THE AUTONOMY OF LANGUAGE-GAMES

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree

of Master of the Arts
in Philosophy at
Massey University

Jonathan Edwin Dempsey

1991

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CONTENTS

TWO IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Part of the inheritance of Wittgenstein is a certain philosophical terminology or jargon (as Wittgenstein himself would probably term it). "Private language", "family resemblances" and "language-game", to give a few well-known examples, have in the past been recognised as important and formidable concepts, and they endure (albeit in a less auspicious manner) in the present-day field of philosophy as controversial and influential items.

In what follows I shall examine in detail a key aspect of one of the above concepts, the "language-game", an item Wittgenstein clearly regarded as being a very real part of the world of human affairs.

For Wittgenstein and many of his followers (chiefly those of the later philosophy), the language-game is seen as an *autonomous* or *self-justifying* system. I believe this is basically correct, and that an explication of such autonomy is essential to understanding, firstly, the concept of a language-game and, secondly, why certain forms of critical inquiry in relation to a given language-game appear odd or mistaken in some fashion.

Autonomy, it will become clear, is best approached through an analysis of what I call (and shall frequently be referring to as) *intrusiveness*. As a distinct and independent system of discourse and living (to state it simply), a language-game is governed by rules that specify what sorts of behaviour - linguistic and otherwise - are practised in the game. Intrusion, I hope to show, consists in presenting to the game a procedure that not only breaks the rules but also appears as something far removed from the everyday conduct within that system.

Before we start to scrutinize the intruder, however, we need first to take a closer look at what it is that is being intruded on - what kind of "system of discourse and living" is a language-game, that we may go on and examine the sense in which it is autonomous?

The nature of a language-game, as an acquaintance with the relevant literature will quickly reveal, defies explicit definition[1], and Wittgenstein and the more eminent of his disciples systematically avoid presenting the concept to their readership in this manner. And as far as simple descriptions go, most appear

rather too imprecise to be very helpful. Norman Malcolm speaks of a "system of thinking and acting"[2], while in the *Investigations* (and elsewhere) Wittgenstein uses from time to time the title "form of life" in place of "language-game"[3]. - Given that there is a great deal that may be quite properly described as a "form of life", and in the absence of a clear account of how the description is to be applied, it seems to do little in the way of explanation.

The best - though by no means entirely satisfactory - way of coming to grips with just what we are to identify as a language-game is to concentrate on specific examples given to us by the experts, rather than their often-hasty general descriptions. In Wittgenstein's later philosophy we have a host of cases presented to us, some in detail, others - perhaps most - only sketchily. The *Investigations* is packed with examples, many of which strike us as simple and homely sorts of human activities: giving orders, asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying and so on - a large number of which Wittgenstein is contented merely to list, noting as he does so that, as basic sorts of speech-acts, their number is "countless" (P.I., S 23).

The language-game, however, is not *just* the kind of item we may describe as a *command* or *request* and suchlike. Occasionally in the *Investigations* and more often in his preliminary notes (*Blue and Brown Books*) as well as other jottings (*Zettle*; *On Certainty*) we meet much more complex examples: making up a story and reading it (P.I., S 23), talk about material objects (P.I., pg 200), descriptive geometry, chemical symbolism (*Blue and Brown Books*, pg 81) and even mathematics in its entirety (*Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, V 15).

Norman Malcolm, a keen follower and one-time pupil of Wittgenstein's, by concentrating on the grander cases has produced some rather controversial examples of his own. In his book *Thought and Knowledge* and elsewhere (for example his memoir of Wittgenstein, pg 60, and his article on St. Anselm's ontological arguments) Malcolm speaks straight-forwardly of an entire discipline - especially religion, but also science - as being a *form of life*, a *language-game* (*Thought and Knowledge*, pg 212), and he suggests to us in a matter-of-fact way that Wittgenstein shared this view[4].

For Malcolm, a language-game, as a form of life, is a fairly well-delineated practice of what he terms "language embedded in action" (*ibid.*, pg 212). It is, to call on one of those hasty descriptions, "agreement in language, possession of common concepts... a common way of conceptualising experience together with accompanying kinds of behaviour" (*Hacker*, 1980 pg 220). In its structure, a language-game possesses its own criteria of rationality, successful conduct and intelligibility.

Not a lot is said though about the precise sense in which a language-game has "rule-generated boundaries" and how certain kinds of behaviour are "intrusive" to this "autonomy". A brief example is needed to help these preliminary proceedings along. Consider then what might be called the *trainee artillery squad language-game* and an intrusive act within that system:

We have a group of soldiers on the practice range of their camp. These men are trainee gunners, and their squad is led by an officer whose job it is to supervise the men as they go about loading a howitzer in preparation for firing.

Now, because the men are still in training and their work is potentially lethal, they are watched closely by the officer, who stops them at certain stages and checks what they have done. This is not hard for us to imagine. The officer shouts in a brisk military fashion: "artillery squad, stop and check!" and waits for a verbal report from the men in which details of the progress are given and any difficulties are noted. At a given point the checking procedure may be as follows: Soldier one looks at the elevation of the barrel; soldier two inspects the setting of the aim; soldier three makes sure the wheels are locked; while soldier four examines the position of the anti-recoil mechanism.

Importantly, as this procedure takes place each soldier may be given to various sorts of worries and doubts: Is *this* screw tight enough?; should *that* be a little looser?; how secure is *this*; should *that* be adjusted? and so on. Any faults that are detected would be reported and remedied. For example: "The elevation is half a degree off!" - and the correction made. And, of course, any doubts would be raised and dealt with.

Now, suppose that as the checking gets underway, one of the men expresses

genuine concern for the *possibility* of the shell in the barrel *dematerializing*. Our fellow says to the officer: "Sir, the thought has just occurred to me that the shell may no longer exist! No one of us is directly perceiving it, and it may very well have gone out of existence since being placed in the detonating chamber!".

How would this sort of remark fare in the language-game? Would the issue of dematerialization be treated as a *legitimate* difficulty? Would it be in order for the officer to say something like "Yes! that *is* a worry! But in war you don't have time to deal with such matters; you just have to cross your fingers and hope for the best!?" In philosophy the existence of unperceived physical objects is a real issue (especially with young philosophers). However, on the practice range of an army base is the matter at all appropriate to raise?

Undoubtedly, such a concern and ones like it are quite out-of-place in the trainee artillery squad language-game. Worries about objects vanishing into thin air because they cannot be detected by the senses are not given a moment's thought by the players, the so-called problem of dematerialization *just does not exist* in that system. Such matters appear quite ridiculous in the military context, as well as many others. They come across as being decidedly silly, and most people would consider them a waste of time.

Most people would also want to say, I think, that the officer and his trainees are not answerable to the so-called problem of dematerialization, that they are excused of any obligation to respond to the suggestion in such a manner as to give it recognition as a legitimate difficulty.

But *why* is this issue a silly one? I want to propose *autonomy* as the answer. However, not everyone will forward and account of autonomy. Someone might want to say that the problem is a *redundant* one, one, that is, that *used* to be workable, only now in light on many careful investigations is regarded as being definitively solved. - We have known for some time that things do not cease to exist simply because they are not seen, smelt, felt, heard and so on. A second example of a redundant problem would be the *danger* of sailing off the edge of the world. Another explanation might have it that the dematerialization matter

can only be raised *successfully* if the timing is right, that it truly counts as a real concern, only the battlefield or practice range is not the place to point out such difficulties. We might very well call this the *awkward moment argument,* and anyone supporting it might suggest the mess or barracks as the right location in which to deal with the matter. A third explanation would be the view that the whole subject belongs to philosophy or physics (or some kind of combination of the two), and not to the army. This is to say that it does indeed count as a kosher concern, only it is one exclusively dealt with by other *areas,* and *that* is why it seems so strange in the context of the firing range.

On my view the soldiers are excused for none of the above three explanations, Instead, their exemption is based on this business of the problem failing to qualify under the rules and practice of the language-game as a legitimate, a *true* problem. This is to say that the abovementioned type of dematerialization is not for the trainee artillery squad language-game a real concern in any way whatsoever, and that instead it amounts to the intrusion of a procedure of one language-game on to another.

In what follows I will be advancing the notion that, as an autonomous system of thought and action, a language-game is not answerable to moves (claims, arguments, etc.) that are, as Malcolm puts it, *alien* to its practice[5]. A language-game is self-governing in that all forms of inquiry, justification, explanation, criticism and evaluation that are binding to it must be conducted exclusively under the terms of the system in question. And regarding intrusion, I will be forwarding a scheme that enables one to see exactly how and why a given move or act is an intrusive one. This second objective is really the primary aim of this paper, and I believe that an account of autonomy, as told through an analysis of intrusion, may be given precisely and without too much conceptual complexity. Also, the explication of autonomy will make more evident the reality or existence of language-games and their self-justifying nature.

NOTES

1. The reason for this is perhaps, as Patrick Sherry puts it, "...that Wittgenstein's use of the term is so wide as to cover both conceptual systems like geometry, chemistry or talk about physical objects, and 'speech-acts' like asking questions and giving orders. This variety seems to preclude any single definition of the concept ..." (*Sherry*, 1977 pg 24).

2. I have taken this description of Malcolm's from a passage of his quoted on page 35 of this paper.

3. See, for example, P.I. pg 147. Also, P.I. S23 gives us the reason for this: "The term *language-game* is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of a language is part of an activity, or a form of life".

4. None of the published work of the later philosophy contains religion as a *clear* example of a *form of life*. However, from various notes taken at Wittgenstein's lectures we may glean considerable support for Malcolm's view.   See especially *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, pg 58.

5. The example of Malcolm's from which the term is taken is worth keeping in mind: "Nothing is put forward in the Old or New Testament as evidence for the existence of God. Someone whose religious concepts were formed exclusively from the Bible, might regard this question of evidence as a alien intrusion. It would have no contact with the religious ideas he had learned. It is my impression that this suggestion of evidence plays no part in workaday religious instruction and practice, and puts in an appearance only when the language is idling." (*Hick*, 1964 pg 108).

CHAPTER ONE
THE INTRUSIVE CASE OF MR JONES

Intrusion is the key to understanding autonomy, and here it will be helpful if we confront and examine in detail a second example of intrusion, this time one from a more common context, or language-game.

The example I have in mind is located in what might be called the *shopping* language-game - a *form of life* most of us participate in on almost a weekly (if not a daily) basis. The game here, for the sake of a simple description, consists of those forms of action we engage in and are familiar with when we go shopping: the kind of vocal behaviour we practice and recognise, the sorts of thoughts we have, as well as other types of non-vocal activity. The example is situated in an everyday supermarket, though a department store or any other ordinary retail environment would be just as suited to the job. The reason for the detail of the study will be justified as we progress, as will its slightly (and not, I stress, unnatural) theatrical air. Consider then an example of intrusion from the shopping language-game, as we meet it in the context of a supermarket.

We have a character called Jones. Jones is at a supermarket, the layout of which he is quite unfamiliar with. Jones wants to buy a certain make of cheese, and having neither the patience nor the time to look for it, he asks one of the store attendants to show him to where the cheese section is. The assistant does so, and actually points out to Jones the very brand he was looking for. But then, much to the surprise of the assistant, Jones remarks: "This may be Camembert *now*, but what guarantees can you give me that it won't turn into something else - like a soft, worthless, plastic replica - the second I step out of this store?"

- And Jones, may I add, is *perfectly* serious: his tone is serious, he has a stern look about him, and he shows every outward sign of a customer with a grave grievance. What's more, Jones *considers* himself to be *completely* serious: as far as he is concerned, the idea that his remark might be one big joke is totally unthinkable. Jones *believes* that there is a very real possibility that the cheese

might somehow be transformed or perhaps turn itself into something entirely different the moment he leaves the supermarket. And let me also add that it is plain to the assistant that Jones's claim is in earnest, that Jones - an ordinary looking stranger - is neither being malicious nor clowning around. After all, Jones is not dressed up as a clown, or grinning from ear to ear, or giggling under his breath. Jones is expressing no sign of being a prankster and every sign of being a customer with a genuine worry.

Now, there is one very important observation to be made about the Jones example. It is this: that Jones, in his serious belief that what he has said is quite all right, expects to meet by way of reply on the part of the assistant with one or more forms of response *from a certain range.* This is to say the Jones considers his remark to merit a range of replies that in no way *dismiss* his claim about the cheese, a range that *recognises* that a proper difficulty relating to the Camembert has been raised.

