareness or vague feeling as also in the sense of particular or distinct awareness. While having a headache, I have not to be all the time distinctly aware of my headache and say to myself 'Here I am knowing that I am suffering from headache'. I may be only vaguely conscious of my headache for I may engage my attention with many other things. Now, the way I am conscious of my headache, I am conscious of my self-awareness. While inferring a conclusion from the premise, I need only say 'Because so and so, therefore such and such, I need not be also distinctly aware of my self-awareness and say, Here I am deducing

such and such from so and so'. The self-apprehending consciousness and the mental state scrutinized my form one whole and we may be conscious of the whole without being distinctly conscious of parts. A. C. Ewing correctly holds, "So if I introspect or am in some way conscious of myself as resolving, both introspection and resolving will be part of my total felt state, but they need not both be object of distinct consciousness."²⁶

Self-consciousness which is implied in our conscious activities is only vaguely felt or known. Ryle has overlooked this point. He argues as if self-awareness is a distinct awareness on our part, running concomitantly with every apprehension of ours. It is on account of this failure to distinguish between the two senses of the term 'conscious' in which I am said to be conscious of an object as well as conscious of myself experiencing that he could see an infinite regress in the notion of introspective consciousness.

Ryle attacks introspection also on the ground that it is not what it is said to be. Introspecting, the dualists believe, is the deliberate act of internally perceiving the mental episodes. It is said to be unerring in informing us about our internal life. Ryle argues that, if it is so, why do several disputes exist relating to the nature of internal life? Why do they not 'look within' and settle the issue? Now, this criticism of Ryle appears to have some substance. It is true that the claim of infallibility is an extravagant claim on the part of the introspectionists. Introspection surely is a sort of scrutiny and as such involves judgement. But the error in judgement does not warrant the conclusion that there is no judgement involved at all. The alleged mistakes of introspective consciousness are in reality mistakes in the interpretation and naming of various data of consciousness. That a fact can be misconstrued is not, however, a reason for denying it.

He has some objections against introspection and self-knowledge on linguistic grounds too. He argues that if consciousness is to be conceived on the analogy of light, the dualists ought not to say that consciousness enables us to *know* the mental states and processes. His objection is to the use of the word 'know'. He asserts that we speak of only seeing things, say a table, in light. We do not speak of knowing it. "Knowing is not the same sort of thing as looking at, and what is known is not the same sort of thing as what is illuminated."²⁷ Similarly he rejects introspection on the ground that we do not use verbs like 'observe', 'witness', 'discover', 'listen to' etc., in connection with the objects of introspection. He writes, for example, "In the sense in which a person may be said to have had a robin under observation, it would be nonsense that he has had a twinge under observation."²⁸ Now, an argument of this sort depends too much on common usages and idioms for the refutation of well established theories. The question at issue is whether the irregular and infinitely varying speech habits of people can be made a criterion for deciding about the reality of obvious things as experiences. Ryle erroneously argues as if seeing and knowing are opposite conceptions so that if we could speak of seeing in the context of light, we could not speak of knowing in the same context. Besides, it is one thing to say that we do not speak of knowing in the context of light (external perception) and quite another that we cannot speak of knowing in the same context.

Ryle mentions another objection against introspection. Following Hume and others, he points out the futility or worthlessness of the supposed acts of introspection on the ground that they cannot possibly enable us to have a true picture of our inner states or experiences. A study of anger, for example, will automatically decrease the intensity of anger with the result that the introspectionist will fail to get

a correct picture of the same. In a situation like this, it is retrospection which comes to our help. So, why should not, argues Ryle, retrospection alone supply us the data about our self-knowledge? "If retrospection can give us the data we need for our knowledge of some states of mind, there is no reason why it should not do so for all."²⁹ Ryle believes that what we call introspection is in fact an 'authentic process of retrospection'. By substituting retrospection for introspection, he seems to think that he can eliminate the 'ghost'. But it is not at all clear how this substitution can help one to escape the 'ghost'. For if we do not introspect, that is, know the mental state or even while it is occurring, how can we retrospect? Retrospection, as is commonly understood, means scrutiny of the recent past. But unless the recent past was also once the present and felt as such when it occurred, retrospection upon how we did feel or act would be impossible. We know that retrospection involves memory and memory involves our consciousness or awareness of some state or situation. So, even when retrospection is the observation of something not present now, still what is observed is the experience of one's own. It is in this connection that Price observes: "Introspection may always be retrospection; it may always be form of short-range memory. But even if it is always 'retro-', the point is that it is 'intro-'. "³⁰ It is indeed difficult to do away with introspection, for if we do not introspect, how do we know that an attempt to introspect cools down the anger or emotional experience. Moreover, if I am asked to introspect the feeling of pain that I will have when a needle is pierced in my body, shall I ever fail to introspect? All these facts go to support the case for introspection and consciousness. Even granting Ryle that all introspection is chronologically posterior to the occurrence of what is introspected, this would not tell against awareness. For, if introspection is not contemporaneous with what is introspected, the time-lag may be very short and be entire-

ly contained in the period psychologists call the psychic present (or the specious present).³¹ Processes may be psychically present which are chronologically successive. This account certainly obviates the difficulty brought against introspection by Ryle and others. Therefore, any criticism of the validity of introspection and reflexion implicitly presupposes as the conditions of the possibility of its own validity precisely what it denies in its own premises. Ryle, in arguing for retrospection as opposed to introspection, tacitly assumes the validity of the latter for his examples. He could not give his example unless it was true that he could be non-retrospectively aware of his daydreaming, humming, etc.

Let us now pass on to Ryle's account of, paradoxical though it may sound, 'self-knowledge without consciousness and introspection'. In this connection he makes a bold statement which dominates his thoughts and ideas throughout *The Concept of Mind*. He says, "The sorts of things that I can find out about myself are the same as the sorts of things that I can find out about other people, and the method of finding them out are much the same." Now, even when we acquiesce and say that what we can know about our own selves, we can also know about others, still it is hard to believe that the methods of knowing in both the cases are the same. Is it at all plausible to believe that the way I know my pain, I also know the pain of others? An observer has to imagine, guess or infer whether I am actually in pain, but I have not to do the same in order to know if I am in pain. A doctor has to ask and interrogate his patient in order to know the nature of his trouble, but the patient has not to ask and interrogate himself for knowing the nature of his suffering. How, in view of these plain facts, can one say that the patient's and the doctor's methods of knowing the

trouble are the same? Moreover, if the methods in the two cases would be the same, certain questions which could be asked of the one could also be asked of the other. When I say 'I feel depressed' nobody would legitimately ask me the question : 'How do you know?' or 'Are you sure?' But if I say of the other 'He feels depressed?' the same questions can easily be asked. I may say that I have reasons or clues to believe that he feels depressed but I cannot say that I have reasons or clues to believe that I feel depressed. My knowledge of my own mental states is direct, immediate and non-inferential. My knowledge of experiences of others, on the contrary, is mediated, inferential and analogical. This clearly establishes that my justification in making the two statements is not the same but very different. Shall we then agree with Ryle in maintaining that the method of knowing about one's own self is the same as the method of knowing others. It is not difficult to see in this connection that Ryle's identification of the method of knowing one's own self with the method of knowing others is due to his gravely mistaken and reductionist view of mind and the mental in holding that mind is just a name for a certain class of behaviour, typical to human beings.

Finally, let us turn to 'The Systematic elusiveness of I' which constitutes the heart of Ryle's argument against self-knowledge. This is, of course, as I observed earlier a well-known problem of how the self as subject or knower can become an object of knowledge to itself. But, Ryle's treatment and exploitation of it has no resemblance at all to the genuine philosophical problem faced by all earnest writers on the subject. The elusiveness of the concept 'I' allegedly appears in the fact that, whatever thing or action I take 'I' or 'me' to refer to in any particular case, I can always make this thing or action the object of a sentence which has 'I' for its subject. The question then arises: what, does this 'I' stand for? And so on, ad infinitum. I can observe my body

and its parts and I can also think of myself observing my body, etc. The 'I' refuses to be tagged as subject-self to any particular event. The self of the moment, cannot be caught for objective description, it is objectively describable only at the next moment. Ryle proposes to dissolve this elusiveness by his logical distinction between higher order and lower order actions. A higher order action denotes an action the description of which involves the oblique mention of another action or actions. But, no such higher performance or comment can be its own object, no higher order activity is ever performed upon itself. No 'act of ridiculing can be its own butt.'³² It could 'be the target only of another commentary. Self-commentary, self-ridicule and self-admonition are logically condemned to eternal penultimacy.'³³ No higher order actions are instinctive. Children have to learn how to perform them and they can be done well or badly. The most common examples of higher order actions, and the ones which are first acquired, are those directed upon the actions of others; later on, one turns them upon one's own lower acts :

'At a certain stage, the child discovers the trick of directing higher order acts upon his own lower acts. Having been separately victim and authors of jokes, coercions, catechisms, criticisms and mimics in inter-personal dealings between himself and others, he finds out how to play both roles at once. Just as he had earlier acquired not only the ability but also the indication to direct higher order acts upon the acts of others, so he now becomes prone, as well as competent, to do the same upon his own behaviour.'³⁴

This is how Ryle explains the systematic elusiveness of 'I'. There is nothing 'mysterious or occult' about higher order

acts and attitudes, neither when they are inter-personal nor when intra-personal. The lower order I or its equivalent must stand for some actions or attitude or object, but the higher I merely stands for some other act or object, in turn themselves object of still higher order acts. We cannot review all the reviews of a book. The last review must remain unreviewed.

Ingenious though this piece of argument may appear, Ryle in truth misses the point completely. Inspired (or rather biased) by his idea of one-world theory, Ryle objectifies what is essentially subjective, that is, he thinks the self or the soul in us can be thoroughly and exhaustively described in objective language. He is fundamentally in error here because of his acceptance of the view that only that can be asserted as real which is apprehended as an object. The root of this mistake lies, in other words, in the supposition that the self can be an object in knowledge exactly in the same sense as other objects or actions are. This leads him to identify the self with the body or with some 'mental' state or act.

