Essential Indexicality

by

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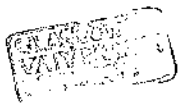

Contents

Summary

The idea which provoked this essay is that sometimes an indexical term is essential to the expression of a truth. I explore some consequences of this idea, whether or not it is true, and investigate why anyone should believe that it is.

As to the consequences of the idea, I strongly hold that they are much more dramatic than is usually supposed, and that casual acceptance or rejection of it is therefore impermissible. Since that nonchalance is general, this is one of the main contentions of the thesis.

In general I argue from the supposition that the nature of temporality and selfhood necessitates indexical forms of expression, and therefore oppose the 'absolute conception' of the world as a body of impersonal and eternal truth. In the course of this polemic I discover an argument against current modal semantics.

However, the subjectivist position which I adopt is found to involve a host of unpopular metaphysical consequences, and doubt is cast on its own expressibility. The reader may well come to feel that the absolute conception does not suffer by comparison.

Finally, I put the concept of essential indexicality to use as an exegetical instrument, and argue that it brings out a central feature of many irrationalist or subjectivist philosophies. I find it hidden also in several innocent-seeming forms of expression to which analytic

philosophers are much given and which may, therefore, commit them to doctrines they would gladly disown.

— 1 —

Causes and consequences of the doctrine

Are there any logically complete, true propositions whose expression essentially requires the use of indexical terms? Some philosophers find it obvious that there are not. Others find it equally obvious that there are such propositions, but do not think that the possibility raises any serious logical or metaphysical problems. I cannot share either of these attitudes. For, while it seems to me that there are several classes of propositions (kinds of subject-matter) which strongly invite treatment as essentially indexical, I do not think this can possibly be a trivial truth, if it is true; the decision to embrace or to reject such propositions ought to have a quite radical impact on the shape of one's metaphysics. It is one of the objects of the present study to show this.

Dummett and Evans, for example, seem to think it uncontroversially true that there are essentially indexical (EI) truths. 'Why should one suppose that all truths can be expressed non-indexically?', they ask[1]. But, true or false, it can't be uncontroversial, because of the number of received ideas which it refutes. Dummett himself, in his Defence of McTaggart[2], indicated one such strong general prejudice - the assumption that there can be an objective description of the world.

Quine, Smart and Goodman seem to think it uncontroversially, unparadoxically true that time lacks the EI features which McTaggart found in it[5]. But this is not an unparadoxical fact; it refutes our strongest-held prejudices about time, and renders many of our beliefs inexpressible.

Finding a common formal idiom in which to express and compare the 'eternalist' and 'indexicalist' positions concerning time would not, I think, give conclusive support to either side. It would nevertheless sharpen the issue sufficiently to make the absolute opposition of the two views obvious; and to render untenable the indifferentism of those modern authors - Dummett, Evans and Grünbaum among them[6] - who seem to think it a matter of no great moment whether there are essentially indexical truths or not. Dummett is one who has lately struck this attitude; yet he himself, in his excellent Defence of McTaggart in 1960, made it clear what a drastic impact the question has on one's metaphysics. As he put it then, if there are irreducibly tensed truths (i.e. if Time, as McTaggart conceived it, is real), then there can be no complete, observer-independent, objective description of the world. Since this last idea is presupposed to almost any speculative enterprise, nothing which refutes it can be called inconsequential. It is because the reality of tense has this implausible consequence that McTaggart inferred it to be unreal - more exactly, as Dummett pointed out[7], he took it for granted that the world had an objective nature and thence showed real tense ('time') to be self-contradictory. Objectivism is inherently so attractive that McTaggart presumed it as part of his proof that time is unreal (because essentially indexical and hence not objective). At any rate the existence or non-existence of

indexical facts is not one of the adiaphora of philosophy. Everyone must take a stand upon it, even if not expressly in these quasi-linguistic terms.

It's the nature of truth that's put in question by EI. It involves the existence of something which is unconceptualizable but true. Dummett's nonchalance about it is at odds with his whole philosophy.

What makes discussion of these topics complicated is that authors disagree not only on what is the case, but also on what matters, or is to be worried about. One writer, confronted with a certain consequence, sees it as plainly false and sufficient to refute the premisses. Another sees it as trivially true. Assuming there are no confusions or mutual misunderstandings to dispel, the situation is one of conflicting intuitions. And in that situation a philosopher ought to decide between them by finding a structure of proofs deriving from intuitions which do not conflict.

However, if, as I think, the conflict of intuitions here is that which divides a rationalist or objectivist system of the world from an irrationalist or subjectivist picture of it, then the procedure proposed above as philosophical – to infer a decision from agreed premises – will beg the question in favour of the rationalist.

Moreover, it is likely that there are in this case no suitable common dogmas with which to begin. Is one then forced to recur to 'the choice of the soul', and permit everyone to resolve the conflict according to inclination?

In a certain sense this would beg the question in favour of subjectivism: not because one is forced to favour those intuitions which lead in the direction of subjectivism, but in the sense that there would be no objective grounds for favouring either objectivism or

subjectivism.

Two odd possibilities are left open by the above. One is that subjectivism could be objectively established; the other is that objectivism could not be.

Popper, with his 'critical rationalism' which founds reason on unreason, would accept the latter[6]; and so would Quine, who teaches that truth is immanent within a theory, and that decision between theories is not itself theoretical, but practical[7].

My purpose, however, is not so much to prove EI as to draw out its consequences. In a way, EI is not something you prove. It's something you jalouse, and conclude things from. The advantage of approaching it from a logical point of view is that those conclusions can be drawn less controvertibly. It is more certain that they follow.

But however much exploration of the consequences I do, the reasons for setting out on such a quest may seem less than compelling. In that case there would remain only the analytical interest of a certain (implausible) logico-metaphysical position, and the hermeneutic interest of seeing whether old philosophies can be cut to its pattern.

This is true to some extent; I do not expect to interest anyone who does not agree that much past discussion of 'subjectivity', 'becoming', 'situation' and 'contingency' is best viewed as oblique discussion of essential indexicality, or at least that the idea of EI does capture an important feature of that sort of philosophy.

It is an instrument of analysis only in a Pickwickian sense, since an essential indexical, once unearthed, is always a problem and an enigma rather than a clarification.

An EI analysis is always the abnegation of analysis and the acceptance of a surd.

Why believe in EI, and why disbelieve in it? My view, put as crudely as possible, is that there is EI because

1. that is the nature of time, and time is real;

2. it is the nature of selfhood, and there are selves.

I do not conclude EI from the nature of modality and space, because

3. space is real but objective;

4. modality is not real.

There are some truths which are not logically accessible to everybody. I think so because I find some common concepts which I think have instances, but which cannot be expressed or conceived except with the aid of indexicality. Some of our most fundamental concepts involve it, so we must either abandon them, or abandon the project of universal metaphysics.

How does one judge, of a concept, that it suffers from this sort of limited conceivability? McTaggart and Prior expect us simply to see that it afflicts the concept of the passage of time, for example[8]. Others expect us simply to see that it belongs also to the metaphysical kind of personality (selfhood). On the other hand, McTaggart simply assumed that his argument about time does not apply to space and personality[9]. Apparently one can just see that it doesn't apply – see, that is, that personality and space are not essentially indexical. Dummett agrees that McTaggart's proof doesn't apply to personality, on the grounds that although time is EI, personality is not. My own inclination is to deny this and to say that personality <u>is</u> EI. Of course, one must distinguish between the forensic/psychosomatic concept of personality, which isn't

EI, and the metaphysical concept (selfhood), which is EI, and is presupposed to special philosophical uses of the personal pronouns - Frege's subjective 'I'[10], the indirect as opposed to the direct reflexive, the auctorial 'I' of Descartes, etc., which are discussed below.

Are there any proofs that time (or any other concept) is essentially indexical? McTaggart assumes it: nothing changes unless facts change[11]. Prior assumes it: we are just to see it.

I certainly don't believe there are any conclusive arguments; but a strong case can be built up. The strategy of proof is to accumulate idées reques about time, to show that they tend to EI in different ways, and hence to show how different non-EI (objective) 'time' is from time. That is verbal, in a way, but the name 'time' is dispensable. The substantive point is that the EI concept, by whatever name, is indispensable to conceiving some truths.

One could be certain that a sentence is essentially indexical only if one were sure that the fact which it states couldn't be stated otherwise. Our situation is that we can't see how to express the fact non-indexically. It evidently does not follow that there's no such formulation and that the fact is EI. Nevertheless we are obliged to assume so until such a formulation is actually produced, because the alternative would be a 'promissory eternalism' as vapid as promissory materialism.

There is no inference from the fact that we can't see how to express something non-indexically to the absolute impossibility of expressing it non-indexically. The arguments simply show that the truths in question have not been expressed non-indexically (the eternalist candidates are no use, inadequate), and invite us to assume that they

cannot be expressed non-indexically - the idea being that we have the right to assume this until we get a counter-example.

In a sense this is the position of one of Popper's empirical theories. It's eminently falsifiable: it will be falsified by the production of a non-indexical expression of the indexically expressed truths to which it draws attention. It is essentially a declaration that certain things can't happen (again like an empirical theory).

However, it has other, more dramatic consequences for metaphysics - so drastic that one may feel that they falsify it of themselves. But if so, the indexical propositions remain even more worrying. We ought to pursue an eternalist account of them with great vigour, and not just pretend to have got one.

Saying that truth is indexical does not imply the doctrines of real subjectivity, real becoming and real contingency. They are implied only by cases (if there are any) of essential indexicality. Moreover each requires its own proof. They march together only for rhetorical reasons, and because of the formal parallel between them. Logically they are quite separate claims. They would coincide only if the parallel turned out to be perfect (since in logic analogy - having the same Logos - is identity).

Does the formal parallel indicate a logical connection, or is it a coincidence? We ought to hope the former, because it's unphilosophical and unscientific to rest content with coincidences - a coincidence is the sign of a scientific failure[13].

I have no arguments to the effect that if time has this form it can be (syntactically) proved to have this

other form. All my discussion is of whether certain forms genuinely formalize time, i.e. idealize time in a way which does not distort it by omitting important features. Part of the difficulty with this is that, in usual discussions of whether a formalism fits, time is an unimportant feature which one neglects in judging the idealizations. Idealizations typically abstract from trivialities such as the time of an event. In attempting to idealize time itself, one is soon tempted to neglect the fact that time requires change, and change requires that something be past, present and future[1] which are either incompatible (if everything real is objective), or incomparable (i.e. obtaining only relative to mutually exclusive viewpoints, here positions in time). It is a temptation to which the eternalist or objectivist succumbs, but there are reasons for resisting it.

If there were no subjective truths, then times, places, and selves would be be real and individual things, since statements like 'I am here' certainly express truths, and the only objectivations of them which have been given refer to selves, places, and times. Therefore if any of these three classes of individuals is empty, there are subjective truths.

Moreover, our discourse about such entities will be vacuous unless there is a practicable, objective way of individualising them. Of course a thing's individuality does not consist in anything, and the criteria sought do not define individuality. They merely guarantee it. They are nevertheless indispensable if we are to get a theory conceivable by finite intellects. And I have seen some, e.g. Prior, identify an instant with the conjunction of all the propositions that are then true*[5]. This may, if you please, be a condition of a moment's individuality, but it

is hardly a practicable criterion. The only practicable criterion of individuality, whether of worlds, times or selves, is indication. But that is not an objective criterion. They aren't objective entities.

Purely objective thought may, indeed, be an incoherent ideal. Change and subjectivity are what necessitate indexical thought; should we then say that without them all thought would be quite general, or rather that the particular and the general are connatural, concreate? If the latter, it is difficult to imagine what thought before change and subjectivity would be like. Like Valéry, "One does not see what a god could think about"[14].

Some form of subjectivism will be established if one can show that the idea of worldless, timeless, or impersonal truth makes no sense. This is pretty plausible in the case of worldlessness. On the most favourable construction, worldless truths would be ones which are neither necessary nor contingent[15].

Timelessness is espoused by many, but there is a suggestion that every proposition is at least present-tense, i.e. that a present-tense operator has the widest scope, even if other tenses, modalities etc. fall within it[16]. It is then superfluous to mark the present tense. Whatever is true, is true now, and that is all that's being declared of it. There are no genuinely tenseless statements. I hear an objection to this as SAE (Whorf's 'Standard Average European'[17]) parochialism, on the grounds that only a minority of tongues have tense. All languages have means, however, of expressing various kinds of remoteness of the fact described from the situation of utterance, in which temporal remoteness would be included. Indeed, one can be more robust and insist that since time distinctions are real and important, a language is

defective which doesn't express them by some special idiom.

Observe that English itself has not got a pure tense system[15]. The future is a partly modal conception, and the present contrasts with other kinds of remoteness than temporal. Even the past tense is not purely temporal. In "To Schopenhauer art was an escape; to Schiller it is control and integration'[16], the speaker uses the present tense for Schiller because he is the main object of discussion and sympathy, but the past tense for Schopenhauer because he is not. No temporal facts are involved.

It is not SAE parochialism; and even SAE doesn't express unambiguously the intended distinction. That's why, once having descried the distinction, and believing it to be real and important, we dedicate a special logic to it.

There might be verificationist support for the incoherence of timeless truth. Russell[20] once held that ultra-empiricism would be a solipsism of the moment. And indeed, what experiment could do more than prove that a hypothesis is true at the time of the experiment? Evidence of past events is always evidence for events that are now past. It is always I who verify a statement empirically, and I always do so now – hence the empiricist concern to prove the existence of 'other minds', other times (the past and future), and more recently, other worlds. The concern is common to Cartesianism, which expressly depends upon an essentially indexical truth. This is one of many affinities which should make us sceptical of the supposedly radical enmity between empiricism and philosophy in the tradition of Descartes. I may note in passing that before the Rationalist/Empiricist typology was generally received among anglophone philosophers, Reid[21] enumerated the principal 'Cartesians' as Descartes, Malebranche, Arnauld,

Locke, Norris, Collier, Berkeley and Hume. "For, though they differ from Des Cartes in some things, and contradict him in others, yet they set out from the same principles, and follow the same method, admitting no other first principle but their own existence, and the existence of those operations of the mind of which they are conscious, and requiring that the existence of a material world, and the existence of other men and things, should be proved by argument." It is noticeable that Spinoza and Leibniz, now thought of as Cartesian, are excluded: they are metaphysicians, not epistemologists.

Of course it is truistic that all actual verification is first-person, present-tensed and trying to get something substantive out of it may be like trying to get Egoism out of the truism that all my actions are done by me and hence for my purposes[22]. Nevertheless, there is something for Egoism in that apparently trivial fact, and correspondingly there may be something for neo-Heracliteans in the other.

It is more difficult to hold that impersonal truth is an incoherent idea, but a methodologically solipsistic verificationist might be inclined to it for reasons like the above. And in general anyone who wants to define truth in terms of possible evidence (warranted assertibility, in Dewey's phrase) ought to be more concerned with all three possibilities. Evidence is always got by particular persons at particular times in particular worlds.

I confess that this road is unappealing to me. I'm interested in real truth, unalloyed with cognitive considerations: real subjectivity, not restricted cognoscibility; a real present, not contemporaneity with a cognitive event; and real contingency, not logical independence of what is known. I seek an EI premise independent of belief and action; an indexical essential to

the expression, by whichever means, of a truth, and not merely to the expression or identification of a belief. The fact that the war is over is an example of such a premise, in the case of temporal EI.

It is possible, of course, that 'the war's over' etc. look like hard facts only because of their emotional, practical significance. According to Oakeshott[23], a practical proposition is essentially one capable of changing truth-value. However, if that is an illusion I see no prospect of dispelling it.

In my view, the subjectivity of these statements is neither practical or epistemic in origin. Prior argues to the effect that 'the war is over' is not equivalent to 'the war (timelessly) ends in 1945', and observes that one could know the first without knowing the second[24]. Not that he offers this observation as a proof of the non-identity. That would be a case of the Arnauld/Descartes epistemic fallacy (fallacy of substitution). He concludes on other grounds that they are not the same fact, and proves from that that it isn't timelessly knowable (because not timelessly true) that the war is over. For like reasons this fact is not timelessly celebrable, regettable, etc. - anything of the form 'V-able', where 'V' is some factive attitudinative. It must be factive because the argument depends on the truth of the object of the attitude. Thus, it is timelessly credible that the war is now over, belief being non-factive.

Something is knowable if and only if it is expressible, provable and true; so unknowability does not by itself imply untruth. Something, it seems, might be true but inexpressible or unprovable.

Sentences can be true but unprovable. In the case of formal unprovability, this has actually itself been proved

by Gödel; and even when it is understood informally, as unjustifiability or unverifiability, only verificationists will find a repugnancy between it and truth. Their argument would be that unverifiability implies inexpressibility (meaninglessness), and that inexpressibility excludes the possibility of truth. I certainly accept the second of these implications.

By EI we move from the inexpressibility of a truth to its unprovability and hence incognoscibility from a certain viewpoint (e.g., moment of time). And we get its untruth, relative to that standpoint, since it is impossible for a logically ineffable truth to exist at all. It's not that such a truth is beyond the reach of human concepts. They elude the concepts of any intellect not located at the right viewpoint. There are some facts which I am metaphysically incapable of understanding. For example, the truth that the war is not yet over does not exist from my temporal standpoint.

In support of the doctrine that indexical terms sometimes occur essentially there are proofs which I am inclined to credit and intuitions which I probably share: not all truths are objective. However, if all statements contained an essential indexical – a view which I find implied in various irrationalist philosophies – the outcome would be a solipsism of the present moment and doctrine of universal contingency, which undermines the premises from which it is drawn. It is possible that this follows also from the apparently more moderate position.

That position, held in their various ways by Frege, Buber, Nagel, and Heidegger, is that some truths are EI and others aren't. There are both subjective and objective facts[20]. The occurrence of Frege's name in this company

might raise some eyebrows, but it is really quite a clear consequence of 'Der Gedanke', in which thoughts grasped by Dr Lauben by means of the subjective 'I' are said to be available only to him, and to differ from those which he communicates to others through the objective use of 'I'. Borrowing a phrase of Nagel's I may style this moderate romanticism. It's admittedly a rather dull conclusion, compared with the extremes from which it dissents. However, I feel that the attempt to establish an unwonted connexion between a part of the analytic tradition and some unreasonable Continental philosophers is not without interest. I have been actuated throughout by a reluctance to view romantic philosophers as deluded mystics, and feel that, in some cases anyway, it is enlightening to try to effect a rapprochement between their work and the analytic sort.

The passage of time is the main source of the doctrine of essential indexicality. The next cause of it is the existence of beliefs about oneself which resist paraphrase into objective idioms that include neither 'I' nor the reflexive pronoun. I know of no discussion of the question in this linguistically-oriented form older than Geach's note of 1957[26]. However, certain older discussions of self-knowledge can, I think, be treated as discussions of the essential occurrence of 'I', as it were in the material mode of speech.

On certain assumptions which I reject, the idea of real (non-epistemic) contingency would also present itself as an essentially indexical one. These assumptions are that modal semantics given in terms of possible worlds is not self-stultifying, and that Lewis's analysis of 'actual' as indexical - an analysis which depends on the first assumption for its plausibility - is correct[27]. In my

view the only way to represent really contingent statements in such a theory is as statements essentially containing the indexical 'actually'. This will seem an unmotivated remark. A justification of it occurs elsewhere (Chapter 7). In any case these considerations do not arise from the true view, which is that necessity and contingency are alike unreal, or else are 'elliptical statements of relative necessity', i.e. of entailment (the basic modal notion). Though P entail Q, yet this relation of entailment does not itself necessarily hold except relative to some further proposition. Ultimately the dependency is on the laws of logic, which are contingent (not entailed by any other truth).

According as one grants different deictic roles a fundamental significance by holding them to occur ineliminably, one grounds different subjectivist philosophies:

If 'I' occurs essentially, then truth is relative to a self, and not caught by explicit relativization to one (solipsism, monadism: there is real subjectivity, there is no impersonal world description.).

Similarly if 'now' is ever essential, then truth is relative to a time, and not caught by explicit relativization to one (there is real becoming, there is no timeless world-description.).

And if 'actually' were an indexical adverb which sometimes occurred essentially, then truth would be relative to a world, and not caught by explicit relativization to one (there is real contingency, there is no worldless description of reality.).

The extreme position is that <u>every</u> true sentence includes the suppressed adverbs 'now', 'for me' and 'actually' — or, equivalently, that a redundancy account is

to be given of them. They "presuppose in use no more than what must be the case because there is an utterance" (Kneale). Every truth then involves the existence of me, the present moment and the actual world.

Let me amplify these consequences.

If, for example, there exists any truth which cannot be stated without the use of 'I', then the world-formula, to use Carnap's term - the perfect description of the world - cannot be given without the use of 'I'. So either there is more than one world-formula (one for each 'I'-user: an idea impossible to state consistently) or else the single world-formula is available only to *me*. And here I do not intend that you, the reader, should reconstrue the word 'me' to refer to yourself, as you would a 'philosophical indexical' (see Chapter 13 below). By 'me' I mean myself.

That is not yet solipsism. It may imply only that the world is oriented towards me in a certain way, perhaps that I enjoy certain cognitive privileges in respect of it (e.g. that only I could in principle learn all there is to know). This is not an accurate statement of the position, however. The 'availability' of the world-formula which I have mentioned as exclusive to myself is not any sort of cognitive relation. It is not that there are some truths which only I can get evidence for, and hence truths which only I can know - that would not be an astonishing opinion, and indeed belongs to common sense. What is meant is that there are some truths which are only <u>truths</u> for me. They cannot co-exist, as truths, or even as statements, with any other self but me. And that yields a proof of solipsism. The world contains certain facts. But if there were other selves, the world could not contain those facts - they don't exist for any other self. There cannot be a plurality of 'worlds' (I would hold, against Lewis[28], that 'the

world' is singular, as a matter of logic), and the nature of the one world which exists cannot be contradictory; so there cannot be a plurality of selves. Hence (since I exist) any essentially egocentric truth entails solipsism.

Analogously, any essentially present-tense truth will be found to involve the Chrysippean doctrine that only the present moment exists - there can be no plurality of times. If the complete description of the world includes an essentially present-tense statement, then the whole description is essentially present-tense, and doesn't exist (can't be stated) at any other time. But if that description does not exist then the world is indeterminate, which is impossible; so the world exists only at the present moment. Which is as much as to say that there is only one moment of time - now. That in turn takes away the content from the essentially serial notion of a moment of time. So we should conclude that time and change are impossible.

And if, dato non concesso, 'actually' is indexical, then any essential occurrence of it would disprove the plurality of possible worlds - only the actual world would be possible. But then without the plurality of possible worlds, an indexical analysis of actuality doesn't begin to make sense - the persuasive analogy with times and selves has vanished.

Maybe Chrysippus was the first to think that only the present existed. Past and future merely 'subsist', according to him[29].

If every statement is present-tense, then only what exists now exists at all: only the present exists. Other things have existed or will exist.

One can construct formally identical proofs from the premises that all statements are fundamentally subjective

or contingent.

From the first it would follow that only what exists for me exists at all. None of the alleged pre-existents (things which existed before me) or post-existents can be real. Furthermore, if a thing can't come into and go out of existence, then only what always exists for me ever exists at all. And that might well prove that only I exist - I and mathematical objects, perhaps.

In combination with the analogous tales concerning tense and modality, this gives a pure solipsism of the present moment, and of this world.

Some Greeks thought in this way. The name of Protagoras springs to mind. But the instantaneous self-world postulated is really an Eleatic one also.

Time, modality and selfhood are by this theory unreal, because there are no other times, worlds or selves. There is the paradox therefore that, by trying to take their reality as seriously as possible, and rejecting eternalist treatments as denials of their reality, one ends up by denying their reality oneself. If real, they are unreal; therefore they're unreal.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Evans (1982), p. 211:

> It is true that we cannot state in non-indexical terms what it is for the identity-proposition (sc. 'I am Thomas Nagel') to be true; but why should we suppose that everything that is true can be represented in that way?

Dummett (1973), p. 384:

> It is, of course, quite unnecessary to suppose that a thought expressible by the utterance on a particular occasion of a sentence containing token-reflexive expressions can also be expressed by some 'eternal' sentence containing no such expressions.

Dummett, however, allows that this position weakens the Fregean claim that "thoughts are that to which truth and falsity are primarily ascribed".

2. Dummett (1960), pp. 503–504.

3. Throughout Quine (1960) the assumption is made that

> all traits of reality worthy of the name can be set down in an idiom of this austere form (sc. a canonical notation which eschews indicator words) if in any idiom.

(p. 228). We often receive the impression from Quine that the practical convenience of this proposal is a good reason, if not the only reason, for believing in it. It simplifies logical theory (p. 227), and renders scientific discourse objective (Quine (1957), p. 236), so it ought to be true. Nothing which resists it is worthy of the name of reality.

See also Smart (1964), p. 18, and Goodman (1951), Ch. 11, §3.

4. Grünbaum (1968), p. 340.

5. Dummett (1960), p. 503.

6. Popper (1945), II, p. 229n.

7. Quine (1981), pp. 21–22.

8. McTaggart (1927), §§ 311–316. This discussion is

intended to establish that nothing changes save in respect of 'A-characteristics'. It is little more than an extended invitation to concede the point, as I think we should. See also Geach (1965), Geach (1979) pp. 95ff., Prior (1967b) and the opening pages of Prior (1967a).

9. Dummett (1960), pp. 499–502.

10. Frege (1918), pp. 25–26.

11. McTaggart (1927), §318.

12. Cf. Sokolowski (1971), p. 250:

> Hermeneutic failures leave us with verbalism, scientific failures leave us with coincidences.

13. Prior (1968a), p. 196.

14. Quoted by Merleau-Ponty (1960), p. 241.

15. The absurd condition in which, as Kneale (1962) says, p. 639, facts are left by modal conventionalism.

16. See Prior (1967a), p. 6, or Prior (1977), p. 67:

> so-called tenseless propositions are simply a sub-class of those tensed propositions which are always or never true.

17. Whorf (1941).

18. See Lyons (1977), p. 677, and Lyons (1968), pp. 309–310.

19. The example is taken from an Open University talk (12 March 1978) on Schiller's theory of art. It is Lyons's 'empathetic deixis'. See Lyons (1977), p. 677.

20. Russell (1927).

21. Reid (1785), vi.6.

22. Discussed in Von Wright (1963).

23. Oakeshott (1933), p. 263.

24. Prior (1962), p. 29.

25. See Frege (1918), p. 26, and Nagel (1979), pp. 212–213. In Buber (1923), §1, we learn that the subjective 'Duwelt' is no part of the objective 'Eswelt', and that the objective is independent of the subjective. There is room for a psychologizing version of Buber's dualism, however.

In the 1957 afterword to Ich und Du, he states that the world is not 'zwiefältig' for animals. He understood the duality much more metaphysically in 1923. Buber (1954) discusses prefigurements, in earlier German Idealists and others (Jacobi, Fichte, Feuerbach, as well as Kierkegaard and Rosenzweig) of Buber's own 'dialogical' interpretation of the subjective 'I'. Compare also Heidegger's contrast of the everyday (objective) use of 'I' to refer to the 'they-self' (das Man-selbst), with the subjective 'ontological interpretation' of 'I' as referring to 'that entity which one is in being-in-the-world'; Heidegger (1927), §64.

26. Geach (1957).

27. Lewis (1970) and Lewis (1973), p. 86.

28. The argument of Lewis (1973), p. 84ff, is dependent upn 'world', in the metaphysical sense, being an orthodox count noun. I feel sure that it is nothing of the kind. The analysis is plausible only by association with the numerous non-metaphysical and metaphorical uses of 'world' - not least that use in which it is synonymous with 'planet'

29. Van den Bergh (1954), II, p. 11.

— 2 —

Nature of the doctrine

I study a logical intuition which engenders certain kinds of irrationalist philosophy (romantic subjectivism). This intuition is that there are some significant statements whose expression essentially requires an indexical term.

The suggestion that there are essential occurrences of 'now' (tense) is very ancient. It was argued by Avicenna, as by Prior, that a timeless intellect could not know what was now happening[1]. But since something is now happening, that fact can't be timeless. The present tense is essential to its expression.

Modern discussions of this descend from McTaggart, who held that the reality of time required the existence of statements of variable truth-value (essentially indexical statements). R. Gale, in imitation of McTaggart's terminology, has divided students of time into A-theorists, who share McTaggart's diagnosis of the nature of time (usually without allowing his conclusion that time is therefore unreal), and B-theorists, who reject it[2].

The topic was introduced to recent analytic philosophy by Geach, Dummett, Prior and Castañeda[3]. The idea that "now" can occur essentially is associated with McTaggart, who thought it proved the unreality of time. Other metaphysical conclusions have been drawn from it by Prior

and Mellor[4].

The essential occurrence of 'I' is much discussed in America, and has led to a sort of neo-Fichtean metaphysics in the work of Chisholm and D. K. Lewis[5].

The hypothesis of essential indexicality can be used to explicate, and partially assimilate to the analytic tradition, several species of what might be termed romantic subjectivism -

1. Existentialism and allied philosophies descending from Kierkegaard - Heidegger, Shestov, Buber[6].

2. Idealisms with a solipsistic twist, either post-Kantian (Fichte) or Berkeleian (Ferrier[7], John Grote[8]). It's also a very old notion that all cognitions are of the self, that the self is conceived along with whatever else is thought of; explicit in Grote and Ferrier, of course, but also in Kumarila (7th cent.)[9]. The special, primitive, subjective use of 'I' described by some philosophers is identical with what I would call an essentially indexical (EI) occurrence.

3. French reflexions on 'le moi', beginning, I think, with Maine de Biran, and descending through Bergson to Sartre. Here is a confluence with 1. There is close agreement between Sartre's dualistic conception of the self and that of Maine de Biran)[10].

It offers an interesting way of considering all notions of subjectivity. Is all subjectivity essential indexicality? The answer would depend on whether the pre-analytic and therefore dark popular conception of subjectivity as 'dependence' on the subject always masks EI only, or sometimes something else - which might be, for example, the fact that the subject, or the subject's say-so, causes a description to apply.

The idea can also be brought to bear upon the

Leibnitian philosophy of monads, and on phenomenalism. Its utility as an exegetical instrument is independent of its truth.

However, it is possible to wonder whether essential indexicality is indexicality at all, or even if it is a conceivable feature of human speech. Isn't it incoherent to say, e.g., that something exists <u>for me</u> but not for others? Surely everything either exists for all for none? But the objection put in this way involves a concession that the phrase 'exists for' is intelligible. How can a quantified version of the phrase, such as the objector employs, make sense unless a singular one does, an 'A exists for B'? The position objected to is not unintelligible, therefore, though it may false, and even - if 'true for me' entails 'true for all others also' - necessarily false. There is, though, another question about the coherence of the idea of EI. Someone should ask what exactly I, propounding an EI concept of time or some other thing, expect to persuade people of, if even the allegation that there is essential indexicality is incoherent. To my mind the best case for its incoherence would claim that it rests on a crypto-general use of indexicals which could not in principle become explicit generality. This objection is explored elsewhere (Chapter 14). Briefly, my answer would be that even if 'I' is essential, and quantification over other 'selves' and their 'viewpoints' is a sham which could never become authentic, a coherent world-picture is still possible from a single viewpoint, namely my own. I can paint that picture for my own edification, but being EI it is incommunicable. Further, the generalities which I use about ineffability do not quantify over things that could not be individually named. They are supposed to be simply

silent about any other selves or viewpoints.

In any case, the arguments about essentially indexical sentences (McTaggart, Mellor, etc.) have always concluded that sentences with those meanings can't be true. They do not contend that nothing can have those meanings. On the contrary, they premise that some things do. Nevertheless, it is a hard task to say what the role of an essential indexical is. It escapes the usual semantic categories, just because it is essential. By hypothesis, the information conveyed by means of it can't be expressed without it.

The hypothesis is not that the same meaning could not be conveyed without the indexical. There would be no case of EI if the indexicality were entailed only by the sentence's having the meaning it does have. Since its meaning presumably includes an indexical concept, this would be veiled tautology. The indexicality in that case is not essential, because it isn't entailed by some other truth which we won't give up. It is ordinary indexicality. Just as the necessity of a proposition relative to its own truth is not necessity but just intelligibility, so one cannot propose as a specimen of EI the fact that a proposition's indexicality is a logical consequence of its indexicality! One must show that its indexicality logically follows from some other fact which is not in doubt.

On the other hand, nothing is directly said, either, in the hypothesis, about the impossibility of conveying the same information or knowledge by other means. And informativeness is pretty certainly a context-dependent property. It is relative to what the hearer already knows.

The alleged situation, however, is that the possession of a certain set of truth-conditions is impossible for a sentence not including the indexical in question, or others

defined in terms of it. If one is sure S has truth-conditions T, and sure that anything which had those truth-conditions would be indexical, one concludes that S must be indexical, is essentially indexical. And clearly, what is a condition for the existence of a statement at all is a fortiori a condition for the existence of a piece of information or knowledge.

In a way it's a platitude that indexical thought is indispensable. Hampshire, Kneale and others[11] believe that one can refer to something only by its unique relation to the act of speech (Kneale) or to oneself (Hampshire, D. K. Lewis) – at any rate to something which is itself identified directly (indexically). That is, all identification of things in space and time is ultimately indexical. Such an idea is easily assimilated to more ancient conceptions, such as that of Ockham, that the only cognition of individuals is intuitive cognition, not abstractive. It is also current doctrine among the linguists that deixis is the root of all reference[12].

It is not a question of an indexical's being essential to expressing a certain sentence meaning. It's a question of its being essential to the stating of a certain fact.

If an indexical is essential, then tautologically there's a necessity that it should be indexical. All necessity is relative; but not all EI necessity is relative to the same things. The indexicality of the Cartesian Cogito, for example, is entailed by the fact that the sentence expresses a proposition which is certain. If it were not indexical it wouldn't be certain.

In the case of temporal EI, construed after the manner of McTaggart and Prior, the indexicality of the tensed sentence is entailed by the fact that the sentence has the truth-conditions which it does have: it states a 'tensed

fact'[13].

That the sentence of Descartes has an indexical component is a condition of its having the certainty it has. And that a tensed sentence has an indexical component is a condition of its having the truth-conditions which it has.

In the case of the tensed sentence the indexicality is essential because there is a fact we can't state without it. It's not the sentence's sense, but its truth-conditions, that can't be specified non-indexically. And this is not a merely human impossibility (an impracticability), but a logical or metaphysical one. There are some facts which can only be indicated. They cannot be stated in purely general, or even objective, terms.

The idea of such a fact 'contains an intuition', as Bolzano would have said; and contains it ineliminably. It is therefore, in Bolzano's terms, a mixed intuition, not a mixed concept[14].

Impure sorts of essential indexicality abound. For example, Perry's indexicals[15] are essential only in a qualified way - they are essential to the belief if the belief is to explain behaviour. And the Cartesian Cogito is EI only in this sense: the indexicals 'I' and 'now' are essential to it if it is to be certain.

The case of pure EI is different. In that case the indexicals are essential if the sentence is to state what it does state - an eternal 'version' would not have the same truth-conditions. Indexicality can't always be rendered by an eternal relation to an object (world, time, place or self). Some statements are irreducibly indexical. If a truth can be stated only by a certain indexical sentence S, then ex hyp. it can not be stated by any

conjunction of eternal sentences. No conjunction of eternal sentences can have the same truth-conditions as S.

According to the eternalist position, the reference of a deictic utterance on a certain occasion is dependent upon certain perfectly definite and objective features of that occasion. It is always possible to represent those features (e.g. the time of utterance, the identity of the speaker) in an eternal (non-indexical) sentence which would convey to anyone the same information as the original indexical sentence was capable of conveying only to those present at its production.

The indexical sentence is unstable. According as it is produced at different times or by different persons it is liable to take different truth-values. The eternal sentence which might do duty for it has by contrast at all times and in all mouths the same truth-value. There is therefore no question of a strong meaning-equivalence between an indexical form of words and an eternal sentence. On the contrary, the same indexical utterance will be equivalent to different eternal sentences on different occasions of its use.

The eternalist or B-theoretic claim is that the system of eternal sentences is capable of giving all the information which can be conveyed by the system of indexical sentences, whether they contain tenses, personal pronouns, or any other deictic element. Objectivism is the belief in expressibility without indexicals.

The eternalist says indexical sentences are elliptical, or else systematically ambiguous. But EI sentences are not elliptical, and if ambiguous, it's a systematic ambiguity which, so far from impeding speech, actually enables some statements to be made which would otherwise be ineffable.

An EI sentence only partially determines its own truth-conditions; its truth-value depends on something which it doesn't mention – isn't 'about'. Yet it isn't elliptical on any particular occasion of utterance.

The terminology of G. Evans makes possible an interestingly different statement of the EI thesis. In his book[16], a true proposition (the sense of a true sentence) is a definite way of contemplating the truth; and in general a sense is a definite way of considering its referent. In this vocabulary, essential indexicality means therefore that there are some ways of contemplating the truth which include an indispensable indexical link to the circumstances of the contemplator.

Correlatively, there is a way of contemplating me which singularises me indexically. Nobody else can think of me in this way. The perfectly definite sense which 'I' has is a certain way in which its user can think about himself, and nobody else can think about him.

The theory of sense, in saying what one must know to understand a given language, enumerates the ways of thinking of objects which that language provides. A 'way of thinking of' something must be at least a way of identifying it, since otherwise it would not be a way of thinking of <u>it</u>. But a way, mode or method is a troublous entity. In quite another connection, viz. in extending Davidson's theory of adverbs[17] to cover states as well as events, it is convenient to allow them – as states of states, considered as individuals.

Senses, though, are ways which are built up of other ways. From a way of thinking of an object and a way of thinking of a concept is composed a way of thinking of truth or falsity. If ways, and therefore senses, are individual things, then it's metaphysically unproblematic

that one should be a part of another. But the result isn't specially pleasing. Evans's idea that every true proposition is a way of thinking about the truth has an Eleatic look about it. He would perhaps reply that the differentiation we need is supplied by the definite differences between these 'ways'. But isn't it more natural to say that all propositions are the same way of thinking about different objects (states of affairs) than that they are different ways of thinking about the same object? At the very least, Evans's formula rules out the individuation of propositions by their objects, and one who uses it should hate the idea of empty referring expressions – ways of thinking about objects without objects to be thought about.

However, Evans's vocabulary enables a suggestive reformulation of the thesis of essential indexicality. There are ways of thinking, or modes of contemplation, or modes of presentation, of objects, which can't be expressed without indexicals, and hence aren't universally communicable. In other words, they are ways of thinking of a thing which belong inalienably to certain situations. Elsewhere they don't exist: but they are nevertheless distinct ways of contemplating the truth.

The meaning of an essential indexical is dependent upon its context in a very radical sense, because in its case the context is <u>essentially</u> context. It is impossible to abstract the meaning-determining features of the non-linguistic context and represent them in speech in such a way as to decontextualize the originally context-bound utterance. It constitutes a limit to possible decontextualization[18]. In El there is a necessary gulf between the words and their disambiguating context. It is a form of disambiguation that can't be incorporated into

speech[19]. Essential context is much odder than ordinary context, and more like metaphysical location, Heideggerian or Sartrian situation. 'Metaphysical location' is a sort of inseparability of something from its environment[20].

Tarski wrote[21]: "in any utterance we make about an object it is the name of the object which must be employed, and not the object itself."

