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THE *YOU*-TURN IN PHILOSOPHY OF MIND:

ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EXPERIENCES THAT AREN'T MINE

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Abstract

This dissertation challenges a dominant way of thinking in philosophy of mind that gives rise to a variety of problems of other minds and, thus, different versions of the threat of solipsism. I contend that these problems arise because of a problematic philosophical starting point. For such ways of thinking start from the removed, contemplative position of a solitary individual, conceptually isolated from the world, trying to bridge the conceptual divide between himself or herself and the world at large. Appealing to a recent trend in cognitive science called enactivism, as well as the medieval Indian philosophy of Kaśmīr Śaivism, I suggest that we can dissolve these problems without entirely neglecting their significance if we take a different starting position for philosophy of mind: the lived position. In the lived position, the possibility of solipsism, for the most part, simply goes unconsidered since we are always already involved in participating with each other to make sense of the world.

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Introduction

"My resistance to solipsism – which is as lively as any I should offer to doubt the *cogito* – proves that I have always known that the Other existed… Since the Other is not a representation nor a system of representations nor a necessary unity of our representations, he cannot be probable: he cannot *at first* be an object."
Jean-Paul Sartre[1]

Well before we can conceive of ourselves in the first-person, we are addressed second-persons. We are talked to prior to talking to others; we are looked at, gestured towards, and readily responsive to these looks and gestures of others before we are consciously focusing to look at or gesture towards anyone. From this starting point of being a second-person first, I seamlessly graduate to recognizing myself as already recognized by others as being "one of us," and as being addressed as such. My sense of myself as myself arises out of my having been a "you" for someone else. Self-consciousness is thus read through a socialized or intersubjective lens. In the words of Emmanuel Levinas, there is no escaping the appeal of the neighbor.[2]

Yet, on the other hand, as we become aware of being a center of consciousness, as the first-person point of view takes hold of our psychophysical lives – perhaps with a little nudge from Cartesian meditations – we can find ourselves stuck in a conundrum regarding others. For the first-person sense of experience implies an exclusiveness of experience: *Dasein*, as Heidegger said, is in each case mine. Even if I can't escape the appeal of my neighbor, still my neighbor does not live in my house. The puzzle thus arises: In what sense can a "you" also be a "me" too?

This sort of question will be the basis of the following investigation. We will discuss this question under a variety of formulations in an attempt to elucidate a notion of subjectivity in its

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[1] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, Hazel Barnes, tr. (New York: Washington Square Press 1956), 339.
[2] Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being, Or Beyond Essence*, Alphonso Lingus, tr. (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne UP 2009), 128.

intersubjective element. In doing so, we will engage in a critical exploration of a common way of thinking about experience. Under this construal, experience is an *essentially* subjective phenomenon. By "essentially subjective," I mean to highlight a way of thinking about experience where its cognitive and epistemic dimensions are emphasized and where what matters is the inherently reflexive first-person accessibility of content. This first-person accessibility comes with a sense of "mineness". The implication is that the subject of experience is in a unique relationship with the contents of the very experience the subject undergoes, a relationship that defines those contents as inherently accessible only in the first-person. When pain is experienced, it is always and only ever experienced by whoever feels it. Hence the unquestionability of the folk psychological certitude: "No one else can feel my pain as I feel it." It is then hard to understand where others stand in relation to such a subject's experience.

Such a way of thinking has some intuitive force to it that explains its prevalence. This can be quickly captured in a powerful thought experiment articulated by Caspar Hare that we will examine in more detail later on.[3] Given that both are pretty awful options, which of the following events would you rather occur? That you burn your hand with boiling water, or that an anonymous Russian does the same to themselves. In addressing this question, there is a strong pull toward preferring the anonymous Russian burning their hand. And the explanation purportedly involves the essentially private aspect of subjective experience. Whereas when I burn my hand with boiling water there is a pain-experience, the anonymous Russian's pain is, in some important respect, simply absent even if I believe or know that they are having pain-experiences. There seems to be something unique about my relationship to the first event that

[3] Caspar Hare, *Myself and Other Less Important Subjects* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP 2009), 35.

gives it a *preferential* privilege. It concerns me in a way that the Russian's pain fundamentally cannot.

A sort of realism about experience in the mode of subjectivity thus takes hold, a version of realism that will be referred to as cognitivism[4] in the following inquiry. Several varieties of this way of thinking will be discussed and critically analyzed. We will inquire into similar cognitivist conceptions of experience across Indian and Western traditions of philosophy as well as in psychology and cognitive science, in preparation for our response to such a perspective. What makes these positions cognitivist, in the sense of the term used throughout this inquiry, is that they put excessive emphasis on a logocentric,[5] situationless subjectivity articulated in largely epistemic terms. In this way, the significance of experience, its meaningfulness, is tied entirely to the subject of experience as observer or contemplator of their own experience. As such, it is assumed that we know, for example, what pain is purely from one's own pain-experience alone. But if this is the case, where does the significance of others' pains come from?

The basis for the cognitivist conception of mind therefore rests in epistemic considerations. As such, the first chapter of our investigation will take up a critical analysis of epistemically-centered conceptions of mind and of intersubjectivity. It will be argued that, insofar as subjectivity is considered to be an epistemic matter at its foundation, several epistemological

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[4] The term "cognitivist" or "cognitivism" is standardly used, in philosophy of emotions, to refer to a theory according to which emotions have propositional content. Though related to my use of such terminology, I use a non-standard sense of these terms: as a general position in philosophy of mind that emphasizes the individuality of a truth-aiming, epistemically concerned subject.

[5] The term "logocentric" is standardly used in Continental philosophy, and in the work of Jaques Derrida particularly, as identifying a trend in Western philosophy that emphasizes the metaphysical and epistemological superiority of the spoken word, and thus what is immediately present in the situation of the spoken word, over the written word, and the distance and absence that implies. However, I will be using the term non-standardly to refer to a particular feature of what we will be calling the cognitivist position, namely, that it considers the principal aim of mental activity to be truth, often in the sense of correspondence.

problems regarding other minds arise. We will discuss two in particular, namely the traditional epistemological problem of justifying our knowledge that other minds exist and the more recently discussed problem of how we actually go about knowing what others are thinking, feeling, or intending.

The detour through epistemic considerations is necessary in order to get a sense of where the difficulty with the meaning of other's experiences comes from. The traditional epistemological problem, insofar as it is read as a problem of *whether* we can tell that others are not mere automata, might be brushed off as farcical, and to some extent rightly so. David Hume famously notes that playing back-gammon and merrily conversing with his friends dispels the skeptical stupor that might result from over-philosophizing: "And when after three or four hour's amusement, I wou'd return to these speculations, they appear so cold, and strain'd, and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any further."[6]

Indeed, the traditional epistemological problem, considered on its own, can be one of those issues that makes philosophy look silly. Surely it is obvious that others are not mere machines or automata or philosophical zombies. The fact that I am writing these words with the intention that they be read by others would seem to prove against any epistemic solipsism without argument. That you experience these words as the words of another, that the source of their expression is outside of your purview implies that you take it that another's presence is signaling something to you. These facts imply that we assume each other's presence; it is an *a priori* necessity in our experience. Why, then, bother reviewing this issue?

[6] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*. (Oxford: Oxford UP 1978), 269

The point of reflecting on this traditional version of the problem is not to defend the legitimacy of the problem or even any particular response to it. Rather, the point is to criticize traditional epistemological considerations as a starting point for thinking about subjectivity, particularly in its intersubjective element. For such a starting point, it will be argued, distorts our understanding of experience, particularly the experiences we share with others and how these experiences impact our own. Thus, we will see that a similar intuition at play in the scientific study of folk psychology obscures how we go about actually studying intersubjective understanding scientifically.

In the next chapter, following suggestions from Ludwig Wittgenstein and others, it will be argued that some philosophers think there is a problem of justifying our knowledge that others exist because the very conception of subjectivity in epistemic terms tends to abstract it from mundane, everyday experience. Conceiving of experience in unduly cognitive terms leaves us with a necessarily solipsistic subject. Moreover, the approaches to how we actually go about knowing what the contents of other's experiences are will be seen to be problematic precisely because of how those approaches think of subjectivity. These issues arise because such cognitivist approaches to understanding the mind tend to neglect actual situated interaction between participants.

Again, this is a problem for a special sort of philosopher who accepts a starting point that is largely alien to situated, living experience. It will be argued, in line with Anita Avramides and others, that employing the concept of action helps us make sense of mental concepts by mitigating the attraction to cognitivist conceptions of mind. That is, if we temper the cognitivist intuition of associating the subjectivity of experience with epistemic abilities and concerns by

introducing concepts of action into our understanding of subjectivity, the practical significance of the intersubjective dimension of experience becomes more apparent. However, as we will see, difficulties with behavior-based notions of action arise insofar as they have not rid themselves of certain aspects of the cognitivist position.

The points made in chapter two will be reiterated in the third chapter, where possible axiological implications of a particular form of cognitivism will be discussed. Here, we will become more concerned with why other's experiences are significant to us at all. Why does it matter that you are a subject too? In posing some responses to such a question, it will be argued that thinking about others isn't merely a cognitive matter, but an affective and conative matter. Without appealing to these latter factors, our understanding of intersubjectivity, a fundamental component of the human experience, would be woefully inadequate.

After diagnosing what goes wrong in cognitivist conceptions of the mental more generally, chapter three will go on to consider two other ways of thinking about the mind as intersubjectively concerned. One, derived from aesthetic considerations in Indian philosophy, emphasizes affective dimensions of subjectivity. The other, derived from Sartre's account of the look, emphasizes ontological relations between subjects. Each of these approaches go beyond certain aspects of cognitivism by bringing to the fore the *significance* of others' experiences, of thoughts and feelings that are not my own. Still, they also face difficulties of their own. The former emphasizes a distilled, impersonal affective experience through artistic activity, but does little to highlight the socialized and personalistic angle from which we always approach art, and thus are capable of such impersonal affective experience. The latter pits subjects against each

other in a perpetual struggle to have control over what makes them who and what they are. Both neglect how we participate in meaningfully sharing experience.

The fourth chapter will be an attempt to point toward what a more successful alternative to cognitivism about subjectivity, particularly in its intersubjective element, might look like. In order to give a preliminary response to the question, What makes the experiences of others significant to me?, we will employ a strategy that hearkens back to the action-based approach of Avramides and others discussed in chapter two. But whereas their emphasis was on action as observable behavior proper, ours will be on living, interactive participation in making sense of experience. The relationship between subjects, it will be suggested, is imbued with a constantly developing, but always presupposed, sense of the intentional significance of another's presence. It will be argued that our mental concepts, and thus our ability to think of each other at all, to meaningfully share in the unfolding of experience, is conditioned by our bodily constitution as well as normative practice.

Despite being fundamentally subjective, it will be argued that human experiences only ever have the significances they do under intersubjective conditions that include bodily and normative dimensions. This does not mean that, where such conditions do not hold, burning my hand with boiling water would not hurt or that there is no pain without such cultural phenomena as language. What pain is, is not constituted entirely out of our ability to talk about it. But neither is it constituted by phenomenal experience alone. For if it were, your pain would remain meaningless and insignificant to me. The concept of pain, and by extension, mental concepts more generally, it will be suggested, are in continuous development as we participate in making sense of our worlds in each other's presence. To the extent that our pains are continuous with

and constituted by our crying out, the expectation of fellow-pain-experiencer's attention lies at the heart of the of the basic disagreeableness of pain-phenomena.

CHAPTER 1 A Critical Review of Epistemological Problems of Other Minds

"Appreciating that another person is a locus of experience and action is not the same thing as being able to attribute states of the form 'B believes that p' and 'B desires that q'."
Matthew Rattcliffe[7]

1.1 Introduction

The primary constellation of questions that will be entertained in the following pages has grown out of a certain way of thinking about what it means to be a subject or for there to be subjective experiences, and thus, what it means for there to be subjects that aren't me or experiences that aren't mine. This way of thinking, which we will for convenience dub "cognitivism," has a tendency to overemphasize certain aspects of experience to the neglect of other aspects. What gets neglected in these ways of thinking are aspects of experience that are definitively intersubjective in the sense in which we participate in articulating the significance of our shared experiences. It is just such an estimation of mind and experience that will be the target of the critiques and suggested conceptual considerations and revisions that will be put forth in the ensuing inquiry.