Despite some differences, behind both Hume's account and Ryle's account is the one assumption that the obvious fact of self-consciousness can be adequately treated in terms of objective ideas and impressions. Now, with regard to this attempt to objectify the subject and to bring it in line with the objective data or other facts of the world, we may observe that this poses serious problems. The first and the most fundamental problem is the problem of personal identity, that is: How are we to talk of 'one self' if all we have is an infinite series of objective terms? If a human being is a mere collection of objective data, what is it, we may ask, that binds them into one whole so as to make him feel one in the midst of changing facts and circumstances? It is not

impossible to conceive of two persons objectively looking alike. In that case, it would be extremely difficult for others to tell who of them is X and who Y. But surely X and Y will have no difficulty in distinguishing themselves from one another. This is so because personal identity is given in self-awareness which is other than the objective facts constituting partly the life of an individual. The absurdity of replacing self-awareness by objective data (expressed in observational language) is shown by Ramsey with the help of a Nursery Rhyme. He writes :

“The familiar Nursery Rhyme about the old market woman, who, sleeping on the way back from market, had ‘her petticoats cut all round about’ by a pedlar. She, on waking, says: ‘Oh, deary, dear me, this is none of I’. Then she argues: ‘But if it be I, as I do hope it be, I have a dog at home and he will know me; if I be I, he will wag his tail, and if it be not I, he will bark and wail’. Off she goes home, and the dog begins to bark. The result is that she cries: ‘Lawk a mercy on me, this none of I’.³⁵

The point of the Rhyme of course is that to suppose that one’s self-awareness can be exhaustively described by objective data is completely mistaken. Knowing oneself subjectively is clearly not knowing any description of oneself. It is a peculiar, descriptionless inner awareness of the subjects’ own identity, that is totally different from the knowledge of objects given in observation language. A similar point was made by Waismann when he wrote: “. . . it is never impossible for the person himself to say ‘But I have toothache’, even when all the empirical tests have proved negative.”³⁶

Not only does Ryle’s extreme objectivism make personal identity difficult to explain, it also obliterates the distinction

between subject and object. The so-called systematic elusiveness of 'I' is only the logical consequence of a wrong-headed idea that 'I' as the experiencing subject can be worked perfectly in terms of object-words. In his extreme behaviouristic fervour Ryle has wrongly sought to merge the subject with objective data. The 'I' is not of the same category as the object-words occurring as the predicate in the observational i.e., spatio-temporal, public language. To quote I. T. Ramsey again,

"The systematic elusiveness of 'I' relates to the fact that self-awareness as characterizing highest order 'actions' or 'feelings' of personal Identity', cannot be adequately dealt with in terms of those elements which a highest order action *objectively* refers and which becomes available for treatment later."³⁷

In true self-awareness, the self apprehends itself directly as subject; that is, knows or 'enjoys' itself from within. The self so grasped and acquainted with is not, pace Kant, a merely formal and empty unity of apperception, but a real subject existentially apprehended as such. This consciousness does not involve an infinite regress: the self so apprehended is not systematically elusive. Rather it is present invariably in all mental states and acts. It is to be found equally in lower order and in higher order acts. Systematic elusiveness comes only when Ryle tries to "catch" himself i.e., his self by introspection of subject-object model. But this is not an adequate view of self-knowledge, since the subject qua subject cannot be truly grasped as an object. To know the self one must know it precisely for what it is, viz. as a subject. It is, therefore, a serious mistake on the part of contemporary thinkers to view the subject as object. According to Ryle himself, the self of the moment does not allow

itself to be objectified; but this surely does not preclude the direct and intimate cognizance of the self as subject in the way I have suggested.

To sum up: we must admit a certain direct awareness of the self, an awareness which Ryle overlooks completely. This consciousness does not involve an infinite regress, which is proper only to introspection: the self so apprehended is not systematically elusive. The self's presence to itself (when in act) is enjoyed and experienced by all, and this presence is there in its fullness in any mental act or state. It is to be found equally in lower order and in higher order acts. Since Ryle fails to see all this, his account of self-knowledge is fundamentally erroneous. He is strictly against 'Privileged Access' i.e., the thesis that only I can know my own mind and the states of my mind. The foregoing discussion shows that he is mistaken in this unfounded assumption. The question of privileged access links up with the issues of criteria and epistemic privacy which will be the subject matter of the last chapter of this book. Before proceeding with that, I would like to discuss the views of some other contemporary philosophers on the problem of self-knowledge.

7.4 VIEWS OF AYER AND OTHERS

Ayer, in conformity with Hume's empiricism, rejects the self on the ground that it is an entirely unobservable entity. I have already dealt with some aspects of his views regarding the self, especially in the context of its cognitive role. On Ayer's view there is no subject self because it is not revealed in consciousness. Nor is it thought, by those who support a serialist analysis of the subject, that the phenomena of self-consciousness is of special interest to the philosophers. In Ayer's words:

"All that is involved in self-consciousness is the ability of a self to remember some of its earlier states. And to say that a self A is able to remember some of its earlier states is to say merely that some of the sense experiences which constitute A contain memory images which correspond to sense-contents which have previously occurred in the sense-history of A. And thus we find that the possibility of self-consciousness in no way involves the existence of a substantival ego."³⁸

Now, first of all, the equation of self-consciousness with memory is not at all plausible. When I am aware of myself as thinking and writing at a table, I do not *prima facie* appear to myself to be remembering anything. Retrospection is not sufficient for knowledge of mental states, for we can retrospect only what we have been previously conscious of. Moreover, my experience, to be sure, is not confined to being aware of the colour of the table and the whiteness of the page on which I am writing, and so on. I experience myself, or can do so, as noticing this particular thing or the other, and in saying this, I am saying that I am conscious of *myself*. Ayer's account seems to ignore the obvious fact that, when introspection takes place, there is a self (or states of the self) which is introspected and a self which introspects. It seems to me grossly mistaken to say that all I am doing in being thus conscious of myself as noticing this or that is remembering my earlier states. To say that all that happens in such a case is that one set of sense-contents confront another is, to say the least, very paradoxical. The question arises: What is it that does the remembering? Does a sense-content remember anything?

In *The Problem of Knowledge* he holds similar views. . . the point is not that to have an experience of one's self

is to perform a remarkably difficult feat of introspection: it is that there is nothing that would count as having an experience of one's self, that the expression 'having an experience of one's self' is one for which there is no use. This is not to say that people are not self-conscious, in the sense that they conceive of things as happening to themselves. It is that the consciousness of one's self is not one experience among others; not even, as some thought, a special experience which accompanies all others."³⁹

This denial is, of course, consistent with his general ban upon any entity observable in a manner other than in which sense-experiences can be observed. Admitting that the self cannot be observed in the sense in which a material object or a sense-experience can be observed, it does not follow that it is therefore unknowable and fictitious. Indeed the self is as tangible a reality as the experiences themselves; the arguments in the earlier sections of this chapter try to substantiate this claim. The experiences of which we are all conscious are all of them clues to a reality, the reality of the self, which has the experiences and unites them, conferring upon them that special relation to each other which I describe by saying that all of them are mine. We need only to glance within, if we hold no prejudicial theories, to see what is hidden from the philosophers using analytic methods and blinded by the postulates of their theory and by their technique of observation.

Another recent writer who denies the introspectibility of experiences and the accompanying self-knowledge is R. J. Hirst. He declares :

"We only have evidence of certain experiences and activities, of ourselves thinking and seeing. There is no revelation of the ontological status of these

activities or the self which performs them. We may see a red glow and be aware that we are seeing it, but we cannot be aware that it is a sensation in the mind, for that is pure theory, a hypothesis to account for the experience of red glow after certain brain activity."⁴⁰

This seems to me a very misleading statement. Undoubtedly we only think of the 'red glow as a sensation in the mind' when we theorize. But in being aware of the glow, whatever at the time we take it to be, we are also immediately aware that we are aware of it. Now clearly the awareness of the red glow which we 'enjoy' and the red glow itself are not one and the same thing. Normally we do not stop to reflect on this, and our perception of objects seems to be so direct and immediate as to justify the argument that there are just the objects and no apprehending of them. But surely this is not the position a philosopher would accept. We have to distinguish between that which we apprehend and the apprehending of it. And it is the latter that introspection discloses. As such, it is definitely mental. Moreover, the awareness of the self, the subject to whom the presentations of red glow, a book, etc, is presented, is itself lived through or enjoyed along with the awareness of the red glow. In fact this is how Hirst himself comes to say '*We have evidence of certain experiences and activities, of ourselves thinking and seeing*' (italics mine). The ontological status of this self is not doubtful either. Introspection (or intuition) directly apprises me of myself as some mental reality distinct from my body.

The dispensability of introspection and self-knowledge has also been argued by Sydney Shoemaker. He writes:

"It is a distinguishing characteristic of first-person-

experience statements. that it is simply their being true, and not the observation that they are true, or the possession of evidence that they are true, that entitles one to assert them."⁴¹

Writing under the increasingly popular influence of later Wittgensteinian philosophy as he does, Shoemaker purposely minimizes the role of consciousness on the part of the subject of experiences. It is inconceivable that I shall make the statement 'I have a headache', unless I do undergo the painful experience of a headache. The fault of Shoemaker, Hirst and others lies in their unwarranted assumption that the acceptance of introspectibility of experiences necessarily implies an infinite regress. This introspection, as I have tried to bring out in this chapter, is not a superadded or secondary activity; it is not an act of observing our awareness that is quite distinct from the awareness, of an object or performed upon it. It is rather that in being aware of objects — a red glow or headache — we are being aware of so aware. It is the failure to recognize this peculiar awareness — in the sense of 'enjoyment' and 'living through' — that has led philosophers to reject the self as unknowable. This essentially private awareness of one's own self in having experiences is somehow repugnant to the majority of recent writers on the subject. Their arguments and a critical examination of them will form the subject-matter of the concluding chapter of this book.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. "My self-Knowledge is" says Alexander in this connection, "Knowledge consisting in myself." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. ix pp. 25-26.
The mention of Alexander here does not, however, imply that I accept his view of the mind or the self, viz., as being just a mode of spacetime. Edmund Husserl, in a similar vein, explains the consciousness of mental events and the self through the notion of 'lived experience'. ". . . the term 'lived experience' signifies givenness to internal consciousness, inner perceivedness." See his *The Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness*, Translated by James S. Churchill, (Nijhoff, the Hague, 1964) p. 177.
2. A detailed critical appraisal of Ryle will be made in a separate section of this Chapter. See below sec. 3.
3. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Chap. xxiii Sec. 15. p. 185.
4. G. Berkeley, *The Principles of Human Knowledge*. Sec. 27.
5. *Ibid.*, Sec. 142.
6. *Ibid.*, Sec. 139. Earlier in Sec. 2 Berkeley wrote that besides our ideas, "there is something which knows, or perceives them, and exercises divers operations, as willing, imagining, remembering about them. This perceiving, active being is what I call *mind, spirit, soul, or my self.*"
7. *Critique of Pure Reason*, see 'Transcendental Deduction' and 'On the Paralogisms of Pure Reason'. tr. N.K. Smith (London, 1953).
8. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
9. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. Pears and McGuinness (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul), 1961. Sec. 5. 631.
10. *Ibid.*, Sec. 5. 641.
11. *Ibid.*, Sec. 5.633 and 5.6331.
12. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, ed. G.H. Von Wright and G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford. Basil Blackwell, 1953) part I, entry for 7.8.16.
13. *Ibid.*, Sec. 5.5421.
14. *Ibid.*, Sec. 5.641.
15. *Notebooks*, p. 80. This represents the view held by Wittgenstein in the early phase of his thought.

