REALISM AND ANTI-REALISM

by

P. PEARSON

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

1986

To Susan

REALISM AND ANTI-REALISM

By P. Pearson

ABSTRACT

Michael Dummett has proposed a means of characterising a range of traditional philosophical disputes. This method is intended to highlight the similarities which exist between these disputes and by this means to facilitate their solution. Within the characterisation each dispute is regarded as a conflict between proponents of different theories of meaning. This proposed characterisation, its validity and usefulness, form the main topic of consideration within this thesis.

An exposition of the realist/anti-realist characterisation is presented which attempts to summarise the important features of Dummett's writings on this topic. Subsequently attention is given over to a critical appraisal of this approach. The appraisal falls into two phases. The first of these is parochial in the sense that the topics discussed are internal to the framework of the characterisation. In the second phase the characterisation is viewed from further back and the relationship between it and its Wittgensteinian origins are examined.

The first phase of the appraisal initially centres around issues which have arisen within the literature. One feature which emerges at this stage is that certain concepts which are central to the characterisation are in need of more precise specification. Further concerns regarding the specification are uncovered as the assessment extends beyond the published literature.

In the second phase Wittgenstein's work on privacy is reviewed in some detail. It is concluded from this phase that some of the main disputes intended to be covered by the characterisation are in fact forestalled by Wittgenstein's work. Also it is suggested that the intended adoption of Wittgenstein's approach to meaning, within the characterisation, runs counter to Wittgenstein's intent. Overall it is concluded that the proposed characterisation is in need of better specification but that even if this is achieved, the approach to meaning which is being advocated is one which may not be sustainable.

Acknowledgement

My work on this thesis has been supervised by Dr. N.D.N. Measor. I am indebted to Dr. Measor for his comments and suggestions concerning the thesis but most of all for the thought-provoking tutorial sessions he has given me during the course of the work.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER 2 : DUMMETT ON REALISM AND ANTI-REALISM 7

(i) The aims of the characterisation. 8

(ii) Wittgenstein's idea of meaning as use applied to mathematical statements. 12

(iii) Platonism - the position under attack. 21

(iv) The ontological route to intuitionism. 28

(v) Character traits and the distinction between anti-realism and reductionism. 33

(vi) The idea of an auxiliary class and some of the problems associated with this concept. 42

(vii) Anti-realism and the past - the possibility of global anti-realism. 49

(viii) The anti-realist's case with respect to the past - his response to the realist's claim that he neglects the truth-value link. 58

(ix) Review of the main points emerging in Chapter 2. 65

CHAPTER 3 : AN APPRAISAL OF DUMMETT'S CHARACTERISATION 69

(i) McGinn's counter example to anti-realist positions generally. 70

(ii) McDowell on the expansion of the idea of a truth-value link. 86

(iii) The possible accessibility of past events. 89

(iv) Two anti-realist responses to the claim of an accessible past and some of the problems which accompany these responses. 99

(v) Wright's objections to the link McDowell forges with the past. Problems arising in the debate concerning central anti-realist's conceptions. 106

(vi) Strawson's request for a better definition of the anti-realist's position. Wright's response and problems associated with effective decidability. 122

CHAPTER 4 : FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS ON THE VIABILITY OF DUMMETT'S CHARACTERISATION 136

(i) Character traits. Realist and anti-realist reductions and whether there is really a distinction. 137

(ii) The possibility of a general anti-realist argument. 147

(iii) The positive side of anti-realism - a replacement theory of meaning. 154

(iv) Problems concerning the selection of dispute areas and their extent. 170

(v) The potential for compound statements which span different dispute areas. 178

(vi) The possibility of a more ontologically based characterisation of these disputes. - The basis of meaning and ontological domains. 182

(vii) The benefits and disadvantages which the new characterisation seems to confer. 190

CHAPTER 5 : PRIVACY 196

(i) The relevance of the privacy issue to the realist/anti-realist debate. Wittgenstein's pre-occupation with the case of pain. 197

(ii) Traditional views regarding privacy. 204

(iii) Privacy - approached from an assessment of size by visual means. 208

(iv) The concept of privacy seen in a wider context. 223

(v) After-images considered as a means of giving content to the idea of a 'phenomenal' quality of experience. 226

(vi) The philosophical myth which depends upon the notion of the phenomenal object. An example of a modern exposition of the myth. 235

(vii) Wittgenstein on privacy. The relation between pain and other modalities. Is 'pain' the name of a sensation? 243

(viii) The importance of recognising the full implications of Wittgenstein's work on privacy. Questions concerning the attribution of 'consciousness' etc. 250

CHAPTER 6 : ANTI-REALISM, PRIVACY AND MEANING 261

(i) Relations between the phenomenal object myth and scepticism. 261

(ii) Wittgenstein's attack on scepticism and the implications which this has for phenomenalist and behaviourist forms of anti-realism. 264

(iii) Wittgenstein, other minds and anti-realism. 277

(iv) The implications of Wittgenstein's attack on scepticism for the anti-realist's programme. 281

(v) Consideration of the appropriateness of Dummett's use of Wittgenstein's approach to meaning. 288

CHAPTER 7 : THE CONCLUSIONS OF OUR REVIEW 301

(i) The objectives of the proposed characterisation. 301

(ii) The first part of our assessment of the characterisation - the findings of Chapters 3 and 4. 304

(iii) The characterisation considered in the context of Wittgenstein's work on privacy. 312

APPENDIX 1 : PRIVACY, LOCKE AND KRETZMANN 324

APPENDIX 2 : KRIPKE ON PRIVACY 338

BIBLIOGRAPHY 353

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

Michael Dummett has over a period of years produced a number of papers which have been concerned with a generic approach to a series of philosophical disputes. (See for example Dummett 1, 2, 3 and 4.) The intention has been one of highlighting links and similarities which are alleged to exist between these various disputes. (See Dummett 5.) These can best be seen, in Dummett's view, by showing that the different disputes can be characterised in ways that are similar. (See Dummett 2 pp 145-6.) Basically the approach is to characterise these disputes as being about meaning. On the one side of each dispute there is the realist position which, it is proposed, can be expressed as a view about the meaning of a particular class of statements. On the other there is an opposing position which both denies the validity of this proposed theory of meaning for these statements, and which advocates an alternative theory.

This proposed characterisation will form the main topic of concern within the present work. One of the reasons for interest in this topic arises from the fact that it is being suggested that a range of traditionally very significant disputes - including such controversies as those about phenomenalism, solipsism, behaviourism, constructivism/ intuitionism within philosophy of mathematics and the philosophy of time should be viewed in a new light, and that this revised approach will be of benefit in trying to resolve these disputes.

Something which seems to lend support to the characterisation is the fact that very little dispute has arisen over its validity. Several papers have been produced which have successively criticised and defended various anti-realist or realist positions but by and large these have worked from within the characterisation rather than being directed for or against it. In the present work I shall be concerned not only about internal questions, which arise in connection with realist and anti-realist positions, but also with more general matters which relate to the value and suitability of the proposed characterisation itself.

One other reason for interest, which is worthy of note, is that a central feature of the characterisation derives from Wittgenstein's approach to meaning. This is interesting because Wittgenstein was greatly concerned about meaning, but little has been done to comment on or develop his suggestion that meaning be equated with use. Here at least it appears that his doctrine is being put to good use - namely as a basis for a clearer grasp, if not the solution, of a number of traditionally significant philosophical disputes.

Some of the present work will therefore be exegetical. Before we can make any sort of assessment of the reasonableness or worth of Dummett's proposal it will be necessary to examine in some detail what is being offered. Chapter 2 presents an outline of the proposed characterisation

drawing mainly from Dummett's papers on this subject. No real attempt is made at this stage to criticise or assess the proposal. In the two subsequent chapters I consider various problems - some real, some unreal - which surround this issue. Initially the problems considered are those that have arisen in the literature. So again some exposition is necessary, although following the identification of the problems, each is examined on its merits. Later on the problems which are raised tend to be less directly related to the existing literature.

In his recent paper, 'Dummett's Anti-Realism', (Devitt 1, p74) Michael Devitt commented concerning the exposition of this topic that, '- any attempt to be comprehensive in such references is rapidly becoming hopeless.' Rhetorically he asked, 'Is there any chance of a time out?' The same comments could be applied to the present work which can at best provide only a snapshot of what seems to be evolving into a major philosophical issue of the present time. This is not to concede however that no worthwhile assessment or review can take place even at this evolutionary stage.

By the time we come to the end of these chapters the groundwork for a major part of the assessment is complete. In the next phase of the assessment (contained in chapters 5 and 6), I attempt to pick up on the Wittgensteinian origins of the proposed characterisation. I remarked above that the approach to meaning which is described by the phrase 'meaning as use' plays a fundamental role in the setting

up of the characterisation we are considering. (See particularly Dummett 3.) It also bears, in my view, a fundamental relationship to Wittgenstein's work on privacy. More specifically I see the latter as being an example of how the method epitomised by 'meaning as use' is to be used in practice. This is not to say that this work on privacy is merely illustrative, but it does provide us with an idea of what sorts of things can be achieved using this 'method'.

There is then a link between the privacy issue and the realist/anti-realist characterisation if only in that at the origins of both lies the idea of meaning as use. There is also a further link. The realist/anti-realist characterisation is presented as a new way of looking at some old disputes. On the anti-realist side these traditional disputes have led to the development of largely idealist or sceptical positions. The privacy issue is also related to certain sceptical positions in that it can be seen as a rejection of the very ground from which certain sceptical positions have been launched. For these reasons it is worth examining further the connections which exist between realism and anti-realism and the privacy issue. To this end, chapter 5 offers an interpretation of Wittgenstein's work on privacy, along the lines suggested above. Part of this interpretation alleges that what Wittgenstein has said regarding privacy can be seen as an attack on certain traditional epistemological positions epitomised by such philosophers as Locke and Russell - though it is not suggested that it was specifically aimed at these individuals. This allegation

is one which has however been rejected in the case of Locke. (See Kretzmann 1.) The point is not crucial but the aim of Kretzmann's paper is opposed to the interpretation I offer. As a consequence I have included in appendix 1 an examination of this dispute.

Having outlined the interpretation of Wittgenstein's treatment of privacy, it is necessary to consider what implications this work has for the characterisation with which we are concerned. This is dealt with in chapter 6, where two main conclusions are drawn. One is that the value of the characterisation which Dummett offers must be seriously impaired if we accept the implications of Wittgenstein's work on privacy as I interpret this. It is suggested that these implications remove the very possibility of certain forms of scepticism and hence render defunct what would be the associated realist/anti-realist disputes. The second point concerns the application by Dummett of Wittgenstein's advocacy that we look to use in language rather than asking for the meaning. Dummett regards Wittgenstein's approach to meaning as one which restricts what can be considered as a suitable theory of meaning. He does not therefore take seriously the view that Wittgenstein is rejecting the utility of theories of meaning <u>per se</u> and suggesting instead an alternative role for philosophy. At the very least this suggests a misguided interpretation lying at the roots of Dummett's characterisation. But more importantly than this, if we do take seriously Wittgenstein's disapproval of the search within philosophy for theories of meaning, and we

regard this as a justifiable and sensible conclusion, then Dummett's enterprise is one that cannot succeed and need never have been undertaken.

This chapter concludes the second phase of the assessment of Dummett's characterisation. In the final chapter the issues raised in the preceding chapters are drawn together and summarised. The main conclusions of both phases of the review are recapped.

CHAPTER 2 : DUMMETT ON REALISM AND ANTI-REALISM

CHAPTER ABSTRACT

In this chapter we are going to examine what is being offered in the proposed characterisation concerning realism and anti-realism. One of the most developed accounts of an anti-realist's position is presented in Dummett's paper, 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic', (Dummett 3) and for this reason we will look carefully at the case being made in this paper. The anti-realist's case with respect to mathematics appears as a reaction to a platonistic view of the meaning of mathematical statements. This latter adopts truth as its central concept. The anti-realist attacks this view by showing that truth cannot take on such a role for all statements within the class. The Wittgensteinian concern that meaning be exhibited in our linguistic practices is used in undermining the realist position.

Two other significant examples of this sort of dispute concern character traits and the past. The example of character traits is used by Dummett mainly to indicate a distinction between anti-realism and reductionism. The past is thought to provide a particularly testing case for the anti-realist. Consideration of the past introduces two important concepts: that of 'global anti-realism', the adoption of anti-realism with respect to all statements; and that of a 'truth-value link'. This latter is a mechanism which the realist uses to defend his position with respect to the past but which can also be applied in other areas.

(i)

'Realism' is not a new term in philosophy. It has a long history and has been used to label a variety of different beliefs. Having said this it might be expected that one could characterise these different positions as having ontological links - in the sense that each form of realism constitutes an assertion of the ontological status of some set of entities.

In a number of recent papers (e.g. Dummett 1, 2, 3 and 4), Michael Dummett has attempted to demonstrate that these different philosophical positions, which are labelled realism, do indeed share a common characteristic and that in each case the traditional opposition to these different positions also share a common character. What is at first perhaps surprising is that Dummett chooses to characterise these different types of realism, and what he calls anti-realism, not in ontological terms but as disputes essentially about the meaning of classes of statements.

First of all it is important to try to get a clear idea about the purpose which lies behind Dummett's characterisation. He makes the point that he is not attempting to collapse a number of traditional philosophical disputes into a single dispute type in such a way that this generic dispute type can be solved and a solution be provided for each of the specific disputes. It is not intended to be so simple as this. However it must be said that the aim,

in pointing out the similarities of form which exist amongst these different disputes, is that there will be some useful carry over from one dispute to the next. If there were not some benefit of this sort it would hardly be worthwhile pointing out the similarity and the alleged characterisation would be of little philosophical significance.

To recap this point, Dummett is attempting to highlight what he regards as a sort of link or common form which exists in a range of traditional disputes. He does this in a way which for the moment can be regarded as neutral - at least in so far as the recognition of a common form does not of itself prejudice the issue one way or the other - and he does it with the intention that this will reveal perhaps novel approaches in the area of one dispute resulting from developments in another.

I should make it clear at this stage that it is this general point with which I shall be mainly concerned rather than any more parochial issues which Dummett may or may not be making with regard to the advancement of anti-realism or realism within any particular area. Dummett states this underlying intention in the preface to Truth and Other Enigmas:

> 'A belief expressed in "Realism" that I still maintain is that there is a range of traditional metaphysical disputes relating to very different subject-matters but sharing a common form, the form, namely, of a

> conflict between a realist and an anti-realist view of some class of statements. When we prescind from the ...subject-matter, we see a striking analogy between the arguments and counter-arguments used in such disputes; indeed I think it possible to construct a uniform framework by means of which what may be called the abstract structure of each particular such dispute can be characterised.' (Dummett 5, p.xxx.)

No assertion is being made to the effect that the original disputes were ill-conceived or misdirected - at least I do not believe that it is Dummett's intention to make such an assertion. ('The problems were not supposed to be new ones; on the contrary, the whole point was that the problems were old. What was supposed to be new was the approach.' Dummett 5, p xxxi.) It is rather that these traditional disputes are being regarded as genuine problems and a new approach to them is being proposed. But if this is the case, it is important to preserve the essential features of these disputes and not, aided by the new realist/anti-realist conception, to restyle these in a way which produces essentially different disputes. Viewed in this light, the importance of Dummett's contribution in this area of philosophy depends on the advancement which can be made in these traditional disputes when armed with this new conception. It should not be dependent on the construction of a range of completely new philosophical problems.

I mentioned earlier that one of the features of Dummett's proposed characterisation is that it is meaning based rather than ontologically based. Traditionally realisms have appeared, at least, to share one common feature: that they are in each case philosophical beliefs about a particular class of 'things'. What is novel about Dummett's approach is that he does not select this feature as a general characteristic of realism or anti-realism. Instead he characterises these disputes in terms of particular statements. For any given realist/anti-realist debate there will be a class of statements termed the disputed class for which the realist adopts one view of what it is for such statements to be true and the anti-realist adopts a different antithetical view.

For the realist, statements of this class may be true independently of our means of being able to detect the conditions which make them true. This idea is captured in the catch phrase, that the realist believes in 'verification-transcendent truth-conditions'. It is the truth-conditions which determine the truth-values of a statement and, for the realist, statements of the disputed class possess truth-conditions even in cases where these are outside our possible range of experiences. Hence they are truth-conditions which are verification-transcendent. The anti-realist opposes this view. He believes that we come to understand statements, what they mean, by becoming familiar with those conditions which justify our assertion of these statements. For statements of the disputed class if there are no detectable

conditions which would justify our assertion of these statements then it may not be possible to assign a truth-value to such statements. The anti-realist is not prepared to accept the positing of transcendental truth-conditions simply in order to maintain the law of bivalence.

Dummett's own interest in this area stems from his involvement in the philosophy of mathematics and it is a paper of his on this topic which I am going to consider first. The paper in question is titled 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic' (Dummett 3). It deals with the development and possible justification of an anti-realist position within the philosophy of mathematics.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that in most of these realist/anti-realist disputes it is the realist's which is the received position. Consequently an examination of the dispute often centres around a consideration of the anti-realist's reaction to that position. This should not be taken to imply however that the anti-realist's position is necessarily a development or refinement of the realist's views. Such an approach would clearly prejudice the issues at stake.

(ii)

In Dummett 3, two alternative routes to intuitionistic logic are examined. The first one is meaning based and it develops from considerations of the meaning of mathematical

statements - the class of statements which are in this case the disputed class. Essentially this route amounts to a rejection of the inherited realist position in this area which is taken to be platonism. This rejection is based upon an alleged incompatibility between platonism and the Wittgensteinian doctrine of meaning as use, given that mathematical statements are not in general effectively decidable.

It will be necessary to digress briefly in order to review the basic idea which Wittgenstein was concerned with in his advocacy of meaning as use. One of the things which Wittgenstein tried to bring out in the Investigations (Wittgenstein 1) was that a certain, rather prevalent, view of language was in fact untenable in many of the areas in which it was applied. The view which he was attacking holds that there are words and meanings and that the meanings are in some sense things to be associated with those words.

> '.....You say: the point isn't the word, but its meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word, though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow that you can buy with it. (But contrast: money, and its use.)' (Wittgenstein 1, 120) (The '120' is used to denote the remark identified by that number in Philosophical Investigations. This system is used throughout.)

Money acts as a token and so in a sense do words. But in order to understand what money is and what words mean you have to look at the use in each case, not at the object for which these tokens go proxy - even if this can be found.

> '....We are talking about the spatial and temporal phenomenon of language, not about some non-spatial, non-temporal phantasm. But we talk about it as we do about the pieces in chess when we are stating the rules of the game, not describing their physical properties.
>
> The question "What is a word really?" is analogous to "What is a piece in chess?"' (Wittgenstein 1, 108)

We understand what a particular piece is in chess when we have seen how it is used - when we know how to use it. Similarly, we know the meaning of a word when we know how to use it.

Within mathematics, if we are to apply this conception of meaning, to understand the meaning of a statement will be to understand the use to which that statement is put. To learn the meaning of a statement will be to learn how it is used and a demonstration of our knowledge of a statement's meaning will consist in our actual use of that statement in ways judged to be appropriate by the linguistic community.

Dummett develops this part of the argument in Dummett

3, pp216-8. (See also pp445-8 of Dummett 6.) Wittgenstein's remarks could almost be interpreted as suggesting that use is the key to meaning: that the use to which we put a particular statement will provide us with the clues to its meaning. It goes further than this however, as we shall see when we come to look more closely at Wittgenstein's private language argument (chapter 5). Use does not merely point us in the right direction of meaning, it serves, in its entirety, as the sole determinant of meaning. A linguistic statement is a tool which is used by members of the appropriate linguistic community in order to communicate with each other. This is the sole function of such statements and it is the reason for their existence. Hence it is only here, in the use to which such statements are put, that we will discover an understanding of their meaning.

In considering mathematics Dummett stresses this role of use as the sole determinant of meaning.

> 'The meaning of a mathematical statement determines and is exhaustively determined by its use. The meaning of such a statement cannot be, or contain as an ingredient, anything which is not manifest in the use made of it, lying solely in the mind of the individual who apprehends that meaning: if two individuals agree completely about the use to be made of the statement, then they agree about its meaning. The reason is that the meaning of a statement consists solely in its role as an instrument of communication between individuals,

just as the powers of a chess-piece consist solely in its role in the game according to the rules.' (Dummett 3, p216)

Two consequences of this belief about the primacy of use are distinguished by Dummett. One concerns the acquisition of an understanding of the meaning of a statement and the other, a manifestation of that understanding. If the meaning of a statement is determined solely by the use to which that statement is put by the appropriate linguistic community, then it is to this use that a would-be user of the statement should turn if he is to acquire any understanding of what it is that the statement means. If we consider the parallel with chess, it might be suggested that novices seldom acquire an ability to play chess by merely observing games in which the pieces are made use of. Rather it would be more usual for their introduction to commence with an explanation of the rules of the game. What the rules provide however is an explanation of the objective of the game and a formal statement of the ways in which the different pieces can be used. It remains the case that in order to acquire an understanding of the game - in the sense of being able to play it - the novice must, in some way, acquire a knowledge of how the pieces are used.

In human languages, acquisition is much more frequently associated with the observation of practised exponents. A young child, in assimilating a new word into his vocabulary, does this often without the need of explanation, by merely

observing how the word is used - in what contexts and to what effect. Clearly it is true that the child can short-circuit such procedures by requesting an explanation of the new word, or later, by consulting a dictionary. These alternative means will amount to an explanation in terms of synonyms or an explanation of the use to which the word or statement is put. By one means or another, in coming to understand what is meant by a statement, we must acquire an understanding of how it is appropriately used by exponents of the language.

The acquisition issue concerns what the individual must do if he is to extract from his community an understanding of a particular statement. In the course of this acquisition it is possible that the learner may erroneously believe that he has acquired a correct understanding of the statement in question. How, it may be asked, would such a mistake be revealed? It would be revealed only by inappropriate use which the learner made of the statement or by inappropriate responses which he made to the use of the statement by others. Such inappropriate use may however reflect an incomplete understanding of the statement or a lapse or aberration on the part of the learner as well as a more straightforward lack of understanding. In any event an assessment of the learner's appreciation of the meaning of a statement must depend upon his ability to use the statement consistently in situations and contexts that are judged appropriate by fellow speakers. A person will only be said to have acquired a correct understanding

of a statement if he is able to manifest that understanding by use of the statement in appropriate contexts or by his appropriate response to the use of the statement by others.

The acquisition aspect of the meaning as use doctrine tells us how an understanding of meaning can be acquired but in doing so it delimits the ways in which such an understanding can be acquired. If meaning is solely determined by use then it is to use that we must turn in order to acquire an understanding of what a statement means, but further than this, it is only to use that we can turn. There can be no additional mentalistic or other component which plays a part in the acquisition of this understanding. Similarly it is only by means of a speaker's linguistic transactions that his understanding of meaning can be manifested and demonstrated.

> 'To suppose that there is an ingredient of meaning which transcends the use that is made of that which carries the meaning is to suppose that someone might have learned all that is directly taught when the language of a mathematical theory is taught to him, and might then behave in every way like someone who understood that language, and yet not actually understand it, or understand it only incorrectly. But to suppose this is to make meaning ineffable, that is, in principle incommunicable. If this is possible, then no one individual ever has a guarantee that he is understood by any other individual; for all he knows, or can ever

know, everyone else may attach to his words or to the symbols which he employs a meaning quite different from that which he attaches to them.' (Dummett 3, pp217-8.)

The next element in the argument which is intended to overthrow platonism is simply to recognise that not all mathematical statements have effectively decidable truth-values. In describing a statement as one whose truth-values are effectively decidable we are supposing that in such a case it is possible for one who uses the statement to come to a position where he can recognise that the condition which makes the statement either true or false does in fact obtain. In a case where the truth-value of a statement is non-effectively decidable it is not possible to come to such a position. Such statements are sometimes described as having verification transcendent truth-conditions. Given that there are a range of mathematical statements for which the truth-values are non-effectively decidable, mathematical statements cannot in general be regarded as having effectively decidable truth-values.

Meaning, as we have seen, is to be determined solely by use. Hence if we are to formulate a theory of meaning, this must be based on some feature of our linguistic practice - its central concept must be accessible in our linguistic transactions. However the truth-conditions of mathematical statements cannot qualify as such a central concept since, as we have noted, these are not in general available to

us. Consequently truth-conditions cannot assume a central role in the theory of meaning which we adopt for mathematical statements in general. It might be remarked that this rejection of truth-conditions as central to a theory of meaning appropriate to mathematics should come as no surprise since in adopting Wittgenstein's doctrine we have effectively reserved that central position for use. Dummett claims that this is not the case however. He maintains that an acceptance of the idea that meaning is exhibited in use merely restricts the sort of thing that can be taken as central to a theory of meaning. It excludes the possibility of some feature being taken as central which cannot be exhibited in use. And since it appears that truth-conditions for mathematical statements cannot be exhibited in this way in general - because they are not capable of being recognised as obtaining in all cases - then <u>truth</u> cannot be a central notion in a theory of meaning which is taken to apply to such statements in general. Platonism however is taken to be a theory of meaning for mathematical statements which gives this very feature, i.e. truth, just such a central role.

Hence it is shown that platonism, as a theory of meaning applying to mathematical statements in general, is in conflict with the thesis that meaning is determined by use. Dummett summarises this conclusion as follows:

> 'On a platonistic interpretation of a mathematical theory, the central notion is that of truth: a grasp of the meaning of a sentence belonging to the language

of the theory consists in a knowledge of what it is for that sentence to be true. Since, in general, the sentences of the language will not be ones whose truth-value we are capable of effectively deciding, the condition for the truth of such a sentence will be one which we are not, in general, capable of recognising as obtaining whenever it obtains, or of getting ourselves into a position in which we can so recognise it. Nevertheless, on the theory of meaning which underlies platonism, an individual's grasp of the meaning of such a sentence consists in his knowledge of what the condition is which has to obtain for the sentence to be true, even though the condition is one which he cannot, in general, recognise as obtaining when it does obtain.' (Dummett 3, pp223-4.)

Consequently the account of meaning which the platonistic theory offers cannot be one in which - as is required - meaning is fully determined by use. (See Dummett 3, p225.)

(iii)

At this stage Dummett, I think, regards himself as having forged a route to the overthrow of what he takes to be the classical theory of meaning for mathematical statements. And this effectively leaves the way clear for an intuitionist theory to be established. He does this however without saying very much about the theory he is rejecting - except that it is a theory of meaning in which truth plays

a central role.

Later in the paper Dummett considers an alternative possible approach to intuitionism via ontology. In this case the incentive for an attack on platonism, not surprisingly, stems from a rejection of the ontological implications of that theory. During the consideration of this approach, platonism seems to be regarded as a theory which carries with it an implicit belief in a realm of mathematical entities. The platonist is seen as one who takes there to be an analogy between, on the one hand, physical reality and the way in which truth-conditions within this reality determine the truth-value of statements about the physical world and, on the other, a realm of mathematical reality in virtue of which mathematical statements are either true or false.

Certainly this view of the platonist corresponds to the more general remarks which Dummett makes elsewhere;

> 'The very minimum that realism can be held to involve is that statements in the given class relate to some reality that exists independently of our knowledge of it, in such a way that reality renders each statement in the class determinately true or false, again independently of whether we know, or are even able to discover, its truth value.' (Dummett 7, p55.)

We have the notion of a platonist who believes in the

existence of mathematical objects corresponding to natural numbers, real numbers, etc. Dummett describes this form of platonism as offering a metaphor:

> 'The platonist metaphor assimilates mathematical enquiry to the investigations of the astronomer: mathematical structures, like galaxies, exist, independently of us, in a realm of reality which we do not inhabit but which those of us who have the skill are capable of observing and reporting on.' (Dummett 3, p229.)

What is not completely clear is to what extent this ontological commitment, i.e. to a belief in a realm of mathematical reality in which mathematical facts provide truth-conditions for mathematical statements and thereby determine their truth-value, is associated with the platonist who comes under attack from the meaning based intuitionist. Certainly the remarks quoted above concerning the minimum requirements of realism, would seem to leave the platonist little room to manoeuvre away from this ontological commitment.

In Dummett 3, the platonist who comes under attack from intuitionism, is characterised merely as a mathematical meaning theorist who takes truth as the central notion in his theory. Certainly it is only this aspect of his belief which is used to mark him out as being at odds with the meaning as use doctrine. Dummett makes this point explicitly when he says:

'The first type of justification of intuitionistic logic which we considered* conformed to Kreisel's dictum, "The point is not the existence of mathematical objects, but the objectivity of mathematical truth": it bore directly upon the claim that mathematical statements possess objective truth values, without raising the question of the ontological status of mathematical objects or the metaphysical character of mathematical reality.' (Dummett 3, p228.)

Apparently then the dispute between platonist and anti-realist can be presented purely in non-ontological terms and this suggests the possibility at least of a platonism that is not committed to the more extreme ontological implications. If a dispute can exist between the platonist and his opponent which does not relate to any ontological commitment on the platonist's part - and surely this is the point of Kreisel's dictum - then it may be that any ontological features which the platonist's position involves, can be jettisoned. The situation is confused however in that Dummett's most recent paper entitled 'Realism' (Dummett 7) requires, as has been noted above, that realism involves a commitment to some stretch of reality corresponding to the class of statements under consideration and possibly including verification transcendent truth-conditions.

---

* i.e. a meaning-based or anti-realist justification of intuitionism. [P.P.]

With this sort of view in mind it would be difficult to see how a species of platonism could exist in which the ontological implications of that doctrine were neglected.

I would suggest tentatively that Dummett's writings indicate the possibility of two distinct forms of platonism (a similar distinction between extreme platonism and moderate realism is made by Putnam in his paper, 'Models and Reality', Putnam 1, p1), and that these are perhaps the versions he has in mind when in Dummett 3 he outlines first a meaning-based attack and then an ontologically-based attack on mathematical realism. On the one hand there appears to be a strong form of platonism which involves an ontological commitment to a mathematical reality in which mathematical objects exist. It is this strong version of the doctrine which carries with it the astronomical metaphor which Dummett refers to and against which his ontological attack is launched.

A passage in Dummett 7 suggests the possibility of what might be regarded as a weaker version of the doctrine.

> 'A platonist will admit that, for a given statement, there may be neither a proof nor a disproof of it to be found; but there is no intelligible anti-realist notion of truth for mathematical statements under which a statement is true only if there is a proof of it, but may be true because such a proof exists, even though

we do not know it, shall never know it, and have no effective means of discovering it. The reason is evident: we can introduce such a notion only by appeal to some platonistic conception of proofs as existing independently of our knowledge, that is, as abstract objects not brought into being by our thought. But, if we admit such a conception of proofs, we can have no objection to a parallel conception of mathematical objects such as natural numbers, real numbers, metric spaces, etc; and then we shall have no motivation for abandoning a realistic, that is, platonist, interpretation of mathematical statements in the first place.' (Dummett 7, pp90-1.)

There can be no sensible form of anti-realism which adopts a belief in verification transcendent proofs since this would be inherently realist. Such a position would constitute a variation on the strong platonist position which involves a conception of mathematical objects such as natural numbers, real numbers, metric spaces, etc., but it would nonetheless conform to the minimum requirements for a realist doctrine in that it would allow for some form of independent reality consisting of proofs.

Whilst the strong platonist clearly overlooks Kreisel's stricture and indulges wholesale in beliefs about mathematical objects corresponding to numbers, etc., this weaker platonistic version appears to be more in harmony with that doctrine. He does not abandon realism but his emphasis would

be more on the objectivity of mathematical fact based on the reality of proof states than on a concern with mathematical objects.

For the strong platonist the truth-value of a mathematical statement will be derivable by the observation or recognition of a correspondence between the statement and some part of mathematical reality where this can be observed or recognised. The major problems with such a doctrine concern the idea of an independently existing mathematical reality and understanding what is meant by observing or recognising states within that reality. This idea of our awareness of some sort of abstract reality is at best mysterious. It may be that the strong platonist would liken this awareness to some form of religious experience, which though not available to all and to some people a mysterious concept, does for the religiously committed person confirm certain religious truths. The difficulty with such an analogy would be I think that it would restrict the practice of mathematics to those who had received mathematical enlightenment which could not in this sense be equated with mathematical learning.

Turning to the weak version of the platonist doctrine we find that the truth-value of mathematical statements will here be discoverable by means of the construction of a proof. This is not to say, as a constructivist might, that it is the construction of the proof which <u>makes</u> the associated statement true. Rather it is merely the means

by which we are able to discover the truth-value of the statement. In other respects this form of platonism comes so close to constructivism and seems to neglect so much of what is taken to be essential to realism (see Dummett 6, p434 and Dummett 7, p55), that it may be objected that this cannot be taken to represent a form of realism at all. Despite this we should recall that it is against this sort of weak platonist's position that Dummett's meaning based attack appears to be directed.

To recap then we have been considering what is perhaps a 'classic' exposition of an anti-realist position. In this particular case the class of disputed statements is the class of mathematical statements. The realist position with respect to these statements has been taken to be platonism and the anti-realist attack has consisted largely in demonstrating that, at least for the non-effectively-decidable statements within this class, platonism must be rejected if we start out with a requirement that meaning should be capable of being exhibited in use. Hence platonism cannot be in general applicable for mathematical statements. Having developed this anti-realist justification for the intuitionist's rejection of the classical approach to meaning in mathematics, Dummett goes on (in Dummett 3) to consider whether there could be an alternative approach to the establishment of intuitionism.

(iv)

The only possible alternative approach to intuitionism

which Dummett seems to regard as even plausibly tenable is, as I have mentioned above, one which is based on ontology rather than an issue about meaning. It is an approach which is specifically directed against the strong platonist's attempt to posit a realm of mathematical reality in order to shore up his essentially correspondence-theoretical analogy between meaning in general and in the particular mathematical context.

From the outset of his consideration of this possible alternative, he seems to regard it with suspicion. His apparently fundamental objection to such an approach to intuitionism lies in an implied impossibility in trying to resolve what is essentially a metaphysical issue about the ontological status of mathematical objects <u>in advance</u> of our establishing what meaning-theory approach we adopt for mathematical statements. The point is reiterated at several points in 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic'.

> '....it makes the question whether mathematical statements possess objective truth-values depend upon a prior decision as to the being of mathematical objects. And the difficulty about it lies in knowing on what we are to base the premiss that mathematical objects are the creations of human thought in advance of deciding what is the correct model for the meanings of mathematical statements or what is the correct conception of truth as relating to them.' (Dummett 3, pp228-9.)

'And the puzzle is to know on what basis we could possibly resolve this metaphysical question, at a stage at which we do not even know what model to use for our understanding of mathematical statements.' (Dummett 3, p229.)

'Preliminary reflection suggests that the metaphysical question ought not to be answered first: we cannot, as the second type of approach would have us do, first decide the ontological status of mathematical objects, and then, with that as premiss, deduce the character of mathematical truth or the correct model of meaning for mathematical statements.' (Dummett 3, p229.)

The impression given in these passages is that it should be patently obvious that what the ontological approach sets itself to do is simply not possible. Perhaps because of this supposed perspicuousness Dummett says very little about why it is that the ontologist's order of attack is so clearly misguided. Just prior to the first of the above quoted passages he does say that this approach would violate Kreisel's dictum; namely that, 'The point is not the existence of mathematical objects, but the objectivity of mathematical truth'. Clearly this approach would violate such a dictum but again it is not obvious why such a dictum needs to be conformed with: it seems in fact merely a reflection of Kreisel's own particular belief (and perhaps Dummett's) that the central issue here is one of meaning theory and

not ontology.

Dummett's view of the primacy of semantic issues over their ontological or metaphysical counterparts is noted by Devitt in his paper on 'Dummett's Anti-realism', (Devitt 1, pp80-1). Devitt believes that Dummett has been impressed by Kreisel's dictum in the context of mathematics, to the point where he sees the metaphysical issues as merely metaphorical accompaniments of the real semantic issues. There is some justification in my view in Devitt's remark that, 'The cause is clear, but it supplies no good reason'.

The flavour of Dummett's remarks seems to be that before we can sensibly come to any ontological decision concerning the referent of our statements we have to get clear about what we mean by those statements and in order to do this we must develop an appropriate meaning theory. There is an element of plausibility in this sort of suggestion although the lack of fully developed theories of meaning has not in the past appeared to impede ontological theorising. Perhaps however we should not read too much into what appeared to be a fairly fundamental objection to the ontological approach to intuitionism since in the end Dummett himself does establish one such route to intuitionism.

On the view which is developed in this way, mathematical objects are taken to be creations of the human mind. Hence the strong platonist's conception of independently existing mathematical objects can be dispensed with. One of the

differences between these two positions will be that for the latter it will make sense to discuss the possibility of mathematical objects of which we are unaware and may never be aware, whereas on the constructivist's view such an idea will be untenable since all mathematical objects are creations of the human mind. Wright likens this lack of objectivity in the constructivist's view of pure mathematics to the writing of fiction, (Wright 1, p6). Once the character of Hamlet has been established it may make sense to discuss his actions and motives, but these will not necessarily reflect or describe any of the actions of real people. Similarly if I create a fictional character with blond hair, the statement I make to this effect serves to distinguish this character - it is part of his creation - and it would make no sense to suppose that some sort of independent check could be made which would confirm that I really was correct in making this assertion. Likewise the constructivist cannot expect the truth of his statements to be confirmed by an examination of mathematical objects since these are themselves a result of the same construction of which his statements are a part.

The truth of mathematical statements is linked for the constructivist to the existence of proofs or computations. This leads to a strong form of positivism in which truth is regarded as applicable only to those statements for which a computation or proof, which justifies those statements, has actually been performed. Dummett himself appears not to approve of such a 'hard-headed' view as this, embodying

as he sees it, a 'resolute scepticism concerning subjunctive conditionals', and consequently regards the meaning-based approach as the only plausible route to intuitionism. (See Dummett 3, p247.)

(v)

So far we have been concerned with the origins of Dummett's conception of anti-realism within mathematics. I want now to consider an example which recurs in some of his other writings on this subject, e.g. 'Truth', 'Realism'(1963) and 'The Reality of the Past' (Dummett 1, 2 and 4). The example in question concerns character traits.

From an ontological stance opposition to realism has often taken the form of a reductionism. It might be expected as a result that Dummett's characterisation of anti-realism will be in many respects akin to reductionism. According to Dummett however there is no direct correspondence between these positions. He illustrates this point by a consideration of the case of character traits.

Let us imagine a person who is now dead but who during his lifetime was never in the type of situation which may have elicited behaviour thought relevant to a particular character trait. If we imagine the trait to be that of bravery then we take it that this individual was never throughout his life in a situation which could be thought of as one which would appropriately elicit brave behaviour - even

in someone who was brave. In such a case, would it make sense to try to maintain that either this person was brave or he was not? One way in which an attempt may be made to retain bivalence would be to say of this individual, either that had he been in an appropriate situation he would have exhibited brave behaviour or, that if in such a situation he would not have exhibited brave behaviour. In essence this would be an attempt to shore up classical logic as it applies to this case by means of counterfactuals. The counterfactuals in question however may be not effectively decidable. (I ought to make it clear that in considering this problem Dummett postulates that character traits can be determined unequivocally from behaviour providing this is relevant. This may be disputed but by starting from this point he avoids any problems relating to the correct interpretation of behaviour, etc.) Dummett suggests that it may be the case that no evidence exists not only of the direct behavioural sort but of any sort which would entitle us to assert or justify an assertion of either one or other of the relevant counterfactuals: viz. 'Had Jones been in a dangerous or threatening situation he would have (would not have) acted bravely.' So again it seems that there would be little point in trying to insist that bivalence applies - or at least it would be difficult to justify why this should be maintained. The only option appears to be an admission that it is neither true nor false to say of Jones that he was brave. The law of bivalence and with it classical logic fail to extend to this case and because of this we should reject a realist conception of character traits -

that is a conception in which each assignment of a character trait to a particular individual is either true or false independent of our capacity to acquire knowledge relating to such an assignment.

In the counterfactual approach to character traits which we have been considering, it is assumed that traits are evident in a person's behaviour. This assumption could reflect at least two different views. One would entail a belief in some underlying mechanism or quality which affected our behaviour in a roughly consistent way. On this view we might regard the mechanism or quality as the real trait which reveals itself in our actions and behaviour. Alternatively we could adopt a reductionist approach in which talk about character traits is seen as nothing more than a way of talking about behaviour or certain elements of our behaviour. The former view is essentially realist in that it conforms to the idea that there is some definite truth value to be associated with the statement 'Jones was brave', regardless of our ability to recognise this through its effect on behaviour. (See Dummett 2, pp149-50.) The latter view constitutes an anti-realist reduction of character traits in that it reduces statements about traits to statements about behaviour whilst recognising that in certain cases the type of behaviour which would determine the trait may not have been exhibited.

Dummett himself sees no plausible alternative to the rejection of the realist's position with regard to character

traits (Dummett 2, p148 and p150). Because there seems to be no sensible option to accepting that the law of bivalence fails to apply to counterfactual statements of the reductive class - i.e. statements about behaviour - Dummett regards anti-realism as being the obvious and natural view to be adopted for character traits.

He also acknowledges that the preferred alternative is a form of anti-realism which amounts to a behavioural reduction:

> 'In many of the cases I have mentioned, anti-realism takes the form of a species of reductionism. Thus phenomenalism holds that .....; statements about character are really about behaviour, we may say;....' (Dummett 2, p 156.)

An extension of this form of anti-realism to the whole of our talk about mental states and processes, rather than just character traits, would amount to a form of behaviourism. Hence Dummett continues the passage quoted above, 'and the behaviourist says the same about statements concerning desires, intentions, mental images, etc.,'. Elsewhere he comments that:

> 'Among the cases I do want to consider are [that is those disputes which he does want to characterise as realist/anti-realist disputes]:..., realism about mental states, events and processes, to which is opposed

behaviourism;...' (Dummett 2, pp147-8.)

and,

'...: behaviourism is one species of anti-realism, namely a rejection of realism concerning mental states and processes;....' (Dummett 4, p367.)

The sense in which behaviourism can be equated to a form of anti-realism will no doubt parallel the way in which Dummett sees the behavioural reduction as constituting a form of anti-realism concerning character traits. That is to say, the general form of behavioural anti-realism will contend that statements about mental states and processes (not physiological processes or brain states), can be understood as being about different forms of behaviour. Needless to say this reduction will amount to more than a crude equation between say, 'John is in pain', and 'John is crying'. Nevertheless it will embody a denial that mental events and processes enjoy a separate existence which may or may not be revealed in our behaviour, taken in its entirety.

I shall return to Dummett's position with respect to behaviourism later but for the time being I shall continue with our treatment of reductionism and its relation to anti-realism. The behavioural reduction concerning character traits is an example of an anti-realist reduction - a case in which reductionism does comply with anti-realist

principles. This is not always the case however and it may be possible to construct a reductionism in such a way that the law of bivalence is retained for statements of the reductive class. Dummett refers to this type of reductionism as a realist reduction.

For the example under consideration - character traits - such a reduction could take the form of an explanation in terms of physiological constitution. Such a theory would presumably link each character trait with the underlying physiological constitution in a determinate way such that for all character traits and all individuals it would be correct to say, 'either it is true that X is Y, or it is false that X is Y', where 'X' spans the range of individuals and 'Y' the range of traits. Now this type of explanation of character is regarded by Dummett as a form of realist reductionism because although one class of statements is 'reduced' to a class of more fundamental statements (in terms of explanation) the law of bivalence still applies to the reductive class.

This example then, illustrates the way in which an anti-realist position may or may not be aligned to a type of reductionism for the relevant class of statements.

In contrast with the discussion on intuitionism the examination of character traits has been dealt with <u>purely</u> in terms of statements. (I should make it clear that by comparison with his treatment of intuitionism Dummett's

remarks concerning character traits are far more sketchy since the example is provided mainly I think to illustrate this distinction between anti-realism and reductionism.) This is in keeping of course with Dummett's characterisation of the realist/anti-realist dispute as a quarrel over meaning. And in line with this, we should recall that the consideration of an ontological route to intuitionism was really an attempt to discover whether or not there could be any serious alternative to an anti-realist intuitionism in the form of a constructivism.

It would be possible however to devise an ontological opposition towards realism with regard to character traits. (See pp40-41 below.) Such an opposing view one would imagine could be closely aligned to the form of physiological reduction which is discussed by Dummett.

On this view behaviour appropriate to a particular type of character trait results from an underlying physiological mechanism. And talk about that character trait is viewed as reducible, in some sense, to talk about physiology. Now Dummett regarded the physiological reduction as being essentially a realist position in that bivalence about character traits held in virtue of bivalence about physiology holding. If however we view this reduction from an ontological stance it can be seen as a means of eliminating character traits as independently existent objects. With this ontological slant in mind, talk about character traits will be seen as a convenient means of talking about physiology

perhaps in much the same way as we frequently find it convenient to talk about macroscopic objects rather than their underlying sub-microscopic constituents. This sort of position with respect to character could also be seen as giving an account of what these traits really are rather than as providing a means of eliminating them. Taken in this sense however the notion of the view as an opposition to realism would have to be abandoned. Whilst this is really a matter of emphasis the reductionist with ontological motivations will want to stress the way in which this reduction can be used to rid us of character traits as real objects. His concerns are more to do with the problems that arise from mistaken ontologies than with matters of linguistic convenience. (The ontological view of this matter could be likened to the claim that the playwright Shakespeare did not exist and that his plays were written by Bacon. The alternative approach would be to retain talk about Shakespeare as a matter of convenience whilst recognising that what we really mean in talking about Shakespeare's plays are the plays which were written by Bacon. The ontological approach perhaps strikes us as more honest but in very complex cases matters of convenience are likely to dominate.)

This sort of physiological reduction is in line with the physiological realist's position, in so far as both are agreed on some sort of interdependence between statements about character traits and statements about physiology.

The ontologist takes this further in as much as he takes this equivalence to depend upon the fact, as he sees it, that statements of the former type are <u>really</u> about physiological entities.

A point which is of interest to note here is that not only is the physiological reductionist out of step with anti-realism but it would appear that so also is the ontological opponent of realism with respect to character traits; that is someone who rejected a sort of platonistic conception of character traits as existing forms. This 'ontological reductionist' will be regarded by Dummett as a realist (in meaning terms) because of his ontological commitment to those 'objects' which underpin the reductive class of statements. Hence in this case it appears that the ontological opponent to realism will also be at odds with the relevant anti-realist position. And this, not just in respect of how each formulates his case against the realist but in a quite fundamental way which leaves the ontological reductionist defending a realist position in the eyes of the anti-realist.

