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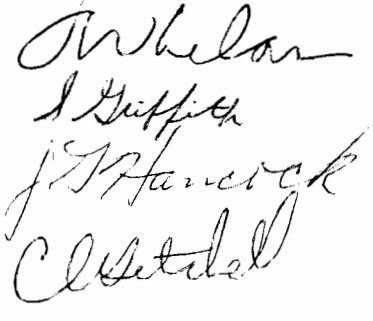

THINKING

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Augustine in the Confessions: "quid est ergo tempus? si nemo ex quaerat scio, si quaerenti explicare velim, nescia." (What therefore is time? When no one asks me, I know what it is; when someone asks me, I don't know.) The problem Augustine faces when trying to explain the nature of time is similar to the problem faced by one trying to explain the nature of thinking. It seems that we cannot simultaneously think and examine those thoughts with the type of examination necessary to find out what a thought actually is. We cannot feel, see, smell, taste or hear our thoughts, yet we are aware of them, we know when we are having them. It is tempting to think that if we could somehow improve this awareness of our thinking, or be more exact in the recording of our observations of our thoughts, we could find out what thoughts are and what it is to think. This line of reasoning depends upon an analogy between thinking and, for example, digestion. We find out what digestion is by looking at the process of digestion so we should find out what thinking is by looking at the process of thinking. Locke exemplifies this view when he claims that we are conscious of and can observe in ourselves all of the different actings of our own minds, perception, thinking, doubting, believing, reasoning, knowing and willing.[1]

In the first part of this paper I am going to dispute the position set out by Locke. I am not going to dispute that we are aware of our thoughts or that we have thoughts, although at times it may seem as if I am. Rather, I am going to claim that we neither discover what thoughts are nor learn anything about them or about what thinking

itself is by this method of inner observation.

The following claim seems to me to characterize fairly the view on thinking held by Locke and others, and under dispute here. The claim is this: "In order to get clear about the meaning of the word "think", or to find out what thinking is, we watch ourselves while we think. What we observe will be what the word means."[2] The first objection which may be brought against this claim is that to watch ourselves while we think, and to be aware of what it is that we are observing, we must first be able to tell when we are thinking, and therefore must have some idea what thinking is and what the word "think" means. If we did not first know what thinking was, we should not know what it was we were to observe. If this objection is valid, inner observation might supply certain useful facts about thinking, but could not answer the conceptual questions about what thinking is. Such inner observation might tell us that we sometimes think in our native language, sometimes in images, sometimes in ideas or in some other mode. But inner observation could not tell us why we call these actions "thinking." In a sense, we already know this, but like Augustine cannot say what it is that we know.

A second difficulty with the view that inner observation constitutes the most efficient method of finding out about the process of thinking has to do with the concept of "inner observation". We are certainly aware of many so-called inner occurrences, such as pains, hunger, thoughts, and so on. We do not, however, find out that we are thinking, hungry, or in pain by looking to see. If

someone asks us if we are thinking, we don't have to observe ourselves in order to be sure.

We cannot use any of our five senses to observe that we are thinking. This is important because talk of observation of thoughts and of thinking tends to blur the distinction between thoughts and entities which we can observe in such a way. This tends to promote the view that thoughts are like furniture of the mind, that the only difference between tables and thoughts is that we can touch tables but can't touch thoughts. If this is the picture we are going by, it is tempting to want to examine the process of thinking in the same way we examine physical processes, that is by various methods of observation.

Even granting that observation, in the sense of awareness, of thinking is possible, we seldom observe ourselves think. That is not the usual experience. We are seldom aware, in a second order sense of being aware, that we are thinking. That we have the ability of having a second order awareness of thought is dependent upon, and therefore cannot explain our ability to think.

Wittgenstein attacks the view that inner observation can teach us anything about what thinking is by showing the limitations of inner observation. He puts it this way: "Believing that we learn what thinking is by inner observation is analogous to believing that we find out what 'check-mate' is in the following way: without knowing how to play chess, we make out what the word 'mate' means by close observation of the last move of some game of chess."[3]

This analogy brings into focus a certain fact about language. This fact is that some words, such as 'lamp', 'table', 'chair', etc. can be ostensively defined with a minimum of context; while other words such as 'check-mate' and 'thinking', require much more extensive context for successful ostensive definition. A check-mate only exists in a game of chess. Knowing the various rules for chess is a prerequisite for knowing when a check-mate has occurred. One could not simply look and see that a check-mate is being pointed at without knowing the game. A non-chessplayer sees, in a sense, exactly what a chessplayer sees, that is, a board and pieces, but he could not say why a check-mate has occurred.