16. David Hume: *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford, 1955) pp. 251-2.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 252.
18. H.H. Price, *Hume's Theory of the External World*, (Oxford, The Clarendon Press) pp. 5-6.
19. This analysis of Hume's paragraph will not, I hope, be seen as unjustified in view of the fact that he could not possibly observe the different perception of light, shade, love, hatred and cold etc. at one moment of time.
20. Roderick M. Chisholm, in an excellent article, argues on similar lines against Hume's non-encounterability thesis. He writes: "Clearly Hume would not have been justified in saying, 'Nothing but impressions are to be found.' And in fact he made no such *subjectless* report. He said, referring to himself, that *he* found nothing but impressions." See his 'On the Observability of The Self.', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 1970 p. 11 (first italic mine).
21. Hume: *A Treatise of Human Nature*, p. 633.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 635, 636.
23. H. D. Lewis, *Elusive Mind* (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1969) p. 18.
24. I.T. Ramsey, 'The Systematic Elusiveness of I', *The Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 5, No. 5, 1955, p. 204. Similarly, D.G.C. McNabb, in a penetrating discussion of Hume's treatment of self-identity, rightly maintains that Hume's mistake lies in his use of the words 'impression' and 'idea' pertaining to self-knowledge. The self is not known to us in a sensation of any sort, in the same way as a colour, a sound, or an emotion is. Equally certainly we can form no image of the self. McNabb goes on to accept Berkeley's view that "we have an experience which we call the self or soul, an experience different in kind from our other experiences, more internal than the most personal emotion that we feel, and not needing or able to be presented in thought by an image, since in all thinking it is actually present that which has all other experiences has also a special inner experience of its own existence." *David Hume. His Theory of Knowledge and Morality*, London, 1951, pp. 148-49.
25. See above Chapter 2.

26. A.C. Ewing, "Prof. Ryle's attack on Dualism", reprinted in '*Clarity is not Enough*', George Allen & Unwin (1963) p. 320.
27. G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*. p. 162.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 205.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
30. H.H. Price, 'Some Objections to Behaviourism', *Dimension of Mind*, Ed., Sidney Hook, Collier Books, 1961, p. 81.
31. I owe this point to P.W. Robinson, cf. his '*Gilbert Ryle's Concept of Mind*', (hethrop, 1960) pp. 32-33.
32. G. Ryle, *op. cit.*, p. 195.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*, p. 193.
35. I.T. Ramsey, 'The Systematic Elusiveness of I', *Philosophical Quarterly*, 1955, p. 199.
36. Cf. F. Waismann, 'Language Strata' in *Logic and Language*, ed. A.G.N. Flew. *op. cit.*, p. 114.
37. *Op. cit.*, p. 203. Ryle's attempt to take out the self or the mind and make it fall in line with the object has been debated by many. Aaron, for example, has argued that even from a linguistic standpoint, first personal pronouncements, which he calls psi-statements, are not reducible to statements of the third person. Vide. 'Dispensing with Mind', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. LII (1951-52), p. 241. Similarly, Wisdom observes that 'peculiarity of the soul is not that it is visible to none but that it is visible only to me'. Cf. his article 'The Concept of Mind'. Reprinted in *The Philosophy of Mind*, ed., V.C. Chappell, Prentice Hall, 1962, p. 53.
38. A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, (London, Victor Gollancz) 2nd edition, p. 126.
39. A.J. Ayer: *The Problem of Knowledge*, (Penguin Book, 1969) p. 48.
40. R.J. Hirst, *The Problems of Perception* (George Allen and Unwin, London) p. 182.
41. S. Shoemaker, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*, (Ithaca, New York, 1963) p. 122.

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THE PERSON—APPROACH

8.1 THE PROBLEM OF IDENTIFICATION

One of the basic theses of cartesian dualism is that a mental substance cannot have physical properties and that a physical substance cannot have experiences. That is to say, the self or mind and body are categorially distinct particulars. Cartesian dualism asserts that a mind cannot also be a body and that a body cannot also be a mind. In the preceding chapters of this thesis, I have advanced arguments to vindicate the reality of a substantial self, which may be briefly stated thus: each man's make-up includes a wholly immaterial entity, his self, mind or soul. It is the mind that sees and hears and feels and thinks and chooses — in a word, is conscious. The mind or self is the person; the body is extrinsic to the person, like a suit of clothes. Though self and body affect one another, the self's existence is quite independent of the body's; and there is thus no reason why the mind should not go on being conscious indefinitely after the death of the body. The ontologically distinct reality of the self demands a dualistic view of human beings; it demands that human beings be regarded as a synthesis of two distinct elements, self and body. The essence of the self is thought or consciousness; and that this thinking self is best depicted as an inner substantial particular directly knowable to the individual person himself in all his activities. There is, in the widest sense of the word, some entity, i.e., the immaterial, substantial self to which I am referring on occasions on which I express a true proposition by utterances like 'I feel

depressed', or 'I see that it is raining'. In the foregoing I have tried to substantiate the cartesian view of the self, that is, as an inner or mental substance, necessarily private, whose existence is only contingently linked with the body or any external physical features of human corporeal existence. The dualist or two-substance conception of persons is that of two entities, a mind or self and a body.

Two-substance conception of persons is not very much in favour in the philosophical scene of to-day. There is a wide variety of objections and sources of discontent, and it is with these that I want to deal in this chapter.

A number of philosophers have grave doubts that the notion of mind or self as a non-physical substantial entity can even be rendered intelligible. I have made constant allusion to Ryle's theories and I do not want to encumber the book any more with quotations from his works. Yet I cannot help quoting two brief passages from two reviews of his *The Concept of Mind*, which, I think, precisely summarize the sources of discontent with the view of the self the present author has tried to establish and maintain. They read:

" 'The Concept of Mind' conveys a sharply personal and definitive view of the world: a world of manageable objects, without hidden recesses, each visibly functioning in its own appropriate fashion."¹

"We live in an age of ceaseless communication. We are bombarded by papers, books and radio talks, beset by meetings and conferences and fill our waste-paper baskets with letters, circulars and minutes. 'The Concept of Mind', in one sense, is a book of the age in which we live."²

According to cartesian dualism, however, in addition to the familiar objects of everyday life, tables, rocks, motor-cars, trees, clouds, in short, material objects, there also exist things of a different sort, namely mental events and selves or subjects of experiences. The self is a real particular, a real entity, but it is a fundamentally different kind of particular from material things. It has no extension, that is, no shape, size, or capacity to occupy space; it is not visible to the eye, tangible to the touch, nor is it visible under any microscope however powerful, tangible to the most delicate of probing instruments. The self is in no way physical, nor is it like a gravitational, magnetic or electrical field. We do not open up one's brain, reach in, and pull out a human midget called the self. The self is just not that sort of thing. Yet, if it is in no way like physical objects, or has no spatio-temporal criteria of identity, the opponents of dualism ask, in what sense is the self an entity at all? What meaning can we give to the notion of the self as an existing (real) thing?

The problem has been formulated in two particular ways, in the problem of identification and the problem of individuation. The former problem, stated briefly, concerns how we tell when we are in the presence of some other mind A rather B or even in the presence of any other mind at all. Since, on the dualist account, another mind is not detectible by any observation we could make, it is impossible that we should have any reason to think we could ever identify another mind as mind A or B. So we could never justifiably believe we were, for example, talking to someone, i.e., some subject of experience like ourselves. And a concept of the self which made it impossible justifiably to apply that concept to any other would be utterly useless, even if intelligible.

The problem of individuation concerns what makes two minds distinct assuming there could be two distinct minds.

One answer might be that they have different mental histories, each having had different mental events at certain times. But, it is argued, it is perfectly conceivable to suppose that at some time we might have two distinct minds with exactly the same history of mental events (each might have grown up in exactly the same way). And if this supposition of two exactly similar minds is intelligible, then what would make them two distinct minds rather than one and the same mind? The dualist, they think, apparently does not seem to have an answer. He must say they are distinct, and yet he cannot say how or in what respect they differ. Does that make any sense?

It is, indeed, not difficult to see why so many philosophers have thought that it is bodily continuity that alone can provide a necessary and sufficient condition for the identity of a person. For them spatio-temporal location and continuity appears to provide a simple public standard for determining whether some thought or feeling or action belongs to the biography of a particular person. It is sometimes said that the theories according to which bodily identity is a necessary condition of self-identity have a number of virtues. It has, first, the theoretical attraction of simplicity, in that it requires only one mode of treatment for the identification through time of all enduring things, treating human beings (or persons) as just one variety of concrete objects. Second, it has a practical appeal, in that its application yields uncontentionably correct answers in the very great majority of the actual cases of personal identification with which we are called upon to deal. B. A. O. Williams, among others, argues for the bodily criteria of personal identity in these lines:

'I have tried to show in a limited way that although we may have the feeling that, by consideration of it (sic. consciousness of self) alone, we may be

given the clue to personal identity, this is in fact an illusion. That it is an illusion is disguised by those theories of personal identity which, by assuming no particular point of view, try to get the best of both worlds, the inner and the outer. If we abandon this for a more realistic approach, the facts of self-consciousness prove incapable of yielding the secret of personal identity, and we are forced back into the world of public criteria. If we accept these conclusions, it may seem that the attempt to give a sense to 'particular personality' that omits reference to the body has failed'.³

Similar considerations lead Ayer to maintain that the basic, 'first', or independent identification is of the body, which, being a physical object, is identified by its physical properties and spatio-temporal location. He too therefore states that,

'a person can be identified by his body; this body can be identified by its physical properties and spatio-temporal location; as a contingent fact there are certain experiences that are causally connected with it; and these particular experiences can then be identified as the experiences of the person whose body it is.'⁴

The above mentioned views are however, in my view, radically misguided. A critical look on Ayer's position here would itself show the failure and deep misconception of philosophers who uphold a bodily-dependent view of self. Ayer, earlier in the essay, formulates the problem of self-identity as that of 'what makes a given collection of states of consciousness belong to one and the same person?' He states: "I am inclined to think that a person's ownership

of states of consciousness *consists* in their standing in a special causal relation of the body by which he is identified."⁵ In the very next sentence, however, he goes on to say that what he is maintaining is "the fact that they are the experiences of the person that one is, *depends* on their being connected with this particular body". But clearly to say that X consists in Y, is a very different matter from saying that X depends on Y. Moreover, this discrepancy is not incidental to Ayer's central argument, as is borne out by his attempt to elucidate what he means by saying that a person's experiences are causally dependent on the state of his body. He begins this attempt by noting that "To say that the experience is not physically determined may be false, but it does not appear to be self-contradictory"⁶ and he goes on to say that "I think, therefore, that the most that we can hope to maintain is that an experience belongs to a given person in virtue of the fact that some state of that person's body is a necessary condition of its occurrence. The justification for this would be, first, that experiences are individuated only by reference to the persons who have them, and secondly, that persons are identified only by reference to their bodies'. A little further on, Ayer concludes that "What *makes* a given experience mine is the fact that the existence of some state of my body is immediately necessary condition of the occurrence of the experience and that no state of any other body is so".⁷ Each of the last two quotations given makes clear that when Ayer speaks of 'what *makes* a given experience or series of experiences mine' he is really talking about 'What makes a given experience or series of experiences identifiable as mine as distinct from anyone else's'. Contrary to his own claim in the matter, he is therefore offering an answer, not to the question as to what makes the given experience or state of consciousness mine, but to the question of how it can be known that the experience or state of consciousness is mine. This is to say that he offers what may be a conceivable ans-

wer to an epistemological question, while claiming in fact to be answering an ontological one, and although in any given case these two questions may well be connected, they are by no means the same. Ayer's answer to the latter question is therefore confused.