Cognitivism, as we will use the term, is a position in philosophy of mind, broadly construed, that has a tendency to exaggerate epistemic and logocentric aspects of subjectivity, thereby emphasizing the primacy of a knower or cognizer, a witness. Cognitivist conceptions of mind represent it as a primarily epistemic concept: a mind is the sort of thing that knows. But as true as it may be that mind is an epistemic necessity, this is not its only significance, nor even its primary significance. Cognitivism tends to shift from the idea that the operations of the mind are

[7] Matthew Rattcliffe, *Rethinking Commonsense Psychology: A Critique of Folk Psychology, Theory of Mind, and Simulation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 103.

necessary for epistemic pursuits to the idea that minds are primarily epistemic operations grounded in the observations and reflections of a conscious subject. In doing so, cognitivists overlook the fundamental role of intersubjectivity in the constitution of mind – and knowledge – as we know them.

Thus, we will begin our inquiry by analyzing some lines of thought that treat mind in primarily epistemic terms grounded in the first-person. Knowledge, under this construal, runs through a first-person filter. And this filter is intentional; it must be about or directed towards an object. Knowledge must be knowledge of some fact, thing, event, or process. As such, I can know nothing about you without placing myself at the center of epistemic importance and *representing* something about you. For you to be known, I must first take you as an object – not a subject – of my experience.

But, as the 10th century Kaśmīri polymath Abhinavagupta remarks, "One cognition is not to be made manifest by another. For if one cognition were to shine in another it would cease to be self-manifest."[8] If to know mentality renders it no longer first-personal, no longer "self-manifest" (whether, as Abhinava's remark suggests, this be intra- or interpersonally), it would become more of an object – something merely observed or reflected on, which is thereby attributed properties from a removed, third-person position. It would be difficult, at best, to make sense of just what is to be known, viz. an object of knowledge that is not merely an object.

The present chapter will study a variety of approaches to understanding mind and knowledge that give rise to the aforementioned epistemic difficulty. There are two common

[8] Abhinavagupta. *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī.* K.C. Pandey, tr. (Varanasi: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, 1998), 33. Henceforth cited as *IPV*.

formulations of this issue. One is the traditional skeptical question "How can I know *that* you exist?" Here, cognitivism asks after the justification for affirming the truth of the propositional knowledge that others are themselves subjects of experience. The other formulation is a bit more practically minded and amenable to empirical investigation: "How do I know *what* the contents of your mind are?" or phrased another way, "How do I go about knowing what you are thinking, feeling, desiring, believing, etc.?" Here we inquire into the actual processes through which we go about understanding each other's particular thoughts and feelings – and thus how we might be able to predict each other's behavior. We will explore these questions in order to get a sense of what cognitivism's conception of mind is like. This will open the door to the broader questions of the present inquiry.

1.2 Inference and Knowing That You Exist

Let us begin with the following formulation of the epistemological problem of other minds: Assuming that I know that you exist, *how* do I know *that* you exist? Or, phrased another way: On what grounds can I justify my claim to know that others are truly other subjects of experience? Answering such questions has been approached along mostly inferential lines. Under such construals, knowing that others exist is a matter of attributing mental properties to some of the (apparently physical) objects of our experience by inferential judgments. Whether we take "mind" or "self" or "subject" to refer to some kind of a mental substance, neural firings, functional dispositions, or otherwise to some causally interrelated psychophysical bits, certain physical activity is judged, through inferential reasoning, to be caused by the thoughts, feelings and intentions of a mind that does not belong to the one making the inference.

Making such an inference is often thought, by cognitivists, to be necessary because of how they think of the relationship between mind and knowledge. Such a position conceives of mind or subjectivity as uniquely and fundamentally accessible to itself. This self-knowledge, broadly speaking, is what grounds claims to knowledge more generally. Whether we know things through perceptual observation or reflective thought, what is known must be represented by a first-person.

Thus, in its capacity of representing the world, the mind gets conceived of in essentially representational terms. Behavioral activity is then construed as being caused by such representations. As such, in order to be able to know about other minds, we cannot merely observe behavior, for all that is known in this case is the activity of a physical object. Rather, we must move from representing certain physical activities in our minds to their cause by comparing those activities with activities that we ourselves cause on the basis of our representations of the world.

We can articulate two versions of this inferential strategy to knowing that others exist. One is more or less a consequence of a Cartesian or otherwise a subject-centered conception of mentality. Given that I exist and that my actions are caused by my representations of the world, if I can observe other bodies similar to mine acting in similar ways, I can infer that those actions have a similar cause – namely, another mind. This is the famous argument from analogy. Another approach to inference comes from the Buddhist conception of the world as "mind only" (*cittamātra*) as articulated by the Vijñānavāda, a school generally considered to be an idealist form of Buddhism. For these thinkers, mental states are generally the cause of certain physical

states. Thus, when such physical states are observed, it is inferred that they have a mental cause. We will call this, in line with Jeremy Henkel's recent suggestion, the argument from remainder.[9]

1.2.1 The Argument from Analogy

The need for an *argument* to the existence of other minds, at least in the Western tradition, arises largely due to an obsessively subjective, substantially egoistic conception of mind, knowledge and experience that has dominated intellectual culture since at least Descartes. According to Cartesian dualism, the mind as *res cogitans* is radically different from the rest of the physical world, and the subsequent struggle to reconcile these differences. Through such conceptual and ontological isolation, the mind – a thinking thing in the first-person – came to be thought of as an "inner" realm which represents the external physical world from which it is distinguished.

Under this construal, to know or understand anything at all, something must first be represented in the mind, and such representations – at least under a realist perspective, as intended by Descartes – must refer to a state of affairs that definitively is or is not the case independent of the representing mind's existence and representational capacities. As such, when I perceive your actions, all I have are my representations of your physical movements. This leaves open the possibility that you are an automaton, seeing as I presumably couldn't tell the difference if you were. All that I can observe is a physical body which behaves in familiar ways; that there is something it is like, from "inside" that body, for that body to behave in some manner is beyond what I can immediately know or perhaps even comprehend.

[9] Jeremy Henkel, "How to Avoid Solipsism While Remaining an Idealist: Lessons from Berkeley and Dharmakīrti," *Comparative Philosophy* 3 (2012): 58-73.

When the mind is conceived of independently of physical constraints, there is thus a gap in accounting for our apparent knowledge of others. For it certainly seems that we know of each other's existence even if all we can observe are each other's bodily behaviors. We are not normally solipsists, at least not entirely. Indeed, our everyday actions, for the most part, imply the falsity of solipsism. But given the *essential physicality* of all bodies, according to this view, we must be able to justify this kind of knowledge. For it is not obvious how observing physical bodies can lead us to knowledge of representational minds. The only way that I could possibly tell that you exist, then, is by an indirect judgment on the basis of observed behaviors.

Perhaps the most well-known response to this formulation of the epistemological problem is the argument from analogy, and its most famous expounder is J.S. Mill. He asked what leads us to believe that the walking and speaking figures we see and hear "have sensations and thoughts, or in other words, possess Minds" and proceeds to outline the analogical argument:

I am conscious in myself of a series of facts connected by an uniform sequence, of which the beginning is modifications of my body, the middle is feelings, the end is outward demeanour. In the case of other human beings I have the evidence of my senses for the first and last links of the series, but not for the intermediate link. I find, however, that the sequence between the first and last is as regular and constant in those other cases as it is in mine. In my own case I know that the first link produces the last through the intermediate link, and could not produce it without. Experience, therefore, obliges me to conclude that there must be an intermediate link… by supposing the link to be of the same nature as in the case of which I have experience, and which is in all other respects similar, I bring other human beings, as phenomena, under the same generalisations which I know by experience to be the true story of my own existence. And in doing so I conform to the legitimate rules of experimental enquiry.[10]

Let us take note of a few things here. The argument begins by referencing Mill's very own consciousness of a "series of facts connected by an uniform sequence." Bodily modifications, by

[10] J.S. Mill, *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (London: Longman, Green, Reader, and Dryer, 1872), 243-244.

which he means the physical or mechanical aspect of the sense organs, cause feelings. These feelings then go on to cause behavior. I burn my hand; I thus feel pain, so I remove my hand from the heat source. Mill then says that in the case of others, we only have perceptual evidence of bodily modifications and behavior, but not the middle-term, not the uniquely inward feeling. These are specific sensations, privately yours in their nature, and thus essentially isolated from any experience anyone other than yourself can possibly have. But when you burn your hand, you also remove it from the heat source. I can infer, upon observing such similar behavior as mine, that you must feel pain as well.

One prominent way I can thus understand your bodily behavior as being that of a living mind is by *attributing*, through an inferential judgment, mental predicates to you *in a third person fashion* – from the outside, as it were, as if you were merely an object of my observation – on the model of myself in order to bridge the apparent gap between your "bodily modifications" and your behavior. Thus, the inference from analogy is 1) a generalization from a single case (viz. my own) which, 2) is impossible to check up on since I can never feel the "intermediate link" between your sensorial and behavioral states. Indeed, as Alec Hyslop points out, these are the two most prominent objections to the argument from analogy.

In defending such an argument from these objections, Hyslop proposes that a "scientific" or "hypothetical" inference to other minds must be grounded on an inductively based analogy from "one's own case." As such, Hyslop explains, we can't simply appeal to a general theory of mind such as functionalism or behaviorism in order to account for our knowledge of other minds. Through these theories, we only get the general features of what makes each of us the same; we only get a conceptual characterization of what generally constitutes a mental state. But since

minds also include an irreducibly unique sense of first-personhood, we cannot rely on this sameness to help account for our knowledge of others as mental creatures. For it would gloss over what constitutes "one's own case."

Hyslop thereby suggests that leaning on such theories to account for knowing other minds is to commit something of a category mistake, to use metaphysical theories to solve epistemological problems.[11] Since other's minds are invisible to us, Hyslop suggests a successful argument from analogy must infer, on the basis of a causal link between mental states and physical states in one's own case, as well as observation of certain physical states in another case, that another's mental states are the cause of the observed physical states. Doing so has the form of a scientific inference since it goes from observable evidence to unobservable, theoretical phenomena.

Thus, if we are to know that other minds exist, we must always appeal to instances of our own first-person, lived cases lest we miss the epistemological character that Hyslop says is essential to the problem of other minds. As such any argument from analogy – or any argument used to justify knowledge of other minds at all, for that matter – has a meager generalization base out of necessity.[12] Hyslop goes on to point out that multiple-case arguments – arguments that require reference to the "enormous number of correlations between instances of behavior and experience"[13] as R.I. Sikora puts it – can't do the trick. Why?

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[11] Alec Hyslop, *Other Minds* (Boston: Klewer Academic Publishers, 1995), 39.
[12] Hyslop (1995), 41.
[13] R.I. Sikora, "The Argument from Analogy Is Not An Argument for Other Minds," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 14 (1977): 137.

For one thing, multiple-case arguments tend to conclude that "many instances of behavioral states are associated with mental states" which, Hyslop tells us, shouldn't be the conclusion we aim at since it is still compatible with philosophical zombies: "The conclusion we want is that for every body which behaves much as one's own does, it is true that many instances of its behavioral states are associated with mental states."[14] But even if multiple-case arguments did work, they would rely on the common sense idea that each body is associated with at least one person. In other words, they would still rely on an analogical argument from a single case – the case of my personhood being matched up with my body such that my behaviors are generally accompanied by mental events.[15]

Hyslop next targets six forms of the objection from uncheckability. Since it would be unwieldy to go through all six forms here, suffice it to say that they all turn, according to Hyslop, on similar misunderstandings about the structure of a proper analogical argument to other minds. Many seem to assume that the inference makes use of the dubious principle that like effects have like causes. But Hyslop reverses this slogan and says that, in the case of analogical arguments to other minds, the relevant principle is that like causes have like effects.[16] Here, Hyslop is appealing to the fact that similar bodily causes – brain states for example – have similar mental effects.

Hyslop feels that he has successfully defended the argument from analogy against objections regarding its inductive soundness.[17] But there are other objections to the analogical

[14] Hyslop (1995), 42-43.
[15] Hyslop (1995), 43.
[16] Hyslop (1995), 63.
[17] Hyslop (1995), 70.

argument not addressed by Hyslop which don't necessarily aim at the inductive soundness of the argument. Max Scheler delivers four such critiques that challenge other assumptions underlying analogical approaches to other minds.