Thinking is like -check-mate in at least one aspect. One could not point to a thought or to an instance of thinking without knowing the rules to "the game." "The game" here is the context necessary for thinking to occur. A later part of this paper will spell out part of this context.

The "check-mate" analogy is an example of how important Wittgenstein feels it is that we understand how certain words could and could not have been learned. It is possible to learn what the word "dog" means by someone pointing to dogs and repeating the word "dog." It is not possible to learn what the word "think" means by having person point to instances of thinking and repeating the word, unless of course the learner already is aware of many other things and can do other things and we sufficiently spell out what is to count as an "instance of thinking."

An example of this type of teaching of the word "think" might be as follows. A child has learned some uses of language, in particular the practice of asking what something is, and getting an answer. He has perhaps learned how to solve some problems. He might then, for example, be unsuccessfully working on a simple jig-saw puzzle. Seeing his difficulty, his parents tell him to think. He asks what they mean. And now - they do not point to his head or tell him to examine what is going on inside of him. Instead they might think aloud for him, saying, "You see, a piece shaped like this must go here" and in this way perform a type of ostensive definition. This is not pure ostensive definition as the parents did not point at an instance of thinking, but rather at an instance of talking aloud. "Talking aloud" is not thinking, but in this case it is so closely tied to thinking that it helps to define it. When the child completes the puzzle on his own, his parents commend him for thinking. It is in this and similar ways that we learn what the word "think" means.

In this example, the child needed some equipment before he could learn what thinking was by the means used. He needed to be able to ask "What is that?" and to be able to understand the answer. He has to be able to do something which showed his parents that he wasn't thinking, or wasn't thinking well.

This has a bearing on Locke's claim that one can know what thinking is by simple inner observation. Suppose I am a being with language, including the use of language required for ostensive

definition, an intelligent being, a thinker, and I have never heard of the word "think", or "perception", or any of the other words designating what Locke calls the "actings of the mind." Suppose I then undertook to call an experience I am now having "thinking". I concentrate on my thinking, and say that from now on I shall call this "thinking". Why this method of inner ostensive definition fails is understandable in light of the relationship between what a chessplayer sees when he looks at the board and what the non-chessplayer sees when he looks at the chessboard. They both have a particular and similar mental image. Yet one understand what is going on and the other doesn't. There is nothing inherent in the mental images to allow one person to understand while the other doesn't. Similarly, in none of the mental images nor in anything I might say to myself, nor in any of the other various modes of thinking I might use, in none of these things does there inherently reside a quality which makes them thinking instead of simply some kind of mental image.

A further difficulty with inner ostensive definition is that we could not find out what the word "think" means by this method. We could only find out what we mean by the word 'think'. If I know what thinking is only from my own case, then I know only what I call it, not what anyone else (i.e., other speakers of English) does.[4] If I did not know what the other speakers of English call thinking, then I would simply not know what the word means.

If what I have done thus far in the paper shows that we do not

learn what thinking is by inner observation and that we cannot define the word "think" by inner ostensive definition, does that really show that thinking is not some inner occurence? For example, one important difference between humans asking for a cracker and a parrot asking for a cracker is that a human, but not a parrot, can think about what he says and can also mean what he says. It seems as if the thinking and meaning consist in something that goes on inside of the human but fails to go on inside of the parrot.

There is something right about this characterization of the difference between the parrot and the human, and also something wrong about it. The human definitely thinks and means his words while the parrot does not. But instead of asking what that consists in, more progress can be made if we ask how we know these facts. If a child asks us for a cracker, and when we give him one he did not eat it, or kept asking for one whether we gave him one or told him he could not have one, then we would be inclined to say that he does not really want a cracker, that is, he does not mean what he says. This is one reason that we don't respond to the parrot's 'request' in the same way we respond to a human's request. The parrot does not mean anything by the noises he makes. The child usually means something by the noises he makes, the parrot never does.