On the ground of his claim that the ownership of a given series of experiences or states of consciousness depends on their being connected with a particular body, Ayer considers he is adopting what P.F. Strawson calls a 'no-ownership' theory,⁸ and that he must therefore cope with the charge made by Strawson that a no-ownership theory is necessarily incoherent. It is pointed out by Strawson that while it lays down the requirement that any genuine ownership of particular experiences be contingent and logically open to transfer (as it would be if they could be said to be owned by the body on which they are causally dependent) the theory at the same time requires a kind of ownership that is *not* contingent or logically open to transfer. For to state the theory is to say something like this: all *my* experiences are had (in the contingent way) by a certain body B. And the ineradicable concept 'my experiences' can be understood only by resorting to a self or subject enjoying ownership that is non-contingent and logically incapable of transfer. It cannot be taken as the very concept of experiences contingently dependent upon a certain body B; this would make analytic the claim, 'All my experiences are owned by or dependent upon body B'; and ownership would then again become non-contingent.

Ayer concurs that 'as a contingent fact there are certain experiences which are causally connected with it'⁹ that is, with the given body, and yet wants to introduce analyticity into the issue since avowedly he is concerned to determine what is *meant* in saying that a given experience or set of experiences belongs to a given person. He does this by

stating, as analytic, that, "if an experience is causally dependent on the state of *my* body, then the experience is mine." (*my* italics). But he can only make this statement by introducing into it, as already presupposed, the very idea of ownership which he claims to be challenging as invalid. This is to say that he merely presupposes what makes the given body mine, and fails to offer any answer at all to the question of what is meant by ownership of a given collection of experiences. Ayer's 'no-ownership' theory of the self is therefore internally incoherent. Its incoherence arises from, or is at least concerned with, his confusion of the two kinds of questions which I distinguished, that is, while claiming to answer the question what 'ownership' consists in, he in fact offers an account of what makes a given experience identifiable as mine i.e., identifiable from an external or third person point of view. One may say that, in Ayer's theory, the body is the ultimate subject and owner of such experience as it has. But I do not think that this does justice to what he is driving at, since, for him, the body is a physical object, and physical objects do not go around 'having' experiences. It is the self or ego who does this. Ayer emphatically rejects physicalism on the ground that it requires of ourselves as we would be only if 'permanently anaesthetized'. Thus it is not surprising how much difficulty Ayer has in avoiding the possessive pronoun not only in connection with experiences, but also in reference to bodies. His theory covertly assumes ownership by a self or subject of experience in order to determine what experiences are in question → 'my' experiences — and then purport to assign them ownership.

I have gone into Ayer's position at length with the purpose of showing how philosophers who, under the charming influence of theoretical simplicity and identificatory considerations, land themselves into an altogether anomalous situation. They get into difficulties because they confuse and

intermix two ontologically distinct realities: the self or subject of experience and the material body. Indeed the requirement of these philosophers to identify the self in terms of spatio-temporal continuity is wrongheaded from the start. When one talks of 'identification' of self or mind, one already quite erroneously presupposes an externalized view of a reality that is essentially inner and private and not open to public demonstration. The notion of an incorporeal subject of consciousness or self is perplexing and obscure for Williams, Ayer and others of similar persuasion simply because they start with an unwarranted assumption that only the bodily or physical, i.e. spatio-temporally identifiable, particulars are allowable in their philosophical scheme. Williams in his above mentioned article accepts at the outset that 'Identity of body is at least not a sufficient condition of personal identity, and other considerations, of personal characteristics and, above all, memory, must be invoked' and then goes on to say 'I shall try to say that bodily identity is always a necessary condition of personal identity.'¹⁰ Now in an earlier chapter I have already argued that memory itself is explicable only if we accept a substantial, persistent self and therefore to think that personal identity can be explained by uncritically 'invoking' memory is a wholly confused idea.

So far as identification or knowledge of another self is concerned, it does seem to be the case that we can tell we are in the presence of another subject of experience and can tell whose consciousness it is by observing physical phenomena and behavioural pattern. Surely we have no way of getting at the other mind directly. Knowledge and identification of their minds would be easier if mental telepathy were a common phenomenon. Then one could communicate with another mind without resort to ordinary sense observation and one might tell, by the content of the communication, whom one was communicating with.¹¹ But as things are, we

have to content with the analogical or sign-view of the knowledge of other beings who have thoughts, feelings, and other mental attributes. In general terms to argue by analogy is to argue on the principle that if a given phenomena A has been found to be associated with another phenomena B, then any phenomena similar to A is very likely to be associated with a phenomena similar to B. I observe that there is an association between my mental states, on the one hand, and my behaviour and the physical state of my body, on the other. I notice that there are other bodies similar to mine and they exhibit behaviour similar to my own. I am justified, therefore, in concluding by analogy that mental states like the ones I experienced are associated with those other bodies in the same way that my mental states are associated with my body.^{1 2} I notice, for example, that when I have a pain in my tooth, it is likely to be decayed and that I am likely to groan, complain and hold my jaw. Observing another body like my own that has a decayed tooth and behaves as my body behaves when I have a toothache, I conclude that this body, like mine, is the body of a subject of experience or self that has a toothache. The argument from analogy or the sign-view of the knowledge of other selves asserts, in brief, is that one can have direct and immediate knowledge of oneself, of one's own case, and then ascribe mental attributes and experiences to others on the analogy of correlations that are first found to hold in one's case. I have already, in the preceding chapter, discussed the issues regarding self-knowledge, and here I shall simply reiterate that every one of us knows, enjoys, is intuitively acquainted with, his own self in having any experience, and therefore in accordance with the analogical view, can have indirect knowledge (or justified belief, if one prefers) of other subjects of experiences. The analogical theory has been much impugned in recent analytical and linguistic mental philosophy, but a detailed examination of objections and criticisms made against it lies outside the

scope of this book. Some of the main and currently popular difficulties, pointed out by Wittgenstein and Strawson, will however be discussed in other sections of this chapter.

Like the problem of identification, the question of individuation too does not arise, or in other words, does not present any insuperable difficulty on my theory of the self.¹³ It is quite wrong to suppose that there could possibly exist two different persons who have exactly the same mental history, exactly the same set of mental states and events throughout their life. In the first place, the supposition of exactly similar mental histories would necessitate their having exactly similar bodies and environments, which is most certainly impossible to obtain. Secondly, suppose I suddenly feel a pang of anxiety. Now would it make any sense to speak of the possibility that exactly that event might occur but to someone else, that someone else might have had just that pang of anxiety rather than I myself. One could easily imagine someone else having a feeling of anxiety similar to mine but not exactly that one. As Strawson puts it, "it does not seem to make sense to suggest, for example, that the identical pain which was in fact one's own might have been another's."¹⁴ Thirdly, as it has already been sufficiently argued in the earlier chapters of this thesis, each mental event or state is owned or cognized by an experiencing subject the moment it occurs. In other words, the identity of a mental event is not logically independent of the identity of a person (or self) to whom it occurs. It is an essential feature of a mental event that it occurs to a particular individual self, and to pick it out uniquely we must indicate *whose* mental event it was. Perhaps the more correct way of expressing this thought would be that each mental event is uniquely owned by a particular self and that the so-called problem of individuation is an unreal one.

To sum up the above discussion: I have argued for a view of the self as the subject of experience according to which facts about the body are not logically sufficient grounds for inferences concerning the self. However, as things are, we usually take facts about the body as evidence concerning a person (i.e. a self) and even practically as conclusive evidence — and this applies only in the case of other persons. The subject of experience in the first person, the 'I' does not even require this evidence. In both cases, in the case of oneself and others, the mental experiences are ascribed to the self — the non-physical cartesian ego, and not to the body. It is quite wrong to suppose that identification and individuation in terms of spatio-temporal relations is an exhaustive index of reality. The self is identified by each person in his own case without reference to bodily conditions. Since a person almost always 'has' a body, this entails certain regularities in that body, which make the observation of such regularities inductive evidence.¹⁵ We must now turn to Wittgenstein and Strawson and examine their arguments against the cartesian self made on similar grounds.

8.2 EPISTEMIC PRIVACY AND CRITERIA: WITTGENSTEIN

In the preceding section I discussed the criticisms made against the substantial self, which took their stance from the questions of identification and individuation. My reply to these criticisms was that the knowledge of one's self and one's experiences is essentially private and requires no external criteria or identificatory media in the case of experiencing subject himself. Since so much that has been written in recent philosophical literature is bitterly opposed to these claims, and indeed to the whole approach they presuppose, it is my aim in this section to deal with currently fashionable Wittgensteinian remarks about these. I must admit my

treatment of his theses would inevitably be rather schematic and far from exhaustive.

At the root of objections Wittgenstein, like many other philosophers, has brought against the cartesian self lies the uncritical and unwarranted initial bias that the paradigm of reality is that of spatio-temporally locatable and inter-subjectively communicable particular. Philosophers who approach the realm of the subjective and the private with this preconceived notion are, however, mistaken from the start. One most undesirable consequence of the theory of the self I am maintaining is that only the individual person can know himself and his experiences in his own case. Experiences, mental states and occurrences etc., are known and lived through only by the agent who has them. In this sense they are epistemically private and unsharable — only the experiencing person in principle can know and have them. The significance or content of mental or psychological predicates is given by acquaintance with private inner 'objects' (the experiential data) which constitute the significance or meaning of those predicates or ascriptions. I shall elaborate this point a bit further.

I know of the occurrence of my own experiences with a certainty and incorrigibility which are unavailable to others who judge me (or infer) to be having a certain experience. For whereas I know that I am having experience E because I am having it, because I cannot fail to identify it correctly, others know that I am experiencing E only from my behaviour. They infer it or attribute it to me on the basis of behavioural criteria, that is, on the basis of some change of countenance, or utterance, or physical action. Since my behaviour is only inductively correlated with my experience and since the proposition that I am behaving in the way in which people normally behave when they experience E does not

entail that I am experiencing E, the knowledge that others have of my inner states lacks the certainty of my own knowledge of them. Whereas I am acquainted with my experiences, as it were, from the 'inside', others can only know them from the 'outside'. Since I have a privileged access to my own experiences, and others must make do with the external manifestations of them, it is certainly true to claim that 'only I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise or guess'. I can only believe that someone else is in pain, but I know, with utmost surity, that I am in a similar (pain) state. In my own case, I know directly that I am experiencing E, just by experiencing E. But in the case of others it is only their behaviour and facial expression etc. that is available to me, which gives only indirect access to their inner experience. I cannot know whether another person is really having an experience E, or merely behaving as I do when I experience E. Experiences are, thus, epistemologically private, because you cannot have my experiences. The truth of the matter is that only the pains I have are called 'my pains'. What is intimated by this tautology is the truth that pains, like other mental states and occurrences, are private-identifiability-dependent, that is, they must be privately owned by, ascribed to, subjects of experiences or the selves. Another way of saying this is that there is no criteria for ascribing experiences to oneself. It makes no sense for me to doubt, when I am in pain, whether I am in pain. It is a direct, non-criterial, evidenceless knowledge that one has of one's own experiences.