For one thing, we seem to accept that some semblance of an understanding of the existence of others is found in certain animals and infants. However, Scheler suggests that it is questionable to attribute to them the capacity for analogical induction.[18] In addition, Scheler objects that my awareness of my embodiment is quite different from my awareness of yours.[19] The body is lived by a first-person; my experience of my lived body and my experience of your body as alive, albeit not lived-by-me, are quite phenomenologically different. As such, Hyslop's suggestion that the argument from analogy is one which has recourse to first-person knowledge of the causal link between "my body" and "my mind" in order to move to knowledge of other first-persons through a third-person form of awareness commits a conceptual confusion. It moves from the lived body, *pour soi* as Sartre would say, to an objective body for-others (*pour d'autre*) without adequately addressing the difference. This will become a significant issue later as we explore what Joel Smith calls the conceptual problem of other minds.[20]

Scheler continues his critique by emphasizing that we experience some form of mentality expressed in the behaviors of "creatures whose expressive movements (and 'action') have no resemblance to our human ones."[21] As will be discussed later, we have an apparently innate tendency to recognize and respond to organic bodily intentionality. However, this responsive

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[18] Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*. Peter Heath, tr. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 238-239
[19] Scheler (2009), 240
[20] Joel Smith, "Conceptual Problem of Other Bodies," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 110 (2010): 201-217
[21] Scheler (2009),240.

recognition is not a one-way affair. For in our responses, we are responded to. What the presence of others comes to mean for us is dependent on such regular, concerted responsiveness in making sense of things.

Finally, Scheler complains that since the analogy requires other minds to be essentially the same sort of things as my mind, it can't give us knowledge of other minds, but merely more of *my* mind: "If the conclusion refers to an alien self distinct from my own, it is a false conclusion."[22] Here we already see the hints of deeper problems than the status of our knowledge of others. The cognitivist *conception* of mind is the basis for the problem that motivates the argument from analogy.

1.2.2 The Argument from Remainder

The analogical inference to other minds has a hard time holding up, and not necessarily because of its inductive soundness. One thing that an analogical approach could have going for it involves its appeal to a causal relation between the mind and body. The influential Indian Buddhist philosopher Dharmakīrti appealed to such a general causal relation, responding to the epistemological problem of other minds in much the same way Hyslop recommends: by focusing on the sameness of causes rather than effects. However, for Dharmakīrti, the causality is reversed: instead of focusing on how bodily states cause mental states, he begins with the assumption that intentional mental events generally cause bodily behavioral events.

It is important to take note of what the epistemological problem amounts to for Buddhists like Dharmakīrti. For Buddhists in general, there is no subject, no real, unique, singular "I" that

[22] Scheler (2009), 240-241.

acts as a metaphysical base for a multitude of subjective experiences. There are just causally interrelated psychophysical events. For Dharmakīrti, each of these psychophysical events are said to consist of a subjective-aspect (*grāhakākāra*) and an objective-aspect (*grāhyākāra*). The subjective-aspect of experience is self-luminous (*svaprakāśa*) or self-aware (*svasamvedana*). In a given moment of experience, an object is present to consciousness; but consciousness is, at the same time, pre-reflectively disclosed to itself as grasping (*grāhaka*) the object. And indeed, the object's reality is, according to Dharmakīrti, exhausted by its being grasped (*grāhya*), for we can never find objects outside of their being grasped by some conscious event.

In this way, the Vijñānavādin argues that objects are fundamentally tied to subjectivity. What it means to be an object is to be illuminated, to be brought to light, to be represented to consciousness. Such a way of thinking about subjectivity thus runs into much the same kind of problem as Cartesian dualism does, despite the latter having a realist bent. For if knowing phenomena requires that they are objects for reflexively self-aware consciousness, that makes others, insofar as they can be known phenomena, objects too. For like all other objects of knowledge, they must be represented as images for a subject. But others, in order to be other *minds*, must be conscious, and objects are not the sort of things that are conscious; they are not self-luminous. What, then, is the status of our knowledge of these other mind-streams (*santānātara*)?

Dharmakīrti's inference is particularly interesting because, despite coming from a largely idealist or phenomenalist perspective, it is meant to work for both realists and idealists. Each

perspective, as Vinītadeva suggests in his *ṭika* on Dharmakīrti's *Santānāntarasiddhi*,[23] holds essentially the same attitude towards the minds of others. They both agree other minds cannot be directly perceived and that we must always start, so to speak, from our own perspective. Our only access to the minds of others is by "observing the purposeful actions outside ourselves."[24]

Given that, in one's own instance there is an invariable concomitance between mental states and physical states, and since I did not produce the actions I observe, another mind must have: "The representations, in which the external marks of our own mind appear to us, are perceived by us subjectively. Therefore, the ones perceived objectively must have another cause."[25] In other words, by experiencing behavioral activity accompanied with an awareness that I did not cause it and supposing action is generally caused by mind, by intention, an inference can be made to the effect that a set of intentions not my own were behind the action.

However, since Dharmakīrti suggests that the only evidence we have of the minds of others are representations or ideas (*vijñāpti)* of external signs, someone with a more realist bent can ask why such representations must be caused by an alternate consciousness. Aren't *vijñāpti* in my own mind? Isn't there, as Dharmakīrti famously suggested, a lack of distinction between blue and the perception of blue? Wouldn't there then be a lack of distinction between your bodily gesticulations and my perceptions of your bodily gesticulations? If so, why assume that someone or something external to my mind caused those gesticulations? The Vijñānavādin presumably wouldn't want to say that someone or something external to my mind caused my blue

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[23] Dharmakīrti, *Santānāntarasiddhi* with Vinītadeva's commentary. Harish C. Gupta, tr. In *Papers of Th. Stcherbatsky,* Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya ed. (Calcutta: Indian Studies Past and Present, 1969), 71-123. Henceforth cited as *SAS.*
[24] *SAS*, 83
[25] SAS, 88

perceptions. As with the variety of objects that are present to subjectivity, this can be explained by appeal to the beginningless awakening of residual traces (*vāsānaprabodha*) and need not refer to external objects. Why can't we make a similar appeal in explaining the causes of behavior not our own?

Dharmakīrti replies that actions must be caused by subjective intentions. But observing actions external to one's own behavior does not come with such a sense of subjective intention. Given that there is, according to Dharmakīrti, an invariable concomitance (*niyata sāhacarya)* found between one's own action and intent, all action must be caused by some intention. Without being able to account for the intentions behind the gesticulations of other bodies, it would appear that they would have no cause. Residual traces thus couldn't explain this action because they don't refer to the intentions of another series of experiences (*santānāntara*). If we relied on residual traces to explain purposive actions outside of ourselves, no presentation of purposive action *in general* would then be said to have a cause.[26] But since everything that exists is caused to exist, this would be absurd. So, the epistemological problem of other minds, in this case, arises because of a combination of Dharmakīrti's representationalist and idealist tendencies. And he solves it by emphasizing a universal concomitance based on one's own experiences with one's own desires and actions.

But doesn't such an argument have the same force and form as an analogical argument? R.K. Sharma, for one, seems to think so.[27] However, as Jeremy Henkel points out,[28] the shift of

[26] *SAS*, 89
[27] R.K. Sharma, "Dharmakīrti on the Existence of Other Minds," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 13 (1985): 59
[28] Henkel (2013), 70-71

emphasis from my experiences *tout court* to a general causal relationship between mind and body alters the argument. The general form taken by the analogical approach is:

(1) My actions are caused by my intentions.
(2) I observe actions that are similar to the ones I perform.
(3) My intentions didn't cause those actions.
(4) Since the actions I observe are similar to mine, and I didn't cause those actions, intentions that are similar to mine when I perform such actions must have caused the actions I observe.
(5) Therefore, a similar entity to me, another mind, causes those actions.

Dharmakīrti's form of argument runs more along the following lines:

1) I know from my own case that actions are generally caused by intentional states of mind.
2) I observe certain actions being performed.
3) My intentions didn't cause those actions.
4) Given the invariable concomitance established by the first premise and given that my intentions are not causes of the actions being observed, another mind's intentions must have caused those actions.
5) Therefore, other minds exist.

Here, reference is first made to a general relationship between mental states and physical actions that can be observed in one's own case. Next it is noted that any action that I do not cause must still be caused by some mind since action is, in general, an effect of mind. As such, there must be at least one instance of subjective intention and objective effect that isn't the instance observed by the one making the inference. No reference to similarity is made; there is only the acknowledgement of an invariable concomitance and an observation of a certain type of effect in need of causal explanation.

Henkel thus refers to this latter argument as the argument by remainder.[29] Because I see other bodies move with intention regardless of my will, and mind in general is what causes such action, these other bodies must be caused to behave in the ways I observe as a result of

[29] Henkel (2013), 71.

subjective intentions that are not mine. In this way of thinking about mentality, although a first-person aspect is still heavily emphasized, its third person aspect – its objectivity, its bodily activity – plays an increasingly pivotal role. This is more than can be said for analogical arguments, which at best take note that other bodies are like mine, and therefore *probably* "contain" a mind. The argument from remainder, relying on a general conception of mind as causing bodily action, ties mind and body – subject and object – tighter together.

But further consideration suggests that the inference fails. One Buddhist associated with the Vijñānavāda – viz. Ratnakīrti – argues that Dharmakīrti's inference is unestablished (*asiddha*) and indeed, as we will see in the next chapter, that the very notion of another mind, at least insofar as we accept the kind of representationalism Buddhists following Dharmakīrti tend to adopt, is non-sensical. In a critique of the logic of Dharmakīrti's inference, Ratnakīrti asks the following question: "Is the volition that is being established as the cause of the phenomena of language and behavior something perceptible by the inferrer or is it volition as such, [something] which is independent of the properties of visibility and invisibility?"[30]

If, at the time of making the inference, another's mental states were perceptible, there would be no scope for Dharmakīrti's inference. For if something that is perceptible is absent from perceptual experience, its presence is already ruled out by non-observation. This does not discount other inferences that involve such non-observation, such as inferring a fire on a mountain from seeing smoke. For the fire, though being a non-observed perceptible entity, is still in principle perceptible. That is, its non-observation is a matter of spatial limitation; if we got

[30] Ratnakīrti, *Santānāntaradūṣaṇa*. Jonardon Ganeri, tr. in *The Self: Naturalism, Consciousness, and the First-Person Stance* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), 206. Henceforth cited as *SAD*.

closer to the fire we would see it. But such is not the case for other's mental states: "But in the case of an act of volition, [it cannot be said] that it is too far away. Volition is not spatially inaccessible, for it is observable by the inferrer to whom it is related."[31] The inaccessibility of another's volition is a matter of principle, not spatial distance.

On the other hand, if the mental state of another's subjectivity that is to be established as the cause of action is a mental state as such, Dharmakīrti's inference would be logically problematic. Ratnakīrti points out that a causal relation between fire-as-such and smoke-as-such can be established on the basis of a perceptual awareness of a lack of smoke when there is a lack of fire. But there can be no such awareness of another's volition. For if the other's mental states are inaccessible in principle, there would be no way to tell whether these states are present or absent. A causal relation between volition and action as such thus cannot be established since this would require that I can access such a relation in cases outside of my own. Thus, as Ratnakīrti puts it:

Thus the condition for perceptibility is – 'were a pot present at this place or time, it would certainly be perceived: it would be an object of my objective visual awareness'. But what is not possible is the formulation in relation to another mind: 'were another mind present, it would certainly be an object of my self-awareness'… One does not know that the absence of action is invariably connected with the absence of will.[32]

In addition to these problems with Dharmakīrti's inference, Abhinavagupta argues that it is circular. For the whole inference to another's mind rests on the assumption that the other has a desire, say, to speak – and this already implies the other's existence.[33] Dharmakīrti might reply that when one desires to speak, they desire to be heard, and thus their speech becomes

[31] *SAD*, 207
[32] *SAD*, 208
[33] *IPV*, 62

objectively manifest. This would make the situation such that in each desire to speak there is both the subjective "I wish to be heard" and the objective "Speech is heard". Since there is such an invariable concomitance as this causal link between desiring to speak or to be heard and actually being heard in my own case, Dharmakīrti may suggest that the speech acts of others can be explained in terms of this concomitance: the objective manifestation of their speech itself implies that they desire to be heard. We need not assume such a desire outside of ourselves prior to drawing the inference.