So we have made a judgement about the child and the parrot - namely that the child means his words and the parrot does not. We make the judgement without referring to any inner occurrences and

without relying on them to show our judgement to be true. The child might have said the words to himself before he spoke, but he needn't have. He might have imagined himself eating a cracker before he asked, but he needn't have. He may have had the idea "I want a cracker", but again, he needn't have. Nothing is necessary to "go on" in one's mind when or before one says something in order for one to mean what one says.

Wittgenstein understood that when one thinks about issues such as these, it is essential not to make up examples too easy for oneself. Does showing that no necessary condition exists concerning what goes on inside of oneself for thinking to occur really show that thinking is not an internal occurrence of the type it surely seems to be? There seem to be some inner occurrences which, when they occur, we know that we are thinking.

The experiences associated with reading are especially like this. Compare two cases. The first case is the experience of reading aloud material you have never come into contact with. Contrast that against the experience of reciting the same material after you have memorized it, but doing so while staring at a page upon which it is printed, or in other words, pretending to read. You yourself will know whether you are actually reading or just pretending to read. And while doing these two acts, you may have different experiences. Wittgenstein recognized this when he stated, "there are of course many more or less characteristic sensations in reading a printed sentece; it is not difficult to call them to

mind: think of sensations of hesitating, of looking closer, of misreading, of words following on one another more or less smoothly, and so on. And equally there are characteristic sensations in reciting something one has learnt by heart."[5] In our example, in the first case you have many of the sensations that are characteristic of reading, and in the second case you will have none of them, but instead will have sensations characteristic of reciting from memory. If the difference in sensations is what constitutes the difference between reading and reciting, then Wittgenstein would be forced to admit that it is by inner observation that we could find out what it is to read. Since reading a text bears important similarities to thinking, the main premise of this paper would also be in serious jeopardy. When we read, we often picture scenes being described or we have sentences run through our mind much as we do when we think.

But do we decide whether or not we are reading by examining our sensations? Isn't it rather that we have come to associate these various experiences with reading or with reciting? Wittgenstein asks us to examine the following cases: "We give someone who can read fluently a text that he never saw before. He reads it to us - but with the sensation of saying something he has learnt by heart (this might be the effect of some drug). Should we say in such a case that he was not really reading the passage? Should we here allow his sensations to count as the crietion for his reading or not reading? Or again: Suppose that a man who is

under the influence of a certain drug is presented with a series of characters (which need not belong to any existing alphabet). He utters words corresponding to the number of the characters, as if they were letters, and does so with all the outward signs, and with the sensations of reading. (We have experiences like this in dreams, after waking up in such a case one says perhaps: 'It seemed to me as if I were reading a script, though it was not writing at all.') These sketches are designed to show that it is not our sensations which we depend on when we make the claim that we are reading. That experiences of reading do not act as criteria is shown by the fact that cases are possible where they would not show that one was reading. As in the cases above, someone could have the sensations involved in reading, but still not be reading. It might sometimes be possible to claim that we are reading on the basis of sensations or experiences we have, and it is possible for someone always to have a certain experience only when he is reading. While certain experiences might sometimes be able to act as criteria of reading, they are never needed to serve the function. We don't need to make an examination of our sensations to find out if we have been reading. If one were unsure of whether or not one was reading because he was given the druf referred to by Wittgenstein, examining his sensations wouldn't help him find out.

Just as an observation of our sensations is not needed to help us decide whether or not we are reading, an observation of our own sensations is not needed to help us decide whether or not we are

thinking. Any position, such as Locke's, which holds that we actually do find out about thinking by inner observation must take into account the claim that such inner observation won't help find out what thinking is.

I will consider one more counter-argument to the position taken by this paper before closing the first part of the paper. This counter-argument may be formulated as follows: the thoughts that a person has are essential to his being able to mean what he says. The sentences which we speak are verbal counterparts to what is going on inside our heads. When we talk, what we are doing is putting our thoughts into words. When someone else hears our talking, his understanding it depends entirely on his ability to turn the words into thoughts. This has come to be known as the telegraph theory of language. If it is a valid theory, then the thoughts are of supreme importance. They must exist as entities for such a system of language to work. They must exist as just those types of entities which Wittgenstein denies exist.