But if the only 'name' in the utterance is an ineliminable demonstrative, then the object itself must enter into the utterance, autonymically, to make the utterance definite. Here the context is essentially context. It is the contextual feature itself which is needed, and merely naming it could not serve the same purpose. It must be present in propria persona. An EI statement is a proposition with a necessarily implicit element, one which cannot be made explicit. I do not find this flatly contradictory, any more than e.g. the idea of a necessarily unconscious belief is flatly contradictory.

At any rate, essential indexicality is not a relation, even an internal relation, to some object called an Index. Such a relation would be objective and non-indexical, which contradicts the hypothesis. In Prior's Egogentric, the Ego is not named and cannot be the value of a variable. It occurs not as a name or variable but as a sort of zero modality. A theory which gave the meaning of Egocentric sentences might refer to the Ego, but that also contradicts the hypothesis, because it explains EI sentences in eternal terms.

The denial of eternalism I can call indexicalism, or the doctrine of essential indexicality[22]. Indexicalists generally have in mind some definite class of truths, or possible subject-matter, to the expression of which, they

hold, indexicals are essential. Time is the commonest provoker of EI – there is a feeling that the eternalist apparatus of objective times 'at' which propositions are true, and the objective relations of 'earlier' and 'later' which serve instead of past and future tenses, actually presuppose an understanding of tensed sentences, and are, as Prior put it, constructions out of tensed facts[23]. Another way of declaring the EI nature of time (used by Dummett in his defence of McTaggart[24]) is to say that temporal facts are inexpressible and unknowable except by an intellect which is itself located within time. A timeless intellect can't possibly know what is going on *now*; but something *is* going on now. It's a fact – and one which can't be caught by any means of expression which does without the present tense. The view that a timeless intelligence can't know what is now happening is an old opinion. It is stated very lucidly by Avicenna; see also the discussions of it by Algazel and Averroës in the latter's *Incoherence of the 'Incoherence'*. It was espoused more recently (1960) by Dummett[25].

The Priorian approach does not offer proofs; it invites us simply to *see* that the fact the war is over is not the same as the fact that the war ended earlier than 1 March 1983, and moreover that the system of dates, taken as a whole, can't do all the work of the system of tenses, taken as a whole; or that the system of hypothetical worlds is incapable of saying everything that modal operators can say (e.g. that a statement is true *simpliciter*, and not merely *secundum* some world or other); or that the theoretical plurality of selves won't let you say everything that the system of personal pronouns will.

A proposition or fact is EI if it can't be stated without using a certain indexical term. And, by an unobjectionable extension, an object would be EI if it could be designated only by a certain indexical term. The first formula locates EI in a sense to be expressed, and the second in an object to be designated; but this should not cause confusion. An object of this sort can be said to have an indexical component, since a part of its nature is given only by its environment, and it's essential to it that this should be so. A fact of this sort is just an historical fact, if history is understood as Idealists understand it. Compare Collingwood's remark[24]: "History is nothing but conceiving the object as concrete fact, fact to which its context is not irrelevant but essential."

One must distinguish between the essential indexicality of a concept and the essential indexicality of a fact. When I say time is an EI concept, I don't mean that the concept of time or a temporal concept can be grasped only relative to a certain index, or that there is a certain time to which every temporal fact relates. I mean that for every temporal fact, there is some index to which it relates essentially. A temporal concept declares that it indicates, not what it indicates. A temporal concept, unlike a particular temporal fact, is general, and can be grasped from any temporal point of view; but it can't be grasped without such a point of view. It must apply to (though not necessarily be true of) anything which could grasp it.

By contrast, a sentence is essentially indexical, in the interesting way, when it requires for its expression not just some indexical but a certain deictic term, such as 'I' or 'now' (or maybe even a definite token thereof). If all one needed were some indexical or other, it would

remain possible that different indexical sentences can state the same fact in different circumstances (the conventional idea): 'I am F' (said by me) = 'You are F' (said by you), etc. The mechanism which Tugendhat holds to be the foundation of all objective (situation-independent) reference, namely, the systematic intersubstitution of indexical terms in different circumstances, would then operate. When that can happen, we are no longer dealing with a subjective fact[27].

It would take some proving, in any particular case, that something can't be referred to except by EI; and it's remarkably easy to produce self-falsifying statements of this thesis which do refer to the thing by some other means.

It does not seem at first sight true that I can be referred to only by 'I', or now by 'now'. These things can also be referred to as 'ET' or 'three o'clock'. Or so one would think. Which then of the parts of 'I am ET' make the whole essentially indexical, when it has that property? Do not in reply refuse to locate the essential indexicality in any particular constituent of the proposition, and insist that it is a property of the proposition as a whole. That just makes things even more incomprehensible. Whatever deixis is, it eminently belongs to parts of speech. The idea of a whole sentence or proposition which is itself indexical in a way unrelated to its constituents doesn't make sense to me. One defines an indexical sentence as one which contains an indexical term.

Which part, then? It can't be the predicated property, since that is universal; so either the subject or the copulation. It would be gratuitous to assume both, but unintelligible to assume copulation only: if both substance

and property are available to you, how can you fail to understand what it is for the substance to possess the property? It's therefore the subject that is the source of the inaccessibility. I am indeed the problem. There is something about me which makes me impossible for you to name, or refer to by other objective means. I am not part of your world, and don't exist from your point of view. You are incapable of designating in any way, and a fortiori of understanding any purported designation of, that which the term 'I' designates in the sentence under discussion.

But if I am a subjective entity and ET is not, how can I be ET? This is not the sophism Arnauld detected in Descartes (fallacy of substitution) - the subjectivity here is not an epistemic property. Manifestly I can't be ET; and in consequence one inclines to the idea that there must be both a subjective and an objective self, as Maine de Biran held (also Sartre) and indeed Descartes, as interpreted by Anscombe)[28]. However, the "objet absolu de croyance" and the "sujet relatif de la connaissance", or the in-itself and the for-itself, are so radically unlike that one hesitates to believe in such a property as selfhood, if it is supposed to be some important thing which they have in common.

Essential indication is a way of referring to something as a limit of the world but not as part of it. And since the fact that the indication is essential implies that it is the only way of referring to the thing in question, that thing can't be thought of as part of the world, and so presumably can't be part of the world.

There are some things which can only be indicated. They can't be specified, because there are no individual concepts (pure concepts) which fit them. One must not

conclude from this that they lack identity conditions, so that we should refuse to believe in them. An EI substance is bound to have EI identity conditions, just as an EI truth must have EI truth conditions. Anything else contradicts the nature of EI.

It might happen that an indexical should be essential to an expression, without being essential to every expression co-referential with the first. But if it were true that all expressions referring to X must be indexical, then that would be a fact more about X than about the expressions. The necessity of this 'must' must consist in being implied by the nature of X. It is difficult to see how it could be entailed directly by the concept of 'referring to X', which is the only one under which all the expressions are guaranteed to fall. 'X', as here used, must itself be indexical, of course, but there is nothing in the use of any indexical as such which implies that the indexical is essential; and certainly the idea of 'referring to' has not got that implication.

Besides, it would be very odd if the fact that all possible concepts of X were subjective in this way had no connection with X's nature. It might, I suppose, be a general fact about intellects, or intellects in time, or personal intellects, that their cognitions of X have this special property; but it is hard to believe that this fact is not an instance of a law governing cognitions not of X merely (de re) but of all things of X's sort. (All this style of talk - referring to X, the nature of X, things of X's sort - presupposes that 'X' is a singular term and X is an individual. This is a simplifying fiction - 'here' and 'now' are of course grammatical adverbs, and it's only by philosophical sophistications that one gets singular references out of them.)

The expressions referring to X, and the language of which they were part, would then be just as they had to be in order to refer to things like X at all, and that fact would not indicate anything special about human language or thought. Compare Chomsky on the vacuity of Zipf's law in connection with language: words obey a certain rule of frequency distribution, but since it turns out that the elements of 'texts' generated by almost any process would obey the same rule, the fact that linguistic productions obey it tells us next to nothing about the mechanism which originated them. If something is a necessary condition for language, then it is not an interesting fact about the mind that it fulfils that condition – we knew that already, in knowing that the mind is capable of language[29]. Similarly here, if something's nature entails that it can't be contemplated except indexically, then the interest resides in the thing, and not in thoughts or statements about it. Or more shortly, the consequences are metaphysical rather than epistemic.

It seems that what can be contemplated only indexically is no part of the world. This may be true of myself. Is it also true of the present moment? It is painless to hold that the present moment is no part of the world, if one says so as a simple consequence of the fact that there are no such things as moments anyway. But how would it be if I were to assert, or at least not deny, that there are such things as past and future times, yet still maintain there is no such thing as the present time?

It is a strange mirror-image of the Chrysippean contention that only the present exists, whereas the past and future merely subsist. In this case we might think of the present as related to the time-series a little as a

real number is conceived as a Dedekind cut - not a member of the series of rationals, but definable in terms of them[59]. But it is a poor analogy. The present is distinguished entirely by its indexical nature, and no definition of it wholly in terms of the non-indexical elements of the B-series has been given. It seems clear that no such definition, however exotic, could exist.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. For Avicenna's opinion, see Van den Bergh (1954), I, p. xxvii. In the same work, I, pp. 274-275, is a version of the same theory given by Algazel (though not held by him). In an event such as an eclipse there are said to be three moments, the time at which it has not yet occurred, and the time at which it has occurred:

> The philosophers affirm now that the condition of God is not differentiated by these three moments, for this would imply a change, and that He whose condition does not change cannot be imagined to know these things, for knowledge follows the object of knowledge, and when the object of knowledge changes, the knowledge changes, and when the knowledge changes, without doubt the knower changes too; but change in God is impossible .... the whole universe is known to him, that is, it is manifested to him in one single congruous manifestation which is not influenced by time. Still, at the time of the eclipse it cannot be said that He knows that the eclipse is taking place now, nor does He know when it has passed that it has passed now, for he cannot be imagined to know anything which for its definition needs a relation to time, since this implies a change.

Compare Prior (1968a), 86, referring to Prior (1959):

> if God did not see the past as past, he would be unaware of the fact at which I am rejoicing when I say 'Thank goodness that's over', but only of the quite ungratifying fact that something is earlier than something else .... no one can see a war as being over until it <u>is</u> over.

2. Gale (1968), pp. 70-83. Gale also speaks of dynamic and static temporality, which is the terminology of Sartre (1943), p. 130ff.

3. Geach (1957); Prior (1959) and many other places; Dummett (1960); Castañeda (1967).

4. Mellor (1981) is an unusual kind of B-theory, since it allows that McTaggart actually proved something — namely that, not time or change, but the flow or passage of time is unreal.

5. See Chisholm (1979), Chisholm (1981) and Lewis (1979). I

style these theories 'neo-Fichtean' because they hold that the fundamental intentional relation is an attitude to oneself. Chisholm (1981) pp. 85-86 expressly compares his theory to Kant's. Fichte's position is expressed thus in Adamson (1881), p. 160: "Self-affirmation of the Ego is the primitive activity of consciousness."

6. E.g. Buber (1923), Heidegger (1927), Shestov (1929).

7. See Ferrier (1856), p. 79:

> PROPOSITION I - THE PRIMARY LAW OR CONDITION OF ALL KNOWLEDGE - Along with whatever any intelligence knows, it must, as the ground or condition of its knowledge, have some cognition of itself.

8. Grote agreed with Ferrier's proposition above, but the construction which he put upon it was more paradoxical and in my view also more realistic. In Grote (1865), II, p. 145, he says:

> By the "self-self" I mean that which cannot really be thought of, i.e., which cannot be made an object of thought, but which is with-thought (mitgedacht), thought along with, or included in, our immediate thought and feeling, or which, in other words, is one of the essential elements of such thought or feeling. There is a sort of contradiction here, for by attempting to make the reader understand what it is, I am making it an object of thought.

9. Dasgupta (1922), I, p. 399.

10. Gouhier (1942) p. 81, includes the following characteristic remark by Maine de Biran in 1812:

> Toutes les fois que nous prenons connaissance d'une chose extérieure à nous, nous avons bien la connaissance intérieure, plus ou moins claire ou obscure, de nous-même.

Gouhier in the same book, p. 22, discerns a line of 'spiritualistic positivism' in French thought, descending through Ravaisson, Lachelier and others to Bergson. Sartre (1943) seems clearly to belong to this lineage. Where Maine distinguishes between l'âme as an object of knowledge and le moi as a subject of consciousness (Gouhier p. 191), Sartre distinguishes between the for-itself and

the Ego which does not belong to the domain of the for-itself, but is a transcendent object, an in-itself: Sartre (1943), pp. 102-103.

11. E.g. Kneale (1962), p.600 ; Strawson (1959), pp. 22, 117, 119; Tugendhat (1976), p. 330.

12. E.g. Lyons (1975).

13. I will be accused of misrepresenting Prior. In Prior (1967b), he does not say that a tensed sentence is essentially indexical. He denies that it is indexical at all; rather, it directly states a tensed fact. But this is verbal. Tense is linguistically indexical, and Prior is saying that, as a means of expression, it is logically complete and ineliminable. He objects to calling it token-reflexive only because he construes token-reflexivity as essentially eliminable, after the manner of Russell.

14. Bolzano (1837), §73>.

15. In Perry (1979).

16. Evans (1982), p. 17.

17. Given in Davidson (1967).

18. Cf. Lyons (1977), p. 646:

> It is difficult to escape the conclusion that person-deixis in any language that manifests it (and, as far as we know, all natural languages do) is something that cannot be analysed away in terms of anything else. Deixis, in general, sets limits upon the possibility of decontextualization; and person-deixis, like certain kinds of modality, introduces an ineradicable subjectivity into the semantic structure of natural languages.

The fact that this particular semantic mechanism cannot be replaced by a non-subjective one has philosophical consequences only if, as I claim, there are some truths which cannot be stated ewxcept by means of it. The very universality of the mechanism, attested above by Lyons, has some tendency to show that this is the case. The least we are entitled to conclude from it is that there is <u>some</u> important linguistic function which cannot be performed

without the use of indexicals – natural languages are ordinarily so diverse from one another that their resemblance in this respect would otherwise be inexplicable (except by theories for which there is no other evidence, such as the hypothesis of a common origin).

19. Geach (1958a), p. 65, is very relevant here:

> there is no conceptual difference between judgments formed in different years to the effect that a hydrogen bomb has been exploded, although such a judgment formed in 1940 would have been false and one formed in 1956 would be true. The difference between the two judgments is constituted by their standing in relation to different sensory contexts ....; but it is a great mistake to try to bring in these contexts into any setting forth of that which is judged.

I would argue that this 'mistake' is what is presupposed by every B-theoretic attempt to eliminate an indexical expression; B-theorists are precisely concerned to incorporate the distinctive sense of an indexical expression into the 'intelligible content' of a non-indexical judgment. I do not argue, as Geach appears to do, that this is never possible. In Geach's account, all indexicality is essential indexicality; and further, so it seems from other passages in Mental Acts, all particular reference is indexical. He appears to believe, or to have believed then, that all reference is irreducibly context-dependent. Every instance of it is mediated by the same mechanisms as underlie indexical reference. He uses Thomistic labels for these (conversio ad phantasmata, demonstratio ad intellectum), but does not pretend to explain them further. (Nor do I.) See, e.g., Geach (1958a), pp. 63–65, pp. 72–74, etc.

20. Not the 'location in logical space' of Lewis (1979).

21. Tarski (1944), p. 344; p. 16 in the Linsky volume.

22. Richard (1982) opposes 'temporalism' to 'eternalism' in the case of time. But one can be his sort of temporalist without accepting EI, since He sees no objection to a

'temporalistic' semantics which refers to objective times as Indices. His 'temporalism' is not so much an analysis of the conception of time as an opinion about the English language.

23. Prior (1968a), 86:

> I cannot understand 'instants', and the earlier-later relation that is supposed to hold between them, except as logical constructions out of tensed facts.

24. Dummett (1960), p. 501.

25. See Note 1 above. Van den Bergh (1954), p. xxvii, cites Plato's Parmenides as the source of the idea. It is perhaps rather a prosaic point to have arisen from that incredible piece of dialectic, and is certainly not contained in it expressly.

26. Collingwood (1924), p. 234.

27. Tugendhat (1976), pp. 223-224.

28. See note 10 above, and Anscombe (1974), p. 22, discussing Descartes:

> If .... the non-identity of himself follows from his starting points, so equally does the non-identity of himself with the man Descartes. "I am not Descartes" was just as sound a conclusion for him to draw as "I am not a body" .... That which is named "I" - that, in his book, was not Descartes.

Anscombe, of course, does not believe that one must introduce a special subjective self, or Cartesian ego, on these grounds; but she makes clear in the same essay (p. 29) that one escapes from this necessity only on her assumption that "I" is not a referring expression of any sort.

29. Chomsky (1972), p. 42.

30. Cassirer (1971) uses the comparison, but something quite similar occurs in Aristotle's Physics, in which the present is a sort of limit, and a kind of middle combining beginning and end (Θ 1. 251b19-26).

— 3 —

Species of essential indexicality

One must distinguish between epistemic and ontological interpretations of EI. Epistemic EI is a less radical idea. An indexical is epistemically essential if it is a condition of some cognitive property (such as certainty) of the proposition in which it occurs. Such a situation naturally cannot be described without mentioning indexicals. One must mention them in ascribing an essentially indexical belief, as if the believer himself were to use them. However, it is quite possible to entertain the same belief as that EI believer, though shorn of whatever special epistemological properties it may have derived from its peculiar relations to him. Only Descartes can be sure that what he means by 'I think' is true; but anyone can entertain the belief that Descartes's Cartesian ego is thinking — a belief which has, let's suppose, the same propositional object as Descartes's belief, though not the certainty which it has for him. Eternalists are liable to say there is only the epistemic sort of EI, interpreted as implying nothing beyond the believer.

An indexical is ontologically essential if it is a condition of the proposition in which it occurs being that proposition at all, since nothing without the indexical would have the same truth-conditions. Such a proposition

can't be entertained without the use of indexicals, or their mental analogue; and the situation is not one which can be described at all in a way which divorces it from its original viewpoint.

The case of Time is the most clearly non-epistemic. Your cognitive situation (what you know, or could know) does not determine which tensed propositions are true for you. That is decided simply by your location in time. Of course this is not the only interpretation which has been given of essential tense. McTaggart's formulation is ontological (tense expresses the nature of time; so time is unreal); Mellor's interpretation makes it epistemic (tense expresses how things must seem to agents in time; but it is not possible that things should really be thus). Only McTaggart's Time offers indexical metaphysics (as opposed to psychology).

Other cases are less definite still. There are possibly other non-epistemic examples of EI to be found somewhere in the Cogito (selfhood, or the existence of a cognizing self), or in my possession of my psychological states[4]. The 'metaphysical location' of a Self - not its spatio-temporal location only, but its 'perspective' or 'viewpoint' on the world - is hard to understand except as limitations on its cognitive capacity: with respect to the future, say, or the heterophenomenal (the experience of other selves).

The subjectivity which primarily interests me, however, is not any sort of epistemic property. It would belong to the world even if it were false or impossible that the world should contain minds capable of developing true beliefs. My concern is to discover if there is any authentically metaphysical property going by this name, and if so to try to offer an account of that.

Most of the concepts current in the area are temptations to muddy this water even more and epistemicize everything. An example is 'intuition' whether à la Bergson or à la Burge (who thinks Frege should have used 'intuition' as a name for irreducibly context-dependent thought[2]).

Much discussion of subjectivity makes use of the idea of a 'viewpoint', and while duly fearful of the epistemic suggestions of the word, I shall use it and try to make metaphysical sense of it. Falling into this vocabulary, I say: that a thing's possession of property is subjective means that the thing has the property only from a certain viewpoint; it does not mean that it is only from that viewpoint that the thing seems or can be seen to have the property; nor does it presuppose that this viewpoint is occupied by a cognizing spirit. Things are subjective independently of whether anybody is thinking about them. One may say that P is true 'for' me, but this does not mean that I can get evidence for its truth, or that it is 'accessible' to me, if this accessibility is understood as a cognitive relation. P would still be true 'for' me though I were quite incapable of understanding it. I count here as the source of a metaphysical perspective (origin, viewpoint), not a cognitive or epistemic one. It is a sort of subjective realism: P is T or F 'for' me regardless of whether I could realize the fact.

But what is a 'metaphysical' perspective? One thinks promptly of the way Leibnitian monads mirror, reflect or express the rest of the world, differently according to their different viewpoints. This systematic difference of expression is held to underlie, not only the causal relations among monads, but also the intentional relations of perception and appetitions, and probably others, which

are held to be species of 'expression'. Leibnitian perspectives are prior to all these. They are pre-epistemic, although cognitive relations are ultimately constructible out of their properties. The point of emphasizing that subjectivity is non-epistemic is to make clear that the reality of subjective things is not to be identified with my belief that they are real. This does not mean that metaphysical subjectivity does not include as species some primitive kinds of cognitive property, as Leibniz suggests[8], or even that subjectivity may be ultimately epistemic; only that there isn't any immediate need to think so.

Where exactly do considerations on monadology fit into the question of essential indexicals? A Leibnitian style of monadology can be made to result from the thought that all propositions are indexical, but that their indexical features can always be rendered by eternal relations to certain Indices which are selves. If all indices reduce to 'I' and every 'I' is explained by an eternal relation to a self, then the world turns into a system of immutable spirits. But if you think that personality is essentially indexical, you do not get a monadology like Leibniz's, since nothing in his philosophy answers to the egocentric facts which that idea introduces.

So far monadology seems tangential to EI. It crops up only in eternalist reactions to indexicality. But I feel sure there is a deeper connexion than this. It has something to do with the choice of whether something is modal (to be described via modalities like tense) or real, i.e. implying a certain ontology.

If a phenomenon is judged to be fundamentally modal (see below, Chapter 6), then its expression by means of predicates of individuals can't be taken at face value. The

'individuals' do not really exist. The identity-conditions of any of them consist in relations to other quasi-objects of the same sort. I call anything a monad whose individuality is wholly conferred by such a system of mutual determination.

Monads are essentially nodes in a system (a monadology) - numbers, places, and moments being examples; a moment of time is a quasi-object, constructed out of indexical facts (tensed facts); and Davidson's event-ontology is probably also a monadology in my sense. Despite his insistence on the concrete particularity of events, their identity seems to consist entirely in relations to other events, and I don't see how something can be a real individual on those conditions. Individuals by contrast are Humean 'distinct existences'. They form no system. The existence of one implies nothing about the existence of any other. Both are countable, so both have identity-conditions. But for monads these are given by the principle of construction of the monadology from anywhere within it considered as an origin.

Real individuality or thinghood implies having at least one intrinsic (non-relational) property. Something with only relational properties is a node in a network, an abbreviatory convention. Monads are a device which lets one talk concisely about the system that generates them. But (*pace* Saussure and his epigones) there can't be a system of relations without real terms. A real monadology, therefore, is not a system of relations; it is a complex structural property of the world. The property of being causally ordered would be an example. It may be one which we are unable to conceive except by way of a shadow-ontology: a monadology, the monads being 'events' which are causally inter-defined. Perhaps it is the case

that any sufficently complex property represents itself as a monadology in this way. We defix the details of its complexity in terms of place-holding quasi-substances. There is a ubiquitous tendency to feel that a simple property isn't understood until replaced by a complex property or by a relation. An entity without intrinsic properties, i.e. with only relational properties, is a device which enables us to think of an obscure monadic property as a complex polyadic one. The acme of such simplifying is atomism - partes extra partes. We are adapted to understand things as simply related, and monadic properties aren't felt to be understood until envisaged as relations, ultimately as necessary relations.

Likewise, substances aren't felt to be understood until assigned an inner structure. The mark of a substance is that it undergoes real change, and if a good definition of real change is that it is a change of intrinsic property, where 'intrinsic' means 'non-relational', then thinghood or substantiality is the having of at least one intrinsic property: that's why substance seems unintelligible, a surd and nescio quid.

Perry[4] draws from essential indexicality a conclusion about the nature of belief, rather than that of the world. One can convert this into a conclusion about the world either

(1) by the assumption that a belief's object must be a proposition, and that a belief's identity is given by its object (Lewis[5] denies the former, Perry the latter - his sketchy alternative would have to be rebutted); or

(2) by proving something more general about any world in which (all possible?) agents operate with systems of beliefs not completely classifiable by propositions. I

shall explore the first of these.

Perry's theory is unwieldy in postulating both 'beliefs' whose objects are propositions and 'belief-states' whose identity criteria are behavioral. He needs this duality, however, in order to make the distinction between the objective belief which we can all share and the subjective belief-state which can belong to only one person.

For Perry, the diversity belongs, not to the individuating objects of beliefs, but to the criteria of individuation. He says that beliefs are individuated in two different ways, and denies that they are individuated by two kinds of object. His theory therefore turns into a suggestion that the behavioral and propositional approaches to belief are both right. The complication of the theory of belief is deemed a lesser evil than the existence of non-objective propositions.

The main line of attack on this theory would be to deny that a dispositional or behavioral analysis of the belief-state is possible. It is an admitted weakness in Perry's position that he does not say, other than sketchily, how belief-states are distinguished, if it is not by their objects. He seems driven back upon an old-fashioned (Braithwaite-style[4]) dispositional analysis of belief, a kind of view which tends to seem the more implausible, or else the more vacuous, the more fully it is worked out. I must say I had the impression that this idea, as a general theory of belief, had, like phenomenalism, been discredited and abandoned since its heyday in the thirties, on grounds of impracticability. If a theory is practically impossible to construct, it is discredited as surely as if it had been refuted. The question of refutation doesn't arise, because the theory hasn't even

been stated. According to my own realist prejudices, it might still be true and operative even if we can't state it; but if we can't state it, there's no point in pretending otherwise.

And what sort of 'dispositional analysis'? If in terms of a disposition to behave as if P were true, then the belief is after all singularized by its relation to a proposition, contra hyp.. Further, if this P is tenseless, one does not distinguish the belief-state from others with different tenses or none. A paraphrase into eternal language doesn't correctly describe the belief. But if one intrudes tense into the description of the disposition - as it were a disposition to behave as if P had been true, etc. - the old problem simply recurs.

Perry's own suggestion is that the individuality of an indexical belief state consists ('partly' - but the qualification is negligible) in a disposition to utter if prompted the sentence 'I am F'?

There will also be a related non-indexical belief-state 'John Perry is F', such that everyone who is in it is believing alike, viz. believing the objective proposition that John Perry is F. The relation between them is expressed thus by Perry: "Anyone at any time can have access to any proposition. But not in any way. Anyone can believe of John Perry that he is making a mess. And anyone can be in the belief state classified by the sentence 'I am making a mess'. But only I can have that belief by being in that state."

We have therefore to think of each individual's repertory of possible belief-states as divided into two sorts -

(a) the universal belief-states, which are correlated with propositions in the same way in every individual

believer; and

(b) the subjective belief-states, which map onto different propositions in different individual minds.

But how could I ever learn to correlate something of the form 'I am F' with something of the form 'ET is F'? It can only be by learning the truth of the identity 'I = ET'. However, that identity is not objective[8], and here Perry's redescription appears not to work, since it would produce something like "anyone can believe that ET is ET, but only I can have that belief by being in the belief-state 'I am ET'". Believing that I am ET surely can't be, on any conditions, a belief in the proposition that ET is identical with himself. Would Perry really hold that all I have acquired is a disposition to say, when asked who I am, 'I am ET', and mean by it that ET is self-identical?

Again: we hear that being in a certain belief state is being *cet. par.* disposed to utter a certain sentence, which can be indexical. Is it then impossible for the speaker of a language without tense, or indeed for a brute, to believe that the time has come to do something? Brutes know when it's time to pounce. The possibility of *utterance* is therefore inessential. There would be no difficulty in ascribing essentially reflexive beliefs to speechless brutes that see themselves in mirrors, and believe themselves to be threatened; or if you prefer, deaf-mutes without sign-language. One such might see a fiend rushing towards him, but do nothing because he believed the object of the aggression would be another, interposed, person. Only when the fiend had continued his rush past this other would the deaf-mute conclude 'he's after *me*'; get up and flee. Nothing quotable has occurred.

But if the possibility of utterance is inessential, and if the dispositional analysis is impracticable, then, when Perry classifies belief-states by indexical sentences, he is in effect individuating belief-states by corresponding λέκτα rather than by propositions. A Stoic λεκτόν abstracts only from particular languages, and not from particular circumstances of utterance. But a λεκτόν just is an 'inaccessible proposition' of the sort he discounts; it's not a 'metaphysically benign form of limited accessibility', and the metaphysical consequences of the theory have not been transformed into psychological ones after all.

A more radical approach to de se thought has been introduced by D. K. Lewis and R. Chisholm[9]. It also seeks to avoid metaphysical consequences by reforming the theory of intentionality, and so confining any essential indexicality within our representations rather than letting it out into the world. According to their theory, there are no essentially first-person propositions. Rather, the fundamental intentional relation is that of attributing a property to oneself. This self-attribution is taken as unanalysed, and all other forms of intentionality are defined in terms of it. In particular, any normal de dicto belief is defined as attributing to oneself a special kind of property. Here Lewis's characterization of beliefs de se makes reference to possible worlds. I find this objectionable, but the theory can do without it. Instead of explaining the state of believing that P as a self-ascription of the property of being an inhabitant of a P-world (a world in which P is true), one can understand it as self-ascribing the property of being such that P. A property is one of those which 'corresponds to a proposition' if it can be attributed by 'x is such that P'.

Chisholm says all reference is first to oneself, but neglects the parallel arguments for the primacy of the present tense (quasi: all reference is first to oneself now). In his review of Castañeda[10] he allows that there are irreducibly tensed propositions, and treats EI tensed belief as de dicto belief in one of them. His EI tense is therefore a modality; but his EI person, like Lewis's, is a peculiar relation to oneself and to a property; or not so much a modality as a sort of modalizing of a property.

It's an analysis which incidentally gets rid of those very unpleasant sentences in which occurs a se which seems to be not only an essential reflexive but also a variable of quantification. An example of Castañeda's is 'A person is a thinking being which knows it exists' (Persona est id quod novit se esse)[11]. These are exceptionally annoying for me because I consider that our supposed quantification over things like selves, viewpoints, times, etc., is never more than a bluff waiting to be called. The accounts of indexical fact in which they occur are only allegorical, and we should not believe in them more strongly than in Dame Sensualitie. Given the Lewis-Chisholm analysis, these sentences no longer tempt us to do it: 'novit se' is actually the unanalysable relation of attributing a property to oneself. The surface se vanishes, and with it the appearance of an embedded variable of quantification.

If Lewis and Chisholm are right, then the primacy of ergatives, middles and deponents in Proto-Indo-European reflects the facts better than our grammar does. I am involved 'in a personal way'[12] in every process. I conceive it only as a remote or modal action of my own[13]. It may be true, in a psychological or imaginative sense,

that I conceive events only by unconsciously imagining myself to perform them or have them befall me. One knows also that the concept of causality, essential to that of events, has evolved from an intuitive idea of our own active powers. Thus Von Wright[14] has causality depend on manipulability.

Evidently the Lewis-Chisholm doctrine alleges a conceptual, and not merely psychological, dependence of the idea of an event, and more generally of the idea of a state of affairs (any possible object of a propositional attitude), on the idea of the self. It is a sort of universalism, in that we do not have propositions varying in truth-value between selves. But the theory differs from ordinary eternalism in abandoning the primacy of the proposition as an object of belief. It takes the subjective 'I' out of the world, leaving only a property and a being capable of intentionality. However, it is also a sort of subjectivism, because it involves that knowledge is not exhaustively universal. De se knowledge is a root of irrationalism because it is knowledge but not universal knowledge. Lewis remarks[15] that "Science and scholarship, being addressed to all the world, provide knowledge of the world; and that is knowledge de dicto, which is not the whole of knowledge de se." But, he adds, there's no contradiction between them: a map is not misleading, merely silent, about where you are. The inconsistency of statements which essentially belong to different observers is supposed not to arise. They are incomparable, or incommensurable; at any rate never come into logical contact.

But consider what that means. It implies that there is no single, comprehensive body of truth which is valid for all observers - no single world, in effect. Lewis's remark

really misses the point. It is true, my de se truths do not contradict objective truths; but they do contradict your de se truths, just as the tensed truths of the past contradict those which now obtain. This is not straightforwardly so if the 'truths' aren't propositions like 'I'm tall', but (self-ascribed) properties like tallness. However, tallness does 'contradict' shortness, if the only thing you can do with properties is self-ascribe them. Moreover, temporality and personality are de se (egocentric) concepts. They, and properties which imply them, can only be self-ascribed. They do not 'correspond to propositions'. And further, if self-ascription is the basic intentional relation, including intentions which are de dicto or objective as a special case, the distinction between subjective and objective becomes quite fuzzy. It is odd to think of the objective as a special case of the subjective. And if like Lewis and Chisholm you tag every possible belief, including the 'propositional' ones, with a believer, it will be hard to say why

(1) my ET beliefs are incommensurable with yours, but

(2) my objective beliefs are commensurable with yours;

why the distinction, since both kinds fall within the scope (as it were) of an 'I'?

The example about 'I am ET' and 'ET is ET' may suggest that 'I am ET' is not, despite appearances, an identity proposition. This is also suggested by the fact that, if it were an identity, 'I am Euan Thomson' would also be necessary; but it's clear that I might not have been Euan Thomson, as long as 'I' is being used in the basic subjective way.

Anscombe is one who holds that it is not an identity proposition, on the grounds that 'I' does not refer. She

analyses it in terms of the demonstrative identification of one's own mental states[16]. And Geach's discussion in Mental Acts[17] implies something similar. "We are not to argue," he writes, "that since 'I' does not refer to the man René Descartes it has some other, more intangible, thing to refer to. Rather, in this context the word 'I' is idle, superfluous; it is used only because Descartes is habituated to the use of 'I' ... in expressing his thoughts and feelings to other people. ... The use of 'I' in such soliloquies is derivative from, parasitic upon, its use in talking to others; when there are no others, 'I' is redundant and has no special reference; 'I am very puzzled at this problem' really says no more than 'This problem is puzzling'."

But surely 'This problem is puzzling', said to myself, is true in the same conditions as 'I am puzzled at this problem', said to somebody else? And if it has the same truth-conditions, mustn't it refer to the same objects? If so, it's the soliloquial form without 'I' which is elliptical, and not the alloquial form with 'I' which is redundant. The forms without 'I' invite comparison with Prior's egocentric gerunds; but they belong in a language in which express reference to selves is impossible, and can be constructed only indirectly, by modalisations[18]. It's conceivable that this *is* the logic of self-communion; certainly the importation of a duality into the soul, of elements between which a sort of communication could occur, is even more difficult to understand.

At any rate these 'I'-thoughts are highly resistant, analytically. Of course it is no novelty that a proposition should have different epistemic properties according as it is expressed in different ways. The proposition which I express by 'I exist' is certain in those circumstances, but

not as expressed otherwise by me, or in any way by another person. Thoughts which are called 'pragmatically self-verifying' have, I think, always got an indexical component. They are pragmatic tautologies which state only what must be true if they have been uttered or thought.

'Something exists' is a sort of exception. It is not indexical, but its certainty is conveyed to it by indexical truths which entail it, such as 'this thought exists', or 'I exist'. This is an argument against the view held by Bar-Hillel[19], and maybe by Quine[20], that indexical sentences do not have a proper logic and hence entail nothing. If that were true, where could the certainty of 'Something exists' come from? Evidently it's no logical truth. Besides, any inference can be put as a conditional, governed by a univocal tense. The conditional will be either true or false <u>now</u>, and the inference correspondingly valid or invalid <u>now</u>.

'Cogito' (and other 'psychological verbs', first person, present tense) is certain, from simple intuition; but 'cogitat' is not. It is certified, if at all, then only by observation and inference. However, we know that a difference in epistemological properties doesn't prove real diversity. There could be the same propositional object in each case. From this we show only that there are some truths which only I can be sure of; or that only I can know without observation and inference[21].

<u>Cogitat ergo est</u> would indeed be an inference, but <u>cogito ergo sum</u> is not; it is an intuition, as Descartes explicitly says[22]. It is not the fact of the thinking, but the event of the thinking, that makes <u>sum</u> certain[23]. Williams[24] remarks that if it gives grounds, then it must be a fact; which must be conceded. But it does not give grounds; it merely causes the certainty, and does

not justify it.

It is impossible to replace the indexical components of 'Cogito' with objective ones (proper name, tenseless verb) and get something with the same epistemic relation to everyone. 'Cartesius cogitat' is not evident. But the indexical 'Cogito' does have the same epistemic relation to everyone who contemplates it, even though it refers to a different Cartesian ego in each case. Unfortunately, no substantive conclusion can ever be drawn from the Cartesian Cogito – at least, not with the certainty which Descartes required. It is truly sans caryokinèse[25]. The certainty which 'Cogito' has for Descartes transmits itself – granted the genuinely EI[24] premiss that 'sum Cartesius' – in his case (for him) to the objective proposition 'Descartes thinks', only if 'sum Cartesius' is also a certainty for Descartes. And it is not, if 'Descartes' means a body or a (psychosomatic or forensic) person[27]. In that case, the certainty of the Cogito is not conveyed to the objective 'Descartes thinks', since that transmission depends on the certainty of the other premiss, 'I am Descartes".

Notes to Chapter 3

1. See Nagel (1965).
2. Burge (1979), p. 431.
3. Leibniz (1687), p. 71f. - the relation of 'expression', in which monads stand to one another, is not in itself an epistemlogical one, but includes epistemological relations as species. Another suggestion is that of Sartre (1943), p. 216, that knowing is itself 'a fundamental ontological relation.'
4. Perry (1979).
5. Lewis (1979).
6. I am referring to Braithwaite (1933).
7. Perry (1979), p. 19.
8. The non-objectivity of such identities is conceded in Evans (1982), p. 211, and often asserted in Nagel's works, e.g. Nagel (1965), p. 109.
9. In Lewis (1979), Chisholm (1979) and Chisholm (1981).
10. Chisholm (1979), p. 396.
11. Castañeda (1967), p.12
12. Meillet (1937) says of the ancient Indo-European middle voice that 'le sujet est interessé d'une manière personelle au procès'. I have lost the page reference. Of the Greek middle, Thompson (1883), p. 125, remarks: "In the Middle Voice the action of the verb refers in some way or other to self."
13. Prior (1977), pp. 58-59, is imagining a possible interpretation of his Egocentric logic:

> Statements like 'I am in pain', 'I am tall', might be less misleadingly expressed as 'It is hurting', 'The ground is a long way off'. In the former, the 'it' is no more a genuine subject than in 'It is raining', and in fact elementary propositions do not need subjects; the assumption that they do reflects an erroneous 'thing-quality' or 'substance-accident' metaphysic. Of course, it is one thing for me to be hurt and another for you to be hurt - your pain is not my pain. But it is a 'remote' pain of mine in the sense in which a former pain or a possible pain is a remote pain, though the 'removal' is in a different direction. Your pain is not what I mean by 'It hurts', but 'It hurts you' is a modality of 'It hurts', in the sense in which 'It could hurt' and 'It did hurt' are modalities of 'It hurts'.

14. Von Wright (1973), pp. 107, 113:

> To regard things as being causally related is the intellectual privilege of agents who think they are free to interfere with the world.