I will return to consider these various positions with regard to character traits in Chapter 4. For the moment it will be sufficient if we simply recognise the different sorts of positions which can be maintained and the distinction which Dummett makes between anti-realism and reductionism. Before leaving character traits however I am going to introduce a new concept; that of 'an auxiliary class of

statements'.

(vi)

It will be recalled that in any particular instance of a realist/anti-realist dispute, this will revolve around the theory of meaning to be adopted for a class of statements - the disputed class. We have also come across what has been referred to as the reductive class in certain disputes. This will be a class of statements such that the truth of statements of the disputed class can be reduced to the truth of statements of the reductive class (Dummett 4, p360). Dummett also describes as a typical feature of these disputes an auxiliary class. He remarks that,

> 'Typically, in such a dispute there is some auxiliary class of statements about which both sides agree that a realist interpretation is possible (depending upon the grounds offered by the anti-realists for rejecting a realist interpretation for statements of the disputed class, this auxiliary class may or may not consist of statements agreed to be effectively decidable); and, typically, it is in terms of the truth conditions of statements of this auxiliary class that the anti-realist frames his conception of meaning, his non-classical notion of truth, for statements of the disputed class, while the realist very often appeals to statements of the auxiliary class as providing an analogy for his conception of meaning for statements of the disputed

class. Thus, when the dispute concerns statements about the future, statements about the present will form the auxiliary class; when it concerns statements about material objects, the auxiliary class will consist of sense-data statements; when the dispute concerns statements about character-traits, the auxiliary class will consist of statements about actual or hypothetical behaviour; and so on.' (Dummett 3, p238.)

The points to note are that the auxiliary class is only a typical component of a realist/anti-realist dispute. The implication is that it will not feature as an essential element of every dispute of this type. What characterises the auxiliary class in disputes where it does arise, is that whilst the realist and anti-realist may use it to different ends, they are both able to agree that a realist interpretation is possible for <u>this</u> class. So in cases where an auxiliary class is introduced, the anti-realist in the dispute will take a realistic view of this class of statements. He will then typically use this auxiliary class to illustrate the deficiency which in his view arises in the case of the disputed class when a realist theory of meaning is applied to it, (e.g. he will allege that statements about the past cannot in all cases be verified in a way comparable to that in which we verify present-tense statements). The realist also takes a positive view with respect to the auxiliary class. For him the theory of meaning which we adopt for the auxiliary class provides us with an analogy for the theory of meaning which he wishes to

adopt for the disputed class (e.g. the realist about the past models his theory of meaning for past-tense statements on the theory which both he and the anti-realist are able to accept for present-tense statements).

At first sight there appear to be two problems which arise in connection with this idea of an auxiliary class as Dummett presents it, and its relation to the reductive class in cases where there is one. In the first instance Dummett seems to allow, in the passage quoted above, that although the anti-realist adopts a realist stance towards the auxiliary class, this class may or may not consist of statements agreed to be effectively decidable. The problem here is that it was this very feature, i.e. the lack of effective decidability, concerning some mathematical statements which allowed the anti-realist, in the paradigm case, to launch his attack on platonism. It is certainly not obvious how anyone with anti-realist sympathies can consistently maintain a realist stance towards a class of statements which he acknowledges to consist of statements which may not be effectively decidable. His realist attitude towards such statements would seem to commit him to the view that their truth-value was determined by a correspondence to truth-conditions within that realm of reality to which the statement referred. (See Dummett 6, p434 for example.) However his acknowledgement that these statements might not be effectively decidable would seem to commit him to a belief in verification-transcendent truth-conditions relating to the auxiliary class. But, concerning the disputed

class it was this very feature, i.e. verification-transcendent truth-conditions, which he wished to avoid.

The second problem is a related one. Consider the case which we examined earlier concerning character traits. We learnt that in this case Dummett regarded a behavioural reduction as constituting a form of anti-realism. The behavioural reduction involved the introduction of a reductive class which consisted of behavioural statements. In the quotation concerning the auxiliary class however Dummett tells us that in the case of character traits statements about actual or hypothetical behaviour constitute the auxiliary class. The two classes, the reductive and the auxiliary, appear in this case to coincide. However as an auxiliary class of statements we note that the anti-realist, (the behavioural reductionist in this case), will agree to adopt a realist view of these statements. It is this conflict remember, between his realist view of the auxiliary class and his acceptance that this class might contain statements which may not be effectively decidable, which constituted our first problem. However it might appear that it was the lack of effective decidability of statements within this reductive/auxiliary class (i.e. behavioural statements) which ensured the lack of effective decidability of statements of the reduced class (statements about character), and so confirmed this as an anti-realist reduction. On this interpretation it is the reductionist's inability to extend a realist view to the reductive class which confirms him as an anti-realist with respect to the

reduced or disputed class. In the alternative example, where the reductionist is able to adopt a realist attitude towards the reductive class, e.g. in the case of a physiological reductionism, then this is seen as a realist reduction. Such an interpretation leads us however to conflicting views regarding the behavioural anti-realist's position with respect to his reductive class.

In attempting to untangle these apparent difficulties we will need to look more closely at the character traits example. The behavioural reductionist believes that statements about character can be translated in some sense into statements within his reductive class, i.e. statements about behaviour. Let us assume that he does indeed adopt a realist view of these latter statements. That is to say, as we have been understanding the debate, that he has no problems regarding the lack of effective decidability of such statements. In order to do this and to keep our example within manageable proportions we will need to neglect any concerns which arise with respect to the adoption of realism for past-tense statements. (This issue will be considered separately later). For our purposes the behavioural reductionist believes that statements about actual behaviour have determinate truth-values. So any statement such as, 'Jones did act bravely that night', or 'Jones' behaviour throughout the affair was not cowardly' will - neglecting evaluation issues - be decidable. The point is however that we can have knowledge of all the truth-values relating to such a statement about Jones and still, for the reasons

Dummett cites, not be in a position to know whether, 'Jones was brave', is true or not. We might know that Jones did not act bravely on that night and that his behaviour was not cowardly during that affair but this might just reflect the fact that these situations did not really test Jones. In this case then, all the statements in the reductive class may be effectively decidable but this will be insufficient to underpin the truth or falsity of all statements in the reduced class. We can know all there is to know about Jones' behaviour and still not know whether he was brave. (See also chapter 4 where these ideas are further elaborated).

If we contrast this with the physiological reductionist's case, here again realism is accepted for the reductive or auxiliary class. However it is an implicit assumption in this case that if we know all there is to know about Jones' physiology then we will be able to say whether or not he was brave.

Physiology is taken as determining character in the sense that if a given physiological feature is present then bravery will be a resultant characteristic and if it is not present then the person in question will not be, or will not have been, brave.

Each case involves a reduction and both reductionists adopt a realist stance with respect to the reductive or auxiliary class of statements. This much is in keeping with Dummett's remarks. However there is no obvious way in which,

given this, the behavioural anti-realist could opt to accept that his reductive class contained statements which were not effectively decidable and we now see I think that he is under no obligation to do so, since the anti-realist element of his position with regard to the reduced class does not depend on any discovery of such statements within his reductive class. There remains then a doubt concerning Dummett's suggestion that the auxiliary class may contain statements which the disputants regard as not effectively decidable. Apart from this issue, the above interpretation is consistent with Dummett's remarks in 'The Reality of the Past'. (Dummett 4, p359.)

Concerning the tension with respect to the adoption of realism with respect to a given class of statements which is simultaneously acknowledged to contain statements which may not be effectively decidable, I can see no obvious means of resolving the problem. We might note however that the issue is not of central importance as far as Dummett's characterisation is concerned. I will consider these examples again later but I now want to turn to what Dummett considers to be one of the most challenging problem areas which the anti-realist faces: namely, the problem of past-tense statements. This will not only provide us with another example of a realist/anti-realist dispute as conceived by Dummett but it will also introduce certain wider issues associated with realism and anti-realism.

(vii)

It may be recalled that the development of an anti-realist position in the philosophy of mathematics could involve either an emphasis on the acquisition of an understanding of appropriate linguistic usage or on the manifestation of such an understanding. The argument presented in Dummett 3 could lay stress on the peculiarity of the realist position as this is portrayed requiring us to learn the meaning of statements when what is taken to be the central feature of meaning, namely their truth conditions, may be completely inaccessible to us. Alternatively the anti-realist may structure his attack in terms of the difficulty which must be experienced in explaining how linguistic competence can be manifested in use, when again the central feature in the assumed theory of meaning may not be extant in our linguistic interactions.

In his paper 'The Reality of the Past' (Dummett 4), Dummett considers an anti-realist challenge concerning statements about the past which is framed in terms of the problem associated with the acquisition of an understanding of past-tense statements when the truth-conditions relevant to these statements seem to be in some sense unavailable. He also considers a realist response to this challenge and in so doing introduces, almost as a side issue, the idea of a truth-value link. This concept has since been examined in terms of its plausibility as a realist defence mechanism in other disputes. To begin with however let us consider further the anti-realist's challenge.

In learning to understand what statements mean, we learn to recognise those situations or states of affairs which justify an assertion of those statements. If we claim to have acquired such an understanding of a particular statement but in practice we fail to recognise those situations which would clearly be taken as justifying an assertion of this statement, then it will be apparent that we have not in fact acquired the appropriate understanding. Now in the case of our learning to acquire an understanding of past-tense statements the situations which will be available to our recognition in the actual learning process will be presently existing situations. These situations may well be regarded, if appropriate, as ones which would justify our assertion of past-tense statements. But, the anti-realist suggests, because we can never rule out the possibility of new information coming to light which contradicts our beliefs about the past based on previously available evidence, we cannot regard these situations as <u>truth-conditions</u>.

A truth-condition is that state or situation which if it obtains and is accessible, will confirm the truth of a statement for which it is a truth-condition. In the case of past-tense statements however the only situations which we can become acquainted with in learning the meaning of these statements are situations which provide evidence as to the truth of these statements - though this evidence cannot be conclusive. The reason why it cannot be regarded

as conclusive is that even the totality of current states of affairs may not uniquely determine a single past history and in any case a comprehension of such a totality would be beyond a linguistic user's capability. Hence although currently available evidence may restrict the number of possible past histories relevant to the statement in question, there is always the chance that some future evidence may be revealed which will favour particular histories not currently regarded as most probable.

Dummett outlines the way in which the anti-realist with respect to the past utilizes the general form of the anti-realist's argument, in Dummett 4, pp363-4. The use of the past tense is learnt by our learning to recognise those situations which justify assertions made using that tense. These situations may include those in which we remember the occurrence of some past event. However he maintains that there is no way by which we can pass from a grasp of the assertibility conditions associated with a statement to a conception of what it would be for the statement to be true independently of these conditions or conditions of this sort.

Consequently we have no right to insist that bivalence should apply to these statements and such an insistence would 'invoke notions of truth and falsity independent of our recognition of truth or falsity, and hence incapable of having been derived from the training we received in the use of these statements.' (Dummett 4, p364.)

In response to this broadly acquisition-based challenge the realist, in Dummett's account, makes appeal to the notion of a truth-value link. He claims that in the case of a certain past-tense statement uttered at some future time, this will be true then in virtue of some present-tense statement which is currently true. E.g. the statement, 'Pearson was writing in his study at 8.30 on the 5th January 1983', uttered at some future time, will be true in virtue of the fact that the present-tense statement 'Pearson is now writing in his study' uttered now, is true. The realist - or in this case the truth-value-link realist - claims that it is by coming to understand how this sort of link between the truth-values of differently tensed statements operates, that he is able to grasp what it is for a past-tense statement to be true.

But the realist makes a double use of this mechanism. He not only claims that the truth-value link supplies him with an effective defence against the acquisition challenge which the anti-realist presents him with. He makes further use of it to suggest an inconsistency in the anti-realist's own position. He claims that the idea of a truth-value link is fundamental to our understanding of tensed statements and yet the anti-realist's account, which is implicit in his challenge, appears to be incompatible with this. The anti-realist alleges that there is no way by which we could come to understand the significance of truth-conditions for past-tense statements in the course of our learning to use those statements. The realist has now provided, or

claims to have provided, an account (though not in detail) of how this is done and suggests that if the anti-realist persists in this challenge he must acknowledge and explain his rejection of truth-value links which, it is claimed, lie at the very 'heart of our use of tensed statements'. (Dummett 4, p364.)

At this point Dummett distinguishes two distinct positions which the anti-realist is able to adopt and he presents responses to the realist's offensive in each case.

The two forms of anti-realism which Dummett describes are global anti-realism (which, as might be expected, involves the adoption of an anti-realist position with regard to all statements) and anti-realism solely about the past - or more correctly about past-tense statements. The letters 'G' and 'T' are used respectively to designate these two positions. For the T-anti-realist, statements about the present form an auxiliary class for which he adopts a realist interpretation. For the G-anti-realist no such auxiliary class exists. Some of the comments which Dummett makes with regard to these two anti-realist positions are of particular interest and I shall consider these shortly. Before doing so we should note the following passage which appears in the preface to Truth and Other Enigmas.

> '...It is apparent from "Realism" that I did not suppose that the abstract structure of all these disputes would be precisely the same; indeed, I am prepared to assert

positively that no two of them agree exactly in their abstract structure. There was therefore never any presumption that there would be any sound argument establishing, for all the cases simultaneously, the correctness of a realist or of an anti-realist view. The only presumption was that a uniform approach to these disparate metaphysical problems would be fruitful.' (Dummett 5, ppxxx-xxxi.)

Dummett is making no claims or pretensions to be presenting in his characterisation of realism and anti-realism a means by which all such disputes can be solved, as it were, at a stroke. It is not intended that a single realist or anti-realist argument will become available which will have complete generality and thereby avoid the necessity of a particular study of each of the disputes involved. However, having noted this apparently restricted aim, when we consider what is perhaps his most detailed account of the development of an anti-realist's position (Dummett 3), the argument presented does give an impression at least of the sort of generality which Dummett disclaims. These are matters which will be examined further in future chapters but for the present it is of interest to bear them in mind when we look at what Dummett has to say about G-anti-realism; a philosophical position which must rely either on a general anti-realist argument (if such is possible) or a range of separate arguments each establishing anti-realism in its own particular disputed territory.

'Perhaps the most interesting question about realism is precisely whether global anti-realism is coherent: for, if it is not coherent, then there must at least be some restrictions on the applicability of the anti-realist argument, and, by finding out what these are, we may hope to take a large step towards seeing how to resolve the various particular disputes. There are a number of reasons for doubting whether global anti-realism is coherent, for instance: behaviourism is one species of anti-realism, namely a rejection of realism concerning mental states and processes; phenomenalism is another species, namely the rejection of realism concerning physical objects and processes; it immediately occurs to us to wonder whether it is possible consistently to maintain an anti-realist position simultaneously in both regards. But I think that without doubt the thorniest problem for one who wishes to transfer something resembling the intuitionist account of the meanings of mathematical statements to the whole of discourse is what account he can give of the meanings of tensed statements.' (Dummett 4, pp367-8.)

As Dummett sees it then the past, or more precisely past-tensed statements and tensed statements in general, will form a sort of test case for anyone who wants to adopt global anti-realism. This particular area of dispute is one where he will have most difficulty in extending his ideas.

What is also of interest in this passage is what Dummett says about the difficulty which the global anti-realist may have in presenting a coherent story. It is suggested that even a fairly superficial consideration of what is taken to be required of the global anti-realist will give rise to a strong suspicion that his case is untenable.

All we need do is select two particular realist/anti-realist disputes, identify the anti-realist position in each of these cases and then compare these to see if they are compatible. Since the global anti-realist is burdened with adopting anti-realism in every area of discourse and since it is implied that one form of anti-realism only will be available in each dispute, the G-anti-realist will be forced to subscribe to the two forms of anti-realism selected. Any discord which might then be apparent between the two forms will be indicative of a fundamental incoherence in the global anti-realist's position and he will be forced to modify and restrict his case. Further than this Dummett suggests that if we consider the particular disputes relating to statements about mental states and events on the one hand and statements about physical objects and processes on the other, then it will immediately occur to us to question whether indeed the associated forms of anti-realism are compatible.

As is mentioned above this sort of threat to the viability of the global anti-realist's position assumes

that in each area of realist/anti-realist debate there will only be one form of anti-realism which will be available to be adopted. The very fact however that with regard to the past we find that considerations concerning the extent to which the anti-realist is committed generally, govern the type of argument he deploys in a particular area - G- and T-anti-realists develop distinct responses to the realists' charge of incoherence - should arouse some suspicion on this point. Such doubts might be allayed however if it is maintained that the two variations in this case do not represent essentially distinct positions but rather the same philosophical end-point supported in each case by slightly different arguments. Nevertheless we may still have residual doubts about this implicit assumption that for each disputed area there will be essentially just one anti-realist position. Indeed the doubt expressed is not too dissimilar from one which Dummett himself raises. This occurs in the preface to Truth and Other Enigmas, and concerns an objection which Strawson brings against the adoption of anti-realism with regard to statements ascribing pain. Dummett diagnoses what he takes to be Strawson's error in the following way:

> 'The feeling that, in giving an account of pain-ascriptions, there are only two choices open, to be a realist or to be a behaviourist, may lead one, as it leads Strawson, to overlook Wittgenstein's demonstration of the untenability of the realist position; or it may lead to the belief that Wittgenstein

did not sufficiently exculpate himself from the charge, which he denied, of being a behaviourist.' (Dummett 5, pxxxiii. See also Dummett 2, p157.)

In contrast to the implications contained in Dummett's passage on global anti-realism, he here plainly rejects the idea that behaviourism represents the only option to one who rejects realism with regard to pain ascription statements. This would appear to be the only sensible option and suggests that Dummett's somewhat throw-away dismissal of global anti-realism may have been misguided. (Prompted by the remarks Dummett makes on this matter, McGinn has gone on to develop a paper (McGinn 1), which is based on essentially the same mistake, that is, that behaviourism and phenomenalism represent the only options available to the anti-realist in the relevant disputes.) The assumption then that the anti-realist's position in a particular area will be uniquely defined, is far from obvious and unless this is shown to be the case the global anti-realist should have much more room in which to manoeuvre.

Before leaving 'The Reality of the Past', I ought to say a little about the responses which the anti-realists make to the realist's charge of inconsistency regarding their failure to acknowledge the truth-value link.

(viii)

We should recall that the realist with respect to the

past uses the notion of truth-value links in two ways. First of all he uses them in a defensive role to show how these (together with the auxiliary class of statements, i.e. present-tense statements), can provide an answer to the anti-realist's challenge. This had required him to explain how he comes by an understanding of past-tense statements. He then attempts to turn the tables on the anti-realist by inviting him also to acknowledge the essential correctness of his conception of truth-value links and thereby to renounce his previous challenge, or to provide a coherent account of tensed statements which neglects these links. If the anti-realist is to maintain his position in the face of this retaliation he must either show how the concept of truth-value links can be accommodated alongside his anti-realism concerning the past, and by implication show how the idea of truth-value links fails to provide the realist with the support he requires, or he must show how our intuitive views concerning the correctness of truth-value links are in fact mistaken.

The anti-realist's position with respect to the past relates, as it does elsewhere, to the two concerns over acquisition and manifestation. When I hear a statement or make a statement, the only situations or conditions which are available to me are those that prevail at that time. If the statement is a tensed statement the situations and conditions which we take it, realistically, to refer to will not be available to our cognizance. Consequently it cannot be in virtue of such conditions that I acquire an

understanding of those statements. Nor can I manifest my understanding in the presence, as it were, of such conditions. The realist sees this as a view which leads to inconsistency if an attempt is made to couple it to the idea of truth-value links. He suggests that by acknowledging these links the anti-realist, (or anyone else), must accept that a past-tense statement made in the future will be true in virtue of more than just what is then the case. If acceptance of the idea of truth-value links entails that the truth of a past-tense statement uttered at some future time, follows from the truth of some corresponding present-tense statement uttered now, then the truth of that past-tense statement will, at that time, consist in more than just what is then the case. Wright (2) concocts an example which brings into focus the realist's objections:

> 'Suppose the sentence, "Dummett is at present, on the morning of the 16th November 1984, working at the keyboard of his word processor" is now, as I write, true.' (Wright 2, p10.)

From this it appears to follow, by means of the truth-value links, that the sentence 'Dummett was, on the morning of the 16th November 1984, working at the keyboard of his word processor' will be true. But then Wright continues,

> 'Suppose we now verify the present-tense version. It would be peculiar but not impossible simultaneously to have excellent reason to think that there will,

in a year's time, be absolutely no basis for affirming the past-tense version; (perhaps we are a band of conspirators who intend to destroy all evidence of Dummett's present whereabouts in order to frame him for a crime to be committed elsewhere in Oxford, and then to administer to ourselves a special amnesia-inducing drug in order to be able to resist any subsequent interrogation.)' (Wright 2, p10.)

No doubt other situations can be imagined in which evidence which did exist relevant to the truth of some past-tense statement, will be lost by the time that that statement is made. But now if the anti-realist recognises this, will he not in effect be forced into embracing verification-transcendent truth-conditions?

Dummett suggests that this conclusion can be avoided provided that the anti-realist is careful about the formulation of his position. What he must stay clear of, according to Dummett, is a characterisation of his own position as accounting for the truth of past-tense statements - whenever uttered - in terms of what is then - at the time they are uttered - the case. Instead of this he must confine his attentions to what it is now, or in the future, which makes past-tense statements, whenever uttered, true. In Dummett's words,

'....he must state his general thesis by saying that a statement in the past tense is (or was, or will be)

true just in case there now is or will subsequently be a situation whose existence we can now acknowledge as justifying the ascription to that statement of the value true.' (Dummett 4, p368)

The distinction being made is one in which the anti-realist relates the truth of a past-tense statement whenever it is uttered, to evidence that is either now available or may subsequently become available, rather than to evidence available at the time of the utterance of the statement. By means of this rather deft manoeuvre Dummett believes that the anti-realist will be able to avoid the most obvious, and perhaps all, of the inconsistencies which the realist would want to draw to his attention. Basically the anti-realist is to stick to his contention that past-tense statements, whenever made, are to be judged to be justifiably assertible in terms of what evidence is now available or may become available. In this way, it is suggested, he avoids making prescriptions concerning what makes a past-tense statement uttered in the future, true at the time it is uttered. But is this really so? Dummett recognises that the realist is unlikely to be satisfied by this response.

'He wants to object that no general account has been given of the meaning of the past tense: the anti-realist has explained only how we are now to ascribe past, present or future truth or falsity to past-tense statements - or rather, to tensed statements generally - uttered now or in the past or the future: he has

not said how we shall ascribe truth-values to those that are subsequently uttered at the time when they are uttered.' (Dummett 4, p369.)

According to Dummett however, he has done this.

'Of course, the anti-realist will claim that he has explained this: he has said under what conditions a past-tense statement uttered a year hence will at that time be true.' (Dummett 4, p369.)

But if he has said this then what those conditions are, are ones that are available to us now or ones which may become available to us. If we revert to a slight variation of Wright's rather bizarre example, the conditions which make the past-tense statement concerning Dummett having been at his word processor true, are ones which are now or may become available to us. This caveat concerning what evidence we might come across in the future is intended to allow for situations where we do not now know the truth-value to be associated with a particular statement although we may in the future be able to get in a position where the relevant conditions would be accessible to us. As far as our example is concerned we may assume that the present-tense statement concerning this situation is now known to be true and because of this we can forget about the caveat. The evidence which supports our current knowledge that the present-tense statement is now true will also suffice as evidence confirming the truth of the past-tense statement.

So the conditions under which the past-tense statement, 'Dummett was on the evening of the 2nd September 1985 working at the keyboard of his word processor' when uttered in a year's time, will at that time be true, are conditions which are now available. But if we mimic Wright's example we might now, as well as being aware of this evidence, also have good reason to believe that such evidence will cease to be available before the year is out. Consequently the anti-realist is accounting for the truth of a statement made a year hence, at that time, in terms of conditions which he acknowledges may then be verification-transcendent. It may appear, and probably does to the confirmed realist, that this amounts to a straightforward contradiction of the anti-realist's own views. This is not precisely the case however, as Wright points out:

> '....there is nothing in the example to impose an understanding, as it were, of how the truth of a past-tense statement may transcend its current decidability. What the example teaches is rather how, if the truth-value links are accepted, the truth of a past-tense statement at a time <u>other</u> than the present can transcend the means for deciding it at that time. But that is not at all the same thing.' (Wright 2, p11.)

The anti-realist's view that the truth-value of past-tense statements should be determined by evidence which is <u>now</u> available (or which will become available) is not in direct conflict with the sort of example considered above

because this serves to show only that, truth-value links accepted, the truth-value of such statements may in the future be determined by conditions other than those which are then available. Despite this there must be a great sense of unease experienced by anyone who would wish to draw comfort from this nicety. The reason being that it seems to commit the anti-realist concerned to a belief now that in the future an appropriate theory of meaning for a certain class of statements would be one which he would currently regard as untenable for those statements.

We will later return to the issue concerning the reality of the past when we turn to the appraisal of Dummett's characterisation.

(ix)

We have now considered some of the major pieces in which Dummett unfolds and develops his views regarding his characterisation of a range of philosophical disputes as essentially realist/anti-realist debates. There are other important papers in which he discusses this characterisation (e.g. several of the papers contained in Truth and Other Enigmas, including 'Truth', 'Realism', etc.) but I am not going to delve specifically into these. The aim of this thesis is not primarily exegetical and the presentation so far provided will suffice to enable us to go on to make an assessment of the characterisation and of some of the criticisms which have been made against it.

The fact that at various points throughout this exposition we have been led towards areas of criticism of the main characterisation is indication enough that we should perhaps now move in that direction. There is however no sharp and clear-cut distinction between exposition and assessment and in what follows we shall continue to explore Dummett's fundamental conception.

Some of the main points that have arisen can be briefly itemised as follows:

1. Dummett has set out to show that certain traditional philosophical disputes have a common form. He describes each of these as realist/anti-realist debates.

2. His characterisation of these disputes is not in terms of certain classes of entities or proposed entities but rather in terms of beliefs about the theory of meaning applicable to certain classes of statements.

3. Although these disputes share a common form there is not intended to be any presumption that they will all be 'solved' by means of a single general argument.

4. In 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic', Dummett develops an anti-realist argument in support of intuitionism with regard to mathematics. This argument reveals a dependence on certain central issues including

Wittgenstein's doctrine of meaning as use, the existence of non-effectively-decidable statements within the disputed class and the adoption by the realist of a theory of meaning which takes truth as its central notion.

5. Despite the warning that there will be no single panacea giving a general solution to all the various realist/anti-realist debates, there is a certain general flavour to the argument which is presented in favour of anti-realism in Dummett 3.

6. A separate realist/anti-realist debate concerns character traits but here Dummett gives the impression that no one would seriously adopt a realist position in this regard. The anti-realist position involves a form of behaviourism.

7. The dispute concerning character traits serves to illustrate the sort of relations which might exist between anti-realism and reductionism. It is concluded that reductionism is neither sufficient for anti-realism nor necessary to it. (Dummett 4, p361.)

8. It is suggested that the adoption of anti-realism with respect to past-tense statements will prove to be one of the most difficult cases which the global anti-realist will encounter.

9. The main difficulty in espousing an anti-realist philosophy with regard to the past will be the apparent impossibility of showing this to be consistent with an acceptance of the notion of a truth-value link. Dummett attempts to show that by some refinement of the anti-realist case this apparent obstacle can be overcome.

10. In passing, it is suggested that global anti-realism may well be an untenable position and this seems to be based on an implicit and seemingly unwarranted assumption that only one form of anti-realism will be available in each disputed area.

With these points fresh in our minds I will turn now to an assessment of the proposed characterisation.

CHAPTER 3 : AN APPRAISAL OF DUMMETT'S CHARACTERISATION

CHAPTER ABSTRACT

In Chapter 3 we move on to an assessment of Dummett's characterisation. This part of the assessment uses as its taking-off point some of the recent literature which has been provoked by the characterisation. McGinn has made out a case, based on a particular example, that is intended to indicate a sort of crucial oversight in the anti-realist's position. The example is aimed at showing that it is possible to form conceptions of verification-transcendent situations. On closer inspection however, it appears that this criticism of the anti-realist's position may well be wide of the mark.

In another paper McDowell has attempted to defend a realist's position with respect to the past. Interestingly he considers the notion of a truth-value link, but rejects this ultimately as being unable to form an effective means of defence. He instead attempts to establish a more direct link with the past. This position is itself criticised by Wright.

In considering the debate in this area it becomes apparent that it is limited by a certain vagueness in the specification of the problem. This recognition is also reflected in Strawson's comments on the realist/anti-realist debate generally. Wright has responded to the complaints which Strawson makes but it is not obvious that this response

represents a completely satisfactory state.

(i)

In the previous Chapter I outlined some of the points which Dummett has made with regard to his characterisation. I am now going to consider certain problems and objections which might be raised in connection with this.

Colin McGinn has in a recent paper (McGinn 2) discussed Dummett's characterisation and what he takes to be Dummett's advocacy of an anti-realist approach in certain areas. He outlines in his paper a particular example which it is suggested should constitute a prime case for the application of an anti-realist argument. He claims however that such an argument can be successfully countered and by this means hopes to show the error in the anti-realist's ways. McGinn's main objective is to demonstrate that a general form of the anti-realist's argument is certainly not compelling and that as a result realists by and large may rest easy. He is not so much concerned with the nature and validity of the actual characterisation which Dummett provides. It is rather with the case which the anti-realist makes out that McGinn takes exception and this is perhaps a general feature of Dummett's critics. Despite this it will be useful to consider in detail McGinn's counter-example as this should further develop our understanding of the proposed framework.

The hypothetical case which we are invited to consider

involves a community of speakers C who are in most respects like ourselves but who, like trees, are rooted to a particular spot. This community inhabit the northern side of a particular mountain and hence statements within their language which concern states of affairs on the south side of the mountain constitute a disputed class.

> 'These sentence types are undecidable for C because, given the actual capacities of members of C, it is perfectly possible that they should be systematically unable to determine the truth value of these sentences, since they cannot transport themselves to the south side of the mountain.' (McGinn 1, p25.)

McGinn notes the following points regarding this community.

> 'We can allow that they occasionally have access to indirect evidence for the truth of sentences belonging to the undecidable fragment; but it can happen that they have available neither verifying nor falsifying information concerning these sentences. (Their predicament with respect to the south side may be compared with ours with respect to the past.) As I glossed it a bit back, they associate no sensori-motor routine with the undecidable sentences corresponding to their semantic structure. Suppose nevertheless that, like us, they are disposed, realistically, to assert bivalence across the board; that is, they take the appropriate notion of truth for their sentences to

transcend the epistemic limitations imposed upon them by their truncated recognitional capacities.' (McGinn 2, p25.)

As an aside we should notice certain typifying features in this example which often characterise realist reactions to anti-realist arguments. It posits a language user or community in a situation in which their knowledge or awareness of their environment is limited. We, however in our "God-like" position are able to look down on this situation with our wider perspective and recognise both the limitations of their awareness as well as the "reality" which exists beyond that awareness. Clark Glymour's brain in a vat example (Glymour, 1) (and others which McGinn uses elsewhere, McGinn 3) can be seen to be in a similar vein.

Having elaborated his example McGinn then develops what he sees as an anti-realist acquisition-type argument with regard to the disputed class, i.e. statements about the southern side of the mountain, along the following lines:

Speakers are exposed only to states of affairs that they are capable of recognising, e.g. conditions which have arisen on the north side of the mountain. They cannot derive from this training conceptions of conditions which transcend those to which they have been exposed, e.g. conditions arising on the south side of the mountain. Consequently a realist theory of meaning for the language used by the community C would, 'leave it quite unexplained - would indeed make

it quite mysterious - how it is that speakers have come to bestow upon their sentences truth-conditions that relate to states of affairs that could have played no part in their acquisition of the language, on account of their inaccessibility.' (McGinn 2, p26.)

Although his realist counter to this argument is I think supposed to carry with it an implied rejection of a manifestation challenge also, it is primarily with this acquisition argument that McGinn is concerned. McGinn considers three possible replies which the realist might attempt to make. Two of these derive from the notion of a truth-value link and the third, very similar one, is a sort of argument from analogy - members of the community extend their conceptions by hypothesizing and speculating about a being who is like themselves but mobile. He rejects all these defences as inappropriate or inadequate in the case of his particular example and then in quite a short space presents his favoured response.

> 'Thus, though my model speakers experience only the north side of their mountain, we may ask what is to <u>stop</u> them, as creatures given to speculation and to the search for a coherent picture of the world they inhabit, from arriving at the idea of the south side of the mountain, and from conceiving of it as a determinately constituted stretch of reality. More strongly, it is hard to see how they could <u>avoid</u> arriving at that idea. For a conception of that (for them)

inaccessible reach of reality seems forced upon them if they are to have any reasonable explanation of the things they do observe: sheep disappearing and re-appearing, etc..... So I suggest that it is only an empiricist dogma, with few attractions in other contexts, that make us disposed to deny the possibility of acquiring conceptions of reality that transcend our recognitional capacities.' (McGinn 2, pp28-9.)

The McGinn response to the acquisition challenge amounts really to an affirmation that his tree people, and by implication ourselves, can form conceptions of situations which are recognition-transcendent. The thrust of the acquisition challenge is taken to be, or at least to rest on, a denial that we can form such conceptions. Consequently McGinn's conviction that we can is sufficient to refute such an attack providing that he is correct in this conviction. First of all, I suppose we should ask ourselves whether what McGinn affirms and records as his conviction concerning conceptions of recognition-transcendent situations is in fact reasonable. (No argument is offered in support of what appears to be such a crucial step.) We should think of these as conceptions of situations which are in some way totally inaccessible to the particular linguistic community in question. For the tree people it will be a conception of the sheep which recently disappeared over the horizon now eating grass on the south side of the mountain. (In a similar example due to Reichenbach concerning people who live in a large translucent cube, it will be

the conception that the shadows they see cast on the surfaces of the cube result from the presence of birds outside their cube. Reichenbach 1). For ourselves, within a particular anti-realist context, it could be a conception of some distant historical situation.

On the face of it, it certainly seems plausible to credit McGinn's tree people with such conceptions. Indeed if we look back to the way in which the example was set up, it seems as if it would be difficult to deny their ability to form such conceptions. We should recall that;

> '....like us, they are disposed, realistically, to assert bivalence across the board; that is, they take the appropriate notion of truth for their sentences to transcend the epistemic limitations imposed upon them by their truncated recognitional capacities.' (McGinn 2, p25.)

Such an acceptance of bivalence across the board appears in itself to imply this ability to form conceptions of recognition-transcendent situations. And again, even without considering the arguments which might be concocted in debating whether or not we are able to form corresponding historical conceptions, it would appear somewhat perverse to deny such a capacity.

Having said this we can perhaps feel sympathy towards McGinn who rather than argue this point simply points to

it as a rather obvious fact. All we need to note is that this idea which appears to play such a fundamental role in McGinn's defence of realism - that it does appear possible within linguistic communities, to form conceptions of recognition-transcendent situations - turns out to be a rather straightforward view with which most people would accord on the grounds that its denial would appear perverse.

Perhaps at this stage we should pause to reflect on the nature of McGinn's rebuttal of anti-realism. The very fact that when translated to a more familiar anti-realist context it appears to possess a sort of innocent banality should introduce a suspicion that the response may have misconstrued the original challenge. Presented with an argument in favour of anti-realism with respect to the past, of the type which we encountered in the previous section, do we expect that an appropriate rebuttal of those arguments will consist in an affirmation that we can in fact conceive of events in the past? On the face of it, it appears unlikely that such an apparently obvious suggestion would advance the realist's position in any way. At least either this must be the case or Dummett (and his associated anti-realists) must have been guilty of a gross oversight in developing this anti-realist position.

Why then does McGinn believe that by highlighting this particular fact in the context of his own example he will have successfully overcome an anti-realist's challenge which is taken to be of a quite general nature? I think this arises

simply from what McGinn takes the anti-realist argument to consist of. As was remarked earlier he clearly sees the denial, of the view that we are able to conceive of verification-transcendent situations, as a fundamental feature of the 'general' anti-realist's position. We must now revisit our earlier outline of the anti-realist's position to see if McGinn is actually correct in this belief.

It will be recalled that in Dummett 3 the development of the anti-realist argument involved as a major feature non-effectively-decidable statements - and this is generally true of anti-realist arguments. These were introduced in order to show that the realist theory of meaning being considered could not successfully account for our understanding of such statements. Implicit in this move was the idea that we do in fact understand such statements. Now consider a statement which describes a recognition-transcendent situation. Such a statement would be non-effectively-decidable but we should be clear: Dummett's anti-realist makes no claim that such a statement cannot be understood. If he did make such a claim this would effectively release the realist from any obligation to show that his theory of meaning extended to cover such statements. If we do not understand such statements, if we do not know what they mean, no one is under any obligation to account for the meaning of such statements. Consequently such a claim would remove the anti-realist's main line of attack against the realist.

The anti-realist does not then and cannot deny that we are able to understand statements describing verification-transcendent situations. Rather as Martin Bell notes, 'Dummett's strategy is to show that understanding is not knowledge of truth conditions by producing examples of intelligible sentences where he alleges there is no knowledge of truth conditions.' (Bell 1, p148.) (This line is clearly opposed to the suggestion made by Paul Horwich - Horwich 1 - to the effect that understanding a statement implies knowledge of its truth-conditions.) With this in mind it would seem most implausible if the anti-realist were to deny that we are able to form conceptions of the situations described by such statements. This would amount to a claim that whilst we are able fully to understand a statement describing a particular situation we are nevertheless unable to form a conception of that situation. This would, I believe, amount to a distortion of what we mean by the words 'understand' and 'conception'. In any case it remains that the anti-realist does not deny that we are able to form conceptions of situations described by verification-transcendent truth conditions. The further point may be debatable but it would seem that anything other than an outright opposition to such a denial would put an intolerable strain on the anti-realist's case against realism.

It would seem therefore that what McGinn takes to be the crucial step in refuting the anti-realist's argument - namely the affirmation that we can form conceptions of recognition-transcendent situations - would be something

that the anti-realist would in fact readily accept. Indeed it would seem to form a part of the argument which he develops in his rejection of realism. How then is it that anti-realism has come to be seen as aligned with such a denial of our capacity to form conceptions of recognition-transcendent situations?

There is a passage in Dummett's paper 'The Reality of the Past', which reads as follows:

> 'However, on this anti-realist account, there is no way by which we could be thought to have passed from a grasp of the kind of situation which justifies the assertion of a statement about the past to a conception of what it would be for such a statement to be true independently of any such situation which would justify its being now, or subsequently, asserted.' (Dummett 4, p363.)

Now it may or may not be that this passage or a similar one has been responsible for the idea that the anti-realist's case rests firmly (or perhaps insecurely) on a denial that we are able to form conceptions of verification-transcendent situations. In any event there appears to be sufficient similarity at first sight, between the alleged position and the above quotation, to warrant further investigation.

In the passage which precedes the one quoted, Dummett discusses the way in which we sometimes use memory to justify

assertions concerning events past. We are able to remember or recollect such events and this, it seems to me, implies that we are able to form a conception of such events or situations. It would not make sense to allow that we could remember an event taking place yet at the same time deny that we were able to form a conception of that event. The two views are mutually incompatible. Consequently when we come to the final sentence of the passage quoted we must refrain from taking this as confirmation of McGinn's conception of the anti-realist's position.

In these passages (Dummett 4, p363), Dummett appears to make the following points; The anti-realist's argument with respect to the past follows his general line as applied elsewhere. He grants that we make justified assertions concerning events past. In some instances we do this on the basis of a recollection, via memory, of the appropriate events. This memory process disposes us to make assertions of various types regarding the past and it is this process, as it happens now, which justifies my assertion of the statement. Having said this however, there is no way in which we can pass from a grasp of this assertibility-condition, namely a disposition to assert certain past-tense statements on the basis of our recollection of events described by those statements, to a grasp of the actual condition: the past event itself, independently of or over and above the grasp we have, based on our memory of the event.

Hence it is not being denied that we are able to form a conception of the event described by the statement. On the contrary this is recognised as being self-evident. Rather it is denied that we are able directly to grasp that past event now, in a way which is independent of our just remembering it. Putting aside our capacity to recollect (whether this be based on our own or others' memory or based on some record); and putting aside our grasp of current events and situations, there is no alternative means by which we can determine directly, from inspection as it were, whether in fact a particular past-tense statement is true or false.

This same point which tells against McGinn's argument is made by Martin Bell. He comments that;

> '....we do indeed have a conception of truth conditions which, as it were, goes beyond the decision procedures we actually possess. But that does not mean that we have a conception of truth conditions as possibly <u>obtaining</u> independently of the availability of evidence, for that, in the context of intuitionism is the conception of the analogues of a mathematical proof as themselves somehow existing independently of our grasp of them.' (Bell 1, p143.)

To summarise then, an attempt has been made to show that a generalised form of the anti-realist's argument cannot be correct. A hypothetical case has been introduced to which

it is suggested the anti-realist's argument should be applicable if at all. (It is interesting to reflect on why it was necessary to introduce this particular example in which we occupy a God-like position with respect to the tree people. Possibly this was done in order to reinforce the realist notion that what is recognition-transcendent for us is really only a determinate stretch of the total reality.)

An attempt has then been made to show that in this case the anti-realist's argument can be shown to be fallacious. This demonstration has however been based upon an affirmation that the tree people, and by implication ourselves, are able to form conceptions of recognition-transcendent situations. For the tree people these are conceptions of situations existing on the south side of their mountain and for ourselves they might be conceptions of events in the remote past. The assumption has been made that it is an essential feature of the anti-realist's position that he denies that such conceptions can be formed.

In fact however it seems that the anti-realist would not want to make such a denial and further what does appear as an essential part of his argument against the realist - namely that we are able to understand non-effectively-decidable statements - seems to carry with it the implication that we are able to form such conceptions.

We have then gone on to consider how it might have

come about that the anti-realist's position has been seen to be aligned with a denial of our ability to form these conceptions and this had led us, I hope, to a sounder appreciation of what is and what is not a part of the anti-realist's case.

In another paper (McGinn 3), entitled 'Realist Semantics and Content-Ascription', McGinn introduces a variety of other examples which are similarly directed towards the downfall of anti-realism. Most of these examples, as with the one we have considered, introduce, usually in an implicit way, two linguistic communities. One of these will have limited recognitional capacities when compared to the other. In essence what all these examples come down to is a variation of the Cartesian malignant demon. In the context of one community we are invited to note that the recognitional capacities and possibilities for verification have a particular scope. Then switching to the context or world view of the alternative community, (the demon community, which is sometimes our own), it is pointed out that "reality" actually goes beyond these capacities. In discussing one case he considers a colony of brains in vats. These vat-people have developed their language whilst in this state and have dispositions to linguistic use similar to ours, although the reference of their statements and hence, according to McGinn, the content is different. In this case McGinn recommends that verification-conditions be equated with truth-conditions on the grounds that the statements of these particular vat-people never did refer to an external reality

as seen by us. (McGinn 3, p119.) However in this realm of fantasy worlds, the lot of this particular community could be postulated to be our own. That is to say, we could imagine that we were in fact McGinn's vat-people and that we had never actually succeeded in referring to the external reality inhabited by the 'keepers of the vats'. Viewed from this perspective the brain-in-vat/demon type argument takes on the appearance of trying to drive a rift between verification-conditions and truth-conditions. These arguments can then be seen as support for, or as opposition to, the equivalence of verification-conditions and truth-conditions which illustrates quite well the supervenient and redundant nature of metaphysical realism. The nearest McGinn seems to come to recognising that he is operating with two distinct linguistic communities arises when he comments in setting up one of these examples; 'We now consider a more extensive fragment of our language,.....; or better, we consider as semantic interpreters the corresponding fragment of the language of some <u>other</u> community....' (McGinn 3, p117.)

Elsewhere McGinn accepts, for the sake of argument, that meaning may be determined solely by what is empirically accessible but then because of his failure to distinguish properly the different recognitional capacities of his archetypal communities, he suggests that what lies within the scope of the "demon's" powers is accessible for both. (McGinn 3, p128.) Towards the end of this paper McGinn even seems to suggest that the crux of these issues really comes down to our establishing which "demon" view of the

world is really the correct one. (McGinn 3, p130.)

McGinn hopes to show by means of these examples that reference is independent of use. Meaning, he claims, must be dependent in part upon reference and therefore use cannot exhaustively determine meaning. The brain-in-vat/demon type cases are intended to show that our usage may not correspond to reality; that we may in fact be failing to refer to the true reality. Nevertheless our meaning, he contends, must be determined to some extent by that reality.

If someone were to insist (or just mention the possibility) that his wrist-watch, which in all detectable respects was like any other wrist-watch, was in fact a special watch which was run by a leprechaun, we might react in different ways. One way in which it would be inappropriate to respond would be to say that because of this possibility we must revise our understanding of what is meant by the word "wrist-watch". One can postulate any number of recognition-transcendent possibilities (by the lights of the community whose language is being considered), but we can see clearly that these possibilities have nothing to do with meaning if only for the reason that were it otherwise they would destroy meaning. What we mean by our words is determined by how we use them and cannot be by some possible verification-transcendent "reality".

McGinn's case rests upon the idea that reference, construed in a possibly verification-transcendent sense,

plays a major role in sentence content and thereby in meaning. This however is simply a re-statement of the realist's position, it is not an argument for it.

In the previous section and also in our consideration of McGinn's objection to anti-realism, we referred to and discussed Dummett's paper 'The Reality of the Past' (Dummett 4). This is a paper which has prompted comment from other sources, notably from John McDowell in his 'On "The Reality of the Past"' (McDowell 1) and from Crispin Wright in his paper, 'Realism, Truth-Value Links, Other Minds and the Past' (Wright 3). It is with the debate, as it has been developed in these papers, that I shall next be concerned.

(ii)

McDowell, like McGinn, attempts to resist the implications of the anti-realist's challenge which Dummett is seen to present. He concentrates mainly however on the challenge with respect to the past and he does not adopt the view that the anti-realist's position can be easily shown to depend on an absurdity. Additionally McDowell takes exception to the realist's position which is depicted by Dummett in 'The Reality of the Past'. Basically then McDowell's approach is to take seriously the challenge which the anti-realist makes with respect to the past. He accepts the implications of the truth-value link, but sees this not so much as an embarrassment to the anti-realist who must show that his position is not in contravention of this

universally accepted notion, but rather as something which is unable to sustain the burden which the realist places upon it. He therefore rejects truth-value-link realism (at least with respect to the past) but then forges a new form of realism which is not dependent on the link and tries to show how this successfully meets the anti-realist's challenge.