In direct opposition to this, Wittgenstein and his followers look for the significance and meaning of mental words in their use, in public acts of communication between the users of a common language. They do not consider it of any moment to see how these are understood and employed by individual minds, and the grounds on which they are ascribed.

For Wittgenstein and those who write under his influence in present-day philosophy, the meaning and real significance of mental concepts is derived from their conventionally established capacity to stand for externally observable conditions. Wittgenstein maintains (in the 'Investigations' and other later works) that the mental words and predicates we commonly use do not refer to inner experiences and states. Particularly he denies that the private inner experience could serve as criterion for the employment of psychological words. In his view, to say that someone is in a given mental state is to say that he is in any of a large collection of publicly observable situations which constitute its real significance. I have already earlier in this book discussed and refuted Wittgenstein's rejection of mental states and occurrences by characterizing psychological statements as non-cognitive avowals or bits of learned behaviour (conventionalized alternatives to crying out etc.).¹⁶ So I shall not pursue this part of his doctrine any more. As regards his hostility to the epistemic privacy of mental states, the following quotations epitomize his position:

"But it [a mental state or experience] only makes *sense* because I do behave in this way."¹⁷

"An 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria."¹⁸

Now, these remarks are clearly mistaken and go against the facts as we have them in actual experience. Each of us derives his concepts of the mental from taking note of the happenings in his own mind. The association of these mental occurrences with the outward behaviour is done subsequently, and does not at all enter into the meaning of the mental attributions. The association is contingent. My belief that other human bodies are mind-inhabited is on the grounds of

association or inductive correlations of my inner experiences with outward behaviour in my own case. The fact in which the truth of a psychological statement consists must be one that the person making the statement can directly observe himself. For statements like 'I see an image' and 'I have a toothache' are not inferred from anything, yet these statements are made with certainty and it seems unquestionable that we are (in most of the cases) justified in making them. Here, it is certain, the fact in which the truth of the statements consists must be its own criterion, and must be observed by the person (only by the experient himself) without invoking external evidence or criterion of any sort. It is necessary to insist here that it does not follow, that because the criterion for the application of mental predicates to others are behavioural, they themselves are behavioural. To say that X is the criterion for Y is not to say that X is the definition of Y or that Y 'means' X. Pain behaviour may be a criterion for pain for persons other than the experiencing subject himself, but 'pain' does not mean pain behaviour. It is an empirical truth that pain behaviour is evidence for pain; but this does not imply that pain denotes crying and moaning. Wittgenstein is quite wrong in maintaining that criteria are always essential to a report or a description. As a matter of fact, they are not required in the case of first-person experience statements. Moreover, if there cannot be direct or criterionless basis for the application of psychological processes or events, then it seems there cannot be inductive evidence for its application either, since inductive correlations presuppose the possibility of non-inductively identifying the phenomena to be correlated. Having a pain, thinking or having a thought etc., is a mental event which may accompany and be expressed in speech, or writing or other relevant bodily action, and may also occur in the absence of these. No one can ever know what another's thoughts are in just

the way he knows what his own are; for each person is directly cognizant of his own inner processes. One is rightly inclined to say 'From my own experience of pain I grasp the essential reality of pain'. Wittgenstein and his successors, in their undue zeal for social or intersubjective meanings of psychological language, altogether ignore the most important thing from the point of view of the experient himself, namely, the actual experiencings that name, or designate, mental terms i.e. private inner events and states. The inward and private ostensive definition (the actual experience) provides for each of us the word 'pain' with a direct reference to pain itself, not merely to its manifestations or causes or consequences in behaviour. The former is logically independent of the latter.

Wittgenstein argues against the privacy of experiences on the additional ground that it generates the problem as to how my own private definition could teach me what, for example, the word 'pain' denotes. For this is a word in the English language, a word used by many people. If I know only from my own case what the denotation of the word is, then only I know what I call 'pain', no body else does. The argument has some plausibility. I agree that the fact alluded to does entail that an expression's meaning must, in some sense at least, be regarded as 'public' rather than a private episode. What we must ask, however, is whether the sense in which an expression's meaning is 'public' is not compatible with an equally valid sense in which an expression's meaning is private. It seems to me that it is not very difficult to see that the two *are* compatible. The situation can be summarized like this: a speaker chooses a particular set of words which he hopes will excite the hearer (assuming him to be conversant with the language) to think substantially the same thought as *he* is thinking. To that extent the meaning is, or is intended to be, 'public'. But even where the speaker's

intention is wholly successful, there is the speaker's thinking of his thought and the hearer's thinking of his thought, and the two 'thinkings' remain separate private episodes in the minds of the two individuals none the less because the content of thinking is identical in the two cases.

It is not difficult to see the relevance of the privacy and non-criterial knowledge of mental occurrences and states to the question of self as the persistent, substantial subject of experiences. The private and direct (without the observation of bodily states) cognizance of one's experiences underlies the view that psychological or mental facts are logically independent of the bodily ones; and, likewise, self-identity is logically distinct from bodily identity. The reason simply is that, in order to be entitled to make psychological statements about oneself, one does not have to observe facts about one's body or one's behaviour. This also explains why the relationship between physical and psychological facts and between bodily and self-identity, is only a contingent one. In the preceding chapters of this thesis the case for the substantial self as the subject of experience has already been made, and it would be sufficiently clear by now that the use of 'I' in psychological sentences such as 'I am in pain' 'I see a red patch' refers to a non-physical, cartesian self. Wittgenstein's dogmatic bias in favour of the spatio-temporally locatable subjects, however, does not allow him to see the subject of experiences as distinct from the body. No wonder then that he makes extremely ambiguous and mystifying propositions regarding the 'I' — the subject of experiences. The following four quotations will bring out the perplexing character of his remarks:

'My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul. I am not of the *opinion* that he has a

soul.'¹⁹

'The human body is the best picture of the human soul.'²⁰

'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.'²¹

'We say only of a human being, and what is like one, that it thinks.'²²

It is, in the first place, not clear as to what Wittgenstein means by the word 'soul' in the first two quotations. If it is not a spatio-temporally locatable object (Wittgenstein apparently allows no other types of particulars), then what does 'soul' refer to. Secondly, it would be grossly misleading and, in fact senseless, to speak of the 'picture of the human soul'. The soul or self for which I have argued for in this book is an incorporeal and non-physical entity; it cannot therefore be characterized by forms or pictures on the pattern of physical organisms or material objects of any sort. It is an ultimate particular, known by the experiencing subject in his own case. Thirdly, it is naive and unincisive to maintain that 'we say only of a human being, and what is like one, that it thinks'. The wax effigies in London's Madam Tussad resemble actual living persons to an extent that a wax replica is taken by a viewer for the real person. But would any one say that the wax effigies think, feel, experience pain and joy etc.?

8.3 'PERSON' AS A PRIMITIVE CONCEPT: STRAWSON

P.F. Strawson has developed an ingenious and perceptive, though not very plausible, assault on the cartesian or subs-

tance-self in his book 'individuals'.²³ It is therefore pertinent to take a critical look on his theory. According to the position I have tried to maintain and substantiate, states of consciousness are ascribed to, owned by, a mental or non-physical substantial particular, viz., the self, which is quite distinct from the body. In other words, a person is the union of two entities: a body and the self. These two entities are of different ontological types — no property significantly predicable of one is significantly predicable of the other. Strawson rejects this two-substance view of persons, and holds that the mental and the physical are both of them attributes of persons; the 'person' is the underlying entity to which both mental and physical states are ascribed. Before dealing with Strawson's arguments against the cartesian self, let me first describe the theoretical back-cloth of his views in some detail.

The central thesis of Strawson's book is that from the point of view of particular identification, material objects are the basic particulars. What this means is that the general conditions of particular identification require a unified system of publicly observable and enduring spatio-temporal entities. The material universe forms such a system. Material objects can therefore be identified and reidentified independently of the reference to particulars in other categories, but particulars in other categories cannot be identified without reference to material (spatio-temporal) objects. This explains, for Strawson, the sense in which material objects are the basic particulars as far as identification is concerned. He starts his discussion of persons with a clear distinction between two kinds of predicates which we can ascribe to ourselves; he calls them M-predicates and P-predicates. M-predicates are those that we can ascribe to material objects also, whereas P-predicates are those that could not possibly be ascribed to material objects, and includes such things as

actions, intentions, thoughts and feelings, perceptions, memories and sensations — in other words, states of consciousness. The questions that initiate the discussion, which also, as I shall maintain, bring out the misconceived character of the entire theory, are: 'Why are states of consciousness ascribed to anything at all?' and 'Why are they ascribed to the same thing as certain corporeal characteristics, a certain physical situation, etc.?' — i.e. as certain M-predicates.²⁴

Strawson then considers two theories, respectively, the presuppositions of these two questions. That which denies the presupposition of the first he calls 'the no-ownership view', according to which states of consciousness are not, strictly speaking, ascribed to anything at all, all that is true being the contingent fact that different sets of experiences are causally dependent on the corporeal states of different bodies. The theory that denies the presupposition of the second question he calls 'the cartesian view'; on this view, states of consciousness and corporeal predicates are not really ascribed to the same thing, but to two different subjects: body and self or ego. Strawson attempts to show the incoherence of these two views. His fundamental argument against the no-ownership view is that it cannot be stated without presupposing that which it sets out to deny. For of *what* set of experiences or states of consciousness is it contingently true that they are dependent on the corporeal states of my body, where *my body* is identified in purely physical terms? The no-ownership theorist must answer this question; but he can answer it only by saying '*my* experiences', which reintroduces the type of ownership of experiences which he was trying to do without.²⁵

Against the cartesian self, Strawson argues as follows: 'One can ascribe states of consciousness to oneself only if one can ascribe them to others. One can ascribe them to

others only if one can identify other subjects of experience. And one cannot identify others if one can identify them *only* (Strawson's emphasis) as subjects of experience, possessors of states of consciousness'. But it is this last that the cartesian theorist must suppose to be possible. The only alternative for him would be to identify other subjects of experience via their perceived bodies and behaviour. This he would have to do by extrapolation from his own case; but this would presuppose that he already had the notion of *his* experience (and his cartesian self, as opposed to his body), and this notion, by the earlier argument, he is not yet in a position to have.²⁶ The solution to the dilemma posed by these views is to recognize the 'primitiveness' of the concept 'a person'. It is a concept such that both states of consciousness and physical properties are ascribable to one and the same thing — namely, a person. The concept of a self or mind is derivative from, and secondary to, the concept of a person which is not to be construed as a composite concept made up of a body and a mind. The person is the underlying entity which has both mental and physical attributes. Thus, according to Strawson, we could say of the person A that he is six feet tall, weighs one hundred and forty pounds, is walking at the rate of three miles an hour (all physical attributes), and we could also say of the very same entity, that person A, that he is now thinking about a paper he is writing, feels a pang of anxiety about some problem, and wishes a remedy for this (all mental attributes). We have here, so Strawson contends, neither attributions to two different subjects, a mind and a body (cartesian dualism), nor attributions to a body (materialism), but attributions to a person. One may say that the person has a mind and a body, but all that means is that both mental and physical attributes are applicable to him.