This move, however, does not necessarily save the argument from remainder, for as Abhinava puts it, "It is not universally true that the effect of the subjective is the objective; because there are exceptions."[34] Isabelle Ratié gives a suitable example: "I can very well wish to be heard and yet not be heard."[35] As such, there are exceptions to the proposed invariable concomitance between my subjective desire to be heard and the objective manifestation of heard speech. As we saw Ratnakīrti argue, the invariable concomitance between intention-as-such and action-as-such remains unestablished.

Abhinavagupta further argues that a Vijñānavādin like Dharmakīrti faces a dilemma. For under Dharmakīrti's representationalism, there can be no difference between a perception and the object of that perception since there is a constant co-cognition of the two – when we are aware of an object, we are aware of our awareness, and we can never find the object as distinct from any awareness we might have of it. As such, there could be no difference between my

[34] *IPV*, 62

[35] Isabelle Ratié, "Otherness in the Pratyabhijñā philosophy," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 35 (2007): 330.

awareness of the content of my inference to another mind (namely, "you") and my awareness of making the inference.

Thus, Abhinavagupta puts Dharmakīrti in an awkward position. Either Dharmakīrti admits solipsism, since the mind of the other would have to be non-distinct from the mind of the one who makes the inference. Or, on the other hand, Dharmakīrti must admit that there are things which exist outside the light of consciousness – that there are instances where objects of awareness are found to be distinct from the awarenesses that make them objects – since the other's consciousness is not mine. But this would be contradictory to the notion that there is no distinction between consciousness and its object.

1.3 Folk Psychology: Knowing What You Think

We have thus far considered inferential approaches to knowing that others exist. Such approaches, as we've seen, are problematic. For they articulate a concept of mind that is inherently reflexive, representational, and removed from any interactive context with other minds. Moreover, as we've seen, these inferences are themselves logically problematic. As such, if one is wedded to the idea that our knowledge of others necessitates some kind of an inference, it might be best to side with Abhinvagupta's predecessor Utpaladeva who suggests that we don't quite validly infer (*anumīyate) that* others exist so much as presume, guess, or suppose (*ūhyate*), perhaps in an abductive or improvised manner, that another limited form of consciousness is behind the activity of some of my experiences – more on this later.[36]

[36] *IPV*, 17.

Now even if we can, or occasionally do, infer (abductively or inductively) *that* others exist in such ways as were deliberated on above, this doesn't tell any given "me" much about "your" mind, and presumably, then, about your behavior. For it is perhaps reasonable to assume that much of our behavior depends to some extent on contents of propositional attitudes like beliefs or desires. Cognitive scientists and philosophers of mind have thus, for the past half century or so, been working on figuring out how we know the contents of other minds, that is, how we actually go about knowing other's beliefs and desires.

Minds are "contentful" insofar as they have representations with "built in conditions of satisfaction" and "veridical content that is accurate or inaccurate, true or false."[37] They are governed by conditions of semantic normativity[38] and are therefore sensitive to intensional context. In this way, minds have a sort of formality to them. In other words, mental contents are governed by rules that condition, for example, the truth of propositions about other's beliefs and desires. And such truths involve the application of a mental concept often from a neutralized, third-person perspective, that is, outside of any interactive context with the mental state being represented. Mental contents in general are thus properties attributed to the world by minds, with the expectation that these attributions refer to or otherwise correspond with actual states of affairs – i.e. they have a truth-centered focus.

Thus, in knowing about the contents of other minds – in what writers in this field often call "mentalizing" or "mindreading" – cognitivists think that we primarily *attribute* particular mental contents (viz. specific propositional attitudes, but also feelings and emotions) to others.

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[37] Daniel Hutto and Eric Myin, *Radicalizing Enactivism: Basic Minds without Content* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 87.
[38] York Gunther, *Essays on Nonconceptual Content* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 5.

We thus form mental contents of the mental contents of others. We expect our attributions of belief to others to have truth-value. Either you do hold the belief I attribute to you, or not. And your belief is presumably either true or false as well. In this attribution, however, another mind is never strictly encountered. You are like a quark or an electron, an unobservable object, as Hyslop would have it, that is either theorized about or otherwise modeled. But how do I, in fact, have access to something that is as uniquely beyond my perceptions as other minds are.

The question, then, is how I actually go about knowing what your actual mental states are, what you are thinking or feeling or wanting? Or, as Søren Overgaard puts it, "What methods might people employ if they want to know what someone else is thinking or feeling? What 'subpersonal' mechanisms might be involved?"[39] This is, Overgaard says, the empirical problem of other minds, though we will see that it is possible to approach this problem along more traditionally *a priori* lines.

There are generally two common lines of cognitivist thought in this area. In one way of thinking, mental contents are attributed to others on the basis of a folk theory of mind "a theory that postulates a range of *internal states* whose causal relations are described by the theory's laws."[40] The other form of mentalizing doesn't necessarily make reference to such a system of folk laws which apply mental contents in order to predict and explain behavior. Rather, it relies on a process of simulation whereby one uses one's own mind as a model that reenacts what is going on in the mind of others.

1.3.1 Theory-Theory

[39] Søren Overgaard, "Other Minds Embodied," *Continental Philosophical Review* 50 (2017): 68
[40] Paul Churchland, *Matter and Consciousness* (Cambrdige, MA: MIT Press 1984): 59. Italics mine.

Research into mentalizing or mindreading was sparked by Premack and Woodruff's paper "Does the Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind?"[41] After watching videos of humans engaged in problem-solving tasks, a chimp was given behavioral choices to test its comprehension of what it saw. The chimp's great performance prompted the authors to suggest that chimps possess a theory of mind. With this suggestion, they had the following in mind: "A system of inferences of this kind is properly viewed as theory, first, because such states are not directly observable, and second, because the system can be used to make predictions, specifically about the behavior of other organisms."[42] Gopnik and Wellman would later add that such theoretical constructs cohere with each other and explain why certain behaviors are exhibited and, further, that they are interpretive as well as open to revision.[43] As such, mental states are taken by such theory-theorists to hold a theoretical-causal-functional role in the explanation and prediction of behavior.

Following Premack and Woodruff's paper, the notion of a theory of mind was employed to explain certain experimental results that tested young children's comprehension of other's false beliefs. Such an experiment, first designed by Wimmer and Perner,[44] generally goes like this: A child is shown a scene where an individual, X, puts an object into a drawer and goes out to play. While X is out, another individual, Y, comes in and moves the object into a new drawer. Children are then asked which drawer X believes the object is in. Children below the age of four said that

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[41] David Premack and Guy Woodruff, "Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind?" *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 1 (1978): 515-526.
[42] Premack and Woodruff (1978), 515.
[43] Alison Gopnik and Henry Wellman, "Why the child's theory of mind really *is* a theory," *Mind and Language* 7 (1992): 146-149.
[44] Heinz Wimmer and Josef Perner, "Beliefs about beliefs: Representation and constraining function of wrong beliefs in young children's understanding of deception," *Cognition*, 13 (1983): 103-128.

X believes the object to be in the new drawer. They fail to attribute to X the false belief that it is in its original drawer, and thus fail to display an understanding of the possibility that others might have false beliefs.

These findings, theory-theorists suggest, can be explained by enhancement, around the age of four, of a theory of mind by a more sophisticated and tested conception of belief. Further evidence suggests that a similar thing happens with the propositional attitude of desire, albeit at an earlier age: at around two we utilize desire-talk in our explanations of events.[45,46] Theory-theorists interpret such results as exhibiting the development and refinement of a systematic theory of mind (or at the least, of propositional attitudes). This proposal has two common offshoots: modular theory (MT) and child scientist theory (CST). Let's begin by looking at CST.

CST proposes that our ability to mentalize is the result of a systematic theory of the relation between mental events and behavior which begins to mature in the first few years of life. In this process of theoretical maturation, children are thought of just like adult scientists:

> The child's understanding involves general constructs about the mind that go beyond the focal evidential phenomena. These constructs feature importantly in explanation. They allow children to make predictions about behavior in a wide variety of circumstances, including predictions about behavior they have never actually experienced and incorrect predictions. Finally, they lead to distinctive interpretations of evidence.[47]

Children, it is argued, therefore work with systematic epistemic structures "rich enough and abstract enough to merit the name of theories."[48] One of the prominent claims made by CST is that the false belief task is evidence for a "conceptual deficit" in young children. The concept of

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[45] Karen Bartsch and Henry Wellmen, "Young children's attribution of action to beliefs and desires," *Child Development* (1989): 946-964.
[46] Henry Wellmen and Mita Banerjee, "Mind and emotion: Children's understanding of emotional consequences of beliefs and desires," *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 9 (1991): 191-214.
[47] Gopnik and Wellman (1992), 153
[48] Alison Gopnik and Andrew Meltzoff, *Words, Thoughts, and Theories* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1997), 82

a false belief does not yet cohere with the rest of a child's theory, and so children don't have an adequate concept of belief. Joseph Perner puts this nicely: "Young children fail to understand belief because they have difficulty understanding that something represents; that is, they cannot *represent* that something is a *representation*."[49]

But it is not clear that this is the best way to interpret false belief tasks. Several researchers have modified the task and came up with quite different results. It has been demonstrated that memory plays an important role in the success of false belief tasks. Lewis *et al*[50] showed that if children are given more time to absorb the scenario by presenting it to them twice, they are more successful at the task. In addition, Zaitchik[51] showed that the more salient it was to the observing child that the object was in a new spot, the more likely it is that they would struggle to attribute a false belief to the character in question. This seems to imply that when a situation feels too obvious, when aspects of it are magnified, made more conspicuous to us, we struggle to see another perspective.

These and similar experiments have been suggested to show that the CST thesis of conceptual deficit may not be adequate in explaining the development of mentalizing. It isn't necessarily a conceptual deficit that has children under four struggling with belief attribution. It's perhaps not so much that children don't "have" appropriate concepts with which to operate; rather it is that such concepts haven't been mastered in a propositional manner. For nothing rules out the possibility that our attributional capacities are grounded in more primordial,

[49] Josef Perner, *Understanding the Representational Mind* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 186.
[50] C. Lewis, N. Freeman, C. Hagestadt, and H. Douglas, "Narrative access and production in preschoolers' false belief reasoning," *Cognitive Development* 9 (1994): 397-424
[51] Deborah Zaitchik, "Is only seeing really believing? Sources of true belief in the false belief task." *Cognitive Development* 6 (1991): 91-103

informal, embodied concepts that carry with them a certain ambiguity and thus haven't been solidified and formalized as of yet into a strictly delineated "concept of belief".

As such children may have some semblance of a concept of belief before they begin to successfully attribute it to any minds whatsoever simply due to the effect that concrete, embodied and embedded interaction has on their development. Indeed given, as we have seen, that children seem to understand desire earlier than belief, they may have some semblance of a general understanding of mentality and perhaps, then, an understanding in terms of perspective. And this would be possible without a systematic theory of how propositional attitudes connect. Indeed, such a systematic theory of propositional attitudes would be grounded on more informal, situated interactions. Just because they aren't experts at the veridical application of mentality (particularly, high-level mentality such as propositional attitudes) to others doesn't mean that children are totally bereft of any comprehension of mentality. But such a comprehension would not need to involve a sophisticated theoretical structure.

Mindreading theories based on modular conceptions of mind run up against some difficulties of their own. According to Jerry Fodor, mind is modular insofar as some of its cognitive mechanisms are "vertical" in varying degrees with respect to other mechanisms: some cognitive mechanisms "which subserve one capacity are different, de facto, from those that subserve the other."[52] Thus the work of the mind is divided up into several modular and non-modular mechanisms.