15. Lewis (1979), p. 528.

16. Anscombe (1974), p. 33.

17. Geach (1958a), Ch. 26.

18. Prior (1968a), p. 195.

19. Bar-Hillel (1954), p. 378.

20. Quine (1957), pp. 236-237; Quine (1960), p. 227.

21. Russell once - somewhere in Russell (1948) - took this property as <u>defining</u> the mental.

22. A 'simple mental intuition', he says in Descartes (1641). In the same place, and elsewhere, he expressly denies that it is an inference.

23. Williams (1978), p. 76, calls this the 'performative' interpretation, and derives it from Hintikka.

24. Williams (1978), p. 77.

25. Bachelard (1949), p. 132, observes:

> l'argument logique qui assure la vérité du cogito, voilà un noyau indestructible dont tout philosophe reconnaît la solidité. Nous objectons seulement que c'est un noyau sans caryokinèse, un noyau qui ne peut proliférer.

26. See Note 8.

27. See Anscombe (1974), p. 22.

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Theory of indexicals

In a broad and trivial sense all meaning is completely dependent upon the circumstances of utterance (e.g. if those circumstances include the language being used). The rhetorical or suggestive features of an utterance, also (aspects which Dummett would assign to the theory of force), are prone to vary in significance according to context, for example with the sex, status and general rhetorical ethos[1] of the speaker.

A deictic expression, however, is one whose reference is determined by the circumstances of its production. One includes among the deictic or indexical[2] properties of a statement only those which might cause that statement's truth-value to differ on different occasions of use.

The paradigm cases are the demonstratives, the tenses, the personal pronouns and the locative adverbs.

The possible-worlds interpretation reveals that the modal word 'actual' can be reckoned in with the other indexicals. This is especially obvious in the case of restricted modalities whose significance is given by a 'sphere' of worlds accessible from the world in which they are affirmed[3].

Expressing the same sense isn't always designating the same object; it depends on who you are, and on your circumstances. For example, the 'this'-grade of

demonstrative – 'this', 'now', 'I', 'here' – can't make definite reference without compresence of the objects referred to. For 'now', this compresence is contemporaneity of the utterance with the object; for 'here', collocation of the utterer with the object; for 'I', identity of the utterer with the object. 'I' has of course the peculiarity of being constant in reference within one idiolect; 'you' and other indexicals are not. But this is just a dull consequence of the meaning of 'idiolect'.

Indication changes the rules from moment to moment. The reference of one and the same indexical word may change even during the utterance of a sentence, e.g. 'Not this' – swing of the hand – '<u>this</u>'[4].

Indexicality is a sort of incompleteness. The reference of an indexical sentence isn't fully determinate in itself. The response of the eternizer is to call it a predicate. If all sentences were eternal there would be less point in the sense/reference distinction, because expressing the same sense would always involving making the same reference; whence the attitude of Russell and Wittgenstein to that distinction.

Although hybrids are no doubt the rule in practice, there are two ideal types of singular reference: indication – by means of a deictic term – and specification – by means of an individual concept. Of these, only specification is liable to failure on account of intrinsic defects, e.g. when the individual concept you express fits nothing. Indication can fail for extrinsic reasons, such as that your interlocutor has left the room, but not because it intrinsically fails to single out its object. In short: both can fail in communication, but only specifying can fail in expression. Indication is immediate identification,

and specification is mediate identification, identification mediated by concepts.

It would be fanciful to think that ostension is pure specification in disguise. The pointing finger may have some connotation, and partly specify its object, but it's inconceivable that the aim of ostension should ever be achieved if its content were purely qualitative. There is no pure quality - one without a reference to a substance, which would need to be identified in its turn - that can singularise an object. On the other hand there is no need to require that ostension is pure indication. All I need is that all ostension has a truly indexical component; qualitative adminicles are beside the point.

However, this raises a problem. How does one learn to tell one indexical from another? If they all had the same demonstrative component ('Lo!' or 'this') plus a categorial determinant (world, time, self), so that 'I' = 'Lo! a Cartesian self', 'now' = 'Lo! a time', etc., one is apparently obliged to admit that there are such properties as being a time, being a self, being a world, and also objects for those properties to belong to. This is universalist talk. So telling indexicals apart might pose a difficulty for subjectivism.

Possibly the determinants do not function as properties, but are <u>sui generis</u> in some way more congenial to EI. Otherwise, any reduction of the indexicals to one another rests on such putative properties as being a now, being an I, etc. with all the indexicality to be concentrated in a single element, like 'lo!' or 'this'. That is basically Anscombe's idea, and Russell's[29]. But are the constitutive properties intelligible without the ordinary indexical adverbs which they supplant? And isn't 'this' vague or unmeaning in a factotum role?

Maybe we should think of the determinants as bits of non-linguistic context, and not anything we should usually think of as having any semantic properties.

Some remarks of Sartre* suggest that 'I' primarily means the subject in general or in the abstract, not a particular person. It gets determined in a situation. Compare also Geach's treatment of proper names in Mental Acts*, according to which the whole intellectual import of a personal name such as 'Jones' is 'A person ... the same person ...' The name is fastened to a definite individual only by the sensory context of its production; and this sensory context cannot be incorporated into the intelligible content of such sentences.

Distinguo: no 'sensory context' can do any such fastening by itself. What's needed here is the concept of indication, which is itself just a name for the problem. I should observe also that that Geach, in saying that the sensory context can't be incorporated into the intelligible content, is saying that all reference is not just indexical but essentially indexical - if the indexicality weren't essential, mention of the sensory context could be incorporated into the proposition.

The sense which a token-reflexive designator expresses is constant, and dependent only on the word-type; but the object which it designates is not wholly determined by the sense of the word-type. That sense is incomplete, and has to be supplemented by properties (location, date, cause) of the word-token.

A certain analogy exists between indexicality and referential opacity. Put crudely: Opacity is created when a word is by itself insufficient to express a sense and gets a supplement from a neighbouring word - typically the subject term, at any rate the verbal context. The term

which is thus ingested becomes referentially opaque, i.e. imperfectly designative. It now designates its object not simpliciter but secundum quid, e.g. as a cyclist, or as a mathematician.

Indexicality (token-reflexivity) arises when a word is by itself insufficient to designate an object and gets assistance from the physical, extra-linguistic context (including the utterance itself, considered merely as a physical event). The physical feature thus fixed upon becomes an index in Peirce's sense. It ceases to be a pure, mute object and acquires a designative role. Thus, for example, the word 'now' is as such (as a verbal type) timeless, and incapable of singling out any definite moment of time. One must attend to the physical event of its utterance before one can divine which moment the utterer meant to designate.

Just as the indexical word and its physical annex designate something jointly, but nothing severally, so the opaque predicate and its requisitioned designator express something jointly, but nothing severally. One thinks of the first term of each pair as the senior partner because it is its proper semantic role (to judge by its grammar) which is imposed on the other, which was antecedently self-sufficient. The designator becomes part of a predicate. The physical thing acquires an attenuated semantic role where it previously had none, and becomes part of a designator.

Ordinarily the relation between a physical token and the verbal type which it typifies is not a semantic one. Only the type has semantic properties.

So far as I know, names are never thus parasitic upon predicates, or objects upon names. It suggests a sort of preferred hierarchy – predicates corrupt names, and names

deprave events.

So much for the analogy. Is indexicality then distinguished from opacity only as non-verbal from verbal context? Or does the existence of the analogy depend on a bit of word-play, equivocating upon 'context' (verbal vs. non-verbal)? If so it's an equivocation of which exponents of formal pragmatics are also guilty - see D. K. Lewis's index of 1972[8], an octuple which includes not only non-linguistic factors such as the speaker and time of utterance, but also all the surrounding speech - and that not as physical tokens, but as abstract linguistic types.

If the analogy between indexicality and opacity is granted to be real, it is still to be determined what it might signify, and of this I am very uncertain. It is possible there is some deep connexion between the two phenomena. The verbal tokens (physical events) *are* part of the non-verbal 'context'. On that depends, e.g. Davidson's paratactic account of *oratio obliqua* (the opaque context *par excellence*) as involving a demonstrative reference to an utterance. Again, Dummett has lately contended that these two linguistic features pose parallel problems for the Fregean notion of sense[9].

Anyway, an opaque context is just one that hasn't been fully analysed: a problem, not a solution. Opaque predicates make a subject-term refer to its object only *qua* this or that. But a proper analysis always distinguishes a subject which merely identifies and a predicate which merely qualifies. The appearance of opaque predicates (which of themselves say nothing determinate) and impure subjects (which do not refer, since failure of substitutivity entails failure of reference[10]) are symptoms of wrong analysis - or else the sentence expresses no sense.

My immediate worry is whether the same can be said of an indexical context, since an affirmative answer would pretty well prove the eternalist case by itself. Of course I think it can't; and few people would say that indexical sentences are actually senseless. Instead we should begin to be wary of the analogy which has this tendency.

Note first that one speaks of opaque contexts, but indexical terms. An indexical context is just a stretch of speech with an indexical term in it, or else the scope of an indexical term. It wouldn't be sensible to talk of a referentially opaque term, only a position (i.e. a gap, a context). An opaque term would just be one which occupies an opaque position.

In general I don't think much of the practice of documenting every false step one has made in the course of research, but one wrong turning I made in pushing this analogy may be instructive. Since I was investigating essential indexicality, and had found a formal likeness between indexicality and referential opacity, I wondered whether there was such a concept as 'essential opacity', to make up a foursome. I eventually concluded there was not.

Essential opacity of a 'context' would be the same as logical simplicity. In spite of appearances, the words in such a context would form a logical unity, and it would just be a mistake to presume upon grammatical appearances and attempt to substitute for an apparent logical component another expression of the same logical type, or reference, thus worrying yourself about a supposed variation of truth-value or grammaticality that results.

If the opacity is essential, there are no logical components to interchange; the whole is incomposite, and to call it an 'opaque context' is wrong. The appearance of composition, and dependency of overall truth-value on the

references of components, is here an illusion. Apparent elements are after all logically insignificant, like the C in 'Cat'. The whole is grammatically composite but logically simple.

Query: how could this be coherent? Presumably we must see the grammatical complexity as accidental; we can learn the meaning of such phrases only in the way we learn the meanings of simple, single words.

This tells against essential opacity. Ordinary, accidental opacity results quite clearly from grammar being a bad guide to logical structure. It tempts us to make analytical cuts in the wrong places. But it's a far cry from this idea – that the cuts are to be made elsewhere – to the idea that no cuts can be made at all, the expression being entirely simple.

If grammatical composition could yield logical simplicity, would it be right to speak of the 'elements' even as grammatically distinct? For surely the logical type of an expression is a partial determinant of its grammatical type. Logical insignificance and indistinction should imply the grammatical sort.

Essential indexicality is like 'essential opacity' in preventing the discerption of an expression from its context. But whereas in the case of essential opacity the context is a linguistic one, so that essential opacity consists in the logical indivisibility of an expression from other expressions, in the case of essential indexicality the context is extra-linguistic. It's here alleged that an expression is logically inseparable from the circumstances of its production. An apparently unitary linguistic <u>type</u> is refracted by the prism of El into as many new 'types' as there are physical tokens of the old 'type'. The unity and simplicity is not mere

unanalysability, but the solidarity and integrity of an expression-type with an individual physical event.

'Essential opacity' is just logical unity of distinct linguistic elements; but essential indexicality is logical unity of a linguistic element with the extra-linguistic context.

Essential indexicality may seem as incoherent as essential opacity turned out to be vacuous. Can there be logical unity between things one of which is not linguistic, hence supposedly without logical (semantical) properties? There can: the point is that in this situation extra-linguistic things are made to function as signs for themselves (autonyms). It is tempting to compare the erstwhile view of Russell[11] that the things a proposition is about actually compose the proposition. But then he was considering the proposition not as signifier but as signified - that is, as a fact.

A sign is not indexical merely because indexicals are used in learning it[12], but only if the context of its production is essential to determining what it designates. It is likely, as Bar-Hillel and Quine have written, that one must make use of indexicals to learn, not only such terms of objective spatio-temporal location as '1945' and 'Edinburgh', but also any simple perceptual concept, such as 'red', which can't be defined by other verbal means. One needs an ostensive definition. But this fact does not leave the concept itself with any ostensive or indexical component. 'Edinburgh' is non-indexical if its reference is determined independently of the context of its production.

However, if a co-ordinate system is one whose origin, like that of Schlick's system of dates[13], is <u>given</u> only indexically (by 'now'), then the system is not merely

learned indexically; it also functions indexically, and can't be said to replace indexicality by something objective. It is intersubjective only between subjects who share the originating index.

If the origin of a system of dates is always given by 'now', then there are as many systems of dates in use as there are moments of utterance. But who doubts that every utterance of 'the year 1945' in Christian Europe has meant the year 1945, and been so understood, whenever that utterance was heard or read?

So what did Schlick mean, if he wasn't just making Bar-Hillel's point that indexicals are needed to learn the system of dates? When we have once established that now is 1983, we never need to establish the correspondence again for subsequent nows. We maintain the correlation by counting (clocks). The system is objective because, although every subject comes to understand it -- synchronises his watch with it - by way of a different indexical match-up of a tense to a date, he can compute all other such pairings mechanically.

I don't think there is any other point to Schlick's remarks. When somebody hears '1945' he doesn't have to occupy himself with computations involving 'now', 'hence' and 'ago'. It may be a mild surprise to him to notice that 1945 is 38 years ago. That fact does not impugn his previous understanding of '1945'; it presupposes it. We have machines to calculate these offsets from the time when we first successfully applied a date, and in any case are constantly being resynchronised to the common system by failures of communication which occur when we deviate, mistaking Wednesday for Thursday and irking the company. We can mentally lose track of time without in the least loosening our grasp on the co-ordinate system which lets us

refer to individual times.

I append here remarks on two other concepts which have been or might be represented as context-dependent in the sense which interests me, but which don't seem to need that treatment.

1. Natural-kind words like 'water' have been called indexical by Putnam, and they would if he were right be indexical in the strict sense of Bar-Hillel[14] - not only the acquisition of the concept, but its application (the meaning of the word) has an indexical component. He uses 'here' ('around here') to suggest this component, but it might as well be 'I'. Here is the planet I'm on[15].

Or rather, the planet we're on. 'Change' and 'water' may both have a sort of essential indexicality, but they are quite different sorts. The first is pronounced by an individual, the latter by a choral voice[16]. Change depends only on <u>now</u>, but water on <u>us</u>. It is anthropocentric rather than egocentric. The indexicality is not exclusive to one person or time.

This is an attenuated sort of EI, not the pure, subjectivizing stuff I am concerned with in this essay. And it is watered down still more by some other remarks of Putnam's.

When Putnam calls a natural-kind concept indexical because it requires its objects to bear 'certain similarity relations' to things <u>round here</u> he goes wrong: because these 'similarity relations' must rest on a common attribute, which could ideally be substituted for the 'similarity relations' in expressing the concept. There is then no reason to assume that this attribute is intrinsically indexical: it is merely our ignorance of the

ultimate nature of water that compels us to designate it indexically. We are indicating something which we can't yet name or describe. The word stands for a pure concept, but we don't yet know which (it expresses it clearly but not distinctly). This point did not escape the attention of Bolzano[17]. In his writings, a pure concept is just a set of attributes, but since sometimes we don't which attributes those are (the real essence) we may designate some of them them indexically, applying what Bolzano called a mixed concept – the concept stays pure, even though we may need to identify it intuitively meanwhile and await the future perfection of science.

The qualities signified indexically in a natural-kind concept, being unknown, are occult qualities. We indicate them (as those respects in which something resembles things round here), because we know they must exist. But this indexicality is essential only relative to our current knowledge. It is required only because we, the scientific chorus, don't yet know what attributes are involved in being aqueous. If we did know, there would be no further need to identify them as resemblances to stuff on this planet. The indexicality is not logically necessary.

2. Geach[18] has distinguished the idea of a 'Cambridge change' (one and the same thing having a property at one time and lacking it at another) from the idea of 'actual change' – as when we say that, if Theaetetus has grown taller than Socrates, it is Theaetetus who has actually changed, even though a reciprocal Cambridge change has befallen them both. The Leibniz-McTaggart[19] doctrine that if anything changes, everything must change (at least in respect of relational properties) really assumes that there is no idea of change but Cambridge change. Actual change is

an obscure idea, but integral to the way we conceive of what happens, or is done. We shouldn't renounce it too readily[20].

The distinction between action and omission, for example (unless it's as arbitrary as that between affirmative and negative propositions - action being omission of omission), would depend on the distinction between real and apparent change. An action makes a real change, an omission makes none.

An obvious approach to the distinction between actual and Cambridge change is to distinguish the original or intrinsic properties of a substance from its derivative (relational) properties, and to declare that actual change is change in respect of the former. But then: being taller than Socrates is a relational property. By the suggested criterion, acquiring it wouldn't be a real change in Theaetetus. Again, location is a relational property, so that motion would not be real change (unless space is absolute). So it is at any rate too strong to define real change as Cambridge change of non-relational properties.

I prefer to relate it to the sense in which a proposition is 'about' one object and merely 'mentions' others. Actual change is to Cambridge change what being about a thing is to merely mentioning it. In fact one can analyse actual change in terms of a proposition's being about a thing. A proposition of change proposes an actual change in Theaetetus if it's about Theaetetus. 'Theaetetus has got taller than Socrates' is about Theaetetus, not about Socrates; and therefore it says that Theaetetus has actually changed, not Socrates.

But whether a proposition that mentions a thing is <u>about</u> that thing depends on pragmatic considerations - the actual circumstances of utterance, and the special

intention of the utterer. It isn't part of an objective proposition.

So here is something else that, if real, depends for its expression on features of utterance not usually put into the objective proposition. However, in this case I believe they could be, in principle. One might mark one of the names in the sentence with this intentional category of 'aboutness', and the truth value of the whole would vary according as that which the marked name referred to actually changed or not.

Further, actual change has been proposed as a primitive idea, which can be used to discriminate predicates which express Properties from those which don't. If by Cambridge-changing in respect of a certain predicate one actually changes, then that predicate expresses a genuine property[21]. This dependency ought to remain even when actual change is analysed rather than taken as primitive; so assuming the analysis of actual change in terms of aboutness or thematicity, we can get a further reduction: a proposition which predicates a property is always a thematized proposition.

The propositions treated in logic are generally unthematized. Whatever they mention, they merely mention - they aren't especially to do with just one of the things they name. And similarly, logic is indifferent to whether a given propositional function stands for a genuine property or not. The concept of a property, and that of a thematic subject (that which a proposition is 'about') are at root the same concept, and belong to pragmatics.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. The word means by origin one's own manners. It is derived from the prehistoric reflexive pronoun swé – v. Drosdowski & Grebe (1963), p. 145 (article on 'Ethos'); Benveniste (1967), pp. 270–271. The sense intended here is that of Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958):

> What the ancients used to call oratorical ethos can be summed up as the impression which the speaker, by means of his words, gives of himself.

2. Linguists say 'deictic', which is the older word. Its first use in English was to characterize, in the context of Aristotelian logic, a proof which was direct rather than indirect. In connection with language its earliest role was to distinguish words which can refer only in the immediate presence of the referent, i.e. demonstratives. Thus, for example, Thompson (1853), p. 51: "δδί, οὑτοσί are emphatically deictic forms, this here." More recently its use in linguistics has been generalized to cover any kind of dependency of a word's reference on the circumstances of its production. Here is the definition given in Lyons (1977), p. 637:

> By deixis is meant the location and identification of persons, objects, events, processes and activities being talked about, or referred to, in relation to the spatiotemporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and the participation in it, typically, of a single speaker and at least one addressee.

Philosophers have lately adopted the word 'indexical' and used it in the sense of 'deictic'. The usage apparently derives from Peirce. Bar-Hillel (1954) is the earliest example known to me. Unhappily, linguists use 'indexical'

to mean something quite different: see Abercrombie (1967), p. 6, Laver & Hutcheson (1972), pp. 11-12. In their sense, 'indexical information' is information which the speaker gives, normally unintentionally, about his status, geographical origin, psychology, health, etc., by way of accent, bearing and tone of voice. Considered as under voluntary control, this feature of speech (now styled 'paralinguistic', see Abercrombie (1968)) coincides with oratorical ethos, as mentioned above, Note 1.

Earlier philosophical equivalents of 'indexical expressions' are 'indicator words', from Goodman (1951) and 'token-reflexive expressions', from Reichenbach (1953). The latter is of course still current. Russell's 'egocentric particulars' comes up only in connection with the special psychological interpretation of indexicals given in Russell (1940).

3. E.g. Lewis (1973), p. 96. Accessibility of one world from another (in the form of 'relative possibility') first appears in Kripke (1963). Montague (1968) cites earlier uses of the notion in model theory, by himself, Kanger and Hintikka.

4. Noted in Isard (1975).

5. Russell (1940), p. 108, assumes without argument that all other 'egocentric particulars' are reducible to 'this', whose fundamental purpose is, as usual in Russell, the demonstrative identification of a mental state (p. 114). Similarly, Anscombe (1974) renders 'I' by 'the person ... of whose movements <u>these</u> ideas of movement are the ideas' (p. 33) - the difference being that she prefers to consider ideas of movement and action rather than purely phenomenal states.

6. Sartre (1943), p. 225:

> the Kantians ..., preoccupied with establishing the universal laws of subjectivity which are the same for all, never dealt with the question of persons. The subject is only the common essence of these persons; it would no more allow us to determine the multiplicity of persons than the essence of man, in Spinoza's system, permits one to determine that of concrete men.

7. Geach (1958a), pp. 71-72.

8. Lewis (1972). The elements of the octuple are a world, time, person (for 'I'), set of persons (for 'you'), set of concrete things (for 'that'), segment of discourse (for 'the aforementioned'), and

> an assignment coordinate: an infinite sequence of things, regarded as giving the values of any variables that may occur free ... One might claim that variables do not appear in sentences of natural languages; but even if this is so, it may be useful to employ variables in a categorial base.

Lakoff (1975) has suggested that this last element of Lewis's index is capable of doing the work of the index as a whole: 'I', 'you' etc. would not occur in the 'logical structure'. There would be only variables, to be transformed into deictic words by rules of grammar which would respect both the single assignment index and the occurrence along with the variable of a 'performative predicate'. Lakoff's essay attempts to combine the two understandings of 'pragmatics' which are current: that it is the theory of indexicals, as in Montague (1968) or Montague (1970), and that it is the theory of speech-acts, e.g. Hausser & Zaefferer (1979). No one, I think, now construes 'pragmatics' so broadly as Carnap (1955), in which it is judged to cover the whole theory of meaning for natural languages - 'semantics', correlatively, being confined to the interpretation of formal ones. Carnap (1954), p. 79, states that pragmatics "tells us how this or that language usage depends on the circumstances of the speaker and his context", but this 'speaker' is pretty

obviously the 'ideal speaker-hearer' of Chomsky (1965), and not particular speakers in definite situations. The examples given by Carnap in the same place suggest that he then meant by 'pragmatics' the study of tone, as Dummett uses that word.

9. Dummett (1981), pp. 92ff.

10. Linsky (1969), p. 90.

11. Russell (1912), pp. 31-32.

12. Bar-Hillel (1954); Quine (1957), p. 236; Quine (1960), pp. 194, 228.

13. Schlick (1918), p. 192:

> I say that Kant was born 13 years after Hume. If I then ask when Hume was born, I can answer only by relating that event to another point in time ... Time determinations lack support or meaning unless there is a point at which the question "When?" no longer needs an answer. Now there is just such a point: it is the present moment. I cannot ask "When is the present moment?", for this "when" is immediately experienced. Time determinations have meaning and purpose only for those events that are not directly present to my consciousness.

14. Bar-Hillel (1954), p. 373-374:

> Peirce, Russell ... <argue> ... that replacing 'here' or 'now' by co-ordinate descriptions does not eliminate the indexical space and time descriptions since the origin of the co-ordinate system, ..., the direction and the units of its axis can be taught and learned only with the help of indexical, linguistic or non-linguistic, signs. But this seems to me a very obvious non sequitur, based on a confusion between using language and learning how to use language. There can be little doubt that learning how to use co-ordinates, just as learning how to use words like 'red', involves the use of indexical signs. But, nevertheless, a co-ordinate, just as the word 'red', is non-indexical in this clear and definite sense ... namely, ..., in its reference being independent of the pragmatic context of its production.

15. Putnam (1973).

16. Cf. Sokolowski (1974), p. 220:

> The speaker of science, as a network of judgments, is the scientific community; its voice is choral and not individual.

17. Bolzano (1837), §75:

> In all languages there are ambiguous words which sometimes designate pure concepts and sometimes mixed ideas Even worse, we often jump from one meaning to the other without being clearly aware of it. This happens chiefly with the names we give to certain kinds of natural objects ...

> The idea 'man' (considered as a pure concept) would indeed remain a pure concept even if it were restricted to the point that only reasonable and sentient beings that are equal in all conceptually representable attributes to man as he is found on earth were called men. For there is only a determinate, though very large, number of attributes that are common to all reasonable and sentient beings on earth. Thus from the ideas of these attributes, i.e. from mere concepts, an idea can be composed which would represent what we call 'man', and does not contain any intuition. The matter is quite different if we decide that the name 'man' is to mean not (as before) any creatures that have certain attributes., but precisely those rational and sentient creatures that are found on earth, and no others, no matter how similar they may be. The idea designated by this name is no longer a pure, but a mixed concept that includes an intuition, because even after removing all parts of this idea that are pure concepts, the requirement remains that they must be beings that live on earth. Thus the intuition that is included in the name 'earth' remains. By contrast, there are also words that appear to designate a mixed idea but are sometimes used to express a pure concept. Such is the case with the words 'gold', 'silver', 'oxygen', and similar names of inorganic substances. Our natural scientists are not at all averse to applying such names to any substance in the universe so long as it has the same inner attributes that this substance has on earth. However, we know only very few of the inner attributes of these substances other than through their influence upon ... our own senses ...
>
> We can think of the words that 'it seems yellow to us' as being nothing but an expression for a certain inner attribute of gold which is the reason which gold causes the idea 'yellow' in an organ such as our eye, etc. If we understand matters in this way, then the intuitions which occur in the verbal expression of our concept ... belong merely to the means by which we designate those unknown inner attributes of gold that can only be determined through pure concepts, and of whose idea the concept of gold is to be composed. Just as an intuition does not cease to be pure if we admit into its expression one or the other concept in order to designate it more clearly, so, on the other hand, a concept does not cease to be pure merely because we have to take recourse to certain intuitions in order to designate some of its constituents.

18. Beach (1979), pp. 91–92.

19. McTaggart (1927), §309.

20. Beach (1979) p. 91.

21. This idea is Putnam's, but I have not seen his discussion.

— 5 —

Time and place

The analytical part of this thesis is chiefly an exploration of the parallel theories of Worlds, Times and Selves§ of the A-theoretic (essentially indexical) and B-theoretic (objective) constructions of each of these systems of concepts (to generalize Gale's distinction[1]); and of the means we might have for determining which approach is correct. In particular, I wonder why there has never been propounded an A-style theory of Place. The 'here' is rather a Cinderella. There has been no such agitation about her reality as there has been about that of her two ugly sisters. Although purely temporary truth (essential 'now'), purely personal truth (essential 'I') and even purely contingent truth (essential 'actually') can be made fairly intelligible and plausible, at least for some classes of sentences, and each has been defended, more or less, by some philosopher, nobody has felt it necessary to postulate essential occurrences of 'here'. Everyone agrees that whatever is true at one place is true at all, and sentences including 'here' can all be replaced, without loss of information, by others which <u>name</u> the place that 'here' <u>indicated</u> (by being uttered at that place). Possibly the unequivocal objectivity of space can be given a Kantian explanation ("Space is the universal form of the objective"[2]), and one can hear distinctly Kantian echoes

throughout the literature on this topic. For example, when Lewis and Chisholm conclude that the basic intentional relation is that of attributing a property to oneself, one recalls that the I think must be capable of accompanying all my representations. In general though, the study of Kant is too well developed for me to contribute much to it, and I prefer in any case to find connections instead with lesser known Idealist authors such as Ferrier (who is perhaps more Berkeleian than Kantian) and Grote.

This is partly because I am personally prejudiced against the easy incorporation of every possibly non-objective feature of the world into 'our faculty of representation'. If it is true that an ontological account of subjectivity (as belonging to the world) is liable to seem contradictory, it is also true that an epistemological account of it (it's all in the mind) has a tendency to seem arbitrary and unconvincing. For instance, C. McGinn has lately been arguing that it's a necessary truth that direct or perceptual awareness of anything involves investing it with secondary qualities which it doesn't objectively possess[5]. To me it seems manifestly not a necessary truth, unless 'direct' or 'perceptual' is being redefined to make a dull tautology of the contention. In fact, I think it is actually false, since I believe we directly perceive (literally) e.g. necessary connexions between things (entailments), and that we may also perceive ourselves directly. Russell somewhere argues to the effect that since self-knowledge is not knowledge by description, it must be knowledge by acquaintance; and that's reinforced by consideration of EI 'I'-thoughts, which certainly do not identify me conceptually. But the faculty by which I perceive myself does not involve ascribing to myself any qualities analogous to the phenomenal colours which are

involved in seeing. I think it is this fact which Hume was indicating when he denied that he had any perception of himself. By 'perception' he meant 'phenomenon'.

The objectivity of space yields a renovation of the argument used by Descartes in which which Arnauld detected fallacy: if body is space (the view which Descartes shared with Plato and current 'geometrodynamics'[4]), and space is objective but person isn't, then person is not body. There is no fallacy because the subjectivity is not epistemic.

But this is by the way. The point is that I won't offer any explanation of the objectivity of space, as contrasted with the subjectivity of time and selfhood. I simply accept it, and nobody will dispute it. It has some consequences. We need always to be able to eliminate 'here' from statements, in favour of 'I' and 'now', or else Perry's arguments[5] will lead, by my lights though not by his, to essentially local truths. That involves that 'I' and 'now' should be taken as logically prior to 'here', and is incompatible with the contention of G. Evans[6] that 'I' and 'here' are correlative, neither prior to the other, and the understanding of either consisting in the same ability as the understanding of the other. There must be a one-sided dependence of 'here' on 'I'. Here is where I am now.

Evans's view is that understanding both 'I' and 'here' is 'knowledge of what it is for "I am at p" to be true' - 'p' standing in, presumably, for an objective designation of a place. Evans is consistent. He denies that I can think of myself as a Cartesian ego, in abstraction from my physical location in space. But I do in fact have that ability, and could understand 'I' without believing or understanding that I was located anywhere: 'we could have been otherwise than in space.'

'I' is patently not definable in terms of 'here' (as Evans allows, p. 206n), but 'here' is definable in terms of 'I'. In fact, understanding 'here' (but not understanding 'I') does consist in knowing when 'I am at p' would be true.

A bilateral dependence of 'I' and 'here' can be reinstated only if, as some think, there is a use of 'I' which is eliminable and objective, and virtually definable as 'the one who is now speaking' - purely a participant role in a linguistic situation. Otherwise the logical reciprocity is subverted by a disparity of status between objective 'here' and subjective 'I'. It could hold only for objective 'I'.

I am insisting that 'I' and 'here' have this logical order because one can use Perry's arguments from the theory of belief to get an essential 'here' quite as soon as one gets essential 'now' or 'I'; but there is nothing which intuitively requires 'here' for its description, independently of all theories of belief, and analogously with McTaggart's feelings about the EI nature of time (just as time needs 'now', personality needs 'I', and contingency might need 'actual').

This is a worry, because Perry's proofs (even though he himself evades their conclusion) are among the clearest yet thought up; but although I can live with temporary truth, personal truth and radically contingent truth, local truth is something I'm most reluctant to accept. There aren't any remotely plausible examples from elsewhere. So it might seem that I can't use Perry's arguments without modification, since they'll yield EI occurrences of every indexical. However, an apparently EI 'here' can be analysed in terms of EI 'I' and 'now', and it is of no consequence that those are occurring essentially. We do not have an

essential occurrence of 'here' or other locative indexical, and we aren't forced to think that a statement is true here but false somewhere else. If there is a statement which identifies a place only by relation to an 'I' which occurs essentially, then that statement can be true when uttered by some persons and false when uttered by others. But there is no locative indexical in the statement which must directly relate the truth-value to different places of utterance. A relation like 'place of' is operating like any other general term. It is no more correct to say that 'here' (= 'at my place' with 'I' essential) involves essential location than to say that 'my book' ('I' essential) engenders a proposition true at some books, false at others. Places are here objects like books, not indices like selves. The analysis does not require locative indices if locative indexicals can always be analysed in terms of personal and temporal ones.

However, it's not clear to me that any further reduction of the indexical words is possible. I see no way to reduce 'I' to 'now', for example, so that we could see time as the only begetter of subjectivity.

Dummett, in his defence of McTaggart[7], stated that time is unlike space and personality in that (briefly) it is an essentially indexical concept, whereas indexicals of the other two sorts are eliminable in favour of objective designations of places and selves. I would say that selfhood or personality is like time, and not like space, in this respect. Just as one cannot conceive time without being in time, so one cannot conceive personality without being a person. On the other hand one <u>could</u> conceive space without being anywhere. Equivalently, as Grote said[8]: 'We could not have been otherwise than in time, we might have been otherwise than in space.'

It's become clear in recent years, through the work of McTaggart and commentaries on him, that the concept of Becoming, the passage or flow of time, 'the transiency of the Now', is best treated as a concept containing an indexical component.

McTaggart's contribution to this lay in his insistence that the reality of Past, Present and Future is essential to that of change, and therefore to that of time[9]. These three predicates are simply related to the verbal tenses, which are generally conceded to be indexical (token-reflexive, deictic) parts of speech[10]; and it is to the ineliminability of tense that more recent partisans of Becoming have appealed in order to make their opinions clearer – in order, that is, to say exactly how their views differ from the 'static' picture of time suggested by physics or by formal pragmatics.

Why does Einstein prefer to say that space is curved than that light follows curved paths through flat space? It is because the latter alternative, like the idea that the galaxies are moving outwards, looks like something we ought to explain further.

Similarly, the eternalists prefer to depict tense as a relation rather than as a modality because this preserves an essentially static picture of the world. By contrast the representation of tense as a modality generates propositions with different truth-values at different times and introduces change into the world. The scientific impulse is to regard change as a problem.

It is certainly depressing to think of this choice as merely temperamental; to think that those who prefer to regard change as ultimate are of a piece, psychologically, with Heracliteans and Bergsonians, free-willers and those

who, like Peirce and James, shun determinism for purely emotional reasons and crave 'novelties in the universe'. 'Now' is after all cognate with 'new'. Faith in the flow of time rests on the appearance of novelty. Time really flows if some things are new to all possible observers.

Donald Williams noted that the 'myth of passage' appeals strongly to Bergsonians and Heideggerians who deny the competence of concepts[31]. One may wonder, also, whether the Bergsonian idea of duration is a consequence of the indexicalist view of time, or one of its conditions. The view needs to support itself by some guarantee of the reality of time, and the sense of duration looks like such a guarantee (Geach's remark about the sense of diversity and variety of incompatible experiences may be dependent upon it[32]). If so, it could hardly also be a consequence of indexicalism, since then they would be equivalent, which does not seem plausible. (On the other hand, Bergson sometimes does call duration 'real time'.)

Since vagueness and obscurity have pervaded the theory of Becoming since the days of the Dark Philosopher himself, it ought to count as progress that the essence of the doctrine can be located in a definite conceptual feature, to which one may expect to apply the formal tools now available to a philosopher of language. Such a convinced upholder of the 'static' picture as Nelson Goodman allows that the friends of Becoming are not always simply bemused, and given to 'vague poetry'; sometimes their trouble is 'hopeless confusion over temporal indicators'[33]. That is progress – if the dispute reduces to one over the correct semantics for indexical words, we can hope that it will be a more exact dispute than before, and perhaps even be resolved.

Sadly, it is one conclusion of this thesis that no

such happy outcome is to be looked for.

The trouble is that a thorough defender of Becoming will insist that the indexical component in the concept of time is an essential indexical; and an essential indexical is not something of which a universal semantic theory can be given. We cannot, therefore, expect the opposition between the metaphysics of Being and Becoming to resolve itself into a technical, semantic one. The friend of Becoming, asked why Time, or some other concept, is essentially indexical, will recur to intuition, just as if you had asked him why Time flowed; and produce again the 'vague poetry' derided by Goodman.

We all have the same concept of Time because 'now' means the same for us all. We all know what any temporal statement means. But we are logically debarred from knowing the truth of all temporal truths, because 'now' constantly changes its reference, and its meaning is not sufficient to fix its reference on any occasion. To find the reference one must also be present at that occasion, and none of us can be present at every occasion.

Logical unknowability restricts us in a way impracticability does not. We might get machines to improve our conceptions and theories, as we have got them to sharpen our senses. A necessity can't be attenuated, however.

Moreover, logical unknowability has, it's plausible to say, direct consequences for the nature of the world, and not merely for our knowledge of it, or our capacity to know it. For what can a fact be that is logically inconceivable and unknowable? It is easy to allow there may be facts humans can't conceive; but that there should be facts which are by nature inconceivable by any intellect,

no matter how acute and well-informed, may be unintelligible in itself.

In strictness, the inconceivability and incognoscibility of such a fact is not supposed to hold for everyone. This does not impugn what has just been said about its independency of the acuteness of all intellects. However, EI is not independent of what may be called the metaphysical location of a spirit. To give an example from the theory of tense, it's logically inconceivable that a spirit which no longer exists - which does not exist now - should know that it's now raining. One's knowledge of this fact implies something about one's location in time.

It will be replied that naturally a spirit which no longer exists, or does not yet exist, can't know that it's now raining, because it can't know any proposition. That is not the point I wish to make.

God, let's imagine, exists. But he is not located anywhere in time. It is therefore incorrect to say that he exists now, or that he did exist, or that he will exist at some future time, or that he exists at all times. Every location of his existence in time is wrong. But since he does not exist now, he can't know that it's now raining. He can know that it is raining at 1 a.m. on 13 October, but since he can't know that that time is now, he still can't conclude that it's now raining. Knowledge of such a fact is exclusive to those who are present at a certain point of time.

But there <u>is</u> such a fact. It <u>is</u> raining now. I know that; and my knowing it is not the same as my knowing that it is raining at 1 a.m. on 13 October. It's not the same if only because I knew the former before I knew the latter. To discover the latter I had to look at the clock, and find out that it was <u>now</u> 1 a.m.

God, who is not in time, and who knows timelessly everything that is timelessly knowable, needs no clock. But by the same token he could not make use of one. He would learn nothing from a clock. I, however, do learn things from clocks; and what I learn from clocks cannot be taught to God by any means whatsoever.

A timeless knower could by definition never learn anything; and some analyses of knowledge virtually rule out the possibilty that it should be timeless. For example, it is hard to see how the 'knowledge' of a timeless knower could be true belief caused by what makes it true.

Buber[14], and maybe Sartre[15], have said that only the past is objective. This is true, for epistemological and non-existentialist reasons, because only that is epistemologically objective which is such that there can be cognitive routes from it to more than one cognizer. The only such routes which we know of are ones which take time to traverse; moreover the knowledge-bearing relation is causal and a cause must precede its effect. So whatever is epistemologically objective, i.e. might be known by two minds, belongs to the common past of those two minds. Hence one need not be any sort of subjectivist, or devotee of Becoming, to disbelieve in timeless knowledge.