First of all, it can be said once again that this theory is just not an accurate picture. This is not the way language works. There are occasions when we grope for a word, or grope for a way of putting our thoughts into words. When we find the words, our discomfiture is soothed. But these occasions are rare. Most of the time we just speak and carry on conversations.

Even though the telegraph theory of language does not correspond to our experiences, it has plausibility in that it has the

possibility of overcoming one of the most difficult problems in the philosophy of language, that of meaning. There are aspects of the problem of meaning which are relevant to questions regarding the nature of thinking. Briefly, there is a general question as to what a word, any word, means. Since a word is an arbitrary string of characters, it is hard to see how it could be meaningful in itself. There is also a difficulty in saying that the meaning of a word is the object for which it stands, since the object can be destroyed and the word still be meaningful. The next most likely candidate for what a word means is an idea in our mind. For example, we can have an idea of unicorns even though none exist, and having this idea, on this view, is what knowing the meaning of the word is.

The telegraph theory, then, holds that the meaning of a word is the idea of it that humans have in their mind. This picture of ideas as furniture in a mind that performs actions with and about that furniture is approximately the picture that Locke had of the mind and ideas. Even though this theory has no basis in experience, the fact that it seems to solve the problem of meaning has been considered good recommendation for it. But if there is a problem explaining how a word can be meaningful, there is also a problem explaining how an idea can be meaningful. One would need to posit an idea of the idea which makes it meaningful and an idea of that idea and so on. A. J. Ayer expresses it this way, "the assumption that understanding (a word) consists in having

images leads to a viscious infinite regress. For these images must themselves be in symbols if they are to do the work that is required of them; and in that case further images will have to be supplied for their interpretation and so on ad infinitum."[7] Because the telegraph theory does not solve the problem of meaning, it tends to lose the only plausibility it had.

I introduced the telegraph theory because it was a theory in which it seemed necessary that mental entities such as thoughts and ideas exist in order for us to say things we want to say, namely that words have meaning. If it can be shown that positing such mental entities does not aid in cases like meaning, then we are deprived of one more reason for saying that the concept of "mental entity" refers to anything at all.

So far I have argued against a certain view about thinking. I presented four arguments against the view. The first argument was that we could not make an internal examination of thinking. This argument consisted of three parts. First, that one must already know what one is searching for to make this type of search. Secondly, we are not really equipped to make such a search, and thirdly, that the concept of thinking is only understandable given a broad context, a broad context that would be missing with a mere internal examination.

My second argument consisted in pointing out that what distinguishes a person who speaks and means something from a parrot who speaks and doesn't mean anything is not anything

mental which goes on inside the person but doesn't go on inside the parrot. What it is that does distingusih these two cases is, again, a broad context. The person actually does want a cracker, he knows when he gets a cracker, he cannot want a cracker and so on.

The third argument dealt with the differences between reading and reciting. I showed that while we sometimes associated sensations with reading, the sensations were not reading, and could not be used to show that we were reading.

The fourth argument was directed against the telegraph theory of language. The objection against this theory is that mental occurrences which are supposed to act as the beginning and ending of the communication process could not act in the way they need to act for the theory to be correct. Meaning simply cannot inhere in any symbol, whether that symbol is public or private.

All of these arguments were directed at the view that thoughts occur in our mind as entities which are subject to any type of examination, physical or philosophical. In the second part of this paper I will make what seems to me to be the only possible philosophical examination of thinking, namely a conceptual examination.

One way to begin such a conceptual examination is by asking in what cases it would be true to say "X is thinking." At this point Wittgenstein remarks that "asking whether and how a proposition can be verified is only a particular way of asking 'How do you mean?' The answer is a contribution to the grammar of the

proposition."[8] How then do we verify the statement "X is thinking." Two cases are involved, that in which X is myself, and that in which X is some other person (or, not to beg any questions, some other thing). In the first instance the problem is: "How do I verify that I am thinking?" I don't do it by observation. I tried to show this in the first part of the paper. I know that I am thinking, but I don't know it by observation. If I don't observe that I am thinking, how else could I possibly know that I am? What other methods can I use?