This recognition Jones imagines his remark to warrant may be distinguished from forms of reply that essentially *deny* that any true and proper difficulty has been raised. This second range would be considered by Jones to be unjustified and out-of-order.

We will shortly deal with examples from both ranges. For the moment, however, it needs to be noted that the notion of a specific act making or failing to make fitting various ranges or forms of reply is crucial in the story of intrusion and autonomy. The concept will be examined in detail, for this business of the sense in which Jones's act fails to bring into order a precise range of replies is where we begin to see the exact nature of an intrusive procedure.

Returning to the Jones claim (the claim of course being that it is possible that the cheese may undergo some kind of radical transformation), what sorts of actions are those from the range Jones imagines his claim to make fitting? And which are those from the range he would consider unwarranted?

Well, firstly, from Jones's position, one act that gives recognition to his claim about the cheese is the denial, the earnest denial, by the assistant that the Camembert is prone to drastic transformation. We may compare such a denial

to that given by a fruiterer when a customer says that a certain item of produce "looks old". In the Jones case (as well as the fruiterer's), such a reply could be followed by or, indeed, contain an assurance of some kind, say, one relating to quality in which the reputation of the supplier is included. This response acknowledges Jones's claim as a legitimate concern; it is like saying: "yes, you have put your finger on the very sort of problem a cheese may have, only in this case, with this particular Camembert, your fears are unfounded!" - a reply that expresses the view that there is no possibility of the cheese changing into plastic (or anything else) and that the very idea is absurd, would, by contrast, effectively dismiss or rubbish the claim in the first place.

A second act that *recognises* Jones's claim is one in which the assistant, again, *denies* the possibility of transformation, saying this time that it is most unlikely, and calling on other staff to back him up, so to speak. Like the first reply, this too conveys to Jones the idea that his worry about the cheese is in order, only, due to present circumstances, the danger of the cheese turning into something else is not great.

A third reply that is part of the range Jones imagines his remark to make fitting is one that, in contrast to the above two, entails an admission on the part of the assistant that there *is* a very real chance that the cheese may change. Here, the assistant might tell Jones how there has been grave talk about the manufacturer's conduct in the cheese-making industry, and therefore many misgivings relating to the quality of the Camembert. Such a reply would quite likely be welcome from Jones's point of view; he doesn't really want a fight on his hands, no more than we would want to deal with an argumentative shop attendant after having pointed out an ordinary defect in one of the products on sale.

Opposed to the above examples of replies from the range that recognises Jones's claim is the second group of responses I mentioned. This other range is basically made up of those acts that utterly dismiss Jones, in so doing expressing the notion that no proper difficulty concerning the Camembert has been raised. With the three replies above we saw examples that contained the

acknowledgement that, right or wrong, Jones had raised an issue that was worthy of serious consideration, even if that consideration took the form of a heated debate. Now, however, we must look at examples of acts that *refuse totally* to acknowledge the Jones claim as one that merits being taken seriously, however such recognition is expressed. Consider the following list of responses, any of which the assistant might present to Jones:

1. Expressing disbelief by appearing thunderstruck, and walking off.
2. Saying "What?!" in an annoyed tone.
3. Asking Jones if he's being serious, or if he's joking.
4. Telling Jones not to waste people's time.
5. Asking Jones if he's some kind of weirdo.
6. Saying: "It won't turn into plastic, but it will change into a big pink elephant the moment you get home!" and then walking off.
7. Exclaiming: "Now I've heard it all!"
8. Calling to another assistant, saying: "Come and check this guy out!" or: "Give the men in white coats a ring!"

These replies serve to rubbish Jones's remark about the Camembert; and we can see this clearly, in that if any one of them were to be delivered by the assistant, Jones might very well, by way of reply, ask - or demand - to *himself* be taken seriously.

The overall point about an act bringing into order a certain range of responses (or failing to do so) will be more fully developed further on. For the present, however, we need to ask ourselves what kind of reply or reaction Jones would *actually* meet with if his comment about the cheese was made in a real supermarket. And here let's keep in mind that we are trying to deal with a perfectly ordinary supermarket/retail setting, and nothing fantastic or exceptional.

How, then, would the Camembert claim fare? Would it be recognised? *My* claim is that Jones's point is an obvious intrusive move in the practice of the

shopping language-game, and that like the artillery example it does not merit - or *bring into order* - certain follow-on types of acknowledging actions.

- And *would* we expect to see Jones being taken seriously? Would we expect to witness, say, an earnest discussion in which, on the one hand, Jones defends his claim, while, on the other hand, the assistant is trying to give all kinds of assurances that the Camembert will not misbehave itself? Would Jones *really* be treated in roughly the same way as a customer who had queried, say, the freshness of a loaf of bread?

My bet is that Jones would be firmly and clearly *rebuked* in some fashion. His point just would not be taken seriously, in that it would produce a reaction on the part of the assistant that is dismissive of the claim. And we have, what's more, an obvious reason for this: For, Jones's remark simply fails to qualify under the rules and practice of the shopping language-game as an appropriate or sensible matter to be raised in relation to the constitution/condition of a product. The species of problem he tries to introduce just does not feature in the practice of that system, if it did, then we - who are fairly well acquainted with its workings - would find nothing untoward about the claim and see it as being completely in order and quite natural.

It is not part of the day-to-day workings of the shopping language-game to entertain the sort of doubt Jones has regarding the composition of stock. The players of that language-game do not question whether or not a cheese (or what-have-you) is liable to turn into plastic or thin air. Such matters never enter their minds. They may have doubts concerned with freshness, quality and availability, but not, surely, about whether or not a certain item is *real* or liable to undergo a radical and magical transformation. Ask yourself if you ever, whilst shopping, worry about the products turning themselves into different things, or dematerializing when you get them home. Have you ever thought, while picking and choosing between items, that perhaps such possibilities exist? And do you know anyone who whilst shopping would entertain such thoughts?

Jones is someone who challenges the training of the players of the shopping language-game. He raises, or, more accurately, *tries* to raise those prohibited

and non-sensical types of doubts and controversies, in so doing disputing what is normally and unquestionably regarded as being *beyond* doubt. Jones attempts to introduce a kind of Cartesian scepticism or "method of doubting", and we are led by our intuitions to rebuke the Camembert claim.

Wittgenstein, in considering the restrictions a language-game may have with regard to what may be properly disputed, makes a similar point. Says Wittgenstein:

> One might simply say "O, rubbish!" to someone who wanted o make objections to the propositions that are beyond doubt. That is, not reply to him but admonish him.
>
> (*On Certainty*, S 495)

– In the context of the supermarket language-game we cannot doubt the "proposition" that products do not undergo mysterious changes. We have seen that to attempt to do so results in *admonishment*.

CHAPTER TWO
THE NOTION OF A "CONVERSATIONAL DANCE"

The failure of the Jones claim to qualify as an act of a specific sort may be understood with considerably more precision. By coming to grips with the importance of the need for a given act to bring into order or make fitting a number of follow-on responses if it is to count as a move of a certain type, one acquires a better understanding of the concept of intrusion.

Jones's remark failed to bring into order a range of replies that would have given recognition to his claim, a range Jones thought was entirely justified. In addition to this failure, the sort of move Jones advanced was one that is not practised in the language-game. We are able to identify the intrusive move, then, by: (1) seeing that it does not bring into order a specific range of reactions, and, (2), seeing that it is not at home, so to speak, anywhere in the language-game.

We are not yet in the position of being able to deal with the second point in detail. For the moment let us return to the notion of an act bringing into order a certain range of responses/reactions *if it is to qualify* as an act of a specific sort within a language-game. We will be able to understand this better by comparing the Jones claim with another from the shopping language-game, this time an example that is *within* the practice of that system - in other words, one that is not preposterous:

We have a second fellow: Smith. Smith is shopping at his local supermarket for some long-life milk. He proceeds to the dairy section and selects a carton of long-life milk from the shelf, only to discover shortly afterwards that the expiry date stamped on it is one day away. Not wanting to use the milk for some time, Smith looks for a fresher carton. But he is out of luck: all the boxes have the same "best before" date stamped on them. Still hopeful, however, he calls on one of the staff, explaining that the stock is getting on and asking whether or not there is likely to be any fresh stuff our back.

Supposing that it's a "no frills" supermarket we're dealing with here, and that

(typically) there's not much in the way of service or staff training, it's easy to think of the personnel in the store as not exactly the most cooperative as supermarket staff go. Smith, sad to say, finds himself with an awkward assistant on his hands, one who claims that it will be perfectly all right to use the milk for some days after the "best before" date, as such dates are chiefly concerned with something known in the trade as "premium quality", and not with whether or not a product is fit or safe to use.

Smith, however, is not convinced by all this. He is resolute: it's *fresh* long–life milk he's after and says so, asking the assistant *again* if there's likely to be any out back. The troublesome worker then gives in and instructs the persistent Smith to wait while a check is made.

Now, the above exchange is not in the realm of fantasy (which is about the only place one is likely to encounter the Jones claim); it's *just* the sort of thing that could - and probably does - take place in a "no frills" supermarket. And, importantly, if we are to understand this business of bringing into order ranges of replies, then the Smith-assistant exchange is best understood in terms of the notion of a *conversational dance*, a concept that may be simply and clearly presented in diagrammatic form.

Smith, in his first utterance, presents an acceptable opening move in the dance, a move that is quite typical of the language-game and everyday in its nature. This opening move, because of its respectable nature, brings into order a selection of what we shall now refer to as *response-types*, it *justifies* or makes fitting the delivery of any one of a certain number of replies that are also *respectable* or *typical* of the language-game. The assistant that Smith has called on is in the position of being able to present a second move in the dance.

Smith's first move is represented like so:

SMITH

(OPENING MOVE)→ "Excuse me. This long-life milk has almost
                        expired. Do you think there's any fresh stuff
                        out back?"

In this simple diagram the ringed area signifies what sort of move-type we are dealing with, and the arrow shows that it has been executed or delivered. After the opening move all subsequent actions should be regarded as response-types, and the written report, "X Y Z", tells us about any spoken words that were used, although it may also tells us about non-vocal actions, such as gestures.

We are now able to depict the range - or, more accurately, *part* of the range - of response-types Smith's opening move *brings into order.*

(AFFIRMATIVE)	"Yes!" (walks off to find it)
(NEGATIVE)	"No!" (shakes head)
(INSPECTION)	Looks at the product to check Smith's claim, asking: "Did you say *expired*?"
(APOLOGY)	"Sorry about that. We're having problems with the supplier you know".
(GESTURE)	(Points at some fresh long-life milk in a different location)
(SUGGESTION)	"It's not all *that* old; it'll still be good for some time yet. The expiry date doesn't mean that it will be bad, just that it won't be at it's very best".

This list, I stress, is not meant to show the entire range of response-types Smith's opening move brings into order. Instead, it is meant to give one a feeling for the sorts of actions that are justified by the opening move. There may be innumerable variations of a basic response-type, and it is important to show that a variety of actions may be properly described as response-types.

Let us now depict the first two moves of the dance:

SMITH   ASSISTANT

(OPENING MOVE)➤ "Excuse me. This long-life milk has almost
                    expired. Do you think there's any fresh stuff
                    out back?"

                                          (AFFIRMATIVE)
                                          (NEGATIVE)
                                          (INSPECTION)
                                          (APOLOGY)
                                          (GESTURE)
"It's not all *that* old..." (etc)   ◄(SUGGESTION)

A number of key points need to be made here. Firstly, a respectable act only justifies the counter-delivery of response-types that are customary to the practice of the language-game and the type of dance that is in progress. A proper move does not bring into order a range of *intrusive* responses, or replies that are merely *bad* moves (we will deal with the distinction between an intrusive move and a bad move shortly). The assistant would not be justified, for example, entertaining, by way of a reaction to Smith's opening move, doubts that the speaker (Smith) was a real person, and asking him to actually *prove* that he was not just some sort of illusion.

- By questioning Smith's status as a real, breathing human being, the assistant would effectively put himself in league with Jones and his philosophical concern about the Camembert. We do not, whilst shopping in a supermarket (or anywhere else for that matter) entertain grave doubts regarding the existence of products, we do not enter retail environments thinking that perhaps nearly everything we see before us may in fact be illusion and that scrupulous checking is essential.