What all this means is that the timelessly knowable at least does not exhaust the knowable. There are truths which are not timelessly knowable, because they are not timelessly true. Nevertheless, they are true from time to time. And at those times, they can be known by spirits then existing.

Mehlberg[16] says in effect that the causal relation is materially equivalent to the temporal relation, in the sense that it organizes events into the very same sequence; so that God, though unable to conceive of things as in

time, can nonetheless discover the historical order of events from their causal relations. However, the temporal series which is spoken of here is the B-theoretic one, generated by 'before' and 'after'. The true, A-theoretic concept of time is not a series at all, if a series is a set of things ordered by a transitive, antisymmetric relation. It is not a series: it is the fact that every event has the properties of pastness, presentness and futurity. This primitive fact does not by itself order events in any way, although, as McTaggart showed, it is possible to define the ordering relation 'later than' in terms of the tenses.

Why do McTaggart's arguments not apply to space and personality[17]? Apparently one can just see that it isn't so – that is, one can see that personality and space are not essentially indexical. McTaggart's regress applies to spatial and personal indexicals as well, but nobody cares that therefore they don't apply to the world, since it's believed that space and personality are as well expressed by objective paraphrase. The point about time and change is that one needs the indexicals in order to talk about them at all.

Time can be understood only from within it: temporality is conceivable only by possessors of temporality. The like is not true of space. It is not logically impossible (though no doubt it is unimaginable) that an intellect not located in space should contemplate truths about objects which do have spatial location. But perhaps it is logically impossible to understand what a person or self is, or any proposition about persons, without being one.

I must indeed reckon with McTaggart's regress, since I

hold time and selfhood are EI, and therefore generate it. But I conclude from it not the unreality of time or selfhood, but the impossibility of a complete description of the world.

Suppose, though, that I preferred to cleave to the possibility of a single comprehensive world-formula. The consequence is that time and selfhood as we intuitively conceive them have no reality: daß es in einem wichtigen Sinne kein Subjekt gibt.

This dilemma serves to confirm Schrödinger's idealistic-sounding opinion that the objective world is in a way created by the omission of the cognizing subject from nature[19]. 'The cognizing subject' here is a 'philosophical indexical' (see Chapter 13 below). It's supposed to convey the fact that everyone must omit their own consciousness from nature, if nature is to be a single thing. A generalized form of McTaggart's regress demonstrates an incompatibility between any EI concept and the concept of nature, or of an objective world.

Time can't be as the physicists depict it, or as the proponents of formal pragmatics, because it is essentially indexical, and their 'times' are not. In fact there can't be any scientific picture of time, because science is universal. An indexicalist account would not even be deterministic. If EI propositions contract no stable logical relations (which I do not believe, but some may), then it is indeterminist. And if the laws of nature that would entail EI truths would need to be EI themselves, and therefore constantly get abrogated and reinstated as time went by, this might contradict the idea of a law of nature. It does so if nature and its laws must be eternal and impersonal.

Any physical arguments against time as a dimension (e.g. on the grounds that there can't be instants, or not a continuum of them) ought to be good *ad hominem*, since most who hold that view of time are enamoured of physics and respect its authority quite generally. Somebody who denies the reality of times must either deny that physics assumes them, or else defy the presumption in their favour that comes from the predictive power of physics. I am incompetent to deploy any arguments dependent on the mathematical formalism of current physics, but may observe that both general relativity and quantum mechanics use a continuous time variable; and there is a difficulty, in that case, of imagining that instants are distinct individuals. Strict continuity is notoriously astounding to non-mathematicians. I hear that there are just as many instants in a temporal interval of very short duration - and even, so help me, in one of *no* duration[19] - as there are in the whole of time. And of course, if time is like the real line, there is no *next* instant after a given instant. One begins to doubt if a set of individuals with these properties is a set of *individuals*, as we were using the word. Perhaps even more telling is the impossibility of *counting* the elements of a continuum. Pairing off objects with the natural numbers, two by two, is the essence of dating, and indeed of naming and of identifying in general. If moments of time are countless (indenumerable), they are innominable and unidentifiable, and it seems inept in those circumstances to insist that they are nevertheless distinct individuals.

Quine, incidentally, certainly won't get his denumerable universe[20] if he defends the objecthood of every spatio-temporal region[21] as well as the continuity of space and time.

We can't just impose an arbitrary name on each moment severally. The least we require of an eternalist substitute for indication is a system of generating and imposing names as the occasion demands; or, since in eternity there are no occasions of utterance, a system that renders every moment nameable; in short, a system of dating. But then, all dating depends on indication. Dating, like the causal order, when considered as conferring individuality, requires an origin which is not itself indebted for its individuality to the system which it supports. As a co-ordinate system, it is conceptually independent of any particular occasion of utterance; but in order that an actual person may make use of such a system, he must – at least once – have directly, i.e. indexically, identified a given moment in his experience with one of the dates which the co-ordinate system defines. A physical theory is never going to predict anything more definite than that if at a certain time P is true, than at that time Q will also be true; which is quite useless unless an experimenter is sometimes in a position to know that <u>this</u> is a time at which P is true, i.e., that P is <u>now</u> true.

Weyl conceded as much. According to him[22], a moment can't be distinguished from any other moment in purely general terms. It must be designated directly.

I won't labour further the point about continuity, because I understand that neither quantum mechanics nor general relativity would be destroyed if its time variable were forbidden to range over all the real numbers, and confined to the rationals or even the natural numbers. Continuity is just formally more convenient than density or discreteness[23]. Furthermore, there is Penrose's suggestion that the continuity of space-time is anyway not that of the reals but that of the complex numbers (twistor

geometry) – a kind of continuity which is said to have some kinship with discreteness. 'A longer-term aim of twistor theory', Penrose writes, 'is that ultimately the continuum concept may possibly be eliminated from the basis of physical theory altogether. Then the description of natural phenomena would be based on the principles of counting or other combinatorial processes.'[24]

The GR picture of space-time as in effect the only substance admits a less contentious interpretation of places/times as parts of this whole. They would be genuine individuals if the whole is so. Einsteinian space-time is in this respect similar to the absolute space of Newton, and quite different from the relational space of Leibniz. Leibnitian space is not a concrete whole but an abstract system, and its moments, nodes, nexus &c. must share its abstractness. No individual can be purely relational. However, to guarantee the individuality of times (or place-times, rather) only as parts of the whole spatio-temporal continuum, one must take the part-whole relation to be itself timeless, which bothers me. Do we understand that? Eternalists frequently appeal to it. For example, in the standard eternalist account, change in an enduring body is explained as two time slices, one white, one black, both 'being part of' one extended four-dimensional thing. The 'is part of' is here tenseless.

However, the part-whole relation as we ordinarily perceive it is not intrinsically timeless. Things begin and cease to be parts of other things. Is the tenseless 'is part of' antecedently intelligible, or is this a ruse, masking the old irrationality of change?

A stronger objection to the identification, in the four-dimensional picture, of time with what is basically a further spatial dimension, along which things are simply

distributed, would be one which echoed Geach's objection to mind-brain identity theories[23] (a mental state 'just is' a certain kind of brain-state, one and the same state has both mental and physical properties, etc. - unmeaning contentions in the absence of further theory). We are in effect told that change 'just is' diversity between successive regions of space-time. Such doctrines require an 'error theory' - an explanation of why we insist on making a distinction to which (it is here declared) no difference answers. The necessity for an explanation is only rhetorical, but it is crucial because the other arguments are equally inconclusive. We have such an explanation in the case of the morning and evening stars. We have not got one in the case of time-as-passage and time-as-dimension. How can we have come to conceive one and the same thing under two such disparate aspects?.

Someone may deny that it is specially contentious to identify change with a certain sort of spatio-temporal diversity, on the grounds that the latter is a theoretical concept about which we have no prejudices; just as we need no error theory for water = H_2O, because the latter is an idea about which we have no intuitions. However, it's not true that we have no intuitions about spatio-temporal diversity; we do; we get them from our experience of purely spatial diversity - this is how physicists themselves imagine and explain the four-dimensional world. That is why one accepts McTaggart's objection that differences in a poker along its time-dimension are no more changes in the poker than differences along its length would be[24].

Some of the physical philosophers have acknowledged the paradoxical character of the theory of time as a dimension, by attempting to introduce a simulacrum of temporal passage into their otherwise static world picture.

And some have offered to explain away the sense of the passage of time. The result tends to be instant incoherence.

Thus, Grünbaum[27] allows that 'passage in the sense of transiency of the now is integral to the common-sense concept of time' but contends that this signifies 'only that, in this respect, this concept is anthropocentric.' His view is that becoming is only 'coming into awareness'. The idea is incoherent. Coming into awareness involves becoming in the ordinary sense, or else has no clear meaning. Is change definable at all? Any definition ('loss of a property', etc.) always looks like a species of change.

Again, Weyl[28] seems to say that even in the four-dimensional block universe something – consciousness – moves ('passes on'). One hears of minds crawling up their bodies' world-lines. What does this mean? This 'passage' would seem to require a time to happen in (as opposed to one to be located in or distributed along) but this ex. hyp. is not physical time. It's not a way of being extended, but a way of moving and changing – the only way, in fact. If minds alone change, then they can't be physical. Of course, time could be objective though not physical: not a property of material objects, but still a property of real objects. That is not a theory one sees espoused by physical philosophers. It certainly isn't physicalism.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Gale (1968), pp. 69-83.
2. Adamson (1903), pp. 292-293.
3. McGinn (1983), Ch. 6.
4. Graves (1971), p. 4.
5. Perry (1979).
6. Evans (1982), pp. 185, 224.
7. Dummett (1960).
8. Grote (1865), II, p. 200
9. McTaggart (1927), §§305-324.
10. Prior does not make this concession in Prior (1967b); see above, Chapter 2, Note 13.
11. D. C. Williams (1951), pp. 100-101.
12. Geach (1965) argues that, just as error must exist, because there exists the belief that there is error, a belief whose falsehood would imply its own truth, so

> even if my distinction between past, present and future aspects of physical things is a fragmentary misperception of changeless realities, it remains true that I have various and uncombinable illusions as to which realities are present. I must therefore have these realities not simultaneously but one after another; and then there is after all real time and change.

McTaggart's answer would be that these uncombinable illusions are not, in his theory, said to be combined. They occur at different places in our personal C-series. And of course they are not said to occur simultaneously, because nothing is either simultaneous or successive in McTaggart's world. I think Geach here takes up the remarks of Dummett (1960), p. 503: "Even if the world is really static, our apprehension of it changes". McTaggart would reply that the

world is really static, and our apprehension of it only seems to change. Dummett again: "The fact would remain that we make different such mistakes at different times". McTaggart would reply that the different mistakes occur (exist) not at different times but at different stages of the C-series which we misperceive as time. I do not think that this basically question-begging line of argument works against McTaggart.

13. Goodman (1951), Ch. 11, §3.

14. Buber (1923), I (p. 86 in Buber's Werke, I): "Gegenstände ... bestehen im Gewesensein ... Wesenheiten werden in der Gegenwart gelebt, Gegenständlichkeiten in der Vergangenheit."

15. Sartre (1943), p. 119:

> Between past and present there is an absolute heterogeneity; and if I can not enter the past, it is because the past is. The only way by which I could be it is for me myself to become in-itself.

Again p. 120: "In contrast to the Past which is in-itself, the Present is for-itself." The first of these remarks reminds me of another by the art theorist Adrian Stokes:

> If we were to be shot or hanged within the hour, how fine and untroubled the landscape ... How finely, how unattainably out there the world would look. Unattainably? We shall attain the state out there, the state of complete object, the very brother to stone, all too soon, all too completely....

16. Mehlberg (1977), p. 77.

17. Dummett (1960), p. 500.

18. Schrödinger (1958).

19. In a strictly continuous line of any length there are are just as many points as in the whole of continuous space. See Davies (1981), p. 32 or so.

20. Quine (1966).

21. Quine (1953), p. 147; Quine (1960), p. 171.

22. Weyl (1918), pp. 8-9

23. Kamp (1980), p. 141, states that the application of physical laws becomes 'highly artificial' if time is assumed to have any structure other than that of the real numbers, and that that is the only reason for assuming that it has that structure.
24. Penrose (1975), p. 269.
25. Geach (1979) p. 134.
26. McTaggart (1927), §315-316; Geach (1965), p. 304.
27. Grünbaum (1968), p. 340.
28. Weyl (1918), p. 217.

— 6 —

Modality and reality

I consider deixis or indication a useful concept to apply to various notions of subjectivity. But to use 'indexical' instead of 'subjective', I must extend 'context of utterance' to 'context of intention', or some other patently mentalistic idea; liberate the concept of deixis from its immediate bearing upon speech and apply it to intellectual acts in general. Utterances are plainly individual events; but what would individuate intendings?

It might be the sentences in which they could be formulated or expressed, but then vague intentions are a problem (either they answer to more than one such sentence, i.e. are ambiguous, or perhaps they have a fuzzy logic, and are associated with different sentences to different degrees). It might be the actions they'd lead to, ceteris paribus, but then the ceteris paribus condition is impossible to make precise. And it might be their objects — Meinong's objectives, perhaps: not propositions only, but 'desideratives', 'dignitatives', etc.[1]

At the bottom of this is a very difficult question about the nature of expression. The logical impulse is to compare expression to translation — as if what one meant before one said it were already encoded according to some pre-linguistic syntax and lexicon. There an infinite regress evidently beckons; but as far as I know, no decent

theory of the relation has ever been proposed – as Croce[2] remarked, we know nothing of its nature – and I'm certainly not going to offer one. I hope the reader will simply grant that every utterance is underlain by a distinctive mental state which is as individual as the utterance is, and that therefore I am as justified in speaking of the 'context' of such a mental state as of the 'context' of an utterance. I habitually disregard the abyss mentioned above and think of the mental state as a propositio mentalis composed of termini mentales. But it doesn't really matter what its inner nature is, providing it makes reasonable sense to relate it to a context in which it occurs, and say of it that it is semantically context-dependent or context-free. Everything I say about sentences and propositions is supposed to apply to these things also.

Although I sometimes treat indexicality as a property of sentences, in practice one locates it in parts of sentences: there is no definite notion of deixis as belonging primarily to a whole sentence and not to any of its parts. In a sentence containing 'I' essentially, it's the subject term that carries the EI. In something like 'ET sees green things this way', it's the predicate. There is an inaccessible object in the first case, and an inaccessible concept in the second.

Bearing that in mind, what is the fundamental locution concerning subjectivity, that which displays its true nature most clearly? I discern four alternatives:

(1) 'It is subjective that A is F' – a propositional modality;

(2) 'A is subjectively F' – a property of havings-of-properties, events, or property-exemplifications: otherwise expressible by 'A's being F is subjective'; an alternative which, unlike (1),

looks as if it implies that A's being F exists, i.e. that A is F tout court;

(3) 'A has subjective-F-ness' -- a property of properties -- it is a special kind of F-ness which A has, viz. the subjective kind;

(4) 'A is subjective' -- a property of individuals.

These possibilities are not necessarily all mutually exclusive. If, as some have held, propositions are a kind of property (formalists, for example, who wish to treat sentences as zero-place predicates), then (1) is compatible with (3). And if, as some have held, events are a kind of individual, then (2) is compatible with (4). However, a mutual incompatibility does hold between these two alignments, (1)-(3) and (2)-(4), because it is senseless to hold that one and the same non-epistemic property can belong both to concrete particulars and to abstract objects: at least in the absence of an explanatory logical theory.

The type-free logico-metaphysical position once espoused by Prior would be such a theory. Prior held[8] that grass and virtue share the property of not being blue; the difference between them is that virtue also has the property of not being non-blue, since colour is inapplicable to abstractions. This reconciliation is unappetizing to me. The corresponding analysis of subjectivity would treat it as the property of not being objective; and would hold, let's suppose, that it is not objective that I am here, and further that I myself am not objective, but I'm not non-objective either, because objectivity applies only to abstractions. Here the kind of incompatibility spoken of in the preceding paragraph is merely transferred from subjectivity to its contrary, and the gain in perspicuity is nil.

J. Perry[4] concluded that facts about belief do not force the radical metaphysical conclusion that some facts are intrinsically subjective. They yield only the mild psychological conclusion that some mental states are correlated with facts in subjective ways. Subjectivity is in the mind of the believer, or rather in his cognitive relation to the world; not in the world itself.

The subjectivity I plead for is non-relational. If subjectivity were relational, objectivity would be relational also. It would be the degenerate case in which the relation holds to all minds rather than some. Intrinsic (non-relational) subjectivity or tense is of great interest, because it means there's no single, complete description of the world; only (as Dummett says[5]) maximal descriptions of it, each proper to one viewpoint or point of time. In the material mode of speech, I think this means there isn't a single world, but a multitude of worlds - not possible worlds, but actual.

Prior's influence is everywhere in this essay, so I should like to declare independence by slighting one of his ideas. He suggested[6] that we might think of personal pronouns as a sort of modal operators: your pain being modally distinct from mine ('a remote pain of mine'), as the former pain is from the present one. Philosophically I find this unilluminating, and formally it's a mess. Although it is quite possible to invent, by analogy with the present tense, an operator of the first person, meaning 'It is true for me that', there is no smooth way of getting analogues of the non-present tenses: 'I' and 'you' certainly can't be treated as dual to one another, to form a pair of operators such as we are accustomed to find in other kinds of modal logic. And even if the first person is treated as the zero or inner-most modal operator in this

set-up (again like the present tense), it is incredible that the best analysis of 'you are in pain' should be anything like 'It is true for you that I am in pain' or 'The following is true of you: being in pain'.

The system is more complex. Linguists[7] of Jakobsonian tendency sometimes characterize it in terms of distinctive features, ±ego and ±tu, symbolizing respectively the self-referential and the vocative components. So 'I' is given as +ego; 'thou' as -ego, +tu; 'he' as -ego, -tu. Notice that 'he' and any other 'third-person' pronoun is defined by the fact that it lacks both of the characteristic personal features. In fact the so-called third-person pronouns are basically a variation of the demonstratives, as even etymology suggests.

There seems no sensible way of treating the authentic personal pronouns as a sort of hybrid of modal operator and quantifier, either. An attempt was made by one philosopher to reduce the quantifiers in part to personal pronouns. Hobbes suggested in De Corpore that every = what you think of; some = what I think of; but these definientia are now seen to presuppose quantification[8].

The position is, therefore, that although time and modality can be represented as modes, personality can't be. Real selfhood does not require there be objective selves, any more than real temporality requires there be objective times; but sadly it is too difficult to treat person as a modality like tense. The distinctiveness of person is suggested also by the fact that although most indexicals have at least this much universality, that if someone else were placed in the same circumstances, he would say the same thing by those indexicals, 'I' is not like that. What it varies with is not 'circumstances' but personal

identity.

What do I assert, though, when I say that time and modality, though not person, can be treated as modes? The word is redolent of 17th-century metaphysics. I suggest that the proper 20th-century gloss on 'mode' is 'whatever is expressed by a (modal or other) operator'.

With the notion of an operator goes that of the scope of an operator, the context operated upon. That depends on grammar, since scope is defined as the shortest WFF including the operator. The nodes in a phrase structure tree, in fact, might be treated as notional operators whose scope is their daughters.

What is syntactically a difference of scope, between an external operator and an internal one, may answer to a radical semantic distinction. Propositional operators stand for e.g. different ways of being small, predicate modifiers for different kinds of smallness.

The notion of an 'operator' in logic is rather vague, mostly because of the wide variety of uses it's been put to. It ought to be, roughly speaking, logic's answer to the adverb of ordinary speech. An 'operator' in mathematics is a function with a non-numeric argument, especially another function. The following further uses of 'operator' may be noted, their order representing a gradual evacuation of content. All Carnap's[9] operators in Meaning and Necessity are variable-binding (the two quantifiers and the lambda- and iota-operators). Hughes and Londey[10] call all the propositional connectives "operators". Kirwan[11] speaks both of sentence-forming operators on sentences and subject-forming operators on subjects, and Lyons[12] in Semantics calls a predicate a proposition-forming operator on names. These uses take away any distinctive sense from the word 'operator', and equate it with

'function'.

If we need a working syntactic characterization, I would suggest that an operator is what forms sentences from sentences, or predicates from predicates. This can be a single syntactic category if we adopt the popular ploy of seeing sentences – less than pellucidly – as zero-place predicates. The ploy has the dignity of having been thought of by Peirce, and it does have a unifying effect on logical syntax. Someone who rejects it must rest content with a dual characterization, and reflect that ordinary adverbs, also, qualify either predicates or sentences.

By 'sentences' I mean closed sentences. I want the definition to exclude the quantifiers, which seem to me to be sui generis. There is much discussion in this essay of people's desire to reduce modalities of various sorts to quantification, over worlds, times or whatever (Davidson's theory of adverbs is essentially a project of the same sort, reducing adverbial modification to quantification over events); there is nothing about the possible reduction of quantification to modality – though Prior, typically, has suggested it[13]. As I use the word, an operator can't produce something with a different number of argument places from the original object of operation. If it could, then a quantifer, or indeed a name, would qualify as an operator, since it forms zero-place predicates from one-place predicates.

I should add that operators, like predicates, may have more than one argument place – the standard propositional connectives do so, with the exception of 'not'. Montague observed that the idea of a zero-place operator is otiose, because it would not be distinguished from that of a zero-place predicate[14].

The semantics of such words is much more contentious.

As the mathematical usage noted above suggests, an operator is a bit like a higher-order predicate. I do not want to raise dust, hackles etc., by bringing in attributes of attributes and properties of propositions, so a better approach is possibly to ask: when should we express something by an operator on sentences, and when by a predicate of individuals? The information given by connectives, one might say, is given modally, by sentence operators, but we can also give it predicatively, in predicates of propositions. For 'if P then Q', somebody might substitute 'That-P implies that-Q'; for 'not P' read 'that-P is false', etc. But the relational formulation suggests that there are propositions; the use of an operator refers to no such things. There is however a presumption in favour of a predicate analysis, if only because the logic of subject and predicate is well understood, and the related metaphysics of substance and attribute may be innate.

By contrast the logic of 'operator and nucleus' has not been much studied. By this I mean the logic of operators as such, and not as reinterpreted by a semantics that replaces the operator with a predicate (a relation to an index: world, time, or self). These semantic analyses presume that a predicate is intrinsically more intelligible than an operator. They symptomatise a reluctance to accept the explication of an operator in terms of other operators; a feeling that nothing would have been explained thereby. In other words, part of what we want explained when we ask after the meaning of an operator, is the status of the operator itself. We want operators explained away, because they are not Aristotelian and familiar.

Adverbs in general get this treatment. Witness Davidson's introducing a new ontological category (events

as particulars) to enable the treatment of adverbs as ordinary predicates of individuals. Rival accounts which make of adverbs a sort of predicate modifier have not found such favour (even if a predicate analysis comes in later at the semantic level, e.g. explaining these 'modifiers' as relations between worlds and sets of worlds).

So far as I know, only Prior (and F. Christensen following him)[15] has discussed the question of deciding whether a feature of the world is to be represented by a sentential operator or a predicate of individuals. He discusses it in the context of time and tense. It arose for him because he believed that the use of (tense-logical) operators on sentences logically preceded and explained the application of temporal predicates like 'is earlier than' to putative moments of time. It's probably fair to represent Prior as holding that one should prefer to convey information via predicates of individuals (since the logic of subject and predicate is so well known) - but only if one believes that the class of individuals in question has actually got members[16]. Prior did not believe that there were such things as moments of time, so that for him they have to be constructed out of tensed truths. I don't believe that there are such realities as possible worlds. The system of those objects and the relations between them does not explain, but is explained by, and to be constructed out of, modal truths expressed by operators on sentences.

But if there are no times to quantify over, what is the analysis of apparent quantifiers like 'always' and 'sometimes'? These adverbs cry out for a formal analysis on the pattern of 'all' and 'some', but the abolition of times deprives such an analysis of its most obvious semantic underpinning. An alternative, if there is one, must depend

on a fuller logic and semantics of operators on sentences (not predicates of individuals).

Adverbs like 'somehow', 'anyhow' etc. strongly suggest it would be a mistake, in any case, to cleave always to an analysis in terms of genuine quantification. If there is any quantification expressed by these words, it must be over such things as 'ways' in which things are true. The possible worlds which are used to reduce the modal adverbs to quantifiers are similarly said by Stalnaker, Pollock and others[17] to be 'ways things might have been' - which is worse than what it explains, a phrase with no native clarity at all.

I am sometimes prepared to believe in states of states as individuals; and that seems better than yet another modification of truth. Sadly, if EI holds, this neat scheme - part of the general Davidsonian method which treats all manners and modalities as relations between indices and instantiations - must be given up.

Note in passing that adverbs of manner don't have to be replaced by relational predicates of instantiations: ordinary monadic ones will do fine. That's because they, unlike adverbs of time and place, don't arrange themselves into continuous series which demand explanation in terms of a more detailed analysis of the predicate - specifically, an analysis which treats it as a relation to one member of the series of times or places. As Prior observed, selves and worlds do not naturally serialize like this; nor, we may add, do ways, manners or modes. An index is not inevitably solidary with a co-ordinate system. Times and places are, worlds and selves are not.

"Ontological commitment varies inversely with modal involvement" is one of Prior's best sayings[18]. But he gives no hint of the criteria one should use to determine

whether something is a real or modal phenomenon. Indeed, in one place he abandons this choice to the philosopher's prejudice[19]. But it ought to be possible to agree on some generalities which should affect the choice, if not force it.

To relegate such a decision to 'the choice of the soul' is dogmatism. You merely refuse to justify your choice, while at the same time, by calling it a choice, you imply that there ought to be reasons for making it. If human beings cannot find reasons for this choice, it is for them no choice, but rather an instinct, or better - since human beings differ in this - a brute fact of temperament.

It must surely be a real question what kind of things there are, and not a question which can be answered by declarations about what the speaker himself finds plausible. Prior's observation is something like an emotivism of ontology. Explicit ontological commitment is a sort of ejaculation, and what things you commit yourself to depends on what kind of person you are. This is something Fichte might have assented to, and I wonder if it wasn't at the back of Quine's mind when he chose to use the word 'commitment' (remember he coined the phrase in the heyday of existentialism).

If we are genetically predisposed to credit the existence of some kinds of things, but not others - and there does seem to be some metaphysics in the germ plasm, most notably the metaphysics of substance and attribute - let's hope it is highly formal, and doesn't incline us to any more substantive beliefs (e.g. that there are such things as instants; or that there are not).

I find, therefore, only negative reasons for representing something modally, instead of by predication. The rule is that one conveys information by predicates

unless one is somehow convinced that there exists nothing for any suitable predicates to belong to. In that case one resorts to modal forms of expression. Thus, holding Christensen's[20] opinion about temporal information, that it is 'one kind of non-logical information that simply cannot be expressed by means of predicates' (only tenses will do), and being asked why predication concerning times wouldn't do as well, I can answer: because there are no times. And predication concerning possible worlds will not convey modal information, because there are no possible worlds. We must use operators for the purpose; and analyse them, if at all, in terms of other operators – until such time as we discover some <u>real</u> objects with properties which explain our intuitions about necessity.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. In Meinong (1902), p. 99, or Meinong (1923), p. 225.
2. Croce (1909), p. 27.
3. Prior (1955).
4. Perry (1979).
5. Dummett (1960), p. 503.
6. Prior (1977), pp. 58-59.
7. See Lyons (1968), p. 278.
8. Hobbes, (1656), Ch. 2, §11.
9. Carnap (1946), §1.
10. Hughes & Londey (1965), p.9
11. Kirwan (1978), pp. 92, 108.
12. Lyons (1977), p. 149.
13. Prior (1977), p. 10; cf. also Geach (1967), p. 166.
14. Montague (1968), p. 97.
15. Prior (1968b), pp. 138-142; Christensen (1974), pp. 297ff.
16. Prior (1968b); also Prior (1977), pp. 53-54, discussing the possible-worlds account of modal logic:

> But do we illuminate the subject of modal logic by so presenting it? To this I want to say, No; or at all events, Not much. It is, if you like, formally but not materially illuminating to present modal logic thus. The metatheory of predicate calculus is more fully understood than that of modal logic, so that the presentation of the latter as a special case of the former enables certain transfers of information to take place. But possible worlds, in the sense of possible states of affairs, are not <u>really</u> individuals ... We understand 'truth in states of affairs' because we understand 'necessarily'; not <u>vice versa</u>.

17. Stalnaker (1976); Pollock (1976) calls them 'counterfactual situations' (p. 112); his more explicit version identifies them with maximal consistent sets of

propositions (p. 15).

18. Prior (1968b), p. 142.

19. Prior (1968c), p. 93.

20. Christensen (1973), p. 297.

— 7 —

The vanity of modal semantics

The basic locution of modal semantics – the form of words which must make sense if any of the rest of the subject is to be significant – is this:

'P is true in W'

where 'P' holds a place for the name of any sentence, and 'W' does so for the name of any possible world. This is presupposed in the most formal versions, such as Kripke's[1], with its 'assignments' of truth-values relative to each world.

I maintain that a sentence like this, which contains a singular reference to a definite individual possible world, cannot itself be imagined to vary in truth value from world to world: 'P' might so vary; 'P in W' can't.

It is only sentences which do not refer expressly to a definite world that can vary in truth-value from world to world. 'Elephants are grey' can do so, because, although the world in which is uttered may contain only grey elephants, there are other worlds in which elephants are pink. But 'Elephants are grey in W' cannot do so, because, in whichever world one utters it, it is the state of things at world W which fixes its truth-value at all other worlds: it is a statement about W.

To see this, compare it with the strictly analogous temporal semantics which, we are told, will do instead of

the system of tensed sentences. In a theory of that kind, the typical locution is:

'P is true at T'

where 'T' is the name of a moment of time, and 'P' is the name of a tensed sentence. In this scheme it will always be sensible to ask when P is true, and one of the answers will be 'at T'. But it will never be worthwhile to ask when 'P is true at T' is true, because 'P is true at T' is either timeless, in which case the question is inapplicable, or else it is true (or false) at all times. This, indeed, is the virtue of the analysis in the eyes of its many advocates (e.g. Russell, Quine, D. C. Williams[2]). It provides a universal, objective statement of the meaning of tensed sentences, which appear on the face of them to be intelligible only to contemporary hearers.

Returning to the modal case, the analogous conclusion is evidently that, although something of the form 'P' might, so far as we can tell, vary in truth-value from world to world, nothing of the form 'P is true in W' can do so: exactly as 'P' might change truth-value from time to time, but 'P is true at t' can never do that.

'P is true in W', therefore, is true either in all worlds or in none. The system of such statements, which is meant to be a more perspicuous substitute for the system of ordinary-language sentences that make no explicit reference to possible worlds (the analogy with tenseless semantics for tensed sentences is again clear) is a system of necessary statements.

The presupposition of such a theory is that truth is not a monadic predicate of sentences, but a relation between a sentence and a world. In the ordinary case, we should regard a sentence as containing an implicit adverbial reference (indexical, if Lewis and Stalnaker are

correct[3]: the modal analogue of tense) to the world in which it is uttered. 'Elephants are grey' is better understood as 'Elephants are grey in the actual world' (what other route can there be to the understanding of the semantic concept of truth-in-a-world?). But no one who hopes for an objective semantics of indexical sentences will think it wrong to replace the indexical reference to 'the actual world' by a non-indexical reference to that same world. We could call it W_1 and apply the above arguments.

Every sentence P contains, therefore, a covert reference to a world. But we have seen that every such sentence is true either in all worlds or in none. I conclude that, in the perspective of modal semantics, every sentence is either necessary or impossible. It is true in every world that P is true in W_1 but that's the definition of necessity. So every truth is necessary if it is expressly relativized to a world (i.e. in the metalanguage of modal semantics the distinction between necessity and contingency is pointless), just as every truth is eternal if expressly relativized to a time, and universal if expressly relativized to a person. All statements are necessary, or rather the distinction between necessary and contingent statements lapses. This latter conclusion follows also if one construes the statements which are declared by modal semantics to be good substitutes for ordinary ones as themselves immune to modal qualification (worldless).

Suppose the answer is given that the possible worlds palaver is inapplicable to the semantic theory because it is part of it. 'P is true in world W' might be said to be worldlessly true, as eternalist reinterpretations of tensed statements are said to be timelessly true, or as statements

utilising the category of person are replaced by others which mention persons and are said to be impersonally true. Modality, person and tense are supposed to be transcended by these renovations.

It's not an option open to every class of theorist: not to David Lewis and any others who take a realistic view of possible worlds[4]. If possible worlds are real, then it is perfectly reasonable to ask concerning 'P is true in world W' whether that statement is itself true in all or some of them. It is a question which must have a true answer. If possible worlds are real objects, then we have no right to stipulate that the question whether a sentence is true in a world 'arises' only for some sentences and not for others. Once one has embarked on the relativization of truth to special objects, one is not free to reintroduce truth unalloyed and unqualified at sticky moments in the dialogue. Truth-in-worlds is now the only truth which is available to sentences. If truth-in-worlds does not 'apply' to 'P is true in world W', then that sentence does not make any statement at all.

Modal realism as a semantic theory has syntactic consequences. It is impermissible for the realist to accept either of the modal reduction principles. He must allow that modal operators be nested to any depth, and each new nesting produces a distinct assertion – one which is distinct from the assertion immediately preceding it in the iterative sequence, because the sentence whose relations to possible worlds make it true is distinct from the sentence whose relations to the worlds made its predecessor true. If one allowed the S4 or S5 equivalence of $\Box P$ with $\Box\Box P$, as one might who wished to represent $\Box P$ as not itself necessary, but worldless, then that distinctness would vanish. The enemy can answer (by way of capitulation) that

a semantic statement of any order is true in all possible worlds, so that the reduction is a defensible convention. And further, it might seem insignificant that this semantics did force abandonment of the reduction principles, in view of the fact that some logicians, e.g. C. I. Lewis[9], have rejected them already on intuitive grounds. But then if it's true in all worlds that P is true in world W, there are no really contingent statements at all: W may as well be this world - the actual world - as any other.

This course is forced on the realist. It just isn't sensible to allege that 'P is true in W' is true in some worlds only, whatever the facts might have been concerning its unregenerate original, 'P is true'.

It seems to me that it is also forced on those who define a possible world as a maximal consistent set of propositions: a set, that is, which contains every proposition or its contradictory but not both, and none of whose members imply the contradictory of any of the others. The question to him is: if there are any of these sets containing 'P is true in W', are there any which contain its contradictory? The question is fully intelligible. If the answer is No, then by agreeing to relativize all our propositions to worlds expressly, we are representing them all as necessary. If Yes, then I claim that this interpretation is not helping us to systematize our modal intuitions: it is 'counter-intuitive' (crazy) to think that 'P is true in W' could itself vary in truth-value from world to world.

Lewis does use worldlessness in one place. He declares mathematical objects to be worldless - they "inhabit no particular world but exist alike from the standpoint of all worlds". Normally we think of them as

entia necessaria, i.e. existing in all worlds. I do not understand the distinction between existing from the standpoint of a world and inhabiting it. Lewis does not amplify this distinction in any way except to appeal once more to the formal analogy between worlds and times. Numbers are worldless just as they are timeless: "they have no location in time and space but exist alike from the standpoint of all times and places."[4]

Construing the metalinguistic statements as themselves worldless, even if permissible, means only that no facts are either necessary or contingent in themselves. I doubt the intelligibility of this; but in any case it is no more favourable to the reality of contingency than the Spinozistic alternative (all facts are necessary).

The temporal analogue of this conclusion is perfectly acceptable to the B-theorists of time who defend it, since the feature which the analysis declares to be illusory, i.e. time-relative truth-value (tense), is in fact denied by them to be a real feature of the world. It is therefore the objective of a B-type semantics not merely to explain tense but to explain it away. The time-indexer can admit that 'P is true at T' is itself true at all times, since he is recommending that we should express ourselves only in eternal sentences (or, as Bradley says, that truth is of its nature eternal). But so far as I know, no defender of modal semantics has shown himself content to accept the unreality of that which his analysis shows to be unreal, i.e. world-relative truth-value (contingency). The world-indexer might be loth to confess that 'P is true in W' is itself true in all worlds, since then he is then recommending that theories should contain only necessary truths, i.e. truth is of its nature necessary, and contingency is an illusion: Spinozism, in short. Indeed,

the whole enterprise of modal semantics was aimed at making clearer the intuitive distinction between the necessary and the contingent, not at repudiating it. Lewis *et al.* are not Spinozists. They hold an A-type view of contingency (they think it's real) but do not see that a B-type semantics subverts that opinion.

These theorists have therefore to choose between abolishing contingency (Spinozism) and unintelligibly iterated modalities. If this predicament does not attract you, you should forget about 'worlds' and rest content with unanalysed modal intuitions.

This last is an EI response. So much is obvious if one accepts that 'true' should be taken as the indexical 'true in this world', and then add either that there are no worlds at all, or that some modal truths can't be caught by express relativity to them.

Prior, in support of the reality of tense, rejected the series of special objects (moments of time) which are necessary to the B-theorist's case (replacing tenses by dates). For Prior, instants of time are not fundamental; they are constructed out of tensed facts. The expression of a tensed fact is a sentence in which 'now' occurs essentially.

By parity of reasoning I say that one who thinks there is really such a thing as contingency ought to reject the series of special objects (possible worlds) which are necessary to a basically B-theoretic approach to modality (modal 'tenses' being replaced by modal 'dates' whose relations are necessary, just as the relations of temporal dates are eternal). If contingency is real, possible worlds should be constructions out of irreducibly modal facts. And the expression of a modal fact is one in which 'in the actual world' (the phrase construed as an indexical, like

'now') occurs essentially.

The EI view of modality turns out to be a defence of real contingency, as its analogues defend real becoming and real subjectivity.

A semantic theory adequate for modal concepts abandons truth in favour of truth in a world, at a time, for a person, etc., a polyadic relation between a proposition and various entities which function as indices. In such a theory an unmodalized sentence will be said to be true, not in some or all worlds, but in this, the actual, world. I hold that if there is real contingency, this indexical is sometimes essential.

A semantic theory is a contingent statement if anything is: think of all the linguists insisting that the connection between sign and meaning is arbitrary. If the semantics were necessary (which it would be if it were a conjunction of clauses each necessary in itself), this would be a revival of the idea that there is an intrinsic, internal connection between signs and what they signify. But whatever is contingent is essentially indexical, and therefore not universally intelligible, in the sense of being intelligible to all possible beings. It is intelligible only to actual beings - the inhabitants of this world.

Contingency is essential actuality (actuality being 'truth in this world'). Every true statement is actual (true in this world at least); but from a contingent statement the indexical 'actually' is ineliminable.

The "all possible worlds" kind of necessity corresponds to universality and eternity. An EI view of modality would hold that truth is truth, that truth relative to a world (this relativity being conceived to hold in all worlds) does not adequately capture truth in

the actual world (this world, the world). Some truths are essentially this-worldly, and can not be replaced by objective (= true in all worlds = necessary) declarations that they are true in W.

The identity 'It is true in some worlds that P' = 'It is true in this world that it is true in some worlds that P' does not complicate deductive systems of modal logic (reduction principles, etc.). The phrase 'It is true in this world that ...' only apparently refers to one 'world' among many 'possible worlds'. One could as easily read it as 'It is true in the world that ...', or 'It is the case that ...', or 'It is true that ...'. In reality it's a primitive idiom which the fiction of other possible worlds presupposes, as the fiction of other selves depends on 'I', and that of other times on 'now'. The traditional 'problem of other minds', and worries about the existence of past and future (other times), have now been joined by a 'problem of other worlds' - certainly the critical problem for current modal semantics.