A cognitive mechanism that is modular has at least two important properties: it is informationally encapsulated and domain specific. The latter "has to do with the range of

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[52] Jerry Fodor, *Modularity of Mind: An Essay on Faculty Psychology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1983), 15

questions for which a device provides answers (the range of inputs for which it computes analysis)."[53] In the case of a modular mindreading mechanism, this means that it would have the job of inputting information specific to the range of possible propositional attitudes others hold. The former, on the other hand, "has to do with the range of information that the device consults in deciding what answers to provide."[54] For modular mindreading, this implies that only information about another's propositional attitudes, namely beliefs and desires, would be computed during mindreading activities. Thus, for example, Simon Baron-Cohen proposes a series of modular mechanisms that feed specific sorts of information (viz. information pertaining to other's intentional movements, gaze direction, and shared attention) into a Theory of Mind Module (ToMM) which transforms that information into metarepresentations – e.g. beliefs about beliefs – which are systematized into a coherent theory. [55]

However, ToMM-based theories may fail the dual test of domain specificity and informational encapsulation. Firstly, ToMM's domain is supposed to be over metarepresentations, which are for the most part propositional attitudes about propositional attitudes. But there are many other features of mind that need to be accounted for, features such as sensations and emotions.[56] In addition, as Alvin Goldman points out,[57] modular theorists mostly discuss only input processes as modular. Indeed, domain specificity is a matter of the sort of input a mechanism uses to make its computations. However, Goldman points out that

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[53] Fodor (1983), 15
[54] Fodor (1983), 103
[55] Simon Baron-Cohen, *Mindblindess: An Essay on Autism and Theory of Mind* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1997), 51
[56] Alvin Goldman, *Simulating Minds: The Philosophy, Psychology and Neuroscience of Mindreading* (New York, NY: Oxford UP 2006), 102.
[57] Goldman (2006), 103

"Mentalizing, at least most types of mentalizing, is surely not an input process."[58] Finally our *interactive* experiences – perhaps for the most part – do not necessarily require such contentful processes. Matters of truth, of veridical applications of concepts, are not always the primary concern in our understanding one another; the domain which defines our interactive practices and experiences may not be so precisely defined as to have strict application conditions. That is, such interaction may exhibit a certain informality unconstrained by the semantic strictures that condition the cognitive practices involved in veridical concerns.

In addition, it isn't clear that mindreading is informationally encapsulated. For one thing, mindreading requires input from a central system which houses general information about the world in order to construct its theories.[59] In other words, mindreading mechanisms would require more general information than that which specifies another's beliefs and desires, namely what those beliefs and desires are about. As such, it wouldn't be receiving input purely about the place of beliefs and desires in a theory of mind. Moreover, mindreaders tend to attribute beliefs, which they themselves hold, to others – Nichols and Stich call this "default attribution."[60] But again, if this were the case, ToMM would have to make recourse to a central system to retrieve its own beliefs, thus being unencapsulated.[61]

Modular theories of mind would thus struggle to adequately account, not just for how we predict and explain other's behavior, but for the particular case of close human interactions, where second person cooperative participation is of the utmost importance. Basic interactions

[58] Goldman (2006), 103
[59] Goldman (2006), 105
[60] Shaun Nichols and Stephen Stich, *Mindreading: An Integrated Account of Pretence, Self-Awareness, and Understanding Other Minds* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2003), 120-121.
[61] Goldman (2006), 105

need not be domain specific since they do not follow the clear input-output patterns modularists assume. Furthermore, even in basic interactions between infants and parents, the information that is operated on is not purely of another's internal states since the objects of those internal states are always implicated in our knowledge. The two most notable features of modularity are thus inadequate to second-person experience.

1.3.2 Simulation Theory

The primary rival of theory-theories in the world of mindreading scholarship is simulation theory. Instead of explaining mindreading in terms of a system of folk psychological laws that backup a system of inferences about the minds of others, simulationists propose that mindreaders use their own minds as a model to reduplicate, reproduce, resonate with or otherwise mirror the mental goings on of others. Thus, instead of feeding a representation of another's propositional attitudes into a ToMM, simulation theory says that we veritably project ourselves into counterfactual situations by taking on counterfactual mental states as our own in order to predict or explain how one might behave in these situations.

The basic gist of simulation theory, then, is its proposal that we do not need a systematic representation of psychological theory in order to understand others. Rather, we already have what it takes to understand others in the sense that we already have that which we want to understand about another – namely a mind, thoughts, feelings, etc. Instead of testing and developing hypotheses into theory, our understandings of others are due to the ways in which we, in some sense, recreate or reproduce what goes on "in" another's mind "in" our own, using the same mechanisms others use to think through content.

It is worth noting that simulation theory has become an umbrella term for a variety of approaches with some family resemblances. But there is no agreement as to the specifics of what this capacity for "simulation" is. Indeed, the terminology is embroiled in controversy and confusion. As such, I will not sift through the various ways in which terms like "simulation" and "empathy" have been used. For our purposes, it would be overly cumbersome to sort out the entire debate within this field.

As such, the following analysis of simulation theory, despite the varied interpretations it has gotten, will be restricted to two ways of thinking about simulation theory that approach our empathic abilities from different epistemic directions. First, we will discuss Alvin Goldman's more *a posteriori* approach to simulation and then we will explore Jane Heal's more *a priori* perspective. This will suffice for us to get a gist of how simulation theory deals with the problem at hand – and what sorts of problems such approaches tend to encounter.

Goldman's perspective utilizes empirical evidence in order to show that simulation theory is a better candidate to explain social cognition than theory-theory. In doing so, Goldman distinguishes between high-level and low-level simulation. In low level mindreading, we "automatically" and "implicitly" attribute emotions and intentions to others. Using evidence from Face Based Emotional Recogntion (FaBER) studies as well as studies on mirror neurons, Goldman has made a case for a form of simulation in which one "matches" or "resonates" with the mental state of others – in low level mindreading, there is no pretense.[62] In other words, under low level simulation, we do not quite put ourselves in other's shoes so much as spontaneously recognize the other's state of mind by the excitation of a similar mental ability in ourselves.

[62] Goldman (2006), 131

However, Goldman's switch from talking about mindreading as the attribution of mental properties to others into the vocabulary of recognition, which he takes to be essentially the same insofar as mindreading goes, is questionable. Recognition, particularly in the perceptual experience of emotionally expressive faces, may not be so contentful as to warrant the appropriate comparison with the explicit and measured attribution of properties. It may not be appropriate to bring up such semantic concepts here, as this "low-level mindreading" does not necessitate the veridical application of psychological concepts so much as a more pragmatic and visceral awareness of expressivity and its general significance for consequent action.

It is only in the case of high-level simulation, according to Goldman, that we, so to speak, take up the position of another. It is in high-level mindreading that we pretend to hold certain beliefs and desires, processing them "off-line" as it were, so as to formulate inferences which we don't act on but which we attribute to others. As an example, imagine that we want to predict someone's behavior. They are about to leave their house and go out in the rain. We assume they desire to go outside and to not get wet and believe that, on the one hand, if it is raining they will get wet and, on the other, if they bring an umbrella, they won't. We can then predict that this person will bring an umbrella with them when they leave so that they can avoid getting wet.

The high-level simulation explanation of the above prediction, according to Goldman, goes something like this: We can make such a prediction by feeding these beliefs and desires into our own decision-making mechanisms. Based on the input of the above beliefs about rain and umbrellas and the desire not to get wet, our own decision-making mechanisms produce output predicting that this person will likely bring an umbrella with them when they leave. And we make this prediction, rather than, say, carrying out the predicted action, because our own cognitive

mechanisms are operating off-line, that is, detached from these mechanisms' usual connections to action guiding systems. Goldman takes it that empirical evidence supports the case for such a theory of simulation over any straight theory-theory.

Simulation theory, particularly along the lines of high-level mindreading, thus predicts that self-reference is a necessary part of high-level mindreading. The idea is that in order to predict or explain what goes on in another's mind, we imagine what our thoughts would be were we to be in another's situation. Then, using our own cognitive mechanisms, we can predict the other's likely state of mind or propensity toward action. In order to mindread, we must therefore reflect on what it would be like if we ourselves were in another's position; we must engage our own cognitive mechanisms in an off-line capacity. According to Goldman, there is empirical evidence that supports this. After citing several fMRI studies that point to the medial prefrontal cortex (MPFC) as of paramount importance in self-reflection and self-reference, Goldman draws attention to studies that highlight the role of the MPFC in mindreading.

For example, Mitchel, Banaji, and Macrae[63] gave subjects either a mindreading or a non-mindreading task while in an fMRI. In the former instance, subjects looked at a picture and judged how pleased the person in the photo is. The latter instance saw the subjects merely describe how symmetrical the person's face in the photograph was. Thirty minutes later participants viewed the photograph again and were asked to indicate how similar the photographed person was to themselves.

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[63] J.P. Mitchel, M.R. Banaji, and C.N. Macrae, "General and specific contributions of the medial prefrontal cortex to knowledge about mental states," *Neuroimage* 28 (2005): 757-762.

Compared to the non-mindreading task, the MPFC showed significantly more activity during the mindreading task, particularly when participants later registered the degree of similarity they saw between themselves and the person photographed. Goldman, following Mitchell et al., takes this to vindicate the claim of high-level simulation theory that self-reference is a vital component of mindreading. And since theory-theory relies on an impersonal, neutral psychological theory to work, it would be hard pressed to explain such phenomena.

This would seem to imply that mindreading by simulation would be prone to errors by egocentric bias. If there is data that suggests that such egocentric bias occurs, such a conception of simulation would be further validated. Goldman thus adduces such studies that further support simulation theory. For example, Camerer, *et al.*[64] found that when people who are well-informed about corporate earnings are asked to predict how less-informed individuals will forecast earnings, they tended to yield predictions that reflected their knowledge. In a similar experiment Keysar, *et al.*[65] had a "director" instruct participants (who had previously hidden a roll of tape in a bag, unbeknownst to the director) on how to move objects around on a grid. When the director told the participants to "move the tape," indicating that he wanted the participants to move a video tape around on the grid, participants tended instead to reach into the bag.

In these examples, people had trouble quarantining their own knowledge during mindreading tasks, and so their behavior reflected this egocentric bias. Good mindreading theory would require that we account for these phenomena. While this is difficult to explain under a

[64] C. Camerer, G. Loewenstein, and M. Weber, "The curse of knowledge in economic settings: An experimental analysis," *Journal of Political Economy* 87 (1989): 1232-1254.
[65] B. Keysar, S. Lin, and D.J. Barr, "Limits on theory of mind in adults," *Cognition* 89 (2003): 25-41

theory-theory construal, where the theoretical apparatus operates impersonally, simulation theory posits a process whereby a mindreader must quarantine his or her propositional attitudes in order to be successful at the given task. As such it is more equipped to handle our tendency toward egocentric bias in mindreading.

Here we see some attempts at suggesting that simulation theory trumps theory-theory as an explanation of our understanding of others on the basis of empirical evidence. However, Jane Heal has contended that, as interesting and important as the empirical research is, it is not needed to usurp theory-theory from its dominance in the field. For, she argues, "simulation" in a more normative sense does the task *a priori*. Her formulation of simulation theory takes its inspiration from the *Verstehen* tradition – she notes, in particular, the likes of Vico, Kant, Dilthey, Weber, and Collingwood – a tradition that has been critical of positivist approaches to human understanding. This puts her at odds with any empirically driven approach to mind reading, despite her acknowledgement of the importance of *a posteriori* considerations – she takes them to be more pertinent to the question of *how* simulation is realized physically and psychologically, not to *whether* and *in what sense* simulation is our primary mode for understanding the contents of others' minds.

Theory-theory appeals to a body of information – a theory of psychology or of mind – that we use to formulate hypotheses and make predictions about others behavior. Simulation, in Goldman's sense, does not require such a body of information since we can pretend to inhabit a certain situation and see how we would play it out. Heal, however, focuses on our understandings of subject matter and the reduplication of content. Whereas Goldman's higher-level form of simulation requires the use of one's own cognitive mechanisms put to work imaginatively in such

a way that we consider what we ourselves would do were we to take up the beliefs and desires of another, Heal's approach has no such requirement of pretense. Instead, she argues that "simulation" is a matter of the reduplication of content, and thus the ability to think together about some topic – it is "co-cognition."[66]

When we think about others' thoughts, and given certain relevance constraints, Heal suggests that we are thinking the same thoughts as others are, we are co-cognizing some subject matter, cognizing the same content. As such, there may not need to be the deployment of "pretend" states in order to make sense of another's actions. Echoing Hans-Georg Gadamer's critique of romanticism – that it is not necessary for us to transpose ourselves into another's shoes, and instead that understanding is a matter of being "at one with each other on the subject"[67] – Heal says that "[The] ability to think about another's thoughts… is an extension or redeployment of the ability to think about the subject matter of the other's thoughts."[68] Thus, simulation as reduplication only requires that we know about the subject matter that we take the other to be thinking about.