Moving on, in addition to the intrusive move there are non-intrusive acts that are prohibited from appearing in the range of response-types brought into order by Smith's opening move. These are the *bad* moves - moves that may quite

properly feature in other dances within the language-game, and even in a later stage of the Smith dance, but *not* as a follow-on reaction to Smith's opening move. An example of such a bad move (and there are many) would be the assistant issuing a report of the week's specials to Smith:

"This weeks specials are: Chocolate biscuits ...."

- Such a statement would be a spectacular irrelevance and would, more than likely, strike Smith as being rather odd. And importantly, after hearing the report one would not want to *recognise* it by, say, asking what the reduction on chocolate biscuits was. This is to say that the report would not make it fitting for a number of reactions to occur, responses that, if executed, would acknowledge that the report was itself perfectly in order in that part of the dance. Despite this, however, the bad move is not an intrusive one; for, a report on the week's specials would be entirely in order in the context of another conversational dance in the shopping language-game (it's *just* the sort of statement we would expect to witness in a conversation between a customer and a member of staff), or even later on in the Smith dance.

Further on I shall discuss moves that appear to be intrusive but in fact are not. In that section we shall again return to the "bad move" and take a closer look at it.

Let us return now, however, to the general discussion of the concept of a range of response-types. The second main point I wish to make here is that a range of response-types need not consist exclusively of *vocal acts*. As I said, the above list of replies the assistant may give to Smith's opening move is not intended to be exhaustive. We could add to it many other actions that would be right at home in the range. A response-type may, for instance, consist in a certain sort of doubt being entertained, or perhaps a specific type of feeling. A response-type may simply be a bodily action: a facial expression or a gesture/signal of the

hands and/or arms. It would, for example, be perfectly acceptable and quite understandable for the assistant to hold up one finger in that well-known "wait a second" or "just a moment" hand signal, and then go off in search of some fresh long-life milk without having said a word.

On the thought-related side of things (that is, the response-type as a mental act), for the assistant to *try to remember* if there's any milk counts as a possible response-type. Similarly, the assistant might just regard Smith's request as a nuisance, or perhaps as some kind of relief, in that it provides an excuse to go out back and do something different.

In addition to the point that a response-type may be vocal, non-vocal or thought related and so on, another and third major point needs to be noted. For, the response-type may be an act of varying complexity.

Those sorts of actions that are suitable for counter-delivery may be grouped under a number of descriptions. This is to say that what we may properly describe as a response-type may encapsulate a number of actions/procedures, in that we may divide it into sections by successfully identifying different kinds or actions within the one response. By this I do not mean that a reply need always be complex. A response-type may simply consist of a single procedure: a laugh, a look of astonishment, a request to repeat the previous move, a frown. On the complex side, however, Smith's first move may be said to contain *three* distinct sorts of action. First we have a kind of salutation, one designed primarily to secure the assistant's attention. Second, we have a statement: "this long-life milk has almost expired" - the purpose of which is, of course, to convey information. This is followed by a third action: a request for a search to be made, veiled in the form of a question ("Do you think there's any fresh stuff out back?"). And the assistant's reply is also complex. He counter-delivers four separate statements: the milk is not old; it will be drinkable for some time to come; the "best before" date is not concerned with whether or not a product is fit to use; instead it's concerned with whether or not it's at its very best. - All of which is designed to both inform Smith and to challenge him.

Say the assistant chooses to give a reply of the form: "We haven't any fresh

long-life milk, sorry about that. There's a strike, you know. I'm sure, however, we'll have some in by Thursday". Such a move may be said to contain the following actions: a simple statement; an apology; an explanation and another statement, this time one that serves as a kind of promise or guarantee.

A range of response-types may contain, then, many, many procedures that resemble one another. For, the same statement or gesture may crop up in different response-types. The statement about the absence of fresh milk may be regarded as constituting a complete reply, or it may appear alongside other actions in another response. Where there are similarities, we may group various response-types under certain general descriptions so as to help distinguish between very different forms of reply. Thus we may have a list of response-types that includes such procedures as: referring, requesting, apologizing, confirming, denying, questioning, examining, gesturing, thinking (such and such) ... and so on.

Fourthly, we need to understand the effect ordering of the affairs of the world has on a range of response-types. For, what if there *is* some fresh long-life milk that Smith has overlooked? Here a distinction needs to be made between the *complete* range of response-types and the *permitted* range, those actions that are not prohibited by the way the affairs of the world are ordered at the time of a particular step in a dance. Thinking back to the range which Smith's opening move brings into order, one may have the impression that the assistant can, during the *actual* course of the dance, deliver by way of a reply *any* one of the response-types in the range. This is not so, and the reason for this is that any dance is restrained by the way the world is ordered, by the way reality is constructed at the time of its execution. And what I mean here is simply that certain states of affairs prevent a response-type from being a candidate for actual delivery, a response-type that under different circumstances could be executed.

Say, for example, that at the time of the Smith dance there is *in fact* no fresh long-life milk in the supermarket and the assistant Smith has called on *knows* and

remembers this, and, additionally, is not inclined towards trickery and does not suffer from mental confusion (also, let us say that there are no other employees nearby who may enter the dance). - Given that all this is the case, the assistant is unable to counter-deliver the response-type of *affirming* the existence of fresh stock nearby. Of course, if the facts that obtained at the time were ordered a little differently, the affirmation would be possible, even if there was still no milk. For, a mistake on the part of a uniformed or forgetful assistant would be quite in line with the conditions of the dance. It would be perfectly acceptable for a mistaken assistant to reply to Smith that, yes, there *is* some "fresh stuff", and then discover shortly afterwards that in fact there isn't.

A second example: Say that the supermarket Smith is at is not in the practice of storing fresh stock on shelving above the goods that the shoppers have access to (some "no frills" stores do actually keep replacement goods on such shelving). An assistant, then, supposing that he is aware of the absence of fresh stock and any above shelving, cannot perform the action of *checking above*, a procedure that would be quite appropriate as a response-type in a dance that took place in a world where things were a little different, that is, a world in which replacement stock *was* kept on shelving above the goods the public has access to.

A conversational dance, then is *constrained* by the state of affairs that obtains in the world at the time of its occurrence. And as the world changes, various response-types become possible to deliver, while others are denied the chance to be executed. We may depict the difference between those response-types that are not constrained by circumstances, and those which are, without adding too much confusion to our diagrammatic scheme. Those which are denied delivery appear with broken ellipses:

(There is no fresh milk, and the
assistant knows and remembers this).

(The supermarket does not keep any
stock on shelving above the items the
customers have access to).

(AFFIRMATIVE)
(NEGATIVE)
(INSPECTION)
(APOLOGY)
(CHECK ABOVE)
(GESTURE)
(SUGGESTION)

What comes to mind here is the potential vastness of a range of response-types if we are to include those actions that are prohibited. For, a respectable move justifies many sorts of counter-moves or follow-on procedures, and not just a handful. And here "justifies" is not only about those actions that may *actually* be performed, it also concerns those kinds of moves that are fitting to the direction of the dance in the general sense, moves that, due to what is and isn't the case at the time in terms of facts, may be denied the possibility of being executed. We ask: what sorts of action do Smith's opening move make fitting? What kinds of reply would, generally speaking, suit his fist move, given the type of dance and the language-game in which it occurs? - A host of possibilities come to mind, some of which - as we see the factual circumstances of the setting - are clearly forbidden, while others are free to be executed.

Fifthly, a range of response-types that is brought into order need not always be the range that is *expected* or *hoped* for by the person responsible for the move. The reason for this is that an act that is, say, unintentionally rude will bring into order a number of forms of reply a number of which will be unexpected by the issuer of the act. For example, let us make it the case that Smith is a very impatient fellow and has no time for argumentative supermarket staff. Smith may respond with anger, then, to the assistant's suggestion that the long-life milk, despite not being completely fresh, is still perfectly all right to use - a form of reply the assistant would be unprepared for, as he (let us say) imagines his remark to be totally respectable and in no way provocative. Smith's

anger would count as an acceptable type of reaction to the assistant's argumentative claim; and this response is not anticipated by the assistant.

A range of response-types that is successfully brought into order by the delivery of a respectable action within a dance has its scope determined not by the intentions and hopes of the person responsible for the act, but instead by the predetermined rules of the game. This is to say that a move of a certain type brings into order such and such a range of response-types, and that the nature or extent of the range is derived not from what this or that person hopes or imagines is fitting, but instead from *how the game is played*, the way *that* sort of move works in *that* sort of dance in the language-game. Of course, someone who is a good player will *know* what sorts of actions may make up a range, and therefore be able to anticipate the reply he will get. - But this expectation does not itself make up/create the range; what goes into the range is the result of the practice, the custom, the habit of the language-game.

Let us now represent the Smith dance fully, that is from the opening move to when the assistant goes off in search of some "fresh stuff" out back. In the following diagram I have tried to give some indication of the extent of the ranges of response-types involved by including other examples of actions (both possible and not).

(FOR DIAGRAM, SEE OVER)

The basic structure of the dance is as follows. The opening move, because it is one that is in line with the practice of the language-game (or in line with its *rules*), *brings into order* or *makes fitting* a range of response-types, forms of action that may be counter-delivered as replies (in the *general* sense and in the *permitted* sense. The assistant delivers one of these, specifically one of the permitted types (as only he can), and, again, because this counter-act is fitting to the practice of the language-game, another range of response-types is brought into order, another range of reactions is justified. Smith then delivers one of the types from the second range, in so doing bringing into order a third range, from

	SMITH		ASSISTANT	
Details	Description of response-type	Response-type delivered	Description of response-type	Details

(OPENING MOVE)→ "Excuse me. This long-life milk has almost expired. Do you think there's any fresh stuff out back?"

(AFFIRMATION) Saying: "Yes!" or "You bet!"

(DENIAL) Saying "No!" or shaking head

(CHECK ABOVE) (The supermarket does not keep fresh stock "above".)

(QUESTION) Asking: "What brand is that?"

(GESTURE) Raising a finger in the "one moment" gesture.

(APOLOGY) "I'm sorry. That's all there is."

(WITHDRAWAL) Smith withdraws his request, using say "Oh, don't worry!"

←(SUGGESTION)

ETC. ETC.

Asking: "How about (POINTING) this brand?" There is no other brand. Spend time think- (PONDER) ing it over.
"Is there really (QUESTION) no fresh stuff?"
"But I want it at (INSIST) its best!"
"Oh, nevermind!" (DISMISS)

"It's not all that old. It'll be good for some time yet. The expiry date doesn't mean that it will be bad, just that it won't be at its best"

The assistant says (WITHDRAWAL) "But I will have a look for you."
Smith: "It just (CONCEDE) might be good enough"
(INSIST)→

ETC. ETC.

"Listen. I don't intend to use the milk for some time; it'll be well and truly off before I need it. Will you see if there is any fresh stuff out back?"

(QUESTION) Asking: "How long is a while?"

(CHECK ABOVE) (As above.)

(REFERRAL) (Smith cannot be referred to another brand.)

(APOLOGY) Assistant: "Sorry. If there is, I've no idea where it may be."

(DARK THOUGHTS) Thinks: "What a fussy customer!"

(WALKS OFF) Just that: an act of rudeness.

(WITHDRAWAL) Smith: "Look, just forget it."

"Okay. Just wait there. I'll be back shortly."

(The assistant walks off.)

←(CONCEDE)

ETC. ETC.

which the assistant counter-delivers his second move.

It is here that the example ends, as the dialogue ceases when the assistant goes off in search of some fresh long-life milk, an action that itself constitutes one of the response-types from the third range to be brought into order in the dance. The dance, of course, would continue with the return of the assistant and his report to Smith, but as we are concerned here with *structure* we do not need to know the outcome.

Now, the label "conversational dance" is not my own. It is a development of a similar description used by Terry Winograd, who, in his book *Understanding Computers and Cognition: A New Foundation for Design*, presents us (albeit briefly) with the notion that when we engage in communication, any given act of expression sets up a selection of follow-on procedures[1]. Winograd applies the notion to a simple model of conversation for a computer programme. He tells us about a conversational dance in which a character called "A" makes a basic (and unspecified) *request* of a character called "B". This act, says Winograd, brings into order a set of five possible follow-on responses (the range is deliberately restricted for the sake of keeping the programme simple). Following the request, says Winograd, "there are precisely five alternatives: the hearer can accept the conditions (promising to satisfy them), can reject them, or can ask to negotiate a change in the conditions of satisfaction (counter-offer). The original speaker can also withdraw the request before a response, or can modify its conditions" (*Winograd*, 1986 pg 65).