I can know I am here now without knowing who I am, where I am, or what time it is; likewise I can know that things are thus without knowing what is the case - for example if I lack the concepts to express the state of things objectively.

But consider the state of not knowing what possible world one is in. What this ignorance consists in depends on how you, the possible-worlds theorist, propose to individuate and designate particular worlds. Supposing they are singularised by the propositions which are true in them, it is hard to see how a finite spirit could ever individuate a possible world. It's fair to postulate a world in which P holds; but that determines a class of

worlds. One would need to be omniscient about a world to designate it univocally. This really subverts polycosmic semantics. Generalisation about worlds is a sham if it's forever impracticable to singularise any of them.

It's true that this is how we treat electrons, or better, quarks - none of which has ever been observed; or better still, quantum states, which cannot, in principle, be determined individually, but only in ensembles. However, it is defensible to interpret quark-talk in an anti-realistic way, as providing a vivid intuitive analogue of some predictive mathematics. But at least Lewis's version of possible-worlds semantics has not got such a course open to it. He directly states that these worlds are real entities, and therefore his position is directly attacked by a suggestion that none of them can in practice be identified.

Essential indexicality, if it exists, also makes the plurality of worlds impossible.

Quine[7], taking a cue from Hintikka, compared diacosmic (cross-world) identity to diachronic identity, and asked: what guarantees can we get that an object remains the same across worlds or through time? There is of course a corresponding concept for place (diachoric, diatopic?), based on contiguity of parts, continuity of contour, etc. And we can find a corresponding concept for selves - transsubjective identity criteria - if we consider the laws we use to decide whether you and I are perceiving the same object, laws like those the phenomenalists wanted to define the thing itself by - a synthesis of optical perspectives based on projective geometry. We decide whether it is the same by how it seems to each of us.

Are these cross-index laws vitiated by EI? I think so: they are destroyed because they generalize about

perspectives. Since there are no general indexicals (except the artificial 'philosophical indexical' discussed in Chapter 13) these laws do not use indexicals. They name viewpoints (or presuppose that possibility by quantifying over them) and therefore they cannot state any fact which is essentially indexical, i.e. one which can be stated only by means of an indexical reference to a 'viewpoint'.

EI destroys the continuity between instants and makes conservation into something as unintelligible as continual creation, and it has a like atomizing effect on selves. This disintegrated situation makes it hard to defend any opinion except that there is just one mind and one moment. These two views were held by Schrödinger[8]. The analogous view for places would shrink the world to a point – if there is just one place, it can have no extension, because every part of a place is also a place: it's a 'homeomerous' concept. I would hope that the world can't be an extensionless point, but fortunately EI does not apply to place (there are no ineliminable occurrences of 'here'), and hence does not yield that foolish conclusion. EI modality – ineliminable occurrences of 'actual' – implies there's just one world, which is quite true: like Quine it reduces the worlds to one by subverting cross-world identification, but not in a way he would approve of.

The last remark takes for granted the analysis of 'actual' and its derivatives as indexical words. Not all of the above observations depend upon that analysis, but my main target is indeed the variety of modal semantics – Lewis's – which uses it, and is of most interest in a discussion of essential indexicality.

That 'actual' is an indexical word has been proposed by both D. K. Lewis and R. Stalnaker[9]. Lewis dissociates

'actual' and 'real', as Nagel has dissociated 'objective' and 'real', and Kripke 'a priori', 'necessary' and 'analytic' - reductionism is nowadays in retreat, and the vogue is for proliferation - subtlety and wire-drawn distinctions. This particular distinction, however, raises peculiar problems.

'Actual' has numerous properties which suggest an indexical analysis. 'The actual ----' can often be replaced by 'The present ----', which is in turn frequently a variant of 'This ----'. We might, without much grammatical strain, speak not only of the actual world, but of the actual self, the actual place, the actual time - compare the French 'actuel', and the corresponding words in German and Russian - meaning by them 'I', 'here' and 'now'. Actuality might even be glossed 'thisness'. But if so, actuality is a bizarre property. There are no pairs of selves or worlds or times or places relative to both of which its application is the same. How then can there be such a concept? How can we share a concept if agreement as to its extension is ruled out a priori?

There are also syntactic grounds for suspicion. This pattern is general among adverbs argued to be indexical:

For me	For everyone	For someone	For nobody
Now	Always	Sometimes	Never
Here	Everywhere	Somewhere	Nowhere
Actually	Necessarily	Possibly	Necessarily not

But the meaning of the primary indexical depends on a different particular opposition in each case:

'I' is opposed to 'not-I' (the Other), which is articulated first as 'you' and then as the third person and demonstratives. These presuppose the first and second

persons: 'he' is 'the male distinct from us, i.e. from you and me', 'this' is 'the thing close to me', 'that' (in the sense of iste) is 'the thing close to you", and "that" (in the sense of ille) is 'the thing remote from us both'.

'Now' is opposed to 'not-now' (the neutral 'then'[10]), which breaks down into the past and future tenses and related adverbs;

'Here' is opposed to 'not-here' (the neutral 'there' discussed by Lyons), which has in English and many other languages two grades, one answering to each person: 'there by you' and 'yonder'; the second of which, like 'he' and 'that', presupposes 'we';

Finally, 'actual' is opposed to 'non-actual', which does not diversify in any way.

This is a puzzle. Why are there no other modal indexicals? If Lewis is correct to call 'actual' indexical, it is the only indexical without correlatives. Why is there no analogue of 'then' and 'there'?, meaning 'in that world' as 'actually' means 'in this world'?

By artifice, one might read 'potentially' as 'in that world', as opposed to 'possibly', meaning 'in some world'. The former, Aristotelian term suggests that the user knows in what way something is possible – i.e. in which world it is true – as distinct from knowing only that there is a world in which it is true.

If this far-fetched suggestion is laid aside, then 'actually' is the sole modal indexical: a suspicious circumstance. At least one philosopher – Tugendhat – has argued that the importance of indexical terms is that they belong to a system of indexical words which are interchangeable according to circumstances[11]. He holds, indeed, that this is the fundamental fact which makes

singular reference of any kind possible.

Since there is nothing obviously brainless about Tugendhat's contention, we should look askance at a putative indexical word which, by having no correlative indexical words that can be substituted for it in other contexts (other worlds, in this case), would do away with an impressive theory of indexicality and reference without further argument.

The indexical analysis of actuality, like egocentric logic, was first thought of by Prior[32], and developed avowedly as a jeu d'esprit. He considered it a 'tall story'. It is presented as the honest truth by David Lewis, though one might not think so from his tone of voice. He seems quite unaware that many will think it and its associated metaphysics too unexpected to be proved by its logical utility alone.

Lewis thinks actuality is indexical, but not essentially indexical. It is not essentially indexical because it is an objective relation between a world and its inhabitants, who call it actual only because they inhabit it and not some other world.

If he were right that 'in the world' ('actually') is indexical, it would then be as problematic to talk of 'a world' and 'worlds', as it is to talk of 'a now' and 'nows', 'an I' and 'egos' — general terms which are obviously but not intelligibly derived from indexical words.

And in point of fact, it is problematic to talk of 'a world' and 'worlds'. I doubt if there is any such property as being a world, in the required metaphysical sense. There is only the property of being the world, which is by definition comprehensive of everything which there is. And when Lewis uses 'world' as a sortal term, it is as though

he thought there could be more than one class of all elephants.

Stalnaker thinks actuality is semantically indexical, but that the world is single, as a matter of logic -

"the semantical thesis that the indexical analysis of 'actual' is correct can be separated from the metaphysical thesis that the actuality of the actual world is nothing more than a relation between it and things existing in it. Just as one could accept the indexical analysis of personal pronouns and be a solipsist, and accept the indexical analysis of tenses and believe that the past exists only as memory and the future only as anticipation, one can accept the indexical analysis of actuality while excluding from one's ontology any universes that are the way things might have been.

In fact, I want to argue, one must exclude those analogues of our universe from one's ontology. The thesis that the actual world alone is real is superficially analogous to solipsism - the thesis that I alone am real - but solipsism has content, and can be coherently denied, because it says something substantive about what alone is real. In effect, solipsism says that the actual world is a person, or a mind. But the thesis that the actual world alone is real has content only if 'the actual world' means something other than the totality of everything there is, and I do not believe that it does."[15]

I am in complete sympathy with the second of these paragraphs; but isn't it impossible to make it intelligible, without the apparatus of possible worlds, that 'actually' should be an indexical word? It seems to me that the whole charm of the theory resides in the analogy which exists between the adverb 'now' and the series of times on the one hand, and the adverb 'actually' and the

system of possible worlds on the other. This is certainly the only argument which Lewis offers in its favour. So far as I know, Stalnaker offers no alternative[7] and it is very hard to see why a word should be indexical when there is only one thing to which it can ever refer, independently of the circumstances in which it is used, and by whom.

The intention is probably to retain the apparatus of possible worlds, but viewed as a fiction, or algebraic device. If so, then the indexicality of "actual" is likewise a fictitious indexicality - there is no authentic variation of reference, because the objects which would be variously referred to are unreal. That's an abandonment of the indexical analysis of actuality.

Eternity and necessity have often been associated. In Leibniz and Spinoza, they are identified[14]. They were typically elements of the idea of metaphysical perfection. One idea behind it was: why should a truth be eternal, if not because it is necessary? Compare Cudworth[15]: "all creatures, having once had a beginning, cannot possibly have a necessary existence, were it only for this reason, because they once were not."

This association is again prominent today, in the emphasis on the parallel formalities of 'all times' and 'all worlds'.

The above is intended to show that it still bears the old metaphysical price, which its proponents may not be willing to pay[16].

Notes to Chapter 7

1. Kripke (1963)

2. The essential tenet of the B-theory was given in Russell (1903), §442:

> Change is the difference, in respect of truth or falsehood, between a proposition concerning an entity and the time T, and a proposition concerning the same entity and the time T′, provided that these propositions differ only by the fact that T occurs in one where T′ occurs in the other.

The virtues, indispensability, etc., of this analysis, and often also of the picture of space and time as a four-dimensional manifold, are urged in Quine (1953), Williams (1951), Goodman (1951), and many other works. Quine (1953), §4 is one of the places where Quine contends that unstable truth-value destroys logic.

3. See Stalnaker (1976).

4. Lewis (1973), pp. 84–85.

5. According to Prior (1977), p. 102.

6. Lewis (1973), p. 39.

7. Quine (1976).

8. Schrödinger (1958), p. 138ff.

9. Stalnaker (1976); Lewis (1973), p. 86.

10. Lyons (1977), 15.2.

11. Tugendhat (1976), pp. 223–224, pp. 343–346.

12. In Prior (1968c), pp. 92–93.

13. Stalnaker (1976).

14. Cf. Parkinson (1965), p. 78.

15. Cudworth (1838), p. 51.

16. Skyrms (1976) has an excellent argument (due, he says,

to T. Parsons) against the idea that there are many real worlds. It runs as follows. A world is real if and only if every proposition true-in-that-world is true. Two possible worlds are distinct if and only if there is a proposition which is true-in-one but false-in-the-other. So if two distinct worlds are real then there is a proposition such that both it and its denial are true.

It is essential to this argument that both truth-in-worlds and truth pure and simple can co-exist in a theory. I have suggested that this is not the case, and this argument gives the modal realist a good reason to agree with me; but if he does, then I contend that the conclusions follow which I have drawn in the text. It is, besides, the realist's own fault that truth pure and simple can be turned against him, since the reality which he wishes to confer on possible worlds is reality pure and simple, i.e. it is not world-relative.

In the same essay, Skyrms also deploys a form of the argument about endlessly nested modalities which I use above, turning it especially against the realist:

> Finally, it is not at all clear why Lewis's truism, "things could have been otherwise", should not apply also to the enriched language which numbers among its things the possible worlds relative to the initial language; and thus generate a runaway ontology ...
> One might remark that the ontological situation here is no worse than that for set theory. Indeed! But it is one thing to take a conceptualistic attitude towards sets, and another to take such an attitude to physical reality.

It will evident that I am in full sympathy with Skyrms's paper. I feel, however, that this sort of argument is good, not only against Lewisian realism, but against any semantics which represents modal logic as a fragment of quantification theory. As soon as there is a claim to reduce a modal statement to a <u>relation</u> between a proposition and a special object ("real" or otherwise), one can raise the same questions.

— 8 —

The status of indices

The indexation of truth seems vulnerable to an open-question argument. One can always ask, about 'P is true at T' or 'truth is a relation to a time', whether it is true. If one couldn't, it wouldn't be a statement.

So perhaps 'true' (unqualified) means 'true at all these indices' (I, here, now, in the actual world). That is, it's indexical.

That would not involve that all statements are subjective, local, temporary and contingent. Even though I declare only that it is true for me, here, now, and in the actual world, it might still be impersonal, ubiquitous, eternal and necessary (i.e. true at all other indices also).

If truth is an indexical property, like being present, then truth without apparent qualification is really the zero modality (true in this world) as presentness is the zero tense (true at this time). The idea has the virtue of giving a quantificational explanation for the implication which holds between necessity and truth, and between truth and possibility.

It is implied in Prior's assimilation of truth and presentness[3], even though he uses it to deny that either concept is indexical. This is because of an implicit assumption that essential indexicality is non-indexicality.

It is because Prior fundamentally agrees with McTaggart that essential indexicality implies unreality that he redescribes EI so as to eliminate its token-reflexivity.

The Lewis-Chisholm doctrine of self-attribution[3] suggests that some element like 'for me' is implicit in all statements, much as Prior thinks 'now' occurs in every sentence, so that its explicit representation is unnecessary. If Lewis were correct about actuality, then the same would go for 'in this world', or 'it is true in this world that –'. Even 'It was the case that P' and 'It will be the case that P' are fundamentally present-tense, because they are equivalent to 'It is now true that it was the case that P' and 'It is now true that it will be the case that P': Fp and Fp mean Pp now, Fp now (as Aquinas held: Est futurum quod erit praesens[5]). Likewise 'It is true in some worlds that P' = 'It is true in this world (it is actually true) that it is true in some worlds that P'. Whatever is possible is actually possible. Whatever is possible is now possible. Whatever is true is now true. Whatever is true is actually true.

Any modification which has the characteristics of 'now' and 'actually' in these examples is just asking for a redundancy treatment in the style of Ramsey, Ayer, and Prior (the theory is sketched in Kierkegaard)[4]. It has also been called the no-truth or disappearance theory of truth.

If truth must be relativized to worlds, one can have a redundancy theory of 'true in the actual world' (as if its two elements cancelled out), but not, generally, of 'true in W'. In view of the resemblance between presentness and actuality noted here, it's interesting to recall the French, German or Russian meaning of 'actuel', 'aktuell' (topical, timely, present).

An indexical analysis of a concept is a sort of non-analysis, or analysis-away, and hence akin to a redundancy theory of the concept. The reason is that deixis is eminently non-conceptual; so that to say that the content of a concept is exhausted by its deictic function is as much as to call it a non-concept.

Most writers who propose indexical analyses of concepts do not regard them as irreducibly indexical; they construe indexicality as an eternal relation to a particular object (a world, time, place or self). This is acceptable only if there are such things. It seems *prima facie* highly unlikely that such things as worlds, times and places are real things, but the case of selves is more promising, and it would be possible to give an eternalist account of all indexical concepts if (1) all other indexicals can be given in terms of 'I' and (2) every proposition containing 'I' is equivalent to an eternal one mentioning a particular self.

If every sentence is, as Prior holds, present-tense, then the renovated version would insist that every sentence refers to a self.

A theory that admitted (1) but not (2) above would use Prior's Egocentric[9].

But what sort of thing must a self be, if it is logically prior to space, time and actuality? A Leibnitian monad, perhaps. Such a philosophy is like those of Leibniz and McTaggart in holding that only selves exist; Parmenidean or Minkowskian in holding that the world is immutable.

However, an indexicalist who objected to the eternalism of worlds, times, places and selves on the grounds that in such a scheme change was not change but a merely geographical diversity between different parts of

time, can raise the very same objection to eternalism based only on selves. For although that scheme does not rest on spurious entities such as instants or epochs, it is like those which do in that it does not admit complete propositions of unstable truth value, which may be essential to change.

Universalism, the B-theorist's approach to any indexical concept, has two pillars. The first is the idea of a four-dimensional manifold of space and time, an idea which goes back to Lagrange and descends through Minkowski. It is defended for example by Quine, D. C. Williams[6]. The second is formal pragmatics - the explanation of an indexical language in objective terms, by relating indexical sentences to objectively existing indices (sets of moments, worlds, persons, etc). The formalism is intended to give the meaning of indexical expressions in non-indexical terms. In connection with time this approach begins with Russell). Its generalization to modality and selfhood was apparently accomplished first by Kanger, but popularized especially by Kripke and Montague[7].

The project begins from Russell's suggestion that, in the special case of Time, it is possible to replace the system of tensed (i.e. temporally indexical) sentences, which vary in truth-value from moment to moment, by a system of eternal sentences each of which contains an express reference to a moment of time; and that this reform would involve no loss of information[8]. In other words, it is possible to give the truth-conditions of a tensed sentence in tenseless, non-indexical terms.

In formal pragmatics has evolved the conception of an Index, as that object to which the truth of an indexical sentence is declared to be relative. It is obvious that the

same formalism which makes possible an objective semantics for sentences in which temporal indexicals occur, will do as much for sentences involving locative indexicals like 'here' and 'there', providing only that there are such objects as places, to do for the latter what times could do for the former. Furthermore, it was discovered that the very same formalism can be used to give the semantics of modal sentences. The difference here is that one relativizes the truth of the sentence, not to a time or to a place, but to a possible world.

The isomorphism which exists among these theories has prompted their conflation into a more general theory of meaning for indexical and modal languages. In the standard formulation, the key idea is that of an Index, understood as a sequence of special objects: a time, a place, a possible world, a speaker, a hearer, and so forth, each of which represents some feature of the possible circumstances of utterance which would affect the truth-value of the original indexical or modal sentence. In connection with formal languages the use of such a conception is not a problem, because they are to be explained relative to ordinary speech. However, if we wish to make use of it in the treatment of ordinary speech itself as if that were also a formal language, as Montague wanted to treat it, then the interpretation of the idea of an Index becomes of interest. It is not a colloquial idea. It is a creature of set theory (a sequence), and involves besides a quite definite sort of ontology - one which includes such objects as possible worlds and moments of time.

'Index' is Montague's term. 'Point of reference' was preferred by D. Scott, and others speak of a 'pragmatic context'?. Two more intuitive ideas are at work here: that of a 'viewpoint', 'perspective' or 'standpoint', and

that of 'circumstances', the 'situation of utterance'. The idea of a 'pragmatic context' sounds clear but is vague. In constructing a substitute, the formalists content themselves with listing the cast: speaker, audience, place, time ... A context is a little possible world, with its own time, space and population. But conceiving this as a sequence imposes no special structure besides an arbitrary linear order.

The formal idea is of limited use in explicating the special uses of indexicals which interest me. An index or point of reference is a speech-point rather than a viewpoint; but it's a pity we can get no more general term still. 'Context of utterance' and 'index' etc. suggest that the things they refer to are essentially 'manners of y^e existence of persons', i.e. aspects of a potential speaker or cognizer. The point, however, is not that cognition carries subjective 'facts' with it, but that there are subjective facts regardless of whether anyone knows it. This idea is lost if 'subjective' means 'dependent on a cognizer', and the world is supposed essentially to contain places for such cognizant beings. Strictly, we should not confine our attention to situations of 'utterance'. Anything intentional or semantic is relevant, and I contrast 'context of utterance' with 'context of intention', the latter being a more general idea than the former.

One must extend the conception somehow, because the standard use of an indexical involves a pragmatic context; and it seems possible that one may not use an indexical in any extended way unless one has available something structurally similar to such contexts; unless one has, let's say, interiorised their general form - a form which includes places for speaker, audience, place, time, etc.,

even if not all the places are filled. That brings in the possibility of characterizing different kinds of intentional situation in terms of which of the possible pragmatic roles are in fact being played. In monologue you have a context from which audience is deleted; in monologue intérieur place is also deleted, as also ostensive environment. There is perhaps in such indices a preferred hierarchy of deletion – as it were, audience; place; time; speaker.

Some formal tricks exist which can unify the description of different sorts of pragmatic context. Like Martin[10] one might introduce, as formal devices, various null objects – the null place, null audience, &c., to hold the places. The null place is not nowhere. It is like the null individual, which was compared by Martin to Heidegger's Nichts. The null individual is a hypothetical individual which is 'null', i.e. non-actual, at all times. Inactuality is identity with the null individual. And having no location would be location at the null place. These devices can be adapted such that e.g. locating something at the null place is equivalent to not locating it at all, but still indicating formally that it is the sort of thing which would have a location: you draw attention to an aspect of the situation, but leave it indeterminate. Null arguments are just gadgets, though, for describing a new kind of context as if it were truncated from a more detailed kind. After all one does not want to identify monologue with 'not talking to anyone'.

A pragmatic context – 'circumstances of utterance' – is essential to the use of indexicals, and therefore to anything whose expression requires their use. But can one specify a definite pragmatic context without using indexicals? One factor might be moments of time, taken, on

the authority of physicists, as objective entities. However, many philosophers reject the authority of science when it comes to the metaphysics of time[11]. Geach[12] has claimed that the theoretical 'simultaneity' of physicists is ultimately dependent on a primitive, tense-logical, hence indexical, conjunction with the sense of the Latin 'simul' - a sentence operator, and not an objective relation among substantial events.

I suggest that no pragmatic context can be specified except by reference to another pragmatic context (just as no moment can be specified except ultimately by reference to the present moment). There exists a sort of relativity or relativism of pragmatic contexts. If one of the factors of every pragmatic context were a possible world, then, since a possible world can't be identified except indexically (the alternative would be to state every proposition which is true in it), that is, by some relation to the actual world, the above thesis is proved. I don't believe there are worlds, but someone who does may be persuaded by this! or else by the fact that every pragmatic context contains a moment of time as a factor, and any identification of a moment of time is ultimately indexical. I get support for that from an unexpected quarter. Hermann Weyl[13] observed that any abstract moment is qualitatively identical to every other, and that a single moment must be identified directly - which must mean indexically. Whether the thesis of qualitative identity holds depends on how abstract one is being. It is correct, if one considers only the intrinsic (non-relational) properties of an instant; but qualitative distinctions appear once one thinks about e.g. the propositions which are true at a given time. Listing all of those would singularise the moment, but that is not feasible. And supplying some relations of precedence

and subsequence to other moments of time will work only once one has already broken into the system somehow, and directly, – that is, indexically – identified one of the moments, by relation to which the others can be picked out also.

One says that a sentence is true 'with respect to' an index, or, more specifically, that it is true 'for' a self, or 'at' a time, or 'in' a world. But these prepositional phrases ('at' etc.) are in themselves empty. None of them is any more than the mere form of a preposition (a pro-preposition). They do nothing but convert an n-place predicate into an (n+1)-place predicate, which – if nothing is said about how its sense, as opposed to its mere form, is got from the n-place original – is unintelligible.

I do not think it would be correct to reply that this question does not arise, because 'true-for', 'true-at' and the rest are logical units, predicable of sentences and selves, or sentences and times, etc., i.e. that they have no inner structure. I think that course is wrong because it makes it impossible to see that 'Snow is white' is true-at-T because snow is white <u>at T</u>. No one will say in this latter case that the prepositional phrase 'at ——' is after all a unitary part of the predicate 'is white', and that the identity of structure we seem to discern in 'is white at T' and 'is black at T' is an illusion, as if they were logically simple and unanalysed relations to times. It's quite plain that these relations are complex, and constructed from the monadic predicates 'is white' and 'is black' respectively by application of the prepositional phrase 'at ——'. I do not see why the monadic predicate 'is true' should be excepted from this analysis, if once it is allowed. The problem is the interpretation of the prepositional phrase.

I would contend that the different prepositions used to mark relations to the different possible indices – 'at', 'for', 'in', 'with respect to', 'from the standpoint of', and so forth, do not express different relations. They are conventional or stylistic variants of one another, and a single preposition could be used instead of several. All the prepositions have the same sense, but what is it? Do we know?

As Davidson wrote[14], 'we conceal logical structure when we treat prepositions as integral parts of verbs', and I see no general objection to taking prepositions as main verbs, as in

(∃x)(Flew(I, my spaceship, x)&To(the Evening Star, x))

providing the postulated verb can be understood. Here, the implication which some found obscure, i.e.

(∃x)(To(the Evening Star,x))

is quite colourably glossed by Davidson as 'There was an event involving motion towards the Evening Star'.But

(∃x)(Is-true(the sentence, x)&At(the index, x))

entails

(∃x)(At(the index,x)),

which signifies nothing. 'At' doesn't suggest any definite relation between an event (or property-instantiation) and an index. All we learn is that the event is <u>relative to</u> the index or context in some unexplained way.

Quine is the only writer who has given an explanation of the 'at' in these phrases, but he uses a different syntactic analysis[15]. He considers that 'at T' belongs with the subject term rather than the predicate, and that it combines with a name 'N' to make a compound name 'N at T', which names the common part of T and N, where N is a physical object, i.e. a region of space-time, and T is an epoch, i.e. a stretch of time. The four-dimensional picture

of the world, which Quine adopts, is essential if this analysis is to have any plausibility; and since his is the only decent analysis to have been given of the property of being located 'at' a time, it is instructive that even this elementary part of an eternalist account of temporality proves to involve the full four-dimensional block universe. There is no moderate eternalism.

Any reluctance to accept the complete eternalist picture, therefore, casts doubt directly on the intelligibility of the apparatus of objective times, places, selves, etc., and the nature of the relation which might hold between them and events or truths. The reluctance would result from contemplating the facts of change and subjectivity; and by undermining the only account which has been given of tense and person as objective and relational, it ought to provoke the thought that person and tense may sometimes be essential and primitive.

Essential tense is bound up with a certain viewpoint (a time) but not as such with a certain cognizing subject. The subject is inessential to EI tense in the following way: that the EI tensed truth in question would have held for <u>any</u> subject which happened to occupy that place in time. It would be quixotic to defend an analogous position for EI person: that the EI personal truth in question would have held for any subject who happened to be that person. Unless there are subjects of cognizance which are not persons, there is only one subject which could 'happen' to be that person; and this is subjectivity in the orthodox sense.

How strange it would be to think of my selfhood – my identity with a certain person – as one of my circumstances, as it were an accident of mine. This is what

the treatment of indexicals in formal pragmatics, and indeed the linguist's treatment of deictic terms, suggests to some people. Evans noted[16] that "my being the person that I am cannot be regarded as an aspect of the context or situation I am in". Of course that's correct, but it should not be a difficulty, since it is utterances, rather than persons, which have contexts. And it <u>is</u> an aspect of a speech-act's context that I rather than someone else am playing the participant role of speaker.

The root of the discomfort is the highly general use of 'context' in discussions of indexicality, essential or otherwise. Not only where I am, when I am speaking, etc., but even who I am seems to be represented as something which might have been otherwise. But whereas it's clearly true that I might have been elsewhere, and therefore meant something else by 'here', and might presumably have been located elsewhere in time (though this is not so obvious), and meant something else by 'now', it's impossible that I should have been somebody else, and so meant something else by 'I'.

The introduction of these modal considerations complicates things mightily, at least if any aspect of modality is assimilated, in Lewis's manner, to indexicality. Here the two things are irremediably confounded – or at least the remedy is difficult.

In another world I am elsewhere, I suppose; but there are no worlds in which I am another person (whatever that may mean). Really, what could have been otherwise is not the speaker's identity with himself, but that it was that person who was the speaker. That is, not: For some X, X is the speaker and it is possible that X should not be X, but: For some X, is the speaker and it is possible that for some Y, Y was the speaker and Y is not identical with X. What is

possible is not that I might not have been myself, but that somebody else might have been speaking and saying 'I'. The essential occurrence of 'I' revokes that presumption. It means in effect that here nobody else could have been saying 'I'. Given what was said, nobody else could have said it.

In talking of EI or subjectivity we mention viewpoints. It is an unhappy metaphor from sight and space, because there is no spatial EI, i.e. no ineliminable occurrences of 'here'. However, no obvious alternatives exist, so one must consider the interpretation of this word.

Eddington, expounding Einstein, remarked that distance and duration are not properties of things, but relations between things and observers[17]. In the view I am considering, it is not these metrical properties, but the existence, or at least the individuality, of elements in space and time, which is relative to viewpoints. If both view are correct, then both counting and measuring are relative. I do not consider whether they are relative to the same kind of viewpoint, i.e. whether the relativistic observer is a 'viewpoint' in the metaphysical sense. But there is at least an analogy. The self is the source of a (non-cognitive) metaphysical perspective as the relativistic observer is the source of a (non-cognitive) physical perspective. In general a 'viewpoint' is the ideal source of a metaphysical 'perspective', and a proposition may be unknowable 'at' (or 'from') such a viewpoint only because inexpressible (and hence neither true nor false) there. This is only a metaphor. It is 'information' (knowledge) that can't be given by predication. And these apparent generalities are not real quantifications over

viewpoints. Like philosophical indexicals (see Chapter 13), they invite the hearer to substitute his own essential indexical. (Perhaps here and here only is Hobbes's gloss on the quantifiers accurate: ∀ = what you conceive; ∃ = what I conceive.)

Even if a metaphor, the idea of a non-cognitive perspective or viewpoint looks like a contradictio in adjecto. Two other classes of metaphor are used, which raise different problems – 1. 'source' or 'origin', 2. 'limit' or 'horizon'. Compare Wittgenstein, Tractatus 5.631: "Das Subjekt gehört nicht zur Welt, sondern es ist eine Grenze der Welt."

The self is not part of the world, but is nevertheless supposed still to be real in some way. McGinn points out that we do not take this transcendental and paradoxical view of times: why not? It is true that, unless we are Einsteinian or Quinean monists, who see no essential difference between a material object and a region of 'space-time', we ought to recognize that whatever times and places may be, they are not 'parts of the world' in the way in which a material particle is. They are elements posited to enable us to describe the abstract structure of the world, and hence are logically of a higher order than the world's own bits and pieces. This does not make them transcendental. However, it does make it difficult for many of us to take them seriously as real individuals; and so it's possible to reject a further point made by McGinn in the same place[18], namely that 'no one would wish to hold' that 'now' and 'here' do not refer to times and places. It is quite reasonable to hold just that, if one does not believe that there are any such things as places and times. My own view is that "here" is to be defined in terms of "I" and "now", but that "I" and "now" express primitive,

subjective concepts which cannot be explained in terms of anything else.

When an indexicalist declares that something exists or is true only from a certain viewpoint, the eternalist always replies that in that case it isn't a truth, but a predicate true of the viewpoint; not existence, but some sort of relation to the viewpoint. The viewpoint is now to be considered a substantial object of some kind.

However, if the viewpoint is not an object, can't be named, and is capable of being alluded to only by 'I' or 'now', maybe we should say that such sentences are incorrigible hybrids, and can't be replaced by any purely linguistic form of expression. The circumstances of utterance are essential, and so is the fact that they <u>are</u> circumstances of utterance. It would be incorrect to view them as relevant only as 'disambiguating' equivocal expressions. Basically the eternalist wishes to incorporate the circumstances of utterance into the utterance: circumstances of utterance would become become parts of what is said, and indication would be replaced by naming. But some things can never be named; they can only be indicated.

I should qualify that. Although it is true from every point of view that some things can only be indicated, these won't be the same things from every point of view. And I must qualify that also. This apparent generalization about things some of which are logically excluded from my world implies a restitution of the Universe, a reunification of the subjective and objective which could not in fact be accomplished: the subjective facts would all contradict one another. That no such redintegration is possible is also the view of Sartre and Nagel[17].

To put this last point differently: the inconsistency

of statements which essentially belong to different observers does not arise: they are incomparable or incommensurable, though not with the incommensurability discussed by Feyerabend or Kuhn. That is a conceptual matter, and has nothing do with the relativity to viewpoints which I am concerned with. In order for it to be relevant, one would have to suppose that what varied between perspectives was ideology, i.e. the system of available concepts, which would mean that an indexical expressed different concepts (hence had different extensions) at different times (etc.). But I think its conceptual content does not vary. What varies is its reference, and the truth-value of sentences containing it.

Notes to Chapter 8

1. Prior (1967b).

2. Lewis (1979); Chisholm (1981).

3. Cited in Prior (1967a), p. 14.

4. Ramsey (1927), pp. 44-45; Kierkegaard (1846), p. 170, explicating the sentence, 'The truth _is_':

> The truth _is_, i.e. the truth is a reduplication. Truth is the subject of the assertion, but the assertion that it is, is the same as the subject; for this being that the truth is said to have is never its own abstract form. In this manner we give expression to the fact that truth is not something simple, but is in a wholly abstract sense a reduplication, a reduplication which is nevertheless instantly revoked.

Prior (1967b) suggested also a redundancy treatment of the present tense: "It's no more than the same old 'multiply by one' business when we think of it as a tense-indication." That is, we treat it as a special case of tense in order to preserve a smooth formalism. He further suggested that presentness can be identified with truth. These words designate the same vacuous concept, but by contrast with different non-vacuous ones - past and future in the one case, falsity in the other.

5. Explored in e.g. Prior (1968a) and Prior (1968b).

6. Quine (1960), §171, or Quine (1953), §4; Williams (1951).

7. Kripke (1963); Montague (1968), which was conceived around 1960; Kanger (1957) is the usual reference, but I have not seen that work. The generic theory, which is applied by these writers equally to the study of modality, tense and personal pronouns, is termed 'topological logic',

i.e. the logic of positions (worlds, times or selves) in Rescher & Urquhart (1971).

8. For example, Russell (1903), §442. In Ayer (1956), pp. 159-160 there is a succinct statement of the same position.

9. 'Index' is Montague's term, see Montague (1968) and Montague (1970). 'Pragmatic context' is adopted in Stalnaker (1981).

10. Martin (1965).

11. Mellor (1981) does so expressly, p. 2.

12. Geach (1965), pp. 311-312.

13. Weyl (1918), p. 8.

14. Davidson (1967), p. 119.

15. Quine (1960), pp. 172-173.

16. Evans (1982), p. 202. Also Ayer (1956), pp. 216-217.

17. Cited in Clark (1973), p. 99.

18. McGinn (1983), p. 54.

19. See below, Chapter 14. Sartre is the only author to have paid attention to this idea, which I think is the tendency of any genuinely EI uses of "I". See especially Sartre (1943), pp. 617-625, on why subjective and objective things cannot belong to a single totality, or, as he puts it, p. 623, "it is impossible to pass from the notion of being-in-itself to that of being-for-itself and to reunite them in a common genus". Also p. 624:

> When we studied the for-others, we established that it was necessary that there be a being which was an "other-me" ... But at the same time this being which is an other-me appeared to us as being able to exist only if it included an inapprehensible non-being of exteriority. We asked then if the paradoxical character of the totality was in itself an irreducible ... we decided that the synthetic unity of consciousnesses had no meaning, for it presupposed that it was possible for us to assume a point of view on the totality; actually we exist on the foundation of this totality and as engaged in it.
>
> But if we can not "adopt a point of view on the totality", this is because the Other on principle denies that he is I as I deny that I am he. It is the reciprocity of the relation which prevents me from ever grasping it in its integrity.

I interpret the last remark as a version of the fact that my 'I'-thoughts contradict your 'I'-thoughts; and if these thoughts are irreducibly indexical, then they express 'truths' which contradict one another. Hence we cannot imagine that there is a single world in which all such thoughts are true. See also Nagel (1979), p. 213. And of course Kierkegaard (1846), e.g. p. 107:

> It may be seen, from a purely abstract point of view, that system and existence are incapable of being thought together; because in order to think existence at all, systematic thought must think it as abrogated, and hence as not existing. Existence separates, and holds the various moments of existence discretely apart; the systematic thought consists of the finality which brings them together.

Kierkegaard is a moderate, however: "Reality itself is a system – for God; but it cannot be a system for any existing spirit." This kind of objectivism is indefensible if there are after all truths which only 'existing spirits' can grasp. It is mostly defended <u>via</u> the claim that the necessity for indexical thought is not that metaphysical sort, but something epistemic. So, e.g., Mellor (1981), p. 6: "Although tense is not an aspect of reality, to us who act in time it is an inescapable mode of perceiving, thinking and speaking about reality."

— 9 —

Formal semantics for natural language

EI subverts the project of a formal semantics for natural language. It does so, because, upon current assumptions, we expect such a theory to generate truth-conditions for any possible sentence of the language, and to give those conditions in a form which will be intelligible to anyone. That is, we expect that the theory will not only tell us everything that one needs to know in order to understand the language. We expect it to be a universal theory, i.e. that it will tell anyone everything he needs to know in order to understand the language. The existence of EI sentences in the language makes certain that this latter condition cannot be fulfilled.

The idea of an essential indexical is very different from that of a mere (eliminable) one; such that the essential indexical ought to be viewed as of a different semantic category; or rather as of no such category. The essential indexical resists all semantic treatment — it is anti-semantic. It subverts the synoptic, comprehensive design of formal semantics.

A Chomskyan grammar has the practical prospect of being a real and complete theory only because it uses a finite list of sub-sentential elements — the lexicon — as a

base for recursion. Likewise no Tarski-style semantics can begin by assigning truth-conditions to atomic sentences, since they are infinite in number, and no practical theory can contain an infinity of clauses of the form 'P is T iff Q'. One must first generate those truth-conditions, by stating the satisfaction-conditions for a finite number of sub-sentential elements - propositional functions, or rather predicates (propositional functions are infinite in number). Which is what Tarski does.

What, though, if some of those predicates are (say) tensed verbs, whose satisfaction-conditions can't be tenselessly given? In my view the whole construction becomes futile.

If there is a fact F statable only by a sentence which contains a certain indexical I, then (tautologically) every sentence S expressing F will contain I; and in particular every metalinguistic statement S, giving the truth-conditions of such a sentence S will contain I - since those truth-conditions are what we have labelled F. Spelling it shorter: an essential indexical can't be given a non-indexical equivalent. An essential indexical is essential. It will therefore have to be included in any theoretical statement destined to give the truth-conditions of the statement in which it occurs. This being so, the whole semantic theory will itself be indexical, and essentially indexical.

That, however, puts an end to the prospect of a semantic theory for a language containing sentences like S. The theory must be a universal theory - intelligible to anyone - or else it does not say what an understanding of the language amounts to. If the theory itself contains clauses which use (and do not merely mention) indexical terms, then the whole theory, like any indexical sentence,

is not intelligible in itself, but only together with the circumstances of its utterance. If the theory is tensed, then whether it is true or false depends on the time of its production; while the language whose theory it is must be imagined to change its semantics from moment to moment. This means that it is not a universal theory. It gives the meaning of the original EI (essentially indexical) statement not from all points of view, but only from the standpoint from which the original EI statement was or might have been made.

If time requires there be propositions of changing truth-value – that is, if time is an essentially indexical concept as McTaggart thought it was – then the language capable of expressing temporal facts must have a changing semantics. It must do so because otherwise the semantics would be inconsistent, assigning truth and falsity to the same sentence. If change cannot be expressed without indexicals, then the semantic theory of a language capable of expressing change would need to use those indexicals also (or else it could not give the truth-conditions of sentences which ascribe change).