Before turning to a detailed critical account of Strawson's

specific arguments against the cartesian self, it is useful for the purposes of my argument to state rather explicitly why he rejects the no-ownership view which is quite plausibly equatable to materialistic monism.²⁷ Strawson rightly maintains that we do ascribe states of consciousness to certain subjects; e.g. we say of some particular subject that he had a headache. Now he wishes to argue that the notion of attributing a state of consciousness to a subject cannot be analysed as, or reduced into, the notion of attributing a state of consciousness or P-predicates to a body. The materialists or the no-ownership theorists claim that to say 'Subject A has a headache' is synonymous with saying 'Body a is producing a headache'. Now clearly it is not that *all* headaches are produced by body a. That is obviously false. Only subject A's headaches are produced by body a. But if 'Subject A has a headache' is synonymous with 'Body a is producing a headache', then to say 'All subject A's headaches are produced by body a are produced by body a' is simply to say 'All the headaches produced by body a are produced by body a'. And that is a claim about which controversy would be impossible, since it is an utter tautology. Strawson's point is that in order for materialists and the 'no-ownership view' philosophers even to formulate their claim, they must have a concept of a subject of mental states which is different from the concept of a material body. For they wish to single out sets of mental states and go on to make the nontrivial claim about each of those sets that it is dependent upon some particular body. So they cannot possibly use the body to single out the sets. Hence, their notion of a subject of states of consciousness must be different from their notion of a material body. Otherwise their claim degenerates into the triviality that all those states of consciousness dependent upon a body are dependent upon that body — a claim too empty to be worth asserting. This argument convincingly establishes the logical distinctness of subjects of consciousness or experiences and

physical bodies. That is to say, it establishes that expressions referring to the one cannot *mean* the same as expressions referring to the other; they cannot be synonymous; the one cannot be analysed in terms of the other. The reader of this thesis can himself judge how much positive force this argument lends to the ontologically distinct self I have been arguing for.

But, then, Strawson would say, it is tendentious and unjustified to maintain a cartesian view of self. He rejects the view that the subject of states of consciousness and experiences is a wholly immaterial, nonphysical subject and instead advances his own theory of 'person' as briefly stated above. The following points of criticism are in order here.

(A) There is an unclarity about what a *person* is, since a person is said to be a 'type of entity such that *both* predicates ascribing states of consciousness *and* predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics are equally applicable to a single individual of that type.'²⁸ There are circumstances in which it does seem as though a person's body would be spoken about in the language appropriate to a material body. A person can stand on a scale and be weighed in a physicist's laboratory in much the same manner that a material body (e.g. a table, a machine) can stand on a scale and be weighed in a physicist's laboratory. The physicist would use the same sort of language to record his observations, whether it was a person or a material body. The scale reading for a particular person might be recorded 'Body1 weighs 140 pounds', the reading of a particular material body might be recorded 'Body2 weighs 175 pounds', and so on. In these circumstances, therefore it does seem that that which one calls one's body is, at least, a body, a material thing. However, the view that the concept of a person is primitive requires that one render a different interpretation of these facts. If the concept of a

person is primitive, it follows that physical attributes are ascribable to the person himself, that a person himself is a material entity. Yet Strawson also maintains that a person is not a material body, that 'the concept of a person is not to be analysed as that of an animated body.'²⁹ This situation clearly brings out the paradoxical and perplexing character of his concept of person. Since he does not hold that a material body is a part of a person and he also does not hold that a person is identical with a material body, it remains for him to specify some further sense in which a person might be said to 'have' a material body. The truth is that we do not strictly ascribe corporeal characteristics and mental characteristics to the same thing. Hence Strawson's phrase 'to the very same thing' in the question 'why are they (states of consciousness) ascribed to the same thing as certain physical characteristics?' is based on a very dogmatic and unwarranted assumption about the whole issue.³⁰

(B) Strawson says that the concept of a person is primitive and the concept of a bodiless subject, pure consciousness or cartesian self is a secondary concept which can grow out of the concept of an embodied subject i.e., the person. But surely the concept of a cartesian self as an immaterial entity cannot possibly be derived from the initial adherence to the concept of a person: it is simply incompatible with it. The dualist concept of a person is that of two entities, a self and a body. The self is as much a primary concept as that of the material body; it exists in its own right, independently of the physical characteristics. At any rate Strawson does not explain anywhere as to what significance can be given to the contention that the notion of a subject of experience is a secondary or derivative concept.

(C) Strawson's materialist bias is exhibited very clearly in his assertion that even among the two types of particulars

— the material objects and person — material objects are basic since identification rests ultimately on location in a unitary spatio-temporal framework. But there is a major difficulty confronting this account of referential identification, which appears in the form of a circularity. Strawson says that in our conceptual scheme as it is, the identification of material particulars, at least, involves relating them to the one unique spatio-temporal structure. Space and time, however, are held to be relational, and the argument to the basicness of material bodies indeed relies precisely on this: 'it is a conceptual truth . . . that places are defined by the relations of material bodies.'³¹ Hence, it seems that places and times are identified in terms of material bodies, and material bodies in terms of places and times. There is a nagging feeling here that the identifier himself, the subject of experience, has been left out of the picture. The circularity in the identificatory system is a direct result of this omission.

I now proceed to consider Strawson's main argument against the possibility of cartesian selves. His reasoning begins with the claim that 'it is a necessary condition of ascribing states of consciousness, experiences, to oneself, in the way one does, that one should also ascribe them, or be prepared to ascribe them, to others who are not oneself'.³² Secondly, a necessary condition of the ability to ascribe states of consciousness to others is the ability to identify, 'referringly think about', those things other than oneself to which states of consciousness are to be ascribed. And thirdly, 'if the things one ascribes states of consciousness to, in ascribing them to others, are thought of as a set of cartesian egos to which only private experiences can, in correct logical grammar, be ascribed . . . then there is no question of telling that a private experience is another's.'³³ The point here is that if someone has the concept of a subject of consciousness, then he must be willing to allow that there could be subjects

other than himself, i.e., that he might be only one self among many. To have the concept of other subjects of consciousness is to be able to distinguish one from another, pick out or identify different subjects of the same logical type. Now if other subjects of consciousness were wholly incorporeal, then there would be no way of distinguishing one subject from another. And if there was no way of distinguishing one subject from another, then one would not have the concept of other subjects. And therefore, one would not have the concept of a subject of consciousness at all. Hence, according to Strawson, the cartesian view of self as the subject of experience is without meaning.

Unless I seriously misunderstand this objection, it seems to me it has no force whatsoever. The entire fabric of the argument, to put it mildly, is an *ignoratio*. For a cartesian believes, as a matter of fact, that there is a large class of selves such that to each of the members of this class a causal relationship to a physical body can correctly be ascribed; and according to the analogical or sign-view of the knowledge of other minds each of us can discover that many behavioural or bodily states are accompanied by distinctive mental states. Further, the cartesian holds, one could identify (indirectly, of course) another subject of experience as 'the subject of experience which stands to that body in the same relation that the subject of my experiences stands to this body'. Bodies other than my own are certainly not inaccessible to me in the way in which another's states of consciousness are. Strawson goes on to take account of this rejoinder to his argument in the following words:

But this suggestion is useless. It requires me to have noted that my experiences stand in a special relation to body M, when it is just the right to speak of my experience that is in question. That is to say, it

requires me to have noted that *my* experiences stand in a special relation to body M; but it requires me to have noted this as a condition of being able to identify other subjects of experiences, i.e., as a condition of my having the idea of myself as a subject of experience, i.e., as a condition of thinking of my experience as mine.³⁴

The incoherence of cartesian dualism according to Strawson, then consists in the point that whereas this theory is supposed to provide, among other things, an explanation of how self-attribution of experiences is possible, its basic thesis that a subject of experience is a cartesian mind leads to the stultifying consequence that self-attribution of experience is impossible.³⁵ Since this argument is the crux of his thesis against the cartesian self, I shall deal with this in detail in numbered sections.

(1) Strawson's basic premise — the thesis that a necessary condition of attributing of experiences to oneself is that experiences should be attributable to others is ambiguous. It can be given two senses, a weak and a strong one. The thesis under the weak interpretation is to the effect that one who attributes experiences to oneself must understand oneself as a thing of a certain kind of which there can in principle be other instances. That is to say, one who attributes experiences to oneself must understand oneself as *a* subject of experiences, and to understand oneself in this way is to recognize at least the logical possibility of the existence of other subjects of experiences. This thesis may be regarded as a consequence of the more general thesis that to subsume a particular under a general concept is to recognize at least the logical possibility of the existence of other particulars subsumable under this concept. Now I should think a cartesian can comfortably agree to this, and indeed there is nothing

to prevent him from conceding to this. The concept of a subject of experiences is indeed a general concept of which there can be instances other than the one referred to by the first-person singular pronoun 'I' by its user, so that one who attributes experiences to oneself, knows (or believes, thinks, etc.) that another subject of experience could be identified as for example 'the subject of experience that stands in the same causal relation to that body as the subject of my experience stands to this one' — that is, for any mental state M he predicates of himself, if he were to observe a correlation between a state B of his body and the presence of M, then any occasion on which he observes a body similar to his in state B is an appropriate occasion for predicating M of another subject of experience.