To understand another, under this construal, to know them, to predict and explain their behavior, we must be "at one" with them on whatever subject matter they are engaged in thinking about. It requires that we have the abilities, regarding that subject, to make reasonable inferences to conclusions based on adequate premises. And it requires that understanding another involves no distinction between the subject matter of their thoughts and their thoughts

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[66] Jane Heal, *Mind, Reason, and Imagination* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 91-114.
[67] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, tr. (New York: Continuum, 2012), 387.
[68] Heal (2003), 38.

as the subject matter of my thoughts. For when your thoughts are the subject matter of my thoughts, according to this line of thought, I am just thinking about the subject matter and not something in addition (viz. your thoughts *qua* your thoughts).

The proposal works in some such manner as the following. Suppose someone, X, believes that p_1-p_n and was wondering whether the conclusion q follows. So, X has some such thought as, "Given that p_1-p_n, does it follow that q?" If it happens to be the case that p_1-p_n implies q, and if X were to be aware of this, her reasoning would be as follows: "Given that p_1-p_n and that these imply q, therefore q." Being capable of such reasoning, she would be able to make similar moves in a hypothetical attitude: "Were it the case that p_1-p_n and that this implied q, then q." But to understand X here does not necessarily require that I simulate her thoughts by operating my own cognitive mechanisms off-line, by imagining myself into her scenario and pretending to have certain of her beliefs. It requires only that I understand the same subject in more or less the same way and, thus, will reason the same way.

Simulation as reduplication is thus a matter of rational interpretation, of having a mutual understanding of some subject matter and being able to reason from premises provided in the theory behind that subject to some conclusions about the subject. But your thoughts need not be a separate subject matter the theory of which I employ, nor do I need to pretend to have your thoughts. Your thoughts are about some subject matter and my thoughts about you, being about you thinking about the very subject matter in question, aren't so much about you or your thoughts as they are about what stands between us, namely the subject you're thinking about.

1.3.3 Some Problems with Folk Psychology

The folk psychology that many researchers take to be behind our social practices – principally indicated by the concept of mindreading, of being able to *attribute content* to others' minds – has recently come under criticism for its unrealistic outlook on how we understand each other. As Dan Zahavi puts it, such approaches to social reality "Rarely considered ecologically valid real-life situations."[69] Thomas Fuchs and Hanne De Jaegher articulate several ways in which such an objection has been spelled out.[70]

The first form of this objection criticizes what they call the "inner world hypothesis". Folk psychology as formulated by both simulation theory and theory-theory make much the same assumptions about "mind" as do both Cartesianism and Vijñānavāda. In particular, they assume a certain essential internality to mind that aims at representing objects in the world. With regard to sociality, this means that there is an essentially unbridgeable gulf between any two subjects. If subjectivity is essentially internal and directed at objects, we can never be in any direct relation to each other and my only knowledge of you would have to come from remote means like inference based on a theory or on a model: "We are hidden from each other in principle."[71] However, as will be argued in later chapters, there is something more "direct" about our relationships.

Another way of articulating the objection from the unrealistic ecology of simulation theory and theory-theory is what Fuchs and De Jaegher call the problem of *missing interaction*. Here, it is pointed out that such ways of thinking about sociality tend to rely on empirical studies

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[69] Dan Zahavi, *Self and Other: Exploring Subjectivity, Empathy, and Shame* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2014), 107.
[70] Thomas Fuchs and Hanne De Jaegher, "Enactive Intersubjectivity: Participatory Sense-Making and Mutual Incorporation," *Phenomenology and Cognitive Science* 8 (2009): 467-468.
[71] Fuchs and De Jaegher (2009), 467

where there is simply no second-person interaction occurring. Participants, for the most part, are asked to passively observe some scenario and formulate predictions or explanations about it. This highlights a conceptual difficulty with such approaches: they assume mind-mind relations to be similar to the relation between removed observers and objects of observation.

Thus, second-person *interaction* isn't taken into account in studies on folk psychology. Observations only allow us to attribute properties to objects; but interactions play out our mutually lived positions. Where the mind is emphasized as a purely first-person subjectivity, others become merely dead objects characterized in the third-person. Second-person interactive living is disregarded, or at best unfairly reduced to third-person observations made by isolated first-persons about theoretical other first-persons.

But these assumptions put us at a remove from others and thus require us to know them only through the mediating event of ascribing contents to their minds. As Shaun Gallagher notes, this requires specialized cognitive capacities that may not always – or even often – be exhibited in our common, everyday transactions.[72] Again, it will be suggested that there is something more "immediate" and "direct" about our interactions than cognitivist theories of mind allow for. Second-personhood, as Evan Thompson avers, isn't a primarily matter of "an initial bodily perception of a non-interpreted bodily movement followed by a judgment that attributes meaning to the movement and thereby interprets it as an action."[73]

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[72] Shaun Gallagher, "Practice of Mind," in *Between Ourselves: Second-Person Issues in the Study of Consciousness*, Evan Thompson, ed. (Charlottesville: Imprint Academic, 2001), 99.
[73] Evan Thompson, "Empathy and Consciousness," in *Between Ourselves: Second-Person Issues in the Study of Consciousness*, Evan Thompson, ed. (Charlottesville: Imprint Academic, 2001), 9.

This brings us to the Fuchs and De Jaegher's third form of criticism against folk psychology, the problem of *missing embodiment*. Since such theories depend on a conception of mind as essentially internal, the body is seen to be a mere tool that transmits information to be used in modelling or making inferences about the contents of others' minds. Sociality is understood as a passive process where the only importance of bodily intentionality is to gesture at an invisible, distinct thing – a subject or subjectivity. What happens in social cognition of the sort folk psychology is understood to employ is that we merely observe the behavior of bodies passively without engaging them, and thus without seeing them as more than "behaviors" that can be "observed" as if we are scientists. But this badly misrepresents actual social practices. Sociality is a highly interactive, situated and embodied engagement.

The fourth objection is the problem of *missing development*. Traditional folk psychological approaches to sociality tend to focus on the timing at which certain cognitive capacities come on-line as well as which ones are innate and which are learned. Since the focus is on mental representations and metarepresentations, the developmental significance of the dynamics of embodied interactions is ignored. Little attention is paid to how social capacities develop through our incessant interactions with others.

Gallagher argues that both simulation and theory-theory also run into what he calls the *starting problem*: "Neither theory has a good explanation of how the [mindreading] process gets off the ground – or more precisely what ground we stand on as we engage in the process."[74] Take theory-theory: this idea suggests that in understanding the behavior of others I apply a rule or

[74] Shaun Gallagher, "Narrative Competence and the Massive Hermeneutical Background," in *Education, Dialogue and Hermeneutics*, P. Fairfield, ed. (United States: Continuum Publishing Group, 2011), 22.

principle of folk psychology to specific situations. But it is unclear how we know what sort of rule to apply in the first place. Even the most mundane encounter is highly specific and extemporaneous. As such, it is difficult to tell what sort of general, covering law ordinary folk might deploy to theorize about their situation.

In the specific instance of the common routine of a bus ride to work, how should I understand the people with whom I must interact? What rule, law, or principle sufficiently explains all this coordinated behavior? Is it one about desires to get from here to there? Or about the way reasons lead to actions? What about beliefs that buses can carry passengers to different places? Or how about a folk theory of the way emotions can be contagious through minute behavioral postures and gestures? Which one of these 'folk' theories of human psychology is the one we ordinarily deploy to understand the context of a bus ride? Would it require a couple of essential folk theories put together? Or would it have to be all of them together? If so, would that be a complete description of human psychology, and wouldn't that be a little unwieldy for us folk to utilize in a simple bus ride? Before I can even apply the folk theory I've chosen to understand the situation, I am at my bus stop.

Simulationism also fails to provide an acceptable understanding of how a simulation routine would get off the ground. This requires either selecting pretend states or otherwise representing contents counterfactually which are to imitate or reduplicate the mental states of others. These states, according to the off-line theory at least, are then run through a simulation routine and, as is the case at least for higher-order simulation, an action is inferred. But how do we know which states are to be selected in the first place? It would seem that to do this, we would have already solved the problem that simulation is meant to tackle, namely representing

the mental states of others. In order to simulate another's mental states, we must, it seems, already know what they are thinking.

Folk psychology, or at least the academic conception of how folk psychology works, is thus flawed in its representation of intersubjectivity. As with the traditional epistemological problem of other minds, academic conceptions of folk psychology misconstrue our original posture towards each other. In the next chapter, it will be argued that what makes these approaches to the epistemology of other minds problematic is that they rely on a way of thinking about first-personhood that is unable to incorporate otherness. These epistemological issues are grounded on deeper assumptions about the relationships between minds, bodies, and environments.

CHAPTER 2 A Critical Review of Conceptual Problems of Other Minds

"What gives us *so much as the idea* that beings, things, can feel?"
Ludwig Wittgenstein[75]

2.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, it has been supposed by many thinkers that "the mind" is intrinsically aware of itself and relates to objects through the removed medium of representational contents. Along these lines of thought, "the mind" is inherently self-reflexive – my awareness of anything is inherently an awareness of that awareness – and objects are represented as "external" and thus as being at the very least epistemically reducible to the light of my reflexive subjectivity. But as such, everything subjectivity touches becomes an object for subjectivity. Thus, your subjectivity, being subject and not object, is unreachable by my mind. I am at a remove from you and so my encounters with you are thought of as being from a distance as well.

Knowledge is thus conceptualized in terms of objects that are illuminated or accessed by subjects. In being accessed, the object can be known reflectively and observationally. In either case, whatever is known is considered to be known through a medium, through representational content. It is easy to see how this makes knowledge of others theoretically problematic, even if we can easily dispel with the classical problem of other minds in our everyday goings about. Still, such *conceptions* of mind and knowledge as we have so far studied seem to leave other subjects out of the picture. It would seem to make of you a mere object for my awareness, merely present, fully formed, waiting to be illuminated. What I know when I know you isn't really anything but

[75] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*. G.E.M. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte, tr. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), §283.

my representation or set of representations of you – just like any other object. But since you are supposed to be more than a mere inert object, you in your subjectivity are thought to be at a remove from me – for subjectivity is in each case mine. This gives rise to the classical epistemological problem.

Thus, my knowledge of you is often thought to be indirect in the sense that I don't simply see that you exist or perceive what the contents of your mind are. Rather I infer or imaginatively project your existence and the status of your mind out from mine. My mind is thought to be epistemically and logically privileged, what "comes first" in the knowledge of anything, let alone you. There is certainly something intuitive about this. What would knowledge be if it were not known by someone, namely me myself – or at least by some stream of subjectivity that gets called "myself". But, as we've seen, such ways of thinking are conceptually misleading.

The cognitivist picture of mind is thus problematic with regard to intersubjectivity as it neglects the role that a multiplicity of subjects plays in constituting a general concept of subjectivity. For if my knowledge of you is a matter of the representational contents I have of you and/or your thoughts, *what could it even mean to say that I know you or about your mental states?* All I have are my representations of your objective aspects. I may be able to infer from these experiences truths about your mentality. But in what sense is this to be understood? What makes the objective determinations of your behavior meaningful in terms of mentality? Why do your bodily gesticulations shine forth as the actions of another mind? Why are they not just more of my objective determinations about the world?

The epistemological problems we've discussed are thus reducible to a conceptual problem. For what is presumably problematic about my knowledge of you rests in my inability to

see beyond your bodily configuration, your physical movements, to see directly therein a fully formed subject that is not me. Under the construals so far discussed, knowing about your mentality involves my taking up a quasi-scientific posture towards you as I attempt to grasp an invisible cause of visible phenomena. But such an invisible cause is, so to speak, visible in reference to me: I am immediately aware of my own subjectivity and its objective manifestations. If that's the case, then, it must be asked what makes my experiences of others in their objective aspects experiences of objects that have subjective aspects that are not my subjective aspects. What does it even mean to say that there are other subjects when subjectivity is in each case mine? This chapter thus introduces the sorts of conceptual problems that underlie the epistemological considerations reviewed in the last chapter.