Understanding the language wouldn't consist in the same knowledge on every occasion.

But is a changing semantics a semantics? It is supposed to say what those who know the language know, not what they know <u>today</u>. More generally, is an unstable theory a theory? Assuredly it's not a universal one.

An essential indexical, in short, is a term which has not got a meaning, if by "meaning" we intend something intrinsically universal, i.e. such that any intelligence capable of speech could at any time be got to grasp it. An essential indexical is of its essence intelligible from a single standpoint only. This fact, coupled with the claim

that statements containing such terms are nonetheless significant statements which can be made in no other way, and are capable of truth or falsity, leads directly to the conclusion that there are truths which are not universal. That revokes the presumption (or disappoints the hope, or contradicts the logical intuition) that all truth is impersonal and eternal. It brings in some sort of subjectivism (which sort depends upon which indexicals are held to occur essentially).

Even if the meaning of an indexical sentence is assumed constant, its varying reference (i.e. truth value) will subvert a Davidsonian project of getting meaning from truth - at least it will do so if the indexicality is essential.

An indexical is known to be an anti-Fregean kind of thing, since it seems to have a constant sense but mutable reference.

Quite clearly, if the sense of an expression were a univocal method of determining its reference, and its reference changed between occasions, its sense must also have changed meanwhile.

In that case one could not individuate a natural language by its semantic theory, together with its grammar. One might individuate it genetically, by a history of successful communications descending from some initial occasion. We do in practice identify languages in a way vaguely like this, since we have no proper grammars or semantic theories.

Such a theory as is possible for languages including essentially indexical sentences is no theory at all. The hypothesis of essential indexicality rules out the possibility of a universal theory of meaning.

The point is not that in order to give the meaning of

an essentially indexical sentence we have to use some of the same words as occur in the sentence itself. That is customary and from Davidson's point of view unobjectionable and indeed normal. All the terms of one's metalanguage are presumed to be understood (or else the theory would be unintelligible); and it is practically, although not theoretically, necessary that these should include some words of the object language - their sense can't be given by alternative verbal means. They must be explained through examples, drill, or some other non-theoretic activity. One might almost say that their meaning can be communicated but not expressed. The significance of an essential indexical, however, is that it can't be explained by any method to one who is not located in the exact circumstances to which it belongs. It is a part of the language, but it is not available as an expressive instrument to every user of the language. To many that will seem flatly contradictory. Davidson[1] has said that a theory of meaning for a natural language L must suffice for understanding the speakers of L: all the speakers of L, I presume!

This is not the relativity which Davidson himself predicts will be necessary. He remarks[2] that the theory of truth must be 'relativized to a time and speaker, '(at least)' in order to account for indexicals. This I assume means only that the theory will generate clauses not of the form 'S is true in L iff P' but of the form 'S is true in L for A at T iff P'. In order for the theory to be practicable, these must be doubly universally quantified: (x)(y)(S is true in L for x at y iff Fxy). But since these quantifiers range over all speakers and times, the clause is not subjective in any way, and therefore transmits no subjectivity to the theory as a whole. Davidson's position is in fact ambiguous. In the defence of his 'Logical form

of action sentences' he says[3] that English sentences can't all be analysed as of stable truth-value, yet adds[4] that truth is a relation between a sentence, person and time. But that makes variable truth-value impossible. If it is ever correct to say that S is true-for-P-at-T, it will always be correct to say so, no matter who says it, or when. To get a consistent eternalist position, one must forget about unstable truth-value; and then it is quite feasible to handle ordinary indexicality in this way, explaining the indicator words by means of references to them and to the things which they indicate.

Essential indexicals resist that treatment; and introduce such radical relativity - if that's the word for it - as simply to destroy the whole project of a truth-based theory of meaning. A theory of truth thus relativized - using, and not merely mentioning, 'I', 'now' and the rest - could tell us nothing useful. It could not tell us what we need to know to understand the language. It could convey that information only to certain persons at certain times.

Davidson calls his prospective theories 'absolute' because at least they don't relativize truth to possible worlds. An EI theory of meaning could pass that test (since there are no possible worlds, relativity to them is mere error) but to call such a theory 'absolute' would be completely eccentric. It is in no sense a <u>universal</u> theory of meanng. On the contrary it is temporary and subjective - it holds only for one possible speaker and one moment of time.

It is in the wake of Davidson's proposals that we think of a semantic theory as a device for generating ascriptions of truth-conditions. In a non-Davidsonian context it would not be sensational to say about a sentence

that nothing with that meaning could be expressed without using an indexical; but it is sensational to say that nothing with those truth-conditions could be expressed without using an indexical, because that entails (as the weaker idea does not) that there are subjective truths, truths not available to all possible intellects. A Davidson-style project, which identifies understanding the meaning with knowing the truth-conditions, leaves open only the more drastic interpretation.

Analysis, as a philosophical method, can be pictured in terms of formal semantics. The metalanguage is then the language of the philosophical analyst. The object expressions which are clear to us receive a homophonic translation (or rather, no translation: that part of the object language which is clear to us is also a part of the metalanguage); the obscure and complex do not. But there are hazards to avoid when formal semantics is divorced from its proper subject matter – formal systems – and made to yield up substantive philosophy. It is futile to declare some feature obscure and ban oneself from ascribing it to the object language, only to use it oneself in the metalanguage. Either the semantics is obscure or the reform is pointless. And since the metalanguage is to do the explaining, we must be clear about what it says is real, i.e. the underlying metaphysics. It must refer to everything it declares the object language to refer to.

It is customary in America to provide an objective semantics for indexical sentences by abandoning the idea of absolute truth and substituting truth relative to an 'index' – a sequence of special objects (times, places, selves, worlds). As Prior and R. M. Martin have insisted,

these logicians are casual when it comes to the metaphysical implications of their metalinguistic pronouncements[5]. Many people would like to challenge the appeal to a set-theoretic entity (a sequence), which might be an impossibility for all we know about set theory; and one must demand some justification for assuming that these special, concrete objects (times, selves, worlds, etc.) are real. It is not self-evident and has been denied by many philosophers.

Such a challenge to the only pretended objective semantics for indexical language will, if not met, tend to show that all indexicality is essential, since its meaning cannot be, or at least has not been, given in non-indexical terms.

If formal semantics, applied to natural language, is nothing more than a comprehensive application of the method of conceptual analysis (elucidation of one language by reference to another), then saying a part of speech is essential might mean only that it is unanalysable. If that were all it meant, then the semantics might still illustrate the semantic form of the word - as when one uses 'and' to explain 'and'; but that something should be unanalysable in itself - as opposed to being unanalysed in a given system - would still be controversial. It is denied by Wittgensteinians[6] and by Frege (logical simplicity is relative to a system); although others, such as McTaggart and Moore, call freely and often on the idea of intuitive indefinability or unanalysability.

In fact it is not true only that one cannot explain by verbal means the contribution of an essential indexical to the truth-conditions of a sentence in which it occurs; one cannot explain that contribution by any means to someone who is not in the circumstances which the indexical

presupposes. To somebody in other circumstances, the significance of the word is quite indeterminate.

It isn't a very strict refinement of 'language' to keep it to systems of signs with definite meanings. But it implies that e.g. English is not a language. That conclusion can be derived either from the existence of essentially indexical sentences, or from Tarskian considerations. Tarski habitually spoke of the inconsistency of a language. Since a language is not a set of assertions, this must mean either that the actual semantics of the language is inconsistent, or that no consistent semantics is possible. With respect to a natural language, the first of those is excluded. As Tarski emphasized, English has no semantics, if that means an express theory of the meaning of all its sentences. The contention is therefore that English, or rather, a formalized substitute for English, could have no semantics, because any semantics would have some contradictory property.

A natural 'language' is perhaps rather a system for generating languages stricto sensu - one of them per occasion. (This last idea follows from, or is at least encouraged by, the existence of essential indexicality.) A formal language would then idealize the expressive possibilities of a given occasion.

One of the roots of all this is the Wittgensteinian point that it is impossible to talk about the relation between the language and the world in a naked and unadorned way. It is possible to put off the day when you must simply utter your meaning. You can delay it for example by constructing a semantic theory of one language by means of another. In that case you may talk about the relation between the object language and the world, but only in the

terms of a metalanguage antecedently understood. And however often you iterate such theorizing (make a semantic ascent), the language of highest order — the one in which you are just expressing yourself — is undiscussable. You just understand it; and though it would be false to say that it is impossible to make your understanding of it express and universally available, you could do this only in an idiom of yet higher order which would itself be opaque to the theory. It is Tarski's conclusion: the notion of truth-in-the-metalanguage must remain inexpressible, on pain of antinomy[7].

It is possible that this contains a generalized kind of McTaggartian regress. Objectors to that regress declared that none of the upward moves to an objective idiom in which the contradiction appeared was compulsory: they were all voulu, and by McTaggart.

We have here a regress of similar structure, in which the upward move is not to an idiom which (on the face of it) contains a contradiction; it is to a language which has not got an express, universal semantics. McTaggart claimed on the basis of his regress that time was contradictory. Reasoning alike here, we can say that this regress proves that there can be no universal theory of meaning.

There are those who would concede this and say it didn't matter, or even that it was obviously true. They are like those who are content to regard temporal relations as eternal, and think it a verbal question whether this means time and change are unreal.

There's some echo, too, of Kierkegaard. A Hegelian looks upon his 'system' as a sort of free-standing structure, whose whole import ought to be transparent to any attentive student. He neglects the fact that this construction is the utterance of an 'existent thinker',

namely himself. Kierkegaard meant that a philosophy of its very nature (as the utterance of a person really located in space and time) fails of universal intelligibility.

Philosophers vary in their revulsion from the idea of unstable truth-value, by which is meant its liability to change, not only over time, but between persons, possible worlds, or even from place to place.

It might seem wrong to say, from McTaggart's point of view, that sentences containing a personal or spatial indexical are 'sometimes true and sometimes false'. It is not just any variability of truth-value, but specifically its variability in time, that he presumes to be necessary to the reality or objectivity of time. Put like this, the demand seems circular. It is preferable to think of it as of this form: if any temporal truth exists then it is variable; but it is false because self-contradictory that truth should be variable; so there is no temporal truth, and hence no time. The variability involved doesn't have to be temporal – any variability, any deviation from the ideal of truth as eternal, impersonal and ubiquitous – would prove the unreality of whatever implied it, at least to McTaggart and others who think like him.

It shows either that there are no subjective facts – no propositions of variable truth-value – or that impersonal description is not a comprehensive idiom.

The concept of the Proposition abstracts from both language and circumstances, so propositions have no tense. The Stoic λεκτόν, so we learned from the Kneales[8], abstracts only from particular languages, not from the time and circumstances of utterance. "It is what remains constant in translation from one language to another." But that does not tell us which context-dependent features λέκτα ought to retain. Person may be a universal

context-dependent category, but tense is not; so how does one choose?

How should one decide whether the proposition or the λεκτόν has the right degree of abstraction? It is done by deciding whether indexical sentences are true or false in themselves, or only of persons, moments, etc. Compare Quine[9]: "The primary distinction of eternal sentences is that they are the repository of truth itself, and so of all science. Insofar as a sentence can be said to be simply to be true, and not just true now or in this mouth, it is an eternal sentence." Logic is about what preserves truth.

The use of the more abstract 'proposition' in preference to the Stoic λεκτόν is justified only by the ideal of a universal theory - the scientific ideal, as Quine would see it.

Bradley was an extreme kind of eternalist. The 'always true' formulation used by Russell and McTaggart presupposes that it is at least intelligible to think of something as 'sometimes true, sometimes false'; and Quine would probably be guided by whether it was scientifically convenient to do so. None of that was conceded by Bradley[10]. But why do eternalists declare so confidently that all truths are eternal, even that changing truth contradicts truth's nature? Truth is nothing but fidelity to the nature of the world, and if the nature of the world really changes, then truth must change accordingly.

You will say, No: all that a truth need do in that case is to represent something as really changing; there's no necessity, further there's an impossibility, that it should itself change into a falsehood.

To this I must reply that there is no way of representing something as really changing except by means of statements which really change in truth value. Evidently

it is not the representation per se which reflects the change; it's the fact that the representation is true and was false. (Not a sign, but a sign's fate or history.)

It looks a good start to say that if facts change, and truth is correspondence to the facts, then truth-values must change. But then the focus of disagreement moves to the question whether facts change. What properties are facts supposed to change in respect of? The only relevant ones are existence and non-existence, and it is unlikely that an argument has advanced at all when one stops disputing about the truth of propositions and starts debating the very same question about the existence of facts.

We must simply decide, concerning the intuitive notion of truth, whether it is essentially impersonal, eternal, necessary or whatever, or whether the truth-value of one and the same proposition might conceivably vary between persons, times or possible worlds. If a proposition is to be true at one time and false at another, i.e. to state change, then it must of course be expressible (exist) at both times. 'The present King of France is wise' and others referring to things not yet or no longer existent, can then get falsity by Russellian principles.

It is a familiar situation. The suggestion that everything which we intuitively recognize as a truth can be replaced by a more exactly defined thing whose 'truth' is unchanging has the same shape as Church's thesis, that everything which we intuitively recognize to be an algorithm can be treated as a certain mathematically definite object (a recursive function).

There are trade-offs. The substitute is more precise but has less content. The price has to be right: no essential content must be lost.

From any subjectivist point of view (Heideggerian, etc.) the price is not right. An eternal and impersonal 'truth' would ignore truths belonging to the experience of a conscious and active being in the world - truths which are by nature fleeting, and valid only for the spirit which apprehends them. The reality of change and of the self depends on the logical completeness of propositions of varying truth-value[1].

One therefore concludes by two different methods that there can be no universal semantics: firstly by the way of Tarski and Wittgenstein, which may ultimately rest on the banality that the only way of conveying information, semantic or other, is by a language which one understands; and secondly, from the idea that since a natural language contains sentences which are or can be essentially indexical, any semantic theory of that language must itself use, and not merely mention, indexical terms (not necessarily the same or synonymous ones: there is some prospect that indexical concepts are interdefinable). The theory, therefore, will not be universally intelligible.

In other words, if a language contains a sentence which can be used to state a fact whose statement requires an indexical term, then a semantic theory of that language, being bound to give the truth-conditions of that sentence, must itself use the indexical term. It is a necessary truth that no sentence not containing that term could be used to state that fact.

EI destroys truth-conditional semantics - does it drive us to the speech-act sort, from verification-rule to employment-rule? Not if, as now, the speech-act approach bases itself on the notion of communication. EI concepts are incommunicable, and could not be characterized in terms of communicative acts or intentions.

Notes to Chapter 9

1. Davidson (1977), p. 131.
2. Davidson (1977), p. 131.
3. Davidson (1967), Appendix, p. 123
4. Davidson (1967), Appendix, p. 129n.
5. Cf. Martin (1979), p. 179: "Philosophers sensitive to ontic commitment are often insensitive to ontic involvement, the ontic commitment of the metalanguage". He cites Davidson as a persistent offender.
6. See Malcolm (1960), §4.
7. Tarski (1931).
8. Kneale (1962), p. 158.
9. Quine, Word and Object p. 227
10. Bradley (1883), p. 143:

> What is true in one context is true in another. Or, if any truth is stated so that a change in events will make it false, then it is not a genuine truth at all.

11. Cf. Geach (1979), p. 95, expounding McTaggart:

> unless there are logically complete propositions of variable truth-value, there is no change; and the only such propositions that there are are ones involving A-characteristics.

— 10 —

Expression and communication

The existence of essentially tensed truths implies that some truth is relative to a time, yet not caught by any explicit relativization to one. This sounds contradictory[1], but it is not. There is no objective relation here, nor any objects called 'times' either – they are constructs out of irreducibly subjective viewpoints, designed to enable the communication of some but (here's the point) not all of the facts which a subject might apprehend. The index is not something which one can just name and talk about. An index which is under discussion is not functioning as an index. It indicates only *qua* implicit, unmentioned environment. If that were not so, then 'P now' would not be the same proposition at different times, and truth-value would stay stable.

Since some facts are incommunicable, I dispute the view probably held by Dummett that all concepts are meanings, and the view certainly held by him that meanings are essentially communicable. An essential indexical expresses an incommunicable concept.

When Dummett[2] says meaning is essentially communicable, he makes a claim which is not conceded by all students of language (not by Chomsky, for example); and, to leave room for EI meanings, that claim must be false. Meaning is essentially expressible, but not essentially

communicable. EI is a good reason for endorsing Chomsky's objection to the analysis of 'expression' as 'self-communication'[3]. The idea of expression is independent of that of communication, but the converse is false. And it is quite wrong to analyse expression as communication with oneself. It would be more apt to analyse communication as expression to another. If we are looking for conceptual reductions in this area, we should do better to consider the suggestion of Croce, that expression is really identical with conception, and quite independent of exteriorisation[4]. Objectivity, considered as a property of statements, is the same as communicability. A subjectivist theory in essence contends that expressibility does not imply communicability - more things can be expressed than can be conveyed.

If there were essentially indexical thoughts which could be conceived but not communicated, and language were essentially communicative, then thought and language come apart: the form of speech is not the form of thought, but only the form of communicable thought. The essential indexical would then be an uncommunicative reflex, in speech, of an element of thought which cannot be transmitted to anyone else.

We should avoid this position if we want to get from the philosophy of language as much illumination - not only of language, but of thought and its relation to the world - as its techniques might provide. We should start by assuming that meaning is not a matter of what is conveyed but of what is expressed. It is a question of representing one's thought by an object which makes its structure and logic clearer to oneself. The fact that others may also interpret that object so as to understand the thought is irrelevant to the expressive act itself.

This disregards all versions of the private language argument, and it includes no theory of the relation between the thought and the expressive object which would explain how the one can represent the other. But no plausible theory of that relation exists. Nor does it give an account of how another person can pick up the meaning of an expressive act; but nobody else has a good theory of that, either.

Frege thought idiolects prior to language. This linguistic view favours the possibility of a private language. Idiolects differ; one of them might differ from all others in some respect; or many respects; or all respects - at no stage does there seem good reason to resist the extension. That's why Dummett[5] rejects the priority of idiolect to language, and cleaves to the idea of a language governed by a public standard of correctness, to which idiolects are approximations.

He refuses to view assertion as the exteriorisation of an interior act of judgment, on the grounds that one can treat something as a conventional expression of X only if there exist non-conventional ways of expressing it. Otherwise, he thinks, the postulation of X tells us nothing about the communicative act which it is designed to explain. Davidson made a similar point in 1963[6]: it is unhelpful to be told that the meaning of a given expression is a certain entity, if one knows nothing of that entity except that it is the meaning of that expression.

Dummett therefore sees judgment as the internalization of the conventional act of assertion. His approach is to explain mental acts as derivations of social things. But why not just follow Reid[7] and admit that there are two classes of mental acts, some which presuppose social institutions and others which do not?

It is correct to say that an assertion is not explained by calling it the expression of an inner judgment. That's not explanatory because we know about the judgment only that it is what the assertion expresses. Because of the state of our knowledge about it, it could explain nothing to us even if it were true. It is like saying that the cause of A caused A – true but unhelpful.

Nevertheless, 'the cause of A caused A' does tell us that A had a cause. And 'A expressed the judgment which A expressed' tells us that A expressed a judgment. That might be a fact; in which case Dummett's derivation of judgment from assertion will neglect it. His theory will say that 'judgment' and 'expression' are posterior to the unitary act of assertion, and he will misrepresent assertion as simple relative to them, when in fact they are simple relative to it. In short, he will misrepresent that which is simple so far as we know as simple in fact.

It is as if he were to treat 'the cause of A caused A' as entirely vacuous, when it is not (quite). It involves that A had a cause, even though it says nothing more about that event than that it was the cause of A. In that situation the thing to do is to seek more information about the event which caused A, not to treat it as a figment constructed wholly out of some of A's properties.

Likewise it is not quite idle to say that assertion A expresses judgment X, since it entails that A expresses a judgment. To reduce this claim to vacuity one must prove that it is impossible to discover anything more about X than that it is expressed by A – or rather (even more strongly) that X has no other properties than being expressed by A, i.e. that X is unreal, a figment or artefact of our misconceiving a certain monadic property of A as a relation to a non-existent further entity called X.

The property in question is the significance or meaningfulness of the act of assertion A. The claim which Dummett calls empty is the claim that the significance of A consists in a relation (an expressive relation) to something else. But that claim is not empty: it should be disproved, by showing that nothing can exist which stands in such a relation to A.

To prove it's impossible for anything to stand in the expressive relation to A, I think one must prove that this idea of 'expression' is self-contradictory, and Dummett evidently does not believe that it is. His remark that one can treat something as the conventional expression of X only if there are non-conventional ways of expressing X presupposes the coherence of the concept of expression: it employs it, for one thing.

Judgment can't, in any case, presuppose a human convention, if only because brutes plainly judge things to be the case. They can't express those judgments because they lack the concepts - that is, they do not analyse their judgments into abstract elements as we do - but they show by their behaviour that they have made them.

That contradicts Geach's contention that judgments presuppose concepts[8], and is more Kantian or Fregean in holding that concepts are logically preceded by judgments. However, it does not involve any specifically Kantian account of how concepts arise from judgments. It doesn't give any account of the relation.

Several philosophers (Maine de Biran, Frege, Heidegger, Sartre[9]) distinguish two uses of 'I', one of them a special, primitive, subjective use identical with what I call an EI occurrence. The intention is to connect EI 'I' with a special, exclusive mode of presentation of me

to myself. On this interpretation the essential indexicality is maybe ill-named 'indexicality' - certainly it is ill-named, if an indexical is by definition a communicative device. Here we are dealing with the 'I' of soliloquy, not the 'I' of communication[10].

We can imagine that the distinctively subjective 'I' results from interiorising the pragmatic function of indexical 'I' and using it in self-communion. But the existence of essentially egocentric truths defeats the presumption of universal communicability. Different people do not use a different method of understanding indexical sentences. They all use the same method, but it does not always yield the same result. It results in different intellects contemplating different objects, and characterizing them differently.

It is impossible to characterize anything without referring to it (attending to it, thinking of it). When I think 'I am F', I am thinking about myself. But to think about anything is always to contemplate it in a definite way[11].

The word 'I' however does not convey the definite way in which I am thinking of myself - does not, at any rate, convey it to someone else who can then use it to think of me also.

Dummett may be correct to say that each of us knows the way in which any person is presented to himself[12]. But if this way is identical with the sense of the word 'I', then it functions in communication quite differently from the sense of any ordinary singular term.

In general the sense of a singular term is a way in which the hearer, as well as the speaker, can think of the object to which the term refers. But the sense of the word 'I' is not a way in which the hearer can think of the

object referred to by 'I' (namely, the speaker).

All that the hearer can immediately gather, therefore, is that the speaker is thinking of something or other in that way. He can then infer, from his knowledge that thinking of an object in that way implies identity with that object, that the speaker is thinking of himself.

But it cannot be said that the hearer understands the speaker fully. It is true that he now knows the way in which the speaker is thinking of the object, and that he knows which object the speaker is thinking of. But something further, necessary to a complete communication of thought, is here lacking. The hearer is not thinking of that object in that way; he is incapable of doing so.

In most cases, it's true, the proposition which the hearer now has in mind will not be one whose truth-conditions differ from those of the proposition which the speaker set out to convey. He is thinking of the right object, and characterizing it as the speaker intended he should. The way in which he is identifying it will usually be immaterial so far as truth is concerned. The hearer has not understood the original proposition, but he knew how to construct an adequate substitute.

Everybody knows that the sense of a singular term, as distinct from its reference, is not always irrelevant to its truth-value. But there is no question of an intensional context here. It would be difficult to construct one, because of the peculiarity of 'I' and other indexicals, that they always occur with maximum scope[13]. For example, in 'John believes that Mary wishes that I were dead', 'I' refers to the speaker of the whole sentence in the normal way. The sentence, in fact, gives no hint of how either John or Mary is identifying that person; and the sense of 'I' is consequently quite irrelevant to the truth of the

sentence.

There is however a form of expression in English which does have the same import as the word 'I' would have if it ever occurred in an intensional context, namely the indirect reflexive, to which attention has been drawn by Anscombe and others. 'Euan Thomson believes that he himself is the sole existent' is interpreted exactly as 'Euan Thomson believes that I am the sole existent' would be if one could ever read 'I' as falling within the scope of an intensional operator. If there were such a convention, one could read 'I' in such cases as referring to the subject of the intensional relation, and not to the speaker of the sentence. And in fact it is only by citing the word 'I' that we can attempt to explain the indirect reflexive: Euan Thomson believed, of Euan Thomson under the concept of 'I', that it was the sole existent.

It is in the case of essentially indexical 'I'-thoughts that the hearer is debarred from constructing a good substitute for the hearer's proposition. Not only can you not understand what I mean by 'I am Euan Thomson', with 'I' occurring essentially; you can't even construct something with the same truth-conditions. 'Euan Thomson is Euan Thomson' won't do, and neither will anything else you care to think of. You know, to be sure, the <u>sort</u> of proposition which I am entertaining, since there is presumably a similar one available to you. But that proposition is not one which I can understand; nor is it communicable to me or to anyone else but yourself.

Because you cannot grasp the sense of 'I' as used in the subjective way by me, you cannot in that way identify the object (if it is an object: the Cartesian self) which I identify by means of it. And it has no other means of identification.

Whatever involves 'I' essentially is exclusive to one self; and conversely, I feel that what is exclusive to one self must be EI. The reason is that it must be expressible if it is to be conceivable even to one self - that is nearly tautology; but it cannot be expressible in general terms, since then it would be communicable. Identities of the 'I=A' sort are only one example. There are also phenomenal propositions: 'I see green things like this.' What is it like to be a bat?

You may feel untroubled by the possibility of there being essentially indexical and hence ineffable or incommunicable truths. We know there are truths which are difficult to express; why should there not be some which are impossible to express?

The difference however is that although some truths might be impossible for us to conceive and hence to express because of the limited nature of our intellects, that is a contingent matter, uninteresting to philosophers.

The inconceivability by you of an EI truth proper to me, on the other hand, is a matter of logical or metaphysical necessity. It is a logical contradiction to say that someone means by 'I' - the ordinary first person - both himself and me: which is what would be implied if he could understand my EI 'I'-truths. They require the use of 'I' to express them, but 'I' refers always to the speaker. You would have to use 'I' to mean someone other than yourself - which just means that you are not using 'I' at all, but a homophone of 'I' - one which which refers to me and not to yourself.

Frege was quite relaxed about incommunicability. The tone of speech, according to him, is incommunicable intuition. Nor did he reject incommunicable thoughts; and incommunicable thoughts must take truth-values, or they

would not be thoughts. 'I am Dr Lauben' must be true or false, even though only Dr Lauben can contemplate the truth which it states.

But it seems[14] that in Frege the fact that I can be presented to nobody else in the way I am presented to myself is a merely contingent fact. Compare the opinion of McTaggart and Armstrong that one's access to oneself is only contingently 'privileged' or private; there is no logical necessity that it should be[15]. That view rules out an EI reading. If it is logically possible for another, more perspicacious intellect to get access to that information, then the information is not essentially bound to its original viewpoint.

Failure to be universal, communicable and objective seems to many the essence of unreason. For them the irrational is precisely the non-universal, the subjective and egocentric. Writers as diverse as Popper and Oakeshott settle upon communicability as a defining characteristic of science[16]. Carnap[17] would cast the net wider. He would distinguish ineffable <u>experience</u> from essentially communicable <u>knowledge</u>. He shares this opinion with other philosophers of positivist origin, such as Feigl[18]: the having of 'raw feels' is not knowledge. The element of justification in knowledge makes it essentially social, and hence (perhaps) communicable. Grote is another of this opinion[19].

I am not much concerned, anywhere in this essay, with epistemology. My interest is in whether there are subjective facts, by which I do not mean facts which only some people can know; I mean facts which are only true for, or exist for, some people. Thus, I should not be troubled if told that the fact that the war is over (as opposed to the fact that it timelessly ends earlier than the time of

speaking) is not a piece of knowledge. I want to know whether it is a fact, or a truth.

I say 'some people' or selves. It would effect a closer rapprochement with Santayana, Nagel, etc.[20], if I gathered from essential 'I' and 'now' not merely the subjectivity of personality, but that of animality (and a fortiori of personality, homo being animal rationale, one which acts a proposito et non a natura[21]). When a dog snarls at its image in a mirror, is it not because it believes 'that dog is snarling at me' and not 'I am snarling at myself'? Brutes have beliefs de se (that dog believes that it is being threatened), but presumably do not designate themselves at all (unless by some technical sense of 'mental term', 'mental designator').

But, no: these arguments will apply primarily to persons, i.e. animals capable of expressing themselves in speech. It is principally because a being can play the participant role of first person in a monologue, or first or second person in a dialogue, that it counts as a person also in the non-grammatical senses of the word. These senses generalize from the grammatical one to a more abstract kind of monologue.

The third person is not a true participant role, but a form of demonstrative. Anything you please can play this 'role'. The second person is also suspect, because one can apostrophize anything — a natural animism which we have to unlearn, according to Reid[22]. One can apostrophize non-persons, and things absent from the situation of utterance or from the scheme of things, and even, it seems, oneself; although the duality which this last introduces into a single self is pretty hard to conceptualise, and

might be nonsense[23].

The only indispensable characteristic, if one is to be subject to considerations of *de se* belief, is that one should be capable of monologue. In my view, though of course this is more contentious, 'monologue' can be taken abstractly enough to make sense of the idea of a Cartesian ego or self.

Notes to Chapter 10

1. Specifically, it sounds like the kind of nonsense Geach mocks in his study of McTaggart; e.g. that the ultimate subject of attributes has got no qualities, because it is what has the qualities - v. Geach (1979), pp. 46-47.

2. Dummett, Frege p. 85.

3. Chomsky (1975), p. 71.

4. Croce (1909), pp. 13-14, pp. 191-192.

5. Dummett (1981), pp. 183ff.

6. Davidson (1963).

7. Reid (1788), v. 6:

> Between the operations of the mind, which, for want of a more proper name, I have called solitary, and those I have called social, there is this very remarkable distinction, that, in the solitary, the expression of them by words, or any other sensible sign, is accidental. They may exist, and be complete, without being expressed, without being known to any other person. But, in the social operations, the expression is essential. They cannot exist without being expressed by words or signs, and known to the other party.

Reid was contending against a received resolution of social into solitary operations. It is the converse tendency which I oppose here.

8. Geach (1958a), pp. 7-14.

9. Gouhier (1942), p. 194; Frege (1918), p. 26; Heidegger (1927), §64. See Chapter 1, Note 25, and Chapter 2, Note 8. Compare also Sartre's distinction between the je and the moi in Sartre (1937).

10. So Dummett (1981), pp. 122ff. characterizes Frege's two uses of 'I'.

11. The suggestive description of the sense of a singular term as a way of thinking of its referent is due to G.

Evans (1982).

12. Dummett (1981), p. 122. I cannot accept Dummett's judgment that Frege took a "false step" in arguing that "communication must involve the hearer's thinking the very same thought as that voiced by the speaker" (p. 127). It seems to me that this is essential to communication, and that Frege was correct to conclude from the subjective use of 'I' that there are incommunicable thoughts. Dummett's remark on p. 122 that even if there are thoughts which only one person can think, there is no need to conclude that there are incommunicable thoughts, strikes me as a flat contradiction.

13. Fillmore (1981), p. 155, points out that in "She thinks that idiot is a genius", or "She told him that she wanted me to be here today", every one of the embedded indexicals is interpreted relative to the speaker of the whole sentence, not to its subject, or the subject of any of its clauses. We do not learn how she identified the idiot in question. Van Fraassen (1981), p. 434:

> The word 'now' refers to the time of speaking, and it does this no matter where it appears - no matter how deeply it is embedded inside tense or modal operators.

Prior (1967b) makes the same point. The following paragraph takes up another suggestion he makes there.

14. Dummett (1981), p. 490.

15. Armstrong (1968), p. 108; McTaggart (1927), §§384, 403. McTaggart, in fact, held that we do perceive other selves and their parts (there is nothing else to perceive); and that all such perceptions take the form of love (in Absolute Reality, that is). There is a surprisingly complete agreement between McTaggart's philosophy and the teachings of Buddhism, although the presentation could hardly be more different. Examples are the doctrines of

reincarnation and the unreality of time, and the view that one misperceives one's real condition (under the form of eternity) as one's future perfection (under the form of time). Cf. Sangharakshita (1957), p. 266.

16. Popper (1945), II, p. 217; Oakeshott (1933), p. 171.

17. Carnap (1963), pp. 37-38.

18. Feigl (1958), p. 110

19. Grote (1865), II, p. 212:

> Intelligence is really co-intelligence ... our knowing has the second character of being not only a mirroring of the universe or of fact, but of being a sympathy with other intelligences.

20. Nagel (1974); Santayana (1923), p. 17:

> So far is solipsism of the present moment from being self-contradictory that it might, under other circumstances, be the normal and invincible attitude of the spirit; and I suspect it may be that of many animals.

21. A phrase of Aquinas in De Motu Cordis, Spiazzi (1954), p. 166: "Solius autem hominis est a proposito agere, et non a natura."

22. Reid, (1788), iii 2.3:

> it ought not to be said, that by reason and experience we learn to ascribe life and intelligence to things which before we considered inanimate. It ought rather to be said that by reason and experience we learn that certain things are inanimate, to which at first we ascribed life and intelligence.

23. Cf. Bell (1966).

— 11 —

Connections with agency and consciousness

The theory presented in Mellor's Real Time contains a paradox[1]. This is because he accepts it as proved by McTaggart that a tense is not a quality really belonging to anything, and yet proceeds to give conditions for the objective truth of beliefs and statements which ascribe tenses to things. This is strange, and difficult to defend. They are surely rather felicity conditions, or timeliness conditions. Tensed beliefs are not true under any conditions, because they are self-contradictory.

These 'truth'-conditions take the usual sort of form: a past-tense belief is true if it is held after the existence of the thing to which it attributes a past tense, and so on. But if it attributes a past tense to something then it cannot be true at all, because it is impossible that anything should really be past, present or future. The 'tensed camp', to be sure, imagines that tenses record real, non-relational differences between past, present and future events; but McTaggart proved in 1908[2] that this idea includes a contradiction. Any ascription of tense is necessarily false. Anything which is future, for example, is, by the nature of the concept of futurity, also present and past. So it's self-contradictory to say that anything is future; and similarly for the other tenses.

Mellor further considers that action is impossible without tensed beliefs. In view of this essential connection which he finds between tense and action, I think it's clear that these are not properly truth-conditions which he gives, but something more like felicity-conditions. The paradoxical fact, then, is that there are some necessary falsehoods which, if we are to act, we must believe. Some are pragmatically appropriate at some times, and some at others. Their appropriateness would consist, not in truth, but in their being conducive to the satisfaction of desire.

Thus Mellor's theory can be turned into a sort of proof of the essential irrationality of doing anything.

This objection works providing Mellor adopts an orthodox theory of belief - so that a tensed belief is a belief in a tensed, and therefore contradictory, proposition. Perhaps he would prefer an alternative theory such as Perry's[3], and so escape this argument. He does not do so explictly, however.

An explication more favourable to Mellor is that what is self-contradictory is the metalinguistic or metaphysical position that a tensed form of words, whose truth (or maybe felicity) varies between occasions, nevertheless expresses one and the same proposition on each of those occasions. One must rather say that it expresses different propositions on different occasions; and the necessity for tensed beliefs in agency is not related to any supposed variation in the truth-value of propositions. Tense is, in Perry's terminology, a property of belief-states, not of the objects of belief-states; and belief-states are therefore not individuated by their objects. What is tensed, we may say, is the psychological state of believing, and not the abstract truth-bearing object of

belief.

If he doesn't mean something like this, then he is saying that there are logical falsehoods (viz. statements which ascribe tenses to things) which, if we are to act rationally (topically, on time), we must believe. 'Although tense is not an aspect of reality, to us who act in time it is an inescapable mode of perceiving, thinking and speaking about reality.'[4] It harks back to Kierkegaard: reality is a system only for God, not for those who exist in time. It is timeless and impersonal for gods, maybe, but not for 'existent thinkers'.

Compare now Dummett's 1960 view about time and tense[5], whose conclusion was that if there are tensed facts (time is real) then there is no complete, objective description of the world. Combining this with what has been deduced from a version of Mellor's theory, we get the remarkable consequence that if there is a complete description of the world, then all action is irrational. If there are no tensed facts, all action is irrational (since rational action depends on tensed beliefs); but if there are tensed facts, there is no complete description of the world; so if there is a complete description of the world, all action is irrational. It's of a piece with the illusion of free will, by which we feel we are determining what is ('already') determinate. It is a practical myth, a falsehood which it is not practical to disbelieve. The status of such beliefs is weird. Nothing which stuck to the truth, it seems, could be a self, in the sense of a being which pursues practical ends. Perhaps we should conclude with the Indians that the world is illusion, and aim for the destruction of the self and the extinction of practical desires. The alternative is to be compelled to hold purely magical convictions which do not attempt to reflect the

truth.

It is conceivable that the necessary tensed belief could be acquired even if not on the basis of a contemporary perception of what is going on here and now. I might guess (correctly) that now is noon; and there is such a thing as timing – inwardly estimating that enough time has now elapsed, since a certain remembered perceptual situation obtained, for a certain action to be appropriate now. But in general the tensed belief required for timely action will reflect a perception of the way things are at the time at which I am to act.

There is no action without perception, and no intentional action without express perception; but since without indexicals one cannot say what one perceives, even to oneself, there is no intentional action, no reasons for action, without indexical thought.

This is not quite true. General beliefs and desires might still justify the customs of a community, if they generalized about persons, and justify my own habits, if they generalized about times or occasions. (Compare Bergson: "habit is to action what generality is to thought."[*]) But they could not by themselves rationalize any one action of mine; they could do that only in conjunction with a perceptual (indexical) premise concerning what is the case here and now.

If there could be agency without tensed beliefs, then its acts could only be such as are always timely. They could not aim at changing any part of the world, since then they would need to take account of what is now so: the parts of the world are differently related at different times. That probably yields a disproof of God's agency, or at least his agency within the world. Such disproofs are not hard to come by, given an internal relation between

selfhood (meaning possible agency) and temporality. If an impotent self is inconceivable, then since all practical power is power to determine the future (to change things existing in time), there can be no timeless selves (no selves without time).

I can envisage demonstrations of the converse dependency. Change is essential to time; but nothing changes save in relation to a percipient self; hence, no time without selves. This equivocates upon self = percipient and self = agent; but it seems possible that one must be both or neither. Perception which is not with a view to something is hard to conceive. I can't imagine surveying even a static array of things in which there is not something salient. This salience of a thing to me is my attentiveness to it, and related to desire and fear – a practical matter, therefore, which presumes my agency.

If there were no indexical concepts then there could be no rational action. This is a physical impossibility: tensed beliefs logically require indexical concepts, and rational actions causally require tensed beliefs – i.e. without a tensed belief, a rational action cannot occur.

It will be verbal whether something incapable of indexical thought is 'intelligent'. I do not see why a machine could not operate upon context-dependent data, and therefore I would not appeal to a human being's capacity for indexical thought as proof that a human being is not a machine.