Interestingly, McDowell considers other areas where something akin to the truth-value link might be adopted by realists attempting to rebut the anti-realist's challenge. One such area is that of ascribing pain, or more generally feelings, to others. In this case a statement ascribing pain to another person would be true in circumstances which made a self-ascription of pain by that person true. Likewise a statement concerning some past event would be true in circumstances which made a present-tense statement describing that event true when uttered at the appropriate past time.

Another case which is considered by McDowell is that of statements which are used to describe situations elsewhere. That is to say, situations at places other than those which are within the observable range of the speaker - however this can be defined. Here the truth-value link connects statements uttered by a speaker at one location and describing situations obtaining at another location, to statements uttered at that other location and about the situation at that location. Statements of the former kind will be true in circumstances in which statements of the latter kind

are true where the situations described by each are appropriately similar.

Now in this case McDowell does regard the truth-value link as providing a feasible defence of realism. The link in this case has some potential explanatory power because the statement which the problematic statement is linked to, is one that the utterer of the problematic statement could in principle confirm or falsify. All he has to be prepared to do is to travel.

McDowell comments as follows:

> 'Here, however, appeal to truth-value links yields an effective justification for continuing to use the notion of truth conditions in a theory of meaning. For the truth-value links appealed to in this case would point to ways in which - by travelling and then checking whether the truth conditions of the unmodified sentences obtain - a person could, in principle, decide whether the truth conditions ascribed to the modified sentences, by a theory which incorporates the links, obtained before the travel was undertaken. (Of course this needs qualification - for instance, to cover ruling out the possibility of change during the travel.) In this case, then, as not in the others, appeal to truth-value links might genuinely help a realist, serving to remove an initial appearance that a description of linguistic competence in terms of truth conditions

is inimical to the broadly verificationist principles of the anti-realist.' (McDowell 1, p133).

Presumably McDowell would not want to concede a parallel success in the other cases because this would require time travel on the one hand and human transubstantiation on the other.

(iii)

This development of McDowell's raises a particular confusion which seems to lie at the heart of the anti-realist's argument.

The anti-realist as we have seen first selects a class of statements. He then identifies amongst these some which we are perfectly well able to understand but for which no truth-conditions appear to be accessible to us. In the case of mathematical statements of this type we term these non-effectively-decidable and they become the problematic sub-set of statements for which, it is maintained, a realist approach to meaning fails. In other areas it is not clear whether in fact the anti-realist would wish to describe such statements as non-effectively-decidable or not - it is however statements of this type which he finds problematic and which provide his case with some plausibility.

A concept which is crucial to this general outline, but which is left somewhat vague, is that of accessibility or availability to the awareness or consciousness of the

language user. Attempting to be a little more specific: we can pose the question, in the context of the past, 'What exactly is it that is claimed to be inaccessible?'

There is a sense in which we are never presently aware of events as they arise. It is only possible for me to be aware of an event as that event impinges in some way on me. This effect which the event has on me involves a finite time and by the time we are in some sense aware of the event the event is no longer. As is widely known events which might take place on or around the sun are not 'available' to our awareness here on earth until some eight minutes later because of the time taken for light - the fastest means of impingement - to travel from the event to ourselves.

Because of this delay an anti-realist about the past may wish to extend his argument to present-tense statements about events on or around the sun. Having made this move, he will be forced, in order to maintain consistency, to extend it to cover all present-tense statements with the possible exception of phenomenologically based statements - for which it can be argued that no lag occurs. He does this on the grounds that in his learning to use present-tense statements to make assertions about events on or around the sun, he is never actually aware of the events which might constitute truth-conditions for these statements. All that is 'available' to his awareness in this respect are past states of affairs. He then recognises that there is nothing really critical about this particular eight-

minute delay and thereby feels compelled to extend this particular part of his approach to meaning to all present-tense statements.

Dummett recognises in his paper the possibility of a combined anti-realism both with regard to past and present-tensed statements (this is the position held by the global anti-realist which he considers); but he also allows that there may be a form of anti-realism with respect to the past which hangs together with a realism concerning the present.

In this latter case obviously the anti-realist in question does not feel compelled to accept that presently occurring states of affairs on the sun are inaccessible to us. The possible variations in the anti-realist's position stem from the fact that we are not clearly aware of what is meant by 'accessible' and 'inaccessible' - we are given no criterion by which we could judge whether in fact the anti-realist with respect to the past only is being inconsistent in this argument.

By allowing that a time delay between an event's occurring and our awareness of that event will not suffice to rule out that event from our awareness or accessibility, this restricted anti-realist seems to open up a route by means of which the past could be claimed to be accessible to us.

Suppose we imagine the sequence associated with an event impinging on us, in the following way:

(i) An event occurs at time 0.

(ii) A delay 't' takes place between the event's occurrence and a photon having travelled from the event to our bodily exterior.

(iii) A further delay 't_1' takes place between the photon's having impacted on our retina and our becoming aware of the event.

This latter delay will consist in the time taken for neural transmission and, in some vague sense, 'brain processing'.

Now delays of this type i.e., $t + t_1$, will arise in connection with our witnessing any event. The anti-realist currently being considered (Dummett's T-anti-realist) does not regard this delay as problematic in any way - in the sense that he regards events which are separated from us by delays of this type, as still being <u>accessible</u> to us. And this is true even when t becomes relatively large - of the order of minutes at least. Now consider the event of my daughter having just a few moments earlier entered my study. The time interval between that event and the 'present' will be comprised of $t + t_1 + t_2$, where t_2 is the interval between my initial awareness of that event

and 'now'. It may be that $t + t_1 + t_2$ is shorter than other delays of the type $t + t_1$, i.e. where $t + t_1$ in this latter case is associated with my observation of the sun. In this case also there will be some sort of 'brain process' associated with t_2 which is akin to the one associated with t_1 - it is this which enables me to remember the event.

I am not suggesting that the particular 'brain process' associated with remembering a given event is identical with or even of the same type as one which is associated with recognising that event but in both cases they will be 'brain processes' - they will be characterised by sequences of brain chemistry.

Viewed in this way it is uncertain whether the T-anti-realist would want to say that the event I described - my daughter's appearance - is inaccessible to me ('now'). If he does wish to maintain this he will be obliged to explain in a non-arbitrary way why it is that the process associated with the interval t_2 is different in principle from that which accompanies t_1, and why it is that the introduction of the interval t_2 makes an event inaccessible when t_2 may well be small compared with t or even t_1.

Such an anti-realist, in effect, leaves himself open to a realist's counter claim that the process associated with t_2 <u>does</u> allow past events to be accessible to us now. It is in fact a claim of this type which McDowell makes.

'Events make impacts on our senses while they occur: mastery of forms of words suitable for describing contemporary events is acquired by training which begins by instilling propensities to respond to those impacts with appropriate verbal behaviour. The fact that training which imparts mastery of the past tense can get started at all is presumably due to the persistence sometimes, presumably in the nervous system, of some trace of the impact of a previous event on the senses, so that suitable training is able to institute a differentiation of verbal dispositions, with respect to forms of words systematically related to those with which present events are apt to be greeted, according to whether or not those presumed traces are present. ... And the knowledge is, as required by our different kind of realist, immediate. There is nothing for it to be the product of inference from: certainly not the presumed trace, which figures in this sketch not as something available, even potentially, to the consciousness of someone who remembers - it is no such thing - but as an element in a speculative, though plausible, physiological explanation of why the training works. On this view, then, the circumstance of such an event's having occurred is, as our realist requires, sometimes itself available to awareness.' (McDowell 1, pp136-137.)

The past event then, in certain instances, is available to our awareness and not just by virtue of a memory acting

as a proxy - a pale reflection of the true event - although it is via some such memory trace that we achieve this awareness. In the same sense it is via some sort of neural transmission/brain processes that we are aware of 'presently' witnessed events.

The thrust of this realist counter depends upon the claim that the brain process/memory trace/whatever, is not so much a representation of the event but rather is the vehicle by which the event impinges on our awareness. This is just in the same way as other brain processes mediate in our 'present' awareness of some event taking place before us. In other words the processes associated with the interval t_2 are not different in principle in this respect from those associated with t_1 and the anti-realist has no right legislating arbitrarily that the former processes serve to prevent the possibility of the event being accessible to us. At least he has no right until he has defined more specifically what he means by accessibility.

We should perhaps re-examine one of the points which arose earlier in this section. This was simply that we noted that events which we loosely describe as being the subject of our present awareness occur prior to that awareness. In Wright 1, consideration is given to the problem of what can be verified now. Thus Wright notes that:

> 'Someone might protest.... that of no statement which we have not yet verified can it be said that it is

capable of verification 'now'; for (if) we start now, we shall finish in the future.' (Wright 1, p183.)

However Wright dismisses this objection in favour of what he believes we can recognise intuitively:

'But fortunately we need not waste time on this. Intuitively we can recognise at any time a threefold division among possible assertions: those for which if we have not already tested them, it is too late; those for which if we are to test them, it is too soon; and those for which the opportunity for a relevant test is current.' (Wright 1, p183.)

Whilst the distinction proposed does have intuitive plausibility we would do well to remember that we are moving in an area where we have no guarantee that intuitive plausibility will signpost the right direction. It remains the case that for any event which we observe there will be a delay between that event and our observation of it.

Wright also examines a case in which we in 1979 observe an event T which occurs on a star a hundred light years distant (Wright 1, pp187-8). Wright uses this example in order to probe for an inconsistency between the anti-realist's seemingly unavoidable acceptance of a timelessness thesis, i.e. a thesis to the effect that, 'whatever someone can truly state at a particular time can be truly stated by anyone, no matter when, where, and who; though to effect

the same statement on a different occasion will frequently involve changes in mood, tense, pronoun, and adverb', (Wright 3), and acceptance of the truth-value links. However from the point of view of our present considerations, we can note that with respect to this example Wright seems to accept that our observation of T (an event which actually took place in 1879), in 1979 entitles us to knowledge of the fact that T occurred in 1879. Hence in this extreme case what we might (without astronomical sophistication) be inclined to say we observe about present events, really relates to events in history. And in less extreme cases even where verification of a statement consists of nothing more than our sitting back and observing some event, our verification will strictly post-date the event or situation which we take to provide that verification. Furthermore our awareness of this event or situation will be modified by processes which take place in our central nervous system.

These two points, the fact of the delay and the modification, which accompanies that delay, apply also in my 'awareness' of events which I have previously witnessed. In this latter case those processes in our central nervous system (CNS) will be ones which are associated with memory, whereas in the former case they will be ones associated with perception. It is being suggested then that there exists here an analogy. We have two sequences, viz:

Event (at time 0) -> CNS processing -> Awareness of Event
(perception) at time Z

```
Event (at time 0) -> CNS processing -> Awareness of Event
                     (perception &      at time Z
                      memory)
```

The question then arises, if the interval between time 0 and time Z can be of similar duration in either case, what is it that tempts the anti-realist to rule in one case that the event is accessible and in the other, not. It is agreed that we cannot re-arrange past events to verify something which was not verified at the time. But, as Wright's objector notes, this situation has its parallel with respect to the present. It is not strictly possible to re-arrange things presently so that what we are able to verify is different. All we may do is plan to change things or start out on a verification procedure which will be accomplished subsequently.

In Wright 1 and Wright 2 the analogy is used of a railway train passing by some panorama and in so doing providing an opportunity for passengers to make observations of what lies within the scope of view at any time, though not of things which lie too far ahead or behind on the track. (The analogy supports well the intuitive approach which Wright adopts.) Unlike Wright's objector we are not here pursuing the point that time delays prevent things present being verified. Rather we are posing the question, if such delays do not present a problem for 'current' verifications, why should we regard similar delays as problematic where the statement in question acknowledges this delay in its tense. In terms of the analogy, just as perception gives us a window

on the present, so memory can perhaps give us a window on the past.

The purpose behind our examining this line of thought has been to see in what way McDowell's proposal, that we can now be considered to have access to the past, can be fleshed out or given some plausibility. The proposal is that for certain past-tense statements, the truth-conditions for those statements are currently available to us. Such a view clearly would lend support to the realist's case with respect to these statements at least. Furthermore if the anti-realist had no qualms about accepting such a proposal this would mean that he would presumably have to draw the line between realist and anti-realist semantics on the basis of some individual's memory span or perhaps on that of the oldest member of a community. This boundary will as a consequence be constantly changing and whilst this in itself might not be obviously unacceptable, the arbitrary nature of the distinction will surely strike us as odd.

We shall examine this McDowell-based attack and the anti-realist's possible options to it, further in the next section.

(iv)

There are at least two obvious moves which the anti-realist can make when faced with the sort of rebuttal which McDowell presents. The first is to point out that McDowell

has not in fact demonstrated that a realist account will suffice for all past-tense statements - indeed he seems to concede that this is the case - and the second response involves a re-definition of the disputed class.

If again we cast our minds back to the anti-realist argument which was presented in Dummett 3, we will recall that the route which that argument took was to establish that for some sub-class of the disputed class of statements (mathematical statements), truth could not be taken as a central concept in the theory of meaning applicable to that sub-class. It was never shown that truth was an inappropriate central concept for all statements of the disputed class. Rather it was then implicitly assumed that what was required was a generally applicable theory appropriate to the disputed class (i.e. mathematical statements), and because Platonism had been shown to be unsatisfactory in some cases, it was rejected as a suitable theory for the class as a whole.

There is an important point here which we need to be aware of. Having defined a disputed class the anti-realist does not attempt to show that, for each specific statement within the class, a rejection of a realist semantics is called for. However, having shown that such a rejection is necessary for some sub-set of the class, he concludes that realism cannot be applied to this class. This latter move is clearly only valid if we take as a premise the need for a consistent theory of meaning across the disputed class. This is the assumption which Dummett's anti-realist makes,

(Dummett 3, pp223-5) in his rejection of Platonism. There is no proposal that the anti-realist should reject realist semantics for only a sub-class, whilst retaining it for the rest of the disputed class. I believe that Dummett would argue on this point that whilst for certain statements within the disputed class the anti-realist's argument does not take hold specifically, any attempt to retain a realist account of their meaning in the face of a clear rejection of such an account elsewhere within the class would lead us to misunderstand the nature of their meaning. It would '... [lead] us to use these statements in a recognisably different way from that in which we should use them if we had a clear grasp of the kind of meaning which we ourselves have conferred on them, namely by accepting as valid inferences which are in fact unjustifiable.' (Dummett 4, p362.)

Viewed in this light McDowell's advance against the anti-realist looks less than secure. The anti-realist might grant that McDowell has shown how <u>some</u> truth-conditions appropriate to <u>some</u> past-tense statements may be regarded as accessible to our awareness. However he perhaps claims that the very fact that others are not accessible shows that a realist notion of meaning for this class is not appropriate - just as non-effectively-decidable mathematical statements proved to be the downfall for the whole class of mathematical statements.

Whether in fact this sort of claim should be regarded

by the realist as reasonable, either in the case of the past or that of mathematics, is something we shall need to return to.

The other response which the anti-realist can make is to re-specify what in fact the disputed class is. Instead of concerning himself with simply past-tense statements he might restrict himself to statements about the remote past, where being remote implies being beyond living memory.

This anti-realist move should not be regarded as above suspicion either. It carries with it some of its own peculiarities. In particular if the anti-realist is pressed to define specifically what the disputed class is and he does this in such a way that it becomes dependent upon some individual's memory span (in order to avoid McDowell's rebuttal) then the extent of the class will vary with time. Hence our theory of meaning for past-tense statements will be different according to whether these are remotely past or not, and the boundary between the two will be constantly changing. A particular statement will at one moment be accorded meaning on the basis of one theory and at another on the basis of a different theory. It may be remarked that Dummett's T-anti-realist is faced with just such a constantly changing semantics with regard to present-tense statements. The cases are not quite parallel however in so much as for the T-anti-realist one theory will always be retained for present-tense statements whilst another is adopted for past-tense statements. The boundary we are currently being forced

to contemplate would arise within the midst of past-tense statements and, perhaps even more significantly, can be seen as being drawn so arbitrarily.

In what has been said so far it has been assumed that the criterion which the anti-realist applies in determining what is and what is not accessible (whatever it may be), is constant across the linguistic community. For instance it was assumed above that the anti-realist might want to define his disputed class as say, statements about the past which is beyond the memory of the oldest living speaker of the language. At least this would establish, throughout the community, which statements are to be understood in terms of which theory of meaning - assuming that the anti-realist is able to put forward a convincing case in the disputed area. However if the anti-realist attempts to make his case in terms of acquisition, it would seem that the accessibility criterion he adopts should take account of particular individual speakers' capabilities. This is a point which McGinn makes and it is one which in its turn raises further difficulties for the anti-realist.

> 'First, it denies an evident publicity in the semantics of the language. Second, the act of assertion would have no uniform significance in the community, an assertion being interpretable as a claim to truth or to justification, according as the asserted sentence was or was not decidable by the speaker. Third, the variation across speakers in respect of their entitlement

to assert bivalence for a class of sentences would seem to deprive Dummett of any chance to derive general metaphysical conclusions from the form taken by a proper theory of meaning.' (McGinn 2, p22.)

Once again this criticism of the anti-realist's position arises as a result of the obscurity which surrounds the conception - which is fundamental to his position - of what is regarded as being accessible to awareness and whose awareness in particular we should be concerned with. If the anti-realist is to deal effectively with moves of this sort he will need to sharpen up his handling in this respect.

I suggested earlier that there were two obvious responses which the anti-realist could make when faced with McDowell's realist claim - to the effect that we each of us can in certain instances be 'aware of', and have 'accessible' to us, events past. Both of these responses conceded to McDowell the point he was trying to establish about past events being in some sense 'available'. In the one case the anti-realist merely pointed out that this <u>sometime</u> availability of past events was not sufficient to reinforce the realist theory of meaning for all statements of this type (i.e. <u>all</u> past-tense statements.) And in the other, the anti-realist either shifted ground or claimed that his ground had always been not simply concerned with <u>all</u> statements about the past but rather only those relating to the remote past. (In this latter case the disputed class will end up clearly more restricted.)

Another possible alternative for the anti-realist would be to reject outright the point which McDowell claims to have established, that we can be in touch, as it were, with the past. Although I described the other responses as obvious moves, perhaps it is this one which has most immediate appeal to an anti-realist: in any event it is something more along these lines which is espoused by Wright in his defence of Dummett's anti-realist. (See Wright 3.)

Before going on to consider this further possibility we should perhaps recap on McDowell's defence of realism. McDowell takes the view (rightly or wrongly), that the anti-realist wishes to maintain that truth-conditions for past-tense statements (i.e. the disputed class) are never 'available' to us (i.e. the disputed class is as a whole problematic in this respect). He also believes, for reasons which are less obvious (perhaps because the details of truth-value-link realism concerning the past have never been specified), that truth-value-link realism concedes this inaccessibility claim to the anti-realist. Truth-value-link realism on this view is a realist defence which, however it attempts to stave off the anti-realist challenge, does not do this by establishing the actual accessibility of events past. McDowell's alternative realist defence is a radical departure from this then, in so far as it <u>does</u> claim, in certain instances, that this 'accessibility' <u>is achieved</u>.

(v)

Wright, so far as I can see, criticizes McDowell on two counts with respect to his defence of realism - a defence which Wright labels as M-realism. On the first count he balks at McDowell's suggestion that we can in certain cases be in touch with the past, and secondly he claims that even if this were granted to McDowell, it would not assist him in so far as the <u>remaining</u> non-effectively-decidable statements about the past were concerned.

The latter objection is akin to the anti-realist moves we discussed earlier and is indeed capable of being developed into either one of the two considered. The former objection is however distinct, and in so far as it avoids certain problems which the anti-realist may otherwise be storing up for himself, it would seem to be preferable.

Wright comments - with justification - that McDowell doesn't really say much about the actual process which is involved in making the past accessible or bringing it (where it can be) to our awareness. Hence he writes:

> '... the play with traces in the nervous system made in §6 of his paper serves only to make a plausible case for supposing that our propensity to assert past-tense statements cannot everywhere be seen as a propensity to make certain sorts of inference.... Examples in some detail are what is wanted here; we need to be told how, subject to all the relevant

conditions, we can actually directly observe that it rained yesterday, for instance; .....' (Wright 3, pp125-6.)

Now there certainly is some truth in the suggestion that McDowell could have been a little more explicit on this account. The way in which I would see him as having been more explicit would be in essence to bring out the idea of time delays associated with brain processes associated with both perception and memory - without attempting to be specific in physiological terms about these processes. Whether in fact I am correct in this assumption is of little importance however since this remains as one possible way of expanding on McDowell's idea. How then, on this sort of account, is Wright to be told that we can actually directly observe that it rained yesterday?

Simply we can observe this in the sense of being aware of the condition - of it having rained yesterday - by recollecting the event. When we do this, there will be a link existing between the event and our awareness which we may characterise as the memory process. This process, whatever it may involve in terms of brain physiology, need not be dissimilar from the 'perceptual' process which would link an event 'presently' observed to our awareness.

Remembering Wright's example of an event T which we observe at 1979 as occurring on a star one hundred light years away (Wright 1), we can see how one could legitimately

be said to have directly observed at that time, a supernova explosion which occurred not merely the day before but one hundred years previously. Hence if we accept as unproblematic the recognition of truth-conditions which consist of events 'currently' witnessed, we should not object in principle to McDowell's account of how the past can be brought to our awareness.

This account is however unlikely to satisfy the determined anti-realist. Once allowed to intervene he will almost certainly point to the fact that memory is fallible and that even those events which we have previously witnessed may well be recalled incorrectly. He will then suggest that this proves that our so-called observation of past events (now), is not actual direct observation. Dummett himself raises this objection against the realist with respect to the past; 'if memory is a direct contact with past events, how can a mistake of memory occur?' (Dummett 7, p109. See also Dummett 6, p450.)

Of course the realist will then presumably point out that any perceptual observation of an event 'currently' witnessed can equally be in error. It was never the realist's intention to demonstrate that we could achieve an incontrovertible certainty about the facts pertaining to past events - merely that we could become, in certain circumstances, aware of these events. Indeed the realist will claim that he did not even know that anything else was being required of him.

Hence if the anti-realist is to object against the suggested means by which we can regard ourselves as being 'aware' of the past, on the grounds that it is fallible, it would seem that he may thereby commit himself to an anti-realist approach to the present also - and possibly much else.

Wright seems to trace this route. He first of all considers that McDowell's proposed form of awareness might amount to no more than experience of criteria, and notes that this would be consistent with the falsity of the relevant statement. Should McDowell's realist make a claim then for an awareness which provides certainty? Wright thinks this would be unwise since any claim to indefeasible certainty with respect to contingent statements must be regarded as suspect. Has McDowell then overcome this objection by default, i.e. can he ignore comments about the fallibility of his proposed awareness because even those forms of awareness with the most scrupulous pedigree ('reports about one's immediate physical environment', Wright 3, p124) are tainted with the same fallibility? At this point Wright recognises the need for a notion of truth-conditions obtaining detectably, which does not involve the guarantee of indefeasible certainty to anyone who detects their obtaining. It seems to me that Wright then moves away from a demand for indefeasible certainty - perhaps because such a demand would appear to lead on to a wholesale revision of our realist stance towards present-tensed statements also - but he does

not move far. He formulates a new requirement (which he later imposes on McDowell's realist), in terms of 'bound to be correctness' rather than indefeasible certainty. He asks how an account can be made out of the notion involved. And in response he notes that:

> '...some statements, including all (effectively) decidable mathematical statements, have the characteristic that they are associated with a possible course of action which it is within the power of finite beings to implement and which is such that, if an agent carries it through correctly and with full attention, then, provided he makes no perceptual error and correctly understands the statement in question, the opinion which he forms concerning the truth-value of that statement is bound to be correct.' (Wright 3, p124.)

And in practice for 'the whole class of statements concerning present goings-on in bounded, smallish, nearby regions of space which they represent, the appropriate procedure is: position yourself suitably and observe.' (Wright 3, p124.)

Such a procedure when applied to regions of this sort will place us in a position of certainty which 'falls short of indefeasibility not because we cannot fully embrace in consciousness the appropriate truth-, or falsity-, conferring circumstances - for carrying out the appropriate procedure in a way which meets the described conditions is doing just

that - but because we cannot, in general, secure an indefeasible certainty that the procedure in question has been so implemented:' (Wright 3, p124.)

According to this account our following the procedure allows us, in these instances, to 'embrace in consciousness the appropriate truth-, or falsity-, conferring circumstances.' And adoption of the procedure confers on us in those cases a state of 'bound to be correctness' even though we can never actually be indefeasibly sure that we have achieved this state, because we can never be certain that we have in fact applied the procedure in the prescribed manner. Wright attempts to explicate the notions of verification and decidability also in his paper 'Strict Finitism' (Wright 4). Here again he aims at a procedure which whilst falling short of indefeasible certainty (Wright 4, pp210-211), will suffice to exclude certain obvious cases (Wright 4, p215), e.g. statements concerning the past, the remote future, others' sensations, etc.

Let us assume that some elaboration of this sort of the notion of decidability can be given which allows us to decide the truth-value of statements concerning present goings-on in bounded, smallish, nearby regions of space even though such an assumption prejudices some issues which a global anti-realist would presumably want to contest. How then does McDowell's proposed form of awareness fare when faced with this account of what is to count as decidable? Wright first considers a form of McDowell's realism (M-

realism) concerning the ascriptions of others' sensations. He then goes on;

> 'The same, I suggest, holds good of statements about the past; though, again, I have no argument for the point save to appeal to our intuitive preconceptions. The question is: can any plausible account be produced of the province - corresponding to behaviour and overt physical condition in the M-realist's account of others' pains - on which one who wished, supposing such a thing were ever possible, directly to verify a statement about the past would have to concentrate? Clearly it will not do merely to invite him to "observe the past".' (Wright 3, p125.)

But it seems that Wright is not taking McDowell seriously in this respect for if we accept that McDowell has in some way provided an account of our direct awareness of the past then it will be precisely by our 'observing' or remembering the past that we would attempt to verify such a statement. Wright confirms this suspicion when he asks:

> 'What is the species of presently accessible states of affairs such that an agent who in a sufficiently attentive, comprehendingly, and perceptual-error free way observes enough such states of affairs cannot arrive at a mistaken view about a putative state of affairs which antedated them all?' (Wright 3, p125.)

The form of this question seems to betray Wright's fundamental preconception which is his rejection of the idea that we can in fact be directly aware of the past. Once this possibility is conceded, even if only for the sake of argument, it is fairly obvious that the presently accessible state of affairs in question will be states which occurred in the past. But these states, or our recognitions of them, do not provide us with information concerning the truth-condition of states which antedate <u>them</u>. They allow us to establish the truth-value of statements concerning those states. Wright expects that the state of affairs which the so-called M-realist will cite, will post-date the actual state of affairs to which his past-tense statements refer, because he expects a presently <u>existing</u> state of affairs as opposed to a presently <u>observable</u> state, to be cited. The whole thrust of McDowell's point (whether it be right or wrong) is that states of affairs which do not presently exist can, in certain circumstances, be presently observable. We can in short be aware of the past.

In attempting to answer the question which is posed above by Wright, the M-realist would cite states of affairs which had occurred in the past and for which he had been a nearby observer. He is now able to become aware of these states and providing he is sufficiently attentive, comprehending, and makes <u>no error of recollection</u> he will by this means arrive at a similar state of certainty regarding the truth-value of statements concerning these past situations as Wright believes we are able to, concerning statements

which refer to nearby goings-on. The anti-realist may now object to the assumption which the M-realist makes of no errors of recollection. However the assumption that the procedure can in certain circumstances be followed without such errors intervening merely reflects the anti-realist's own position concerning current perceptual errors. The M-realist, it is being assumed, has provided some account of how the process of recollection can be regarded as feeding our awareness in the same way as perception can, and any persistent attempt by the anti-realist to distinguish between the two on the grounds of susceptibility to error would seem to harp back to the original complaint over defeasibility or indefeasibility.

An alternative objection against the M-realist's response would be that it does not provide a procedure which we can decide to carry out with respect to all past-tense statements. If we had not previously observed the circumstances pertaining to a particular statement we would not be able to recollect the occurrence of those circumstances. (Clearly we are here thinking of being able to recollect only those events which we have previously witnessed - even though there is a quite legitimate sense in which I can recollect Kennedy's assassination whilst not having witnessed it.) The same or at least a similar restriction occurs with respect to present-tense statements. Even if we ignore the time lag problem associated with perception, there will be some events which are presently occurring but which I could not now verify - events occurring in Moscow for example. I could

take steps to ensure that in the future I would be well-positioned with respect to such events and I could in the past have taken such steps, but this is not the same thing. I could equally have arranged things in the past so that what I am able to recollect would have been different but this does not actually change what I can recollect. This is restricted in the same way that my 'present' awareness is restricted to what it is, as opposed to what it might have been.

Looking back then, Wright attempts to examine the soundness of the M-realist's claim to be able to be aware of the past. He first of all rejects the somewhat naive move open to the anti-realist which would be to legislate against this form of awareness on the grounds that memory is fallible. Recognising that such a move would threaten even the legitimacy concerning the decidability of present-tense statements, he attempts to refine the idea of decidability. As a result he produces a notion of decidability involving a procedure which if carried out would for statements concerning present nearby goings-on allow us to achieve a state of certainty or bound to be correctness, with respect to their truth-value. In any particular case we will have no guarantee of indefeasibility however since we can never be quite sure whether in fact the procedure has been correctly adopted. What this seems to amount to is that we are offered a procedure which in principle could result in our being bound to be correct concerning our assessment of truth-values which derive directly from that

procedure. In practice we can never actually be sure that we are bound to be correct in respect of these truth-values since we can never be sure that the procedure has been properly carried out. The question then is, given this procedure, could the M-realist incorporate his notion of awareness of the past in such a procedure and so arrive <u>in principle</u> at certainty concerning the relevant past events? On the basis that the M-realist's awareness of the past is grounded in some sense in memory or recollection of the past, the 'in principle' element here will automatically allow for the fact that memory is fallible and that we can never be certain that we remembered correctly (that we applied the procedure correctly). Bearing this in mind and assuming for the moment that McDowell does somehow manage to forge a link with the past, there seems to be no insuperable difficulty which the M-realist would face in connection with Wright's refinement of the notion of decidability. It is true that Wright believes that there will be a problem and because of this he regards his refinement as distinguishing between statements about present nearby goings-on and past-tense statements. But on inspection, this belief appears to have more to do with Wright's preconceptions concerning our inability to be aware directly of the past. (See also Wright 4, p215.) In this sense he does not take McDowell's proposal seriously.

Turning aside from the issue over whether McDowell can substantiate his claim of awareness of the past in a way that will satisfy Wright's notion of decidability, Wright

goes on to consider how, even if this were granted, it would not in his view advance the M-realist's case. He suggests that the objections which McDowell has himself brought against the truth-value-link realist would apply, in a slightly modified form, to the M-realist also. Just as the truth-value-link realist seemed to be arguing in an unjustifiable way from analogy with the present (or from one's <u>own</u> experience of pain), so now, Wright claims, the M-realist uses those cases in which we may grant he has direct awareness, to justify an understanding of others, where he has not. In Wright's view an unjustified leap is involved. (See Wright 3, pp129-30.)

With regard to the past presumably Wright would want to complain that a trainee who was able to appreciate McDowell's account of how we can be aware of past events experienced, would nevertheless be unable to appreciate or simply perplexed by the suggestion that the unexperienced past is just the same in its pastness. He would be unable to leap from an appreciation of statements referring to the past for which he had some recollection, to one of statements about events and times which he could not possibly recollect - at least if this appreciation was to be based upon the corresponding truth-conditions.

I suggested earlier that this type of opposition to McDowell has similarities with the two anti-realist strategies which were also considered earlier. In the one case the anti-realist would say to McDowell: Yes, but even if I accept

all this talk about traces you have not done enough to re-establish realism with respect to the past as a whole because you yourself readily admit that there are still some cases for which we cannot in principle achieve the sort of experience of the relevant truth-conditions which would be necessary for our training in the use of statements about those conditions or events. Hence we cannot be justified in applying realism to this unified group of statements as a whole and consequently we must reject it and look for something better.

Alternatively the anti-realist says something like: Yes, I accept what you say with regard to that group of statements for which current human memory (mine or someone else's) is effective in achieving the sort of awareness you describe. But this is nothing really to do with the point I am making since my attack on realism is concerned with a more restricted disputed class - namely the class of statements about the remote past. I am not adopting the general class of past-tense statements as my disputed class and hence my position is unaffected by your comments concerning the recent past.

We should recall that the anti-realist attacks the realist on two broad fronts. One involves the acquisition challenge and the other the manifestation challenge. These challenges are based on the anti-realist's contention that the language user's understanding of certain statements has been derived from or reveals itself in situations in

which truth-conditions relating to those statements are absent. Because the anti-realist is dedicated to the idea that meaning must derive from and be exhibited in use, he rejects any account of meaning which would give these absent conditions, or truth itself, a primary role. The problems which we have been entangled in when considering McDowell's defence of realism have arisen from two major uncertainties concerning these challenges. The one we have just been considering relates to the range of statements of a given type for which truth-conditions are available. The second concerns what is meant by the availability or accessibility of the truth-conditions in question. McDowell has proposed that we can be aware of the past which amounts to the claim that past truth-conditions can be accessible to us. Wright believes, with some justification, that McDowell has done little to elaborate on what exactly he means by this awareness. We have considered one way in which this claim might be at least rendered plausible. The problem remains however that there is uncertainty concerning exactly what is required here. What exactly does the anti-realist mean when he claims that certain truth-conditions are beyond our awareness? I am aware that I got up this morning, that Drake defeated the Armada and that the pencil I am writing with is turquoise.

This issue concerns the relationship between certain states of affairs which constitute truth-conditions, and ourselves. What sort of relationship will satisfy the anti-realist that these conditions are able to enter into our

linguistic practices? Until we are clear about just what is required here it will be difficult to legislate either for or against the defence which McDowell offers. Wright's refinement of our notion of decidability amounts to an attempt to sharpen our ideas concerning this relationship but it is not obvious that Wright does this in a way that would allow us to dismiss McDowell's defence.

Each of these uncertainties gives rise to another. We can attempt to clarify the situation concerning the range of statements which the anti-realist would regard as unproblematic by introducing the idea of those statements which are in principle verifiable. And in a similar way we can try to elaborate on what is to count as being accessible to us by admitting those truth-conditions which are at least in principle recognisable. The problem which these developments introduce relates to the 'in principle' part of the formulation.

Since we have been concerned mainly in our previous discussion with the anti-realist's acquisition challenge we may with some pertinence ask just how it is that this 'in principle' even enters into our debate. In a learning situation there will be restrictions and limitations on what can be achieved but is it not reasonable to assume these limitations will arise from what actually occurs in practice - i.e., what actual situations the language learner is subjected to and made aware of in his learning programme - rather than situations and events which could 'in principle'

have been introduced into this process.

I do not propose to embark here on the constructive task which I have suggested needs to be addressed. But I do believe that in order to make further headway in those areas of the realist/anti-realist debate which we have been considering, it will be necessary for the anti-realist to clarify and to specify his position and reservations in a more precise way.

In particular the anti-realist must spell out in more detail what sort of interaction with truth-conditions would be required in order to satisfy his acquisition challenge using a basically realist theory of meaning. When he adopts phrases like 'effectively decidable' he must explain what is meant by 'effective' in this context. I have suggested that there may be different possible options open to the anti-realist in specifying these basic concepts but of course in reality these cannot be arbitrary specifications. At the end of the day the anti-realist will need to revisit his fundamental principle with respect to theory of meaning - the Wittgensteinian conception that meaning is to be revealed in use. It is here, according to Dummett, that the possibilities of what can and what cannot enter into an explanation of meaning and linguistic understanding are limited. Hence if Dummett is correct, a better appreciation of the implications of anti-realism should arise from a clearer understanding of what Wittgenstein's suggestion actually means in practice.

I am going to close this chapter with a look at one other exchange of views that has taken place recently and which relates to the general validity of the anti-realist's position. This will not however mark the end of our critical appraisal of the realist/anti-realist characterisation.

(vi)

At the 98th joint session (1976) of the Mind Association and the Aristotelian Society a symposium was held on the subject of 'Truth Conditions and Criteria'. The symposiasts were Roger Scruton who defended a broadly realist position and Crispin Wright who presented a case for anti-realism. At the symposium the Chairman, Sir Peter Strawson, delivered an address which was largely critical of the position which he took Wright to be holding.

One of the criticisms which Strawson levelled against the anti-realist's position was very much along the lines that we have been moving in, when reviewing the Dummett/McDowell/Wright literature on the past and link-realism. Hence Strawson comments as follows:

> 'I have not so far spoken as if it was anything but reasonably clear what the issue between the verificationist or anti-realist and his truth-theoretical opponent amounted to. But in fact I am very hazy about exactly where the actual lines of disagreement are

supposed to be drawn. And this point at least must remain unclear just so long as it remains unclear where the limits of possible conclusive verification are supposed to fall; unclear just in which cases, and why, what the one party regards as the truth-conditions of a sentence is seen by the other as verification-transcendent and therefore as something either wholly dubious or at least as having no role to play in the explanation of the speaker's understanding of the sentence. So we need to know at least what is to count as falling within the range of "recognisable situations", what is to count as conclusive verification, whose capacity in fact or in principle to do the recognising is in question, what importance, if any, to attach to the disjunction "in fact or in principle" and what "in principle" means.' (Strawson 1).

Wright responded to this criticism (and others) in his follow-up paper, 'Strawson on Anti-Realism'. (Wright 5.) The gist of his response was that whilst he agreed with Strawson that these were important concepts which would require clarification, the want of this clarification need not hold up the anti-realist programme. Although it would not be possible to pronounce in every case what statements were and were not effectively decidable, there would be some which everyone would be able to agree were not so decidable. In order for the anti-realist to launch his programme it would only be necessary that some such universally agreed non-effectively-decidable statements

could be identified. And Wright offers: 'unrestrictedly general hypotheses, many types of subjunctive conditional, many types of description of the remote past and future, many types of description of others' mental states, etc.' (Wright 5, p286), as examples of these.

A similar counter is made by Wright in his paper on 'Strict Finitism' (Wright 4, p219), although there he does seem to concede the real need for an account of what is meant by verification in principle.

This certainly appears to be an easy way with Strawson's difficulties. The danger is I suppose that it may be too easy, and may consequently miss the force of the objection. Acceptance of this line could, I suspect, result in our drifting towards global anti-realism. The proposal is: agreed there is some uncertainty concerning where, if anywhere, the line is to be drawn between what is verifiable and what is not. Nevertheless we can agree that some statements at least are verification-transcendent. Consequently we can concentrate on these areas and leave the precise specification of the extent of the debate (or debates) open for the time being.

If we do leave the notion of verification loose in this way there is the possibility that the extent of the realist/anti-realist debates will be so widespread as to be global and this is a possibility which Wright acknowledges;

'If "conclusive verification" were to turn out to be very restricted, or even chimerical, in application, the challenge would simply be generalised; we should have a very wide, or all-inclusive class of sentences for which it was problematic what grasp of truth-conditions could consist in, how it might be distinctively displayed.' (Wright 5, p286.)

We are aware however that global anti-realism is a view which Dummett suspects of inconsistency and Wright elsewhere seems himself to express doubts about the possibility (Wright 2, pp4-5.) Perhaps one of the strongest doubts that arise in this connection is one that derives from the very origins of Dummettian anti-realism. It will be recalled that one of the underlying features of the anti-realist's position is the adoption of the Wittgensteinian doctrine that meaning is determined by use. I noted earlier the analogy with chess: the idea that just as we understand what a particular piece is in chess when we have seen it used and know ourselves how to use it, so it is with a word; we know its meaning when we know how it is used appropriately. And the use of language in which we acquire this understanding is, in Wittgenstein's terms, part of a form of life.

'...And to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life.' (Wittgenstein 1,19.)

'...Here the term 'language <u>game</u>' is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the <u>speaking</u> of language

is part of an activity, or of a form of life.' (Wittgenstein 1,23).

The activity which is language usage presupposes a form of life.

The notion of a form of life is one which may not be susceptible to uncomplicated elaboration. It must surely, however, imply a commitment to the idea of a language-speaking community, an acceptance of other people, and a belief that they like ourselves use language to communicate their thoughts and ideas.

Our philosophical investigations involve language. They are grounded in this way in language and what language presupposes; namely a form of life. 'What has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - forms of life.' (Wittgenstein 1, p226). This view of language and philosophy imposes restrictions on the ways in which the sceptical philosopher can operate. Language does not on this view provide us with a tool by means of which we can dissect in a completely objective way the range of possibilities. Language presupposes linguistic communities and a shared form of life and this basic framework itself restricts that range of possibilities. We shall examine in more detail this relationship between Wittgenstein's view of philosophy as expressed in the Investigations and scepticism in later chapters. For now we need only note that the Wittgensteinian concept of language, a concept which is at the heart of

Dummettian anti-realism, seems to carry with it a commitment to the idea of a form of life and this commitment may in turn imply a rejection of anti-realism concerning certain types of statements. If this is so it would suggest that the possibility of global anti-realism would involve an inconsistency at the very roots of anti-realism. We need not consider this line further at this point however since it is not sufficient in itself to tell against Wright's response to the plea for clarification. By proposing that we may leave for now the tidying up of our notion of verification Wright allowed that this tidying up could potentially lead towards global anti-realism and global anti-realism may be a view which is untenable. Nevertheless even if global anti-realism can be shown to be completely incoherent this does not automatically affect Wright's position since this did not involve a commitment to global anti-realism.

In order to establish the acceptability of Wright's proposal we will need to look more closely at the ideas of verification and decidability as these are used by the anti-realist.

Wright acknowledges the possibility of a strict form of anti-realism which would only take as verifiable that which I could weakly verify now. Wright characterises weak verification as the provision of adequate, though not necessarily conclusive grounds, for the acceptance of a statement. The important features of this strict form of

anti-realism are that what is verifiable is what I can verify and only what I can verify now. He shows little support however for such a rigorous approach, commenting that;

> 'Those who have faith in the overall anti-realist motif do well to believe that there is some principled reason for stopping short of this view.' (Wright 2, p5.)

McDowell also recognises the need for some flexibility and indeed it would be essential to the position he advocates.

> 'It is crucial to this realist rejection of the anti-realist argument that the conception which the realist claims the right to ascribe is a conception of a kind of circumstance. He claims the right to ascribe it on the basis of behaviour construable as a response to some instances of the kind, in spite of the admitted fact that other instances, on his view, are incapable of eliciting any response from the possessor of the conception.' (McDowell 1, p139.)

Both parties here agree that the anti-realist should not be making a demand for verification of the present/egocentric type and must allow for the possibility of a realist defence where in some cases no verification of this sort is available. The problem as we have seen is to know how the concepts of verification and decidability can be extended to allow a principled but more flexible form of anti-realism to exist. Wright, in effect, proposes

that we develop the dichotomy of verified and unverified into a trichotomy of verified, unverified but verifiable in principle and unverifiable. The idea would then be that the anti-realist would only object to a realist conception in cases where unverifiable statements were involved.

But where is the line to be drawn between what is unverifiable or undecidable and what is unverified but verifiable in principle? Wright affords us a model; a statement is to count as decidable if 'a subject with the same range of cognitive powers as we, whose capacities exceeded our own only in finite degree, would be capable of deciding in practice.' (Wright 2, p5.) This is a proposed elaboration of what we are capable in principle of deciding.

It might appear that the previous quotation from McDowell exemplified an appropriate usage of just this sort of equipment. McDowell proposes that we are actually capable of directly verifying, in an appropriately weak sense, certain past-tense statements. Other statements of this type have not been verified by ourselves but nevertheless could have been by someone with a range of appropriately extended available capacities - longevity presumably being the principal amongst these.

Wright objects to McDowell's line however and to understand this objection we must familiarise ourselves with a further distinction. Within the class of statements which we may choose to call decidable, on the basis of

Wright's model, there will be some which are effectively decidable and others which are merely decidable. Concerning the former group - those which are effectively-decidable - these are statements for which we can identify and formulate a procedure such that if this was carried out, it would lead to the establishment of the truth-value of the statement. (Not all decidable statements fall into this category however since we must allow that we might stumble by accident on truth-conditions relevant to statements for which we had previously been unable to formulate an effective decision procedure.) For those statements for which we can have an effective decision procedure, Wright suggests that we also lay claim to a recognitional skill. This recognitional skill would be exercised by carrying out the appropriate effective decision procedure. But even where this is not so exercised, our knowing what that procedure would be, amounts to our possessing such a skill.

Wright sees McDowell however as trying to extend this notion of a recognitional skill to verification-transcendent truth-conditions:

> '...the idea is that to grasp possibly verification-transcendent truth-conditions is in essential respects comparable to any recognitional skill which there may be no chance to exercise.' (Wright 3, p128.)

Let us try now to pull together these threads of the position which Wright is developing. The first step is a

recognition that the anti-realist would do well to steer clear of a demand that only those statements which I can now verify, be regarded as being susceptible to a realistic interpretation. Apart from decided statements and undecidable ones we must recognise the possibility of undecided but decidable statements. Concerning this range of decidable statements there will be some for which we will be able to formulate an effective decision procedure. By virtue of such formulations we will be entitled to claim to have a recognitional skill relating to the truth-conditions of these statements. However this recognitional skill may in practice be one that is frustrated - that we are unable to apply. Wright is prepared to acknowledge that a realist case could be based on examples of an exercised recognitional skill extending to other instances where a recognitional skill exists but whose exercise is thwarted. This sort of situation should not however, according to Wright, be confused with one where the realist attempts to extend beyond what is capable of being verified. It is this sort of extension which Wright believes that McDowell is attempting under cover of an analogy based on frustrated recognitional capacities.

It is not entirely obvious why we should regard those past-tense statements whose verification lies beyond the capacities of McDowell's realist as being verification-transcendent. We are after all allowed to extend these capacities, even if only finitely, in demarcating the boundary between what is verifiable and verification-transcendent.

Perhaps the issue which should be of more concern to us however is that concerning the possibility of a distinction between what is effectively-decidable and what is undecidable. The problem with this sort of distinction is that it implies at the very least a distinction between the possible and the impossible, between what I might have done but did not do and what I could not have done. (Adam Daum's paper on 'Schlick's Empiricist Critical Realism', touches on this very point, (Daum 1, pp470-6). Schlick rejected the idea of a distinction between what was not possible and what was possible though not real (Schlick 1, p381). Both for Schlick were part of the 'not given'. Interestingly Schlick used this alleged lack of distinction to argue that we should not be prejudiced against what it is not possible for us to know).