(2) There is a stronger thesis implied and later in his chapter³⁶ made explicit by the above mentioned argument. It is to the effect that in order for one to recognize the logical possibility of the existence of other subjects of experiences, one must be actually able to identify other subjects of experiences; that is to say, a cartesian mind should be capable of being identifyingly referred to by another. A corollary of this is that mental predicates are univocal whether they occur in the first-person singular psychological statements or in third-person psychological statements. I shall quote Strawson's passage in full:

Clearly there is no sense in talking of identifiable individuals of a special type, a type namely, such that they possess both M-predicates and P-predicates, unless there is in principle some way of telling, with regard to any individual of that type, and any P-predicate, whether that individual possesses that P-predicate. And in the case of at least some P-predicates, the way of telling must constitute in some

sense *logically adequate kinds of criteria* for the ascription of P-predicates. For suppose in no case did these ways of telling constitute logically adequate kinds of criteria. Then we should have to think of the relation between the ways of telling and what the P-predicate ascribes, or a part of what it ascribes, always in the following way: We should have to think of the ways of telling as *signs* of the presence, in the individual concerned, of this different thing, viz., the state of consciousness. But then we could only know that the way of telling was a sign of the presence of the different things ascribed by the P-predicates, by the observation of correlations between the two. But this observation we could each make only in one case, viz., our own. And now we are back in the position of the defender of cartesianism who thought our way with it was too short. For what, now, does 'our own case' mean? There is no sense in the idea of ascribing states of consciousness to oneself, or at all, unless the ascriber already knows how to ascribe at least some states of consciousness to others. So he cannot argue in general 'from his own case' to conclusions about how to do this; for unless he already knows how to do this, he has no conception of *his own case* or any case, i.e., any subject of experience.³⁷

Strawson had, in distinguishing M-predicates from P-predicates, recognized initially at least³⁸ that I know that another person is tired, depressed or in pain by observing his behaviour; but to report that I am tired, depressed or in pain, I need not, and normally do not, observe my own behaviour or bodily states. But now he says that it is essential to maintain that the observed behaviour on the strength of

which depression, for example, is ascribed to another person must provide logically adequate criteria for so doing; in other words, that we must reject the view that overt behaviour provides only signs or symptoms from which an individual's depression can be inferred. Strawson puts his position unambiguously and without a real concession, by saying: "X's depression is something, *one and the same* thing, which is felt but not observed by X, and observed but not felt by others than X".³⁹

But is not this thesis a mere thinly disguised behaviourism and a repudiation of his own earlier position i.e., the obliteration of the distinction between M-predicates and P-predicates? How are we to interpret the sentence quoted above? If we take it literally, Strawson is equating and identifying what X feels with what others observed. In that case there is an obvious objection. Strawson himself mentions the awkward facts in a single sentence, but offers no further comment: he says in brackets, 'Of course what can be observed can also be faked or disguised'. Strawson is not, surely, entitled to gloss over these facts as if they made no difference to his theses. John's feeling depressed and his depressed behaviour cannot be equated, since as he himself concedes, either may occur in the absence of the other. A man may feign that behaviour which is held to be logically adequate grounds for saying that he is in just the condition he pretends to be in. Perhaps Strawson is assuming here that it is always possible to discover another person's state of mind by observing his behaviour. If so, what grounds could he offer for denying that a person determined to conceal some desire, thought or feeling could ever succeed? If John's state of mind is what John tells us about it, whether voluntarily or not, it is certainly wrong to treat introspective reports of mental events as merely verbal behaviour. Since depression may be successfully simulated without being felt and may be felt

without being betrayed or expressed, we cannot accept the statement that it is 'one and the same thing' which is felt by X and observed by others. The ascriptions of states of consciousness to others have always an unverifiable surplus of meaning, the experiential component enjoyed or lived through by the individual subject himself.⁴⁰ If what is observed and what is experienced, are each one and the same thing as depression, then they are one and the same as each other. It is hard to distinguish this from Behaviourism, a doctrine Strawson otherwise explicitly repudiates.

(3) Strawson's main argument — 'One can ascribe states of consciousness to oneself only if one can ascribe states of consciousness to other's — seems to me clearly false. Because of his overconcern with bodily characteristics and social setting, he has been unable to catch the sense in experiences are always essentially privately owned by their subjects. Strawson, in other words, has completely misunderstood the logic of 'mine' or 'my' in respect of personal experiences. There is no doubt that 'mine' normally implies the contrast with 'thine' and 'their'; this is because the words 'mine' and 'thine' usually refer to a claim, to a right or property, and this involves excluding others or limiting their rights. It seems that Strawson has based his argument on these ordinary forensic usages of the words 'mine' and 'yours' or 'his'. In point of fact there is nothing here that in any way precludes my being aware of my own experiences, and thereby knowing them to be mine, in a way that does not directly involve the very different awareness I have of others and their experiences. An experiencing subject knows that an experience or mental state is his in having it. In case there was someone who was invariably mistaken in ascribing states of consciousness to others, whether because there were no other persons in the world or merely because he never encountered any, this would not necessarily prevent

him from being able to ascribe them to himself.

Let me, in the end, briefly summarize the points of the above discussion. I have sought to show (a) that Strawson's argument against the cartesian self or subject of experience and the analogical knowledge of other minds is based on very flimsy and dubious grounds. It breaks down all along the line and is infected with internal incoherence. His initial distinction of P-predicates and M-predicates is incompatible with the 'logically adequate' criteria of ascription of experiences to others. And (b) Strawson's substitute theory of 'person' suffers from unclarity on many points. It is neither the cartesian subject self nor a mere physical (material) body. What then is it? We have Strawson admitting that the 'possession' of a particular body should be ascribed to the 'something', whatever it may, to which my thoughts and feelings are ascribed, in other words it explains why I say that I *have* a body. This surely negates the claim that my thoughts and feelings are ascribed to the same thing as my physical characteristics.

The issues and theories discussed in this chapter demand a rather elaborate treatment of the question of self's relation to body, and to this I now turn.

8.4 SELF AND THE BODY

The concept of the self which emerges from the arguments of the above discussions is like Descartes', namely, the view of the self as a substantival non-physical entity — the subject of consciousness or mental events. He put it thus in the *Meditations*:

"But what then am I? A thing which thinks. What is a thing which thinks? It is a thing which doubts,

understands, affirms, desires, wills, refuses, which also imagines and feels."^{4 1}

Again, in the words of the Sixth Meditation:

"I have a clear and distinct idea of myself inasmuch as I am only a thinking and unextended thing" and that "this I is entirely and absolutely distinct from my body."

Descartes concluded that 'no body can think'. His argument^{4 2} is based on the sound point that 'I have a distinct idea of the body in so far as it is an extended, not a thinking thing'; from this he drew the inference that 'mind and body are really distinct', from which he concluded that no body i.e., physical body, can think. In this book I have also tried to defend a philosophical case for an essentially cartesian view of the self. I have claimed that the self is necessarily a subject of mental events and experiences, and that especially memory-experience requires a persistent substantial self. One has direct and intimate cognizance of oneself in having all sorts of experiences. Negatively I have argued against the views that a physical body (or brain) could be a self, that self could have physical attributes, and that physical attributes are necessary elements in the criteria for self-identity. That is to say, the identity of the person (or self)^{4 3} is logically independent of the identity of the body. Nor is the self a mere collection or series of mental events. The concept of a person is prior to the concept of a mental event in that mental events are events which can occur only to persons i.e., they must be owned by them.

From the above arguments it is clear that the self is ontologically independent of the body and related to it only contingently. As a matter of actual fact, persons or selves

always have bodies; I have a body and so has every other human individual in this terrestrial existence. Facts about the person's body are often expressed as facts about the person; for example in such statements as 'He weighs one hundred-seventy pounds', or 'he is covered with a blanket'. This might lead one to think that a person is identical with his body. But as Sydney Shoemaker has pointed out, "it no more follows from the truth of such statements that a person is his body than it follows from the truth of statements like 'I am out of gas' that a person is his automobile."⁴⁴ To be sure, the relation between a person and his body is of a different sort from that between a person and his house or car; a person's body is not a piece of property owned by him. Yet there is one similarity of great importance. For any car, it is a contingent fact that it is someone's car and, furthermore, a contingent fact that it is one person's (A's) car rather than another's (B's); similarly, for any body, it is a contingent fact that it is someone's body and, furthermore, a contingent fact that it is that person's body rather than another person's. Just as that car, which I own, could (logically) have belonged to someone else and can someday belong to someone else or even to no one, so this body, which is mine, could (logically) have been the body of someone else and can someday be the body of someone else or even someday no longer the body of any person at all. This last possibility is the most indisputable — namely, that someday A's body will exist (in whatever form) as a body, but as a dead body or corpse, and at that time will no longer be A's body, nor be anyone else's either, for that matter. I think everyone would grant that possibility. Moreover, even the possibility of two person's switching bodies makes sense, and one can imagine circumstances under which we would be inclined to say that just that had happened. Consider the hypothetical case offered by Quinton of the thin, puritanical Scot and the plump, apolaustic Pole.⁴⁵ Here suddenly the thin one claims to be the Pole

(and, to embellish Quinton's story, passes lie-detector tests), takes on all those features of character and personality formerly possessed by the Pole, speaks familiarly of a past which only the Pole could have known about, speaks a superb and rare Polish, and so forth. Meanwhile, the plump one takes on the mentality and psychological make-up of the Scot. Surely we could so work out the hypothetical details that we should be inclined to believe that the miraculous had happened and that somehow the two persons had switched bodies.

If we are willing to admit the possibility that persons could switch bodies (and we have seen there is no logical bar to it), then it follows that the fact that any one has the body he has is a contingent fact, in that he just happens to have the body he does and might, in the next moment, suddenly find himself with some other body. This is because the identity of the body is logically independent of the identity of the person or self whose body it is. What makes me the particular person I am is different from what makes my body the particular body it is, and what makes me the same person over time is different from what make my body the same body over time. Of course, as a matter of actual fact, the relation between a person and his body is very stable, so that it is in general reasonable to make the inductive inference from the fact that here we have the same human body to the fact that here we have the person. Only rarely, if ever, do we actually make mistakes. Such a case would occur if someone thinks he is talking to a particular person and then discovers that he is not talking to that person, because that person has just died (of a sudden heart attack or something), and only his corpse remains. Here the usual inference from same body to same person would break down; but such cases of misidentification occur rarely and, when they do occur, are not especially difficult to detect.

As a matter of empirical fact, almost always persons have bodies. The question arises: What does it mean to say that a person has a particular body or that a body is the body of a particular person? Here the vexed question of mind-body relationship becomes pertinent. Generally speaking what I mean by a person's having a body is that if a person is undergoing certain mental events, states or processes, then that body which is *his* will typically be undergoing certain events, states or processes. To give some very rough examples, if a person is experiencing a sharp toothache, then there will typically be a certain state of the teeth of a particular body (for example, cavities) a certain state of the rest of the body (for example, tendencies toward behaviour expressing pain, etc.), and certain future state (for example, remedial behaviour such as taking aspirin, making appointment with a dental doctor, and so forth). Or if a person sees the red light, then there typically has been a certain stimulation of particular sense organs and certain subsequent behaviour; for example, foot moving up to brake pedal, and so on. All of this is very rough, and at best represents probabilistic relationships. But it is obvious that such connections must exist, for we know perfectly well that it is what we mean by saying that a person has a particular body. So it is a necessary truth that if a person has a body, then certain causal relationships will hold between him on the one hand the state, behaviour, and circumstances of his body on the other hand.

The concept of *having* a body is not so specific that it should determine exactly what kind of relationship exists between a person and his body. Yet I think it is sufficiently clear that interactionism is the most reasonable account of the actual relation between a person and his body. The conviction with which we ordinarily believe that mind interacts with body, and body with mind, is of the strongest: it is presupposed in all our daily behaviour, both reflective and

involuntary. It is a familiar fact that states of consciousness can be produced, eliminated, or modified by physical changes. Consider, for example, visual phenomena. By covering the eyes we can eliminate or at least sharply curtail visual phenomena, and by uncovering them we can restore it. It is also a familiar fact that mental states or occurrences can affect the body and the physical world in various ways. My having the thought that it is too dark to read may lead me to walk up to the switch-board and turn on the lights. So clearly the most obvious theory to fit the facts is interactionism. It holds that

- (1) states of consciousness can be causally affected by states of the body, and
- (2) states of the body can be causally affected by states of consciousness; thus the mind and the body can interact.