2.2 Conceptual Problems

The contemporary debate on the conceptual problem of other minds pays great heed to issues brought up by Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations*. In the midst of the sections that are said to elucidate the private language argument, Wittgenstein tells us the following:

> If one has to imagine someone else's pain on the model of one's own, this is none too easy a thing to do: for I have to imagine pain which I *don't feel* on the model of pain which I *do feel.* That is, what I have to do is not simply make a transition in the imagination from pain in one place to pain in another. As from pain in the hand to pain in the arm. For it is not as if I had to imagine that I feel pain in some part of his body.[76]

This passage is often taken to lay out the gist of the conceptual problem. In order to make sense of the pain of another person, I presumably cannot, at least without serious difficulty, utilize my understanding of my own pains. The next lines suggest why this is. The case where I make sense

[76] Wittgenstein (2009), §302

of your pains by referring to mine is simply not analogous to my making sense of my own pain in two different places.

So, if I want to make sense of another's pain, reference to my own pain won't be too much help because I am not trying to make sense of how pain would feel to me were I to be in another body. This is because pain is thought to be essentially *my* pain. I understand what the term "pain" means from my own perspective without having to refer to anything other than my subjective awareness itself. But when I use the term "pain" in reference to your state of mind, I must refer to something other than my subjective awareness alone, namely the objective events I observe in your behavior. Moreover, I must refer to what is *felt* by the objective events I observe. Yet what could it possibly mean to observe objects that have feelings?

The general difficulty, then, is as follows: If I only know what pain is from my own case, if my understanding of pain is intrinsically linked to my experience of it, then my attributions of pain to others would be fraught with conceptual difficulty. Whatever else I understand as pain, it could not be what I understand when you tell me that *you* feel pain. For what I know about pains is presumably only what it feels like when I feel pain.[77] And this appears to be essential to pain-phenomena. Without knowing what it feels like when you feel pain, the notion of pain becomes conceptually problematic since it means making sense of unfelt pains. But pains are always felt! Thus, making sense of your pains is not like placing my pain experiences outside of myself. In what sense, then, can the sentence "I'm in pain!" be true when it doesn't come out of my mouth?

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[77] Wittgenstein (2009), §347

The issue is one of content, of semantic normativity and intensional context: it concerns the *conditions for the proper application of mental concepts*. It is largely a problem about the formal semantics of mentality. What makes my claims regarding your mentality meaningful? Why does your smile have a personal significance for me when I can't experience it personally, "from the inside" so to speak? In what sense can my claims to know you, to know what psychological conditions you are in, to know your mentality, be intelligible?

Returning to Ratnakīrti's critique of Dharmakīrti's inference may help further bring out what is at issue here. Recall that Ratnakīrti had argued against the validity of Dharmakīrti's inference on logical grounds, namely that the invariable concomitance between mental intention and bodily action is unestablished since I can't perceive its presence and absence in you. But his critique continues on conceptual grounds as follows. If Dharmakīrti's inference were to succeed in establishing the existence of other mind-streams (*santānāntara*), it would require that one set of experiences could differentiate between itself and another set of experiences. But if we attend to our experiences with others, we wouldn't be able to find such a difference. For a difference to be manifest, it would have to occur in my mind-stream (*santāna*). This is the only way that a mark of difference may be *present*. And by occurring in my series of experiences, such a *presentation* would be reflexively constituted, would be a *representation* (*vijñāpti*).

However, Ratnakīrti's objection goes, the difference is to be sought between my mind and another's. And if I could note the experience of another reflexively as I could my own, their experience would just be mine. Were you qua your first-person reflexive experiences manifest to my experience, there would be no difference between my mind and yours. Nothing could be manifest outside of reflexive subjectivity, and something that is not manifest could not appear as

different: "Just as when only one's own stream of experiences is manifest, difference from a non-manifest hare's horn does not appear, so likewise difference from a non-manifest stream does not appear."[78] No conscious event can be different from the one experienced since, in the experienced event, no mark of difference in consciousness can be manifest without being manifest in that very conscious event.

It seems that the notion of *another* mind is incoherent. The very idea collapses as soon as we think it. For to think about the pain of another apparently requires recourse to my painful experiences and so, as far as the conception goes, is always already a concept of pain that I have, that is, of a felt pain. This is, perhaps, Wittgenstein's point. But, Ratnakīrti's point would further suggest that I can't even demarcate myself off as an individual since there is nothing that essentially differentiates one set of experiences from any other. The very idea of subjectivity resists being accounted for in general terms and if it is generalized, its unification as a single concept is put into jeopardy.

The conceptual problem, then, is, as Anil Gomes puts it, the problem of "how it is possible to think about other minds."[79] As it has been discussed in contemporary discourse, to borrow a suggestion from Anita Avramides,[80] "the" problem is ambiguous between being a problem about the generalizeability of mental concepts across different instances of application and the unity of the concept across applications based on first-and-third-person evidences.

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[78] Ratnakīrti. *Santānāntaradūṣaṇa*. Jonardon Ganeri, tr. In *The Self: Naturalism, Consciousness, and the First-Person Stance* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), 209

[79] Anil Gomes, "Other Minds and Perceived Identity," *Dialectica* 63 (2009): 219

[80] Anita Avramides, *Other Minds* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

On the one hand, then, we can ask: Given that the meaning of mental terms is determined by one's direct acquaintance with the experiences those terms purport to represent, how is it possible to extend the use of such terms to others, or even to oneself at other times? The question asks in what sense a term that essentially refers to first-person experiences can be meaningfully applied in other instances of first-personhood. As we will see, answers to these questions have tended to rely either on the logical criteria for the applicability of terms or on the inherent imaginative abilities of consciousness itself.

On the other hand, we can ask: Given that it is possible to extend the applicability of mental terms to others, in what sense is the same concept being used when applied across first-and-third-person evidences? This question wonders whether our ascriptions of mentality to others in our extension of the concept of mind to others are ascriptions of the same concepts as when they are used in the first-person. For the conditions for the applicability of mental terms in the first-and-third-person are different. Let us now explore these two ways of formulating the problem.

2.3 The Problem of Generality

In the contemporary literature, there have been two identifiable approaches to the problem of generality. The criteria approach takes the problem to be largely a matter of the verification procedures involved in identifying the conditions under which mental concepts can be properly applied. Another approach, the imaginative extension approach, tends to argue that mental concepts can be generalized to others because of the inherent ability of the human mind to imagine subjects outside of and even entirely unlike itself.

2.3.1 The Criteria-Based Approach

The question at hand, to reiterate, is the following: Given that I am directly acquainted with mentality through my very own experiences, that the very meaning and significance of mentality is substantially determined through my (or, perhaps, simply *these*) experiences, how can I make sense of the generalization of mentality, the extension of exclusive first-personality from myself to others, or even to myself at other times? In what sense can I "feel your pain," as we say in common parlance, if pain must be felt and your pain goes unfelt by me? In what sense can I say that others are first-persons when the meaning of subjectivity is constituted through *this* very first-person?

Norman Malcolm reads both the problem and Wittgenstein's take on it as the issue of how we can establish criteria by which we can generalize the application of mental concepts outside of one's own instance. He understands Wittgenstein to be laying out a problem for any position that takes mental concepts to be understood essentially from one's own case alone. Such a position conceives of mind as lacking verifiable criteria for identification. As such, our knowledge of others is put in jeopardy, for the object of knowledge is beyond the limits of my cognition. It is just such a view that resulted in the traditional epistemological problem of other minds. But, Malcolm contends, if we start with this sort of understanding of mind, being able to ask the epistemological question wouldn't make sense in the first place. For asking such questions would presuppose what such positions deny: that there are criteria for applying mental concepts.

Thus, Malcolm tells us that there would be a very serious question about whether the conclusion of an analogical argument could be valid in the first place. Such an argument, he contends, starts off assuming that the concept of mind lacks criterion for determining that other objects in the world "have minds." This is so because analogical arguments tend to assume that

I know what a mind is from my own case without needing to refer to criteria which ground observational judgments. But it only ever appeals to the obscure authority of sameness as a criterion for whether another thing in the world has a mind. And so, Malcolm asserts,

> If I do not know how to establish that someone has a pain then I do not know how to establish that he has the *same* as I have when I have a pain. You cannot improve my understanding of 'He has a pain' by this recourse to the notion of 'the same,' unless you give me a criterion for saying that someone *has* the same as I. If you can do this, you will have no use for the argument from analogy: and if you cannot then you do not understand the supposed conclusion of that argument.[81]

Malcolm goes on to link Wittgenstein's formulation of the conceptual problem with the latter's discussion of private language and the way sensations and expressions are connected. In response to asking, "How do words refer to sensations?" and "How does a human being learn the meaning of names of sensations?" Wittgenstein replies that "words are connected with the primitive, natural, expressions of sensation and used in their place."[82] The criteria for the application of pain-concepts is first established, under this line of thought, through the original contexts in which pain-vocabulary is taught. And this involves the identification of certain behavioral displays.

But this doesn't mean that the word "pain" simply means the sorts of behaviors we observe when others are in pain. I *feel* pain too, sometimes solicited by yours, in addition to saying that I do and otherwise crying out in pain. And I presumably don't need to make similar observations about myself to understand that. Even so, because we both presumably need to make observations in order to pick out the pain of others, the concept of pain is itself enmeshed

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[81] Norman Malcolm, "Knowledge of Other Minds," in *Knowledge and Certainty* (Engelwood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 131-132

[82] Wittgenstein (2009), §244.

with commonly observed behavioral patterns. Singular instances of pain-sensation can thus be extended to other such instances, then, because of its conceptual link with behavior and expression.

The point, according to Malcolm, is that our mental concepts are tied to the original instances in which behavioral criteria for applying those concepts are identified. For in these instances, the feeling gets conceptually linked with behavioral displays and linguistic utterances. This is why Malcolm suggests that the criteria for having some experience or otherwise understanding what it means to have some experience isn't just that one can behave in a way consistent with such experience, or even define what the criteria of having an experience would be. Rather (taking the case of color-experience here), one must be able to pick out things that see only red from things that see only blue.[83] Only in this way can one understand what it would mean to see red or to see blue (that is, to have some particular kind of experience).

It isn't clear that appeals to criteria can do the job of successfully negotiating the conceptual problem of the generality of mental concepts. Saul Kripke, for one, thinks that Wittgenstein's problem in §302 and related passages "can be explained without special resort to the notion of a criterion."[84] Kripke suggests that what is at issue for Wittgenstein may not be so much of the *criteria* for application conditions as a "conceptual difficulty in applying a concept in certain cases."[85] He thinks of the issue as being just a particular instance of the general skeptical problem that he takes Wittgenstein to be grappling with: How do we apply our concepts, and

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[83] Norman Malcolm, "Knowledge of Other Minds," in *Knowledge and Certainty* (Engelwood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 135.
[84] Saul Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1982), 120.
[85] Kripke (1982), 121

thereby mean anything by our words? As we will see, this special instance of that issue may not require appeals to criteria.

Thomas Nagel objects to criteria-based approaches by noting their anthropomorphic tendencies. Emphasizing criteria that verify whether a mental concept has been applied appropriately relies too much on humanly familiar conditions for the application of concepts. But what if there were creatures whose subjective experiences could not be manifest in terms of criterion that are accessible to humans? In asking such a question Nagel is getting at the idea that there would be a fact of the matter regarding the existence of other minds, even other minds unrecognizably different from humans, regardless of if we could find criteria by which to apply concepts of subjectivity to them. As such, Nagel argues that whether I can identify the criteria for attributing thought to a rock is irrelevant to whether the rock *really* thinks: “what we were wondering about would have an answer,” says Nagel, even if we couldn’t figure out what criteria would constitute the appropriate application of mental concepts.[86]

2.3.2 Imaginative Extension

In opposition to criterialist approaches, some philosophers have emphasized the role that imagination plays in the generalizability of mental concepts. Kripke, in objecting to criterialist readings of Wittgenstein regarding this topic, sets up the problem differently than Malcolm. Both agree that traditional models of mind, as Kripke puts it, “presuppose without argument that we begin with an antecedently understood general concept of a given material object’s ‘having’, or

[86] Thomas Nagel, “Panpsychism,” in *Mortal Questions* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1979), 193

not having, a mind"[87] and both read Wittgenstein as challenging the meaningfulness of the extension of mind from an instance in one's own case to other instances.