Once we accept the possibility that things might have been otherwise than they are, there is a problem in determining what rules are to be applied in establishing to what extent the alternatives may have differed. My environment and what I am able to determine are, trivially, limited to what they are. I might aim to extend this limitation on my capabilities for verification by saying that had things been different I would have been in a position to verify statements different from those which I am now able to verify. But having introduced this idea of an extension to my present egocentric capabilities how do we limit this extension in a principled way which allows us still to rule certain statements out as undecidable or

unverifiable? We might vaguely try to do this by proposing that my internal capabilities are to remain as they are but allow the postulation that my relationship to my surroundings could have varied. I could have occupied a different observation point. (We would presumably need to specify whether this could be a difference in space or time or both. Different views on the nature of individual essence and what it may be sensible to consider a person could or could not have been are discussed in Putnam 2, pp64-66.) Alternatively we might say that in principle my cognitive and physical capacities, though limited in range, could have been extended in power. Or again, we might allow an increase in the range of those capacities. It would be possible to formulate rules concerning these different postulations and in this sense we might conceivably arrive at some means of distinguishing between effectively decidable and undecidable statements which we could claim to be a principled approach.

What we need to know is which distinction of this sort, if any, is an appropriate one. That is to say, we need to know if such a distinction can be related to the anti-realist's underlying principles. (Wright's discussion relating to the finite extension of our powers or capacities, (Wright 4, pp222-3), certainly leaves one wondering what relevance these concepts have to an approach which purports to be grounded in the idea of meaning being evident in <u>use</u>.) It is not that the anti-realist has an arbitrary choice to make regarding the distinction to be imposed between

statements which are in principle decidable and those that in principle are not. Rather, he must show us how a distinction of this sort can be introduced which reflects and is consistent with his basic objection against realism. This justification of the distinction would as a consequence need to be based not on the arguable capacities of some intellectual superman but on the Wittgensteinian ideas concerning meaning as use and what is to count as linguistic practice. It was from this basis that the anti-realist launched his objection against the role of unavailable truth-conditions in the realist's theory of meaning and if he is to attempt to make his own position more flexible than the egocentricity of the present time and place which Wright alludes to, he will need to do this in a way that clearly does not infringe these underlying conceptions.

Strawson, in his brief but penetrating comments, highlights the need to get clear about some of the anti-realist's basic terms. Wright, in defence of the anti-realist's position, points out that a detailed clarification of these need not be considered an essential precursor to the development of an anti-realist's position. This may in fact be the case but it appears to be an unstable basis from which to launch the anti-realist's program. Until this clarification is provided it will be uncertain whether we can expect to see any restriction on what might otherwise turn out to be a global anti-realism. Also, where disputes do arise, it may be impossible to tell whether the incumbent realist has been successful in establishing an acceptable

link with the truth-conditions he is concerned with. This latter uncertainty relates directly to the anti-realist's conceptions of decidability and verification and his associated notions of effective decidability and verifiability in principle. For these reasons it seems as if Strawson's request for clarification was a reasonable one and that the anti-realist may in fact debase the value of his own programme and the disputes which ensue if he does not provide this elaboration of what must be his fundamental principles.

The critical examination of the realist/anti-realist characterisation, which has been the subject of this chapter, will be pursued further in the next one.

CHAPTER 4 : FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS ON THE VIABILITY OF DUMMETT'S CHARACTERISATION

CHAPTER ABSTRACT

The assessment of the characterisation is continued in this Chapter. The comments and observations are less directly related to the published literature. Instead certain topics and apparent anomalies arising within the characterisation are examined. The alleged distinction between anti-realism and reductionism is further examined. The question of the generality of the anti-realist's arguments is also examined, along with some of the potential dangers of a global argument. Consideration is given to the more positive aspects of the anti-realist's philosophy; namely his approach to replacement theories of meaning. Certain problems are seen to arise with respect to explaining our understanding of statements on the basis of assertibility conditions.

Difficulties over the selection of dispute areas are also considered. This topic is involved with the apparent requirement for unified theories of meaning within different domains of our language. It is uncertain how these domains are to be established and what their extent should be. Compound statements are considered as potentially problematic, since these could be members of different dispute classes - for which different theories of meaning are required.

As an alternative to the proposed characterisation,

a more ontologically based one is discussed. It is concluded that certain fairly significant problems surround the proposed characterisation and its specification. Because of these problems it is suggested that, at this stage, it may be less than prudent to embrace this new approach to the dispute areas.

(i)

In the second Chapter of this thesis I presented a brief exposition of Dummett's characterisation of a number of traditional philosophical disputes as essentially generic. In this Chapter, and the previous one, an assessment is made of this characterisation. The previous Chapter concentrated on points which had arisen in the philosophical literature. In the main these topics are not much related to the validity or usefulness of the characterisation _per se_. Commentators have rather tended to take this particular representation of the various disputes as an appropriate framework within which to work and have concentrated on defending or attacking particular realist or anti-realist positions. (Even McGinn's attack on Dummett's position - McGinn 2 - which appeared to be far reaching, was in fact an attack on anti-realism rather than the way in which the realist/anti-realist characterisation had been set up.)

In this further consideration of Dummett's main thesis I shall attempt to introduce points which relate more to his suggested approach than to the positions which may be

adopted within the scope of that approach.

First of all I want to return to the discussion which arose as part of our exposition of Dummett's various writings on character traits. It will be recalled that Dummett chooses this particular example in order to illustrate certain points about the relationships which he suggests exist between different forms of anti-realism and reductionism. It is the idea of this sort of distinction, which we touched on earlier, that I now want to explore in more detail.

In his hypothetical formulation of a realist reduction, Dummett postulates that the relevant physiological constitution of a person - i.e. that part of his constitution which causes him to be brave or otherwise - will be determinate. (Dummett most recently [Dummett 7, pp74-6] describes this sort of position as "sophisticated realism", by virtue of its reductive nature.) So, given a physiological examination of Jones - or anybody else - we will be able to tell unambiguously what the relevant constitution is. We should be aware however that it is not precisely this stipulation which makes this reduction a realist one. After all, in the behavioural reductionist's case - which is not taken to be a realist reduction - it is also assumed by Dummett that there is no problem over the interpretation of the relevant forms of behaviour. Indeed in his 1963 paper 'Realism' he expressly makes this point, i.e. that 'no disagreement can arise over the application to a particular act of the predicate "brave".' (Dummett 2, p148.)

As we have seen there is, according to Dummett, a fundamental distinction between these two types of reduction. I am going to suggest that we think of these two cases in terms of two different experiments. In the behavioural case I will refer to the 'behavioural experiment', by which I shall mean roughly, the observation of Jones (or whoever the person concerned is) in appropriate conditions which are judged suitable to elicit bravery - in a brave person. The type of observation shall be such as to determine general features of Jones's behaviour.

By contrast, the physiological experiment shall consist of laboratory tests designed to establish the relevant facts about Jones's physiological constitution relating to the characteristic of bravery.

The results of the experiments will be in one case a record of Jones's behaviour in a known, if not fully controlled, situation. And in the other, a record of the physiological analysis which has been conducted. In both cases, having derived a result of the experiment, I will assume along with Dummett that this result can be unambiguously interpreted.

This way of looking at the two cases suggests a sort of parallel, without I hope, distorting what Dummett had described in outline. In both cases we aim to determine the facts about Jones's character with respect to bravery. Adopting

either theory or model we need to carry out an experiment which once completed will allow us to determine unambiguously these facts.

So what exactly is the difference between these two theories or models? I think it is fair to say that in the behavioural case Dummett believes that there can be instances in which we have not performed the appropriate experiment, nor are we now able to do this. Jones was perhaps never even 'within' the experimental situation during any time in which it might have been appropriate to carry out the experiment (i.e. in his lifetime). So he could never have been and can never be observed in these circumstances. Hence no result has been or can be obtained for this experiment and hence no conclusion can be drawn. The statement 'Jones was brave' will consequently be not effectively decidable and this, together with a dedication to the idea of meaning being manifest in use, will lead us to adopt an anti-realist stance towards character traits - or more correctly to some statements concerning these. Hence this behavioural reduction will be seen as an anti-realist reduction.

I want to outline now a way in which the physiological theory can also be thought of as leading to non-effectively-decidable statements. Let us suppose that in Jones's case we never carry out the appropriate physiological tests and that Jones's medical records are scant, so that we are not able to make any justified inferences regarding the relevant part of his constitution. It might

be suggested that although we have not so far carried out the experiment there will be nothing to prevent us from doing this now. But imagine, as in the behavioural case, that Jones is now dead. Perhaps we should do an autopsy. But again, quite plausibly, imagine that the relevant part of a person's constitution deteriorates irrevocably within a short time after death. (Or imagine that Jones has been cremated.)

So now there does seem to be a parallel. Although certain physiological tests, carried out within a defined time-span, are able to determine facts about Jones's constitution which in themselves determine quite unambiguously whether or not Jones was brave; in situations where these experiments or tests have not been carried out within this time-span, it may not be possible to say of Jones either that he was brave or that he was not. Hence this type of reduction seems to leave open the possibility of non-effectively-decidable statements in much the same way as did the behavioural reduction.

Although there are environmental conditions in which Jones could be placed which would provide observational information about his behaviour, from which we would be able to determine unambiguously either that he was brave or that he was not, it may be the case that if these conditions have not occurred, we will be unable to make any deductions about Jones's bravery or lack of bravery. In this case however, because we are led to believe that there will be some instances in which statements about character traits will sometimes

be not effectively decidable, we are urged (by Dummett) to regard it as an anti-realist reduction.

We must look further then for a means of distinguishing these reductions in such a way that one occurs on one side of the realist/anti-realist debate whilst the other appears on the other side. One possibility is that physiology just strikes us as somehow more real than behaviour. In the above example, though we did not check Jones' physiology, it must have been there all the time - just like his heart or kidneys. Surely Jones like all of us has, or had whilst he was alive, a quite definite physiology. It is simply that we did not take the opportunity to go and see precisely how this was composed.

A response to this line might just consist in our pointing out that what this - taking the opportunity - amounts to is merely what we have been referring to as the physiological experiment. The fundamental point seems still to be that this experiment has not been, and cannot not be, carried out and as a consequence its result remains totally unknown to us. Taking the opportunity to determine Jones's physiological constitution seems to be paralleled by taking the opportunity to determine what his behavioural response would have been in certain circumstances. (Indeed the two experiments can be merged together if one thinks of a determination of Jones's physiological state in a situation which provoked a social response and allowed this to be assessed.)

What is being suggested then is that contrary to Dummett's review of character traits, a reduction involving physiology will be no less prone to the adoption of non-effectively decidable statements than will be a reduction involving behaviour. If this suggestion were correct it could have far reaching implications for the anti-realist's programme since the route we have followed with respect to these two cases has been a fairly general one. We first of all selected a reductive class of statements which related to our disputed class, the disputed class being statements of some type of lasting attributes. We then noted the possibilities that statements of the reductive class may have been determined, within certain limits, in the past or currently. Given that we were able to postulate some reason why we are not able currently to decide them, and that they have not actually been decided in the past, the way appeared then to be open to non-effectively-decidable statements - and thereby to anti-realism.

We need at this stage to go back to our basic examples to see whether this way of looking at the reductions is truly representative. We have noted that both the physiological and behavioural classes of statements are to be treated realistically. Even in the alleged case of the anti-realistic behavioural reduction, the behavioural class is regarded as an auxiliary class, which we understand to imply realism. What this amounts to in these cases is that bivalence can be taken to apply to statements of these classes.

If you make a statement about how Jones had behaved at such and such a time, then neglecting issues of vagueness and assuming you make the appropriate observations, the statement will be one which can be determined as true or false. Similarly, if you make some statement about Jones's physiological constitution at some previous time and again assuming you make the appropriate observations, you will be in a position to determine the truth or falsity of this statement.

The significant difference between the two cases now emerges as the way in which each of these reductive classes is related to the disputed class. In the case of the physiological reduction a complete knowledge of the truth-values attaching to all those statements of the reductive class which were pertinent to Jones, would determine the truth-value of corresponding statements of the disputed class. That is to say if we know all there was to know about Jones's physiology we would know also all there was to know about his character (assuming of course that we subscribed to the validity of the physiological reduction). The behavioural reduction does not work in quite the same way however. We might well know the truth-values associated with those statements of the reductive class which relate to Jones (excluding counterfactual statements of this type) and still we may not be lucky enough to get any clue about some particular character trait. The difference is that a total knowledge of how Jones's physiology was, is taken as

determining unequivocally how Jones's character was. But contrary to this, a complete knowledge of how Jones behaved, is not necessarily enough to determine all issues concerning his character.

Viewed in this light the behavioural reduction can be seen as one which is obviously going to leave more issues open than is the physiological one and it is this difference which lies at the base of the distinction Dummett proposes. How then did our representations in terms of experiments disguise this difference? I think they did this by directing our thoughts towards the results of the experiment - what they elicit. But in the physiological case these results relate to what had been in existence all along - namely Jones's physiology. In the behaviour case, even though we regard behavioural statements realistically, this does not correspond to a situation in which the appropriate behaviour is there all along, waiting to be revealed by a suitable experiment. The behaviour which is required to provide an answer to issues concerning Jones's character is provoked into occurring by the experimental situation which assesses Jones's response. The relevant physiology is not in the same way provoked into existence by the experiment. Rather we would think of it as merely being revealed by the experiment.

We can see now I think that it is not the issue of whether the appropriate truth-values of statements within the reductive class have been or can now be determined, which gives rise

to the anti-realist character of the behavioural reduction. It is more to do with how the reductive class is related to the reduced class and whether a complete knowledge of the truth-values associated with the former will determine the truth-values of the latter or leave these open.

I remarked above that we do not normally regard physiology as being provoked into existence by physiological experiments. Such a view could however be regarded as a sort of experimental positivism. If the physiological reductionism were in fact coupled with a positivism of this sort - i.e. one which refused to acknowledge the existence of physiological components until these had been revealed experimentally - then this would amount to an anti-realistic reduction. It is this sort of reduction which was offered to us by the experimental approach which we previously adopted. Where the parallel which was drawn misled us was in representing the behavioural anti-realism as depending in essence on alleged facts which had not been and cannot now be determined, whereas in fact it was more to do with what would be left undetermined even if all the facts had been known. The general route which we followed would have been capable as we suspected of being applied fairly widely but this would only have resulted in an automatic committment to anti-realism in cases where we were already committed to a peculiar form of positivism regarding the referents of the reductive class of statements. (Finally it should perhaps be noted that despite Dummett's efforts [see Dummett 6 and 7 also] to extricate the notions of anti-realism and reductionism, these are still seen as

equivalent by McGinn in his 'An A Priori Argument for Realism' [McGinn 1, p117].)

What we have done here is to describe a way of thinking about the two forms of reduction which appeared to blur the differences between them. We have then gone on to examine more closely what was intended by the original distinction and this has led us, I hope, to a clearer appreciation of what precisely it is about these cases which results in our regarding one as a realistic reduction and the other as an anti-realistic one.

(ii)

I want to consider next certain issues concerning the generality of the anti-realist's argument.

In the preface to his collection of papers Dummett makes the point that he had never intended that the common form he was hoping to highlight in the different types of dispute would permit a single common solution to be devised.

> 'There was therefore never any presumption that there would be any sound argument establishing, for all the cases simultaneously, the correctness of a realist or of an anti-realist view.' (Dummett 5, pxxxi).

The benefit which was to be derived from the characterisation was not of this type. It was in fact aimed

at providing a cross fertilisation of ideas between the different disputes - a much more modest task. Dummett continues the above disclaimer as follows;

> 'The only presumption was that a uniform approach to these disparate metaphysical problems would be fruitful.' (Dummett 5, pxxxi).

From his comments regarding the implausibility of global anti-realism it is obvious that Dummett would be reluctant to adopt such a view. And equally from his remarks concerning the appropriateness of an anti-realist (behavioural of a sort) approach to character traits, it can be concluded that he would not wish to adopt global realism either.

> 'it is evident that only a philosophically quite naive person would adopt a realist view of statements about character,....' (Dummett 2, p150.)

Clearly in order to maintain such a balance of views it will be necessary to regard the overall characterisation in the way that Dummett suggests in his preface. That is in a way such that we should not expect a single resolution, once and for all, of these problems. This is not to say that it was in order to substantiate this sort of balanced view that Dummett directed his characterisation towards the more modest aim - i.e. that of helping to show links and similarities between the disputes previously considered disparate. The point to note is that, regardless of the

motives, Dummett's acceptance of certain anti-realist views but without an overall commitment to global anti-realism, is in harmony with his remarks about what he is trying to do by introducing the characterisation: and this is as might be expected.

Ironically there may be a danger to the anti-realist's position if his arguments and methodology prove to be too generally successful. If there really is some good reason, as Dummett seems to think there is, for rejecting global anti-realism this must be linked either to a rejection of anti-realism in certain areas and an implied acceptance of realist substitutes where necessary, or a rejection of the very possibility that a single coherent and completely generic argument can be made for all areas. Of the two options mentioned, Dummett appears to be broadly aligned to the latter, i.e. to rejecting the possibility of a fully generic argument on the grounds that this would be incoherent. This presents no serious problems for him, since as we have noted it has not been a part of his approach that such a final solution would be available.

Having said this it is worth revisiting some of the arguments presented in earlier sections, in order to see how the intended approach works out in practice. One argument which gave the appearance of a fairly wide generality was that developed in Dummett 3, in favour of an anti-realist understanding of mathematical statements - namely intuitionism.

We are by now familiar with at least the outline of Dummett's proposed argument in favour of intuitionism and based on anti-realist principles (as opposed to ontological principles). The argument relies on there being statements within the disputed class which are not effectively decidable. These statements are none the less understood by speakers of the language. Hence it becomes incumbent upon anyone proposing a theory of meaning applicable to this class, to provide an explanation of the meaning of these statements which is consistent with their being not effectively decidable. A successful theory cannot, as classical logic does, base itself on the notion of truth, if we are to take seriously the idea that meaning should be evident in use. The truth or otherwise of these particular problematic statements is not and, by (some) definition, cannot be known to us. Because of this it may not even be appropriate in these cases to consider the statements as true or false. No truth-conditions appropriate to these statements ever play a part either in our acquisition of an understanding of them or in a demonstration of that understanding. Truth cannot, therefore, occupy a central role in the correct theory of meaning for them. We (implicitly) require a unified theory of meaning throughout mathematics and for all mathematical statements, hence classical logic which takes truth as its central concept cannot be that unified theory. Classical the cor logic must be rejected as an inappropriate theory of meaning for mathematics taken as a whole.

In the context of our present interest it probably strikes

us that this argument has little to do specifically with mathematics. What is perhaps even more surprising is what Dummett himself has to say on this topic:

> 'Now the first thing that ought to strike us about the form of argument which I have sketched is that it is virtually independent of any considerations relating specifically to the mathematical character of the statements under discussion. The argument involved only certain considerations within the theory of meaning of a high degree of generality, and could, therefore, just as well have been applied to any statements whatever, in whatever area of language.' (Dummett 3, p226.)

This is in marked contrast to what Dummett has written elsewhere. The point is here being quite readily accepted that the anti-realist's argument in favour of rejecting realism as a theory of meaning in the field of mathematics is of a general nature. Hence if it is successful in this area there will be little if anything to prevent its successful application in other areas.

This generality of the anti-realist's argument has been commented on elsewhere. For example:

> 'The acquisition and manifestation challenge ....assumes a perfectly general shape and is bound, it seems reasonably clear, to have the same solution, if any at all, in all areas of discourse featuring non-KED

sentences.' (That is sentences we do not know to be effectively decidable.) (Rasmussen and Ravnkilde 1, p399.)

This apparent generality, whilst reflecting the potentially widespread nature of the anti-realist's attack, represents a double edged sword. As well as opening up a possible route to global anti-realism, a position which may well be untenable, it makes the anti-realist's position vulnerable to a realist counter in many areas. Again Dummett seems to appreciate and accept this threat without qualification:

'It follows that, in so far as an intuitionist position in the philosophy of mathematics (or, at least, the acceptance of an intuitionistic logic for mathematics) is supported by an argument of this first type, similar, though not necessarily identical, revisions must be made in the logic accepted for statements of other kinds. What is involved is a thesis in the theory of meaning of the highest possible level of generality. Such a thesis is vulnerable in many places: if it should prove that it cannot be coherently applied to any one region of discourse, to any one class of statements, then the thesis cannot be generally true, and the general argument in favour of it must be fallacious. Construed in this way, therefore, a position in the philosophy of mathematics will be capable of being undermined by considerations which have nothing directly to do with

mathematics at all.' (Dummett 3, p227.)

Because the argument can be applied in many different areas, any particular failure of the argument will reflect upon its validity in other areas having nothing much in common with that particular one.

This approach to a general argument appears on the face of it to go much further than Dummett's suggested aim of highlighting certain similarities of form existing between different disputes, which may result in a sort of cross-fertilization of ideas. Indeed it seems to go as far as collapsing these different disputes into a single issue capable of being resolved by a single relatively abstract argument.

Perhaps the conclusion which needs to be drawn from this is that in examining particular realist/anti-realist arguments we should keep one eye on the potentially wider implications that these specific arguments may have for other disputes of this type.

In amongst the passages which I have quoted above from 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic', Dummett steps beyond the essentially negative position which the anti-realist normally adopts. It is this positive side of the anti-realist's position which we shall examine next.

(iii)

In summarising the various anti-realists' positions I have tended to emphasise the negative side of these. Anti-realism is after all a reaction against what amounts to a positive view regarding theory of meaning. In Dummett 3, remarks are made which tend to extend this essentially negative aspect of anti-realism. Verification is offered as the generally applicable concept which is to replace truth. (See Dummett 3, pp226-7.)

Anti-realism attempts to remove truth from certain areas of discourse as the central concept within the theory of meaning for those areas. But then what, if anything, is to replace truth? What reconstruction can the anti-realist offer if we accept his destruction of realism in some areas? In Dummett 3, pp226-7 and elsewhere (Dummett 4, p362, for example), Dummett provides an answer to these questions. We are to replace truth with the general notion of proof or verification. In the general (i.e. non-mathematical) context, '... to know the meaning of a statement is, on such a view, to be capable of recognising whatever counts as verifying the statement, i.e. as conclusively establishing it as true.' (Dummett 3, p227).

An immediate objection to this essentially positive move is likely to arise from opponents of anti-realism. If this new central concept, proof or verification, provides some sort of guarantee of truth, that is to say if to prove a statement is to prove it to be true and if to have verified a statement is to have conclusively established it as true,

have we really changed anything? And if we have not really changed anything, will not this new positive doctrine be susceptible to exactly the same sorts of attack which the anti-realist launched against the original realist position?

The anti-realist's response to this objection must I think either dispel the idea that verification and truth are as inevitably linked as is assumed in the objection, or it must impact upon our notion of truth. In situations where truth-conditions are available to us, verification could well consist of a confrontation with those truth-conditions. In these instances the realist's and anti-realist's theories of meaning could not amount to any noticeable difference. The difference arises where truth-conditions are not available. In some instances of this type the anti-realist will be saying one of two things. He may say that although the relevant truth-conditions are unavailable he nonetheless has evidence of a sort that we would count as warranting a justified assertion of the statement in question. He might in this case suggest that whilst his evidence falls short of a guarantee of truth we should still regard this as conclusive verification. In this instance the anti-realist would be proposing that verification could arise without a guarantee of truth. That is to say, he would probably need to accept the fact that in the absence of truth-conditions new evidence could always lead to a revision of what he previously accepted as conclusively verified. Alternatively the anti-realist may choose to maintain the link between conclusive verification and truth and claim

that where we have provided evidence which it is agreed would count as warranting a justifiable assertion, then we have conclusively established this as true even though we have not confronted the truth-conditions.

The one response says that where truth-conditions are unavailable we might still have evidence which warrants a justifiable assertion of the statement and whilst our familiarity with this evidence and its role with respect to the statement may not guarantee the truth of the statement, it nonetheless constitutes our understanding of the statement. The alternative response really says that there can be no notion of truth which differs from our idea of conclusive verification. To verify a statement conclusively, even where this does not involve confrontation with its truth-conditions, is to establish that statement as true. This is all we can mean by 'true'.

However successful these two responses may be generally, they do attempt to answer the opponent's objection. The anti-realist, in substituting proof or verification for truth, is making a real change. The central feature in his theory of meaning may in some cases be available when truth-conditions are not.

Hiliary Putnam, who has recently acknowledged the influence of Dummett's work on his current philosophical position, (Putnam 1, pxvi) finds himself unable to adopt the positive aspects of anti-realism partly on the grounds

that he regards conclusive verification as something which may be unattainable. Dummett also refers to the problem in the preface to Truth and Other Enigmas, pxxxviii. We saw earlier in Chapter 3 that Wright had speculated that conclusive verification may turn out to be chimerical and this, in Putnam's view, seems to be the case. The reason behind his dissatisfaction with conclusive verification concerns our general inability to specify appropriate conditions for observation. He comments;

> 'Consider the sentence "There is a chair in my office right now". Under sufficiently good epistemic conditions any normal person could verify this, where sufficiently good epistemic conditions might, for example, consist in one's having good vision, being in my office now with the light on, not having taken a hallucinogenic agent, etc. How do I know these are better conditions for this sort of judgement than conditions under which one does not have very good vision, or in which one is looking into the room through a telescope from a great distance, or conditions in which one has taken LSD?....There is no single general rule or universal method for knowing what conditions are better or worse for justifying an arbitrary empirical judgement.' (Putnam 1, pxvii. See also pp84-6 in the same volume.)

This potentially chimerical nature of conclusive verification again threatens us with a prospect of global anti-realism and, in a way, this is to be expected. Putnam's

problem concerns the nature of the correspondence between the world and the way in which we 'see' the world. His complaint really comes down to the sceptic's challenge which says, "The way in which you 'see' the world can be distorted. Bearing this in mind how do you know what relationship the particular distortion which you call normal observation has to the real world?" We will need to return to this sort of metaphysical issue and the view of ourselves and our epistemology which it implies, in later chapters. For the time being I am going to consider a more specific objection to the anti-realist's positive move, which at least allows the possibility, in some sense, of justified assertion.

In the same way that the anti-realist drew attention to the absence, in certain cases, of truth-conditions which were required by the realist in order to explain our appreciation of meaning, so now it is possible to ask the question, at least, as to whether within particular disputed classes there may equally be an absence of justified assertibility conditions.

If we take as a particular disputed class that of statements about the past, our question will be whether there may be some such statements for which there are no justified assertibility (or deniability) conditions which can be identified.

In 'The Reality of the Past' Dummett gives us an indication of the sorts of conditions or situations which

he regards as providing a justification of assertions about the past. These included situations in which 'we remember the occurrence of some event which we witnessed.' (Dummett 4, p363.)

It seems plausible enough to suggest that we come to understand the meaning of statements about the past by our acquaintance with memories and other 'traces' of the past. (Notice that for the anti-realist it is the acquaintance with, and accessibility of, current conditions that justify assertion of statements about the past. It is not in any sense the accessibility of the past conditions themselves to which these statements refer. Indeed it is on the strength of the suggested inaccessibility of the latter that the anti-realist makes his initial negative move against the realist.) If we accept this approach we will no doubt agree with the anti-realist and Dummett that, for some statements concerning the past, meaning can be explained in terms of a theory which adopts assertibility conditions as a central notion. This may not be enough however to secure the anti-realist's position with respect to the past - just in the same way that the possibility of explaining the meaning of <u>some</u> mathematical statements, in terms of a theory which held <u>truth</u> to be central, was not sufficient to save classical logic. The question we must now ask is whether there are <u>any</u> statements about the past for which no justified assertibility conditions can be identified. Consider the statement, 'It rained on the central land mass which is now known as Africa at 3 p.m. on the 3rd of May 1,732,000 B.C.' Could such a statement

about the past have justified assertibility conditions?

I suspect that such a statement possibly could be justifiably asserted. It may well be that geologists could come up with some evidence which would suggest that the area in question was covered with ice or desert or even a very precipitous dense mist at the time in question - perhaps not so much at that precise time but rather for a period which engulfed that particular little episode. Such evidence would provide us with what would possibly have to be accepted as conditions justifying assertion or denial of the statement in question. However, in spite of this possibility, I am going to suppose that no evidence of this type does in fact exist. (If I am wrong in this assumption then I will merely propose a different example where climatic conditions were even more uncertain - I think it is fairly clear that ultimately I will be able to dredge up some sort of statement of this type which is not susceptible to assessment as to its truth or assertibility, by means of any evidence which is currently available.)

The crucial point here is that although it is possible that in the future (forgetting for the moment any reservations which we may have about the future), evidence, conditions or situations may come to light which would justifiably warrant the assertion of this statement, no such evidence is currently extant - or available at least. Consequently no such evidence could have played any part in our acquisition of an understanding of the statement in question.

Another example of this sort of objection could be provided by the case which Dummett himself introduces: that of character traits. It will be recalled that Dummett cites the example of Jones - now dead - who never in his entire life experienced any situation which would be likely to precipitate appropriately brave actions on Jones's part. Dummett claims in this case that there are no relevant conditions which allow us to say of the statement, 'Jones was brave', that it was true or that it was false.

However considering now the positive move which the anti-realist attempts to make, it seems that in this instance it may also be the case that there are no conditions available which would warrant justified assertion of such statements. But if this is the case it will be unclear how the anti-realist, in his role as the restorer of meaning, can claim general validity for his own approach to meaning for expressions for character traits either.

At this stage the anti-realist will want to point out that his opponent has somewhere along the line missed the thrust of the acquisition challenge. The opponent's understanding of this seems to be based on the idea that for every statement that we understand, we must show how we have available to us whatever we take to be the central feature in our proposed theory of meaning, whether this be truth-conditions or assertibility-conditions. But in practice our understanding of certain statements - conjectures for

example - will be based neither on our acquaintance with their truth-conditions nor their assertibility conditions. Neither the anti-realist, in his attack on realism, nor those who oppose anti-realism when it makes its positive contribution, can afford to neglect the idea that we sometimes come to understand new sentences by understanding their composition and the semantic significance of their constituents. Indeed, we will be reminded of this fact if we look back to the case which Dummett makes out for anti-realism in 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic'. Concerning the knowledge which is required to confer an understanding of meaning, he remarks:

> 'In particular cases, of course, there may be no problem, namely when the knowledge in question may be taken as verbalisable knowledge, i.e. when the speaker is able to <u>state</u>, in other words, what the condition is for the truth of the sentence; but, as we have already noted, this cannot be the general case.' (Dummett 3, p224.)

It cannot be the general case because in order to avoid circularity we must at some point explicate our statements in non-linguistic terms.

Here we have then a means by which realist and anti-realist alike can provide an account of their understanding of certain statements for which neither truth-conditions nor verification-conditions may be available. (This alternative means by which understanding can be accounted for is discussed

also in Bell 1, p146). In those instances where a legitimate use of this means is sanctioned the meaning theorist will be invulnerable to opponents who point out that in these cases, that which constitutes the central feature in the proposed theory of meaning may be unavailable.

How are we to tell then when this form of defence is legitimate? This is no easy question to answer. Clearly from Dummett's writing he would not regard it as a legitimate defence for the realist with respect to character traits. Regarding the case of Jones, Dummett would appear to be unimpressed by a realist defence which granted that whilst we were unable to confront the relevant truth-conditions which would settle the question of his bravery, we were nevertheless able to give an account of our understanding of the statement that he was brave, in terms of the composition and semantic significance of its constituents. And yet if such an account can be given, in what way would the case of Jones threaten the realist's conception of character traits? The realist presumably says that in certain circumstances he has been aware of situations in which brave deeds have been performed and this has given him a conception of what it is to be brave. Consequently when the anti-realist points out particular instances of statements which attribute bravery but which cannot be correlated with any truth-conditions, the realist merely observes that in these particular instances his understanding is partly based on a grasp of the conception of bravery which he has obtained in situations in which appropriate truth-conditions have been available. In Wright's

terminology (Wright 3), the realist would claim in the case of Jones to have a frustrated recognitional capacity - that is a capacity to recognise the truth-conditions pertinent to the question of Jones' bravery, without having had chance to exercise this - but this need not and does not imply an absence of a recognitional capacity. (Putnam also utilises the notion of a frustrated, or at least unexercised, recognitional skill in his paper on Analyticity and Apriority. [Putnam 4, p123]). A similar line will be available to the anti-realist who attempts to defend his position with regard to the central importance of verification-conditions. Whilst these may be unavailable in the case of Jones, this does not threaten the anti-realist's positive move, since special cases of this sort will be claimed as representing frustrated recognitional capacities. This defence will be of little comfort to the anti-realist however if it merely reflects the sort of realist defence which would have pre-empted the introduction of his positive move in the first place.

Dummett, it appears, would be reluctant to admit the realist's defence based on the composition and semantic content of statements concerning Jones's character. But this would leave his position vulnerable to similar attacks to those which he makes against the realist. He would be hard pressed that is, to say how his understanding of Jones's character could be explained in terms of verification-conditions. On the other hand Wright, I suspect, may be prepared to concede a realist defence concerning character traits, which accounted for the case of Jones in terms of a frustrated recognitional

capacity.

We need to get a clearer view concerning the boundary between situations which Wright would maintain correspond to a frustrated recognitional capacity and situations which preclude the possibility of acquiring a recognitional capacity. Concerning this distinction and the case of McDowell's proposed form of M-realism, he writes;

> 'The M-realist wants to make two quite different attributions to X: he wants to credit him with recognitional abilities which, as it happens, he may not get the chance to display; and he wants to credit him with an understanding of what it is for certain truth-conditions to obtain undetectably. McDowell's answer to the manifestation-challenge is to claim, in effect, that these two attributions are exactly on a par. But the fact is that they are not. Grasping M-realist truth-conditions for a particular statement involves <u>both</u> possession of a recognitional skill, whose exercise may be pre-empted either by falsity or by undetectable truth, <u>and</u> an understanding of what it <u>is</u> for the statement to be undetectably true.' (Wright 3, p128.)

The crucial distinction, according to Wright, is that between our possessing a skill which would allow us to recognise the prevailing of certain circumstances determining the truth-value of appropriate statements, and our

understanding of what it would be for these circumstances to prevail undetectably. This is reminiscent of the distinction which we felt it necessary to introduce when considering McGinn's proposed counter example to anti-realism. It may be remembered that McGinn selected a class of statements which he took to be suitable for the application of an anti-realist programme. He then pointed out that his subjects would nevertheless be able to form conceptions of those situations which would determine the truth-values of these verification-transcendent statements. We noted however that the formation of such conceptions would be implied by the anti-realist's understanding of these statements and that this capacity posed no real threat to the anti-realist's position. The anti-realist was not maintaining that conceptions could not be formed but that there was no way of passing from the conceptions to a grasp of what it would be for the conceived situation to obtain in a way that transcended verification.

The difference again is that between the possession of a conception or recognitional skill concerning certain conditions and our being able to grasp or understand what it would be for these conditions to obtain undetectably. (McDowell uses an example involving a frustrated recognitional capacity to produce a kind of <u>reductio ad absurdum</u> from the anti-realist's thesis [McDowell 2, pp231 and 247]. He recognises that the realism which he concocts in this way is something which Wright would separate out from the target of his anti-realist attacks, but protests that the resulting

qualification of anti-realism would detract from its interest and appeal. Be that as it may, McDowell's point reinforces the suspicion that there is confusion here regarding the constraint which the anti-realist wishes to reveal concerning our conception of meaning.) But now where does all this leave us with respect to character traits and the objection which has been raised to the anti-realist's proposed synthesis involving verification-conditions?

We took it that the anti-realist's objection to realism with respect to character traits was based on his discovery that in certain cases statements concerning these would correspond to no truth-conditions. Subsequently we noted that these problematic statements within the disputed class would correspond to no verification-conditions either and this led us to wonder whether the anti-realist had been any more successful regarding his proposed theory of meaning than the realist had been. We then noted that we were not necessarily justified in demanding that those conditions which are central to a particular theory of meaning be always available. In certain cases the proponent of a theory of meaning would be able to account for his understanding of certain statements in terms of his knowledge of the statements' composition and semantic constituents, without necessarily confronting the relevant conditions - be these truth-conditions or verification-conditions. Do we at this stage say that the counter offensive against anti-realism was misguided in this case? But if we say this should we also acknowledge that the anti-realist's case against the realist with respect

to character traits, was misguided in being based on what amounts to no more than a frustrated recognitional capacity?

We might imagine our anti-realist objecting to this, along the lines that it is Brown rather than Jones who presents us with a frustrated recognitional capacity. Brown, let us imagine, had been shipwrecked as an infant and had lived a long and adventurous life on a desert island in complete isolation from his fellow men. Although now dead, Brown had often fought courageously against the wild animals on his island. Brown's brave behaviour was a bit like Jones's physiology. It was there (we suppose) but circumstances prevented us from ever confronting it. In this sense our recognitional capacity was frustrated. But what the case of Jones proves is that there could be instances where this sort of capacity would not merely be frustrated but would be completely unattainable. The physiological case is fundamentally different in that our capacities to recognise the occurrence of a certain physiology can at worst be frustrated whereas with respect to the behavioural reduction the appropriate capacities could not be attained in the first place.

If the anti-realist follows this line he would appear also to be ruling out the possibility of explaining his own understanding of statements concerning Jones's character, in terms of verification-conditions. Also his neglect of a realist response based on the composition and semantic significance of the constituents of the relevant statements

would seem to prevent his own escape by this means.

The important points which I think we need to note from this particular examination are these: Our ability to understand statements implies a capacity to conceive in some way of the situations which these statements pertain to. The anti-realist is not at all aiming to deny our ability to understand statements of any sort. Rather he is concerned to ensure that the theory of meaning which we adopt for certain of these, is one which is capable of providing an explanation of that understanding. Consequently, neither is he aiming to deny our ability to form conceptions relating to those conditions which would determine the truth-values of statements. In assessing the adequacy of any proposed theory of meaning the anti-realist does require that what it presents as its central concept should be something which we are able to confront in practice in our linguistic training or at least be capable of confronting. It is at this point however that the difficulties arise. With regard to Jones, are we to say that we could have confronted the truth-conditions relevant to the question of his bravery? We would merely have had to observe Jones in situations which we could ourselves have provoked. Or are we to say that the appropriate condition could not in this case have been observed and that it remains in this sense verification-transcendent?

Anti-realism is concerned over the question of whether certain truth-conditions are confrontable. It fails however to clarify its notion of what is to count as confrontable

and this failure permeates, it seems, not only the issues that arise between realist and anti-realist but also those which stem from his own reconstruction programme.

(iv)

So far in this chapter we have considered the validity of claims which Dummett makes as to the independence of the anti-realist's position from that of associated reductionist positions. We then examined the practical facts that lay behind Dummett's disclaimer to the effect that he had never intended to be providing a single universal resolution of all the various realist/anti-realist disputes. On this we noted that as far as the anti-realist's argument with regard to mathematics is concerned this certainly gave the impression of - and at points is claimed by Dummett to be - a general argument. We noted also that this may not necessarily be something which works in the anti-realist's favour. From this point we went on to review the positive aspect of anti-realism. That is, he replaces an arguably defunct realist theory of meaning with a more appropriate and generally valid theory, in line with the doctrine of meaning as use, where this was seen to be necessary.

These have all been attempts to assess whether in fact the anti-realist programme can be regarded as a consistent and coherent one. What I intend to do next is to take this assessment a stage further by examining whether the way in which the anti-realist's position has been specified is entirely appropriate and satisfactory.

I must reiterate at this point my belief that the whole realist/anti-realist characterisation is being put forward merely as a means of advancing traditional philosophical disputes. There is nowhere, as far as I am aware, any suggestion by Dummett that we should forget these original disputes and consider instead some new range of disputes. The new approach is intended as a contribution to philosophy only in so far as it helps us to think about and perhaps even solve some of these disputes. '...the problems were old. What was supposed to be new was the approach.' (Dummett 5, pxxxi).

However, having said this, we should recognise that the basic characterisation of these disputes is being approached in a new way and this is being done deliberately. Dummett chooses not to present his characterisation in terms of ontological disputes over different classes of things or possible things. He selects instead classes of statements as defining particular disputes and the disputes themselves as being over the explanation of our understanding of, or the theory of meaning appropriate to, these different classes. In Dummett 2, he remarks:

> '....I shall take as my preferred characterisation of a dispute between realists and anti-realists one which represents it as relating, not to a class of entities or a class of terms, but to a class of <u>statements</u>, which may be, e.g., statements about the physical world,

statements about mental events, processes or states, mathematical statements, statements in the past tense, statements in the future tense, etc.' (Dummett 2, p146.)

Earlier on I alluded to one feature of this way of setting up the problem which could give rise to difficulties. Having selected a particular disputed class, i.e. a class of statements about which the realist and anti-realist can debate, it is assumed that within that class a unified theory of meaning must apply - at least this assumption forms part of the anti-realist's argument. However the anti-realist, unless he is a global anti-realist, will not want to insist that a single theory of meaning applies across <u>all</u> classes and to <u>all</u> statements. Dummett himself is not a global anti-realist or even sympathetic with the view. Such an approach, involving a requirement for a universally applicable theory of meaning, would as we have seen be out of line with Dummett's stated aims. Consequently the anti-realist described within the characterisation seems committed to a view in which two or more different theories of meaning cover our linguistic usage. Each theory would have its own sphere of influence and be completely dominant within that sphere.

What I suspect may be problematic here is just how the anti-realist is supposed to know that for a particular class of statements a unified theory of meaning is required, in advance of his acquiring a theory of meaning for the class of statements.

To take an example, the intuitionistic anti-realist developed his case against platonism by attempting to demonstrate that the latter was not able to cater for all mathematical statements. On the assumption that there must be a single unified theory of meaning within mathematics (but not necessarily throughout all linguistic practice), it was concluded that platonism could not be that theory - since for certain mathematical statements it was seen to be inappropriate. And following the removal of platonism an alternative more generally applicable theory was introduced.

The question is, what is the basis for this assumption that a single unified theory of meaning must apply to just these - somewhat arbitrarily selected - statements? Furthermore, what prevents us from subdividing mathematics so that each subdivision obeys its own unique theory of meaning - one of which may possibly be realism or platonism? Or alternatively, what prevents the anti-realist from subsuming any particular disputed class within another and, having demonstrated to his own satisfaction that anti-realism must be adopted within the former, demanding that it also be applied within the latter, on the grounds that here also a unified theory is required?

These issues concern the boundaries within which particular realist/anti-realist debates take place. It may appear that the location of these boundaries is a somewhat academic matter. But this would be to misunderstand the significance of what the anti-realist tries to achieve.

Remember that the anti-realist launches his attack with respect to a particular area of discourse. He does this by citing a class of statements, the disputed class, which he perhaps characterises as being about things of a particular type. From within this disputed class he selects a sub-class which are the problematic statements. It is with respect to these statements that he attempts to demonstrate that a realist theory of meaning cannot successfully explain our understanding. But the intended result of this strategy, the rejection of realism, if successful, will not just be confined to the problematic sub-set of statements. A new appreciation will be required, it is suggested, for the way in which we confer meaning on the whole class of disputed statements. Dummett remarks;

> 'It is true, indeed, that we tend to treat statements of the disputed class as if they must be either true or false independently of anything by which they could be known to be true, and therefore of anything in which their truth could consist. This leads us to use these statements in a recognisably different way from that in which we should use them if we had a clear grasp of the kind of meaning which we ourselves have conferred on them, namely by accepting as valid inferences which are in fact unjustifiable. But, in this respect at least, the use which is made in practice of the sentences of our language is not unassailable: we accept invalid inferences because we are dominated by an incorrect picture of the meanings of our own statements.' (Dummett

4, p362.)

And the fact that this incorrect picture affects the full range of statements within the disputed class (not just the problematic statements) should not surprise us since realism involves a belief about how all the statements in the disputed class acquire meaning. More recently Dummett talks of a given class rather than disputed class. This perhaps reflects the fact that, as we have seen, this class includes some statements which are not initially seen as problematic. He writes that:

> 'The primary tenet of realism, as applied to some given class of statements, is that each statement in the class is determined as true or not true, independently of our knowledge, by some objective reality whose existence and constitution is, again, independent of our knowledge.' (Dummett 6, p434.)

It is because of this potential expansion of anti-realism throughout the disputed class, once it has been established within a sub-class, that the boundaries of the disputed or given class are of importance. It is the boundaries which determine precisely how influential a given form of anti-realism will be.

We are concerned here with problems that can arise from the specification of the boundaries relating to the disputed class. One response to these problems would be simply to

claim that the anti-realist and the disputants generally do not have much freedom of choice concerning these boundaries. After all we are characterising old disputes. These will already define for us the dispute areas and neither disputant will be free to change these areas arbitrarily or to select new ones. A given traditional dispute will, on this account, define a disputed class and the anti-realist will just have to develop his case within the context of that disputed area.

One of the consequences of such an approach would be that the anti-realist would not be free either to introduce new disputes or even to modify the scope of old ones. Perhaps this is thought to be quite proper but it does also appear to be somewhat limiting. There would perhaps be no scope for the introduction of a realist/anti-realist debate over character traits for example since, as far as I know, there is no corresponding traditional dispute. We are left, as a consequence of this view, only able to work within a fairly rigid framework.

Another reservation concerning this approach would be that it does not really solve the problem it set out to. It still does not provide any justification for the imposed requirement for unified theories of meaning. We must remember that the original disputes were not couched in meaning terms. The incentive to debate the ontological status of a given class of entities was not tied to particular views about the meaning of statements which referred to those entities. In other words although it is recognised that the original

ontological disputes define, implicitly, certain specific areas of dispute, these do not carry with them any particular requirement for a unified or other theory of meaning within that area. Even if it is granted that a traditional dispute has existed over the status to be assigned to mathematical entities and this can be used to define a class of statements, there is no requirement within this recognition that a single theory of meaning shall apply to that class. This is not a problem about recognising the inherited boundaries of these disputes, it is more to do with what it is that dictates these boundaries.