Wittgenstein claims that it doesn't make sense for a person to doubt whether or not he is in pain.[9] Since one cannot doubt whether he is in pain, he has no need to verify to himself that he is in pain. Such verification would be redundant. Is thinking like pain in this respect? Does it make sense to doubt whether or not we are thinking? I can doubt whether or not my thinking is any good. We often ask others to judge the value of our thinking, because, for example, we are too close to it and so cannot tell what is wrong or illogical about it. One might set up a continuum between good, i.e. logical thought, and bad, i.e. illogical thought.

It would certainly facilitate matters if there were no need for verification. But a problem arises with illogical thought, namely, is it possible to think nonsense? Peter Geach thinks that it is impossible to think nonsense. In discussing William James' analysis of thinking, he makes this claim.

"James' description of thought blurs out the logical features of thought and makes it impossible to see why one cannot think nonsense though one can talk nonsense (If you write down a nonsensical that clause after 'Smith has the thought ...', the whole sentence will be nonsense and thus cannot be a true report of what Smith thought; but there is no such difficulty about quoting the nonsense Smith talks.)"[10]

Geach's argument, however, begs the question. We are wondering whether it makes sense to say that Smith thinks nonsense. To show this, Geach claims that "Smith thinks nonsense." is nonsense, which is exactly what is at issue.

Suppose I say to myself, "This ball of wax is completely red and also completely blue." I can definitely say this aloud and also to myself, but can I think it? It certainly seems as if one cannot have an idea of something which is completely red and also completely blue. Does "speaking to oneself" count here as thought? If it does not, then I can mistakenly believe that I am thinking. If I can mistakenly believe that I am thinking, then I can be wrong to claim that I am thinking, and can doubt whether or not I am thinking. Thinking would then be different from being in pain, and the claim that I am thinking would need verification.

We human beings, at one time or another, make illogical statements. We even believe them and presumably think them. Few of these statements are as obviously illogical as claiming that something is completely red and also completely blue. But

nonetheless we do sometimes believe nonsense. If I engage in a long train of (what seems to me to be logical) thought, and at the end of the train of thought ask myself whether or not I was thinking, I am asking for verification. At this point it might be helpful to distinguish two possible cases where we might doubt about our thinking. The first is a type of Cartesian doubt where we doubt whether we have any mental life at all. This is not the kind of doubt being considered here. The second kind is the doubt whether or not this that I am doing now is a case of thinking as opposed to a case of something else, e.g. nonsense, dreaming, remembering, and so on.

This seems to clear away some of the smoke. What am I doubting when I doubt whether or not this that I am doing now is thinking? Isn't it this - Does the concept "thinking" cover this case? And if we have a problem answering, it isn't because we are unsure of what is going on inside us, but because the concept is misunderstood and its use is confused. So when Geach claims that we can't think nonsense, he is not saying what can and cannot go on inside of us. He is saying that such a case does not fit our present concept of "thinking." We can, therefore, say this - in most cases, we do not have to and could not verify to ourselves whether or not we are thinking. In the problem cases (dreaming that we are thinking, or believing a contradiction), a conceptual difficulty exists, and when that is cleared up, we again do not have to verify to ourselves that we are thinking.

Next we must consider how we verify the claim that someone else is thinking. This is a very simple formulation of the problem of other minds. Again two problems can be distinguished. One, does this other person have any mental life at all, and two, is this other person thinking right now? Is there any valid basis for answering either of these questions in the affirmative? I am going to take a naive approach to this, and must show that such a naivete is warranted. In order to find out whether someone has any mental life at all, we find out the answers to some other questions. Is he alive? Is he a human being? Can he talk? Can he solve problems? If he satisfies these and similar criteria, then he has a mental life. In order to find out if someone is now thinking, we ask him. If he cannot tell us what he is thinking about, then we have strong evidence that he was not thinking. But if he can tell us what he was thinking about, then we have strong evidence that he was thinking.