The last two are of particular interest. Winograd suggests, quite correctly, that the range may include *further* action on the part of the person responsible for the preceding move. Applying this to the Smith exchange, it would be quite in order for Smith to say something like "Oh, don't worry!" after his opening move. In other words, another of the response-types his opening move brings into order is the action in which Smith himself withdraws his request for this or that reason (he may simply have changed his mind).

Returning to Winograd's example, Winograd says that as the dance progresses "each action in turns lead to a different state, with its own space of possibilities" (*Ibid*, pg 65), meaning here that for any one executed act an associated range of response-types is brought into order. More than once Winograd emphasises this key aspect:

> At each point in the conversation, there is a small set of possible
> actions determined by the previous history. (*Ibid.* pg 66)

The "small set of possibilities" Winograd speaks of is not just an artefact of the limitations of the programme. The element of restriction is concerned with two important points. Firstly, there is the point that not just *any* kind of action is brought into order by the execution of an act. This we have already covered. Secondly, however, there is what is best termed as the idea of *irreversibility*, the notion that, with a dance underway, many sorts of actions once they have either been executed or have featured in one of the ranges of response-types *cannot again be brought into order.*

The *salutation* comes to mind here. With a dance well and truly underway, the act of *greeting* someone or a number of people *for a second time* cannot feature in the dance. It would be most odd to say hello to someone you have already greeted in the middle of a conversation, it would be just as strange as trying to re-introduce oneself to people who already know who you are. Wittgenstein, in his very last writings, notes the oddness of such utterances:

> I am sitting talking to a friend. Suddenly I say: "I knew all along
> that you were so-and-so". Is that really just a superfluous, though
> true, remark?
> I feel as if these words were like "Good morning" said to someone
> in the middle of a conversation".
>
> (*On Certainty*, S 464)

Unless a person is asked, for various reasons, to repeat himself, he cannot re-issue certain sorts of statements and other, perhaps non-vocal, sorts of actions. Smith, for example, cannot deliver his opening move for a second time at the end of the dance (or, say, when the assistant has returned from making the check). Smith may, however, repeat the opening move if the assistant is deaf (and therefore asks for Smith to repeat himself), or if another person/assistant enters the dance.

There are, on the other hand, some acts that may indeed appear more than once in the same dance. Examples of these are not hard to think of. Asking someone to repeat what they have said is an instance, so too is affirming and/or denying something (that is, saying "yes" and/or "no", or expressing such information with various gestures). We may add to this questions that ask for a point to be clarified, saluting/welcoming new-comers to the dance (and not the same people over and over again), apologizing, laughing, expressing dismay, expressing joy, and of course certain -- though not just any - acts that players have asked to be repeated.

Importantly, the point that some acts are prohibited from appearing for a second time helps us to understand more fully the nature of the *bad* move, as opposed to the *intrusive* move. Like the intrusive move, the bad move fails to bring into order its associated range of response-types. Unlike the intrusive move, however, the bad move may, in another dance or in a different point in the same dance, bring into order its range. The true intrusive move never justifies any of its associated follow-on procedures.

The "Good morning" and "I knew all along that you were so-and-so" Wittgenstein examples are not instances of intrusion, then. For, there are several sorts of actions that, although they fail to bring into order the range of response-types hoped for by the person who initiated them, are still actions that are within the general scope of the practice of the language-game. The report on the week's specials is another such example. It would be quite at home in another sort of dance in the shopping language-game, a dance in which a customer *asks* a shop assistant what's "on special". And it could even feature at

a later stage in the Smith dance: Smith could change his mind about wanting the milk and say something like: "Oh, don't worry. By the way, what's on special this week?" - in so doing setting the stage for the report.

A second example of a bad - but not intrusive - move in the shopping language-game and, specifically, Smith's dance, would be a statement such as: "My Uncle just loves this long-life milk, and so does my Aunt" delivered by the assistant after Smith's opening remark. It would be fine in a dance-discussion in which opinions of the product were being forwarded left right and centre, but not straight after a request. A third example would be a recommendation by the assistant of another and totally unrelated product after Smith has asked for the search "out back". "Have you thought about buying any tinned peas?" would be perfectly acceptable in another supermarket dance, or perhaps at a later stage of the Smith dance (say, when the search is completed), but in no way is it at home after the first move.

I cannot overstress this point. The above examples are not instances of intrusive procedures; they are examples of bad/misplaced moves. They are not intrusive because these sorts of actions may be quite successfully executed in other dances in the supermarket language-game and/or at a later stage of the Smith exchange.

It is here that we may see the exact nature of the kosher intrusive move. For, an intrusive move is not just one that fails to bring into order or make fitting its associated range of response-types on this or that occasion (but not on others), it is one that fails to justify the counter-delivery of its follow-on procedures *in every dance it attempts to feature in* a given language-game. And this is to say that it is totally alien, to use Malcolm's term, to the practice of the language-game: no matter what dance we put it in, it can never work effectively as a fitting move (i.e. one that brings into order its response-types).[2]

Thinking back to the Jones example, is it really possible to imagine Jones's claim about the Camembert being taken seriously *anywhere* in the shopping language-game? Are we perhaps to suppose that the staff in the cheese section have already established through many careful investigations that their cheeses

won't turn into plastic, and that it is because of this that the assistant won't, even for a second, *think* of treating Jones's claim in the manner Jones expects? - I cannot believe that anywhere in the shopping language-game there is an appropriate place, an appropriate dance for the concerns of Jones. Taking seriously the idea that a product may magically transform itself into something *totally* different and quite useless would, in the context of a retail system, create intolerable complications for the day-to-day practice of business.[3] My claim here is that it is just an obvious truth that Jonesian controversies do not at all feature in the custom of the shopping language-game, that they never have and, unless products actually *do* start turning themselves into "other things", they never will.

NOTES

1. Interestingly, Winograd notes that his proposal is not, to use his words, "a model of the mental state of a speaker or hearer". He says it "shows the conversation as a *dance*". His aim here is to emphasize the behaviourial side of discourse, that is, to forward the idea that the language involved has no real or significant private mental side to it, and that the *meaning* of actions is to be understood in terms of their placement in the dance, especially their relation to follow-on procedures. (*Winograd*, 1986 pg 64).

2. In this sense an intrusive move is not just a poorly executed speech-act. For, a bad speech-act may work a second time around, in another dance in the language-game. There is nothing strange about happily executed acts such as placing a bet ("I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow") or naming a ship ("I name this ship the H.M.S. Smith"). For, these acts may, under the right conditions be totally respectable procedures in the language-game. If the timing is right, nothing untoward strikes us about a person making a bet or naming a ship. However, the time never seems to be right for the sorts of problematic concerns Jones wishes to raise

(except, perhaps, when doing philosophy!).

3.   Could we imagine a business being successful in a world where the idea that objects were liable to suddenly change or vanish into thin air was taken seriously? Would people even attempt to go shopping if they needed to be constantly on the look-out for phoney merchandise and their minds were racked with doubts about this or that product? Surely there would be a great deal of debate and confusion, and it would be hard to imagine any *absolute* guarantees being given. Also, it would be just as hard to think of such langauge behaviour going on in the absence of any real threat of objects turning into worthless replicas, that is, if things never actually changed their composition.

CHAPTER THREE

RELIGION AND INTRUSION

The discourse that takes place in a language-game does so within the framework of the conversational dance. Those moves or actions that may participate in the innumerable dances of a language-game are ones that are fitting to the practice of the game, they are typical of the way players behave in the system. Intrusion amounts to behaviour that is not at all customary to the workings of a language-game; no matter what dance we try to locate an intrusive act in, the result is always the same: the failure to bring into order the associated range of response-types.

The Jones claim was an *extreme* example of this, so extreme in fact that we would think it highly unlikely for such a claim to be made (let alone treated seriously) in the shopping language-game. Let us now, however, confront some less extreme examples, a group of intrusive acts that, in contrast to the Jones and artillery examples, do not obviously appear as preposterous and intrusive. For, unlike the extreme examples, we *do* actually meet this second set from time to time in the affairs of the world about us, that is, this second set of examples is a *real* set, in the sense that these moves are actually made.

The cases are those tricky and often embarrassing philosophical 'problems' we come across now and again in the context of what are decidedly non-philosophical *forms of life*. The examples are of varying complexity, and for the sake of clarity we shall concentrate on the more simple cases.

Earlier I said that Norman Malcolm regarded as language-games the disciplines of science and religion.[1] Religion is the more useful of the two for us, in that it is part of the habit and delight of philosophy to give theism a fairly good beating from time to time. Consider the following 'problems' that philosophers think they have generated for theism, 'problems' that deal with the issue of the extent and exact nature of God's power. They are, in my view, undeniably intrusive:

1.   If God has unlimited power, meaning he is "all-powerful" and can do

"anything", can he build a wall over which he cannot climb?

2.   If God is omnipotent, and can perform any task what-so-ever, can he make a stone that is *SO* heavy he cannot lift it?

3.   Is God, whose abilities are limitless, able to construct a square triangle?

Most philosophers would say that the above difficulties are not nonsenses, and that we - and certainly *they* - are perfectly justified in presenting theism with such problems. Anyone will tell you, after all, that talk of a divine being who possesses infinite power (besides many other quite startling properties) cannot but fail to invite some kind of philosophical scrutiny, especially seeing as such a being is actually supposed to exist. With the Jones example one may have felt that the assistant was perhaps excused from being answerable to that ridiculous claim about the Camembert. Many, however, do not have that sentiment when it comes to the business of the nature of God's power. The stone, wall and other similar paradoxes and 'problems' are not, so the story goes, at all silly or out-of-place, and it is most certainly a case of theism (alongside all other language-games, incidently) being answerable to the analysis of philosophy. I want to say just the opposite.

This paper aims to advance the case for the autonomy of language-games by presenting a clear and concise account of that in which autonomy consists. A language-game, I wish to argue, is self-governing in that it is not answerable to moves that are alien/unknown to its practice. This is to say that autonomy consists in a game not being accountable to intrusive procedures. The apparatus of the conversational dance explains precisely what is intrusive, and my claim here is that the philosophical paradoxes are true examples of intrusion into the custom of a language-game.

Let us return to the language-game of religion and the above-listed paradoxes. Certainly, if we were to try to locate these philosophical problems within the game as moves in a dance we would meet with a distinct lack of recognition on the part of the players. And here by lack of recognition I mean that the moves would fail to qualify as legitimate difficulties in the religious system, they wouldn't be treated as kosher problems relating to the subject of God's power. What this really means, I am suggesting, is that they would fail to bring into order their ranges of response-types: if they were taken as proper concerns, then one would expect the players of the game to engage in all sorts of activities that showed the matters were effective as problems relating to the issue.

- Such activities, however, do not occur. Questions about square triangles, exceptionally high walls and unbelievably heavy stones *do not* feature in the day-to-day life of the religious, both lay and clergy. One does not hear sermons on the power of God in which the stone paradox is grappled with, nor is it the habit of other religious forums to wrestle with such subject-matter. Prayers, liturgies – both formal and informal – as well as creeds and scriptures are all free of these 'problems'. It is just an empirical fact that theists do not permit in the practice of the religious language-game the paradoxes and similar problems to hold ground as matters to be investigated, debated, preached on, prayed over, worried about and so on. These sorts of philosophical concerns just aren't present.[2]

All this, however, is not to say that religion, specifically *Western* religion, is in terms of its scope of internalized critical monitoring, how shall I put it? *superficial*, that theism is largely devoid of a significant self-evaluatory/critical dimension.

- Far from it. *Internal* to the workings of any language-game one meets with what counts as grave concerns and controversies. A language-game has its *own* criteria which determine what is to be treated as a difficulty and what is not. Religion without a doubt contains a great deal of material that strikes its players as being problematic and, in some cases, philosophically so.

The problem of evil, for instance, is an example of a philosophical concern that arises in religion. The existence of God in the face of so much apparently

needless suffering and evil works effectively as an issue to shake the life of faith and daunt the believer. The matter counts as a legitimate puzzle for the believer, one to be worried over and dwelt on. And we may add to this genuine problem other inconsistencies, like the confusion surrounding predestination: the conflict between the doctrines of free will and grace, as well as less philosophical matters such as the dispute between Catholics and Protestants over the authority of the Bishop of Rome. Our list could include doctrines like transubstantiation, and the extent of God's power in view of the person and influence of Satan. We have, I contend, an abundance of controversial material within the langauge-game of religion, material that is far from being superficial and free of significant philosophical content.