What I am suggesting here is that if the meaning-based theorist claims that he is merely taking over certain dispute areas from the ontologist this may satisfactorily define areas of dispute but it will not explain why we should expect unified meaning theories to exist in each of these domains. Further, such a claim makes the meaning approach dependent upon prior ontological issues. Such dependence might be avoided in some areas if the meaning theorist claims that his selection is in some sense implicit, being based on some sort of natural division of categories. He might add in his defence that the ontologist offers no real justification of his areas of concern and so by employing a similar approach, he is able to bypass in these areas a dependence upon ontological issues. This is a not completely satisfactory solution however and it does nothing for those areas of dispute where the meaning theorist couches his definition of the dispute area specifically in ontological terms; e.g. that class of

statements about X's, where X's constitute a particular ontological class.

There are really two criticisms of the suggested characterisation involved here. One is that we are given no justification for the assumption of this 'domain' theory of meaning, i.e. a theory that proposes that there will be a range of definable linguistic areas within each of which we can expect, or even demand, a single unified theory of meaning - without any prejudice to the distinctions which may exist between domains. The other - which is related - is that we are given no guidance on or justification for the selection of domains.

(v)

There is yet another problem which arises when we choose to define our areas of concern in the way the anti-realist does. This one relates to what might be called compound statements. Suppose that we are able to satisfy ourselves that when it comes to character traits we must, as Dummett seems to advocate, adopt an anti-realist stance. Concerning material object statements however perhaps we can see no way of abandoning a realist approach. What sort of theory of meaning would we then feel inclined to apply for statements such as, 'Caesar's bravery was in evidence every time he drew his sword'? Quite apart from any particular qualms that we might have regarding the past, or past-tense statements, we will be faced with a statement which looks as if it might

go into either of two categories (if not more). We could describe this as a statement about character traits and we could describe it as a statement about (at least in the sense of involving) material objects. (The same is true of the statement 'Caesar was brave' which is structurally simpler.) The problem is that for the former class of statements we want to adopt an anti-realist theory of meaning and for the latter a realist theory. Concerning this particular statement it will be unclear what theory of meaning should be adopted.

Faced with this sort of difficulty, the anti-realist may try to separate out two aspects of the problematic statement: to convert it, as it were, to two simpler statements. Even if he manages to do this successfully, there is no doubt that it represents a somewhat unnatural interference with what, on the face of it, is a fairly ordinary example of linguistic usage.

This problem can be seen to be a direct consequence of the decision to base the realist/anti-realist characterisation in terms of classes of statements rather than classes of things. The statements are categorised for the most part as being about certain things, e.g. 'statements about the physical world, statements about mental events, processes or states,' (Dummett 2, p146), but can also be thought of as statements of a particular type, e.g. 'mathematical statements, statements in the past tense, statements in the future tense, etc.' (Dummett 2, p146). The basic problem is that this means of categorisation does

not provide a unique class for each and every statement and hence any particular statement can apparently belong to two or more classes for which possibly different theories of meaning are being advocated. (One thing that the anti-realist clearly cannot do, if he wants to be taken seriously, is to say that it does not matter which theory is adopted.) Another anti-realist manoeuvre which would seem to be fairly undesirable would be to maintain that if an anti-realist theory has been shown to be necessary for a particular class of statements including one which is a member also of another class, then this would be seen as a means of infecting, as it were, the latter class. Realism would hence need to be abandoned for this class also. The difficulty with this response would lie in its appearance of being a fairly dubious means by which widespread, if not global, anti-realism could be demonstrated.

In the preceding pages I have raised a number of related problems which concern the way in which the realist/anti-realist disputes have been characterised. These problems surround the specification of disputed classes. If we are allowed a fairly wide freedom in selecting disputed classes there are several anomalies which seem to arise. As has just been discussed, we might discover that a range of statements can be fitted into more than one class and, for other reasons, we may previously have decided to adopt different theories of meaning for each of these classes. Perhaps we take this as an indication that our original decision concerning appropriate theories of meaning was wrong, and these particular

statements simply highlight this. If we do adopt this approach however we shall discover that with a little imagination we can invent statements linking many, and perhaps all classes, such that if anti-realism had been adopted for one of these we would be compelled to spread it across all classes.

A related problem which has already been touched on arises in the following way: if we select a fairly restricted disputed class and demonstrate that some form of anti-realism must be adopted for this class because certain statements within that class cannot be explained in terms of a realist theory, we might possibly be able to subsume this original class within some much wider class and thereby establish anti-realism for the more general class. This possibility arises because the anti-realist's method implicitly involves him in demonstrating his case for some sub-class of the disputed class, but then using this demonstration to justify an anti-realist approach to the wider, disputed class. It is this technique which makes the selection of disputed classes and their boundaries such a significant one within the issue over realism and anti-realism.

In the limit all statements are members of the most general class of statements i.e. all are statements of a particular language. Unless we are prevented by dispute boundaries we might for example subsume the class of statements about character traits, for which anti-realism may have been established, within this most general class and in this way make out a case for global anti-realism.

This may in fact be a gross over-simplification, the consequences of which can be avoided by reference to the boundaries of the implicit domain type theory of meaning. If this theory is adopted, the establishment of one theory of meaning within any particular domain would not influence the establishment of that theory within any other domain, because the domains would be associated with independent semantic theories. Such an implicit domain type approach has not however been developed and no justification has been provided for the boundaries which would form a central feature of such a theory. Hence we are left wondering how the collapse into global anti-realism is in practice to be avoided.

Whatever explanation of these suggested problems is offered by the anti-realist we could still be left wondering whether the sort of characterisation which gives rise to them is an ideal one. Because of this possibility I am going to consider briefly how this characterisation compares with a more ontologically based one.

(vi)

From an ontological viewpoint opposition to realism will normally take the form of a denial of the existence of a class of otherwise assumed entities. Apart from this negative feature, which constitutes an ontological reduction, emphasis will normally be placed on some other class of 'real' entities which are sufficient to account for all the normal

phenomena which had previously been associated with the eliminated class. In order to allow a distinction to be made between this type of opposition to ontological realism and Dummett's defined anti-realism, I will use the term 'unrealism' to refer to the former. Unrealism will be understood therefore as an opposition to realism within an ontological context, whereas anti-realism is essentially an opposition to realism within the context of theory of meaning.

Unrealism with relation to character traits would presumably take the form of an opposition to a belief in character traits as real entities in some sense. It would be a denial of the independent existence of things which could be labelled as character traits. Talk about character traits would on this view be 'reinterpreted' as a sort of shorthand for talk about some more fundamental class of <u>real</u> entities - although this intention need not necessarily be explicit or even implicit in the speaker's mind.

As we have seen there will be relations imposed between different types of anti-realisms which result from the relations existing between different classes of statements. If one class of statement can be sensibly subsumed within another for which we demand a consistent theory of meaning, then adoption of anti-realism - implying some positive theory of meaning - for the former class will necessitate its adoption for the latter class also. Certain relations of this type will arise for different types of unrealism also. For example, imagine someone who develops a sort of ideological bent towards

some class of alleged entities within the material sphere (we refer to them as alleged in an attempt to give the impression of not prejudging the issue). Let us say he becomes an unrealist with regard to trees, neglecting for the moment, any problems which might arise in connection with defining such a claim. Now the class of entities, or alleged entities, which give rise to a dispute in this case between the unrealist and his realist counterpart, are a sub-class of the total class of material objects (or maybe allegedly material objects).

At this point, I think it could be claimed by an anti-realist, that within the structure of unrealisms there is an assumption which parallels his alleged assumption about meaning theory domains. Just as the anti-realist may impose, in a seemingly arbitrary way, a demand for semantic consistency across the entire range of statements about material objects, so also the unrealist will, in practice, demand a consistent ontological status for such objects.

Specifically the objection is being made that our unrealist will not in fact develop an idealist stance towards just trees because whatever would tempt him to such a conclusion should be generally applicable to all material objects. Thus since there seem to be no good reasons for differentiating trees from other material objects in terms of their ontological status, any conclusion reached concerning the former should apply also to the latter. Hence it is being denied that unrealism with respect to trees could arise

independently of a wider unrealism. The actual width of this extended unrealism will depend in a seemingly arbitrary way upon demands which we make for consistency of ontological status within what might be termed 'ontological domains'. In addition it may be suggested that unrealism would face similar difficulties to those which we considered concerning anti-realism and compound statements.

It might appear then that some of the problems which have been raised concerning the anti-realist's selection of disputed classes are not peculiar to this particular way of characterising the various disputes. To some extent this may be correct but even if this is granted, it must still be noted that the two approaches are not entirely parallel. Because the unrealist makes his case with respect to things or events, or alleged things or events, there is not the same scope - as there is with the anti-realist - for, in a sense, distorting the class by introducing into it elements of a compound nature; elements that is, that might span a range of classes. The difference here seems to be that the elements of the anti-realist's classes are too unwieldy for the doctrines that the anti-realist would want to defend. Defining the disputed classes in terms of statements will always add in an extra level of complexity because it will always be possible to identify statements which are about things of more than one type. The problem over compound statements arises for the anti-realist because his basic unit of currency - the statement - is capable of embracing a range of the ontologist's basic units.

Further, even if the unrealist accepted a commitment to ranges of domains within which he required or assumed a stable ontology, he might well be in a better position to offer a justification of these domains. Roughly he might claim that any argument or reasoning he produces for the adoption of a particular ontological view with regard to certain objects or entities (or alleged objects or entities) within a domain, is equally applicable to all items within the domain, though not necessarily to those outside the domain. Hence it may be possible for the unrealist to offer some form of justification for the domains he makes use of, based on the scope of the arguments which he presents.

I suspect that a parallel route would not however be available to the anti-realist. The anti-realist's approach as we have seen involves an implicit move from arguments concerning a sub-set of the disputed class to the whole of that class, without any attempt to demonstrate that these arguments apply equally to all members of the class. As a consequence the anti-realist cannot hope to justify the selection of his classes and their boundaries on the basis of the range of his arguments.

We saw earlier that the boundaries of the disputed classes are of importance because these define the extent of the anti-realist success, if his arguments prove successful in a particular area. Because of this it appears to be incumbent upon the anti-realist to give some account of the extent

of these classes which relates to his demand for consistency in the approach to meaning for statements within each class. There appears however to be no obvious justification for these classes of meaning-consistent domains, except possibly one which is based on the ontological referents of the statements in question. If the anti-realist offers this basis for his selection of domains he grounds his meaning-theory approach to the problem of realism, in ontological terms. That is, in order to provide an account of his implicit demands for unified theories of meaning in certain areas of discourse, the anti-realist resorts to the ontological status of the referents of statements within these areas. This may come as no surprise; the old disputes were after all ontological disputes and what the anti-realist provides is just a new way of looking at these. This realisation should however reinforce our view that the anti-realist's approach is dependent upon ontological issues and it is these issues which in fact lie at the heart of what the anti-realist attempts to characterise. It may be recalled however that one of the incentives, if not compelling reasons, for adopting an anti-realist as opposed to an unrealist characterisation of the dispute, was to avoid the requirement for ontological commitment prior to the establishment of an appropriate theory of meaning for those statements which referred to the relevant ontological items. Whether this sort of dependence, which the anti-realist seems forced to adopt, on the existence and self-evidence of defined ontological domains actually constitutes the sort of prior commitment which Dummett has been at pains to avoid, is not clear. However it certainly

appears that the semantic characterisation will be dependent on a prior ontological characterisation and if this is the case it might occur to us to ask how the additional structure advances us. And apart from this we are still left with the question, which was raised earlier, of why it should be accepted that ontological domains will provide the necessary underpinning for a theory of semantic domains. Why should the fact that we expect a consistent ontological status to hold for a class of items imply that a consistent theory of meaning should apply to the class of statements which refer to those items?

Another reason behind the proposed move towards a meaning based approach to the traditional disputes was that the ontological approach could not readily accommodate as wide a range of disputes. This incentive is referred to in Chapter 20 of Dummett 6:

> 'A characterisation of realism in terms of reference would be more traditional than one in terms of truth; but it certainly would be less illuminating, and would fit fewer cases. It would not fit realism concerning the past or the future, which do not diverge from the corresponding forms of anti-realism by asserting the referentiality of any terms (certainly not of temporal adverbs) nor would it be apt as a characterisation of platonism as a philosophy of mathematics, since the issue between platonism and constructivism is not whether there are mathematical objects, and is only misleadingly

described as relating to the character of mathematical objects.' (Dummett 6, p441.)

If this were true it would provide an incentive, though not a compelling one, to adopt this wider characterisation. Earlier, in his paper 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic' Dummett himself sketched out an ontologically based opposition to platonism. Furthermore, it is not obvious that realism concerning the past does not relate to the referentiality of certain statements at least. Indeed this ontological aspect of the various disputes is hard to neglect when it is cited by Dummett as the very touchstone of realism.

> 'The very minimum that realism can be held to involve is that statements in the given class relate to some reality that exists independently of our knowledge of it, in such a way that that reality renders each statement in the class determinately true or false, again independently of whether we know, or are even able to discover, its truth-value.' (Dummett 7, p55.)

I am not going to dwell further on the relative merits of the two approaches since whilst I am questioning the suggested need to abandon the ontological characterisations, I do not see these in particular as being the correct way ahead. Suffice it for now to say that there exists an alleged reason for abandoning the ontological approach to these disputes which is not an obviously valid one and even if

it did represent a real difficulty for the traditional characterisation this would have to be set against the potential problems, some of which have been considered above, which may be introduced by the meaning-based approach.

(vii)

The questions raised above emphasize, I believe, the basic dependence of the modern characterisation which we are being offered on possibly more fundamental ontological issues. The new characterisation has been offered as a way of linking a range of traditional disputes in a new way, from a new angle as it were, and hence as a way of throwing up new insights into these disputes.

The intended additional benefits are that this way of approaching the problems or disputes will show them to have a similar form and hence allow advances made in one to be carried over - possibly - to others. The possibility of linking the disputes is not however limited to this type of characterisation. We have seen in (vi) above that a less novel way of achieving this end might be based on an ontological characterisation.

Furthermore this alternative characterisation keeps us in closer touch with the origins of the traditional disputes and it must be remembered that <u>it is</u> these traditional disputes, disputes about the external world or the past or numbers, that are being addressed under whatever

characterisation we adopt. It may well be then that the logical relations between different forms of realism and opposition to realism are more readily apparent when these are viewed from more of an ontological stance than a semantic one. The incompatibility for example of holding realist views about the past together with unrealist views about the present, or of maintaining realism with regard to physiological entities - as a means of underpinning unrealism for character traits - and unrealism with regard to material objects, might be more readily observed when considered in an ontological setting. The danger in abandoning such an approach is that by removing disputes from their ontological context altogether, there may be a possibility of missing certain points which would be more readily apparent within that context.

Apart from this, I have tried to suggest that the meaning-based characterisation may lead to problems over the setting up of particular disputes. There may be problems in trying to avoid global consequences - which could be taken as a symptom that something is fundamentally wrong with the characterisation. And there appears to be a sort of unsatisfactory lingering dependence on ontological issues in any case.

Paul Horwich and Michael Devitt have individually tried to separate out the ontological and semantical issues which Dummett raises. Both Horwich and Devitt believe that Dummett confounds these essentially distinct disputes (Horwich 1, p183 and Devitt 1, p78). Certainly I think that Dummett would

agree that he sees these issues as being intimately linked. In his recent paper, 'Realism', Dummett remarks that:

> 'Realism and anti-realism are metaphysical doctrines; and it has been an implicit contention of the present analysis of the concept of realism that metaphysical questions, at least ones of this type, are at root questions belonging to the theory of meaning.' (Dummett 7, p106.)

What perhaps remains in doubt is precisely how the two are linked. At points Dummett defines realism in what are inextricably ontological terms (e.g. Dummett 7, p55 and Dummett 6, p434). These definitions make realisms (and because of this anti-realisms) into positive ontological positions which should result in the possibility of each dispute being formulated in purely ontological terms. At other points, almost in the same breath, Dummett suggests that such formulations would fail to capture the real nature of all such disputes (Dummett 7, p55 and Dummett 6, pp441,461-2). Elsewhere, as Devitt notes (Devitt 1, pp80-1), Dummett appears to regard the ontological aspect of these disputes as merely a metaphorical accompaniment.

Having separated out the ontological and semantical issues Devitt tries to argue that no semantically based argument could suffice to establish anti-realism (which he construes as an ontological opposition to realism). However since anti-realism has been defined by Dummett as a semantic

doctrine, what this comes down to is that the establishment of anti-realism will not really guarantee or support the establishment of what we have referred to as "unrealism". If true this would be an embarrassment to Dummett since, again as Devitt is quick to point out (Devitt 1, p78), Dummett appears to see his work as deriving its importance from the implications it has for traditional (ontological) disputes.

Rasmussen and Ravnkilde have however argued that Dummett is without error in linking the semantic and ontological, (Rasmussen and Ravnkilde 1, pp380-1 and pp412-3). They suggest that there could be no content to one's maintaining ontological realism in an anti-realist semantical context. Anyone who tried to maintain this position would be holding 'that the mind-independent segments of the world are such as not to make any of our declarative sentences describing those segments either true or false'. (ibid. p380). How then, they ask, can aspects of the world that resist capture in language be producible? Ostension, they argue, fails in this respect since this would make true the assertion that that aspect of the world obtained. This, it seems to me, is an essentially correct interpretation which demonstrates to some extent the vacuousness of Devitt's attack on Dummett and of metaphysical realism generally. However there remains a still substantial point concerning the way in which these disputes, however linked, are to be characterised. I have merely suggested that the one which Dummett favours for what amount to reasons of convenience, may not be the most appropriate.

In Chapter 2 we reviewed the realist/anti-realist programme. Since then we have considered objections which relate to that programme. In the previous Chapter these objections were centred around topics which had arisen in the literature and in the main these concentrated on advancing or attacking particular realist positions. It was as if, in some of these exchanges, the main objective of Dummett's philosophical task - namely the setting up of a particular characterisation covering a range of traditional disputes - was not in question, but rather had been accepted. It should be remembered that an attack on anti-realism does not imply an attack on the characterisation of disputes according to the realist/anti-realist framework, and to some extent must be regarded as indicating acceptance of that characterisation.

In the present Chapter I have tried to widen out a little the issues involved in the characterisation itself. Whilst it has not been my intention, in developing these observations and criticisms of the characterisation, to show that this is in some way untenable or would be unprofitable, it has been an aim to appraise this characterisation critically and to illustrate that there are a number of areas surrounding it which appear at least as though they are going to prove problematic. Hence we come to the end of the first phase of our review of the proposed characterisation. We are not in a position at this stage to reject or accept the characterisation, but it is I think reasonable to conclude that we cannot be completely satisfied with what is at present being offered.

The issues already considered, whether directed specifically at anti-realism or more generally at the characterisation, are in a sense internal to the subject area of realism and anti-realism. They have arisen over arguments and concepts which form part of that characterisation. In the remainder of this work I am going to pursue a different line of enquiry.

The idea of meaning as use is, as we have seen, one of the corner stones of the characterisation. But this is a thesis which has its origins elsewhere - namely in the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein. In the next chapter I am going to examine Wittgenstein's approach to privacy which is to some extent intertwined with his conclusion that meaning is determined by use. This will form the prelude to a further chapter in which I will attempt to take a more external view of Dummett's objective, by comparing this with Wittgenstein's beliefs about privacy and meaning as use.

CHAPTER 5 : PRIVACY

CHAPTER ABSTRACT

It is suggested that the topic of privacy, as this has been approached by Wittgenstein, is of relevance to the characterisation which Dummett presents. One reason behind this suggestion is that the privacy issue can be regarded as a working through of Wittgenstein's idea that meaning be exhibited in use, in one particular area. A separate reason is that Wittgenstein's work in this area can be seen as a rejection of certain sceptical positions, some of which will be associated with anti-realist counterparts.

It is noted that Wittgenstein concentrated mainly on the example of 'pain' when examining the privacy issue. It is suggested that certain accidental features of our language make 'pain' a more difficult example than a consideration of other modalities would be. However because we are more concerned with appreciating the issues, rather than establishing a general case as Wittgenstein was, we start out by examining a visual example. Later on when these issues are better established we turn more towards the writings of Wittgenstein. Also an attempt is then made to indicate how the case with respect to vision is in principle similar to that of pain.

It is suggested that the view of language which is under attack from Wittgenstein, is closely aligned with a sort

of psychological model in which private phenomenal objects play a central role. With the demise of this erroneous view of language we are able to dispense also with the very dubious psychological model. The major importance of these moves is in their impact on certain traditional forms of scepticism.

(i)

At the end of the last chapter I mentioned one reason for turning our attention towards the notion of privacy. It was simply that this concept was bound up in my view with the idea of meaning as use, and this latter doctrine forms one of the corner stones of anti-realism if not the whole realist/anti-realist characterisation.

There is however another reason for this apparent digression. Those writings of Wittgenstein which concern privacy and which have become known as the 'private language argument' are very much more than simply a correction of an error in our thinking about how certain parts of our language function. They do point out such an error but the really crucial point is that this erroneous way of thinking about language has formed a central feature of much sceptical philosophy. Once it is recognised that this faulty approach to language is illegitimate, the traditional sceptic becomes unable to formulate his objections to broadly common sense views.

It is important to recognise that this contribution

which Wittgenstein makes is outside the conventional framework, within which sceptical arguments are usually assessed.

The pattern of the conventional dialectic between sceptic and anti-sceptic is as follows: there is a given position with regard to some area of knowledge. This is embedded in the essentially pre-philosophical, perhaps common-sense, view of the world. It takes for granted such things as there being objects and other people in the world and that we can learn facts about those objects and the situations they enter into and that those people have thoughts and feelings in much the same way as we do. The sceptic challenges this world view or some aspect of it. He does this by pointing to some gap in the reasoning which would be necessary to support our 'deductions' about the world.

The difficulty with trying to make a defence against this sort of attack is that the sceptic leaves us very little with which to work. The result in some cases is that the anti-sceptic resorts to a basic act of faith. He accepts the paucity of his position, once the sceptic has persuaded him of this, but he feels, perhaps intuitively, compelled to resurrect some edifice from the ashes. The sceptic's conclusions cannot be allowed to go completely unchallenged or they will degrade our world or some part of it to a merely ethereal existence. (I would regard Descartes as providing a sort of archetypal example of both the traditional sceptical attack and the intuitive - act of faith type - response to that attack.)

Alternatively the sceptic's opponent responds by trying to establish some form of direct acquaintance with the particular states of affairs of concern. Dummett comments regarding this defence that:

> 'The thesis of direct knowledge, considered as a component of naive realism, serves many purposes. Epistemologically, it is a means of defeating scepticism by rendering it senseless.' (Dummett 6, p451.)

and in the particular case of the past:

> 'If my knowledge of the past, in memory, is the outcome of a direct contact that I now make with the past event, Cartesian doubt becomes impossible: it must be <u>senseless</u> to suppose that I should have this memory even though the past event did not occur.' (Dummett 6, p450.)

But this issue over what we can claim to have direct acquaintance of is merely another aspect of the concern over what is accessible to us. In Dummett 7 in a parallel passage to the one above, Dummett goes on to consider the difficulties that emerge for the naive realist when he is required to account for mistaken judgements which are supposed to have been based on direct contact with the events in question.

> 'He has, first, a problem to explain how we ever come to make a mistake in making a judgement on the favoured

basis...' (Dummett 7, p109.)

Dummett also criticises the traditional phenomenalist for what amounts to not being sufficiently thoroughgoing in his scepticism to warrant the epithet of anti-realist. If he had been prepared to carry through his sceptical sympathies to their logical conclusion, he would it is suggested, have recognised that there would be no basis for his maintenance of bivalence in respect of subjunctive conditionals of the type, 'If anyone were to go into the next room (and switch on the light) he would see a table.' But he failed to do this because of a persistent realist conviction concerning the material objects which would underpin bivalence concerning such conditionals.

> '.... the classical phenomenalist ... had neither ground nor motive for accepting strong bivalence for the subjunctive conditionals resulting from his translation of material-object statements. We can reasonably regard his having done so as due to a lingering attachment to a realistic view of material object statements; and, so regarded, he was not genuinely an anti-realist.' (Dummett 7, pp84-5.)

These sorts of treatment reflect the similarity of the issues and problems concerning realist/sceptical arguments and those which relate to realism and anti-realism. And perhaps this should come as no surprise to us since the various forms of anti-realism are intended to emerge from traditional forms

of opposition to realism. A consequence of this will be however that we should expect to find links and connections between the traditional opponent of realism, the sceptic, and Dummett's anti-realist. No matter how much more sophisticated we regard the anti-realist's position when compared with that of the sceptic, it will be his sceptical sympathies which in most instances form the basis of his rejection of our acquaintance with the relevant conditions which would be a requirement for a realist's theory of meaning.

Now if my views about the consequences of Wittgenstein's writings on privacy are correct these represent a very powerful argument against various forms of scepticism. Because of the interconnection which exists between anti-realism and various sceptical positions, it may be that Wittgenstein's approach will conflict with, or forestall, the development of anti-realism.

Anti-realism we recalled has been created from the Wittgensteinian approach to meaning epitomised by the phrase 'meaning as use'. Hence there would be a certain irony if some part of Wittgenstein's later philosophy - a philosophy which I hope to show is mainly directed against traditional sceptical positions - were used as a foundation for what might be viewed as a new form of scepticism or something which is at least closely related to these old forms.

It is this slightly paradoxical situation which prompts further investigation and comparison between the offered

realist/anti-realist dichotomy and the Wittgensteinian approach to privacy which looked as if it might eliminate such disputes.

Much of what Wittgenstein had to say on privacy concerned 'pain', 'pain ascriptions' and 'pain language'. (The notes on 'Private Experience' and 'Sense Data' place more emphasis on colour and visually related vocabulary however than the Investigations do.) In discussing pain Wittgenstein's aim was to get us to realise that there is not any sort of private object or item with which each of us alone is acquainted and which gives meaning to our language concerning pain. Similar things could have been said about 'seeing red' or, 'seeing a particular object' or 'touching an object' or even 'hearing a certain noise'. The essential point is still the same: there is no private object or event which corresponds to our seeing red or seeing an object or touching something or hearing a noise. – and which gives meaning...

We might be tempted to ask then, 'Why did Wittgenstein concentrate on the case of pain so much?' I think the simple answer to this question is that he selected for detailed scrutiny what he took to be - and what I am sure is - the most difficult of the cases which he could find. Pain presents a particularly difficult example because there is quite a genuine sense in which pain can arise - and often does - in an internal way. Normally when we see red, we associate this with some object - something "out there". There are parallel cases with pain but also there are other examples where there is nothing "out there", at least in the sense

of outside our bodies, which is responsible for our pain. This aspect of pain - its closer association with things internal - complicates matters and for this reason makes pain an unusually problematic case. Note that I am not suggesting that pain is fundamentally different from our other senses - indeed I shall try to show subsequently that this complexity is not sufficient to make us regard pain as different in essence from these other modalities. Nevertheless almost as an accident - a contingent fact about our linguistic usage - we are tempted to regard 'pain' as something which belongs more to our 'inner world' than say our visual awareness does. This peculiarity about 'pain', though not of fundamental importance, makes this case more difficult to handle when we try to get clear about how our language actually does work and how it does not. So far as Wittgenstein is concerned, had he concentrated instead on a more straightforward case he would have run the risk of someone using these complexities to suggest that pain was unaffected by his arguments. His approach therefore has the merit that if it is successful it can be more easily seen to apply to a wider class of cases.

Our situation is somewhat different however, in that we are trying to come to appreciate the significance of what Wittgenstein is trying to do, and this may be easier in a more straightforward case which can then be shown to be general. For these reasons the example which I am going to use as an introduction to this topic concerns the visual modality rather than pain perception or experience. Before

we turn to this example however I am first going to look briefly at the sort of traditional views which have been held by philosophers with respect to this concept of privacy.

(ii)

One of the things which perhaps marks out Wittgenstein's contribution in this area as something of significance, is the fact that prior to his examination of the problem there wasn't known to be a problem. This is not to say that Wittgenstein invented a problem where none previously existed - rather he was able to uncover the root problem of a number of difficulties in a place where no problem had been recognised to exist. Because his investigation is innovative in this way there are no previous treatments of "the problem". Also because the topic had not been thought to be problematic the received position was universally accepted and in general unstated. Wittgenstein himself does not help much here, as he only very rarely refers to statements of the views which he sets out to oppose. There are however particular philosophers who have written sufficient, in their considerations of epistemology for example, to allow them to be clearly identified as aligned with the views Wittgenstein was at pains to eliminate. One such philosopher was Locke. P.M.S. Hacker draws attention to this view of Locke:

> '"Words", Locke proclaims, "in their primary or immediate signification, stand for nothing but <u>the ideas in the mind of him that uses them</u>.... nor can anyone apply

them as marks, immediately, to anything else but the ideas that he himself hath." (III.ii.2.). Similarly, the words of Wittgenstein's imaginary private language refer to the speaker's immediate private sensations. "I know what the word 'toothache' means" remarks Wittgenstein's adversary (Notes p.315), "it produces one particular image in my mind." The words of the private language refer to elements of one's experience: pain, or the red patch in one's visual field when one looks at a red object.' (Hacker 1, pp224-5.)

Hacker also points out some of the peculiarities of Locke's model of language (Hacker 1, p226). For example, for all we are able to tell, the idea that a violet produces in one man's mind may be the same as that which a marigold produces in another's. (Locke 1, II,xxxii,15.) And that the sounds we utter in speech, unless backed by ideas in the mind of the speaker, will be mere noises rather than words. (Locke 1, III,x,26.)

(There is an appendix to this chapter which considers a particular defence of Locke against the sort of charges that I make against him in this chapter. It is probably most appropriate to read this following the completion of this chapter, when, it is hoped, Wittgenstein's views concerning the error of traditional epistemology will have been unfolded. I mention the appendix at this point because it is here that I cite Locke as typifying this tradition.)

It is not just the ideas of Locke however that the private language argument is directed against. As Hacker points out;

> '.... while Locke was explicit in his presuppositions about meaning, language, and thought, philosophers such as Descartes, Berkeley or Hume were no less guilty of the confusions which Wittgenstein seeks to lay bare, and indeed the sceptical consequences of the theories of meaning they presuppose are no less evident in their work than in Locke's and are often more striking.' (Hacker 1, p218.)

In more recent times some of these essentially Lockean ideas are echoed in the writings of Bertrand Russell for example. In his lectures on logical atomism (Russell 1, p50) we are told that 'When one person uses a word, he does not mean by it the same thing as another person means by it.' The reason is that 'the meaning you attach to your words must depend on the nature of the objects you are acquainted with, and since different people are acquainted with different objects, they would not be able to talk to each other unless they attached quite different meanings to their words.' (Russell 1, p50.)

In his essay 'The Relation of Sense-data to Physics' he also wrote concerning sense data and private experience:

> 'The things seen by two different people are often closely similar, so similar, that the same <u>words</u> can be used

to denote them, without which communication with others concerning sensible objects would be impossible. But, in spite of this similarity, it would seem that some difference always arises from difference in the point of view. Thus each person, so far as his sense-data are concerned, lives in a private world.' (Russell 2, p152.)

Furthermore, Russell illustrates the way in which this private world view leads on (if pursued) to epistemological scepticism:

'...it becomes evident that the real table, if there is one, is not the same as what we immediately experience by sight or touch or hearing. The real table, if there is one, is not immediately known to us at all, but must be an inference from what is immediately known...' (Russell 3, pp3-4.)

And so is born the sceptical doubt. There is a gap between things as they are, if they are, in themselves and our knowledge or awareness of them. And the puzzle is to know the relationship that exists between these two, and which spans the gap. Russell like all the major epistemological philosophers before him took it for granted that such a gap existed. And what led all these philosophers to such views was the fundamental conception that items in the external world impinged on us in such a way as to produce in us essentially private ideas, which are the only items of our

immediate awareness and which are the actual referents of our naming words. When we learn to use a word like 'table', we come to associate that word with an item of our private experience - namely that item which is provoked in us by confrontation with some inferred external object. Thus to think that such a word refers directly to something 'out there' is to slur over the actual state of things.

Wittgenstein then in overthrowing the private object is opposing the sorts of scepticism which arise from such an epistemology.

(iii)

I am going to turn now to the example which I mentioned earlier concerning vision.

I recall that when I was younger a certain "well-known fact" was frequently referred to. This was that 'cows see everything ten times bigger than we (humans) do'. It is interesting to try to speculate concerning what sort of fact this latter statement about cows could have described. Certainly it was intended as useful information which might enable one to predict how a cow would behave in a particular situation - this much was apparent from the usage.

In order to examine this particular case further however I am going to have to change it slightly because otherwise we would run into problems concerning cows' inability to

communicate or to make suitable judgements. To avoid these problems I want to suggest that we consider a group of hypothetical individuals who suffer from a particular disease. Now imagine that people who suffer from, let us call this disease bovine syndrome or b.s. for short, see things ten times larger than the rest of us do. Our task will then be to see what sort of meaning can be attached to such a statement about b.s. individuals: how can the idea be "unpacked".

(Just in case, at this stage, there is some apprehension as to whether I have neglected completely the main topic of this chapter, I will mention the following point: the statement, 'people with b.s. see things ten times larger than the rest of us do', bears a similarity to others such as, 'it may be the case that what I experience when I see blue is what you experience when you see red', or, 'for all I know other people's experience of pain may be like my experience of being tickled - pain is private in this sense'. All of these statements attempt to state facts or possibilities about our private experiences or sensations. It is this aspect of the statement about b.s. that makes it of interest to us and relevant to the issue of privacy.)

Suppose first of all that we take the statement, 'people with b.s. see things ten times larger than the rest of us do', to mean that when people with b.s. measure things they get results which are ten times those that we obtain in similar situations. If this were the meaning that we tried to attach to the statement then I think it would be fair to say that

this was just a misleading way of saying that people with b.s. do not fully understand what is meant by measuring something. In Wittgensteinian terms they just do not understand the language game which is played with words like 'measure', 'length', etc. - either this, or the statement is trivially false and there can be no people of the type described.

This sort of unpacking of the statement does not seem then to get us very far. We will need to try another tack. Imagine that we assume the statement to mean something like, 'the eyeball of people with b.s. is such that the image which is formed on their retina is ten times as large as that formed on the retina of a normal person under similar conditions - i.e. when both view the same object from the same distance etc.' The statement is just taken as signifying something about the relative image sizes produced in the retina of people with and without b.s. (We should note that there is nothing special about the retina in this respect and it would be possible to attempt to give a similar interpretation of the statement based on purely physiological facts about the coded visual information at points along the optic nerve for example. The essential feature about such interpretations is that they take the statement to be about various physiological facts - but from our point of view they are basically similar.) The problem with this account is that it seems again to be misleading. If this were the information which it was intended to convey by the statement, then why not just say something about image sizes in the first place? And why talk in a misleading way about what people with b.s.

"see"? Certainly in the original case, the statement was intended to convey more than just information about image sizes. It was further intended to create certain expectations about behaviour.

Perhaps it will be possible to expand this purely physiological account by adding to it some sort of behavioural component. So now we take the statement to mean that people with b.s. have image sizes which are larger than those which the rest of us have, and this fact produces beliefs in these people that things they see are larger than we would assume them to be - by a factor of ten.

This sort of situation could be simulated artificially if we took an individual and strapped something like a pair of binoculars to his eyes. It is a purely contingent psychological fact that in such circumstances the individual would tend to report that things appeared <u>nearer</u> rather than <u>larger</u>. This 'size constancy' effect, as it is known, could well have been otherwise and it is I think conceivable that humans might have exhibited distance constancy. The suggestion is then, that having b.s. is a bit like having a pair of binoculars strapped to your face, at least in terms of the visual effect - and neglecting the bothersome size constancy effect.

This sort of explanation would I believe only seem plausible if b.s. was something which people developed part-way through life. It is only in this sort of case that the

transition between seeing things as the rest of us do and seeing them as a b.s. person does, could be likened to the change which is undergone when a pair of binoculars is strapped to your face. But now we should recognise that in unpacking the original statement about b.s. in this particular way, we have made it a description of an essentially 'external' fact. Consider that I am now in a room looking around at the objects in the room. I am able to assess their size and I judge some things to be larger than others. If some modification is then applied to my visual sensors such that my retinal image sizes are magnified then it is conceivable that I could interpret what I see as familiar objects but that these now appear larger than previously. There is nothing more to the current explanation than this.

In Wittgenstein 2 a similar example is considered:

> 'We take it as the criterion for meaning the same by "red" as we do, that as a rule he agrees with us in giving the same names to the colours of objects as we do. If then in a particular instance he says something is red where we should say it's green, we say he sees it different from us.
>
> Notice how in such cases we would behave. We should look for a cause of his different judgement, and if we had found one we should certainly be inclined to say that he saw red where we saw green.' (Wittgenstein 2, p241.)

Such cases are at least plausible and they parallel the example of the person who contracts b.s. disease. Suddenly he reports seeing familiar things, not with uncharacteristic colours, but with uncharacteristic sizes. In the b.s. case we know what the cause is of his different judgement. We know that the disease affects his physiology with the result that he makes these peculiar judgements. But the effect of the disease is no different from an essentially external modification which might be made to his visual apparatus and hence nothing remains of the private aspect of the statement we originally set out with. 'People with b.s. see things ten times larger than the rest of us do', can be unpacked in the way suggested. But when this is done it is seen to be essentially similar to 'Jaundice can cause discoloured vision' or 'When I look through rose coloured spectacles everything seems tinted pink'. If external modifications of this sort persist we are likely eventually to become unaware of the distinction between how things now seem to us and how we remember them. Although our ability to recognise such things as shapes and colours is not completely transitory (the world does not strike us as new every morning), if a change is brought about and maintained, this after a while, becomes accepted as the norm.

Suppose now however that we are dissatisfied with this need to introduce the idea of a transition and to externalise the meaning of this statement in the way that I have done. We insist perhaps that the statement is to describe a permanent

feature of an individual's awareness as compared to others. We want, it seems, to be able to give some meaningful account of certain people always seeing things as larger than the rest of us do. This situation cannot be revealed however by these individuals obtaining different measurements because on the one hand they would "see" the unit of measure as magnified also and on the other, if they did for some reason disagree either consistently or inconsistently with our normal measuring practice, we could only interpret this as their inability to understand what we meant by 'measure', 'length', etc.

Neither will an account based on a straight physiological distinction do. Such an interpretation is not sufficient to give content to these people seeing things larger, etc. Suppose we try again to marry up the physiological explanation with a behavioural element. Perhaps b.s. individuals are known to have enlarged image sizes throughout the whole of their life. We now have to suppose that this difference results in differences in judgements, but again we will run into difficulties as to how these differences emerge. When b.s. people are taught to use measurement terms, either they will learn this practice correctly or they will not. And, if they do not, it would seem unlikely that their inability could be traced to a persistent discrepancy in their visual coding, (except perhaps unless they were blind - but this is not a possibility in the current context).

A little bit in desperation let us turn away from the

physiological and behavioural accounts of the statement. We want now just to say that independent of biological differences, b.s. individuals have a subjective impression of size which is different from ours. This difference is neither reflected in a physiological difference nor in any judgement that b.s. people make. It is simply that the impression which these people have (before the mind's eye) when they look upon an object is different from (larger than?) our own. The impression or sensation which b.s. people have when they look at a particular object differs from that which we have and this reveals itself neither in any incorrect judgement nor in any physiological investigations which may be carried out.

How then is the state of affairs which is described by our statement revealed at all? What justifies us in this claim we make about b.s. people? What prompts us to make the statement or to suspect at all that it might be appropriate? The phenomenon which the statement describes will not be apparent to us in our observations of b.s. people - neither in their behaviour nor in their physiology. Neither will this phenomenon be apparent to b.s. people themselves. In all their judgements etc. they agree with the rest, so how would they themselves begin to suspect that a difference existed and even if they did, how could they say in what way?

Once again the proposed content of the statement is in danger of dissolving before us. Perhaps we should concede

that the statement as it stands, assigning some attribute to some individuals, is not viable on the grounds that there could be no justification for asserting the statement with respect to any particular individuals. But now suppose we re-hash the statement as follows: 'It is possible that people with b.s. (or any other group or individual) see things larger than the rest of us do'. 'Seeing', in the context of this latest proposed account, is now neither the physiological, concomitant of sight nor the judgement we may make based on our vision. It is instead something between the two, something which may have been caused by the one and which results in the other. But now what does it mean to say that what we "see" in this sense is (possibly) larger (or smaller), than what others "see" in this same sense? How can it make sense to talk about the size of what we "see" at all <u>in this sense</u>? Isn't size a concept we learned in connection with the whole language game of measurement as this applied to <u>objects</u>?

If you are persistent in maintaining that you have a 'sensation', 'mental image' or 'impression' which can itself be ascribed a 'size' which is distinct from the size of the object itself then you are using 'size' in a way that is illegitimate and which cannot be understood by others. (In section v) of this chapter the application of colour, shape and angular size terms is considered in relation to images and after-images.) 'Size', 'inches', 'feet', etc., are all part of an established language-game which is our normal language of measurement. But this is a game which relates

to the measurement of objects, not 'sensations'. If I say I estimate the length of an object to be around six feet, this can in most cases (not necessarily in all) be checked - someone else can take a tape measure and actually determine its length. This sort of judgement conveys something because you can agree or disagree with it. You can check it and we can conclude together that I was wrong or right. (This is what is meant by saying that there is agreement in judgement.) If on the other hand I say I have a mental image which is six inches long this obviously cannot be checked in the same way. Suppose I compare this mental image with another mental image of a tape measure or some sort of mental size standard. This provides no check because the original doubt which led me to carry out a check can be raised in connection with this second image - I may be uncertain about its size. There is a sort of regress involved here by our attempting to confirm one suspect image by reference to another which may be equally suspect.

In his book Other Minds (Wisdom 1), John Wisdom examines different usages of the sort we have been considering. He distinguishes between a practical usage and one which he denotes as philosophical or idle.

> 'If in the ordinary way I say "Smith says he sees the Union Jack in red, white and blue but I suspect he's colour blind and sees everything in greys" this is a serious suspicion. For if I am right we cannot take him on as an engine driver. But if when you say "Then

we can't take him on as an engine driver" I reply "Oh, he's all right in that way, in fact, do what you will, you'll find no sign of his weakness", then my hypothesis has reached a philosophical condition.' (Wisdom 1, pp11-12.)

Wisdom likens the hypothesis which has reached its "philosophical condition" to one in which a person maintains that his watch contains a leprechaun - but insists that no practical consequences can be derived from this. Perhaps we should not expect in such a case to convince the individual concerned that what he says is true, cannot be so. All we would seem to be able to do would be to point out that in any event these 'visions' appear to be profoundly irrelevant.

In trying to come to understand this particular fragment of our language we have adopted Wittgenstein's advice. That is, we have tried to look at the ways in which language is used. There is a real and significant link between this sort of approach and the way in which Dummett develops his anti-realist's position. (See Dummett 3, pp217-8.)

Whilst Dummett's case is clearly strongly influenced by Wittgenstein, and this is as we would expect, it contains the seeds of a subtle extension. Wittgenstein's approach attempts to maintain a strong link with linguistic practice. To understand what a word means we should look to see how it is used. The anti-realist and the verificationist attempt to set this approach in a prescription concerning what can

and cannot be significant to meaning. They attempt, as it were, to formalise the method, but in so doing they contravene the essential feature of that method. The first step is to consider questions about meaning as questions about usage but it is a further step to proclaim what usage can and cannot conform to.

The implications of Wittgenstein's approach to privacy for the anti-realist's position will be examined further in later sections but for the time being I will return to Wittgenstein's work.

The problems associated with ascribing a size to a sensation apply equally to other 'characteristics'. The sort of investigation which we have pursued with regard to 'size', can be carried out with similar results in other areas. The classic examples of this being of course Wittgenstein's treatment of 'pain' in the Investigations, and of 'colour' in his 'Notes on "Private Experience" and "Sense Data"'. With the background which we have gained from a consideration of this simpler example we should now be in a better position to assess the import of what Wittgenstein is driving at in these writings. (Further consideration of the similarities and differences which exist between the different types of phenomenal language is given later in this chapter.)

In the Investigations Wittgenstein considers the possibility of a private diarist who tries to correlate the sign 'S' with an experience which is private in the sense

which the private linguist would require. The attempt is similar to that which we have been making in trying to attach a phenomenal content to the idea of b.s.

> 'What reason have we for calling "S" the sign for a sensation? For "sensation" is a word of our common language, not of one intelligible to me alone. So the use of this word stands in need of a justification which everybody understands. - And it would not help either to say that it need not be a sensation; that when he writes "S", he has something - and that is all that can be said. "Has" and "something" also belong to our common language. - So in the end when one is doing philosophy one gets to the point where one would like just to emit an inarticulate sound. - But such a sound is an expression only as it occurs in a particular language-game, which should now be described.' (Wittgenstein 1, 261.)

And now it may be objected that we sometimes quite legitimately refer to a stabbing sensation or a throbbing sensation. Is this then not a clear example of our referring to, or describing our sensation, in language? To think this way is I believe to be misled by the grammar of our language. When I say, 'I have a stabbing sensation' this is more akin to my saying, 'I see a red patch' than it is to the idea of my having a sensation which is red. (We could become similarly misled if instead of saying 'I see a red patch', we were to substitute 'I have a sensation of redness'. I

will return to this point later.)

We have been trying to attach some sort of meaning to a statement which we took to be about an essentially internal and private state. We started out with the statement 'People with b.s. see things ten times larger than the rest of us do'. We have discovered that this cannot sensibly be taken to describe a behavioural measuring idiosyncrasy on the part of these individuals. Such behaviour would be interpreted as a failure of the teaching/learning process associated with measuring (except perhaps if this was a transient phenomenon - but more of this later). We found also that it cannot be taken to describe a purely physiological fact. It cannot be taken in this sense because this would be to distort the meaning of terms like 'see', and in any case this would constitute an essentially public unpacking of the statement. We next tried to combine together a physiological and a behavioural aspect of the statement. This interpretation seemed to work when we modified it slightly to allow for the possibility that b.s. itself caused a transition of a physiological nature which resulted in modified behavioural responses. But this interpretation when fully expounded turned out to be no more mysterious than any description of a physical or physiological modification to a sense receptor which results in altered behaviour. The private element of the description had once again disappeared.

Dissatisfied with these attempts, we turned our attention away from both behavioural and physiological accounts in

favour of a more phenomenological account. The first problem here was that a description taken in this sense to relate purely to a phenomenological fact, without either behavioural or physiological concomitants, could not be detected. As a consequence the description had to be taken to concern merely a possibility. (At this point it became something more akin to 'for all I know your "experience" of red may well be similar to my "experience" of blue'.) The difficulty with this idea when we came to look at it more carefully was that we appeared to be using words in our ordinary everyday language in an illegitimate way. Terms to do with length and measure, like colour terms, were learnt in the context of objects, not of phenomena. Furthermore there does not really seem to be any way in which such terms, or alternative ones, could be linked to phenomena. What we took to be the essential feature of sensation - the private element which is revealed to me alone - seems not only to be incapable of being described or referred to, but more importantly, seems to elude our grasp altogether. If we fail to recognise this we will have been misled by the grammar of our language into importing a concept of the inner private sensation: a concept which we intend to firm up on and define more clearly at a later date but a concept which will forever elude such clarification.