It can be immediately objected that these criteria of life, humanness, language, and problem solving ability can only show us outer qualities, and can say nothing about the inner mental life which concerns us. However, we can't have access to other person's mental lives, and the claim I am making is that we don't need to. This is why so much effort was spent at the beginning of this paper to show why inner observation is irrelevant to whether or not a being thinks. The skeptic who denies that one can have knowledge of another's mind will only accept as

evidence the type of immediate awareness he thinks he has of his own mind. But he does not use evidence to know that he has a mind and that he thinks. He is, therefore, being inconsistent by requiring stronger evidence in the case of others than he requires for himself. His mistake is in thinking that such strict evidence was required for himself, and in thinking that such strict evidence was even available to him.

The skeptic has a rejoinder. He can claim that while the listed criteria are dependent upon a being thinking, we cannot be sure that the being under consideration is actually a human or alive. He might very well be an automaton. It is hard to even formulate this argument, though. One must have a basis for claiming that these beings are automatons and not humans. Which criteria for humanness do they not fill?

Wittgenstein reacts to this formulation of the skeptical argument in a manner which may be more naive than the reaction I have to it. He asks himself: "Can't I imagine that the people around me are automata, lack consciousness, even though they behave in the same way as usual? - If I imagine it now - along in my room - I see people with fixed looks (as in a trance) going about their business - the idea is perhaps a little uncanny. But just try to keep hold of this idea in the midst of your ordinary intercourse with others, in the street, say! Say to yourself, for example: 'The children over there are mere automata; all their liveliness is mere automatism.' And you will either find these

words becoming quite meaningless; or you will produce in yourself some kind of uncanny feeling, or something of the sort."[11] Which is the more plausible hypothesis: that all these beings around me who have eyes, ears, noses, and who flinch when I go to strike them can see, hear, smell and are aware, or that all of these beings are automata, unaware of all that I am aware of?

I still must justify my acceptance of language, humanness, problem solving ability, and so on as proof of a being being able to think. I would not like to say that only humans think, as this would, of course, ignore the possibility of intelligent life in other parts of the universe, as well as the possibility that animals now have or could develop language and the other needed characteristics. I also have doubts about the problem solving ability criterion, as that is a concept as much in need of clarification as thinking. Language, though, is a much sturdier place to get a grip. Wittgenstein, and others, argue that there is more than just a contingent relationship between thought and language. Even though Wittgenstein does argue this point, some of what he writes seems to contradict this. For example, "We don't say of a table and a chair: 'Now they are thinking', nor 'Now they are not thinking,' nor yet 'They never think', nor do we say it of plants either, nor of fishes; hardly of dogs; only of human beings. And not even of all human beings."[12] If thought is more than contingently related to language, why do we say that dogs think, and which humans do not?

Another example of this seeming inconsistency is this claim. "We only say of a human being and what is like one that it thinks. We also say it of dolls and no doubt of spirits too."[13] Why dolls and spirits? Additionally, contrary to Wittgenstein, we do sometimes ascribe thought to fishes. "That big trout is too smart to go for that lure." We sometimes speak of machines knowing facts and knowing how to perform certain functions. And these claims make sense too. We cannot say of someone who speaks in this way that he is conceptually confused.

It is tempting to avoid this problem by claiming that these are derivative senses of "think." However, a derivative sense of a concept is a legitimate expansion of that concept while the claim is that these are not legitimate expansions of the concept.

It is helpful to see what is being claimed or denied here. It is not being claimed that thoughts might or might not go on in the mind of dogs, fishes, or machines. The questions is whether or not we want our concept of thinking to include these cases. We might even be willing to admit that a very primitive type of thinking is possible for non-humans. It should not be surprising that certain concepts, such as "complex thinking" are applicable only to beings which possess language.[14] One needs language to think certain kinds of thoughts. We might be willing to accept that a dog thinks that its master will take it for a walk when it sees him pick up the leash. Here the dog's thinking would consist in some kind of expectation. It would be exhibiting

primitive, but nonetheless intelligent behavior. After all, the dog also has eyes, ears, a nose and reacts to sudden movements. And we know, therefore, that the dog is aware of certain things. It could be said of him, in a sufficiently limited sense of "know", that he knows that he is going for a walk. But we have no reason at all to believe that the dog thinks "Now Joe is going to take me for a walk." To be able to think such a proposition one needs the concepts of time, self, naming and so on. Wittgenstein might remark that a dog which could think that sentence could also figure out what check-mate was without knowing the rules of chess. This is a good example of Wittgenstein's move-in-a-game metaphor. In order to make this move, he must be able to play the game. He must be able to think such thoughts as "Joe will not walk me"; "Joe walked me yesterday"; "Joe will walk my brother" and so on. The dog might believe that it is going for a walk, but it doesn't understand the concept of "walk", as we understand it, unless it understands that others can go for walks, that when it is resting it is not walking, and what one did yesterday was and what one might do tomorrow is walking. It is not just that we do not have any good reason for believing that the dog does not have these concepts, but rather to have the concept is to be able to express those differences just mentioned.