1. Accountability, then, does exist, but it exists as a process, as a procedure that is *internal* to the language-game. This is to say that all forms of critical inquiry that are binding to the workings of the game (in that they are effective as procedures of this or that sort) must take place or be conducted under the terms of the system. Malcolm puts it very nicely:

> *Within* a language-game there is justification and
> lack of justification, evidence and proof, mistakes
> and groundless opinions, good and bad reasoning,
> correct measurement and incorrect ones. One
> cannot properly apply these terms to a langauge-
> game itself.
>
> (*Malcolm*, 1977 pg 208)

In the very next sentence he elaborates on the notion of self-justification.

> It [the language-game] may, however, be said to be
> "groundless", not in the sense of a groundless opinion,
> but in the sense that we accept it, we live it. We
> can say, "This is what we do. This is how we are".
>
> (*Ibid.* pg 208)

- With fundamentalist Christianity, for example, something is considered to be true if it is stated clearly in the Bible. If a doctrinal dispute arises, it is customary to make recourse to scripture and there to try and show that, what ever the point is that one is backing, it is supported by "God's word". "Can a Christian, who is invested with God's holy spirit, be possessed by a demon?" – Those theists who answer "yes" will have pointed out to them various scriptural quotations opposing their view, and they in turn may defend their position with other biblical references. A good argument is one with a clear and massive scriptural backing; a poor argument is one lacking in biblical endorsement. This is how the game is played, this is how fundamentalists "think and act". The primacy of scripture is uncontested, and all evaluations are conducted in relation to its standing. When a believer asks of a specific teaching: "why does it seem wrong?", he compares it to what he knows and believes about biblical theology, and not to, say, any philosophical/logical objections he has come across. Questionable religious teachings are judged in view of what is known about biblical content, and not in relation to any logical criterion or some other external source.

2. A language-game, then, contains its own criteria that determine what is to count as an action of this or that kind. And importantly, there are no *overall* criteria that we may apply to the vast array of language-games, there are no universal rules that stipulate from game to game what is to work as a rational line of criticism, or what is to count as a full explanation or a good defense of one's actions and views. The only justification that we are to speak about in relation to a language game in that which is its own.

3. Additionally, in any game accountability as a procedure is limited, it has boundaries placed on it, in that there are conditions of *adequacy*. In giving an explanation or justification, one arrives at a point where satisfaction is attained, where *it is obvious* that a good enough excuse or account has been forwarded, and that if anyone were to make further demands it would appear

unreasonable and unnecessary. For example, in answering a query about the freshness of a certain item, a supermarket worker might point to the date stamped on the product and tell us how the item arrived fresh that very morning. This action *convinces* us, we would not wish to doubt or question further, we would not ask for proof that the date was genuine or that the assistant was not somehow tricking us and telling lies. A second example: We ask a shop attendant if there is any more of a certain product. We are told "no" and that the reason for this is that there has been a problem with the supplier. The attendant adds that he has recently checked, and he sounds quite certain and sure of himself. - We cannot and do not question him further, asking for proof that he was not being malicious. We take him at his word and simply leave the matter there. Again, Malcolm:

> Within a system of thinking and acting [i.e. a language-game] there occurs, *up to a point*, investigation and criticism of the reasons and justifications that are employed in that system. This inquiry into whether a reason is good or adequate cannot go on endlessly. We stop it. We bring it to an end. We come upon something that *satisfies* us. It is *as if* we made a decision or issued an edict: "*This* is an adequate reason!" (or explanation, or justification). Thereby we fix a boundary of our language-game.
>
> (*Ibid.* pg 210)

Wittgenstein notes that when we can no longer pursue a justification or explanation we must simply confront the fact that we have reached a limit and *that* is how the game is played - namely with *that* as a limit. The final explanation that we can give is that *this* is how we behave in the system, *this* is how we live:

If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: "This is simply what I do".

<div align="right">(Investigations, S 217)</div>

Returning to the examples concerned with the fundamentalist use of scripture, with Christianity, the fact that the Bible says "such and such" is often – especially with children - considered to be a final or complete proof for something. A child might ask its believing fundamentalist parents: "why is it wrong to hit Jimmy?" and be told that it's wrong because God says so, and that he says so in the Bible. Or we may ask the fundamentalist: "how do you know such and such happened to Christ?", and he will reply: "because it says so in the Bible, and the Bible is God's word". - And there it ends. For the believer and his children the justification is complete, and in their minds there can be no further questioning, no further doubting. That, of course, is how the language-game is played.

4. We are wrong to press beyond the boundaries of a system, to insist that *this* or *that* matter must be addressed and has a right to feature in the discourse as effective controversies of such and such a kind. Besides those lines of investigation that are internal to a language-game, we cannot ask why a given *form of life* is the way it is, why the procedure for this or that activity terminates where it does. Says Wittgenstein:

> Our mistake is to look for an explanation where we
> ought to look at what happens as a 'proto-
> phenomenon'. That is, where we ought to have said:
> *this language-game is played.*

<div align="right">(Ibid. S 654)</div>

Now Wittgenstein's explanation of the points (1) to (4) is, in effect, an explanation of the phenomenon I have been calling "autonomy". And Wittgenstein gives us a solution for dealing with the intrusive procedure: we are to *insist* on the primacy and autonomy of the language-game, in so doing refusing to acknowledge the intrusive action.

The autonomy of a language-game is manifest in its ability to make certain kinds of moves - criticisms, controversies and so on - seem ridiculously out-of-place and irrelevant. And the sorts of moves I have in mind are decidedly philosophical ones; they are often ones contrived by philosophers for the purpose of, allegedly, clarifying some point or claim, or explicating some concept, as well as pointing out "wrong" ideas, illogical thinking and various inconsistencies. Yet this is not a whole sale dismissal of philosophical investigations; for, many genuine forms of philosophical inquiry may be right at home in this or that language-game (just consider the "free will versus grace" and "problem of evil examples"). My point here is really only that there are still real intrusive acts, and that philosophy furnishes us with an abundance of examples.

NOTES

1.   The claim that religion - or a religion - is a language-game has been hotly disputed. Patrick Sherry and Richard Bell express the view that it is not religion or a single religion that should be seen as a *form of life*, but rather certain religious activities: praying, hoping, telling parables, prophesying and reporting events of sacred history (*Sherry*, 1977 pg 23). They claim that, in line with Wittgenstein's doctrine that it does not make sense to ask for a justification of a language-game, we may not properly ask for a justification of a language-game, we may not properly ask for a justification of hoping, praying, etc., but that we may ask for such in relation to a given religion. For Sherry and Bell, apologetics counts as proof that justification of religion is in order. They argue that *because* justifications are given, religion cannot be a language-game, and,

furthermore, because no-one ever asks for a justification of hoping in general, hoping (along with other basic forms of action) *does* count as a language-game.

2. These are very bold claims, and in order to avoid obvious counter-examples (from, say, eastern and obscure western cultic sources) all I really need to do is divide religion into many separate language-games and identify one tradition where philosophy is not at all at home. I believe that such an example is to be found in the present-day Christian denominations that are described as *charismatic movements*. Even the professionals associated with this brand of Christianity have no time for entertaining the concerns of Philosophy, those of them that are aware that such 'controversies' exist.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE SEMANTIC BACKGROUND

We need now to examine what, if any, so-called justification there may be for advancing philosophically-styled intrusive 'problems'. Why does philosophy assume that it is perfectly warranted in raising those tricky paradoxes against theism, paradoxes that religion itself has little or no time for? On what does the confidence of the philosopher (or whoever backs such 'controversies') rest? What is to be noted here is essentially a *semantic* point or assumption, one that is best arrived at indirectly.

Those people who pursue the believer and his many extraordinary claims, would doubtless themselves wish to claim that their understanding of the meaning of the religious terminology they're looking at is really no different from that of the believer's. This is basically to say that when the investigator talks about God (or what-have-you), he *means the same thing* as the theist, he has in mind the same general sort of notion. Certainly, there might be slight conceptual variation. One person's understanding of "God" may entail no limit on, say, the extent of God's love, while another person's view may have it that not everyone is loved by the almighty. Basically, however, the same meanings are still involved here: The philosopher's "God" does not refer to a concept that is wildly at odds with the theist's; the two of them both have the same meaning in mind when they discuss divinity. The philosopher, for instance, would not call "God" something the theist would refer to as a "saint" or "prophet".

All this, I contend, is rather uncontroversial. Most people would agree that a philosopher - and others - are quite capable of understanding or taking the meaning of a good deal of (if not all) religious terminology. - The point, despite its apparent neutrality, is immensely useful to us, for, the explanation of meaning here is essentially the old story about people (the philosopher and the theist) sharing common *concepts* when they talk about something. And these concepts can only be the meaning-referents of the terms under investigation.

It would appear that there is some kind of referential semantics in the background here, a semantics that philosophy doesn't seem to be very worried about. For, many philosophers speak quite openly of *precise* concepts when it comes to the meaning of religious terms. The noun "God" is commonly said to refer, for instance, to the notion of an omniscient, omnipotent and perfectly benevolent being - and, what's more, it is often stated rather matter-of-factly that *unless* one has *this* concept in mind when one uses the word in the divine sense (in contrast to, say, the blasphemous), then one can't, strictly speaking, be said to know the *true* or *complete* meaning of "God".

Moreover, a natural move on the part of the investigator is, in asking after the meaning of this or that theistic term, to ask for the *concepts* that are involved. And it all seems a pretty harmless and entirely justified exercise. After all, how better to find out what the meaning of a word is than to come to an understanding of the idea it supposedly signifies?

But what has an apparent referential semantics got to do with the supposed justification of intrusive moves? Well, I believe there is a connection. Referentialism incorporates the idea that referents may be approached or dealt with *in a number of ways*, that provided one has in mind the correct referent-meanings, one is able to discuss and dissect the ideas in question in the manner of one's choosing. Regardless of who is using the term, because it picks out the same referent/concept, the user is able to deal with the concept in any way he chooses. The philosopher may say: "I am able to ask these troublesome questions and raise these awkward matters in relation to *God* because I am referring to the very same thing as the theist when he talks about God!" - The philosopher is not wanting to mean by "God" anything different from the believer.

Let me go through this key point slowly. We begin with the simple notion and so-called truth that when the philosopher talks about God in the divine sense, he *means* the *same thing* as the theist. This, surely, is an uncontroversial point. The philosopher is just as able as the theist to *use* the term properly. He avoids grievous mistakes, such as thinking that by "God" one means "the Arch-bishop of Canterbury" or "the Pope" (as a primitive or simple mind may take the word to

mean), and challenging the theist, saying; "You're wrong! Your God is quite visible - there are *countless* photos of him!" So, when the philosopher uses the term in relation to his many and varied investigations into the divine, the same referent as the theist's application of the word is picked out. So long as the philosopher refers to the same thing as the theist - and doesn't mistakingly refer to, say, the Pope, he is free to deal with the concept/referent in any way he chooses, *because his usage of the term - no matter what it may amount to - involves the correct referent being picked out.*

The players of the religious language-game are not the only people who are able to use theistic language therefore. Divinity may be grappled with by professional philosophers through to supermarket staff, and although the issues and depth of analysis varies, the numerous and different criticisms and concerns are all justified by the fact that, when all is said and done, everyone is trafficking in goods (or, more accurately, in *referents*) that are common property. When the philosopher (or whoever) talks about "God" in the divine sense, he *means* the same thing as the theist, the term "God" as used by the philosopher stands for or refers to the same object/meaning as the theist's employment of the word.

This presents us with a kind of *fair game* doctrine, the idea that, because the correct objects are being identified in the use of theistic terminology, they can be dealt with in any of a number of ways, and therefore no one way is especially privileged. The believer may try to object to this *fair game* doctrine. He may claim that if the sceptics and company *really* knew what was meant by "God", etc., then they would know not to raise those tricky 'problems'. Like the players of the language-game, in knowing the meaning of religious jargon, one refrains from specific lines of inquiry and other telling remarks. For instance, in understanding the meaning of "miracle" and "prayer" one does not make comments like: "Will it help, when I pray to God, if I use a radio transmitter?" and "I would like to know, from the point of view of science, how it is possible to make a blind man see *just* by *telling* him to open his eyes".

Furthermore, the theist might say that because such questions are raised, because people make these silly objections, the intruders demonstrate their

ignorance of the true meaning of the terms they purport to be explicating.