Among the dualistic (i.e. non-identity) mind-body theories, the two seriously discussed today are Parallelism and Epiphenomenalism — the main rivals to interactionism. Parallelism holds that every mental event is correlated with some one brain event in such a way that whenever that mental event occurs the particular brain event also occurs, but there is no causal connection; they just happen to occur together. Epiphenomenalism agrees with parallelism that there is the correlation, but adds that it consists of a one-way causal connection in which every mental event is caused by some brain event and no brain event is in any way causally affected by any mental event. I shall here make brief comments on each of these theories.

According to the epiphenomenalist theory, mental states and events are nothing but by-products or side-effects of physical processes and themselves can exercise no causal

efficacy on the physical processes. Epiphenomenalism is clearly so paradoxical that it can be ruled out of court quite justifiably. If it is only an illusion that mental events have effects, then human affairs must be conceived very differently from the way they are ordinarily conceived. Historians and common sense like to attribute events to human decisions, emotions, thoughts and feelings. All of that would be in error on this theory. And our ordinary, everyday explanations of human behaviour in those terms would also be in error. It is just false that mental events are never causes. Are we not perfectly familiar with countless indisputable cases in which it is appropriate to say that mental events cause other mental events or cause physical events? A man is at the dentist's and a sudden pain causes him to wince. The sudden realization of his peril may cause a prisoner to take to his heels. How can the epiphenomenalist claim that we are always mistaken when we cite a mental event as a cause? That he does this is a "great paradox of epiphenomenalism".⁴⁶ Indeed the epiphenomenalists are wrong in their basic assumption that the development of the physical sciences will show a steady increase in the number of mental phenomena being explained in purely physical terms. It must be admitted that it is a pipe dream. The characterization of mental events as mere by-products of a chain of physical events is an utterly misguided view. All that we can expect from the future research is a more precise determination of the mental and physical events involved, but we will always be left with the basic difference in type between the two events.

Proponents of parallelism have refused to allow that there could be a causal connection between self or mind and body because they are so radically different in their essential nature. So they maintain that between mental and physical events there is the kind of correlation without direct causal connection which we have in the case of two perfect clocks.

The objection to interactionism, in other words, is based on the fact of familiar dissimilarity of mental and physical phenomena. Parallelists, however, accept the concept of causality: they allow that there is causal connection between bodily events, so that a bodily event like a cut on the hand could produce another bodily state, for example, stimulation in the nerves leading from the hand to the brain. And they also allow that one mental event, say, feeling a sharp pain, could affect another mental event, e.g. the thought that I should better do something about the pain. But they deny that a physical event like the stimulation of certain nerves, a public matter of electrochemical occurrences in tiny cells, could produce a mental event like a sensation of pain, private to the individual person concerned and utterly different in character from electrochemical cellular phenomena. And similarly they deny that a mental event like a sensation of pain could produce an electrochemical change in cells. The events in question, the parallelists maintain, are so utterly dissimilar that it is inconceivable that events of one type should produce events of the other type.

The situation with respect to the two clocks, the basic analogy of parallelism is clear enough; each clock has its own internal mechanism which accounts for its own successive states, and the perfection of each mechanism keeps the two clocks always in phase. But the situation in the case of mind and body does not seem analogous. Consider a person asleep who is awakened by a fire alarm. His mind suddenly hears a wailing, clamorous noise. Now if the parallelist is right, the occurrence of that mental event, the hearing of noise, can be explained simply within the realm of mental events, by some prior mental event. But surely hearing that wailing noise cannot be explained simply by appealing to some prior mental state or event. Therefore on the parallelist theory the undeniable fact of causal correlation between the mental and

the physical is left completely inexplicable. I do not think that there is any logical force in the postulate 'no communication without community'. After all, are there not cases in the physical realm in which the cause and effect differ enormously? Consider, for example, the gradual heating of a piece of ice so that it is eventually turned from ice to liquid and then to a gas. The effects are so very different one from the other and each is utterly different from the cause. Yet it would indeed be rash to say that there can be no causal connection, only correlation, because the alleged cause and effects are so dissimilar from each other. It is similarly unreasonable to admit the correlation between physical events and mental events and yet deny that there is any causal connection between them. As Martha Kneale has pointed out, we are not entitled to have *a priori* convictions about what events can and cannot enter into causal relations: ". . . . we should be prepared to find them anywhere".⁴⁷

There is no denying the fact that we know very little about the actual manner in which mind does influence body, and quite unable to imagine how the influence becomes effective. But our inability to imagine it does nothing to show that it does not happen. It is not important whether we can imagine the interaction of mind and body in the way in which we can imagine a collision between two billiard-balls. What is important is that we have good reason to believe that this interaction takes place.

8.5 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

In this chapter it has been argued that *pace* Wittgenstein and Strawson, 'I' has a concrete referential force of its own, grounded in a self-intuition. To suppose that scientific (observational) or public language could in principle be the whole story about ourselves is to suppose that second - or third-person language is logically primitive and ultimate. I

have argued, on the contrary, that in fact all second- and third-person language requires a first-person setting and backing for logical completeness. Our knowledge of our own self-identity and mental states is in truth a non-linguistic or pre-linguistic one; so that peculiarities appearing in its verbal utterance on which recent philosophers seize on are irrelevant.

I would like to end by briefly going over my steps. I began by arguing that mental occurrences and states are irreducibly distinct from physical or bodily events and overt behaviour. We are directly aware of our own mental processes like, sensing, thinking, willing, imaging, etc. and we are aware of them as being different in nature from material or bodily — externally observable states or processes. Having done this I claimed that a conscious mental event as such involves the existence of a logically simpler entity to be its subject; in other words it is 'I' — the substantival self, which is conscious or cognizant of mental states like the having of some thought, the feeling of some sensation, the entertaining of some wish, etc. Alternatively, I argued that no account of a continuing self or of personal identity is possible in terms of distinct perceptions, for no account can be given, merely in terms of distinct perceptions, of how they are 'connected together'. Memory, instead of providing the connective tissue of one's continued identity, itself entails or presupposes an abiding subject self. Each of us becomes aware of himself when surveying a set of mental states; he enjoys self-awareness of such a kind that he recognizes the mental states to be 'his', becomes at the same time aware of himself as the subject of experience. Mental occurrences or experiences are not qualities of any thing else, e.g., of the body. They may depend on the body, but their distinctive features are not bodily features. This itself shows that self-identity is logically independent of bodily identity.

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2. Wright, J. N.: "Mind and The Concept of Mind", *PAS*, Vol. 1959.
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4. Ayer, A. J.: *The Concept of a Person*, (MacMillan and Co., London), (1963), p. 117.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 116 (italics mine).
6. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
7. *Ibid.*, 120 (my italics).
8. Strawson, P.F., *Individuals* (Methuen and Co., London, 1959), p. 94. see also below pp. 235-236.
9. Ayer, *op. cit.*, p. 117.
10. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 324-325.
11. There is some question even here how much such inferences are based upon what we know about others through sense observation; for example, one would think a piece of information was something only person or subject of experience 'A' could know because one knows, perhaps, that only 'A' was in the room at the time (as established by observing, through the window, his body and the otherwise empty room). So if in the end external observation must be depended upon, telepathy alone will not help.
12. The analogical argument for the knowledge of other minds was suggested by Descartes (Discourse on Method, Pt V) and Locke (An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Bk. IV, Ch. iii. par. 27). It was explicitly stated by Hume (Treatise of Human Nature, Bk. I, Pt. III, sec. xvi) and by J.S. Mill (An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy (London, 1889), pp. 243-244. More recently it has been tentatively endorsed by C.I. Lewis (An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation) p. 143. It has been restated and reaffirmed by A.J. Ayer (The Problem of Knowledge (London, 1956), pp. 214-221; by C.D. Broad (Mind and Its Place in Nature) pp. 335-347; by Stuart Hampshire ('Analogy of Feeling', *Mind*, LXI (1952), pp. 1-12; by H. H. Price ('Our Evidence for Other Minds' *Philosophy*, XIII (1938) pp. 425-436).

- by Bertrand Russell (Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits) pp. 483-486; and by W. Stace (The Theory of Knowledge and Existence) Oxford, 1932, pp. 186-192.
13. That is to say, the self as the cognizing or owning subject of all mental states and events. See above chapter 4.
 14. Strawson, P.F., *Individuals*, (Methuen and Co., London) 1959, p. 97.
 15. See below sec. 4 'Self and the Body'.
 16. See Ch. 2, sec. 4, 5.
 17. *Philosophical Investigations*, sec. 357, p. 113.
 18. *Ibid.*, sec. 58.
 19. *Ibid.*, p. 178 (italics in the original).
 20. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
 21. *Ibid.*, sec. 281.
 22. *Ibid.*, sec. 360.
 23. *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, (Methuen and Co., London), 1959, pp. 87-117.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 96 ff.
 26. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.
 27. That is, all philosophers who reject the subject self are materialists in so far as the body is taken to be the bearer of both physical and mental attributes. It equally applies to serialist theories which (like Ayer's) make body the basis of one's personal identity.
 28. p. 102 (Strawson's emphasis in both cases).
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
 30. For similar criticisms, see N. Burstein, 'Strawson On The Concept of A Person', *Mind*, July 1971, pp. 449-452 and H. D. Lewis 'Mind And Body' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, (1962): 'I should also wish to add that my real self is my mind, and that it is only in a derivative and secondary sense that my body is said to be myself at all. In other words, in the strict sense I am not bald at all, and cannot be; it is only part of my body that can be bald, my body is not something that I *am* but something that I have.' pp. 8ff.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
 33. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
35. "All private experiences, all states of consciousness, will be mine i.e., *no one's*", *Ibid.*, p. 100.
36. *Ibid.*, Ch. 3 'Persons'.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106 (first emphasis mine).
38. He makes it clear that he would accept a Rylean account of some mental concepts, notably 'those which carry an assessment of character or capability', but he offers a different account of certain mental concepts: those which one ascribes to oneself on a different 'basis' from that on which one ascribes them to others.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 109 (my italics).
40. In Chapters 2 and 3 above it has already been conclusively shown that mental events or states of consciousness (Strawson's P-predicates) cannot be equated with, or reduced into, the accompanying bodily manifestations and behavioural states.
41. Descartes: *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, "Second Meditation" tr. (Haldane and Ross), Vol. I, p. 53.
42. 'Reply to the Second Set of Objections to the Meditations', *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 142.
43. After having criticized Strawsonian 'person' theory, I hardly need say that by person what I really mean is the self.
44. Shoemaker, S.: *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity*, (Ithaca, New York, 1963) p. 18. Though Shoemaker would not agree with my use of his example, on my account it follows that when I say, 'I weigh one hundred-fifty pounds', strictly speaking I am saying something not about myself but about something else — namely, a physical body which is contingently connected with me. One might object by asking why we do not say, 'My body weighs one hundred-fifty pounds'. The answer simply is that we could, but it would be a pointless bit of verbosity.
45. Quinton, Anthony: 'The Soul', *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. LIX (1962) p. 401.
46. Kneale, W.C.: 'Mental Events and Epiphenomenalism in *The Philosophy of C. D. Broad*, ed. P. A. Schilpp (New York, 1959) p. 453.
47. Kneale, Martha: 'What is the Mind-Body Problem', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. L (1949-50) p. 116.

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