Thinking is, therefore, more than contingently related to language. Complex, that is, conceptual and propositional thought is only possible for a being with language. This is to say that

to have a concept is to be able to apply that concept in a variety of situations, and to apply that concept correctly; that is, as the rest of us users of language apply it.

William James was one philosopher who disagreed with the view that only beings with language can have complex thoughts. "James, in order to show that thought is possible without speech, quotes the recollection of a deaf-mute, Mr. Ballard, who wrote that in his early youth, even before he could speak, he had had thoughts about God and the world. Ballard writes: 'It was during those delightful rides, some two or three years before my initiation into the rudiments of written language, that I began to ask myself the question: how came the world into being?'"[15] We don't want to question what went on inside of Ballard. He certainly might have had a sense of wonderment, and even such a sense as he now has when he asks himself the same question. Wittgenstein remarks this about the Ballard case: "Are you sure - one would like to ask - that this is the correct translation of your wordless thoughts into words? And why does this question - which otherwise seems not to exist - raise its head here? Do I want to say that the writer's memory deceives him? - I don't even know if I should say <u>that</u>. These recollections are a queer memory phenomenon, - and I don't know what conclusions one can draw from them about the past of the man who recounts them."[16]

What is at stake here is this - if Ballard, an individual without language has thoughts, then only a contingent relationship

exists between thought and language. There is an important difference between this case and a case where, for example, James produced a five-legged dog to show us that not all dogs have four legs. The difference is that we would not have to change our concept of dog or of five-leggedness to accept this case. We would change some of our beliefs about dogs, but not our concept. In Ballard's case, or in the related case where someone purports to think nonsense, our concept of thinking would be called into question. Whereas we know beforehand what a five-legged dog would look like, we do not know before what a thought in such circumstances would look like. We could certainly change our concept to include cases like this, but it would consist in a change of our concept.

What Ballard does have is a memory of an experience, an experience which he interprets or translates as such-and-such a thought. All this shows is that it is possible for non-languaged beings to have experiences and subsequently to remember them. In order to interpret the experience to be such-and-such a thought, he must have gone by certain rules. Could he, prior to possessing language, have known any rules as well as knowing when he was and when he was not following them? He would not at that time even have a concept of rules.

The Ballard case also brings up what Ayer had to say about the meaningfulness of mental images. There was nothing inherent in the experiences which Ballard had which made them mean what

Ballard said they meant. In fact, the experiences which Ballard had were not meaningful at all since, as Ayer says, mental images are not things which have meaning.

In this second part of this paper I have been trying to make several points. The main point is that the concept of thinking is as Wittgenstein puts it, a tool.[17] It fits some situations but not others. We have the concept because it allows us to make what we feel are important distinctions. We use it as one way of dividing up the world. The fact that this concept is so closely tied to language shows what distinctions we think are so important that we require a concept to make them. We feel that it is important to be able to separate those beings who can make judgements, predictions and statements about the world from those who cannot. Our concept could be different in that we could accept nonsense as thinking or dreams or color flashes as thinking. But then we would have changed in what we feel is important about the world.

Footnotes

1. Locke, Book II, Chap. 1, Sec. 4.
2. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations 316.
3. P.I. 316.
4. P.I. 347.
5. P.I. 159.
6. P.I. 160.
7. Ayer, "Thinking and Meaning", page 107 of Nagel and Brandt.
8. P.I. 353.
9. Geach, p. 35.
10. P.I. 246.
11. P.I. 420.
12. Wittgenstein, Zettel 129.
13. P.I. 360.
14. Zettel, 520.
15. P.I. 342.
16. P.I. 342.
17. P.I. 342.

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