These objections, however, assume too much. They assume that an accurate knowledge of the meaning - and, therefore, the use - of religious language *excludes* those controversial paradoxes and other philosophical trouble-makers. It is the justification of these criticisms that is the very question that is under examination here. The philosophers claim that they *do* know what, for example, the proper meaning of "God" is, and they are able to demonstrate this understanding by using the term in many perfectly acceptable and totally uncontroversial ways, ways that the theist himself knows and practices. The issue is *how may this language be used?*, can the paradoxes be raised? Certainly, if one does know the correct meaning, then one *automatically* understands how to use - and not to use - the word; but it is precisely this issue of *how* the language is to be used, or *what* use is *permissable* that is so central here.

The philosopher's so-called justification for the way he treats theistic language is founded on an assumed referentialism. What apparently justifies the paradoxes being raised is the alleged fact that the religious language/terminology involved is connected with the correct referent-meanings, and that because of this there can be no reason why the terms "God", "omnipotent" and so on cannot be dealt with in a philosophical manner, that is, investigated by philosophy. Because, say, the philosopher of religion *means* the *same thing* as the theologian (or any other theist) when he deals with God" etc., because his use of the term in the stone paradox (and all the others) *picks out* or *stands for* the right object, he is free to go about his business. So long as the correct meaning is involved, so long as by "God" he jolly well *means "God* - the divine creator and ruler of the universe, etc. etc.", the object/referent is *fair game*, and God may be scrutinized from any angle.

Now, for many, the idea that a term's meaning consists in some kind of referent - especially a *conceptual* referent - is an obvious, uncontroversial and natural truth. A belief in the role of words as symbols is a commonly held position. The task of signification (i.e. the role that some words have as

supposedly signifying referent-meanings, like concepts) has been a popular semantics for quite some time. Russell, in *The Principles of Mathematics*, begins with the assumption that every word in a sentence must have some referential meaning. He says: *"Words* all have meaning, in the simple sense that they are symbols which stand for something other than themselves" (pg 47.)

- The nature of the referent, however, is not my primary concern here. What matters is that, basically, when it comes to the justification of certain philosophical lines of inquiry, signification/referentialism is assumed. As Russell says, words are symbols that *stand for* something, whatever that something might be. Importantly, the justification of intrusive procedures *depends* on a referential semantics: the philosophical treatment or analysis of religious language is based on the assumption that because the correct referents are being picked out, there can be no restrictions on the way they may be used.

One way, of course, to undermine the philosopher's justification is to attack and destroy the semantics of referentialism. By proving once and for all that signification is quite mistaken when it comes to the story of meaning, one will manufacture a very strong case against the right to intrude. Such a grandiose aim, however (and mercifully), is neither practical for a paper of this size nor, indeed, desirable for the objectives I have in mind.

My aim, instead, is to juxtapose the referential story (with its endorsement of intrusion) and the scheme of the conversational dance, with its account of discourse in a language-game and its explanation of why certain actions strike us as being odd. Dance theory, as we shall see, is not at all open to a referential semantics. Yet, we may compare the value of referentialism with that the scheme of the conversational dance has, in its ability to fully explain intrusion, present a plausible interpretation of human communication, and shed a great deal of light on the nature of the language-game. Additionally, by showing that referentialism is unsuited to the story of language, as told to us through dance theory, the justification of intrusion outlined above appears less formidable.

We need now to look at why a referential semantics is unsuited to the conversational dance analysis. Three telling points show that the sort of meaning we meet in the conversational dance is far from being akin to that of the story of signification.

Our first point concerns what we are to treat as being the *basic unit of meaning* within each system. What are we to identify as the fundamental item that possesses meaning?

On the referential story, the *word* or *term* clearly stands out as the basic unit of meaning. What, asks the philosopher of religion, is the meaning of God", "omnipotent", "omniscient", "omnipresent" and so on? What concepts or referents do these words *stand* for/*refer* to?

With the conversational dance story behind us, however, is it just as easy to ask the same sort of question in relation to the way words are presented to us in that apparatus? Looking at the way the concept of the conversational dance depicts discourse to us, do words stand out as the primary bearers of meaning? Or is there another candidate? I believe there *is* another candidate. Consider the following observations.

Under dance theory, when a person is engaged in conversation he is, before anything else, concerned with the successful execution of response-types, he is concerned with delivering actions that are fitting to the direction, to the style of the dance he is involved in. What this means is that there is a primary emphasis on the *correct* exchange of moves, the correct exchange of actions that may or may not contain a vocal component. A player offers a reaction in response to a previous action (one that may even by his own); it is basically a dance of move-types. This is to say that the *currency* of any conversational dance is *the response-type*. The word here, as a component that is not always necessary in a dance move (for there are innumerable non-vocal move-types), appears in a decidedly secondary position. An effective conversational dance consists of a succession of fitting/related dance-moves: an opening move brings into order a range of possible responses, one of which is taken up and issued in counter-delivery (the second move in the dance). This second act brings into

order another range... and so on - it is the *choice of move* that matters before any choice of words that may be involved (and to stress, again, that all-important point: a response-type need not consist of any spoken word, sometimes a simple gesture will suffice).

It is by coming to grips with the way specific acts bring into order ranges of response-types, as well as how they themselves were brought into order (along with other acts) by a preceding action, that one becomes effectively acquainted with the significance and workings of the dance in progress. And by concentrating on a specific action, what range it makes fitting as well as its origins, one gains an understanding of what we should properly refer to as its *meaning*.[1] This leads us, I suggest, to identify the *response-type* as the basic unit of meaning. When we see language, as presented to us under the terms of the conversational dance, we do not witness a presentation of *concepts*, instead we see the presentation of *action*. The conversation of a language-game does not primarily appear to consist of *ideas* being forwarded. What strikes us as having priority over any advancement of ideas that may be taking place is the execution of a complex relation of speech-acts, or response-types.

On the referential story, having identified the word as the basic unit of meaning, one then asks, from case to case, what it signifies, what it stands for or refers to. In the case of religious terminology, many theistic terms are said to refer to quite precise concepts, and often these concepts are claimed to *define* the terms. - Here the *word* is depicted as an obvious item to stand in the referring relation. When it comes to the conversational dance, however, it is not clear that the response-type - as essentially a type of *action* - is also the sort of item that may stand in the referring relation. Unlike the *word*, and on a straightforward intuitive level, the response-type is not an *obvious* symbolic entity; nothing seems to present itself as a candidate for the referent. Here then is a major difficulty in translating the dance story into referential terms: the basic unit of meaning (that which we are led to identify as the primary bearer of meaning) doesn't seem to be the sort of thing that signifies anything.

The second reason for rejecting the application of referential semantics on to dance theory is just as obvious and telling as the first.

Given that a *number* of different words may be used to deliver the same kind of response-type (for example, an affirmation may be made using words like "yes", "aha", "absolutely", "too right", "you bet" and so on), it is obvious that when engaged in a conversational dance, one is not *first* choosing what words one is to use; one is instead deciding on the appropriate *form of action*, one is paying attention to the sorts of actions that may be delivered. This places a natural emphasis on the *use* of words in a dance, or, more accurately, on the way they are *danced* with. With the natural emphasis on the selection and execution of response-types, we see the word merely as an item that is allowed to feature in this or that action, as an item that is used *this* way in one act, and *that* way in another.

- Therefore, in seeking after the possible meaning of such and such a term, one need really only ask after *how it is being danced with in the language-game.* And this is to ask: what move-types is it able to feature in in a conversational dance? -And by understanding the role a given word may play in a game, that is, by understanding the scope of its application in the numerous response-types permitted it, one understands all and any meaning it has. Any account of the meaning of words may be dealt with by simply explaining their role, the extent of their participation in the various move-types. One may ask: "What is meant by this word *God*?", and a report on the way "God" is used in the dances of the language-game will explain the word's significance, the word's meaning. One would see that it features in acts such as "God is all-loving", "I love God" and "God forgave me", while being absent from those questions about square triangles and very heavy stones (questions that do not, in the first place, appear in the language-game). One appreciates the meaning of "God" when one sees what is *done* with it in the dances of the language-game.

Moreover, a *training* in the application of the term in the various dance types permitted it would impart to one an understanding of the term's meaning. And this is to say that *learning how to behave* in the language-game with the

vocabulary, learning what acts *this* word may feature in, what acts *that* word works in, equips one with a knowledge of the meaning involved. One needs nothing else.

Such observations add up to a familiar notion: The general idea that a word's meaning is to be understood in terms of *how it is used* is, of course, not new. It belongs first and foremost to the work of the later Wittgenstein[2]. My point here is just to highlight how nicely the notion works in relation to the scheme and semantics suggested by the conversational dance.

One may object that even players of the religious language-game speak of words such as "God" referring to certain ideas (omnipotent etc.) which make up their "meanings", and that *that* suggests to us that there must be some kind of referential semantics involved. - We can now, however, meet this objection easily. For, the act of saying that such and such a word *refers* to this or that idea is *itself* a move-type, a form of action in the language-game. And where we see such statements in a dance, we may describe that conversational dance as *the referral dance*, as the players of the religious language-game (or *a* religious language-game) are allowed to say that their "God" can be defined in terms of X, Y, Z. - That is, it is part of the practice or habit of the language-game to dance in such a way as to express - one way or another - the view that "God" can be and, indeed, *is* to be understood in terms of such and such a concept.

In other words, part of the dance routine of "God" is its involvement in a response-type we may call *referral*: a speech-act that consists of a statement to the effect that "God" stands for the concepts X Y Z. When we hear talk of the meaning of a word consisting in a specific idea (as a kind of referent), we must recognise that this act of saying that the word's meaning consists in a defining concept is only and merely one of the sorts of moves permitted the word by the language-game, and in no way indicative of proof of a referential semantics.

This business centering on the use of a word highlights our third major difficulty in attempting to translate the semantics of the conversational dance into referential terms.

Most philosophers will grant that if someone is said to know the meaning of a word, then they must also automatically know how, more or less, it is to be used. That is, one knows how to use a term *in virtue of its meaning*.

If I know the meaning of, say, "impressionism" (i.e. the art genre), then I know roughly what sorts of works of art I am able to call examples of impressionism, as well as those that cannot be described in such a way. I know to use "impressionism" in talk about a movement in art history, and I may even know how to *define* it or give it some other kind of technical description. - And I'm able to do all this because I understand its meaning; and on the referential story, knowing the meaning of a word entails somehow being in touch with its referent, the *thing* signified.

With the scheme of the conversational dance, in order to understand the meaning and/or sense of a word, one need really only be acquainted with its application in the game, that is, how it is danced with. Take, for instance, the noun "manager", as we meet it and use it in the shopping language-game. We appreciate the significance "manager" has in, say, the supermarket context by finding out just what moves-types (or response-types) are permitted of it. One understands the sense of "manager" as used in that system by getting a feel for the way it is employed in the various acts that make up the customary practice of the language-game[3]. Players in the system are, for example, able (in certain dances) to *entertain doubts* regarding the manager's professional competence, or, say, his motivation for the job. Players are also able to *question* whether or not the manager is a fair or nice person. They may *accuse* him of being disorganized, or lavish praise on him for generosity. The manager may be asked a host of questions and have numerous queries made in relation to him: "is he at work today?"; "When will he be back from lunch?"; "Does the manager know that the long-life milk has arrived?" The players may *thank* him, *criticise* him, *curse* him, *report* on his instructions and whereabouts, ask others for their

opinion of him, *inform* him of a number of happenings... and so on.

- The list, though finite, is long and of enormous scope. "Manager" features in a multiplicity of response-types in the shopping system.

Of course, knowing what is permissible entails knowing what is not. There are certain actions, certain procedures denied of "manager", actions that appear nowhere in the practice of the shopping language-game, and specifically the supermarket context. One does not, for example, witness Jonesian demands for proof that the manager is not an automaton, or some kind of illusion or figment of the imagination. Similarly, in the everyday practice of the game the players never issue – out of the blue, so to speak - statements like: "the manager exists!" or "the manager breathes air and has arms and legs!" or "the manager is a homosapien!" Nor, indeed, do players worry about whether or not the manager will melt or turn into liquid or go stale. - The players, who know how to dance with the term, don't even *think* about performing such ridiculous actions. In line with some observations Wittgenstein makes about everyday objects such as chairs and trees, this second class of intrusive action appear, as Wittengstein puts it, *unjustified* and *presumptuous*[4].