But we can ask whether something is a person, or (correlatively) whether it can act, if it is unable to make judgements of the 'I am F' form, with irreducible 'I'. L. R. Baker suggests that it can't[7], on the grounds that an agent is what formulates intentions, which require a 'first-person perspective'. Something similar is involved

in Castañeda's analysis of agency, according to which intention and prescriptions are congeners, distinguished only by the fact that an intention is a first-person "practition", whereas prescriptions are in the second or third person[8].

I certainly accept that the first-person, present-tense perspective is essential to agency, and to personhood in the correlative sense. But, as I say, I see no reason why machines should be incapable of such a perspective.

Some people are exercised by the moral consequences of regarding machines as agents. Does this mean it's wrong to thwart their projects? Perhaps computer programming is no better than the brainwashing of dissidents.

It will be evident that I find such concerns ridiculous. They would cease to be so, for me, only if one got some grounds for ascribing consciousness (phenomenology) to machines. But since we have no grounds for doing this even in the case of human beings - it's purely a matter of 'animal faith' - that seems a remote contingency. The question of consciousness enters only when one considers whether one might talk of torturing a machine. Naturally a machine might act as if in pain, and cause sympathetic grief in its friends; but torture, unlike murder, depends for its evil on the feelings of the victim. I side with Oakeshott in holding that morality is the ingenuous recognition of other selves, i.e. allowing them consciousness, and not merely sensory sagacity[9].

Of course, if machines are ever such that human beings can develop strong affections or other emotions towards them, like those which we feel for brutes or even for people, then they will become 'moral objects' just on account of that, and irrespective of whether the machines

themselves are, or are judged to be, conscious, suffering beings. It will automatically be wrong to destroy such an object, because of the outrage which this causes in humans associated with it. That is presumably why murder is wrong: it is not very sensible to say that one wrongs or injures someone by destroying them. The wrong derives from the grief and vengefulness which the action provokes in others. If a machine were individual enough to be valued in the same way, it would at once be protected by a similar taboo.

Philosophical enemies of artificial intelligence, most notably H. L. Dreyfus[10], have argued that a machine could not operate upon context-dependent data. What evidence is there for such a claim? Surely that ability involves no more than the bringing together of data from different sources - from the sensory periphery and from memory - so that they co-operate in determining action? As M. Boden says[11], an intelligent machine would not be a purely syntactic entity, engaged only in uninterpreted computations and therefore incapable of making any reference to things in the world. It must also have some causal commerce with the world, analogous to our sensitivities and active powers. She claims in effect that semantics - in the case of intelligent machinery, and (by subaudition) in the human case also - is syntax plus causality, not syntax alone. Compare Bolzano's contention that an 'intuition' in the mind acquires its power of referring precisely by being caused by that which it refers to[12].

At any rate, a human being's capacity for context-dependent thought does not prove to me that a human being is not a machine. A sense of self and of the present moment may be an automatic property of organisms with a

sufficiently complex ('intelligent') interconnection between sensitivity and activity. My point is only that this generates facts unique to the machine-cum-environment, and not valid elsewhere.

Any organism whose operations on its environment are altered by past effects of the environment on it is percipient. Sense-perception is a purely behavioral concept. The machine's beliefs, as demonstrated by its behaviour, involve that it interprets states of itself as signs of conditions elsewhere.

Berkeley thought of perception as a purely syntactic affair: perceptions are signs, not of things, but of future perceptions[7]. If we conceive artificial perception thus, it will seem to lack the two essential dimensions of semanticity and phenomenology - reference to an object, and the experience of phenomenal qualities (consciousness). I think causal relations with the world might generate the former, although my ignorance of the nature of semanticity or intentionality is as profound as everyone else's. It is dangerous to this idea that intention, in the associated sense, is a broader concept than attention, in that one can intend that which is not present, and therefore that which is non-existent, and presumably causally inert.

No non-human intelligence, supposing he had the concept of semanticity, would feel forced to ascribe it to us by what he could see of our behaviour. We cannot, any more than computers can, literally present the meaning of anything to another person; we can only represent it, by asserting a relation of synonymy between expressions: and this relation is syntactic. It is only the need to reconcile my individual experience with the utterances of others that brings in semantics. I catch myself heeding an object before me, thinking thoughts about it, and believing

some of those thoughts. But it is only as I count myself one among many other attentive, cogitative and judicative persons that I acknowledge that sometimes there is no such object, or that the thought was incoherent, or false. The common object, concept and truth-value are intersubjective myths. One admits error in order to escape banishment, and that's the origin of the concepts of truth and falsity alike. Compare Santayana's[14] remark that a being which was conscious but not self-conscious could not tell belief from truth or enjoyment from beauty.

As for the phenomenal side, I have suggested that it is not essential to perception at all: and why it, as opposed to indexical thought, should exist in us is a pure mystery rather than a problem[15]. McGinn states that it is necessarily true that direct cognitive awareness represents things as having properties which belong to them only in virtue of the peculiarities of the perceiver. Perceiving things involves investing them with secondary qualities, and thinking about them involves indexical thought, or at least 'subject-involving representations'[16]. The second of these views I share; the first I doubt. "It seems to me just unintelligible," McGinn writes[17], "to suppose that one could register differences of colour and not register the colours themselves - what would it be <u>like</u> to have such a visual field?" The final interrogation is question-begging: it means, in this context, 'what secondary qualities would be apprehended?'. The answer is that there is nothing which it would be <u>like</u> to perceive in this way - ask a photo-electric cell. It is the sort of perception with which we would equip a machine; but it <u>is</u> perception. It is cognition, since it is a method of gathering information about the world, in this case by way of its immediate causal impact. But it is not an

abstractive or inferential sort of cognition, which constructs new information out of old. It is intuitive cognition, which is what perception is. And sense-perception, at least, seems to me a functional and behavioral matter. So I do not see this necessity.

Further, although I agree that indexical thought is indispensable – to a self, in time – it's rash to content oneself with calling that "intuitively plain"[18], since, in view of its host of counter-intuitive consequences, many will think that intuition something which we ought to get rid of. I should like to be able to uphold it by proofs, but they are confessedly hard to come by.

I hope it will be conceded that all indication depends on perception. An intelligence that did not perceive could use no indexicals, though it might still contemplate a complete description of the world in purely general terms. And one can imagine a sort of demonstration that non-deictic perception is self-contradictory; non-deictic attention is contradictory, by a definition (Attention =$_{Df}$ mental deixis or indication); so is inattentive perception; ergo, etc. This has content only if the definition used is a real one, not merely nominal; i.e. only if it is true that attention is mental deixis. I will try to justify this identification.

In discussing deixis we speak of context of utterance, occasion of utterance – but not only 'utterance', if there are indexical thoughts. We must say 'context of thought', or 'context of intention'. Put brutally, this change means that not only the furniture in the room, but also the furniture of the mind is supposed to include candidates for indexical identification. Does that contravene the nature of indexicality – indication, i.e. paradigmatically the

pointing finger? It is the kind of idea which was much derided by Wittgensteinians, Ryle, etc., in the fifties, but there may be ways to make sense of it.

The concept of indexical identification (indication), when transplanted to the interior of the mind, becomes the concept of attention. Indication ordinarily so called is drawing the attention of the company to something. Indication *sibi* is just attending to it.

This is not meant as a serious analysis, since the notion of drawing *one's own* attention to something is manifestly incoherent. Just as it would be wrong to try to define expression as communication to oneself, so it's wrong and *hysteron proteron* to define attention as indication to oneself. I mean only to suggest that there is an intimate relation between the concepts of indication and attention. Attention is evidently the prior concept; but in point of fact it is wrong to treat indication itself as an essentially communicative device; and I think it and its logic have a role to play in explicating the concept of attention.

In a way it is only because there exists no proper account of acts of attention that I can make plausible (even to myself) the crude metaphorical view of it as mental deixis – as it were pointing something out to myself. The idea of a mental pointing finger is not more refined than the mental searchlight of Freud, or the eye-beams of Elizabethan poets. But I do not hear other accounts.

Let me adduce some authorities. Peirce is one. He writes: "That universal conception which is nearest to sense is that of *the present in general*. This is a conception, because it is universal. But as the act of attention has no connotation at all, but is the pure

denotative power of the mind, that is to say, the power which directs the mind to an object, in contradistinction to the power of thinking any predicate of that object – so the conception of what is present in general, which is nothing but the general recognition of what is contained in attention, has no connotation and therefore no proper unity. This conception of the present in general, of IT in general, is rendered in philosophical language by the word "substance" in one of its meanings."[19]

He thinks attention is denotation – pure, non-connotative denotation, which, to me at least, means indication. Indeed, he thinks attention, denotation and substance are au fond the same concept. Certainly the formalities are similar, in an impressionistic sort of way: that which in the jargon of mental acts is attention and cogitation, is in Kantian epistemology intuition and concept, in Fregean ontology object and concept, in the philosophy of language subject and predicate, in traditional metaphysics substance and attribute.

Russell is another authority. In the fourth of his lectures on logical atomism, he spoke of a demonstrative or "emphatic particular" as "a proper name for the present object of attention", and observed that "in a purely physical world there would be a complete impartiality. All parts of time and all regions of space would seem equally emphatic."[20] Disregarding his eccentric treatment of an indexical words as an 'ambiguous proper name', Russell may be said to find an intimate connection between indexicality and attention.

It may also be persuasive to recollect Hintikka's reconstruction of the 'intuition' of Kant: it is "not very far from what we would call a singular term"[21]. One may add that it cannot fail to have an object, because it is

the mental analogue of a Russellian name or a Bolzanian intuition. Furthermore, it cannot fail to have the correct object, since it imposes no qualitative standards of correctness (unless 'being the object of this intuition').

It is well known that Russell was unable to find any example of a genuine proper name except 'this', taken as referring to a sense-datum. Although it is true that he construed it as an ambiguous proper name rather than an authentic indexical word, it has the main distinguishing feature of indexicals, namely context-dependence[22], and he defined all other indexicals by means of it. Lately Anscombe has found a very similar role for it: she uses 'this', referring to a present sensation or idea, in order to define 'I'[23].

Another assimilation of intuition, as traditionally understood, to indexicality: Bolzano had a theory of natural-kind terms as containing an 'intuition'[24]; upon examination this turns out to be the same theory, illustrated in just the same ways, as that lately propounded by Putnam[25] and Kripke[26]. The only essential difference is that Putnam believes that these terms contain, not the psychologistic[27] 'intuition', but an "unnoticed indexical component". He observes further that his view of natural-kind terms as indexical and Kripke's view of them as rigid designators are making the same point. Kripke certainly thinks demonstratives are rigid[28], but I wonder if he would he accept the converse - that all rigid designators contain an indexical element? He thinks proper names are rigid, of course, and the best analysis of them known to me is T. Burge's[29], which does attribute indexicality to them. At any rate the fundamental identity of Putnam's view with Bolzano's should support my assimilation of the traditional idea of intuitive cognition

to that of indexical thought. An intuition is the mental analogue of an indicator word.

According to Vygotsky[350] and other psychologists, inner speech lacks subject terms: it is exclusively predicative. Maybe we should say rather that its subjects are 'intuitions' as in the Bolzano-Hintikka construction of Kant, logically proper names. Compare this use of 'intuition' - as a sort of hybrid between a name and an act of cognition, with Burge's other thesis that a faculty of intuition is needed to give a Fregean account of indexicals[351].

Again, theories of becoming are sometimes said by opponents to rest on the 'intuitive' sense of time. They mean this disparagingly, because they believe that concepts should be purged of intuitive elements.

Of course, one must beware of confusion between the English use of 'intuition', to mean 'judgment for which no rational grounds have been given', and the more traditional European use of it, to signify immediate cognition of an individual object.

The latter is exemplified by Ockham[352]: "Generally speaking, any non-complex cognition of one or more terms or things, is an intuitive cognition, if it enables us to know a contingent truth, especially about present facts.

Abstractive cognition, on the other hand, is that knowledge by which it cannot be evidently known whether a contingent fact exists or does not exist."

This incidentally suggests that only abstractive cognitions - which are necessary truths - could be communicated. Only they can be adequately represented in speech.

More importantly, it brings out the intimate connection which has traditionally been seen between the

concepts of intuition and existence. This is represented also by McTaggart[33]: we can know that X exists only if either we perceive X or can infer X's existence from the existence of something which we do perceive.

I discern here another assimilation of intuition to indication. The recalcitrance of existence to system has been stressed by existentialists from Kierkegaard to Gilson, who observes[34] that 'essentialism' (the assumption that the world can be described entirely by abstract concepts) goes to pieces the moment 'existence' (real contingency) is introduced. This is precisely the effect which an indispensable indicator has on abstract systems, and I think it is the same process.

If some facts, i.e. parts of the nature of the world, are describable only from certain viewpoints, and not from all, that implies that the nature of the world cannot be given in purely general terms, i.e. that 'essentialism' is impossible. It is still defended by e.g. Geach[35]. He does not see that it is inconsistent with his other opinion that there is a real 'now' which is ignored by science[36]. Somebody might object that an indexical concept like presentness is itself a general term. Peirce, as we have seen, thought so. Yet it looks like a particular/universal hybrid, functioning like a name in any one context, but general as between contexts or viewpoints (a parameter, one might almost say).

I suggest elsewhere that there is no property of presentness which we can understand independently of the word 'now' - none, therefore, which can be used to explain 'now' (away).

If Kripke's theory of names is a de-epistemologized semantics[37], then an analysis of cognition into mental propositions, composed of termini mentales, etc., with

the intuition a sort of Russellian name, would be in effect a semanticized epistemology. It's the sort of reform which would be in keeping with the change Dummett believes was brought in by Frege -- the replacement of epistemology by semantics at the centre of philosophy[28]. However, semantics can elucidate a language only by reference to another, antecedently understood; and in a sense it is only a more formalized version of the method of conceptual analysis. The change Dummett describes, therefore, is apparently the replacement of a substantive branch of philosophy by a general method of philosophical investigation. Viewed in the same light, a semanticized epistemology would be no more than a formalized or explicitly analytical one: valuable as introducing extra clarity, especially on the question of what ontology one's theory of knowledge might presuppose; but not much of a revolution.

However, the additional clarity is not a negligible benefit. The act of attention has several different kinds of special feature: it is deictic; it is intuitive (non-discursive, non-connotative); it is caused by its referent; and it is subjective (incommunicable). The least I would claim is that by thinking of it as a token indexical we isolate one of those features, and whatever semantics we can devise which is adequate to indexical words ought to illuminate this aspect of cognition also.

Notes to Chapter 11

1. Mellor (1981).
2. McTaggart (1908).
3. Perry (1979).
4. Mellor (1981), p. 6.
5. Dummett (1960).
6. Bergson (1908), p. 201.
7. Baker (1979).
8. Castañeda (1975), p. 106.
9. Oakeshott (1959), pp. 20-24.
10. Dreyfus (1972).
11. TV discussion with J. Searle, 29 March 1984.
12. Bolzano (1837), §74.
13. Berkeley (1709), §144.
14. Santayana (1923), p. 17.
15. A distinction drawn in Chomsky (1975), p. 137. Problems are issues "that appear to be within the reach of approaches and concepts that are moderately well understood", and mysteries are ones which "remain as obscure to us today as when they were originally formulated" because "some fundamental insights are lacking".
16. McGinn (1983), p. 105.
17. McGinn (1983), p. 86.
18. McGinn (1983), p. 105.
19. Peirce (1931), p. 287.
20. Russell (1918), p. 222.
21. Hintikka (1969), p. 43.

22. Tugendhat (1976), p. 303.

23. Anscombe (1974).

24. Bolzano (1837), §75.

25. Putnam (1973).

26. Kripke (1972), e.g. pp. 126-128.

27. It is not really psychologistic in Bolzano.

28. Kripke (1972), pp. 10n, 49n.

29. A proper name is understood as a predicate governed by a demonstrative in Burge (1973).

30. Vygotsky (1934).

31. Burge (1979).

32. Ockham (1483), p. 26.

33. McTaggart (1927), §45.

34. Gilson (1949), p. 121.

35. Geach (1979), p. 54:

> McTaggart, like Wittgenstein in the Tractatus, is committed to the view that the Universe could be completely described in completely general terms, with no irreducible use of a 'non-connotative' proper name; and I think this view ought to be accepted.

36. Geach (1979), p. 101 endorses Dummett's view that it is impossible

> to get a view of the Universe which is complete and which does not specify <u>when</u> it is, what bit of the Universe is <u>now</u>

i.e. one <u>must</u> use the non-connotative designator 'now' or an equivalent. This contradicts the view quoted in Note 34.

37. Phrase of Sluga (1980), p. 161.

38. Dummett (1973), pp. 667-669.

— 12 —

Whether experience involves EI

Nothing can be a person without being a perfectly definite person; just as nothing can have a colour without having a perfectly definite colour[1]. Likewise nothing can be temporal ('in time') without having a perfectly definite position in time.

But further, a temporal or personal concept must apply to, though it need not be true of, anything which can grasp it. A concept involving personality is available only to persons, and a temporal concept only to beings in time.

Personality, as I use the word, is being a self; Time is being-in-time, temporality as a property of individuals. It is a determinable, like colour (being coloured), and one cannot conceive any determinate form of that determinable without oneself possessing the determinable (and hence possessing it determinately). It is not possible to ascribe a definite position in time without using indexicals, which implies having a definite position in time oneself.

What Mellor[2] calls the flow of time is this EI nature which it has, i.e. the fact that one must be part of it in order to conceive it. Temporality is a property which one must possess in order to conceive it. Selfhood is another such, since, analogously, one can't think of

anything having a definite form of personality (being a definite person) without oneself being a person.

In this, how do they differ from all experience? Without being a bat, one can't understand what it's like to be a bat. But without riding a bicycle, one can't understand what it's like to do that, either. In general, one can't understand what it's like, or how it feels, to have any property without having (or having had) that property.

But this is because the idea of there being something which it is like to have a property presupposes the idea of a self to whom there can seem to be something which it's like. There is nothing which it is like to be a bat if there can be no selves which are bats. Contrast the question: what is it like to be a square root? The question is idle because it is impossible for any self to be a square root.

Hence, although it is true that selfhood and temporality share with all experience the property of having to be exemplified by anything which could understand them, the only reason why all experience has this property is that all experience involves and presupposes temporality and selfhood. If there were no such things as selfhood and temporality, there would be no such thing as experience.

I have made out the EI character of Time (even if only dogmatically, after Prior and McTaggart) much better than that of Selfhood. For Selfhood I need some feature to do the job that Change does for Time. As change requires there be something true at one time and false at another, so there ought to be something about selfhood which d[illegible] there being something true at one self and false at another.

There are secondary qualities. [illegible]

perspectives might suggest itself: they must differ, and systematically, between selves; but this difference invites an objective explanation in terms of seeming. What is needed is a non-epistemic difference between selves. A possibility is the roles of 'I' and 'you' in dialogue, understood in a metaphysical, Buberian way[3]. Using 'phenomenal' and 'psychical' as adjectives pertaining respectively to the content and the structure of experience, one may say that the heteropsychic is constructible out of behaviour, and the heterophenomenal is not. There are no proofs that the heterophenomenal is real at all. We have no objective grounds for ascribing consciousness or phenomenology to other selves. The immediate phenomenal quality of consciousness is not in itself epistemic. It is quite independent of belief and knowledge, which would be possible for an entirely unconscious being (a machine). Avowals, being uncertifiable, are no evidence anyway, according to some theorists: a machine might avow phenomenology. So why do I, most of the time, ascribe consciousness to others?

A possible answer is that I know I'm a self, and for this to be true there must be other selves. We provisionally individuate them by expressive notions, but they need not be located anywhere or express themselves. They only have to exist[4]. I do not pretend that because the personal pronouns form a solidary system it follows that Persons must do so. And it doesn't follow, at least not manifestly, that because I exist there must exist somebody whom I can address. Nevertheless I think this much is true: that a self-conscious I has a sort of I-thou duality in it, which is quite different from the I-it duality between it and the body, and which means that it could not exist without at least the illusion of the

existence of other conscious selves.

A disingenuous recognition of other selves is not what's meant; that is mere coping with environmental regularities[5]. But what is necessary for their ingenuous recognition? Must they after all be expressive, 'full of ambushed powers'? Or is some mistier kind of dialogue or presence what's needed?

Just as time requires change - anything which is temporal is past, present and future - so selfhood may require a sort of Buberian[6] or Meadian[7] dialogue. A dialogue requires that something be both I and you; which are either incompatible (if everything real is objective), or incomparable (i.e. obtaining only relative to mutually exclusive viewpoints, here selves). I become a 'you' when spoken to; but I do not cease to be myself merely by falling silent, and listening instead of speaking. I am therfore 'I' as well as 'you'[8]. Further, dialogue, being call and response, presupposes change; so that selfhood involves time. That raises the possibility that selfhood and temporality are fundamentally identical, which would be highly convenient, as unifying the world's sources of EI. A world without selves would then be timeless also, although it might still extend in that fourth spatial dimension which the physicists style time[9]. However, this is indefinite stuff. I explore it no further, but refer the reader to Being and Nothingness[10].

A more promising possible source of something which will do for Selfhood what change does for Time is the notion of spectrum inversion - the familiar idea that my green might be your (or a Martian's) red: a distinction, that is, between the communicable structure and the incommunicable content of experience. I think the distinction goes back to Schlick.

Such a difference would be a fact, but not a scientific or objective fact[1]. This idea is connected with the conceptual difficulty of thinking of the contents of different minds comparatively – e.g. comparing the strengths of desires in different minds – and with the impossibility of a quantitative, as opposed to a purely structural or morphological phenomenology. In the case of desires one has only the fact of action or inaction to go by, and has no possible way of telling whether inaction (e.g.) results from a strong desire being strongly resisted or from a weak desire being weakly resisted. Being a bat is like something, i.e. it involves some distinctive kinds of experience. It is probably more like being a mouse than it is like being a spider. But it is not even obvious that one can express what it's like to be a human being – except maybe in poems and novels. Despite visionary projectors, there is no scientific phenomenology. I know vaguely what it's like to be this human being, but I have no means of telling if any of the features of my experience are unique to me and not characteristic of human experience in general.

The distinction between structure and content of experience doesn't at first seem to yield the truth of statements at some selves and their falsity at other selves. We can agree that the thing is green. The fact that different phenomenologies might be prompting our respective ascriptions does not imply that we are ascribing different properties. By 'green' I do not mean 'prompting this phenomenon in *me*' (the secondary quality). I pick out the green things by their effect on my experience, but I do not insist that it's essential to them that they should effect me thus. They might have affected me as red things in fact do. Moreover, it appears that this might be the

case without my being a different self. One need not suppose another self experiencing these things differently; a counterfactual 'I' does just as well. Having this phenomenology is not essential to me. It is accidental, part of my circumstances (facticité).

So what is the special significance of the fact that another self should have a different phenomenology? The significance of it is that it is a fact about a self (even if an accidental fact) which can't be expressed without indexicals. Only I can say 'I experience greenness like this' and understand what's meant.

Ayer has alleged[12] that the demonstrative identification of an experience leaves no doubt about whose experience it is. The identifier = the experiencer. There is perhaps a connection here with Lewis's and Chisholm's doctrine of self-ascription[13]. But the difference is that their self-ascribers self-ascribe properties which are in themselves universally accessible, and which could with truth be predicated of the believer in a universal and objective proposition (even if it would not express the same belief as the subjective predication). That seems false here. Here the EI is lodged, not in the subject term, but in the predicate. It is what I am saying about me and greenness that can't be expressed or understood by anybody else. Greenness and I might be objective things, but the way in which I experience greenness is a subjective thing.

The way you experience greenness might be said to be a part of my world, in the sense that although I can't imagine or conceive it, I can still pick it out, by reference to greenness and you. And perhaps one can have grounds for believing in the existence of a phenomenal quality with which one is unacquainted. Ayer would say that there are inductive grounds, which can be made to operate

transsubjectively even if established only in one's own case, that associate certain phenomenology with certain behaviour[14]. But your feeling is known to me only externally, by its accidents and not by its essence. Its essence is subjective, and only you can know it. I know, or guess, that *there is* such a feeling; I have no idea *which* feeling it is, or even if it is the same as any of the feelings which I am used to.

Compare Kripke's doctrine that we single out our own pains only by a phenomenal quality which is essential to them - but of course this is not the only quality which a pain has. It has a host of extrinsic determinations, such as being my pain (which is not essential to it), or having such and such causes and effects. Some combination of those might conceivably single it out, though I must say that's doubtful.

Others may experience greenness in just the way I do. But since only I can know which way that is, and I can't know the way in which others experience greenness, this identity can not be known at all. However, these incognoscibilities are contingent matters, in my view. There is no logical reason why I should not have one of your mental states (either token or type). Indeed, if the identity were logically unknowable (from all standpoints) it would be unreal.

Anyway, there is no necessity that I should experience greenness in the way I do. But it is inconceivable (tautologically so, I think) that I should experience greenness in that very way, but with a different phenomenal quality. And what is said when I say 'ET sees green things *this* way' is something which is *intelligible*, hence true or false, only to me. Furthermore, I could say 'John Smith sees green things this way too', where *this* is

again the way I see them, but John Smith is not identical with me. This proposition is once again intelligible only to me, and true or false only for me, but it is uncertifiable by anyone. It is a fact about another self, which exists not for that self, but for me only. Only I can conceive such a proposition; and it's self-evident, or self-evidently false, even to me, only if I am identical with the subject of the proposition and hence acquainted with the phenomenal quality indicated by 'this'.

Note that the necessity of this derives entirely from the fact that the way I see green things is demonstratively identified by me. It may be impossible for me to identify a 'raw feel' non-indexically, but that still does not make it logically impossible for me to have or perceive, and therefore to identify indexically, the experiences of others. However, if there is an essential indexicality here, then those others will not have access to the truths I would pronounce about their experiences or mine.

I do consider that a feeling, phenomenal quality etc. can't be referred to non-indexically; and that this holds both at the level of feeling-tokens ('this very pain'), and, despite the above remarks, of feeling-types, about which Nagel[15] makes the germane suggestion that 'it is a perfectly well-defined but in principle unanswerable whether sugar tastes like this to other people.'

However, it makes good sense, and may be correct, to hold both of the following:

1. phenomena, such as the way green things look to me, need - but only as a matter of contingent fact - indexicals for their expression. An intellect with extra senses could have perceived them as I do. Facts about them are therefore objective. The subjectivity is merely 'medical'.

2. my own selfhood - the way in which I am presented

to myself – also needs an indexical for its expression, but this time the necessity is logical, because the indexicality is essential. It is impossible for any other self to perceive me as I perceive myself.

There's no constructing selves out of their perceptions, on this theory – at least not by logical relations which would transmit objectivity from the parts to the whole. And talk of self-perception is possibly out of place in a theory of this kind. However, it fits well enough with the idea that perceptions, sense-data, etc., are objects and parts of the world, but that the self is no part of the world.

The question of 'privileged access', to oneself or to one's experiences, differs according as 'access' is defined as a possibility of knowing, or merely of conceiving, certain truths. It interests me mostly in the latter, more general, sense.

As privileged access is usually conceived, it is access to objects (sense-data or the self), and the question doesn't arise whether the propositions we have access to are known or merely understood. I generally speak of having access to propositions, by which I mean being able to understand them (provided with a sufficient intellect: nothing in one's circumstances precludes one's conceiving the idea).

Do I perceive myself? I use McTaggart's vocabulary; others, e.g. Frege, prefer to speak of being presented to oneself in a primitive way[14]. There are certainly things which I know or at least believe about myself under no description but 'I'. Since only I can mean me by that designation, these things can't be knowledge by description, because here the description must be transmitted and received by the same person. In order to

use the description I must already know the thing by acquaintance, since it is I who must see that the description applies. I must inaugurate this tradition: there is no one else whose testimony could be authoritative.

The subjectivity Frege ascribes to 'I am F' is fundamentally epistemic and contingent. It derives from the special access which I have to myself -- a way of knowing which is not essentially private to me[7]. McTaggart and Armstrong have contended that the privacy of my sense-data, 'raw feels' etc. is likewise contingent, not necessary.

Is my access to myself logically 'privileged', i.e. is it logically impossible for a self to apprehend other selves or parts of other selves? If the meaning of subjective 'I' were essentially expressible only by 'I', then it would be, as I think it is, logically impossible for someone other than me to express it at all; impossible therefore for me to be presented to them in the way signified by 'I'. A contingently privileged access to oneself could not be a matter of essentially indexical thought. Truths which need indexicals for their expression, but only as a matter of contingent fact, do not yield radical subjectivism. An intellect with extra senses could have seen me as I see myself. The subjectivity is merely 'medical'.

One can tell that persons' sensory systems have a different structure, not only in respect of colour, but also e.g. tactile sensations: as the woman who felt a pinprick as like a prod with cotton wool. But we cannot tell if the content of the sensation of greenness is interchanged with that of redness throughout, because the structure of experience is invariant under this kind of transposition; it might even cross the borders between

different sensory modalities, without our being any the wiser. However, a fact, if there is one, like 'I see green as you see red' – a fact about the content of experience rather than its structure, as such need not be subjective. It might be an objective fact, even if not everyone can verify it. To be subjective, it's necessary that a statement should be inexpressible and inconceivable from some viewpoint. It is not sufficient that it be merely incognoscible from some.

But is such a statement logically unverifiable (by other than a single self), or merely, as Armstrong and McTaggart hold[18], contingently so? If it is contingently unverifiable, this would be by one of the non-logical necessities, such as physical necessity.

The literary device of omniscient narration (use of a third-person subject) gives information in the third person which could be apprehended only in the first person (directly); yet it does not seem absurd. That suggests that the inaccessibility of other people's experiences is not logically necessary. Novelists give us a vague idea of what such access would be like.

If that is correct it means that, as in Hume, my experiences are not essentially mine. I might not have had them, and they might not have been had by me. It doesn't lead as far as Hume's extreme view that they could have existed without being had by anyone.

My conclusion is that I do apprehend myself in some direct way, and do not infer my own existence from my effects on the environment. This 'direct way' is expressed by 'I', at least in some of its uses; and it is logically impossible for me to use 'I' to refer to somebody else. However, it is not so certain that my experiences (sensations, feelings etc.) are inalienably mine. It may

not be a logical impossibility that one such should be transplanted into another soul, though it's admittedly hard to imagine it coherently.

At any rate, a phenomenal proposition is unlike a proposition of change, in that its very expressibility, and not merely its truth-value, is relative to one self; whereas it is only the truth-value, and cannot be the expressibility, of a proposition of change, which is relative to a time. 'The war is over' is intelligible at all times, though only sometimes true. 'Sugar tastes like this' is not intelligible to all persons. As I use it, it makes a definite statement only to me. If I ask 'Does sugar taste like <u>this</u> to you?', you will look blank; yet I know exactly what's meant, and there's nothing difficult about it!

The distinction between structure and content of experience is hard to make precise. Ayer[1?] alleges that it disappears upon inspection. However, the existence of this distinction, between what we can communicate of our experience and what we can't, belongs to the ordinary notion of mind. Everyone is obscurely convinced that a machine might emulate every motion of a human being without in the least having a mind or being conscious.

That's why behaviorists talk of 'conscious behaviour'. By this equivocation - using the word 'conscious' to mean merely purposive, rational, calculating or intelligent - they mean to enlist on behalf of their theory the rhetoric of 'consciousness' in the ordinary sense, since consciousness in the sense of phenomenology is a primary fact of mentality, and something which a theory of mind ought therefore to explain. They are exploiting an ambiguity of 'consciousness', as between its cybernetic and

phenomenological acceptances.

In this respect behaviorists exactly resemble the physicists who insist upon using the word 'time' to name what is really an extra dimension of space. They wish to be seen to be giving a theory of time, so they use the word, even though with an abnormal meaning. Psychologists wish to be seen to be explaining consciousness, so they use the word, even though with an abnormal meaning.

Carnap thought Einstein's late obsession with the Now arose from confusing Experience with Knowledge[20]. In Feigl's foreword to Schlick[21], Schlick's distinction between Erkennen and Erleben is identified with Wittgenstein's between what can be said and what shows itself, and then glossed as the difference between genuine knowledge and immediate experience. Grünbaum's[22] treatment of the experience of time clearly belongs to the same school, which appears from the above to be Positivist. By implication it denies that the facts of experience are facts at all – not 'objective' facts, it would say, but the qualification is immaterial in this case. It is not quite the extreme kind of metaphysical behaviorism which denies that there is experience. But it does involve the incommunicability of experience, and there are many of this cast of mind who hold that the incommunicable is unreal. Besides, what could one mean by 'there is such a thing as experience', if not that there is a distinctive class of facts answering thereto? In certain moods, the idea that there are not facts exclusive to me seems entirely fanciful: just take my experience of the colour of that tea-pot.

Carnap is right if he thinks that experience is as such incommunicable and subjective; but wrong if he thinks it's therefore unreal; and wrong, or at least not in

agreement with me, if he thinks it's therefore unimportant or uninteresting. It is true that consciousnesses generate facts which are inexpressible from the world's point of view, and that suggests they aren't properly parts of the world. A. Danto[23] remarked that representations, the semantic or intentional aspects of mind, are 'logically external' to the world. And according to Erwin Schrödinger[24], excluding the subject of cognizance from nature is exactly what makes it an objective world. Whether such things get a mention in one's philosophy depends on what one is after. It is the old divide between a philosopher who wishes to understand the world per se, and will disregard everything that seems to impede the attainment of that kind of objective picture; and the philosopher who is concerned to understand also his own relation to the world, his situation as an 'existent thinker' (Kierkegaard), rather than as one of God's proxies.

The Etre-au-monde or In-der-Welt-sein of phenomenology is not incarnation; if anything is incarnate, then it is psyche - a certain abstract organisation or structure. We have to think of that which is 'in the world' as anterior to psyche - which, being a mechanism, is no less material than the natural world with which it interacts. I am aware that this is a sort of homuncularism. One imagines the self as something which 'looks through' a psyche at the natural, objective world. Moreover, when such a picture is worked out a little further, it leads, like the Averroist theory of the Agent Intellect, or Fichte's doctrine of the Ich, to the paradox that there are no grounds for distinguishing more than one such self. The most one could do to tell one self from others would be to say: the self that is specially associated with this

psyche, or this mental state. But the reference of that this will be found to depend on prior identification of the self which employs it. This idea needs a defence: Elizabeth Anscombe[25] disbelieves in a self of the sort discussed here, but does think that 'I' can be explained in terms of demonstrative identification of mental things ("this idea of movement", "these intended actions") – hence that such identification has no necessary association with a self. I don't think that can be correct, if only for the reason that it seems at least logically possible that one might demonstratively identify (have, perceive) ideas in other minds. If so, then the fact of indexical identification of an idea does not reveal which self is doing the identifying, hence does not distinguish that self from others or explain 'I'.

This is a situation in which methodological solipsism will lead to metaphysical solipsism. There is nothing about the self which suggests that it is necessarily related to a body, and nothing about other people's bodies that proves that they are related to things like the self. And if there were, that would not show that they weren't all related to one and the same Self.

This solipsist can't appeal to conceptual parsimony. It is entities of one kind, not kinds of entity, that are here multiplied. One needs much stronger proof that there is one coelacanth, i.e. that they are physically possible (since actual), than (given it) that there are two. On the other hand one still needs some evidence for multiplying members of a species, and the solipsist says that there isn't enough in this case.

It is not true that the solipsist could not have got his concept of self without intercourse with others; he could have got it from the illusion of such intercourse; or

by disputing with the snow, if that fell in sentences[26]. I won't rehearse the other stock objections. However, if one attempts a thorough-going subjectivism of both selfhood and temporality, intestine conflict develops. If solipsism of the moment is true, then nothing can change, because change implies one proposition being replaced by a contradictory one. If there is only one moment of time, this would mean that those contradictory propositions were true together, which is impossible. Solipsism and its temporal, local and cosmical analogues imply Eleaticism - except that they do not deny the inner diversity of the one self, place, time and world, merely their mutability. The locative variant would lead to the authentic Parmenidean One - if there is only one place, it can have no parts, since they too would be places.

If Solipsism à la Fichte is epistemologically motivated metaphysics, then the sort which I have been exploring might be called a semantically motivated solipsism: 'I' being essential to the expression of (maybe) all propositions. A certain rapprochement is possible by way of the doctrine of mental propositions and terms - as in Bolzano, or Hintikka's interpretation of Kant.[27]

Notes to Chapter 12

1. The Principle of Ontological Determinacy in Geach (1979), p. 55.
2. Mellor (1981), pp. 3, 7, etc.
3. As in Buber (1923), I.
4. Cf. Sartre (1943), pp. 277f.
5. Oakeshott (1959), pp. 20-24.
6. Buber (1923).
7. Tugendhat (1976), p. 168 interprets this as meaning that it is possible for speaker and hearer to refer to something identical only if each co-performs the linguistic role of the other.
8. Cf. Dummett (1960), p. 500.
9. Kojève (1947) contends that there is time only if there are beings which speak and have a history; otherwise nature would be nothing but space.
10. Sartre (1943), especially pp. 251-278. The 'Look' is not only 'a sort of Cogito' guaranteeing the existence of the Other (another subject), but, being 'a pure reference to myself', it makes possible my own self-consciousness, as opposed to unreflective, 'non-thetic' awareness (p. 259).
11. Cf. Whitehead (1926), p. 184; Ayer (1936), pp. 173-174; Ayer (1956), pp. 206-207.
12. Ayer (1956), p. 196.
13. Lewis (1979); Chisholm (1981).
14. Ayer (1956), pp. 216-222.
15. Nagel (1979), p. 201.
16. Frege (1918), p. 26.

17. Dummett (1981), p. 490.

18. Armstrong (1969), p.108; McTaggart (1927), §384; cf. Rorty (1980), p. 102n.

19. Ayer (1956), pp. 207-208.

20. Carnap (1963), pp. 37-38.

21. Feigl (1974), p. xx; Feigl, however, has some sympathy, even if ironically expressed, with worry about the 'existentially poignant uniqueness' of a self. See Feigl (1958), p. 155, Feigl (1963), p. 260.

22. Grünbaum (1968), p. 343.

23. Danto (1975), p. 24.

24. Schrödinger (1958), p. 127.

25. Anscombe (1974), p. 33.

26. Anscombe (1959), p. 168.

27. Hintikka (1969).

— 13 —

Philosophical Indexicals

It's been common in philosophy to treat the temporal adverb 'now' and the personal pronoun 'I' as if they were ordinary common nouns, capable of taking a plural form (τὰ νῦν, 'the nows', occurs in Aristotle[1]) and a generic singular form (as when we say 'The Russian relishes his borshch'): 'the I', 'the Now', 'das Ich', 'le moi', etc. It is evident that these uses are catachrestic, and they are not made to seem much less so by having become traditional. 'I' has no plural (the choric 'we', as in the football crowd's 'we want four!', is extremely rare and certainly not what's intended here). It is partly in response to this, I feel, that there have been invented words or phrases which are genuine common nouns by grammar, to replace the originally misapplied indexicals and so escape the rhetorical blight with which their use can infect a statement (that of seeming unintelligible). Examples of this ploy are the use of 'the Self' for 'the I', and 'selves' for 'I's' (or 'the Ego' and 'egos' – though here the disguise is less convincing), and 'the present time' for 'the Now'. The use of 'Self' to which I am referring is not of course a psychological one. It does not mean the soul or psyche. It is the metaphysical subject of Wittgenstein, the spirit or consciousness of Santayana and many others, the pre-reflective cogito of Sartre,

probably the transcendental ego of Kant or Husserl, and corresponds also to some metaphysical (non-psychosomatic, non-forensic) uses of person. I contend that all these underlined phrases function, like 'the Self', as rhetorically preferable alternatives to 'the I', and have got no virtues of perspicuity which that phrase does not possess. They are not genuinely analytic of the idea of an I.