> 'How does the philosophical problem about mental processes and states and about behaviourism arise? - The first step is the one that altogether escapes notice. We talk of processes and states and leave their nature undecided.

Some time perhaps we shall know more about them - we think. But that is just what commits us to a particular way of looking at the matter. For we have a definite concept of what it means to learn to know a process better. (The decisive movement in the conjuring trick has been made, and it was the very one that we thought quite innocent.)' (Wittgenstein 1, 308.)

(iv)

Words like 'red' and 'small' derive their meaning from applications involving objects. As such they cannot be used to describe or refer to items of a purely phenomenal nature. But other words and phrases give the impression at least of being more successful in this respect, e.g. 'sensation', 'my experience of', 'my awareness of', 'impression', 'consciousness', etc. These words and phrases seem almost to be capable of a dual role. 'All right', the privatist might agree, 'there is a sense in which I can be aware of or know about your sensation of pain, but there is also another and essentially more fundamental sense in which only you can be aware of your "sensation".' But how could it be that this private usage in which the word is taken to denote a totally private object, was parasitic on our normal language? 'Sensation' is a word already in our public language. Wittgenstein does not attempt to deny that words like 'sensation' and 'pain' and 'remember' have meaning, or to suggest that their use is always somehow illegitimate. But what he does want to get clear about is what their legitimate use is and to illustrate the fallacies which result from

playing along with this dual meaning idea. When you have said that you remember something you have said it all. There is nothing else to do with an 'inner experience of remembering'. (See Wittgenstein 1, 306.) The prime mistake in all this is to allow to go unquestioned the idea that there is the concomitant 'uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium'. (Wittgenstein 1, 308.)

At section 293 in the Investigations, Wittgenstein presents the following example:

> '...someone tells me that he knows what pain is only from his own case! - Suppose everyone had a box with something in it: we call it a "beetle". No one can look into anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at his beetle. - Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. - But suppose the word "beetle" had a use in these people's language? - If so it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all; not even as a something: for the box might even be empty. - No, one can "divide through" by the thing in the box; it cancels out, whatever it is.

That is to say: if we construe the grammar of the expression of sensation on the model of "object and designation" the object drops out of consideration as

irrelevant.' (Wittgenstein 1, 293.)

The point of this passage is to illustrate that no words in our language function (can function) by referring to essentially private objects. Even if there were such objects, such beetles, they would be irrelevant to our language, they would play no part in our language game. But it does not follow from this that all the words of our language which are taken to be names refer to public entities either. Certain names just do not fit the model of 'object and designation', they do not name anything at all in <u>that</u> sense - not even a something.

The reason why Wittgenstein draws attention to this issue over name and designation is to illustrate that this represents a pattern of linguistic usage. In some areas often we have a name and a thing named. If someone wants to know what a particular name means we tell her what it refers to, what the name designates. This constitutes the sort of situation in which an understanding of certain terms can be achieved. The explanation could involve an ostensive definition or a verbal description of the thing designated. This pattern is apt to trick us however. We come to situations in which there is no obvious feature of the world we can hold up and say this is it; this is the thing designated by that particular name. Nor can we describe it, except by using words of a similar type to those which we are trying to explain, words which would place us in similar difficulties if we tried to explain them according to the pattern of

object-designation. And yet we seem convinced that sensation words must operate in this way; we persist in a distorted view of the grammar of such terms. (In Wittgenstein's words a grammatical fiction forces itself on us [Wittgenstein 1, 304 and 307.]) Perhaps we can give an ostensive definition but this will be an essentially private ostensive definition. Therefore the object designated must be private. The name itself must designate a private object. Oh yes it has a public role as well; but what it truly means, is something private to each of us. And yet if we reject this line, with its ludicrous consequences, we still feel compelled by the model of object-designation. We look elsewhere for an object. The object must be the behavioural performance which arises in those situations where we apply the name. The name must designate a certain species of behaviour.

The important point to note is that it is the model that misleads us. We feel compelled to apply a model of linguistic practice which we see operating satisfactorily in one area, to another where it just does not fit. It is this misapplication of an inappropriate model which leads us to suggest that so many curious relationships must prevail. Our failure is one of trying to apply rules instead of looking to see if the rule fits in these cases.

(v)

The model which Wittgenstein sets his face against is one in which external objects impinge on our sense organs

and thereby create in us private inner experiences of which we are aware. This model has the consequences that we never really know what it is that is 'out there', since all we are aware of are the effects which external objects have on us. Also, since the inner experience is essentially private, we do not really know whether what others experience is like what we experience or whether others experience anything at all.

On rejecting this model, responses of the following type are provoked: 'You seem to be saying that when I look at a red object this does not produce in me a particular image of which I am aware. The size, the colour, all the other characteristics belong to the object itself and not to any private phenomena. And furthermore there seems to be no other way to describe the characteristics which such a phenomenon has: no private language whose words refer only to such phenomena. This may sound plausible when the object is present to us; but suppose we separate out our awareness of the object, surely the residue then remaining must represent what is purely phenomenal; the felt quality of experience? Instead of thinking about my looking at a red object think instead about the case in which I have an after-image. Surely what I "see" or experience then, can have a definite shape and colour and perhaps even an angular size judged in relation to my whole visual field. I can describe changes in the hue of an after-image as time passes. Do I not in this case succeed in describing the felt quality of my experience? The reds and the blues here do not belong to any object, at least

not to any object in the external world. And yet no one else can be aware of my after-image. It is something which is entirely private to me.'

According to Victoria Choy we might expect a response of this type from those philosophers who regard the mind-body problem still as a live issue, '<u>not</u> because they hold that sensation reports are incorrigible, nor because they think that incorrigibility must be explained by postulating private entities to which we have privileged access. Rather, they assume as their starting point, as part of their data, that experiences such as pains and mental images have phenomenal contents of which we are directly aware, and these must be adequately accounted for somehow. They fear, however, that the language of our future neurological sciences could never adequately describe the phenomenal contents of sensation reports.' (Choy 1, p527.)

First let us note that the visual after-image has very close parallels with the case of pain. It is a sensation which is not concurrent with an external stimulus and this is often the case with pain. Pains frequently have external initiators but the pain may linger on after the stimulus has disappeared. In this way, we might have talked about tactual after-images but this is not the way in which our discourse has evolved. (An example which perhaps strikes us as being closer to a tactual after-image than pains in general do, arises if I remove a hat with a tight headband and get an "after-feel" of something tight still being there.)

Nevertheless this similarity does mean that much of what Wittgenstein says about pain will be applicable to after-images also. Recognising this, what response should we make to the private linguist who feels that in after-images he has hit on a sort of private object; that thing which just is the raw feel of experience and that of which I can never really be sure whether other people have the same or not? Surely the answer is well rehearsed. In one sense these claims are trivial and in another they are false. Consider the following dialogue.

A 'You cannot have my after-image just as you cannot smile my smile.'

B 'But these cases are not the same. Your smile is something we can witness and observe but your after-image is something we cannot be aware of.'

A 'Well I can tell you about my after-image so that you know as much about it as I do.'

B 'But you need not do this, you could choose to conceal your impression.'

A 'Exactly so, I could choose to do this just as I can smile in the dark. In other cases, where for example I am in pain, I may be unable to conceal my feelings; my tactual after-image.'

B 'Still when you say you can describe your after-image in such a way that I know as much about it as you do, can this really be so?'

A 'Well, I can close my eyes again and attend to my after-image and see if I come up with anything which is not in my description. But then if I do come up with anything I can just add it to my description'.

B 'Well yes, but apart from all that, the things that you can describe about it, isn't there something else which you have, but which you will not be able to describe. Perhaps this is what I mean by the raw feel, it is that which is over and above your description of the image and it arises simply because it is you who is having the experience'.

A 'Suppose I am in New York and I have been commissioned by you to search out the paintings of a particular artist. I ring you up in London and tell you that I have discovered a previously unknown painting by this artist. I have the picture in front of me and I describe it to you. You are so excited, you have me describe the picture in the minutest detail. I tell you the exact colours, the graphic shapes etc. At the end of our conversation you say you can't wait to see the picture. This would not be an unreasonable remark and I would be unlikely to respond by saying, "see it, what do you want to

see it for? I just told you all there is to know about the picture's appearance".

It is in this sort of way, I think, that my telling you about my after-image leaves you feeling that there is something you are missing.'

B 'Yes you might say that, but doesn't this prove my point, that there is an ineffable quality of experience; something which I can never have with respect to your after-image and something that the congenitally blind person can never have with respect to visual experiences generally.'

A 'Certainly it appears to be something of this sort which gives rise to the persistent claim that there is something else: "Some things can be said about the particular experience and besides this there seems to be something, the most essential part of it, which cannot be described." (Wittgenstein 2, p233). But then this is no more than a psychological fact about our cognitive organisation - "Words cannot paint a picture" simply expresses a psychological fact concerning our inability to assimilate completely a verbal description into a visual image. Some people presumably do this better than others and there is no a priori reason to believe that there could not be people who could do this perfectly: that is, people who could assimilate a detailed visual

impression completely from a verbal description. (Perhaps police artists develop a skill of this sort). This contingent fact about our psychological organisation will not however bear the burden which the private linguist wishes to place on it.

For one thing the assimilation of the visual impression is not private in the sense that the private linguist requires. You can achieve "the same" impression that I have in looking at the artist's picture. In the end all I have to do is show you the picture. Similarly you can have "the same" after-image as I have; you just need to stare at the same light bulb for fifteen seconds and then close your eyes. It is in this sense that the privacy claim concerning the "raw feel" is false.

A week after my transatlantic telephone call I stand before you holding the artist's picture. You then say "Yes, it's exactly as you described to me, and yet the thing I hadn't appreciated was that it's a happy picture. I knew about the pale greens, but it just hadn't registered with me how that would enliven the whole picture. I just hadn't expected it to evoke that sort of feeling."

This conversation perhaps continues for some time and in it we discuss the holistic impression which the picture creates. Here we are talking in the

main about the impressions and emotions the picture, when seen as a visual whole, evokes in us. We are talking really about seeing something in a certain way or seeing it as something. But this discussion illustrates something about cognitive psychology and the psychology of perception rather than something philosophical. "Seeing something as" or seeing it in a certain way or grasping the holistic visual impression of a picture; these things may be referred to as mental processes but they are not the "mental processes" which the private linguist requires.'

B 'You said just now that in a sense the privacy claim was false; that I can have your after images or your visual impressions. But this is only true in a sense. And surely the way in which you illustrated this point reinforces my case. You simply invited me to expose myself to certain stimuli which would produce in me, what we take to be the same impression. It is this raw feel which is created in me in this way that is the private object.'

A 'But now we are back to the trivial sense in which the impression is private, the same sense in which my smile is private.'

We started out thinking that things, objects, in our everyday life created essentially private responses in us, responses that we could never be sure of communicating to

other people. We saw our discourse about the world as describing these inward impressions which had been created by the world outside, rather than as relating to that world. On inspection we came to recognise that a language which refers to essentially private objects cannot exist. Shall we be tempted then to think that quite apart from this, there is yet something about our consciousness, a raw feel or phenomenal quality which remains ineffable, indescribable? A way in which we might try to reinforce this view involves our thinking about after-images because in this way we are able to dissociate the external object from the impression. In considering after-images we noted first of all that this quality of being dissociated from concurrent external stimuli, whilst distinguishing them from more regular visual perceptions did not do so with respect to pain, which is often similar in this respect. Because of this similarity a basically similar treatment to that which is to be found in Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations is appropriate. Our response should be to note that in certain respects after-images are not private and that, in the sense in which they are, this is merely a trivial feature of little or no philosophical consequence. You can be made aware of my after-images, I can describe them to you. I can tell you that it is blue, is of such and such a shape and occupies a certain fraction of my visual field, etc. At this point there is a temptation to locate this ineffable quality in that aspect of the visual impression that cannot be conveyed by means of words. But this cognitive feature concerns our visual perceptions generally. We are sometimes unable to describe objects in

our everyday world in a way in which others can assimilate from this a perfect visual impression. This does not mean however that there is something extra about the thing described or about our after-image. It is just that perception is an active cognitive process which involves us in manipulating and sometimes adding to the information which we derive through our senses. Because of this we "see" things in different ways, they sometimes have an effect on us which we would not have expected from even a complete verbal description of them. And apart from our recognition that this is merely a fact concerning cognitive organisation or assimilation, even this 'extra' awareness can be conveyed and discussed. We can share the same holistic visual impression which someone else derives from viewing a particular picture or scene or from having an after-image. We can then discuss in ordinary language what that impression is. (Where would art history be if this were not so?) The complaint then comes back that we have only considered a superficial sense in which two people can be said to have the same after-image. The options remain either to talk in this way in which we can fully externalise the felt quality, the colour, shape or angular size, or we accept the notion of privacy here and recognise that this functions in much the same way as when we say your smile is private.

(vi)

There is a philosophical myth then which holds that our sensory mechanisms produce in us an "awareness" of

something which is distinct from both the event or object observed, and the sensory coding of the information about it. Our sensory mechanisms relay information to us. We, as it were, exist at the end of this sensory network - the point at which the information is no longer being merely transmitted but is recognised and causes our "awareness"; the point at which the information is decoded or restructured for our interpretation of it; the point at which our mental images are produced. These mental images are the only things which we are directly "aware of". We are not directly "aware of" the sensory processes which relate to these images, they merely produce in us the images. Neither are we directly "aware of" the objects and events in the external world; they merely produce the sensory processes in us which cause the mental images. We classify our mental images and also recognise intuitively when the same or similar ones are reproduced in us. Because of this we are able to associate mental images of a certain type with other mental images of different types - namely those produced in us by the use, by other people, of words. It is in this way that language is possible. But words strictly only refer, directly at least, to these mental images. From these we construct or infer the existence of an external world and we commonly take our words to refer to objects and events in that world, though again strictly we should recognise that this is really a pre-philosophical naivety.

The sensory processes, which mediate this sort of information to us, are themselves really only a part of this

constructed or inferred external world. These processes can be investigated by others using scientific techniques in much the same way as a motor car or a more sophisticated computerised machine can be investigated. These processes are in this respect essentially public, although it goes without saying that they are not always accessible or open to the view of the public or any part of the public.

The point is, these are just facts about the external world. But as such our words cannot refer directly to them. What these processes bring about in us are mental images, consciousness, awareness, sensations, an experience of, etc. And these things are not features of the external world and are not public things. They are both internal to me - but not in a physiological sense - and because they are internal to me, they are inaccessible to others. These sensory processes give rise to only one set or sequence of mental images and no one else can <u>have</u> these. No one else can get "wired" in to my mental images. Certainly, it is possible to transfer coded information travelling along my sensory pathways to your own pathways, so that these produce mental images in you. But then these mental images are yours and not mine and you have no more become aware of my mental images than if we had both merely observed the same red rose. Neither can you become aware of my mental images by groping about in my physiology - my brain for instance. The reason why this cannot be done is that this physiology is merely the carrier of information. The <u>actual</u> mental image, <u>my consciousness</u>, lies just behind this. Wherever you choose

to investigate, you will always end up at some point in the mediating chain: you can never get quite far enough back. My consciousness is not this particular heap of physiology; it lies behind this.

The scene is now set for dualism and most other types of scepticism. At a seemingly innocent level we can express such views as it being possible that your 'experience' of pain may be akin to my 'experience' of being tickled, or that when you look at something which is red your 'experience' may be like that which I have when I look at something yellow or again, that you see things in general as ten times larger than I do; but these are only the beginning of a trail that ends at solipsism.

As P.M.S. Hacker writes in Insight and Illusion, 'The idealist and phenomenalist have merely failed to think their position through to its ultimate conclusions with the consistency and relentlessness of the solipsist.' (Hacker 1, p216). The problem is that the whole of the external world, including my own body and the minds of others, are only inferred items and from within this mythology there is no reason why the sum of my mental images should not exist independently.

Very few modern philosophers would be prepared to embrace the sort of views which I have just outlined. Something in this sketch must clearly be wrong. The really crucial point is to know at what stage we introduced the false premise,

the wrong move. If we do not identify this and take steps to avoid it, we may be in danger of either tending towards solipsism or, what is perhaps worse, of not thinking through our position which would ultimately end in solipsism.

Wittgenstein is quite clear about where this illegitimate move takes place. At paragraph 308 of the Investigations he warns us that this fault occurs very early on - at the point at which we vaguely assume there to be some inner process or consciousness which lies behind our purely physiological aspects. When we begin to use such terms as 'consciousness', 'sensation', 'experience' and 'pain' in a 'philosophical' context without first getting clear about how these words are actually used - what their limited but legitimate use is - this is when we start down a road that will lead us, if followed, to scepticism. We allow in the inner process as the thing designated by these words. We do not look to see what, if anything, this inner process can consist in. We can return to get clear about this later. It is at this point that we head off down the wrong path.

The retort immediately comes back, 'Do you wish to say that there are no phenomenal facts at all - that there is no such thing as truly reporting my sensations?' Certainly there is no beetle in the box or if there is, it is irrelevant to language. In reporting my sensation I am not describing something which is essentially private. Wittgenstein addresses this point in his notes on 'Private Experience' and 'Sense Data'.

'Is telling what one sees something like turning one's inside out? And learning to say what one sees learning to let others see inside us? .... Surely you wouldn't think that telling someone what one sees could be a more direct way of communicating than by pointing to a sample!' (Wittgenstein 2, p237.)

To talk of reporting a sensation has meaning but it is not to be taken as a way in which I, for instance, describe for your benefit, my private object (beetle). (We shall see later that it was this idea of a private object which allowed the phenomenalist programme to get started. Once we recognise that such an idea arises solely from our confused way of thinking about language we shall see also that there will be no way in which phenomenalism can be resuscitated.)

To get some further idea about the nature of this mistake and its insidiousness, I want to look briefly at an attitude which has been adopted by a modern philosopher: Thomas Nagel, in his book Mortal Questions. In a paper entitled, 'What is it like to be a bat?', Nagel explores what he considers to be the failure of reductionism with respect to the psycho-physical, which he takes to be a realm of facts which possess a purely phenomenal character. This is the point at which Nagel commits his fundamental error:

'Conscious experience is a widespread phenomenon. It occurs at many levels of animal life, though we cannot

be sure of its presence in the simpler organisms, and it is very difficult to say in general what provides evidence of it. (Some extremists have been prepared to deny it even of mammals other than man.) No doubt it occurs in countless forms totally unimaginable to us, on other planets in other solar systems throughout the universe..... But fundamentally an organism has conscious mental states if and only if there is something that it is like to <u>be</u> that organism - something it is like <u>for</u> the organism.' (Nagel 1, p166.) (Cf. Wittgenstein 2, p238.)

Having introduced this concept of 'consciousness' which exists only in those cases where there is 'something that it is like to be that organism', and having extended it in some undefined way to most creatures - or at least most <u>mammals</u> - Nagel goes on to provide a counter to anyone who might suggest that this realm, of facts about what it is like to be a bat or a martian, might be more restricted than he suggests. Anyone who might feel inclined to deny the extension of this concept of consciousness to creatures such as bats, should compare our situation with that of Martians who doubted our possession of consciousness. We know, according to Nagel, that this would represent a mistake because we know 'what it is like to be us'. (Nagel 1, p170.) In short we should refrain from such a narrow-minded view by reflecting on what we 'clearly know' to be the case - that we each know what it is like to be us - even though, Nagel adds, 'we do not possess the vocabulary to describe it adequately'.

Now, whilst 'in other areas the process of reduction is a move in the direction of greater objectivity, toward a more accurate view of the real nature of things', (Nagel 1, p174), this is not so clearly the case when we come to the realm of the phenomenal:

> 'If the subjective character of experience is fully comprehensible only from one point of view, then any shift to greater objectivity - that is, less attachment to a specific view-point - does not take us nearer to the real nature of the phenomenon: it takes us farther away from it.' (Nagel 1, p174.)

Hence the ill-defined concept; the realm of phenomenal items seems likely to remain at least somewhat mysterious.

In these passages Nagel commits quite straightforwardly the primitive error of postulating the realm of undescribed and possibly indescribable facts: facts of the phenomenal world which 'we all agree' lie behind the more objective realm of public facts, i.e. facts about being conscious as opposed to facts about things. (Nagel seems to vacillate between saying that these phenomenal facts can be described by one member of a species so that they can be understood by another - e.g. Nagel 1, p170 - and saying that they cannot be so conveyed - Nagel 1, p170 and p166.)

An example of the way in which this fundamental mistake

is linked to and used as the basis for an essentially private language conception is provided in McGinn 3, pp125-7.

(vii)

Earlier in this chapter I introduced as an example for detailed consideration a statement of the type 'people with b.s. see things ten times larger than the rest of us do', where b.s. was supposed to be a physiological malfunction which led to the visual peculiarity. What I wanted to do in examining this case was to try to show that in so far as such a statement does have meaning it is in a way which is parallel to a statement like 'When I look through your magnifying glass objects look bigger', or 'Looking through this bottle everything looks green'. The way in which this sort of statement cannot have meaning is as follows: 'When you look at an object there is an impression produced in you and when people with b.s. look at the same object in similar circumstances there is an impression produced in them also - only, in their case the impression is larger.'

Similarly statements like 'Your experience of pain may be similar to my experience of being tickled' and 'when you look upon red it might be the same as when I look upon green' cannot be taken to have content by referring to real differences or possibly real differences between essentially private experiences. Wittgenstein puts the point most succinctly in the beetle passage, Investigations 293.

Words like 'red' and 'larger' and 'pain' do have a use in our language and it is not as the name of, or a description of, a private thing. The concept of an essentially private experience or sensation or impression is irrelevant to the use of these words in the language: 'it' cancels out. And if it is so irrelevant, so indescribable, what makes us think there is anything in this concept at all?

> 'If you say he sees a private picture before him, which he is describing, you have still made an assumption about what he has before him. And that means that you can describe it or do describe it more closely. If you admit that you haven't any notion what kind of thing it might be that he has before him - then what leads you into saying, in spite of that, that he has something before him? Isn't it as if I were to say of someone: "He has something. But I don't know whether it is money, or debts, or an empty till."' (Wittgenstein 1, 294.)

It would be a mistake to interpret this as a reinforcement of a sceptical position with regard to 'other minds'. It is not simply as if I say, 'He has something. But.....', I might equally say, 'I have something. But I don't know whether it is money, or debts, or an empty till.' The point that is made in the private-language argument about how sensation words mean, is just part of a wider argument concerning the absence of a realm of inner 'consciousness' in the sense that Nagel might use the term. The idea that our words can only really have meaning by referring to such

a realm, reinforces our commitment to this realm. The private-language argument attempts to demonstrate that this sort of 'beetle in a box' is completely irrelevant to our actual use of language; that language operates without need of it and in any case could not make use of it. Even when it is recognised, or conceded, that this realm has no role to play in language, there will remain an intuitive desire to defend the inner world as something in its own right.

> '"Yes, but there is something there all the same accompanying my cry of pain. And it is on account of that that I utter it. And this something is what is important - and frightful" ....' (Wittgenstein 1, 296.)

Wittgenstein describes the symptom:

> 'It is as though, although you can't tell me exactly what happens inside you, you can nevertheless tell me something general about it. By saying e.g. that you are having an impression which can't be described.
>
> As it were: There is something further about it, only you can't say it; you can only make the general statement.' (Wittgenstein 2, p233.)

The objector still feels something is missing:

> '"But aren't you neglecting something - the experience or whatever you might call it - ? Almost the world behind

the mere words?"' (Wittgenstein 2, p253.)

And Wittgenstein responds:

'Back to "neglecting"! It seems that I neglect life. But not life physiologically understood but life as consciousness. And consciousness not physiologically understood, or understood from the outside, but consciousness as the very essence of experience, the appearance of the world, the world.' (Wittgenstein 2, p254.)

'"And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a nothing" - Not at all. It is not a something, but not a nothing either! The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said.' (Wittgenstein 1, 304.)

The example that I chose to discuss earlier was one which concerned visual perception, but it is not vision which is most prominent in Wittgenstein's Investigations. He uses more often the example of pain and I suggested earlier that this was probably because pain presented a more stubborn case with which to deal. I also suggested that, apart from certain linguistic conventions, pain was not really fundamentally different from the case of vision or that of other sense modalities. I want now to explain a little more of what I meant by saying this, just in case there is a

temptation to regard pain as a special, still private, example.

Consider a pain which I have in my foot. We can imagine cases in which the pain in my foot is linked to some event - someone stands on my toe or perhaps I stand on a live electric cable. These cases are very much akin to ones in which I see something or hear something. There are other possibilities however in the case of pain. Perhaps there is no external stimulus which causes the pain in my foot - I just suffer from bouts of gout. Now in this case we are tempted to think of the pain as something 'internal'. There is nothing we can point to and say, 'this is the direct cause of the pain I now suffer' - at least not in the sense that we can dissociate ourselves from that thing and thereby obtain immediate relief. (We saw earlier how this situation is similar in this respect to an after-image in the visual modality.) However, even in cases like this, the source of the pain can be traced in physiological terms. There is nothing which is in principle hidden or inaccessible in these cases. I want to suggest then that the differences between pain and other sense modalities are largely a question of mechanism or physiology.

Apart from the <u>actual</u> differences that occur, however, our language can mislead us into thinking that further differences exist. We tend normally to talk of things being large or small, red or green. We do not in most cases talk in terms of having a sensation of red or of having an experience of redness. Pain-language is different from this

however. We tend, here, not to discuss pain in terms of its causes, but rather in terms of the effects those causes have on our bodies. This does not reflect any fundamental difference in the two cases. We could choose to talk more about our sensations of redness and we could also externalise, as it were, our pain talk.

> 'Let us imagine the following: The surfaces of the things around us (stones, plants, etc.) have patches and regions which produce pain in our skin when we touch them. (Perhaps through the chemical composition of these surfaces. But we need not know that.) In this case we should speak of pain-patches on the leaf of a particular plant just as we speak of red patches. I am supposing that it is useful to us to notice these patches and their shapes; that we can infer important properties of the objects from them.' (Wittgenstein 1, 312).

Our choice of expression depends largely on its utility in a particular situation. But this does not reflect any difference in what is public or private, in what can and cannot be exhibited.

> 'I can exhibit pain, as I exhibit red, and as I exhibit straight and crooked and trees and stones. - <u>That</u> is what we <u>call</u> "exhibiting".' (Wittgenstein 1, 313.)

Suppose now it is asked, 'Is "pain" the name of a sensation?' The answer will not be a straightforward one.

Imagine I connect an electrical apparatus to your out-stretched hand. Then I tell you that I am going to do something after which I want you to report to me your sensation - I want you to tell me what sensation you experience. 'Ready?', I say, and then I throw the switch. You give a little jump and then you say, 'It was a painful sensation - it was a sort of tingling', etc. Now is it correct to say you have just identified your sensation and reported the name of that sensation? This would be one way of talking about these events. The important thing is to recognise what the content of this way of talking is.

Consider now another experiment. In this one I explain that I am going to show you certain objects and I want you to tell me their colour. 'Ready', I say, 'Right, what colour was that?' 'Red', you say. Would we in this case say that you have named your sensation? If our language leads us to think of 'pain' as the name of a sensation we should recognise that this is correct only in the same sort of way that we might talk about 'red' being the name of a sensation. If however we use 'sensation' in the way we might when we say, 'Ah, but it is not our <u>sensation</u> which is red', then we should say also 'It is not our sensation which is painful'. This is the spurious use of "sensation" and in this sense pain is not a sensation. This use of "sensation" is the one we might expect to find in the sceptic's epistemology. Here it is taken to refer to an essentially private experience or private object, - the yet uncomprehended process in the

yet unexplored medium.

Pain is not therefore the paradigm example of this type of private object. But to say this is not to commit one thereby to denying that 'pain' is the name of a sensation, when 'sensation' is understood in the only way in which it can have a real use in our language.

(viii)

Before we leave this topic of privacy I am going to examine in a particular case the implications of the misguided view about 'sensations', 'consciousness', etc. My aim here is to try to show that the sort of philosopher who perhaps claims to accept what Wittgenstein says about privacy, but believes that this leaves unaffected the real epistemological and metaphysical issues concerning the nature of consciousness, the mind/body problem etc., really adopts a position which is no longer tenable.

The sort of remarks which Herbert Feigl makes in his paper 'Mind-body, Not a Pseudo-problem', seem to me to be characteristic of this sort of superficial view of Wittgenstein's work on privacy.

> 'As I see it, Wittgenstein's casuistic treatment of the problem [mind/body] is merely one of the more recent in a long line of positivistic (ametaphysical, if not anti-metaphysical) attempts to show that the mind-body

problem arises out of conceptual confusions, and that proper attention to the way in which we use mental and physical terms in ordinary language will relieve us of the vexatious problem.' (Feigl 1, p33.)

'But here is the rub. Even if we learn the use of subjective terms in the way indicated, once we have them in our vocabulary we apply them to states or conditions to which we, as individual subjects, have a "privileged access". If I report moods, feelings, emotions, sentiments, thoughts, images, dreams, etc., that I experience, I am not referring to my behaviour, be it actually occurring or likely to occur under specified conditions. I am referring to those states or processes of my direct experience which I live through (enjoy or suffer), to the "raw feels" of my awareness. These "raw feels" are accessible to other persons only indirectly by inference - but it is myself who has them.' (Feigl 1, p34).

What I am going to do here is to adopt the sort of view of consciousness which Nagel for example has advocated and with this (as I believe, totally misguided concept) in mind, I am going to explore the range of application of such phrases as 'has consciousness', 'is able to feel pain', 'can be said to remember or think', etc.

For Nagel consciousness is a definite attribution; it makes sense to question whether a particular individual

possesses this or not. The assertion that X has consciousness concerns a real epistemological fact, just as if one had said, 'Jones has a cancer'. But consciousness can only be known from the 'inside' - it is what it is like to be the thing/object/individual one is. Consequently there is to some extent an act of faith involved in attributing 'consciousness' or 'experience' to others.

> 'I assume we all believe that bats have experience. After all, they are mammals, and there is no more doubt that they have experience than that mice or pigeons or whales have experience. I have chosen bats instead of wasps or flounders because if one travels too far down the phylogenetic tree, people gradually shed their faith that there is experience there at all.' (Nagel 1, p168).

Well, can our act of faith concerning consciousness be extended to cater for a stone with consciousness? A stone which has experience of what it is like to be a stone? I suspect Nagelians would suggest that we can all agree in this case, if not in the case of flounders, that consciousness does not extend so far. Sooner or later however it will be necessary to establish some sort of criteria if we are to be able to say, in anything but an arbitrary way, where consciousness begins.

If we imagine a tiny piece of silicon, we would have no more grounds for attributing consciousness to this than

we would to a stone. But if then we expand this enormously both in size and structural complexity - and add in a few other elements - we end up, let us say, with a powerful computer. Imagine that this computer is able to answer a wide range of questions of a mathematical nature, more efficiently than either I or any of its programmers can. In addition imagine also that this computer has a large and virtually infallible memory. No doubt this machine is capable of other things also and the question arises, 'Are we correct in saying that this thing answers questions, possesses a memory, etc?' Do its capabilities imply that it really knows certain facts or that it remembers other events or facts? If we answer 'yes' to these questions, does this imply that this undoubtedly complex machine has those sorts of 'mental processes' which we ourselves are taken to have, and would this necessitate our attributing consciousness - in a Nagelian sense - to such machines? (Similar questions might arise concerning such issues as whether a history book could be said to possess a memory or whether a text book on relativity knew all about this particular subject. Clearly the relevant information may be contained in these and be retrievable, from them. But equally clearly this sort of usage would strike us as absurd.)

If we do want to attribute consciousness to the computer at what stage did the amalgam of tiny bits of inorganic material acquire consciousness? Surely no-one would accept that consciousness be attributable on the basis of size - a big stone does not seem to warrant this attribution any

more than a small one. Perhaps it will be suggested that it should be related to structural complexity. At a certain level of complexity perhaps consciousness is acquired or maybe it builds up gradually from virtually nothing in the case of the computer's individual components. It may be possible for someone to resolve his views on this matter so that he can accept some sort of theory along the structural complexity lines. At best however such a theory is based on arbitrary and subjective criteria. This will be unacceptable I am sure to the exponent of Nagelian consciousness because for him these are not arbitrary but factual matters. (The world is really different if computers think, as compared with a world in which they merely act in the same way but do not think - at least things are really different for the computer.)

The alternative seems to be a position roughly as follows: we accept that certain objects/individuals can exhibit levels of structural complexity which allows them to perform tasks which may equal or surpass our own abilities. Yet we insist that there is a difference; in the case of inanimate objects these acts or performances are not backed by a <u>subjective awareness</u>, there is no conscious process of remembering which goes on (inside?), when the computer <u>answers</u> a question on history say. Unlike us, it just goes through the motions. There is no <u>mental process</u> which backs or accompanies the performance; which makes it what we really mean when we say that someone <u>remembers</u>. The machine has no self-awareness associated with its operations. There is performance without

the accompanying consciousness or awareness - without the view from the inside - without knowing what it is really like to remember.

This debate, we should recall, is supposed to concern a real epistemological fact. It really makes sense, in the terms in which we have approached the problem, to debate whether or not the machine remembers - this is an epistemological issue. Furthermore there is a real and correct answer to such questions as 'Can this computer really think?', 'Does it have mental processes?', even 'Can it feel pain?' And although these are taken as questions concerning matters of fact they are fundamentally unsolvable since no philosopher, or anyone else for that matter, is ever going to know what, if anything, it is like to be a computer or what, if anything, it is like for a computer to remember who was on the throne of England in 1356.

It is possible that the proponent of the view that complex inanimate objects, no matter how they perform, clearly cannot be said to possess consciousness, will in some way stonewall the 'complex structuralist'. He may claim on intuitive grounds that we can just 'see' that in the case of the computer these terms are simply inapplicable (for all except the complex structuralist, that is). Such a response would be reminiscent of the way in which Nagel assumes that we can all accept that bats have consciousness - after all they are mammals! Other problems will arise however for this 'animate/inanimate' theorist. E.g. is consciousness independent of performance?

Is it linked in any way to the structure of the item or its history? I am not going to pursue these topics further however. It will be already apparent that for some time now we have been wallowing in the sort of mind/body problem issues which Feigl thought Wittgenstein had not really come to terms with. No doubt people will continue to develop more and more sophisticated "solutions" to the problems which arise in the Nagelian sense. It is time that we returned to the 'decisive movement in the conjuring trick', in order to see how we should bypass these problems altogether.

What we need to do is to go back to the point at which we started to use the terms 'consciousness', 'sensation', 'remembers', 'knows', etc., in ways which we should now recognise as spurious, and to remember how in fact we should be using these terms. What we must vigilantly avoid is the sort of use of these terms to denote some sort of process lying behind our behaviour or actions or physiology.

> '"But you surely cannot deny that, for example, in remembering, an inner process takes place." - What gives the impression that we want to deny anything? When one says "Still, an inner process does take place here" - one wants to go on: "After all, you <u>see</u> it". And it is this inner process that one means by the word "remembering". - The impression that we wanted to deny something arises from our setting our faces against the picture of the "inner process". What we deny is that the picture of the inner process gives us the correct

idea of the use of the word "to remember". We say that this picture with its ramifications stands in the way of our seeing the use of the word as it is.

Why should I deny that there is a mental process? But "There has just taken place in me the mental process of remembering ....." means nothing more than: "I have just remembered ....." To deny the mental process would mean to deny the remembering; to deny that anyone ever remembers anything.' (Wittgenstein 1, 305-6.)

And,

'now it looks as if we had denied mental processes. And naturally we do not want to deny them.' (Wittgenstein 1, 308).

In sections 305-6 of the Investigations, Wittgenstein is attempting to drive home the point that we do not use 'remembers' to denote an inner process of remembering. If you want to talk about the 'mental process of remembering having just taken place in you', you should recognise that you are saying no more than that 'you remembered', but perhaps more importantly you should be aware that you are talking in a way that seems designed to confuse.

The fact that these words do not function by designating an inner process should not mislead us into thinking that they instead denote some particular item of behaviour.

Certainly it is on the basis of behaviour taken generally that we attribute such terms, but the behaviour is not itself the thing designated by the word. The erroneous view that we are faced here with a dilemma, is clearly recognised by Dummett for example in his latest paper entitled 'Realism'.

> 'Having, as I think successfully, but at least to his own satisfaction, exposed the chimerical nature both of the private ostensive definition and of the supposed analogical transference, Wittgenstein concludes that the understanding of pain-ascriptions is not to be represented on the model of a grasp of truth-conditions. Our philosophical perplexities arise, according to him, precisely from the use of this model: for, if we use it, we are forced to choose between two alternatives. One is to seek for conclusive and publicly accessible grounds for ascribing pain to someone, and to declare the existence of such grounds to be that which renders such an ascription true; this is behaviourism. The other is to deny the possibility of any publicly accessible and absolutely conclusive grounds, and, on that score, to hold that what renders a pain-ascription true is something inaccessible to any but the one to whom the pain is ascribed, and hence that our understanding of pain-ascriptions rests on our grasp of what it is for such an in principle inaccessible state of affairs to obtain.' (Dummett 7, p65.)

Words of this sort do not designate a particular referent

or a truth-condition. In order to understand them we must look to see how they are used.

When we consider the question 'Does this computer really <u>remember</u> things?', we should note that the answer to this will be determined by two things. We should also note that there is a third spurious consideration which can play no part in determining the answer.

One important factor is the machine's performance: what it does. If I am able to 'ask' it questions concerning history, either via a keyboard or by voice, and the machine is able to convey appropriate responses either by voice synthesis or some visual display, then it would seem that the machine 'behaves' or performs in a way which would dispose us to say that it remembers. If this were not the case then no problem would have arisen. We hardly feel it necessary to debate over whether a stone remembers. So, as it were, the performance criteria for the attribution of the term 'remembers' are in this case broadly satisfied. But now a second issue arises:

> '.... It comes to this: only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees; is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious.' (Wittgenstein 1, 281).

'Only of what behaves like a human being can one say

that it has pains.' (Wittgenstein 1, 283).

In spite of the fact that the computer performs in an appropriate way we may simply and arbitrarily choose not to apply the term 'remembers' in this particular case. We may just want to reserve this term as a specifically human attribute. In the case of a very sophisticated machine we may need to review this decision. (See for example Donald Davidson's discussion of 'Art' in Essays on Actions and Events, Essay 13). But here again we may or may not decide to reserve this term for 'items' which have developed in a particular way. The important thing to note is that nothing really turns on this. We assign such words to 'items' according to their performance and our arbitrary linguistic practice (and it is in this way that people often do talk about a computer's memory). This is possible because these words do not function by denoting a something in a way that it would really make a difference to say either that it does or does not remember. (The beetle in the box plays no part in our language-game.)

At the risk of sounding repetitive, when we ask, 'Does this computer remember, think, feel pain?', we are asking a question about the performance range of a particular item and about the range of cases which we arbitrarily agree a particular word should cover. We are not asking a question about a real empirical fact which can only be determined by inspecting that item's inner parts or by that item itself introspecting. These terms do not denote a yet uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium.

CHAPTER 6 : ANTI-REALISM, PRIVACY AND MEANING

CHAPTER ABSTRACT

The suggestion that the view of language which is attacked by Wittgenstein is aligned to a psychological model is further examined. The consequences of the Wittgensteinian attack on various forms of scepticism and their anti-realist counterparts are worked through. It appears that the possibility of these anti-realist positions has been threatened by Wittgenstein's attack. This threat to some of the most important dispute areas which were to be encompassed by the characterisation is seen as a potential limitation on its usefulness as a working hypothesis.

It is recalled that in developing his attack on realism the anti-realist makes use of the Wittgensteinian idea that meaning be exhibited in use. This idea that Wittgenstein has provided the meaning theorist with a kind of rule of thumb, to be utilised in selecting appropriate theories, is challenged. It is suggested that the aims behind the presentation of the characterisation may indeed be at variance with Wittgenstein's intent. The idea that Wittgenstein actually intended to shun 'philosophical' questions concerning meaning, and that his work on privacy provides an example of his alternative approach, is discussed.

(i)

In the previous chapter I presented a sketch of what

I take Wittgenstein to have been about in those sections of the Investigations which deal with privacy and elsewhere where he treats this issue. I maintained that he was here challenging an ingrained conception about how language - all language - functions. But this challenge in itself is not the major concern at issue. The really important point about this contribution to philosophy is the implication that it carries with it for various forms of scepticism. For once it is recognised that the conception of language which is under attack is no longer viable, it should follow that the sort of sceptical doubts which Locke toyed with - and which might have led a more consistent philosopher to solipsism - cannot even be sensibly formulated.

The basic conception that lay at the root of those doubts was that the "external world" is known to us only indirectly. All we are aware of directly, according to these thoughts, are the "sensations" which items in the "external world" produce in "us". Hence there is an inference involved in our coming to any conclusion about such items - even the conclusion that they exist - since these "effects" might really be spontaneously produced in "us". So, if we are consistent in following this route we ultimately reach solipsism. But this problem arises because at the outset we allow this idea of a totally private object: the thing which is at the end of the sensory process but which at the same time lies outside that process. And yet, if we deny the private object, are we not denying that we have sensations; that redness produces in me a particular sensation; that

I am able to feel pain? In order to see why this is not the case, we have to appreciate how these words and phrases come to have meaning; how they are used. In this way we come to realise that the private object plays no part in their particular use, or in language in general.

The two ideas, that of the realm of the inner into which images of things outer are projected, and that of our language which only strictly refers to these images, these two things are intimately connected. When the former conception is challenged the latter conception springs forward as a means of showing that such a challenge must be misguided. When an advance is made against the dualistic conception of ourselves as distinct from our bodies the immediate retort comes that we are denying sensations; that we are advocating behaviourism. Hence to be effective, the challenge has to address and to eradicate simultaneously the twin conceptions.

This interpretation of Wittgenstein's aim may appear as a radical extension of the doctrine, placing as it does the private-language argument in an almost auxiliary role to the main thesis, which is an attack on scepticism. These features of my interpretation, its possibly radical nature and its relegation of the private language argument to an auxiliary role, are shared with another recent interpretation which has been presented by Kripke (Kripke 1).

In other respects however Kripke's account appears to be very different. I am not going to spend time in the present

chapter examining this potential divergence - just as I am not going to examine other interpretations of Wittgenstein's writings on privacy. But in appendix 2, I have set down why it is that I believe no substantial objection to the account I have given is contained in Kripke's paper.

(ii)

My original reasons for introducing the topic of privacy were two-fold. Wittgenstein's views on privacy are intermingled in his writings with his doctrine of meaning as use and this latter is a corner-stone of the anti-realist's philosophy. Secondly the private-language argument is, I have suggested, a part of an attack which Wittgenstein makes against a range of sceptical positions.

We noted earlier that we should expect links to emerge between different forms of anti-realism and various sceptical positions. Indeed it is traditional disputes between realists and idealists (where idealism is here taken in a general sense in accordance with Dummett 6, pp432-3) which are intended to be mirrored in the realist/anti-realist characterisation. As for the particular form of idealism which was expounded by Berkeley, this is seen by Dummett as involving two aspects. In its initial phase it would have corresponded to a form of anti-realism concerning statements about the external world: a sort of forerunner of phenomenalism. But, like the phenomenalist, Berkeley was unable to shake off his realist convictions completely and these subsequently emerge as a

belief that for God at least, all statements concerning the external world will be effectively decidable. As a consequence Dummett regards Berkeley as a sophisticated realist rather than a thorough-going anti-realist even though his initial arguments 'appear to lead to a decidedly anti-realist view' (Dummett ibid., p462). (We will see shortly that Dummett similarly regards classical phenomenalists as sophisticated realists, though perhaps of a different sort, in virtue of their dependence on subjunctive conditionals.) Be this as it may, if we are correct in thinking that Wittgenstein's writings represent an attack on the sceptic's basic technique, it may be that in developing a characterisation of various anti-realist positions which are broadly aligned with forms of scepticism, Dummett has succeeded in coming into conflict with Wittgenstein's intended approach. It may even be, that in developing these characterisations from a basically Wittgensteinian starting point, Dummett has identified an inconsistency in Wittgenstein's position.

Let us try to discover how this sort of conflict might actually come about in practice.

It will be recalled that one reason which Dummett has cited for the implausibility of global anti-realism is that such a position would need to embrace both phenomenalism and behaviourism, and in his view the two are incompatible. (Dummett 4, pp367-8.) Whether this is accepted or not is a separate matter, but it remains that Dummett regards each of these as being inevitable positions for anyone who wants

to adopt anti-realism in the spheres that they each relate to. These two particular positions are of interest, from our point of view, because they emphasise the obvious links between modern anti-realist positions and more traditional philosophical views which pre-date the realist/anti-realist characterisation.

Consider first how an anti-realist version of phenomenalism might come about. The disputed class of statements in this case would presumably be that class of statements which are taken to be about the external world. The distinction here between a statement which was a member of the disputed class and one which was not would be that the latter referred, though perhaps not overtly, to phenomena as these were presented to us. That is to say, to the effects that the external world has on us, as opposed to the external world or items contained therein. In his most recent writings Dummett distinguishes between classical phenomenalism, which he now considers to be a sophisticated form of realism in virtue of the use it makes of subjunctive conditionals, and a more thorough-going kind of phenomenalism which could be regarded as a form of anti-realism proper (Dummett 7, pp79-85, Also Dummett 6, p472). The anti-realist phenomenalist adopts a sort of strict finitist position, but the difference is more to do with the rigour of the two positions; the model on which they are based is the same in each case.

I hope that by this stage it will be recognised that the attempted distinction between the disputed and undisputed

classes is in this case purely illusory. And this is not a result of problems over complex statements which might seem to be candidates for membership of either class. Rather it should be due to a recognition that there is no class of statements which refer to wholly private phenomena which are the end result of an interaction between the world "out there" and ourselves - taken as in some sense distinct from that world. There are no statements at all of this type. Now it may be thought that even if we grant this, in the light of our appreciation of Wittgenstein's work on privacy, nevertheless there is no harm done to the 'phenomenal anti-realist', since all we seem to have done is to have brought it to his attention that his so-called disputed class is really the universal class of all statements and perhaps the only consequence of this is a recognition that the phenomenal anti-realist is really advocating global anti-realism - forgetting for the moment any qualms we may have about global anti-realism per se. This might indeed have been the case except that we will see, when we move a little further on, that for the phenomenal anti-realist the choice of the disputed class was based on a particular conception of the world and how that world interacts with ourselves. And this conception cannot itself survive the demise of the inner realm of 'conscious awareness'.