The participation of "manager" in the response-types of the shopping language-game is by no means unrestricted. Nor, on the other hand, is it greatly restrained. The above discussion and examples aimed to show that its employment is extensive and varied. The language-users of the game are acquainted with a wide range of moves that encapsulate the term, and this training constitutes a complex and impressive body of knowledge.

Returning to the notion that knowledge of the use of a word comes from understanding its meaning, and keeping in mind how this point may be applied to a referential semantics, our third major difficulty becomes apparent. For, if one knows how to use a word *in virtue of its meaning*, and pretending for the moment that words in the conversational dance analysis may possess referent-meanings, how could knowledge of such meanings possibly equip someone with the training in the application of a given term in the many, many dances permitted it in the language-game? How, *purely* in virtue of knowing that, say, "manager" stands

for *this* referent-meaning, is one able to dance properly with the word? How does one know to refrain from making those intrusive and ridiculous moves? How does one know what sorts of moves the word is allowed to feature in?

It is not clear how, just by being in touch with this or that referent, one is qualified to behave properly with the symbol associated with it. The standard line has it that if one knows the meaning of a word then one knows - fairly well but not necessarily perfectly - how to use it[5], or in other words: one knows how to use a word in virtue of its meaning; yet when it comes to the conversational dance story and the application of referential semantics thereon, it is something of a mystery as to how knowledge of a given term's meaning can entail the complex training its successful participation in the dances depends on. The referentialist does not have a natural or easy explanation of use here at all.

NOTES

1. Winograd has a similar point. He stresses that any meaning we are to take from certain actions in a dance is to be understood in terms of how they are placed in the exchange of moves. He urges us to look at what acts preceded them and what follow-on action takes place. He sums up this notion in the following: "Meaning arises in listening to the commitment expressed in speech-acts" (*Winograd*, 1986 pg 68). - We understand the function of this or that action by coming to grips with the possibilities its successful execution brings into order, we understand what sort of action has taken place by looking closely at the kinds of activities that follow it and precede it.

2. *Philosophical Investigations* S 43: "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."

3. "One understands the meaning of *manager* in terms of *how it is used.*" We learn the significance of a term by coming to grips with the scope of its application. (And here by "application" I am referring to the way it is danced with in the routine of the system of a language-game). Wittgenstein gives us a few brief remarks on the *scope* of "God":

> Luther said that theology is the grammar of the word "God". I interpret this to mean that an investigation of the word would be a grammatical one. For example, people might dispute about how many arms God had, and someone might enter the dispute by denying that one could talk about arms of God. This would throw light on the use of the word.
>
> (*Wittgenstein's Lectures Cambridge 1932-1935*, pg 82)

- Just as a lowly supermarket employee could not properly be said to quite understand the meaning of "manager" if he were to try to give his boss orders or speak to him as an equal in the hierarchy of the supermarket organization, so to someone cannot be said to understand the meaning of "God" if he insists on trying to give God precise bodily attributes. In the religious language-game (or a specific religious language-game) such acts are not permitted of the term; the players do not dance that way with it.

4. *On Certainty* S 553: "It is queer: if I say, without any special occasion, "I know" - for example, "I know that I am sitting in a chair", this statement seems to me unjustified and presumptuous. But if I make the same statement where there is some need of it, then, although I am not more certain of its truth, it seems to me to be perfectly justified and everyday."

5.   The extent of a term's *application* or use is known as its *extension*. The standard account of how we come to use a term in relation to certain *things* is that all objects that fall within the extension of a term have some *common properties* or characteristics which lead us to use the same word to denote them. Few philosophers claim that in knowing the use/extension of a term one knows *every* possible object to which it may be applied, or, if it is a noun, what function it has. One may, for example, know the meaning of "fruit", yet fail to identify several examples of fruit due to, say, their unusual nature or their more common description under another label (e.g. tomato).

CHAPTER FIVE

AUTONOMY: THE IMPOSSIBLE FORTRESS?

On three rather serious counts then referentialism does not appear as a semantics that is fitting to the scheme of the conversational dance. For, the dance recognises the response-type before the word as the fundamental unit of meaning, in so doing hinting strongly at a radically different semantics when it comes to any meaning we may talk about in relation to the word-pool of a language-game. This alternative "dance" semantics is the second difficulty, and it brings to light the third problem: the inability of knowledge of a word's referent-meaning (pretending momentarily that the words used in a conversational dance have their meaning in virtue of this sort of semantics) to completely account for a person's training in the use, the application of the term.

All this effectively serves to undermine the philosopher of religion's supposed justification of intrusive criticism and inquiry. It undermines it, that is, if the analysis of the conversational dance comes across as being, firstly, a plausible way of interpreting the discourse that takes place in a language-game, and, secondly, a suitable basis from which to approach the *strangeness* of certain utterances and acts I have labelled "intrusive".

The philosopher's intrusive activity is, as we have seen, based on an assumed referential semantics: He is able, so the story goes, to investigate the divine (or what-have-you) in the manner of his choosing because, in his use of the theistic terminology, he is *picking out* or *referring to* or *meaning* the same thing as the theist when he talks about God in the religious sense (and not any other). The conversational scheme, however, will not admit the referentialist assumption: its semantics do not appear to be at home with the account of language presented in that apparatus. Yet, *is* the interpretation of human discourse forwarded in the dance analysis a credible one? Is philosophy *really* able to work effectively in any language-game?

- Here, all we can do is go back to the examples themselves and, again, ask

those simple questions: Beginning with the extreme cases of intrusion I gave (Jones's 'problem' with the cheese, and the artillery example), don't they strike us as being odd or even ridiculous concerns? Should they be heeded, should they be *recognised* (by the counter-delivery of certain follow-on procedures)? Are the sorts of controversies they raise at all worthy of serious consideration *within the practice of the game*? And just how *are* they treated by the players of the language-game in question, how would and do they fare? When Jones makes his astonishing and (from his point of view) earnest claim, doesn't he expect it to receive a form of reply - negative or positive - that *acknowledges* his point as a kosher difficulty, one typical of the custom of the language-game? Yet, doesn't the claim fail, so obviously fail, to make fitting any such recognitory action?

And what of the various paradoxes dealing with God's power and abilities? Why are these 'criticisms' treated with virtual indifference by the players of the religious language-game? (And let us not forget that it is a pointless exercise to look for sermons, formal prayers and liturgies that grapple with the 'problems' of square triangles, super-heavy stones and terribly high walls). Isn't there at a basic, intuitive/commonsense level the feeling that questions about God being able to climb over a wall he has made too high to be climbed are, when we present them to theism in an attempt to confound the believer, slightly ridiculous? To my mind there is something deeply mistaken in pursuing the question of God's ability to deal with 'problems' of this nature. It is as if the investigator does not really understand how religious language works, how its terms are used, and more generally how religious people behave. If these philosophical intrusions are actually binding to the language-game of religion, binding in the sense that they pose *real* problems for the players, then *why* is it that the players - both lay and clergy - ignore such 'controversies'?

- In any language-game, inquiry can only go so far, and the paradoxes (as well as other intrusions) are beyond the limits of the religious game. The account of God's power - as a collection of acts belonging to the game - cannot and *does* not include such procedures[1].

Thinking back to the artillery example, the first example of intrusion I gave, are we perhaps to suppose that the army has already looked into the possibility of shells dematerializing and found that there was nothing for the troops to worry about? Are we to think maybe that *off* the firing range such matters receive the army's earnest attention and that munitions experts constantly keep an eye on the situation, while the rank and file hold back their doubts, placing their faith in the word of the experts? I don't believe that *anywhere* in that system there is a proper place for the pseudo-problem of dematerialization. Investigations into the constancy of shells would make us smile, as would serious meetings to discuss the 'problem', and other such procedures that give recognition to the matter.

And the absurdity of such procedures lies in their being far removed from the established practice of the system of thinking and acting (to use Malcolm's way of describing the language-game) they are attempting to participate in. The pseudo-problems are the product of a way of thinking that *dismisses* the workings of the language, in so doing ignoring not only how people use words but how they *think* and *act* and live their lives. And here we have what is essentially another of Wittgenstein's ideas, the notion that philosophical problems arise when the workings of a language-game are overlooked or dismissed. When we break the rules that prohibit dances in which doubts are raised about the existence of people, the constancy of physical objects, the basic composition of supermarket products, and so on, then effectively any sort of dance may take place, any kind of inquiry, criticism and analysis may occur[2].

My claim is that in many language-games a large number of philosophical probings simply fail to qualify, to count as kosher or effective actions of this or that sort. Any game sets up for its players the conditions of rationality, in so far as its rules dictate what is reasonable and unreasonable, what is true criticism and controversy and what is not. A philosophical action that goes against this training transgresses these rules, and that is why, from the players' point of view (as well as those who know about language-games and their autonomous nature), the intrusive acts seem so balmy.

Despite all this, however, autonomy - as essentially consisting in a language-game not being answerable to alien procedures - may still strike one as being a strongly counter-intuitive position. For, one may still have the feeling that, firstly, we *are* in fact entitled to raise many of the so-called intrusive criticisms, and that, secondly, people should jolly well take notice of the *real* possibility that everything might suddenly turn into thin air, or that everything around us may just be one gigantic illusion or dream-world. This is not to say that *on every occasion* such problems should be attended to in detail; it is to suggest that at least they should be acknowledged as legitimate difficulties, despite the timing not being quite right now and again for their presentation.

Also, one may feel that if language-games are autonomous in the manner described, then it would seem that dialogue between games - and by "dialogue" I mean forms of evaluation with the potential to influence - becomes virtually impossible, and that this just simply isn't the case, as fruitful dialogue does exist, and changes (sometimes dramatic ones) do occur.

Philosophers opposed to the autonomist position have given it the name "Wittgensteinian Fideism"[3], suggesting by it that the language-game, as an autonomous *form of life*, is artificially and impossibly shielded against *any* form of external and especially philosophical evaluation and scrutiny. Autonomy, claim certain philosophers, does away with an unacceptable degree of accountability, in so doing making philosophy appear redundant in many respects.

Now, we may identify in the above criticisms two basic objections to the position of autonomy. 1, First it is claimed that many forms of philosophically-styled criticism *may* indeed be made in relation to the various *forms of life*, and that no language-game is exempt from this sort of scrutiny. 2, Second, it is claimed that there *is* in fact worthwhile dialogue between the language-games, a dialogue that *influences* and changes the way games operate.

I believe both of these concerns may be adequately addressed, and in a way that preserves *totally* autonomistic integrity.

1. The *exclusiveness* which the anti-fideist places on the language-game is a misrepresentation and exaggeration of both the nature of autonomy the character

of the language-game. For, a language-game is not autonomous to the point of being *utterly unique*, in that *no other language-game shares any of its practices of features*. Why can't we speak of philosophical procedures that *resemble* each other from game to game? All this is really only to say that there may be *common* sorts of dances, groups of actions shared by a number - and not always all - language-games.

I believe the example I gave above concerning the problem of evil counts as an instance of the same concern being present in two quite different systems. The philosophical concern that the widespread existence of evil seems to stand as evidence against the existence of an all-powerful, all-knowing and all-loving God is right a home in the religious language-game (unlike many other philosophical matters). In philosophy, the "undeniable" reality of all kinds of evil *counts* as a point in favour of the non-existence of God. The argument centering on the problem of evil is an effective and customary procedure in the system. The same may be said of the religious context: the argument counts as an important contributing factor in the proof against God existing; the argument counts and works just as effectively in the theistic framework.

D.Z. Phillips gives us another example of this sharing of procedures. He compares misgivings Wittgenstein had in relation to the role of the scapegoat with those of the well-known theologian, Matthew Henry (well-known, that is, in professional theological circles). Both gentlemen, says Phillips, saw animal sacrifice as being based on a confused or mistaken notion of atonement. For Wittgenstein and Henry, the death of an animal, in the form of an offering, is not the right kind of act to atone for sin, and more generally an animal is not the kind of object to function as a bearer of sin. And, additionally, Phillips tells us that these concerns were mimicked by many Old Testament prophets[4].

The doubts of a philosopher, one that is not a player of a religious language-game (and Wittgenstein never confessed to being a believer), may be akin, then, to those of the theist when it comes to a certain issue. To quote Phillips: "In saying that the symbolism of the scapegoat jars, Wittgenstein is showing how reflection and criticism *within* religion may have affinities with the discussion

of philosophical confusions" (*Phillips*, 1986 pg 190). - Wittgenstein's niggle may be raised quite properly in the language-game of religion. And, importantly, we are not to see this as a bending of the rules: the inappropriateness of animal sacrifice counts as a legitimate concern *within* the religious system, it is one of the permitted *and practised* forms of critical inquiry, it is one of the dances of that game.