This would not be true if there existed such qualities as selfhood and (temporal) presentness which were more intelligible to us than what might be conveyed or suggested by the ungrammatical use of the corresponding indexical. "Selfhood is a simple quality, like redness", declared McTaggart[2]. According to him, these are simple and undefinable properties – it is impossible to analyse them by decomposing them into logical parts (they have none), but only by indicating their places in the metaphysical scheme of things. This is a possible position. But it seems to me that these qualities are analysable, and analysable in terms of 'I' and 'now'. Moreover, I would point out that the project of analysing the idea of an I and a now in terms of these qualities must bring in also objects for the qualities to belong to. We need a time for presentness to belong to, and something I know not what for selfhood to inhere in. I do not think we can conceive of such objects in sufficient independence from the ideas of I and now. A time just is 'a now'. That is the only idea we have of it. A time is whatever it is that can be present, in the requisite temporal sense. And we have no idea at all of something that can possess selfhood, independently of the fact that it does, i.e. that it is an I.

But what an analytical problem these words pose. The use as a generic singular is no doubt special, but it's

obvious for example that a Russellian account of 'the Now' or 'the I' – considered as an ordinary definite description – is impossible. It would mean 'There is only one I (or now) and it ——', and its use would therefore imply solipsism of the moment. Nor can one treat it as a contextually definite description, as e.g. 'the cat' would normally have a context-dependent unicity of reference, since then it will either presuppose 'the I' or 'the Now', or else reduce to simple 'I' and 'now': 'There is only one now in the present context (i.e. now) and it ——'.

The generic singular use, common in philosophers who theorise about 'the I' and 'the Now', is not less of a difficulty. In this 'philosophical' use of indexicals (das Ich, τὸ νῦν), they cannot be taken as having contextually determined reference to the substances or quasi-substances (persons, times, places) familiar in third-person discourse. The philosophical uses are not genuinely indexical, because the social context essential to pragmatic concepts is irrelevant to these quasi-indexicals. There need not be other minds or an external world for 'das Ich' and 'τὸ νῦν' to mean what they do. It is perhaps because 'here' requires an external world that 'here' lacks a philosophical use. Only Kantians say there is no Self without an external world. And there has always been a strong anti-Aristotelian tradition[3] according to which there can also be a Now without an external world ('motion'). It depends, they say, only on the flow of the thinking mind.

I think E. Anscombe was first to observe, in connection with Augustine, that phrases like 'the mind', with apparently impeccable third-person credentials, can sometimes function in context in such a way as to be

construable only in terms of the first person. They enable essentially first-person arguments to be formulated without the appearance of the word 'I', but their role is that of 'the I' or of the auctorial 'I' of Descartes.

Anscombe writes[7]: "the assent to St Augustine's propositions will be made, if at all, by appropriating them in the first person."

I see two ways of understanding this. According to the first, the 'propositions' of Augustine are first-person propositions, and therefore propositions at least logically capable of varying in truth-value from person to person. It is 'Si fallor, sum', not 'Qui fallitur, est'. In order to make a single proposition out of this one must deny that it is about any person in particular; but neither does it generalize about persons. It is about whoever happens to conceive it, but not because it expressly quantifies over conceivers. This is a peculiar property, and leads on to the second way of considering such propositions, which is that their intellectual content is exhausted by a particular quantification, in this case 'Someone is deceived and therefore exists'. This content is what an individual can 'appropriate' to himself, perhaps by the mysterious conversio ad phantasmata of which Geach speaks[8]. It is awkward to speak of appropriating a proposition, and might be more natural to speak of appropriating a property - hence the aptness to such cases of the doctrine propunded by Lewis and Chisholm - that the basic intentional idea is attribution of a property to oneself, and that considering a proposition is a posterior idea definable in terms of self-ascription of properties[9].

I can give a more contemporary example than Augustine or Descartes. Kripke constantly uses quasi-indexicals in

exposition - we are invited to consider 'this very object', 'this very woman' and see if the thing thus apparently indexically identified, and hence identified without benefit of concepts, has this or that essential property. Of course, no indexical identification is made, just as none is intended when Descartes writes 'I'.

M. R. Ayers, discussing Locke recently[8] remarked, "This cat is countable and re-identifiable ...". This is an example of a dispensable use of indexicals. Here the indexical is inessential, stylistic only. It can be replaced by an explicit generality: 'A cat (any cat) is countable and re-identifiable.'

That is not true of Kripke's remarks about "this very woman". Which woman? He pretends to refer to a definite individual. A generality would not do. "Elizabeth II, this very person, necessarily had those very parents." He means us to substitute analogous experience of our own concerning perfectly definite and indexically identified individuals. It is a quasi-indexical, like the auctorial 'I' of Berkeley and Descartes. I am expected to substitute indexical identifications of *my* own - to stare at a woman, or inspect myself, and see if either of them has the property which <u>something else</u> - a woman Kripke knows, or Descartes's own self - is argued to have by the philosopher. If I think it has, then I am said to agree with the philosopher. It is a very odd procedure.

By the way: T. Burge's[9] theory of ordinary proper names - as complexes of an indexical and a common noun - 'that John', 'the Nixon' - is not only intrinsically plausible, but supported by the authority of Davidson. It is good for me, because, with it, I can accuse Kripke of using quasi-indexicals, not only with 'this very object', 'this very woman', and so forth, but also with 'Nixon' and

'Aristotle'. 'Which Aristotle?' has just the grammar it seems to have. Which Aristotle? Onassis?

In this connection one ought to consider the peculiar auctorial 'I' of writers like Descartes and Berkeley who expound their philosophies in the first person. Geach[9] observed with respect to Berkeley that 'I', in his books, means not Berekley, or Philonous, but 'any finite spirit like us'. In other words it is a crypto-generalization, to be read as 'an I', 'any I', or something similar. When 'I' means 'the I' or 'the Self', that use is such that anyone else could use 'I' in that place salva veritate – essentially a philosophical indexical, and not one which expresses truths peculiar to *me*. It is obvious that the Cogito, for example, can have no interest unless it applies to other selves than Descartes; and no certainty unless it is expressed by the first person and the present tense. The whole Cartesian philosophy is founded upon an essentially indexical statement. But if Descartes's 'I' were an authentic first person, it could not interest us. And if it meant 'an I' it would, as I have suggested, want perspicuity – at any rate be far from the clarity and distinctness that would enable it to found all other cognitions. The best one can do is to substitute for 'an I' something like 'any finite spirit like us, as he refers to (is known to, is presented to) himself'. But the concept of a finite spirit is not one we are very agile with nowadays; and that of a special mode of presentation of oneself to oneself has not become clear, despite its use by Frege in his double (subjective v. objective) interpretation of 'I'.

The famous passage in Hume's Treatise (I.iv.6) which begins "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what

I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other ..." ends with the irony: "If any one upon serious and unprejudic'd reflexion, thinks he has a different notion of himself, I must confess I can reason no longer with him. All I can allow him is, that he may be in the right as well as I, and that we are essentially different in this particular. He may, perhaps, perceive something simple and continu'd, which he calls himself; tho' I am certain there is no such principle in me."

What this ironical concession amounts to is a suggestion that the word 'I' in Hume's treatise can here be construed as an authentic indexical: applying, as used by Hume, only to Hume himself, and having no consequences concerning anyone else. But what highlights the irony, of course, is that this would be the only place in the book where 'I' is so understood. Elsewhere it is what I have been calling a philosophical indexical. We are not, in general, to understand Hume (or Berkeley, or Descartes) to be writing some sort of spiritual autobiography. They intend to be general: we are to understand their use of 'I' by substituting our own. The auctorial 'I', 'we' etc. is like using 'a self' as one uses 'a man' when one says to a man, 'a man can't jump eight feet' -- which entails, in context, you can't jump eight feet. Quite often, this use of 'I' is a dispensable, rhetorical device: one could replace it with a reference to 'all persons', or 'any finite spirit' (as Geach has glossed Berkeley's use of 'I'). In those cases, 'I', 'my', etc. are no worse off than similar uses of 'John', 'Mary', 'the dog' or variables. 'John', and merely stylistic 'I', can be read as a variable, ranging over persons; or at least a place-holder for personal names. This merely stylistic egocentrism raises no philosophical questions.

At other times, however, the first-person formulation has no third-person or impersonal double. The only thing that the philosophical 'I', construed as a variable, could range over is egos (which is perhaps senseless); and it has no substitutes.

An obvious example is Descartes's Cogito (or Augustine's prefigurement thereof). 'I' is essential to that statement: one cannot substitute a generality like 'Everyone who is thinking is real', since that evacuates the original of all its interesting content (besides which, the original is declared by Descartes to express an intuition, and not, despite its form, an argument). However, it is equally impossible to understand the Cogito as one would an ordinary indexical statement, viz. as signifying that Descartes is thinking and therefore exists. That statement was philosophically uninteresting even when it was true.

The least that this shows is that one cannot produce a statement with the same cognitive value as the Cogito without using the word 'I'.

This does not mean that the indexical is absolutely essential to the statement, since by that I would mean that one can't produce another, non-indexical, statement with the same truth-conditions as the original; and that's an impossibility which has not been demonstrated.

At the level of abstraction at which I am operating, it is trivially true that nothing can have the same meaning as 'I think' without incorporating the word 'I' (or 'je', or the Latin morpheme '-o', etc.).

The substantial point here, however, is that the word 'I' is essential to the statement's having the certainty (and hence the philosophical interest) which it does have. Some other proposition might happen to have the same

truth-conditions as the Cogito, but epistemically it wouldn't be any sort of rock on which to found the entire Cartesian philosophy.

The same sort of quasi-indexical is concealed, I believe, in several other concepts made use of by philosophers. In Cudworth, or Nagel and Anscombe[11], or Sartre[12], or indeed in first reflection, there is recourse to a notion of 'internality'. I, myself, am an 'inside thing' with 'internal energy' - to use Cudworth's phrases - not to be identified with 'the mere fridging up and down of the parts of an extended substance'[13]. Evans[14] considers the usage a symptom of a Cartesian model of the mind, but while the affinity is clear in Cudworth's case, and Sartre's, I doubt if anything so definite holds in general. The usage is colloquial and non-philosophical. Nagel[15] notes that 'I have a type of internality', which characterises the way in which I possess my mental states. Here is a more colloquial use by him[16]: "When someone poses inwardly the question whether a past or future experience was or will be his ..."

I do not know what psychological or even physiological basis this locution has. It is possible to interpret the subjective uses of 'I' and 'now' as results of internalising the pragmatic roles of their ordinary indexical equivalents. By this process, 'I' and 'now' can get a use in self-communion, but 'here' doesn't seem to, unless it should mean 'in my mind'. That phrase is hard to construe. One thinks of the mind as a Humean theatre, or reflection understood as monologue intérieur. It is a possible source of the idiom of interiority. However that may be, it is alternative to the philosophical indexical

'I' or 'the Self', which I say is like ivy in philosophy, tangled round everything. And 'where the displaced fog settles' is on 'inwardly' - that's where the obscurity is transferred.

A certain use of 'consciousness' provides it sometimes with an alternative habitation. Someone might ask: Is there a good reason for saying 'das Ich' or 'the self' instead of 'a conscious being', even when the approach is not psychological or epistemological, but metaphysical? One imagines glossing 'is a now' as 'is a moment at which some being is conscious', 'is an I' as 'is a conscious being' and 'is a here' as 'is where some conscious being is'. It's possible; but then no interesting questions are answered, because the metaphysically germane sense of 'I' must be included in 'conscious'. This consciousness is a pure awareness, not illustrable by behaviour. It is not a psychological idea at all: it contains all the mysteries that once belonged to 'I', 'now' etc.

The self which 'I' is adapted to refer to is the practical self, the animate body, the intending self, the person. This includes the psyche, considered as a mechanical system, and hence as corporeal[17]. The philosophical use of 'I' attempts to refer by it to a transcendental or metaphysical self, the limit of the world from my point of view. This 'I' is not a part of the world: it is a purely contemplative ego, a pure spectator, of thoughts and feelings as of all other objects. The transcendental self has no mechanical innards, or else it would be corporeal[18]. It is a condition of there being even one phenomenon, but it is not the 'unitary percipient' supposed to unite diverse perceptions, sensations, thoughts, feelings, etc., as 'sympsychic' into a single system - that is a psychical function. Mistaking psyche for

das Ich is like mistaking process for time, as is generally done by philosophers of physics. One misidentifies something with one of its presuppositions.

But why should 'I' be felt apt to be perverted from its psychological and social uses and used to stand for this quite different, metaphysical idea? It may have something to do with the practical solipsism (egoism) of the practical self, which recognizes other selves only 'disingenuously'[19], as means to ends. It has something to do, also, with the fact that the speaker is always at the deictic centre of the situation[20]. Likewise, the philosophical self - the metaphysical subject - is always at the centre of the world. The latter conception is parasitic upon the former, the ultimate 'situation of utterance' being 'the world'. The world so conceived is essentially oriented towards a centre, or privileged location, just as the speaker is the deictic origin of a pragmatic context.

The central thing about EI is its bearing on the relation between Truth and Objectivity (or Universality). If truth is essentially objective then EI's a chimera; but if it is not, then there can be incompatible - or at least incomparable, incommensurable - truths. Moreover, no objective description of this situation is possible, except a purely general one such as I have just given.

However, is it even legitimate for me to generalize about truths some of which which ex hyp. I could not refer to or express directly? This quantification supposes a unified universe of discourse which is theoretically impossible.

It is not the harmless predicament of not being able to name or express them all. There are some which in

principle I could not name or express. What entitles me then to reckon these truths as possible values of my variables of quantification? Can they be said to exist 'for me' at all?

'Das Ich' combines first- and third-person features; it's a hybrid, like a first-person imperative. And in general, nominal forms like 'das Ich', 'le moi', 'the Self', 'the present moment', τὸ νῦν, etc. are attempts to make discussable from a universal point of view, and by the universal audience, things which only exist for (are available to) certain observers. 'The Cogito' is a phrase of just the same sort.

Phrases like 'the self', 'the metaphysical subject' and 'the transcendental ego' are variants of the auctorial 'I' of Berkeley and Descartes. They stand in for the reader's own personal essential indexical. This is what a philosophical indexical does: it is a sort of second-order indexical, and there is a nesting of contexts here. A context which contains both Descartes and the reader determines which indexical the reader will substitute for Descartes's; and an inner context containing only the reader will determine what thing that indexical then signifies.

The locutions 'is true *for*', 'exists *for*' are basically attempts to counterfeit a universal, impersonal, objective, observer-independent world-picture of the sort which I say can't exist.

'The present', 'the self', 'the world' are all crypto-indexicals or philosophical indexicals (pretending to be general), and all are capable of being given Ramsey/Prior-style redundancy treatments. In fact there is some similarity between the redundancy theory and EI: one says that the predicate 'true' is needed only to enable

generalization, which is exactly the function of the above expressions. But it is a pretence and a pseudo-quantification. The whole apparatus of indices and semantic relations to them is invented so that one can pretend to generalize about 'viewpoints' and so produce universal and objective versions of occasional and subjective truths.

The set of temporal truths changes every moment. The set of personal truths is different for different selves. But it is possible to say no more than that this is the case, and even that ability might be an illusion. In making that general statement I quantify over truths which, being ex hyp. annexed to other viewpoints than mine, aren't even in principle parts of my world. The quantifier ranges over things which could not even in principle be referred to by me.

It is not the familiar epistemic situation of knowing that there is an F without knowing any particular thing to be F. It is tempting to state it ontologically and in the form of a contradiction: there are Fs, but there is no particular thing which is F.

That is perhaps a form of McTaggart's contradiction, which comes from trying to combine two or more viewpoints. And this, too, is purely a façon de parler: there are no such things as 'viewpoints'. A philosophical indexical cannot be read as quantifying over viewpoints, because there are no such things, and even if there were one still could not capture an EI fact that way. One might say that a philosophical indexical is essentially vocative, as it were containing a 'you'. It says: understand by analogy with your own case. But this too is a metaphor. There is no 'analogy', in the sense of parity of structure: there is no 'structure' because its putative fundamental element – the

original viewpoint – does not exist. And there is no real plurality of 'cases' (viewpoints) between which such an analogy might hold.

The very suggestion that there is essential indexicality is incoherent in this way. It depends on a crypto-pseudo-general use of indexicals which could never in principle become a genuine quantification. What then exactly is the doctrine which I'm expounding? I think the point is that there remains one perspective from which a unified account of the world is possible – that is, my own viewpoint. It is an incommunicable account, expressible only by me; and at most I expect another 'I' (if there are any) to consider what he or she would express by the same indexical sentences, and decide if that is true. There is no question of anyone else deciding whether what I say is true. They can contemplate only its analogues expressed by the same indexicals at another metaphysical location. The applicability of my 'I think' to your case is supposed to show itself; it can't be said.

Nagel remarks that something is subjective if it can be conceived only from a certain kind of viewpoint (approximately, the viewpoint of a being which might have experienced the thing). But the idea of a kind of viewpoint also suffers from the weakness I see in attempts to talk generally of 'viewpoints'.

'Subjectivity in general' is at any rate a recalcitrant and possibly incoherent concept. Its oddity gives rise to the typically awkward Heideggerian idea of Jemeinigkeit ('in-each-case-mineness')[21], and Shestov's hostility to Bergson's talk of 'notre moi'[22]. It is as if I must, in order to talk about selfhood, discuss myself (my own case) and hope someone else will overhear and sympathize ('identify') with me. In view of the the general

suggestive connection of EI with expressionism and romanticism, it is interesting to reflect that this is how we understand soliloquy, or stream-of-consciousness narrative (monologue intérieur, erlebte Rede).
Compare Mill's characterization of poetry as not heard but overheard; of the nature of soliloquy[23].

Notes to Chapter 13

1. I may be wrong about the interpretation of this phrase, since my knowledge of Greek is superficial. In particular, it may be that τὰ νῦν, i.e. 'the (neuter plural) now', is an instance of the construction exemplified in Thompson (1883), p. 12, by οἱ νῦν, i.e. 'the (masculine plural) now', and rendered by 'the present generation'. If so, it would mean something like 'the things of today', and be irrelevant in this context.
2. McTaggart (1927), §394.
3. Largely Franciscan and Jewish, to judge from Wolfson (1929), pp. 96–97. A line of descent is drawn from Plato through Plotinus, Crescas, Albo, and Suarez to Bergson.
4. Anscombe (1974), p. 21.
5. Geach (1958a), p. 65.
6. Lewis (1979); Chisholm(1981).
7. But of course these writings – Kripke (1971), Kripke (1972) – are transcribed lectures. It is quite likely that when Kripke uttered the words 'this table' on 20 January 1970, he was indexically identifying a nearby table, i.e. identifying it by non-connotative means. However, those words as recorded on p. 51 of Kripke (1972) make no such identification.
8. Ayers (1975), p. 203.
9. Burge (1973).
10. Geach (1958b), p. 3.
11. Anscombe (1959), p. 166 (expounding Wittgenstein on solipsism), unites all the ideas in this section:

> It is a fairly natural thought that 'where there is consciousness, there is an I'; but this raises immediate questions about 'consciousness', and about the legitimacy of speaking of 'an I' ... it is illegitimate to speak of 'an I'. 'From inside' means only 'as I know things'; I can talk to others about these things, and hear corresponding talk from them; but I cannot communicate to them what I am speaking of 'from an inside point of view', I can only communicate words which they hear from outside. Thus what I mean is really intelligible only to myself.

12. Sartre (1943), p. 305: consciousness is 'absolute interiority'.

13. Cudworth (1678), Ch. 5, §3

14. Evans (1982), p. 203.

15. Nagel (1965).

16. Nagel (1979), p. 200.

17. This is a dogma.

18. Having a structure is one of the usual conditions for material existence. Compare the observation in Popper & Eccles (1977), p. 8, that atoms were accepted as real only after they had acquired a structure.

19. Oakeshott (1959), pp. 20-24.

20. Lyons (1968) p. 276.

21. Heidegger (1927), §9.

22. Shestov (1929), p. 265:

> Immediate cognition presupposes not "our" ego but my ego. Our ego, i.e. the ego as such, le moi, is not a thing which is given immediately ... If Bergson wished to remain within the limits of immediate cognition, he could only say: my ego feels itself free and declares this. But he has no right to to assert that every ego feels itself free ... There is nothing improbable in one ego feeling itself free and another unfree. And if immediate cognition is infallible, then in those cases where we are confronted with two opposite assertions, we have no alternative but to accept both, even though they appear mutually exclusive.

23. Mill (1833).

— 14 —

Irrationalism

There is a general suggestive connection between EI doctrines (or those which can be reconstrued as such) and expressionism and romanticism. It has an elective affinity with expressionism, egoism (which can be derived from solipsism), contempt for rules, systems (Kierkegaard) and conceptual thought, in favour of spontaneity (Shestov) and 'novelties in the universe' (James, Bergson). It emphasizes the 'existentially poignant uniqueness' of the self (Feigl's phrase, reacting to Thomas Nagel[1]). It is anti-rational in the way that egocentricity is anti-rational. Just as Egoism is less a morality than a challenge to morality[2], so Solipsism (which is an EI theory except when it is madness, and perhaps even then) is a challenge to metaphysics. EI and irrationalism are connected because reason is intrinsically universal. It yields propositions whose truth is unqualified, and which ought to be received semper, ubique & ab omnibus. Subjectivisms attack the Classicist presupposition of philosophy, that it should be universal, objective, impersonal. Like Shestov they romantically emphasize the particular and subjective. EI philosophy is characterised as romantic by authors with such diverse views as Nagel and D. C. Williams[3]. Admittedly the connection is much more often rhetorical than logical - what real EI generates is a

contradiction, not a poetic oxymoron as favoured by Eastern mystics - and bearing in mind Dummett's caveat[4] ('The history of art deals with 'influences' based on vague resemblances; but in the history of philosophy superficial analogies reflecting no genuine correspondence of thought are worthless.') I don't propose to make too much of it.

Consider Croce's identification of pure intuition - a concept highly amenable to EI treatment - with lyricism[5]. What characterizes lyric expression, as distinct from epic or dramatic? It is its subjectivity, the centrality of the ego-hic-nunc[6]. Dramatic and epic forms are relatively impersonal and objective.

The idea of 'subjectivity in general' is a snare. Of course I have just made use of it, and use it throughout this essay, but I doubt if much sense can be made of it. Given that subjectivity is an essentially indexical concept, a generalized form of it is problematic in the extreme. Perhaps there is no such idea. Subjectivity is the exclusivity of a truth to a certain self. But subjectivity überhaupt supposes that all such truths, some exclusive to one self, some to another, and mutually contradictory as they are, are capable of being considered together in some way. Nobody bridled at this more resentfully than Shestov. He rejected the use (even by his hero Bergson) of such a pseudo-concept as 'le moi', 'notre moi' to pretend to generalize about subjectivities[7].

Anscombe observed that although Augustine speaks of 'the mind', that phrase as he uses it is a stand-in for 'I', and the sentences in which occurs are essentially in the first person[8].

It is important to realize that when an analytic philosopher speaks of 'the self' or 'the mind' (in a metaphysical sense), or the generic 'man', or 'one', he or

she is often employing the same rhetorical ruse. The usage is catachrestic in a way which Heidegger's bizarre concept of 'Jemeinigkeit' ('in-each-case-mineness')* brings out. The awkwardness of Heidegger's language is a sort of virtue. It is a reminder that none of these questions can be even hinted at without infringing the rules of ordinary speech.

Charitable readers of Hegel may gather a similar point from his discussion of 'I' and 'now' in the early part of the Phenomenology.

When Heidegger writes that 'death is in each case mine'[10], he says something whose expression can't dispense with these irregular uses of the personal pronouns. We may say that it is always an 'I' which dies, or (more cusé) that it is always an individual self which dies – but there is no germane concept of a self which does not depend on the meaning of the word 'I'. It is one place where Heidegger can't be charged with any more obscurantism than the analytic philosophers who write casually of 'selves', or of 'das Subjekt'.

It may seem more risible to say that death is in each case now – how could the fact that I will die be identical with the fact that I have died (even if the present fact that Euan Thomson will die is timelessly identical with the future fact that Euan Thomson has died)? – and contend that this is no darker a saying than that every death occurs at a certain moment of time. But it is open to question whether there is any idea of an instant or moment of time which does not depend on the meaning of the word 'now'; and if there is none, then these remarks do have just the same import, and therefore just the same degree of (in)clarity.

I gather the same point, about the inconceivability of

a single world containing numerous Cartesian selves, from things said by Wittgenstein in the lectures of 1930-1933, as reported by Moore[11]: "he had said that the Solipsist's statement "Only my experience is real" is absurd "as a statement of fact", but that the Solipsist sees that a person who says "No: my experience is real too" has not really refuted him, just as Dr Johnson did not refute Berkeley by kicking a stone. Much later he said that Solipsism is right if it merely says that "I have toothache" and "He has toothache" are "on a quite different level", but that "if the Solipsist says that he has something which another hasn't, he is absurd and is making the very mistake of putting the two statements on the same level". In this connexion he said that he thought that both the Realist and the Idealist were "talking nonsense" in the particular sense in which "nonsense is produced by trying to express by the use of language what ought to be embodied in the grammar"."

The absurdity of putting 'I have toothache' and 'He has toothache' "on the same level" consists in construing the second, objective (behavioral) statement as if it were a subjective (experiential) 'I'-thought like the first. It is senseless either to assert or deny a single world including numerous I's - the other I's and their experiences as it were hidden inside other heads. Although one might speak of '<u>the</u> Cartesian ego', where this is a fantoosh variant of 'I', it is meaningless to suppose more than one 'Cartesian ego' or self; just as one may talk about 'the actual world' by way of decorating one's pronouncements about what is the case, but cannot without absurdity speak of a plurality of such 'worlds'.

Nagel's idea in 'Physicalism'[12] was that the peculiar subjectivity of one's own mental states

(perceptions, feelings) leads one to think that the self is not something in the world (its being in those states is not some substance's having some states). He concluded that the subjectivity should not prevail – the self is a substance in the world, or else it is nothing.

This dilemma is produced automatically by a third-person view of oneself. Compare Richard Avenarius on 'introjection'[13], a theory much in vogue at the turn of the century, and one which has always struck me as fundamentally correct. I think it unfortunate that Ayer has recanted (as 'inconsistent'[14]) the view he expressed in Language, Truth and Logic that one must give a mentalistic theory of oneself, but a behavioristic account of other people. This is the most natural view in the world, and not a symptom of egomania. It is certainly a form of subjectivism, but then one must be a subjectivist if one is to respect all the facts.

With regard to the idea that 'the self' is not real in the sense of being a part of the world – rather, it's a 'limit'[15], or an 'absence'[16] – compare Prior's remarks on the "vacuity" of truth and presentness[17]. Wittgenstein's identification of solipsism and realism[18], like Sartre's doctrine of the self as pure absence which makes the world real[19], suggest, as a logical reflex, a redundancy theory of the self. 'P is true', 'Now P', and 'P is true for me' all reduce to P itself.

Solipsism is Realism because there is nothing in the world which suggests that there are any selves. Solipsism and Realism are the same theory of the world: the self is not part of the world – it either is the world (solipsism) or else does not exist (realism). Either way the internal nature of the world is the same. Or, if you prefer, 'There is no such a thing as the 'side-by-side-ness' of an entity

called 'Dasein' with another entity called 'world'.'[20]

Solipsism is of course one of the things which Wittgenstein characterised as true but ineffable. It is essentially first-person. He rendered it: 'The world is my world'. The sense of Etre-au-monde is what produces it. It is not that there should be a world that is mystical, but that I should be in one. Or rather, this is not so much mysticism as the kind of wonder which, as Plato said, provokes philosophy.

There is an evanescence, a uniquely fugitive quality, which is common to the self (see Hume) and the present moment (see Augustine). They share the property of seeming the most solid of existents until one tries to conceive them as co-existing with other things of the same sort. The opinion that they do not after all exist, as well as the opinon that they alone exist (solipsism of the present), are opposite responses to the same fact - that these things refuse to be considered as mere elements, among other elements, of a single universe. The recalcitrance of 'existence' to 'system' in Kierkegaard, and the uncategorizable 'ego' of Shestov, which is 'the incarnation of revolt'[21], also reflect that fact.

One sees Kierkegaard and Heidegger interpreted as meaning only that one can't understand a philosopher discerpted from his historical setting. On any usual Anglo-American construal of 'history', this is platitudinous. It can stand as an interpretation of Kierkegaard and his spiritual heirs only if one substitutes a suitably peculiar and metaphysical interpretation of the word 'history', meaning something more like Dasein or Etre-au-monde. I am prepared to contend that the hypothesis of essential indexicality can supply such an interpretation - one less vatic, though hardly less

baffling, than the observations on this subject of Kierkegaardians, such as Merleau-Ponty[23]; and more congenial to the analytic ear. It has an obvious kinship with the Idealist conception of history, as Collingwood[24]: "History is nothing but conceiving the object as concrete fact, fact to which its context is not irrelevant but essential."

What Jemeinigkeit means is that I cannot literally generalise about 'selves', though talk of 'le moi' makes it appear that I can. A genuinely subjectivist philosophy must be expressed in the first person, and such a philosophy is not communicable at all, in the ordinary sense. The 'communication' of it is more like discussing myself (my own case) and hoping someone else will overhear and sympathize ('identify') with me. This is how we understand soliloquy, or stream-of-consciousness narrative.

Mill - analytical, yet reflecting upon poetry during the heyday of Romanticism (1833) - wrote[25]: "Poetry and eloquence are both alike the expression or utterance of feeling: but, if we may be excused the antithesis, we should say that eloquence is heard; poetry is overheard. The peculiarity of poetry appears to us to lie in the poet's utter unconsciousness of a listener ... All poetry is of the nature of soliloquy." An objective statement is a piece of eloquence; a subjective statement, in so far as it is considered to be a communicative device of any sort, is a piece of poetry in Mill's terms - not heard but overheard, and of the nature of soliloquy rather than colloquy. It makes a definite statement only to the person who utters it.

The basic tense distinction in English is past v. not-past, and the basic person-distinction is first v.

not-first[28]. I have been arguing that these distinctions are essential, respectively, to time (temporality) and personality, and that they cannot be expressed without using the deictic categories of, respectively, Tense and Person. It is a contradiction to hold that these categories are objective properties of anything: therefore they are subjective properties. Temporality and personality are, however, real features of the world: and so the world has some subjective properties: the question which description of it is correct depends upon which subject is describing it, and when.

Third-person, or rather impersonal, description is not a comprehensive idiom: it is not adequate to express all the facts, and in particular not the facts of human thought and action - facts with a subjective component (in Nagel's sense of 'subjective'). And these are facts, if facts are true propositions, and there are propositions of unstable truth-value.

I try to derive subjectivist metaphysics from a solitary intuition about the logical properties of some statements. This would be hysteron proteron if I meant to support these philosophies by that intuition. The point however is that this logical doctrine expresses or formalizes the nature of things as these philosophies see it.

One concentrates on the logical side of the problem because then it is easier to see the point at issue. As logic incorporates more of traditional grammar, it faces old objections and accusations of deriving a metaphysics from the superficialities of speech. Even with primary logic there's a question whether it represents the world correctly - are there such things as truths? Quantification theory clearly suggests the world is substances with

attributes, which might be false. And with special logics the presuppositions or suggestions become ever more contentious: are there tenses? modalities? duties? objective questions? etc. etc.

What the logical ideas say in this case is that, if there are truths of the essentially indexical sort, then there is no single 'nature of the world': there are numerous incommensurable 'natures of the world'.

I am inclined to think this means there is more than one world, but Feyerabend[26] may be correct to call that an unmotivated leap into idealism. A Rorty-style hermeneutics[27] might seem to be an alternative – informal conversations weave together incommensurable traditions. But the worry about that is that the 'incommensurability' among EI viewpoints is different from and more radical than that between 'incommensurable' traditions, ideologies, etc. I locate EI in the designativity of terms like 'I' – in their reference. In Feyerabend or Rorty, incommensurability arises rather from the meanings of theoretical terms. Those meanings in turn are abstractions from a holistic edifice. The incommensurability belongs not to the metaphysical location of the theorist, but to the internal logical structure of the theory itself.

EI designativity does not seem to come from any sort of holistic network.

One may say that the concept of an electron depends on its relations to other concepts, and even that the way the world is cut up into entities depends on such a Structuralist whole. But one can easily conceive two Selves to share such a theory, and hence to describe the world exactly alike, in the complete manner envisaged by Nagel (i.e. without indexicals). Like Lewis's two gods[28], they would understand each other perfectly and agree about

everything. Yet because they are two selves, each would have some truths which it could not convey to the other.

Are we then to say that this fact defeats the original hypothesis of perfect agreement, and to conclude that, once the subjective component is added in, the two selves do not after all share a single theory? That each has his own; that moreover the subjective component is in each case holistically solidary with the objective part; and that this explains their diversity? No; because the subjective concepts like 'I' would be related to other concepts in the same way in each case. There is nothing about the concept 'I', or any system of concepts involving it, that forewarns which object 'I' will apply to. The extra knowledge needed is not the conceptual sort to which ideas like holism, structuralism, incommensurability and so on apply. In Lewis's terms it is de se and not de dicto. It belongs to existence and not to essence, as one might also say.

Not being in a position to understand a certain sentence meaning is a trifling limitation: there is no reason to think that one could not in those circumstances still grasp the true, universal metaphysics. But to be denied access to certain truths, certain facts, makes sure that one's metaphysics can never be both true and universal (valid for all intellects). And that is not a trifling limitation. It rules out that whose possibility has been a presupposition of most philosophical speculation since the activity was first begun: a complete, universal and true description of the world. Henceforth there can only be (to echo Dummett[29]) a partial description of the world, whose perfection is that it is maximal from one's own point of view - i.e. it contains all the truths which are conceivable from that viewpoint. But those are not all the truths which there are: nobody can have an exhaustive

account of the world. And in order to make even that claim, I have to quantify over truths some of which I could not possibly, not even in theory, conceive or express. This itself may well be incoherent, and a spurious re-integration of many worlds into one[30]. The relativizing locutions 'is true for', 'exists for', and so forth, are vain attempts to counterfeit an absolute or universal world-picture.

It is true that even if there are truths exclusive to selves, there can still be a single, complete and correct description of the world - but that is only on condition that Solipsism is true (or solipsism of the moment, if time also is EI). The prejudice in favour of a single description is what makes subjectivity imply solipsism.

A monadological (Leibnitian) solution is invalid given radical EI, since such a solution would reinstate the Universe by changing EI facts into objective relations. Only Solipsism will do; and if Solipsism is false, then the truth is not single. And if there is no single truth, there is no single canon of proof: EI destroys rationalism. Subjectivity is a prism which refracts truth.

One would say, in ordine ad universum, that there are incompatible truths; but since there is no Universe - no unified totality of truths - this can't be said.

No self or standpoint has 'access' to a pair of incompatible truths; but that is because they are incomparable, or not parts of the same world.

One has to keep in mind that statements like 'There can be no complete description of the world' do mean what they say. Sartre is most explicit about this. As he puts it, being-for-itself and being-in-itself can't be reunited in a common genus[31]. So also Nagel: no unification is possible between the subjective and the objective[32]. One

cannot recreate a complete and objective description by replacing subjective facts with objective relations to objective indices. Neither can one reintegrate the Universe by simply superadding the subjective facts, since many of those contradict one another. The war is over. The war is not yet over. I am Euan Thomson. I am not Euan Thomson.

If I had access to another's viewpoint, and if I were in effect then operating with (located at) two viewpoints of equal status, I would find that contradictions were true. There is almost an argument here against the perception of one self by another. If God were omnipresent in the sense of being located at all metaphysical viewpoints, then the world he would see would be wholly self-contradictory. I might add that because there is no repugnancy between possessing all objective truth and being located - hence possessing some subjective truths too (those which belong to one's location); and since omniscience is knowing as much as it's logically possible to know; God must be located, if he exists at all.

The world's conceivability may be held to be subject to various kinds of incompleteness or limitation. What sort of inadequacy is being alleged here?

1. A complete inventory of the world's facts is impossible, or

2. There are some facts which can't be stated (hence also 1.), or

3. The world's facts don't form a rational system.

I suppose (1) would be generally conceded, for any number of rather uninteresting reasons, e.g. that such an inventory couldn't include all of itself (at least not if it were a simple list, without any sort of recursive structure). I would not wish, either, to guarantee the

partial subjectivity of everything merely by saying (a) nothing can be completely described unless everything is, and (b) some things can't be completely described without indexical concepts.

What we actually have is a form of (2), i.e. not merely 'It is not possible to express all facts' but also 'There are some facts which it is not possible to express'. However, note that the second of these will be true for each person (time) in virtue of different inaccessible facts. Although it's true from every point of view that some things can only be indicated, these will not be the same things from every point of view.
(Pseudo-quantification again - some of the things I have just generalized about could not even be indicated by me.)

This form of (2) naturally yields (3) also. Where one lacks even a single universe of discourse, no rational system could ever be introduced - at least, not on the model of a simple deductive system. It is conceivable that some mathematical formalism might be capable of reflecting this disintegrated situation. After all, there is some mathematics currently in use in quantum mechanics which has not been given a physical interpretation. We assume it reflects the facts, because it is predictive; but we are unable to say what facts it represents[245]. It is therefore logically possible that the disintegrated metaphysics which I have been discussing might be rationalised in some equally exotic way; but there is no reason to expect it.

Notes to Chapter 14

1. Feigl (1958), p. 155 (the 1967 Postscript).
2. Rawls (1972), p. 136.
3. Nagel (1979), p. 213; Williams (1951), p. 100.
4. Dummett (1981), p. 397.
5. Croce (1909), p. 394.
6. Zumthor (1972).
7. Shestov (1929), pp. 115, 265.
8. Anscombe (1974), p. 21.
9. Heidegger (1927), 69.
10. Heidegger (1927), §81.
11. Moore (1954), section D.
12. Nagel (1965).
13. Adopted in Ward (1898).
14. The recantation is in Ayer (1977), p. 155.
15. Wittgenstein (1921), 5.641.
16. Sartre (1943), pp. 61-62.
17. Prior (1967b).
18. Wittgenstein (1921), 5.64.
19. Sartre (1943), p. 302, pp. 617ff.
20. Heidegger (1927), §12.
21. Shestov (1929), pp. 301-302.
22. Cf. Merleau-Ponty (1960), pp. 74ff.
23. Collingwood (1924), p. 224.
24. Mill (1833).
25. Lyons (1968), pp. 278, 306.
26. Feyerabend (1975).
27. As propounded in Rorty (1980).

28. Lewis (1979), p. 520.

29. Dummett (1960), p. 503.

30. Cf. Nagel (1979), p. 213; Sartre (1943), pp. 617–625.

31. Sartre (1943), p. 623. He calls it a 'detotalised' or 'disintegrated' totality.

32. Nagel (1979), p. 213.

33. Some candidate interpretations, as is well known, postulate a plurality of 'universes'. See also Zahar (1983).

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