For any anti-realist, once the disputed class has been established, it is of prime importance to examine whether there are statements contained within that class which are understood but which also are not able in principle to be

decided as to their truth-values. As for the phenomenal anti-realist, he will maintain that some, if not all, statements within the class are such that their truth-values cannot be determined; because these statements (as opposed to phenomenal statements) refer to items, events and situations which are not directly accessible to us. The phenomenal anti-realist in this respect follows in the tradition of Locke and Russell, and the extent to which he regards his total class of statements as not in principle decidable will depend largely on the consistency with which he has worked through his position. What we must recognise here is that although the anti-realist couches his rejection of realism in meaning-based terms, his argument must be grounded, in the same way as the phenomenalist's was, on problems of inaccessibility.

The impact then which Wittgenstein has on the phenomenal anti-realist's position is more than to extend the disputed class by removing the 'auxiliary class'. He in fact makes this position untenable because he removes the basic conception which was to allow the anti-realist to create a gap between what we knew (phenomenal facts only) and what we had naively thought we knew (facts about the external world). The idea that statements about the external world can or should be interpreted as statements about purely private phenomena with which we are directly acquainted and from which we make inferences regarded as partially or wholly unjustified, is rejected. And this rejection is nothing at all to do with the difficulty or impossibility of making that translation or with the act of faith that might lead us to believe there

is some form of correlation between the phenomena and our inferences. The conception cannot be maintained because the essential element, the private phenomenon, (the yet uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium - Wittgenstein 1, 308) is itself purely mythological.

In this particular case then, I take it that Wittgenstein's work on privacy undermines to the extent of removing entirely both the traditional position of phenomenalism and what would amount to the more thorough-going anti-realist formulation of that traditional position, i.e. what I have been referring to as phenomenal anti-realism.

The other form of anti-realism which Dummett mentioned in his dismissal of global anti-realism was behaviourism. There are certain problems with behaviourism however which should be remarked upon before we go further. It has already been mentioned that whilst Dummett's remark on the implausibility of global anti-realism suggests that he regards behaviourism as an inevitable form of anti-realism, he elsewhere comments adversely on remarks made by Strawson, which seem to amount to the same thing (i.e. in the preface to Truth and Other Enigmas, pxxxiii). Also, in Dummett's treatment of character traits he concludes that a behaviourist form of anti-realism is the only serious option for anyone with the least philosophical sophistication and yet, again in the preface to Truth and Other Enigmas, he defends Wittgenstein's rejection of the behaviourist appellation as applying to him. Indeed it might be commented that anyone

with even just the basic grasp of Wittgenstein's private-language argument would recognise that this is not a behaviourist doctrine and one would expect, from Dummett's general alignment with Wittgenstein in this area, that he also would reject behaviourism.

Dummett clearly recognises the error of trying to apply the model of object and designation to sensation terms, as is evident from pp64-5 of his latest paper entitled 'Realism' (Dummett 7) and from the preface to his book Truth and Other Enigmas. For this reason he must be taken to reject a crude behaviourist position in which being in pain is equated with the manifestation of pain-behaviour. (Having said this much, it may be noted that both McGinn and Devitt level arguments against Dummett's presentation of anti-realism on the assumption that it will involve a commitment to precisely this sort of crude behaviourism [McGinn 1, pp117, 120-2 and Devitt 1, p92]). Where Dummett does appear to espouse 'behaviourism', e.g. in his treatment of character traits, this amounts to no more than a recognition that it is on the basis of situations in which we observe people's behaviour that we learn the appropriate usage for such terms. In examining the behaviourist's position in this section I will be concerned with the strict version of the doctrine in which sensation terms are taken to denote or designate particular behavioural acts.

Impressed by the failure of Cartesian dualism there is a tendency to want to neglect or eliminate the idea of

a realm of the immaterial; the realm of mental, as opposed to physical, states and events. If one is persuaded by this view, a problem arises over what one is to make of that part of our language which purports to deal with things mental. Statements such as 'I had a feeling of deep unease as she entered the room', 'by the third day my pain was greatly increased', 'John had a generous spirit which is rare amongst modern politicians', appear to be meaningful statements which are well understood by practitioners of the language. Yet these are statements which, if we adopted a realist view of things mental, we should say referred to the realm of mental events and states. Feelings of deep unease, pains and generous spirits are, on this traditional view, states and events within the realm of conscious awareness or sensation. If this realm - taken as something distinct from the material world - is rejected, then it is clearly no longer possible to explain these statements as referring to that realm. There is a requirement then to provide some other explanation of the meaning or use which such statements appear to have.

Broadly speaking behaviourists respond to this challenge by proposing behavioural events as the things referred to by such statements. So the position of the traditional behaviourist is one which involves a rejection of mental events and states as items outside the material world. Statements which might be taken by realists in this field to refer to mental events and states in this sense, are taken by the behaviourist to refer to behavioural events.

This is traditional behaviourism which is based on an ontological frugality about things mental. How then might we imagine an anti-realist parallel to this traditional position? If there were a realm of things mental then we might subscribe to some form of correspondence theory such that the truth or falsity of statements about things mental - statements about pains or feelings - would be determined by states and events within that world. In this situation all statements about things mental would have a truth-value which was determined by how things stood within the mental world, and one would be able to maintain a classically realist view of such statements (including an adherence to bivalence). Rejection of classical logic as applying to these statements in general could be based on, or have developed alongside, a rejection of those states and events which were taken to determine the truth-value of these statements. That is to say, when we reject the realm of the mental we dispense with a mechanism which could - at least in principle - have been adopted to determine in each case, the truth-values of statements about mental events or states. Without that realm it may be that we are forced to accept that these statements do not conform to classical logic. Once again the traditional and more recent versions of the argument against realism are linked through the notion of inaccessibility.

If mental states or processes cannot be taken as the things which are denoted by these statements and we are in the grip of the 'name and designation' model of language

we will be forced to discover some other set of referents. It is in this way that the form of behaviourism, in which sensation talk is taken to refer to specific items of behaviour, can arise. This is not however the anti-realist behaviourism which Dummett discusses when he talks of this as one form of anti-realism. Nevertheless this position does equate to a form of anti-realism.

It may be objected that even this crude form of behaviourism, whilst clearly not aligned to Wittgenstein's views on sensation, is nevertheless not opposed to Wittgenstein on the issue of privacy. After all, it also attempts to dispense with the private object as the referent of sensation terms. Given this, how can it be suggested that this crude behaviourism arises from acceptance of the psychological model which Wittgenstein is at pains to reject? This objection is plainly reasonable and it reflects a valid point concerning behaviourism. Unlike other forms of scepticism, behaviourism represents a reaction to what is seen as the implications of the psychological model.

In his book Mental Images, Alastair Hannay interprets a passage from Wittgenstein's Investigations (Wittgenstein 1, 308) using the following words;

> 'The denial that there are processes is a direct product of the search for a process; but as such it is misleading, because one should not even expect to find such things.' (Hannay 1, pp181-2.)

The denial that there are mental processes, as made by the crude behaviourist, arises from the continuing search for something which is designated by sensation terms. It is in this sense that such a form of behaviourism is, like phenomenalism, opposed to Wittgenstein's treatment of sensation terms. Both attempt to impose an inappropriate grammatical model on an area of discourse.

Both traditional behaviourism, based on ontological considerations, and its anti-realist equivalent take the view that statements about pain, feelings, emotions, etc., are really, though not necessarily overtly, about behaviour. That is to say, behavioural events are the real referents of statements about mental events or states. But this is I think clearly out of line with Wittgenstein's stance in the Investigations. When he rejects the idea of the role of the private object in our language, by saying:

> '...if we construe the grammar of the expression of sensation on the model of "object and designation" the object drops out of consideration as irrelevant' (Wittgenstein 1, 293),

he was not intending that we should substitute some particular public object in its place.

When asked if his rejection of the private referent amounts to an endorsement of the role of a public referent

he tries to make it clear that it is this particular model of language which he is opposed to: the model which compels us to identify the thing referred to, if not the mental process or state, then the behaviour.

> '"Are you not really a behaviourist in disguise? Aren't you at bottom really saying that everything except human behaviour is a fiction?" - If I do speak of a fiction, then it is of a <u>grammatical</u> fiction'. (Wittgenstein 1, 307).

Wittgenstein has rejected the traditional basis of scepticism in rejecting the conception in which we are all directly aware of our own 'sensations' only. He rejects also the idea of 'sensations' taken in this sense as private objects. But he does not pretend that sensation talk, or the language game concerned with 'pain' for example, is meaningless. Nor does he substitute behaviour as a referent for this part of our language in the place of the private object. The traditional behaviourist, in attempting to solve "the problem" in this way is as much a prey to the grammatical fiction as is the dualist. But sensation language just does not operate on the sort of object-designation model that we feel compelled to constrain it to. Granted, it is on the basis of certain types of behaviour that we consider it appropriate to apply, in particular cases, some part of our sensation language.

'Only of what behaves like a human being can one say

that it has pains.' (Wittgenstein 1, 283).

But the behaviour itself is not the sensation. The sensation, 'is not a something, but not a nothing either! The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said. We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself on us here.' (Wittgenstein 1, 304).

Language itself, including sensation language, is a form of behaviour. But sensation language does not have as a referent other forms of behaviour. The statement 'My pain is getting stronger now' does not equate to 'I am crying', nor any other description of behaviour.

If these points are accepted it will be apparent that the anti-realist's position which is aligned to traditional behaviourism will have been undermined by Wittgenstein's work on privacy.

Alternative forms of behaviourism may be similarly undermined if these attempt to link sensation terms to specific behavioural referents. Dummett's own espousal of behaviourism seems to avoid such a direct linking and on the face of it appears to be closely associated with Wittgenstein's own position regarding sensation language (Dummett 7, pp65-6). Can Wittgenstein be seen then as an early anti-realist in this regard?

It would certainly be convenient for Dummett if this were the case. However Dummett himself recognises that Wittgenstein was not particularly interested in rejecting bivalence but was instead rejecting a grammatical model in areas where that model is out of context. The Dummettian anti-realist operating in this area seems to me to be less impressed by the need to reject the model of object-designation and indeed appears to substitute one form of reference - assertibility conditions - for another. But in doing so this anti-realist needs to steer clear of a crude form of behaviourism which would just equate specific behavioural acts with these assertibility conditions. Anti-realism of this sort takes on only part of the Wittgensteinian approach and cannot for that reason be equated with that approach.

(iii)

Another area of dispute for the anti-realist, which is closely related to that of mental events and states generally, is other minds. Traditionally there is a position which adopts a sceptical view of minds other than our own. The basis of this traditional view again rests upon a gap in our knowledge; we have direct, first-hand acquaintance with the functions and operations of our own minds and on this basis can be well assured that these definitely exist. When it comes to the minds of others however, we have no such direct evidence to go on, and can only infer that there are such things on grounds that can never be totally adequate. We argue perhaps from analogy with our own case. But this

sort of argument can never be conclusive because it involves an inference. Hence we are left with a doubt about other minds, which we may either learn to live with; or which may lead us to reject the idea of there being such entities, depending upon our philosophical rigour.

The anti-realist parallel to this sceptical position would I think be developed along the following lines. First we take, as the disputed class, statements about the mental events and states of others. Some, if not all, statements of this type are such that their truth-values cannot be directly ascertained because the states and events in question, which would be required to allow their truth-values to be determined, are not accessible. Other people's mental events and states, if there are such things, are not available to be used as truth-conditions for statements which refer to those events and states. Consequently a classically realist view of such statements cannot be maintained. Some form of anti-realism would need be introduced at this stage and one contender may well be a form of asymmetrical behaviourism which reduced statements about other people's mental events and states to statements about their behaviour but allowed that such statements as applied to ourselves had a different meaning.

Here again, as in the case of phenomenal anti-realism, we find the introduction of a gap in our knowledge. And this figures as a means of ruling that certain statements are not effectively decidable because the necessary

truth-conditions are inaccessible. The gap arises because we accept a model in which statements about mental events and states are taken to be descriptions about how things are. But not how things are, in the sense that we may say of someone (or ourselves) that they have red hair. Statements about mental phenomena describe how things are but, as it were, on the inside. Knowing how things are "on the inside" is for ourselves a matter of "self-awareness" or "consciousness" (but not self-awareness in the sense that we pay attention to our appearance, say, as others might do). When it comes to others, we simply do not and cannot obtain this sort of 'self-awareness' or 'consciousness' with respect to them.

> 'Inside and outside!
>
> "Our teaching connects the word 'red' (or is meant to connect it) with a particular impression of his (a private impression, an impression in him). He then communicates this impression - indirectly, of course - through the medium of speech." ....
>
> Is telling what one sees something like turning one's inside out? And learning to say what one sees learning to let others see inside us? .....
>
> Surely you wouldn't think that <u>telling</u> someone what one sees could be a more direct way of communicating than by pointing to a sample!" (Wittgenstein 2, p237.)

It should be clear, I think, that we are once again faced with the illusion of a gap in our potential knowledge based on the conception that we are all directly acquainted with our own private objects. This particular version of anti-realism lays stress on the private nature of the object which results in it being accessible only to ourselves. It places less, or perhaps no, stress on the claim that it is the only thing which is accessible to us, as was the case with the phenomenal anti-realist. Hence the gap arises not so much because we cannot get beyond a knowledge of our own 'sensations' but because we are unable to acquire a knowledge of anyone else's. Despite these differences the two cases, that of phenomenal anti-realism and that of anti-realism with respect to other minds, share the same basic conception (and differ more in the rigour with which this is applied). This sort of route to scepticism concerning other minds illustrates the dualistic conception which is a feature of it. Mental processes are totally private entities and in this sense distinct from material objects. A more thorough-going scepticism would couple the doubts about the inaccessibility of other minds with doubts arising from the gap between our own awareness and the external world generally. Such a development would embody a monistic (based) scepticism concerning other minds and would in fact amount to solipsism.

The conception which involves the notion of the private object that we are each directly acquainted with and which is embraced at the outset of these routes, is one that Wittgenstein has tried to show is completely untenable.

'But isn't it our meaning it that gives sense to the sentence? (And here, of course, belongs the fact that one cannot mean a senseless series of words.) And "meaning it" is something in the sphere of the mind. But it is also something private! It is the intangible something; only comparable to consciousness itself.

How could this seem ludicrous? It is, as it were, a dream of our language.' (Wittgenstein 1, 358).

(iv)

So far in this chapter, I have aimed to show that there exists a definite conflict between Wittgenstein's work on privacy and certain anti-realist positions. These anti-realist views which I have considered do not however exhaust the possibilities and so it follows that even if I am correct in suggesting that there is a conflict, this need not detract from the basic characterisation which Dummett offers. I say that this need not be the case since even if it were shown that the majority of anti-realist positions were in conflict with Wittgenstein's work - and this latter was accepted as valid - there might still be some merit in characterising the range of disputes in the way proposed.

Even bearing this in mind however, I believe that serious reservations are emerging which suggest that the characterisation should be viewed with some suspicion. (These

reservations are quite apart from the rather more technical difficulties which were reviewed earlier in chapters 3 and 4). We should recall that the purpose of the characterisation was to draw attention to certain similarities of form which, it was suggested, existed between a range of traditional philosophical disputes. By re-specifying these disputes in a particular way, these would be seen to be related - though not identical in structure - and this realisation would assist in a sort of cross fertilisation of ideas within the whole range of disputes.

If it is now recognised that some of the major disputes within this range have been pre-empted, this detracts considerably from the value of the characterisation - simply in that it reduces its scope. (The major remaining disputes which would fall within the characterisation are I think: the constructivist/platonist dispute within the philosophy of mathematics, the positivist/realist dispute within science and the realist/idealist dispute with regard to the past and the future. There may in fact be others but these will be the most important ones at least.)

The suggestion that such major philosophical disputes concerning the validity of phenomenalism, traditional behaviourism and solipsism, are no longer tenable may itself be viewed with some scepticism. For this reason the impact of this criticism may be thought to be reduced. The fact however that work which has been directed at showing these disputes to be extinct has been carried out by that

philosopher, upon whose approach to meaning the characterisation has been based, suggests that this criticism should not be brushed aside lightly. (Quite apart from this issue over the consistency of the proposed characterisation, if the presentation which I have offered is accepted, it will be seen that Wittgenstein has been successful in this aim.)

Concerning the major remaining disputes which I mentioned above, it seems unlikely in the cases arising within mathematics and science that Wittgenstein's views on privacy could be shown to be in direct conflict with the suggested anti-realist positions. The reason is that in these cases the necessary gap in our understanding is not created as a consequence of the psychological model involving the private object. In the cases of the past and future an anti-realist position could be developed along similar lines to those adopted in the case of phenomenalism. On such a view it would be our direct and immediate acquaintance with our current sensations which allowed us to adopt a realist approach to these, but events past (or future), even where these involved our own consciousness or sensation, would not qualify as things which could be accessible to us. So again in this way a gap would be created between what it would be possible for us to verify and what would not be so possible. The gap would be introduced or imported along with an unspecified and unspecifiable model of the 'self'. Having said this I suspect it must be equally possible to imagine alternative anti-realist positions with respect to tensed statements

which do not lean upon the concept of the private 'self'. In view of this it cannot be said that all anti-realist doctrines in this area will inevitably come into conflict with Wittgenstein's work on privacy, although this does seem to be the case concerning the more traditional positions.

In this section I have been considering the links which exist between various anti-realist positions and certain sceptical views or perhaps better the underlying framework which gives rise to those views. Another way of looking at this relationship arises if we examine the role which correspondence theories play with respect to realism. In a paper entitled 'Vagueness and Alternative Logic', Putnam sets out certain features which he takes to be characteristic of Dummett's conception of realism (Putnam 5, p272). One of these characteristics is the assumption of a correspondence theory of truth. Such an interpretation is certainly not belied by recent statements which Dummett has made, e.g. he describes realism as involving that statements in a given class relate to some reality in such a way that that reality renders each statement in the class determinately true or false. (Dummett 7, p55 and p104, Dummett 6, p446). It is this idea of a correspondence between the way in which we perceive the world and the way the world 'really is', which lies at the heart of many metaphysical disputes and allows the sceptic to introduce his suggested doubts.

Long ago both Hume and Kant had warned against the incoherence of correspondence theories which require that

we are able to grasp separately the idea of a thing and the thing itself. Frege also rejected the idea of a correspondence theory but he did this in a peculiarly realist way. When in 'The Thought' (Frege 1, p19) he wrote 'It would only be possible to compare an idea with a thing if the thing were an idea too', he was not rejecting correspondence theories on the grounds that all we have available to us are ideas and that hence we are unable to compare ideas with things. For Frege truth had to be absolute. Comparing an idea with a thing could not provide such an absolute conception of truth because the elements thus compared were essentially different. Consequently the correspondence between them could at best be only a partial correspondence and this would compromise truth. Hence he suggests that we could only achieve the required sort of correspondence by comparing elements of the same sort; elements which would permit a perfect correspondence and an absolute truth. So for Frege there is no intrinsic difficulty with the type of comparison implied by a correspondence theory, it is just that a comparison of this sort could never provide us with a satisfactory account of truth. Frege is perhaps not untypical however in his neglect of Hume. The early Wittgenstein adopted what was essentially a correspondence theory of truth in the Tractatus.

Now it may be objected that the potential problems which a correspondence theory gives rise to are not really anything to do with anti-realism. Certainly realism is intricately linked with a correspondence theory of truth - realists like McGinn seem at times to see the preservation of a vulnerability

to scepticism which arises from such theories as the touchstone of metaphysical realism (McGinn 1, p127 etc.) - but that is realism and anti-realism is opposed to that. This sort of dissociation does not really stand up to close scrutiny however. Clearly Dummett's view is that anti-realism will only be applicable in certain areas. Elsewhere realism together presumably with its correspondence theory implications will need to be adopted. In this way Dummett can be seen as implicitly accepting the idea of a correspondence theory. (This acceptance is reflected to my mind by statements of the kind, 'To have a realistic view, it is not enough to suppose that statements of the given class are determined, by the reality to which they relate,....'. (Dummett 7, p56). This is not enough for realism, since where circumstances permit, this is the very same model which the anti-realist himself espouses.) It is allowed that where we can grasp referents, these may be used to underpin a correspondence theory of truth and realism.

Wittgenstein's dictum concerning meaning and use is interpreted in such a way that the use consists in our interaction with the referents which constitute the external element in this correspondence. Where the apparent referents are not graspable or cannot be brought within the scope of our linguistic practices, Wittgenstein's dictum is thought of as demanding that something else be supplied as this external element. In order to maintain the idea of a correspondence, assertibility conditions are resorted to. So anti-realism does not represent a wholesale rejection

of the correspondence theory model. Rather it can be seen as implicitly accepting that sort of framework, and introducing a refinement where the basic theory is likely to run into problems, i.e. where difficulty is seen to arise in maintaining that the truth or falsity of a class of statements is determined by their correspondence to certain truth-conditions, the anti-realist maintains instead that in these cases, the truth-values are determined by assertibility-conditions.

With respect to the past the anti-realist is concerned that we can never rule out the possibility of new evidence. But this betrays in a sense his willingness to adopt a broadly realistic correspondence theory framework. His concern is not so much over the reality of the past but is rather to do with the lacuna which he alleges to exist between that reality and what we can know about it.

Both Putnam and Dummett seem at times to be aware of the problems that derive from acceptance of a correspondence theory of truth (Putnam 6, Introduction);

> 'The naive realist's notion of immediate awareness, consisting in a direct contact between the knowing subject and the object of his knowledge, is probably in all cases incoherent.' (Dummett 7, p111).

In part this has led Putnam to abandon his previously held strong realist views. But Putnam's qualms over a correspondence theory have not resulted in a complete rejection

of the model which is inherent in such theories. Like Dummett, Putnam is still looking for an alternative to truth-conditions as the external element of the correspondence. Unlike Dummett, Putnam is unhappy with the idea of justified assertibility conditions because he is uncertain about the circumstances in which such conditions can be known to be justified. Consequently Putnam is driven towards a search for what he calls an idealised justification.

> 'In my view, truth is idealized justification (the true is what would be justified under optimal conditions, where optimal conditions depend on the particular assertion, context, and interests in complex ways).' [Putnam 5, p280.]

And he might have added that even if these conditions ever arise, we can have no way of knowing that they have arisen. Putnam also remains locked into the idea of correspondence between the internal and the external; the way in which we see the world and the way in which the world really is.

(v)

There is one other potentially major problem however which relates directly to the characterisation rather than to the viability of particular anti-realist positions. This is the problem of whether in fact the use which Dummett makes of Wittgenstein's suggestion, that meaning is exhibited in

use, is consistent and true to Wittgenstein's intent.

It will be recalled, particularly in the case of Dummett's route to intuitionism, that the central issue between realists and anti-realists was to concern the theory of meaning which each party advocated for a selected class of statements. The realist in each instance advocated a theory in which truth played a central role. To know the meaning of a particular statement within this class was to know what would be the case if the statement were true. In his negative role the anti-realist aimed to show that such a theory could not be generally valid for the entire class. On the assumption that we require a consistent theory of meaning covering the whole class, it must follow that the realist's theory be rejected. The anti-realist may then go on to outline a substitute theory which has perhaps as a central concept, justified or warrantable assertibility.

The issue which in each case was to guide the debate was that whatever theory of meaning we adopted for the class, this should be such that it exhibited demonstrable conformity with Wittgenstein's idea about meaning as use. This idea, then, which lies at the very roots of the characterisation, is to act as a sort of 'specification' which must be conformed with by any successful theory of meaning. Dummett expresses this interpretation in the following way:

> 'A theory of meaning, at least of the kind with which we are mostly familiar, seizes upon some one general

feature of sentences (at least of assertoric sentences, which is all we need be concerned with when considering the language of mathematics) as central: the notion of the content of an individual sentence is then to be explained in terms of this central feature. The selection of some one such feature of sentences as central to the theory of meaning is what is registered by philosophical dicta of the form, "Meaning is ....." - e.g. "The meaning of a sentence is the method of its verification", "The meaning of a sentence is determined by its truth-conditions", etc. (The slogan "Meaning is use" is, however, of a different character: the "use" of a sentence is not, in this sense, a single feature; the slogan simply restricts the kind of feature that may legitimately be appealed to as constituting or determining meaning.)' (Dummett 3, pp222-3.)

On this interpretation Wittgenstein's suggestion stands outside the mould of traditional or conventional theories of meaning. Indeed it is not itself a theory of meaning at all. It is simply intended as a guide to us in assessing different actual theories of meaning. It merely highlights a particular condition which we should look to see satisfied by a theory which we might adopt. Wittgenstein has, on this view, entered the 'what is meaning' debate but only in a sideways manner. He has not provided us with an alternative theory of meaning which proclaims that meaning is..... But nevertheless he has condoned this sort of theorising by providing guidance which is intended to influence our selection

of an appropriate theory. This interpretation of Wittgenstein's suggestion is fundamental to Dummett's characterisation but it is one which to me does not ring true.

Wittgenstein was reported by John Wisdom to have said: 'Don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use.' This simple statement seems to summarise a major part of what Wittgenstein was doing in the Investigations. At the very start of that work, Wittgenstein considers a primitive language and, after examining how this might function, he remarks:

> '- It is in this and similar ways that one operates with words. - "But how does he know where and how he is to look up the word 'red' and what he is to do with the word 'five'?" - Well, I assume that he acts as I have described. Explanations come to an end somewhere. - But what is the meaning of the word "five"? - No such thing was in question here, only how the word "five" is used.' (Wittgenstein 1, 1).

The question 'But what is the meaning of the word...?' is one which is liable to lead us on a wild goose chase. It is a question which is best avoided or approached by considering it as a request for a description of how the word ..... is used. The reason is:

> 'For a large class of cases - though not for all - in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.'

(Wittgenstein 1, 43).

And hence, in this large class of cases, to ask for the meaning of a particular word is to ask 'What is its use?' The attempt to define meaning in a global way which yet retains some content is all but futile because the task can only really be seen as an attempt to describe how words function. And when we look to see how this is, we find that they function in all sorts of different ways. The serious task for philosophers was, in Wittgenstein's view, to describe, to lay bare, the use which philosophically problematic words have in our language.

> 'We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light, that is to say its purpose, from the philosophical problems. These are, of course, not empirical problems; they are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognise those workings: in despite of an urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language.' (Wittgenstein 1, 109.)

The task is a piecemeal one of examining in each problematic case what the legitimate use is of the particular word which causes us disquiet. It is only in this way that

we will ultimately get clear about wherein lies our problem. It is in this sense that we must bring these words back to their original home.

> 'When philosophers use a word - "knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition", "name" - and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home? - what we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use.' (Wittgenstein 1, 116.)

This may appear as a trivialising of significant philosophical issues but really it is only an attempt to get clear about why we feel a problem exists in the first place.

> 'Where does our investigation gets its importance from, since it seems only to destroy everything interesting, that is, all that is great and important? (As it were all the buildings, leaving behind only bits of stone and rubble.) What we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards and we are clearing up the ground of language on which they stand.
>
> The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language. These bumps make us see the

value of the discovery.' (Wittgenstein 1, 118-9.)

Time and time again in the Investigations Wittgenstein warns us against taking the question about meaning to be more than just a question about use.

'The question "What is a word really?" is analogous to "What is a piece in chess?"' (Wittgenstein 1, 108.)

Once we know how the king is used in the game - what moves can be made and what cannot - then we know all there is to know about the role of this piece in the game. The role of a word in our language can be thought of analogously.

'You say: the point isn't the word, but its meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word, though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow that you can buy with it. (But contrast: money, and its use.)' (Wittgenstein 1, 120.)

Throughout these passages, which precede the privacy issue, Wittgenstein outlines the method which he later uses in dealing with that issue. This method does not appear to provide a rule to be used as a guide in theorising about meaning. Indeed it appears to oppose such theorising - don't ask for the meaning, that was not at issue, look to see instead how it is used. For our task is to bring words back to their natural home - to look and see how they are used in their

normal setting, in our everyday language. It is only in this context that our language gets its cash value.

There is a concern which may arise in connection with this essentially anti-theoretical interpretation. It is this; if usage and linguistic practice are to provide the signposts in our philosophical ramblings, what guarantee have we that these signs do not themselves embody an error which could lead us in the wrong direction? What if we come across a community in which some allegedly mistaken philosophical doctrine is built into their language and its usage? Will not our concern with the importance of usage force us to accept the correctness of such doctrines? For example how should we respond to a community in which a dualist philosophy of mind is ineradicably entrenched in linguistic usage?

What we refer to as 'philosophical discourse' or 'philosophical theorising' is not a primary function of language. What I mean by this is that languages do not develop or arise in order to explicate philosophical issues. Languages are primarily tools for communication; they assist in the transactions of our lives. As languages develop they become more refined and we overlay on them, as it were, the philosophical role. We begin to use them to examine philosophical ideas and concerns. A dualist philosophy of mind could in my view only be introduced at this non-primary or derivative stage. Only when a language had been established (given a cash value), which could cope with transactions involving people and material objects, could it be developed

into a tool for the expression of the dualistic concept. This belief merely reflects the fact that philosophical discourse is not a basic linguistic function. The warnings that Wittgenstein offers us again reflect this fact. Philosophical theories are expressed in language but their expression derives from a more basic and fundamental use of that language. And as well as being aware of this we should recognise that a great many philosophical mistakes, apparent paradoxes and some philosophical problems themselves, arise from our taking a language which has been developed in a particular context and trying to apply it in a new one. We take over our everyday language and use it to philosophise - which is not the primary purpose for which it was developed - and we do this without due regard to the ways in which it must be applied: ways which are in evidence in our everyday linguistic transactions.

If these remarks concerning philosophical discourse are accepted I think it will be apparent that no philosophical theory can be ineradicably entrenched in our language or its usage. To be so entrenched would imply an involvement at a basic stage in the development of our language and philosophising just cannot get a grip at such an early stage. Dualism can, it is true, become ingrained in our ways of thinking and we may reflect this through language; but because dualism is a philosophical doctrine, it will be expressed and presented in terms which have a more basic role.

The suggestion is that if we are sufficiently meticulous

in respecting the usage which arises for these terms in their basic role, then the route which leads to dualism will not even open up. The signposts which linguistic practice provides us with cannot themselves embody philosophical mistakes or philosophical doctrines of any sort since they are laid down in a pre-philosophical context.

I would suggest that we need to take the warnings which Wittgenstein provides seriously, and that in his treatment of privacy he shows us how his suggested method can be used to tackle major philosophical problems. Dummett is correct in highlighting the fact that Wittgenstein's approach to meaning breaks with convention. It is not a theory of meaning in the sense that it answers the question 'What is meaning?' But I suspect that Dummett is wrong in thinking that this break only represents a pause to re-group before we return to the question. Wittgenstein does not attempt to answer this question in the traditional way but more importantly he tries to get us to see that there is little point in asking the question in this way, i.e., in which we expect an answer that identifies a single central concept. Ask instead the question about use. This is the real task - this is where progress <u>can</u> be made.

Dummett remarks that 'A model of meaning is a model of understanding, i.e. a representation of what it is that is known when an individual knows the meaning.' (Dummett 3, p217.) If we accept that what is known is how to use the statement appropriately and what constitutes appropriate

use by others, we will surely recognise that the theory Dummett is after would have to represent something that is both complex and different in every case. In this situation perhaps the best thing that can be done is to analyse the particular problem areas.

The realist Michael Devitt also takes Dummett to task for what I would suggest is his lack of fidelity to Wittgenstein's original approach. Interestingly, and in my view mistakenly, Devitt does not see Dummett as misinterpreting Wittgenstein although Devitt's own ideas on meaning are at places strikingly Wittgensteinian. For example, he writes;

> 'In my view competence in a language does not consist in any semantic propositional knowledge at all.' (i.e. knowledge that the statement in question is true in particular circumstances - such as when the truth-conditions apply).
>
> It is a set of grounded skills or abilities. It consists in being able to <u>do things with</u> a language, not in <u>having thoughts about</u> it'. (Devitt 1, p88.)

Devitt acknowledges, as he surely must, that Dummett also regards competence as a practical ability. His complaint is that Dummett writes as if this ability could only consist in a propositional knowledge of truth-conditions (or verification-conditions). Devitt, quite rightly in my view, rejects the idea of looking for something which is <u>the meaning</u>

of a statement. (Devitt 1, p87.) '"Meaning is use" can legitimately be interpreted as: "it is what people do with words that makes them mean what they do."' (Devitt 1, p95.) But this does not imply that '"use" must be taken to mean "recognizable conditions of conclusively justified use."' (Devitt 1, p95. Paul Horwich makes essentially the same point in Horwich 1, p199.) Devitt attributes this narrow interpretation to Dummett and, in my view mistakenly, to Wittgenstein.

To my mind then, the attempt to characterise these disputes about mathematics and time and philosophy of mind as disputes about meaning, and then to try to decide between the different theories of meaning using Wittgenstein's remarks about use as a guide, is one which misses the very point of these remarks.

If someone takes Wittgenstein's doctrine of meaning as use seriously he will see that this is not a weapon to use against realist theories of meaning or any other theories. Such attacks would not constitute any sort of useful philosophical advance. It would not provide us with a clearer view of any philosophical problem - and in this sense it would not really be a philosophical move at all.

This interpretation of Wittgenstein's intent represents a second reason for having misgivings about the task which Dummett has undertaken. But this second reason is not unrelated to the first which concerned the rejection of certain disputes

which were to be accommodated within the characterisation. If we accept that advance made by Wittgenstein against scepticism, there will be an irony in our viewing the 'meaning as use' dictum - the methodological aid which allowed us to achieve that advance - as a rule or selection criterion which is used to cut us off from certain areas of knowledge and thereby to reintroduce those same sceptical ruminations in a disguised form.

CHAPTER 7 : THE CONCLUSIONS OF OUR REVIEW

CHAPTER ABSTRACT

In this concluding chapter the main issues which have been raised earlier are revisited and summarised. Having surveyed again those issues which are of relevance to the adoption of this characterisation it is concluded that sufficient problems remain unresolved to make this an undesirable course.

(i)

The subject of this work has been the realist/anti-realist characterisation. At the outset I attempted to outline what it is that that characterisation tries to do and how it is intended that this should be achieved. I then presented a review of the characterisation which picked up on some of the points raised within the literature and then went on to introduce others. In particular I have dwelt on the Wittgensteinian origins of this characterisation and explored the relationship between these origins and the characterisation itself.

What I intend to do in this final chapter is to recap on the main points which have arisen from this investigation.

We started out then by considering what it was that Dummett was trying to draw our attention to. He suggested

that several traditional disputes, which were broadly of an idealist versus realist type, could be shown to be more closely related than they had previously been thought to be. In order to show this similarity more clearly Dummett chose to characterise these disputes in a particular way which is somewhat novel. Instead of regarding phenomenalism for example as a doctrine which adopts a particular view about the status of objects and the dispute between phenomenalists and their realist counterparts as a dispute over the ontological status of objects, Dummett characterised this as a belief about the meaning of certain statements and the dispute as being about this view of meaning. Similarly, it was proposed that other disputes followed an analogous pattern in that, in each case, there was a particular class of statements - the disputed class - and the dispute concerned the appropriate theory of meaning which should attach to these statements.

Within each dispute, the realist would attempt to maintain a classical theory of meaning which retained bivalence across the class on the basis that truth was the central concept in the theory of meaning for these statements. He seemed committed in this way to a belief in the existence, in some sense, of inaccessible truth-conditions in those cases where a statement within the class was, in principle, verification-transcendent.

It is basically this encumbrance with verification-transcendent truth-conditions which the anti-realist seeks

to reject. For him the existence, within the class, of statements which are in principle undecidable is an indication that a realist theory of meaning cannot be applied generally to the class in question. He then goes on to develop an alternative theory which takes as its central feature something which can be seen to play a part both in our acquisition of an understanding of these statements and in our manifestation of that understanding in linguistic usage. In both the rejection of the realist's position as untenable and in his selection of an alternative more appropriate theory, the anti-realist is guided by what he regards as the Wittgensteinian constraint on theories of meaning. This constraint is summarised by the idea of meaning as use, and is interpreted as a rule which enables us to eliminate any theory which has as its central feature something which cannot be manifested as a part of our linguistic practice. Hence it is that the disputes themselves, seen in this new way, are rooted in the Wittgensteinian concept of meaning as use. And so also, because of this, is the characterisation of these disputes.

The range of disputes which it is suggested can be viewed in this way include those involving phenomenalism and behaviourism and their realist counterparts, the dispute over constructivist as against platonist theories of mathematics, realist and opposing theories with respect to the past and future and instrumentalist theories as against realist theories within philosophy of science. I suspect also that solipsism and opposing theories would provide another

classic example which could be accommodated within the theory.

One point which I stressed in the exposition was that we were not here being invited to consider a whole new range of philosophical disputes which were to replace their more traditional predecessors. Rather the point of the exercise was to view these original disputes from a new angle. This new angle was selected because it allowed us to see more clearly the links which exist between the various disputes and in this way, hopefully, we might come nearer to resolving the issues involved.

(ii)

The case of intuitionism versus platonism within the philosophy of mathematics is one that I presented as an almost paradigm example of the development of an anti-realist position. This is the case which Dummett presents in most detail and it deals with the area which I suspect first suggested to him the idea of a generic characterisation. Other examples have also been considered including the one which Dummett perhaps most frequently refers to: that of character traits.

In these examples, the emphasis which the anti-realist's case places on the existence within the disputed class of non-effectively-decidable statements became very evident. This feature of these examples is one which we suggested later was in need of greater clarification. Certain other

points were raised first however when we came to attempt a sort of internal review of the characterisation. (This first phase of our assessment was described as internal, in the sense that it concentrated mainly on issues which arose from the mechanics of the characterisation itself.) An objection to the anti-realist's position had been raised in the literature by McGinn. This objection took the form of an alleged counter-example to what was taken to be a fundamental tenet of the anti-realist's position; namely the belief that we cannot form conceptions of particular verification-transcendent truth-conditions. On inspection it became clear that this suggested belief could not in fact be attributed to the anti-realist. In addition it appeared that in general the anti-realist's attack on realism depended upon our being able to understand non-effectively-decidable statements, and this seemed to imply that we are indeed able to form conceptions of verification-transcendent truth-conditions, e.g. a conception of the world continuing to exist after my death. It was suggested that this confusion over the anti-realist's position probably arose in connection with a point which the anti-realist does make; namely that the only conception we can have of what it would be for a verification-transcendent condition to obtain, i.e. a conception of how its obtaining would differ from its not obtaining, would be in terms of conditions which can be described as assertibility or justified assertibility conditions.

We next went on to look at a debate concerning the

adoption of anti-realism with respect to the past. We noted how McDowell attempts to make the claim that we can be, in some sense, directly aware of the past. Hence on this account realism would provide an appropriate theory of meaning for this class. We examined in some detail a possible way in which this sort of claim could be fleshed out, e.g. by comparing the delay between a 'current' event and our awareness of that event caused by sensory processes, with the corresponding delay between a past event and our recollection of that event caused by sensory and memory storage and retrieval processes. In the end however, we concluded that very little undisputed progress could be made in this area until certain points had been clarified. For example, what is meant by 'the past' - are we only talking about the remote past which is beyond living human memory, or are we talking about a broader concept? What is to count as an event being accessible to us; i.e. what ground rules are we to adopt in deciding whether or not a statement is effectively decidable? Before these issues are resolved it seems almost futile to enter into the sort of defence of realism which McDowell has attempted. We also caught sight at this point of a fairly basic problem which surrounds the anti-realist's position. This was the problem of how the meaning domains which he selects are justified as such. In other words, on what basis does the anti-realist demand a unified theory of meaning to apply throughout, whilst not necessarily beyond, his particular chosen class of statements?

Towards the end of chapter 3 we took up on some critical

remarks which Strawson had made concerning the characterisation. We also noted a response which had been made by Wright. The point which Strawson put was similar to the conclusion we had reached in examining McDowell's contribution concerning the past; namely that before any of this goes much further we must get clear about certain issues which are fundamental to the general realist/anti-realist debate, in particular what is to count as effectively decidable and what is not. Wright agreed with Strawson that some tidying up would be necessary here, but rejected the idea that any further progress would be impossible until these issues had been resolved.

Wright's reason for maintaining that resolution of these apparently central issues could be postponed was that, however they are ultimately settled, we already know sufficiently well that certain statements are non-effectively-decidable. This fact would be sufficient to get the anti-realist's programme under way at least. On closer scrutiny however, it appeared that until the issues about what can and cannot be recognised as obtaining are satisfactorily resolved, it may be that the anti-realist's claims about seemingly clear-cut cases could commit him to global anti-realism. This is a situation which Wright appears to take on board as one possible outcome. We went on to consider the possibility that global anti-realism may well involve an inconsistency - not on the grounds which Dummett has mentioned - but because the anti-realist's adoption of the meaning as use doctrine would seem to commit him to the idea of a form of life and

thereby to a position which could not be reconciled with anti-realism in this area. Hence we were unable to agree with Wright's response and found ourselves once again suggesting that the fundamental issues about accessibility, decidability and recognisability needed to be satisfactorily addressed before the anti-realist could hope to make much further progress.

In chapter 4 we continued with this first phase of our assessment. We considered in greater detail Dummett's treatment of character traits as an example of a widely held anti-realist position. We examined Dummett's proposed distinction between an anti-realist reduction, in the form of behaviourism, and a realist reduction, in this case a physiological reduction of character traits. Although it appeared that this distinction might be one which could be blurred over if we presented each in terms of hypothetical experiments, it became evident that the eventual outcome - in terms of realism and anti-realism - had more to do with the relationship between the disputed class of statements and the reductive class.

Another topic which we explored was Dummett's somewhat summary dismissal of the possibility of global anti-realism. It appeared that his rejection of that possibility was based on a somewhat narrow view of the options open to the anti-realist. This was surprising because Dummett elsewhere comments on this sort of feature being displayed by others. The intended rejection of global anti-realism was in line however with Dummett's overall plan of providing an aid to the debates

over the different forms of realism, rather than a single all-embracing solution which would have implied global anti-realism (or global realism). Notwithstanding this, there may be other good reasons, one of which was referred to above, for the anti-realist wanting to reject the possibility of global anti-realism.

If there are major problems associated with the idea of global anti-realism, the disclaimers that Dummett offers about the possibility of a completely general anti-realist argument will represent more than just a modest intent. They will be essential to the stability of anti-realism, since a completely general argument would of necessity lead to global anti-realism, with whatever undesirable consequences this was seen to have.

Despite the disclaimers however the argument which Dummett advances in Dummett 3 does certainly have an appearance of generality, and this is in fact confirmed by Dummett. This apparent conflict is not easily resolved and, as I have indicated, could present serious problems for the anti-realist. He may, ironically be embarrassed by the apparent success of his own arguments.

From this point we turned to a consideration of the more positive aspects of the anti-realist's position: that is, that part of his doctrine which deals with the reconstruction of an appropriate theory of meaning once the inappropriate realist view has been cleared away. In this

respect we noted that if the anti-realist based his reconstruction on justified assertibility conditions - which he is normally taken to do - he may himself be subject to the same sort of attack which he previously mounted against the realist. In the case of historical statements there will be some that can be imagined which, although we can readily understand them, are associated with no conditions which could be taken as justifying their assertion. Similarly in Dummett's much-referred-to case of character traits, the example he provides excludes the possibility of available truth-conditions but equally it seems to leave us devoid of assertibility-conditions.

Another difficulty which was discussed surrounded the anti-realist's implicit requirement for a unified theory of meaning for his particular disputed class, whilst he accepted that different theories might apply to other disputed classes. We referred to this approach as a sort of 'domain theory of meaning'. We noted that the anti-realist might simply respond to this point by saying that the disputes that he is concerned with are already well-defined. It just is assumed that a unified theory will apply to each class - in the same way that the ontologist approached these issues assuming that a particular ontological status would apply to a class of entities or alleged entities, whilst not necessarily extending to all such possibilities.

This does not really answer the point which is being raised however. There may well be good reasons for separating

out particular groups of alleged entities on the basis of ontology. But there is no guarantee or even a reason offered as to why, if there are such ontological domains, these should be associated with meaning domains. And in any case this response makes the meaning-based characterisation curiously dependent upon ontological issues - a consequence which would seem to be at odds with Dummett's remarks in Dummett 3, to the effect that it is futile to try to resolve ontological issues prior to our establishing appropriate theories of meaning for those statements which refer to the items in question.

Related to this question of the justification of the implied assumption that a unified theory of meaning be required for just those statements which the particular anti-realist chooses to consider, is the problem of statements which appear to span more than one domain. Of particular concern will be statements which span disputed classes for which different theories of meaning are assumed, or being argued, to apply. Clearly a statement can be constructed which will span any combination of disputed classes including all disputed classes, given that the disputed classes are characterised in each case as 'the class of statements about .....'

We noted other difficulties which might arise in connection with the specification of the disputes, including the problem of subsuming a particular class within a larger class and, on the basis of our demand for a single theory of meaning across a class carrying over the established theory

of meaning for the more restricted class to the wider one. Again this may create problems if it were to lead inevitably to global anti-realism. Once more however, it may be that this is all part and parcel of a specification of the areas of dispute which is too loose.

It may be that these problems can be resolved in a way which is seen to be satisfactory, but in the meantime we should perhaps view the new characterisation with caution. There may be no point adopting a new approach to an old problem if the adoption of that approach is itself going to introduce problems. If the meaning-based approach is somehow derivative from more traditional ontological issues (at least in its specification of the problems) it may turn out that those more traditional approaches are basically better suited to the problems concerned. It may be that in approaching these disputes from a new angle we will fail to see their overall profile. These are speculative points but they are things which need to be thought out before we take on board any new approach to existing disputes.

(iii)

By the time we had reached the end of chapter 4 we had concluded the first phase of our review of the realist/anti-realist characterisation. I have described this as a sort of internal review because it considered, by and large, those topics which arose naturally from the specification of the characterisation and the literature which has ensued. In

the second phase of the review I attempted to examine the characterisation from a somewhat different standpoint. My aim here was to set the characterisation against the Wittgensteinian roots from which it is suggested that it has been derived, and to explore the relations between it and these origins. (The two phases cannot strictly be separated out from each other as their aim - a detailed review of the characterisation on offer - is the same. I have not intended to imply that a rigid distinction does exist but I think sufficient has been said to indicate the different characters of the two parts.)