So we can see from this example that a certain feature of the practice of one system (philosophy) may also be present in another (religion). And here too we can see how there is space for valuable dialogue between two forms of life: for, we can easily imagine the problem of the scapegoat being brought to the attention of some players of a religious game by an atheist; the controversy need not be the result of the activity of professional holy men. Sometimes the not-so-holy will do. We can imagine changes resulting from its introduction at the hands of a philosopher, as the players come to reject the Jewish concept of atonement and lend their support to something more like the Christian one. Believers might come to feel that they have not *really* been forgiven, and that their sins are not properly atoned for. They would feel the need for another and better bearer of sin.

A language-game is not a static entity. Language-games may change, and some may even pass away[5]. And there is certainly a great deal of interaction between the innumerable *forms of life*. Think of the contemporary attitude of many (but certainly not all) Western theists towards the view that the world was created in, literally, six days. In light of what twentieth century science has found out about the history of the world, there has been a gradual move away from creationism since its heyday in the Victorian age. Indeed, we may identify the general problem of whether or not one should interpret scripture literally as a third philosophically-styled concern that crops up in the religious language-game, one that has brought about considerable reforms in Biblical exegesis. There is much about the method of science, the language-game science, that is binding - or at home - in the game of religion. One need only think of the findings of present day astronomy that have caused many believers (in the

Christian world mostly) to abandon the view that heaven, the official residence of God, is - like a planet or star - locatable in the physical universe.

My reply, then, to the claim that a language-game is immune to the analysis of philosophy is to point out that many - but not all - of the worries and doubts of philosophy (as well as science) are right at home in language-games such as religion. I am advancing, then, a doctrine of what be called *similar types of procedure:* What counts - in that it works in a conversational dance - as an objection of this or that kind in game A may also be just as effective in games B, C and D.

2. Furthermore (and here I address the second main objection I identified earlier), on these common features rests the potential for influence and change: a philosopher or scientist may point out to the theist that facts about the nature of the universe that astronomy has discovered and which he (the theist) accepts are not compatible with the belief that heaven is somewhere far off in outer space and in theory may be reached by rocket-ship.

We do, however, need to be careful here. For, all this is not to say that *any old* form of philosophical action is welcome in a language-game. There are still many genuinely intrusive procedures, acts that cannot be treated by the players of the game in the way the person responsible for them thinks they should, acts which are not part of act-sequences.

We may identify such acts by looking, firstly, to see how they fare in the dance they crop up in: do they bring into order their associated ranges of response-types? Are they afforded recognition by the players? Secondly, we look to see if they are present in *any* of the language-game's dances. We ask: do the players *ever* make these sorts of criticisms, observations, statements etc., do they ever think this way? A truly intrusive move is one that is not part of the routine, the practice of a language-game, in that it *never* brings into order its associated range of response-types. No matter where we locate it, it fails to receive recognition, unlike the bad move, which - in the right place, at the right time - does work.

Intrusion is explained to us by the conversational dance. And, importantly, in explaining intrusion, autonomy is demystified. The automony of any language-game consists in it not being answerable, not being accountable to moves/procedures that are unknown to its practice; and these moves and their unacceptability are to be understood through the scheme of the conversational dance.

NOTES

1.   What, then, should a theist say to a philosopher who *insists* on pursuing the matter, who insists that the paradoxes are tremendous difficulties for the Omnipotence of God? Bravery is called for. The theist needs to be assertive and take up Wittgenstein's directive not to look for explanations, but instead to state firmly that *this* language-game is played, that *this* is how the language-game works and that that is the end of the matter. *Philosophical Investigations*, S 654:

> Our mistake is to look for an explanation where we
> ought to look at what happens as a 'proto-
> phenomenon'. That is, where we ought to have said:
> *this language-game is played.*

2.   This, at least, is how I read Wittgenstein when he makes those often quoted remarks: "...philosophical problems arise when *language goes on holiday*" (*Investigations*, S 38), and: "The philosophical confusions which occupy us arise when the language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work." (*Investigations*, S 133).

3.   The title comes from a paper by Kai Nielsen, (*Philosophy, The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy*, July 1967). Nielsen actually lists what he sees as being the key points of the autonomistic position (pages

192-193). He typifies the extreme stance taken against autonomy, and although much of what he says is accurate, there are some serious errors. For example, Nielsen says that under autonomy, "a philosopher's task is not to evaluate or criticise language or forms of life" - meaning by this that *no* criticism *whatsoever* may take place. He also says that "forms of life taken as a whole are not amenable to criticism" - again, wanting us to understand that only players of a given game may raise a problem within that system.

In relation to religion, F.C. Coplestone sums up the concern of those opposed to autonomy rather nicely:

> The idea of autonomous language-games, each of which can be understood only from within, by those who actually play the game in question, and which is therefore immune to all external criticism, seems to me to be open to objection...
>
> If it is carried to the point at which any fruitful dialogue between religious belief and critical philosophy is executed, theology retreats into a kind of ghetto, cut off from the cultural life of which philosophy is one expression.
>
> (*Religion and Philosophy*, 1974 pg 8)

4. Says Phillips: "The prophets criticized such magical conceptions of rituals" (*Philips*, 1986 pg 365). One example would be Psalm 40, verse 6:

> Sacrifice and offering you did
>
> not desire,
>
> but my ears you have
>
> pierced,
>
> burnt offerings and sin
>
> offerings
>
> you did not require.

And from the book of Hebrews in the New Testament we find a more direct expression of the view that animal sacrifice achieves nothing as far as atoning for sin goes:

> The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming - not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshippers would have been cleansed once and for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
>
> (*Hebrews*, 10, verses 1-4)

Another example of Phillips' concerns the idea that baptism - the physical act involving water - supposedly washes away ones sins. Like the scapegoat, water is not seen as the right kind of object to carry or in some way deal with one's transgressions.

5.   Examples of defunct language-games: belief in fairies; belief in witches (both in the western world); talk of the Earth being flat.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper has not aimed so much to argue the case for autonomy as to explicate what is meant by the notion, as it relates to concept of the language-game. The notion of a language-game - or *form of life* - is itself a tricky and often misunderstood item, and I believe that a discussion of autonomy is a helpful way of approaching the concept.

The autonomy of language-games is unacceptable to many - or, indeed, perhaps most - philosophers, and besides the objections we have already dealt with, there exists one or two other grave concerns with the position. John Hick notes one of them:

> The unacceptable feature of the position is that by
> treating religious language as autonomous - as a
> language-game with its own rules, or a speech
> activity having meaning only within its own borders -
> it deprives religious statements of 'ontological' or
> 'metaphysical' significance. The ordinary religious
> believer has always supposed that such a statement
> as 'God loves mankind' is a true declaration
> concerning an ultimate order of fact which sustains
> and governs all the more proximate types of fact.
>
> (*Hick*, 1964 pg 239)

Hick brings to our attention the problem of truth and autonomy. It is claimed that autonomy commits one to a kind of *relativism*, as what works as a truth in one language-game may not work as such in another.

Hick's complaint, then, is that truth under an autonomistic story ceases to be a report on what *actually* and *universally* is the case, and, instead, is reduced to a matter of whether or not this or that statement is in line with the rules, the practice of a language-game: reality or fact is *determined* by the language-game, and it is not something that exists beyond a game and itself determines

what is true and what is false for *all* language-games.

This brings us on to an even more formidable difficulty. For, it may be argued that the so-called intrusive concerns raised by the philosophers are justified in that they present telling and binding truths that *must* be addressed by the players of the language-game in question.

- The theist runs into trouble if he admits that *it is true* that a subject cannot be said to be "all-powerful" when that subject is unable to build a wall over which he cannot climb, or make a stone too heavy to lift, and so on. Were such an admission to be made (and it's easy to think of it happening), then the next natural step would be to ask if God, who is said by believers to be all-powerful, is able to perform the above-mentioned feats. If the theist is happy to talk about the *impossibility* of this or that subject being "all-powerful" when that subject cannot perform certain actions, then there seems to be no obvious reason why, instead of an unspecified subject, the theist cannot be made to discuss a *specific* subject: God. (The mistake of the believer was, in the first place, to recognise the act of raising the point about omnipotent subjects who cannot create self-defeating objects. The believer ought to have said: "This language-game is played!")

It is not, however, within the scope of this paper to deal with so great an issue as truth. It is important to note these problems and to say that there is, when it comes to the language-game, a definite association with non-correspondence theories of truth as well as what is best described as a "radical form of relativism".

However unattractive these matters may make autonomy seem, it has been part of my aim to show that it is not a position that is too mysterious in its make-up to be explained fully and with some degree of precision. I have tried in this paper to forward a fairly detailed account of, what the literature surrounding it would suggest to us is, the most controversial property or attribute belonging to the language-game, an account that begins and ends with examples of acts that strike us as being quite odd and unworthy of certain forms of recognition. By concentrating on these "intrusive" goings-on, I have been able to explicate

autonomy from a new and, I believe, more revealing angle, and also show more generally what is perhaps the best direction from which to approach the matter. Hopefully this account has served to clarify things, and not to further confuse the debate.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baker, G.P. and Hacker, P.M.S. (1980)

    Wittgenstein. Meaning and Understanding. Essays on the Philosophical
    Investigations. Oxford:
    Basil Blackwell.

Baker, G.P. and Hacker, P.M.S. (1984)

    Scepticism, Rules and Language. Oxford:
    Basil Blackwell

Coplestone, F.C. (1974)

    Religion and Philosophy. Oxford:
    Basil Blackwell

Hick, J. (1964)

    Sceptics and Believers. *Faith and the Philosophers.* London:
    Macmillan & Co. Ltd: 235 - 251.

Hudson, D.W. (1975)

    Wittgenstein and Religious Belief. London:
    The Macmillan Press Ltd

Kerr, F. (1987)

    Theology after Wittgenstein. Oxford:
    Basil Blackwell

Malcolm, N. (1964)

    Is it a Religious Belief that 'God Exists'?
    Faith and the Philosophers. London:
    Macmillan & Co. Ltd: 103-111

Malcolm, N. (1977)

Thought and Knowledge. Essays by Norman Malcolm. Ithaca:
Cornell University Press.

Malcolm, N. (1984)

Ludwig Wittgenstein. A Memoir. With a Biographical Sketch by G.H.
Von Wright. Second edition, Oxford:
Oxford University Press.

Nielsen, K. (1967)

Wittgensteinian Fideism. Philosophy. The Journal of the Royal Institute
of Philosophy: 191-209.

Phillips, D.Z. (1986)

Wittgenstein's Full Stop. The Philosophy of Wittgenstein. New York:
Garland Publishing, Inc.

Phillips, D.Z. (1986)

Religious Beliefs and Language-games. The Philosophy of Wittgenstein.
New York:
Garland Publishing, Inc.

Ryle, G. (1971)

The Theory of Meaning. Collected Papers. Volume 2. Collected Essays
1929-1968. London:
Hutchinson: 350-373.

Schwartz, S.P. (1989)

Naming, Necessity, and Natural Kinds. Ithaca:
Cornell University Press.

Searle, J.R. (1962)

> *Meaning and Speech Acts.* Philosophical Review, vol. 71: 423-433.

Sherry, P. (1977)

> *Religion, Truth and Language-games.* Library of Philosophy and Religion,
> London:
> The Macmillan Press Ltd.

Whittaker, J.H. (1978)

> *Language-games and Forms of Life Unconfused.* Philosophical
> Investigations. Volume 1 Number 4: 39-48.

Winch, P. (1972)

> *Ethics and Action.* London:
> Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Winograd, T. (1986)

> *Understanding Computers and Cognition: A new Foundation for Design.*
> Norwood:
> Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953)

> *Philosophical Investigations.* London:
> Basil Blackwell.

Wittgenstein, L. (1966)

> *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious*
> *Belief.* Edited by Cyril Barrett. London:
> Basil Blackwell.

Wittgenstein, L. (1967)

 Zettel. Oxford

 Basil Blackwell.

Wittgenstein, L. (1969)

 On Certainty. Oxford:

 Basil Blackwell.

Wittgenstein, L. (1979)

 Remarks on Frazer's "Golden Bough". Edited by Rush Rhees. London:

 Brynmill Publications.

Wittgenstein, L.

 Wittgenstein's Lectures Cambridge 1932-1935. London:

 Basil Blackwell.