Before commencing this second phase however, it was necessary to go back and examine in detail a part of this Wittgensteinian background. The particular area was Wittgenstein's treatment of privacy. I have suggested that this part of Wittgenstein's later philosophy is relevant to our interests, partly because it can be thought of as a working out of the idea of meaning as use in one particular area (meaning as use lying also at the roots of the characterisation). But perhaps more importantly, because it can also be regarded as an attack on certain forms of scepticism which are related to some of the major anti-realist positions. It was necessary to review this topic in some detail because the interpretation which I offered deviated to some extent from the received view.

The basic idea behind this interpretation was that certain misunderstandings about the way in which our language functions

lay at the root of several sceptical problems. The work on privacy was then seen as part of the clearing away process of this false understanding. There is a sort of psychological model in which we, our real selves, are taken to lie behind our physical embodiment. This idea or model is clearly prevalent in the writings of a philosopher such as Descartes, but it is likely that his was just a more explicit account of an idea that existed previously and that still persists. On this model we come to acquire information about the world in general by a process in which parts of the world impinge initially on our embodiment and thereby, in virtue of our sensory processes, on our true selves. In this way we, our consciousnesses, are made aware of aspects of the world. One consequence of this model is that it places the transition point between the world and myself at a location which makes it publicly inaccessible. That is to say it views the whole of my physiological processes associated with a sensation, as a part of the world. These processes relay information to me at the end of this sensory chain.

But the real me - my consciousness or awareness - cannot be identified with any of these processes. I am, as it were, behind this sequence of events. One of the consequences of this model is that when we imagine ourselves to be aware of events in the world we are, strictly speaking, mistaken. We are only <u>indirectly</u> aware of these events, although we are or can be directly aware of the effects which these events have upon us - on the self which lies at the juncture of our sensory processes and our consciousness. Consequently

when we use a word like 'red' or 'book', we refer only indirectly to something in the world and the correct reference of these terms consists in some internal private phenomenon. In essence all language is like this and though we tend to think of our words as having a public role - referring to objects which are accessible within the world - this is strictly only a derivative function which depends on the primary association of those words with internal phenomena, ideas, sense-data, or what have you.

I suggested that it is the relationship between these derivative facts about the external world and the associated internal facts which gives rise to various forms of scepticism. These doubts range from such things as mild curiosity about whether what you actually "see", when looking at a pillar box, is the same as what I "see" - 'All right I know that in the public sense it's the same, but do we have the same qualitative experience?' 'Is the character of your awareness similar to mine?' But they also include more extreme forms of sceptical doubt including phenomenalism and solipsism. I discussed a modern example of this sort of thinking, as it occurred in Nagel's paper 'What is it like to be a bat?' The essential feature of this approach was its concern with the subjective or qualitative feel of our experience or consciousness or awareness.

The psychological model carries with it a model of how our language functions. By a vague and ill-defined use of terms like 'subjective awareness', 'qualitative experience',

'consciousness', etc., language reinforces the psychological model. Ever since Descartes, and perhaps before that, we have been dubious about the psychological model. But until Wittgenstein's work on privacy, we seemed to be bewitched by the linguistic aspects which attached to the model, and because of this we had never really been able to shake off the psychological model completely - never quite able to offer a convincing response to sceptical problems which arise from the model.

I have argued that Wittgenstein, in his work on privacy, has given us the means whereby we will be able to dispense with this model altogether. The implications of this move are, however, far-reaching and there is a very real sense in which these are counter-intuitive. Because of this, it was necessary to approach the problem from many different angles - as Wittgenstein had done - in order to try to anticipate the responses which would be provoked by Wittgenstein's work. Hence we considered a range of different possible moves with respect to our example of bovine syndrome, ending up with what John Wisdom termed a philosophical or idle condition. We also examined Nagel's convictions concerning the inner realm and another response which derived from the use of after-images as representing the purely phenomenal or raw feel of our experience. This latter case led us to the idea that the concept of the inexpressible quality - which seems so hard to shake off - may be rooted in commonplace psychological facts concerning, for example, our inability to convey by means of language a precise visual impression.

Wittgenstein remarks concerning this tendency:

> 'Some things can be said about the particular experience and besides this there seems to be something, the most essential part of it, which cannot be described.' (Wittgenstein 2, p233.)

> 'It is as though, although you can't tell me exactly what happens inside you, you can nevertheless tell me something general about it. By saying e.g. that you are having an impression which can't be described.' (Wittgenstein 2, p233.)

Such an impression would amount to an inexpressible thought and as Dummett notes:

> 'Whether or not we ever think thoughts that we do not express, even internally, in words, there cannot be an inexpressible thought: we do not have, besides the thoughts we convey to one another in speech, or embody in silent soliloquy, another range of thoughts that language cannot carry.' (Dummett 6, p431.)

Perhaps the best way to express the Wittgensteinian interest is to say that Wittgenstein never wanted to banish or declare as senseless phrases such as 'inner process', 'inner awareness', 'consciousness', 'felt quality', 'raw feel', etc., but he recognised and made us recognise that they were often used in ways which were prone to philosophical

error. What Wittgenstein achieves in his private language argument is the removal, by means of a painstaking examination, of the concept of the private object. If we persist in using the ill-defined phrases in the philosophical contexts then we must recognise that they cannot denote the private object, the incommunicable inner experience. If we wind up still wanting to talk of inner processes or the felt quality of the experience in a way that makes this profoundly inexpressible then we have been guilty of making the decisive movement in the conjuring trick. That is, we have at some stage introduced talk of processes or states or qualities and we have left the nature of these undecided.

Having provided an account of what it is that Wittgenstein attempts to do in this part of his later philosophy, I finally turned my attention to the implications which this work has for the characterisation which is our main topic of interest.

The most important point which I wanted to make at this stage was that Wittgenstein's work on privacy has implications primarily for certain traditional forms of scepticism. Several of these versions of scepticism were considered, e.g. phenomenalism, traditional behaviourism and solipsism, and in each case it was shown that the formulation of the sceptical position rested upon a model of the world and our language which Wittgenstein had been at pains to reject. In all these cases, the strength of the sceptic's position depended upon his introduction of a gap in our possible knowledge, a point at which we were forced to extrapolate from what could be

known to what could never be more than an inference. And this strategy permeated not only the traditional sceptical positions but also those versions of anti-realism which were aligned, in each case, with one of these.

The conception of our direct acquaintance only with those private objects which were the end result of our sensory processes is one that cannot be sustained in the face of a clear appreciation of Wittgenstein's contribution in this area. Hence, each of these sceptical positions and in most cases their more novel anti-realist formulations are seen to be untenable.

This result is of importance to the viability of Dummett's characterisation. The new characterisation was offered as a different approach to some old problems, an approach that helped us to see links and similarities between some traditionally important areas in philosophy. In so doing it was to assist us towards a clearer understanding and perhaps a solution of these problems. It was not offered as a classificatory system for a range of now defunct disputes. But what is perhaps even more important than the reduction in the scope of the characterisation, is the fact that the characterisation as a whole (and not just anti-realism) tends to perpetuate the pre-Wittgensteinian myth involving the idea of a correspondence theory. (See Dummett 1, p14.)

We have examined the consequences of working through Wittgenstein's advice to look to the use rather than for

the meaning, in one particular area. This has led to the removal of some of the major areas of dispute which were to be catered for by the characterisation. Hence we must conclude that this significantly reduces the worth of such a characterisation.

Finally we considered the validity or appropriateness of Dummett's use of Wittgenstein's advice concerning meaning. One of the points which I wanted to make here was that this Wittgensteinian notion played a crucial role in the development of any form of anti-realism. It is used by the anti-realist as a sort of yardstick against which any potential theory of meaning could be assessed and with which it would be required to comply. In this role the anti-realist used the dictum both to show that traditional realist theories were in some areas inappropriate and to select, and hopefully endorse, more suitable anti-realist theories.

Wittgenstein, in his remarks on meaning and use, is taken to be offering advice or highlighting requirements which must be complied with by successful theories of meaning. He is not himself offering a theory of meaning, merely pointing out what such a theory must be capable of doing. This will be of use in deciding what is and what is not a satisfactory theory for any area of language we choose to consider.

Having said this I can find no support for such an interpretation in Wittgenstein's writings. Futhermore it seems that Wittgenstein offers us a perfect example of what

he did intend by this dictum as we have seen in his exploration of the privacy concept. These writings are characterised more than anything else by an approach to language which neglects the question about meaning and concentrates instead on the use which certain words have in our language. In Wittgenstein's specific treatment of pain language, it seems that his approach was to recognise that certain problems or confusions arose and surrounded such phrases as 'the same pain', 'the pain which I am now experiencing', 'my sensation of pain', etc. He then studiously avoided asking the question about what we mean by these phrases, or by the word 'pain' itself. Instead he tried to examine in each of these cases how we play the particular language-game that concerns them: how in fact we use them. In so doing he hoped to unravel some of the difficulties and mysteries which arose in connection with such philosophically problematic phrases. The problems certainly lay within our language. But they were to be solved by looking to see what gross errors and oversights we had made in transplanting these fragments of our everyday language into philosophical contexts. This could only be done by examining how those particular words and phrases which gave rise to problems, were legitimately used in their normal settings - in their everyday contexts. In this way we would come to recognise how our 'specialised' philosophical usage was at fault or illegitimate, and this would hopefully solve our original problems by removing them.

The solution to these philosophical problems does not then lie in the direction of our attempting to grasp, in

abstraction, what it is that the problematic parts of our language mean. It is not a question of devising appropriate theories of meaning for particular areas of our language. We are to avoid the question about meaning altogether and instead look in detail at how those parts of our language, which seem to be at the centre of our problems, are actually used in their natural setting. Then we will discover how our problem has arisen and upon what fallacy it rests. Quite simply then I take the Wittgensteinian dictum at face value - to be a rejection of the search for meaning and a turning instead towards an exploration of various language-games; and towards a looking to see what legitimate role certain fragments of our language can have. We should not seek the derivation of rules to which these fragments must comply.

This view of the meaning-as-use slogan is totally contrary to the use, as I see it, which the anti-realist (and Dummett) puts it to. On the one hand this dictum is seen as a rejection or turning away from the issue over theories of meaning - we are being offered instead advice on what should be a more fruitful approach to our philosophical problems - and, on the other, it is seen rather as a rule of thumb, which can be applied in selecting appropriate theories of meaning.

The realist/anti-realist characterisation is quite clearly based on different approaches to theories of meaning. But I am suggesting that at its roots it is based on a recommendation which, properly interpreted, attempts to reject such theories as of little relevance to our serious

philosophical tasks.

The proposed characterisation is one which requires a clearer specification. Issues concerning effective decidability, the range of disputed classes, the justification of these classes, the implications of global anti-realism and the treatment of complex statements, all need further consideration and resolution. Quite apart from these concerns, there are other reasons why we should regard the characterisation with suspicion. The characterisation appears to misrepresent the doctrine on which it is based and this doctrine itself seems to be in conflict with the intention of the characterisation. Wittgenstein's remarks about meaning as use appear to be in opposition to the sort of search for meaning which is epitomised by the characterisation. In the example which Wittgenstein provides of a working through of these remarks, he presents us with very significant advances in philosophy and this must lend weight to this opposition. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, in this example he removes some of the main philosophical positions which were to be covered by the characterisation. Because of these doubts I believe we should be very cautious about embracing the characterisation which Dummett proposes.

APPENDIX 1

PRIVACY, LOCKE AND KRETZMANN

In the main text of this thesis it is stated that Locke held the sort of views which Wittgenstein was attacking in his writings on privacy. Reference has been made to the very cogent case to this effect which is included in P.M.S. Hacker's book Insight and Illusion. (Hacker 1.) If there remained any doubts about this thesis these would, I suspect, be dispelled by one's revisiting chapters I and II of Book III of Locke's Essay. (Locke 1.) However, despite my conviction to this effect, there exists a paper by Norman Kretzmann, entitled 'The Main Thesis of Locke's Semantic Theory' (Kretzmann 1), which has as one of its aims the dissolution of just this sort of view about Locke.

I must stress that whether Wittgenstein really did have Locke in mind, or whether Locke did really hold views - unbeknown to Wittgenstein - which would have placed him alongside Wittgenstein's hypothetical adversary, is really irrelevant to the validity of Wittgenstein's argument. (Hacker actually points out that there is no documentary evidence to support the idea that Wittgenstein had even read Locke.) Nevertheless something turns on this, if it is only to reinforce the contention that Wittgenstein is attacking a real problem and to guard us against espousing the same sort of mistaken views. In this respect Locke's dissertation on words, as presented in these two chapters, should stand as a sort of lighthouse preventing others with an appreciation

of Wittgenstein's work from running aground in a similar way to which Locke had done. However, as I say this is not a view which would be shared by Kretzmann and indeed he would be at pains to repudiate it. For this reason I intend in this short appendix to review what I understand Kretzmann to be saying. Because the issue is not fundamental to my main thesis I have separated it out in this way.

Kretzmann's defence of Locke is based on the suggestion that most previous interpretations of his Essay have involved misunderstandings of what Locke was attempting to say and do. It is admitted by Kretzmann that Locke himself is partly to blame for these misunderstandings, on account of his less than totally adequate presentation. He sets out the aim of his paper as follows:

> 'My purpose in this paper is not to defend what has usually been taken to be the main thesis of Locke's semantic theory but to spell out the thesis more carefully than Locke himself or his critics have done. When it is seen for what it is, however, some traditional lines of attack against it will have to be given up.' (Kretzmann 1, p126.)

Kretzmann's discussion centres on the first two chapters of Book III of Locke's Essay. These few pages represent a particularly rich part of the Essay and, as I have suggested above, a part which is particularly relevant to an understanding of Locke's views regarding privacy.

Regarding the prevalent misunderstandings of Locke's Essay, and in particular of these chapters, Kretzmann says the following:

'Although Locke was by no means the first or the last to say that words signify ideas, it is in his presentation of it that this thesis has become established as one of the classic blunders in semantic theory, alongside such other classics as the view that names have a natural connection with their bearers and the view that the meaning of a name is the name's bearer.' (Kretzmann 1, p124.)

'Berkeley's second thoughts about the thesis that words signify ideas mark the beginning of a tradition of criticism so uniformly and intensely negative that the thesis seems now to be considered beneath criticism, or at any rate beneath careful criticism.' (Kretzmann 1, p125.)

'And those lines of attack that seem most damaging often rest on the accidents of Locke's haphazard terminology rather than on what he is clearly committed to. It is easy, for example, to find passages (where he is applying the thesis rather than arguing for it) in which he speaks as if it were his view that every word is a proper name of some idea in the mind of the user of the word, passages that look as if they could have been what started

Wittgenstein thinking about the notion of a private language. Yet for all its shortcomings the main thesis of Locke's semantic theory is not as bad as it looks; and it looks as bad as it does because it looks simpler than it is.' (Kretzmann 1, p125.)

Kretzmann is certainly correct when he suggests that such passages can be easily found, although it is not made clear why it is important to recognise that Locke may be applying rather than arguing for the thesis. Perhaps the suggestion is that Locke is simply examining a thesis which he would not himself espouse. The passages in question lend little support to such a view.

Throughout Kretzmann's paper one is given the impression that one should neglect at certain points what Locke actually says in favour of what Kretzmann tells us he clearly meant. This is indeed a brave line for Kretzmann to take. However I do not intend to consider or debate all of the particular slants which are imposed by Kretzmann on Locke's writings.

There are various places in his paper where it is intimated that a complete tradition of misguided criticism is about to be overthrown. But upon inspection it becomes difficult to pinpoint precisely where this transformation takes place. One passage in particular seems crucial to the manoeuvre. It concerns the following piece by Locke:

'...nor can anyone apply them [words] as marks,

immediately, to anything else but the ideas that he himself hath, for this would be to make them signs of his own conceptions and yet apply them to other ideas, which would be to make them signs and not signs of his ideas at the same time, and so in effect to have no signification at all.' (Locke 1, p12.)

Kretzmann clearly regards this as an important passage as far as the traditional misconceptions are concerned. He writes:

'At first glance it might seem reasonable to suppose that applying the word "gold", for example, as a mark is just the same as using the word "gold" to refer to something, and hence that Locke is here flagrantly committing what has come to be thought of as his characteristic blunder in semantic theory, claiming that one can use such words as "gold" only to refer to one's own ideas. The charge is so preposterous that one would disdain to defend Locke against it if it had not been made so often. And the flimsiness of the case against him is pointed up by the fact that there are relatively clear passages in the near vicinity of this argument to show that such an identification is certainly not what Locke intends.' (Kretzmann 1, pp131-2.)

What I want to try to do with regard to the extract from Locke is the following:

i) To offer what I think is a plausible and well supported account of what Locke is doing in the passage in question; and

ii) To examine the interpretation which Kretzmann offers of what he takes Locke to be doing, and to indicate why this is neither plausible nor supported.

Firstly then I will present my reading of the extract:

'...nor can anyone apply them (words) as marks, immediately, to anything else but the ideas that he himself hath, ...'

Clearly it is implied that a person can apply words as marks immediately to his own ideas. This follows also from what has been said earlier at III 2 i. Now although words <u>can</u> be applied as marks or signs immediately, i.e. directly, of a man's own ideas, they <u>cannot</u> be applied as signs of <u>anything</u> else. We already know from III 2 i and III 1 that words are used as signs of ideas. Hence the importance of the denial that they stand for anything other than a man's <u>own</u> ideas, is that they cannot stand as signs for anyone else's ideas - at least not directly or immediately. (Objects and things taken generally are not referred to by Locke as ideas.)

The main thrust then of this first phrase is that a man's words stand as signs directly only of his own ideas

and cannot stand as signs directly of the ideas of another person. The explanation of why this is so runs as follows: If it were otherwise, that is if a man's words could stand as signs directly of another man's ideas, then 'this would be to make them signs of his own conceptions and yet apply them to other ideas, which would be to make them signs and not signs of his ideas at the same time, and so in effect to have no signification at all.'

The essential nature of Locke's privatism is reflected at the start of III 2: 'Man, though he have great variety of thoughts, ..., yet they are all within his own breast, invisible and hidden from others, nor can of themselves be made to appear.' A man's own ideas are essentially private and cannot be revealed directly to anyone else. Hence if a man tried to use his words - which are signs of his own ideas - as signs of another's ideas this would be to make them signs of one item which he knows and another which he cannot know. A sign cannot be used to signify two distinct things, one of which I know not what it is. Hence this would be essentially to rob the sign of signification and so we see the sign is restricted to the signification directly of our own ideas only. This is what I take the extract to be saying and attempting to show.

Now Kretzmann's interpretation is very different from the above. He lays particular stress on the appearance in the passage of the word 'apply'. The importance of this word for Kretzmann is that it signifies something quite distinct

from what the word 'use' would, if this were substituted in the passage in the place of 'apply'. The supposed point is as follows: if Locke says that a particular word 'X' is <u>used</u> by a man to signify a particular Y, this presupposes that he has previously <u>applied</u> 'X' to signify Y, since the act of <u>application</u> of a word to a something (in its most general sense for the moment), is specifically that act whereby the word acquires its significance. The act of <u>applying</u> a word to a something is like a baptismal ceremony for that thing. And in this ceremony it - the thing - is linked (in one's mind) with the word. Hence to say that a word cannot be applied to something is different from saying that it cannot be used as the sign of that something - although the former implies the latter.

Kretzmann explains this as follows: '

'What Locke does mean by speaking of one's <u>applying a word to something</u> is one's <u>giving the word a meaning</u>. (Since he clearly does not imagine that this is always the result of an <u>action</u> on my part, it might be more generally correct to say that in Locke's view my application of a word to something is that word's acquiring a meaning for me.) If there is any single locution regularly used by Locke that is parallel to "using the word 'gold' to refer to something" it is the plain English phrase "calling something 'gold'"; and of course I could not call a thing "gold" if the word had not already acquired a meaning for me.'

(Kretzmann 1, p132.)

Now with this suggested technical distinction in mind, we should revisit the original passage. Kretzmann believes that the essence of the passage runs as follows:

> '... we can see that the heart of the reductio is contained in the beginning of the premiss: to apply words to signify immediately something other than one's own ideas would be to make them signify one's own ideas. That is, my applying (or attempting to apply) a word to signify something other than an idea of mine presupposes that I have an idea of that thing associated with that word. If I had no idea of that thing I could not make it the object of my attention or of any action of mine. Thus, whenever I genuinely use and do not just mouth a word, parrot fashion, that utterance of mine signifies immediately some idea of mine, whatever other meaning I may give or think I give to the word. Therefore if X is something other than an idea of mine, to suppose that I can apply a word to signify X immediately is to suppose that I can apply a word to signify X while I have no idea of X, which is impossible. Consequently the phrase "to apply words to signify immediately something other than one's own ideas" contains a contradiction in terms, the absurdity to which the denial of the main thesis of Locke's semantic theory is to be reduced. (Part of what is difficult in Locke's own presentation of the argument is that he obscures the

absurdity under apparent efforts to reinforce it.)' (Kretzmann 1, pp132-3.)

Neglecting for the moment Locke's alleged obscurity, Kretzmann's interpretation, if I read him correctly, runs on these lines:

(P1) I cannot make something of which I have no idea the object of my attention.

(P2) In order to apply a name to something I would need to make that something the object of my attention - or at least I would need to have an idea of that something.

(C) I cannot apply a name to something of which I have no idea.

Before we examine the plausibility or relevance of this interpretation, I want to return to consider what obligation we are under to adopt the view offered by Kretzmann that what Locke means by 'applying a word to something is one's giving the word a meaning.' (Kretzmann 1, p132.) This is what Kretzmann says;

'This distinction between applying the word "gold" to something and calling something "gold" is brought out in the very next section of the chapter, where Locke says of the word "gold" that "each can apply it only to his own idea" and describes a child who, "having

taken notice of nothing in the metal he hears <u>called</u> "gold" but the bright shining yellow colour .... <u>applies</u> the word "gold" only to his own idea of that colour and nothing else, and therefore <u>calls</u> the same colour in a peacock's tail 'gold'".' (Kretzmann 1, p132.)

This is the evidence which justifies the interpretation of the word 'applies' in the special sense which Kretzmann outlines. It is worthwhile however noting the following points:

a) The alleged explanation or justification of the technicality does not occur in the text until after the passage in which it is made use of - and then by no means immediately after.

b) No indication is given in the text, in the area of the peacock passage, to suggest or in any way indicate that this passage is to serve as the definition or explanation of a technical term.

c) Quite apart from the role which the peacock passage plays, or does not play, in introducing a technical distinction it serves a different purpose: namely, that of unfolding Locke's explanation of how we each learn to associate names with ideas present only to our own minds, i.e. the very aspect of Locke's philosophy which is really at issue.

It is my contention then that there is very little,

if anything, apart from Locke's use of two terms instead of one (i.e. 'applies' and 'calls'), that substantiates the view that 'applies' is being used in a technical sense. Even if Kretzmann were correct over this point, what, we might be tempted to ask, would be the relevance of his point to the question at issue - i.e. whether Locke believed that our words refer directly only to items which are private to each of us - namely our ideas. My guess is that Kretzmann reasons as follows: Locke has been traditionally taken to be making a denial in this passage. He has been taken to be denying that words can be used to refer directly to objects or things external. Kretzmann wishes to show that this view is mistaken and to this end he tries to show that Locke is in fact denying something quite different in the passage. What he is denying, accordingly to Kretzmann, is the thought that we could give a name to an object in the external world prior to our having brought that object to our attention. Locke is supposed to be merely pointing out that to name something we have to be aware of that something and he denies only that we could name a thing of which we are not aware or have not some idea of. Hence by showing that what is denied is quite different from what is traditionally taken to be denied, Kretzmann establishes that these traditional interpretations are simply wrong.

Nevertheless the text just does not and cannot be made to support or even lend plausibility to the revised interpretation. The passage of concern comes as no surprise to those who read it in context, it merely consolidates and

extends thoughts which have been clearly stated previously. The primary purpose of words is to stand as marks for ideas (III 1 ii). A man's own ideas (conceptions) are invisible to others and can only be represented to others (as opposed to being displayed directly). Words are used as 'external sensible signs whereby those invisible ideas,...., might be made known to others.' Hence, 'That then which words are the marks of are the ideas of the speaker', and no one can use them as marks of ideas other than those which the speaker has, for this would be to make them signs both of his own ideas and of another's, whereof he has no knowledge. Hence the word as a sign would become completely indeterminate and would cease to function as a sign. (Although I do not know what particular previous interpretations Kretzmann has in mind he appears to be contesting the wrong issue concerning this passage. He sets out to show that Locke is not denying that words refer directly to objects - whereas the point Locke seems most clearly to be making here, is that given that words refer directly only to ideas it is only a man's own ideas to which they can refer directly.)

The key issue at the heart of Kretzmann's alternative interpretation is Locke's use of the word 'applies' in a particular technical sense. However the actual text presents little in the way of support for the view that such a technical term has been defined or is being used.

Furthermore if we revisit the passage armed with this reinterpretation we discover that it cannot be made to fit

what is written. Locke is taken to be denying that a name can be applied to a thing prior to our having an idea of that thing. But he expresses this point by saying that this would be to make them signs of his own conceptions - which it would not, since the whole point is supposed to be that he does not have such conceptions - and yet apply them to other ideas, i.e. ideas different from his own and not in the least things.

Kretzmann's crucial re-interpretation cannot therefore be taken seriously, and in any case does nothing to alter our appreciation of a doctrine, not only evident in the passage which Kretzmann concentrates on, but which permeates at the very least the early chapters of Locke's Essay.

By now enough has been said on this subsidiary issue and I hope the reader will have been convinced that Locke - to take just one - does provide a good example of the type of view which Wittgenstein was concerned to correct. If I have been unable to demonstrate this clearly then I would hope that the writings of Locke himself or of P.M.S. Hacker, for example in Insight and Illusion (Hacker 1), might succeed where I have failed. The important point to bear in mind is that Wittgenstein was not explicitly attacking Locke and the validity of his work on privacy is really unaffected by what Locke may or may not have said or thought.

APPENDIX 2

KRIPKE ON PRIVACY

According to Kripke (Kripke 1), Wittgenstein in the Investigations and in Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics (Wittgenstein 3) presents a sceptical problem. This is basically the problem that since all practices can be shown to accord in some way with previous practice, our previous practice conforms with an infinite variety of rules and cannot consequently be said to be determined by any particular rule, and is not therefore rule-governed. Hence it appears that such things as language and mathematics are not rule-governed practices; but paradoxically this seems to remove their very possibility.

Part of the novelty of Kripke's account lies in its taking the 'real' private-language argument to precede what is normally taken to be the private-language argument. Kripke suggests that before we ever come to what is usually taken to be the private-language argument, the general conclusions of the 'argument' have already been developed. The sceptical paradox which Kripke takes Wittgenstein to be posing has been formulated and, in the general context, a solution to that paradox has been provided. In what follows, that is in what we normally take to be the private-language argument, Wittgenstein is simply reworking this general paradox and its solution as it applies in one particular area.

In so far as Kripke's account presents the private-language argument (as it appears somewhere in the Investigations), to be about the posing of a sceptical paradox, it is in conflict with the outline that I presented in the previous chapter. For this reason I am going to pause to look a little more critically at Kripke's presentation. Before becoming involved in this however we should note two points which Kripke makes about his interpretation. Firstly he says,

> '... the present paper should be thought of as expounding neither "Wittgenstein's" argument nor "Kripke's": rather Wittgenstein's argument as it struck Kripke, as it presented a problem for him.' (Kripke 1, p241.)

It could be that with this in mind there is no real necessity to account for any divergence between what Kripke writes and what I have offered as an outline of Wittgenstein's purpose. Also in his conclusions, Kripke notes that he has '... not discussed numerous issues arising out of the paragraphs following PI, $ 243 that are usually called the "private language argument", nor have I really discussed Wittgenstein's attendant positive account of the nature of sensation language and of the attribution of the psychological states.' (Kripke 1, p297.)

There is then a sense in which Kripke's essay is only loosely tied to that part of the Investigations which I have been concerned with. (In fact throughout Kripke's paper he makes very little direct reference to what is actually said

in the passages beyond $ 243.) Nevertheless it is certainly implied that what is said about earlier parts of the Investigations will have a very major impact upon how one reads those passages with which I have been more concerned. Perhaps we simply need to note at this point these limitations of Kripke's account taken as an interpretation of these later passages.

The essential theme of Kripke's account is I believe exhibited in the following passages;

> 'In my view, the real "private language argument" is to be found in the sections preceding $ 243. Indeed, in $ 202 the conclusion is already stated explicitly: "Hence it is not possible to obey a rule 'privately': otherwise thinking one was obeying a rule would be the same thing as obeying it."' (Kripke 1, p239.)

The real argument then precedes section 243 and its conclusion is as stated above.

> 'The "private language argument" as applied to sensations is only a special case of much more general considerations about language previously argued; sensations have a crucial role as an (apparently) convincing counter example to the general considerations previously stated.' (Kripke 1, pp239-40.)

There is something particular about sensations (and

mathematics) which mark these out for special consideration.

> 'There are two areas in which the force, both of the paradox and of its solution, are most likely to be ignored, and with respect to which Wittgenstein's basic approach is most likely to seem incredible. One such area is the notion of a mathematical rule, such as the rule for addition. The other is our talk of our own inner experience, of sensations and other inner states.' (Kripke 1, p240.)

The form of the general paradox is taken by Kripke to be as follows:

> 'In PI, $ 201, Wittgenstein says, "this was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made to accord with the rule."' (Kripke 1, p241.)

But Kripke I think takes this to mean rather more than it says. In illustrating his point he introduces a particular mathematical function called 'quus', and symbolized by '⊕'.

> 'It is defined by:
>
> $x \oplus y = x + y$, if $x, y < 57$
>
> $= 5$ otherwise.'
>
> (Kripke 1, p243.)

Using this example he comments:

'This, then, is the sceptical paradox. When I respond in one way rather than another to such a problem as "68 + 57", I can have no justification for one response rather than another. Since the sceptic who supposes that I meant quus cannot be answered, there is no fact about me that distinguishes between my meaning plus and my meaning quus. Indeed, there is no fact about me that distinguishes between my meaning a definite function by "plus" (which determines my responses in new cases) and my meaning nothing at all.' (Kripke 1, p250.)

Wittgenstein's point was however that specific actions could not be determined uniquely by a rule. It is a point about the relationship that exists between actions and rules which we try to formulate concerning those actions. We strive to eliminate any vagueness from our language. We strive after a perfect language.

'"But still, it isn't a game, if there is some vagueness <u>in the rules</u>." - But <u>does</u> this prevent its being a game? - "Perhaps you'll call it a game, but at any rate it certainly isn't a perfect game." This means: it has impurities, and what I am interested in at present is the pure article. - But I want to say: we misunderstand the role of the ideal in our language. That is to say: we too should call it a game, only we are dazzled by

the ideal and therefore fail to see the actual use of the word "game" clearly.' (Wittgenstein 1, 100.)

But this is not to say that language is not rule-governed or that there can be no fact about what anyone means. The problem is more one of trying to get a clear idea of how these rules operate, how they function.

For Kripke the sceptical paradox involves a denial that any fact in the world determines meaning.

> 'For the sceptic holds that no fact about my past history - nothing that was ever in my mind, or in my external behaviour - establishes that I meant plus rather than quus. (Nor, of course, does any fact establish that I mean quus!) But if this is correct, there can of course be no fact about which function I meant, and if there can be no fact about which particular function I meant in the <u>past</u>, there can be none in the <u>present</u> either.' (Kripke 1, p245.)

The sceptical paradox is posed here by Wittgenstein - or at least Wittgenstein as he struck Kripke.

This idea, that there is no fact determining meaning, is repeated again and again through Kripke's exposition, (Kripke 1, pp246,250,258-9,265,266,272,etc,etc.) But Kripke at no point substantiates this, very dubious, claim about the lack of correlation between what amounts to my patterns

of behaviour and my physiology. One person may exhibit one sequence of actions in response to a series of questions/events etc., and another may exhibit a different sequence in accordance with a different interpretation of the rules governing the situation. In neither case, according to Kripke, will we be able to point to a fact in the world, including a physiological fact, which could be correlated with these different actions. Such a view would have the consequence either that it would deny the possibility of our learning (in the widest sense) anything - since it denies the possibility of my past experiences modifying my physical being in such a way as to affect my future behaviour - or it would remove this possibility of learning to some mysterious level. Apart from not substantiating this implausible claim, Kripke offers us no reason for believing that Wittgenstein was attempting to put forward a paradox of this type.

Wittgenstein does in fact talk about brain states and the like in those passages which precede section 243. Further he does mention certain reservations concerning these, but largely these are reservations about construing such states as <u>being equivalent to</u>, or <u>the basis of</u>, <u>states of inner awareness</u>.

> 'Or is what you call "knowledge" a state of consciousness or a process - say a thought of something, or the like?
>
> If one says that knowing the ABC is a state of the mind, one is thinking of a state of mental apparatus (perhaps

of the brain) by means of which we explain the manifestations of that knowledge. Such a state is called a disposition. But there are objections to speaking of a state of the mind here, in as much as there ought to be two different criteria for such a state: a knowledge of the construction of the apparatus, quite apart from what it does. (Nothing would be more confusing here than to use the words "conscious" and "unconscious" for the contrast between states of consciousness and dispositions. For this pair of terms covers up a grammatical difference.)' (Wittgenstein 1, 148-9.).

'- The change when the pupil began to read was a change in his behaviour; and it makes no sense here to speak of "a first word in his new state".

But isn't that only because of our too slight acquaintance with what goes on in the brain and the nervous system? If we had a more accurate knowledge of these things we should see what connections were established by the training, and then we should be able to say when we looked into his brain: "Now he has read this word, now the reading connection has been set up" - And it presumably must be like that - for otherwise how could we be so sure that there was such a connection? That it is so is presumably a priori - or is it only probable? And how probable is it? Now, ask yourself: what do you know about these things? - But if it is a priori, that means that it is a form of account which is very

convincing to us.' (Wittgenstein 1, 157-8.)

We are certain this is how it must be - there must be physiological correlates of our behaviour patterns but we are largely unacquainted with these phenomena and therefore it would be a mistake to regard <u>them</u> as being what we refer to when we say, 'now he reads ... etc.'.

In section 198 of the <u>Investigations</u> Wittgenstein constrasts the sort of sceptical view which Kripke attributes to him with his own position about the relationship between rules and our actions. He also confirms his belief that in conforming with a rule we merely exhibit a connection established by training - again in contrast to the view Kripke attributes to him.

> '"But how can a rule shew me what I have to do at <u>this</u> point? Whatever I do is, on some interpretation, in accord with the rule." - That is not what we ought to say, but rather: any interpretation still hangs in the air along with what it interprets, and cannot give it any support. Interpretations by themselves do not determine meaning.
>
> "Then can whatever I do be brought into accord with the rule?" - Let me ask this: what has the expression of a rule - say a sign-post - got to do with my actions? What sort of connection is there here? - Well, perhaps this one: I have been trained to react to this sign

in a particular way, and now I do so react to it.

But that is only to give a causal connection; to tell how it has come about that we now go by the sign-post; not what this going-by-the sign really consists in. [This is the interlocutor's complaint.] On the contrary; I have further indicated that a person goes by a sign-post only in so far as there exists a regular use of sign-posts, a custom.' (Wittgenstein 1, 198.)

There is no doubt that Wittgenstein is posing a problem - a great many problems - concerning our conception of language in these passages from the Investigations. But these problems do not include amongst them the major sceptical paradox that Kripke attributes to Wittgenstein. I would not want to try to deny however the links which do exist between these passages and the later sections (which are known as the private-language argument). There are strong links between what Wittgenstein has to say about rule-following and what he says later about the idea of a private object. These links are evident in sections 153 and 154 where he discusses the idea of a phenomenal entity or 'mental process' standing behind and justifying our having learnt to follow a rule. (This is clearly not intended as a denial of the very possibility of physiological concomitants however.)

'We are trying to get hold of the mental process of understanding which seems to be hidden behind those coarser and therefore more readily visible accompaniments.

But we do not succeed; or, rather, it does not get as far as a real attempt. For even supposing I had found something that happened in all those cases of understanding, - why should it be the understanding? And how can the process of understanding have been hidden, when I said "Now I understand" because I understood?! And if I say it is hidden - then how do I know what I have to look for? I am in a muddle.

But wait - if "Now I understand the principle" does not mean the same as "The formula .... occurs to me" (or "I say the formula", "I write it down", etc.) - does it follow from this that I employ the sentence "Now I understand ...." or "Now I can go on" as a description of a process occurring behind or side by side with that of saying the formula?

If there has to be anything "behind the utterance of the formula" it is particular circumstances, which justify me in saying I can go on - when the formula occurs to me.

Try not to think of understanding as a "mental process" at all. - For that is the expression which confuses you. But ask yourself: in what sort of case, in what kind of circumstances, do we say, "Now I know how to go on", when, that is, the formula has occurred to me? - ' (Wittgenstein 1, 153-4.)

Our attention was drawn initially to Kripke's interpretation of, or comments on, Wittgenstein's remarks about privacy. Kripke appeared to be saying that what is commonly taken to be the 'private-language argument' is really a reworking, in a specific area, of more general considerations about language which have been elaborated prior to these passages. One of the most important conclusions of these more general considerations involved the identification of a certain so-called 'sceptical paradox'. At this point it appeared as if Kripke's account was in direct opposition to the one I have given of the purpose and content of Wittgenstein's writings on privacy. Whereas I had suggested that these were aimed at undermining a range of sceptical positions, Kripke seemed to be implicating them in the posing (and possibly the solution, although the intended distinction is not clear) of a sceptical paradox. The paradox results in the conclusions that:

> 'There can be no such thing as meaning anything by any word. Each new application we make is a leap in the dark; any present intention could be interpreted so as to accord with anything we may choose to do.' (Kripke 1, p265.)

One of the integral features of this paradox is the idea reiterated by Kripke throughout the paper that:

> '...whatever "looking into my mind" may be, the sceptic asserts that even if God were to do it, he still could

not determine that I meant addition by "plus".' (Kripke 1, p246.)

He could not determine this because there would be nothing inside my mind, or brain or the world as a whole, which would give Him any clue as to what was meant. This suggestion is however a very dubious one and it is one which Kripke never makes any attempt to substantiate. Towards the end of the paper he even casts doubts on it himself:

> 'The rough uniformities in our arithmetical behaviour may or may not some day be given an explanation on the neurophysiological level...' (Kripke 1, p290).

though he suggests that 'such an explanation is not here in question' (Kripke 1, p290). (Either this is in conflict with the main thesis of the paper or what that thesis is becomes very obscure.) Neither does Kripke attempt to illustrate the suggestion that this claim is one which Wittgenstein has made.

Perhaps the most obvious misdemeanour which Kripke commits is to present Wittgenstein as proffering a problem in which it is denied that anyone can ever <u>mean</u> anything by a word. In the context of the sceptical paradox the word 'meaning' has been extracted from its normal use. It has been rarefied until it has no real use left. We can no longer say of anyone, including ourselves, what they mean or even that they mean anything. 'Meaning' has taken on a new role here; it has

become a 'philosophical' term within this paradox. It is a role of the type which Wittgenstein would deplore.

> 'Whereas, of course, if the words "language", "experience", "world", have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words "table", "lamp", "door".' (Wittgenstein 1, 97.)

The idea of such a rarefication of terms for use within a 'philosophical' dialogue is one which runs completely counter to Wittgenstein's understanding of what philosophy is about. Since

> 'Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it' (Wittgenstein 1, 124),

it is not the business of philosophy to go about redefining our ordinary terms in a way that renders them unserviceable. Rather, philosophy should merely assist us in getting a real grasp, 'a clear view', of how words are used in practice.

> 'When philosophers use a word - "knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition", "name" - and try to grasp the <u>essence</u> of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home? - What <u>we</u> do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use.' (Wittgenstein 1, 116.)

I am not going to examine further the approach which Kripke adopts in his paper. Some of the things he says are very thought-provoking. But, I would suggest, his main thesis that Wittgenstein is elaborating a sceptical problem in the classical sense (in what is normally taken to be the private-language argument) is unsubstantiated and very implausible. Consequently I see no substantial conflict between Kripke's paper and what is said in this thesis about privacy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MARTIN BELL

1. 'Critical Notice: Gareth Evans and John McDowell, Truth and Meaning', Synthese 52 (1982) pp135-166.

VICTORIA CHOY

1. 'Mind-Body, Realism and Rorty's Therapy' (review article on Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature), Synthese 52 (1982) pp515-541.

ADAM DAUM

1. 'Schlick's Empiricist Critical Realism', Synthese 52 (1982) pp449-493.

DONALD DAVIDSON

1. 'The Material Mind', pp245-261 of Essays on Actions and Events, (Oxford 1980).

MICHAEL DEVITT

1. 'Dummett's Anti-Realism', pp73-99 of The Journal of Philosophy, LXXX 1983.

MICHAEL DUMMETT

1. 'Truth', pp1-24 of M. Dummett's Truth and Other Enigmas, (reprinted from Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, LIX 1959).

2. 'Realism', (1963) pp145-165 of M. Dummett's Truth and Other Enigmas.

3. 'The Philosophical Basis of Intuitionistic Logic', pp215-247 of M. Dummett's Truth and Other Enigmas, (reprinted from Logic Colloquium 1973), eds. Rose and Shepherdson, Amsterdam, Oxford & New York, 1975).

4. 'The Reality of the Past', pp358-374 of M. Dummett's Truth and Other Enigmas (reprinted from the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society LXIX 1969).

5. Truth and Other Enigmas, Preface, ppix-lviii, (London 1978).

6. The Interpretation of Frege's Philosophy, (London 1981).

7. 'Realism', Synthese 52 (1982) pp55-112.

HERBERT FEIGL

1. 'Mind-Body, Not a Pseudoproblem', pp33-44 in Dimensions of Mind, edited by Sidney Hook, (New York 1960).

GOTTLOB FREGE

1. 'The Thought: A Logical Inquiry', pp17-38 of Philosophical Logic, edited by P.F. Strawson, (Oxford 1967).

CLARK GLYMOUR

1. 'Conceptual Scheming, or Confessions of a Metaphysical Realist', Synthese 51 (1982) pp169-180.

P.M.S. HACKER

1. Insight and Illusion, (Oxford 1972).

ALISTAIR HANNAY

1. Mental Images - A Defence, (London and New York 1971).

PAUL HORWICH

1. 'Three Forms of Realism', Synthese 51 (1982) pp181-202.

N. KRETZMANN

1. 'The Main Thesis of Locke's Semantic Theory', pp123-41 of Locke on Human Understanding, edited by I.C. Tipton (reprinted from Philosophical Review, 77 (1968), pp175-96).

SAUL A. KRIPKE

1. 'Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language: An Elementary Exposition', pp238-297 in Perspectives on the Philosophy of Wittgenstein, edited by Irving Block, (Oxford 1981).

JOHN LOCKE

1. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, (edited by John W. Yolton, London 1974, but first published in 1690).

JOHN McDOWELL

1. 'On "The Reality of the Past"', pp127-144 of Action and Interpretation: Studies in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences, edited by Christopher Hookway and Philip Pettit (Cambridge 1978).

2. 'Anti-Realism and the Epistemology of Understanding', pp225-248 of Meaning and Understanding edited by H. Parrett and Jacques Bouveresse (Berlin and New York 1981).

COLIN McGINN

1. 'An A Priori Argument for Realism', pp113-133 of The Journal of Philosophy, LXXVI 1979.

2. 'Truth and Use', pp19-40 of Reference, Truth and Reality, edited by Mark Platts, (London 1980).

3. 'Realistic Semantics and Content Ascription', Synthese 52 (1982) pp113-134.

THOMAS NAGEL

1. Mortal Questions, (Cambridge 1979).

HILARY PUTNAM

1. 'Models and Reality', pp1-25 of Philosophical Papers Vol. 3: Realism and Reason, (Cambridge 1983).

2. 'Possibility and Necessity', pp46-68 of Philosophical Papers Vol. 3: Realism and Reason, (Cambridge 1983).

3. 'Models and Reality', ppvii-xviii of Philosophical Papers Vol. 3: Realism and Reason, (Cambridge 1983).

4. 'Analyticity and Apriority: Beyond Wittgenstein and Quine', pp115-138 of Philosophical Papers Vol. 3: Realism and Reason, (Cambridge 1983).

5. 'Vagueness and Alternative Logic', pp271-287 of Philosophical Papers Vol. 3: Realism and Reason, (Cambridge 1983).

6. Philosophical Papers Vol. 3: Realism and Reason, (Cambridge 1983).

STIG ATSTRUP RASMUSSEN & JENS RAVNKILDE

1. 'Realism and Logic' Synthese 52 (1982) pp379-438.

H. REICHENBACH

1. Experience and Prediction, (Chicago 1938).

BERTRAND RUSSELL

1. 'The Philosophy of Logical Atomism (1918)', Reprinted in Russell's Logical Atomism, edited by David Pears, (London 1972).

2. 'The Relation of Sense-data to Physics' (1914), reprinted in A Free Man's Worship, (London 1976).

3. The Problems of Philosophy, (1912) (Oxford 1974).

M. SCHLICK

1. General Theory of Knowledge, translated by A.E. Blumberg (Library of Exact Philosophy, Vol. 11), Springer-Verlag, Wien-N.Y. 1974.

PETER STRAWSON

1. 'Scruton and Wright on Anti-Realism etc.', Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society LXXVII (1976-77) pp15-21.

JOHN WISDOM

1. Other Minds, (Oxford 1965).

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN

1. Philosophical Investigations, (Oxford 1976).

2. 'Notes for Lectures on "Private Experience" and "Sense Data"', in The Private Language Argument, pp232-75 edited by O.R. Jones (London 1971).

3. Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics, (Oxford 1956).

CRISPIN WRIGHT

1. Wittgenstein on the Foundations of Mathematics, (London 1980).

2. 'Anti-Realism, Timeless Truth, and 1984'. Discussion draft for Leicester Conference on the Philosophy of Logic and Language, April 1-3 1985.

3. 'Realism, Truth-Value Links, Other Minds and the Past', pp112-132 Ratio XXII (1980).

4. 'Strict Finitism', Synthese 51 (1982) pp203-282.

5. 'Strawson on Anti-Realism', Synthese 40 (1979) pp283-299.