However, whereas Malcolm reads Wittgenstein as asking for criteria by which mental concepts can be applied to others, Kripke takes Wittgenstein to be asking about why it makes sense to generalize mental concepts despite the presence or absence of criteria. As Kripke understands it, the question is the following: "Assuming that I can imagine that a pain is located in another body, does that give sense to the idea that someone else might be in pain? … What is the difference between the case where I have a pain in another body, and where that pain in the other body is someone else's pain and not mine?"[88]

The way that Kripke addresses the conceptual problem of other minds thus avoids appealing to criteria. The issue is not so much a matter of what criteria allow us to make valid generalizations about minds, but what conditions must hold such that we can conceive of minds outside of ourselves. And this requires appeal, not to criteria for verifying such instances, but to the conditions that intuitively constitute such an instance. If we want to make sense of the idea that a chair, or any other physical object, "has a mind", Kripke argues that we appeal to intuitions about what that would mean despite the observable criteria that such an object might display.

For Kripke, then, the case of extending mental concepts from instances of one's own mind to those of another mind is a special version of the general problem of applying concepts across several instances. The question for him is why we attribute mental concepts, the meanings of which are established in one's own case, to other cases at all. Kripke appeals to Wittgenstein's

[87] Kripke (1982), 115.
[88] Kripke (1982), 129.

rejection of behaviorism in responding to such questions. Consider the following passage from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*:

> I tell someone I'm in pain. His attitude to me will then be that of belief, disbelief, suspicion, and so on.
>
> Let's suppose he says, "It's not so bad". – Doesn't that prove that he believes in something behind my utterance of pain? – His attitude is proof of his attitude. Imagine not merely the words "I'm in pain", but also the reply "It's not so bad", replaced by instinctive noises and gestures.[89]

For Kripke, this passage underscores that what is important in the general application of mental concepts is not so much criteria which point to mental states behind them, but a certain *attitude*, a way of being oriented towards others in the first instance. In his words, "I can be said to think of [the other] as having a mind, and in particular as suffering pain, in virtue of my attitude and behavior toward him, not the reverse."[90]

This attitude, according to Kripke, is formed, not according to a belief in the mental states behind behavioral displays, but through imaginatively extrapolating out of instances of my own experience. Having experienced pain, I am capable of imagining general instances of the experience since what is essential is not necessarily that these are *my* pains, but that they are simply pain-experiences. As such, the issue of how to move from *my* pains to another's is undermined; our ability to think about minds in general is a special case of our ability to think at all. If one is skeptical of applying mental concepts, understood from one's own case, to cases of other minds, then Kripkenstein's skeptical response is that this is just not the way we think about the issue when we actually make these general applications. An image of another's pain is a

[89] Wittgenstein (2009), §310.
[90] Kripke (1982), 138.

certain attitude and disposition towards them, not a picture of how they actually feel behind behavioral displays.

Thomas Nagel also takes an imagination-based approach to the conceptual problem. This problem, he suggests, is more interesting than the epistemological problem because skepticism in the latter case is irresolvable: there is just no principled way to tell whether other physical objects are enminded or not. But the former can be resolved since a mind has, in its own resources, the capacity to understand mental concepts outside of its own instances. In order to understand oneself as one of many enminded creatures in the world, Nagel thus suggests that we need a sort of objective conception of subjectivity, one that doesn't deprive the latter of its perspectival quality, but which takes a centerless stance on any given mind's point of view. Minds must be seen "from the outside" as "events in the world."[91]

Thus, to generalize the first-personhood of mind to other instances of first-personhood, we must be able to imagine an objective perspective on our own personal subjective perspectives. We must be able to see ourselves as others might, as just another event or series of events in the world, just another fact, albeit one which has its own perspective, its own feels, personal life and the like. This imaginative extension, Nagel says, is "pretheoretical" in that it is already incorporated into our lived position: we understand mind objectively and in general right from the beginning, despite the fact that one's own mind is the only mind one is ever really acquainted with. That is, we start with an understanding of mind by which we can imagine

[91] Thomas Nagel, *The View From Nowhere*, (New York: Oxford UP, 1986), 20.

ourselves as others would, without the need to refer to criteria. This anti-verification, imaginative extension of mental concepts is also part of how I can form my own memories and expectations.[92]

Nagel's appeal to imagination in understanding the generality of mental concepts goes hand in hand with his ardent realism. He gives himself a great deal of wiggle room with regard to what sorts of things can be thought of as endowed with mentality. As we've seen, Nagel accepts that minds can exist in other physical objects without our being able to establish criteria according to which we can reliably apply mental concepts to such objects. The physical characteristics of such objects do not help us understand the general application of mental concepts.

Demonstrating this point is, in part, why Nagel asks us to ponder what it is like to be a bat. The problem is that bats are sufficiently unlike us to make the specifics of their experience unimaginable to us; yet sufficiently like us (and unlike things such as stoves) that we feel inclined to attribute some degree of mentality to them. As such, criterialist procedures, involving analyzing the bat's body, behavior, environment and sensory apparatus would not help us much to make sense of what it is like to be a bat, indeed, of "what it is like to be a bat" might even mean, though we can indeed imagine that there is something it is like to be a bat. As we have seen, Nagel thinks such criterialism is too anthropocentric and thus gives us an impoverished concept of mind. We can't explain our capacity to imagine subjectivity independent of criteria for identifying mental states if such criteria constituted the very meaning of the concepts in question.

Christopher Peacocke has argued that such approaches by imaginative extension are circular. He begins his objection by asking us to imagine a suitcase. Next, he asks us to imagine a

[92] Nagel (1986), 21.

suitcase that is completely obscuring a cat behind it. What is the difference between these two images? Peacocke tells us that, "It seems the same conscious, subjective image will serve to meet both requests, even though in one sense what is imagined in each case can be different."[93] The case is similar if we complicate things. Imagine driving around town. Now, imagine "from the inside" *an* experience (i.e. not necessarily your own) of driving around town. Finally, imagine being a brain in a vat, causing you to have your own experience of driving around town. Again, what is the difference between these images?

Peacock suggests that even though all these images are of the same type, each of the possible worlds in which the images occur contain different truths. That is, they are all phenomenological states which seem to present the same situation to a first-person, even though we who imagine know in a more third-person mode the different truths that could be disclosed in each world. These background conditions that determine the various veridical situations of each world are what Peacocke calls *S-imagined* conditions.[94] That is to say, although they do not play a role in determining the phenomenological character of what is imagined, they play a *suppositional* role determining how we (propositionally) think of the situation we imagine – i.e. they play the role of determining content.[95]

What does this mean for the imaginative extension approaches mentioned above? Let us imagine pain that we ourselves were not having. It is our friend Darryl that's in pain. What is the imagined experience like? Well, perhaps I am imagining that we are in the same room, and I see

[93] Christopher Peacocke, "Imagination, Experience, and Possibility: A Berkeleyan view defended." In *Essays on Berkeley*, John Foster and Howard Robinson, eds. (New York: Oxford UP, 1985), 19.
[94] Peacocke (1985), 25.
[95] Peacocke (1985), 27.

him over there wincing or cringing. But given the presumed nature of the relation between mind and body, it would be possible that, even in this image of Darryl wincing, he is not in pain. Unless otherwise specified by the *S-imagined* conditions, he could be faking it. In other words, the "is in pain" predicate determines the content of the image, its semantic meaning, the sorts of truths that pertain to it. I could imagine being in a room with Darryl, on the one hand, being more or less expressionless, and on the other, with him crying out for help – and these can still both be images of pain under different *S-imagined* conditions. While the propositional content of the imagined experience is the same, the phenomenology is different.

Again, let us imagine a pain had by Darryl on the one hand, and a pain that I would feel was I to be Darryl on the other. There is no difference in image, only in content, in the truth-conditions of the world imagined. Here we again have an image of a pain, but now the person who is in pain is a matter of *S-imagined* conditions. For one thing, this means that the identity of the pain-haver is a matter of the semantic meaning of the image, and not the image as phenomenologically experienced. But for another, a vicious circle lurks here. For if we want to use imaginative extension in order to make sense of the very possibility that others exist, and more specifically, that they experience the world in a manner similar to me, we must utilize *S-imagined* conditions in order to designate just who is having the imagined experience in the imagined situation. But the ability to entertain such a variable condition as precisely whose mind is afflicted with pains already assumes that we understand the generality that our concept of mind appears to have.[96] And what we wanted was an understanding of precisely this generality. Imaginative extension, again as Wittgenstein remarked, is none too easy.

[96] Peacocke (1985), 33.

2.4 The Problem of Unity

The previous interpretation of the conceptual problem of other minds regarded it as a problem with generalizing mental concepts across first-persons in such a way that the predicate “see a red patch” can be extended from the statement "I see a red patch” to “She sees a red patch.” But it has been contended that generalizing mental concepts may be problematic because of an asymmetry in first-person and third-person application conditions. The question thus becomes whether the concept of seeing a color, for example, usually understood to represent a first-person visual experience as in “I see a red patch,” is the same exact concept utilized in third-person ascriptions of visual experiences as in “She sees a red patch.”

2.4.1 The Problem of Generality Misses the Point

Anita Avramides presents a challenge to those who emphasize the problem of generality, particularly Nagel’s imaginative extension approach: “Even if the appeal to imagination were not circular, can it give us the understanding of the generality of our concept that we require?”[97] She contends that the problem of the generality of mental concepts – of our understanding of the extension of mind from the first-person to the third-person – is a problem because it is difficult to make sense of how the *very same* concept can be utilized in such different ways. Is the pain I see expressed in your wince the same sort of thing I feel when I am hurt? Is the happiness that you express in your smile the same sort of thing that I feel when I smile? Is the fear that an actor exhibits in a horror movie the same type of experience that I have as I watch the scary scene or,

[97] Avramides (2001), 263.

for that matter, when I actually experience a scary situation? How can they be, given their different modes of presentation?

The problem for Avramides is thus more one of how we can tell that we are utilizing precisely the same concept in first-person ascriptions as in third-person ascriptions rather than one of how the extension is possible.[98] She is particularly critical of the imaginative approaches that Nagel and Kripke take. They think of the problem in terms of how mental concepts can be generalized from instances of one's own case to other instances. Kripke thinks this is a special case of the difficulty involved in explaining, for example, the generalization of the concept of a duck across instances of seeing ducks in a park and even across species of ducks. Nagel takes it that the problem is one of being able to think of subjectivity objectively. But neither of them asks: How does it make sense that the *very same* concept employed in first-person use is logically extended to third-person use? That is, in what sense can we say that what we mean by "I am in pain" when we are in pain utilizes or refers to the same concept of "pain" in our respective cases? How can our utterances about pain across first-and-third-person cases mean the same thing if the evidences for their application are so different?

Avramides analyzes Nagel's criticism of criteria-based approaches to clarify what is at stake. As we have seen, Nagel takes it that whatever it is that we call 'mind' could exist without our ability to tell that it does. For him, imagination is the key to our general understanding of what mind is independent of manifest criteria. We can at the very least imagine *that* it is like something to be a sentient being suitably similar to us, even, to some extent, ones that are very unlike humans. For example, though we can imagine a bat's echolocative experience in

[98] Avramides (2001), 263.

visualizable terms, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to imagine exactly *what* it is like for that bat to have the experience of echolocative visualizations. But I can indeed imagine *that* it is like something for the bat. Something similar can be said even for cockroaches, though here the imagination gets ever hazier.

But Nagel's position seems to go beyond this, suggesting that insofar as I can imagine at all, and so am myself a mind, I can imagine that there are other subjects whose subjective experiences are unimaginable for me. He is what Avramides calls a hard realist about minds since, as we've seen, he takes it that our questions about other minds would have answers even if we couldn't so much as understand how to go about figuring them out. Thus, in Nagel's words:

> The pretheoretical concept of mind involves a kind of objectivity which permits us to go some way beyond our own experiences and those exactly like them.
>
> The idea is that the concept of mind, though tied to subjectivity, is not restricted to what can be understood in terms of our own subjectivity – what we can translate into the terms of our own experience. We include the subjectively *un*imaginable mental lives of other species.[99]

According to Nagel, our concept of mind is innately general, extending beyond human subjectivity but inherently built into that form of subjectivity. As Avramides puts it, "the generality Nagel takes to be inherent in our concept of mind from the outset is *greater* than that which we reach by appeal to the imagination… Nagel is extremely generous about where he finds mentality." [100] Indeed Nagel's understanding of mind allows for panpsychist possibilities, even if he is also willing to say that "some examples, like the ascription of pain to a stove, do pass the limits of intelligibility."[101] But whether we ascribe pain to a stove or a bat or, for that matter, to

[99] Nagel (1986), 20.
[100] Avramides (2001), 264.
[101] Nagel (1986), 23.

another human, Avramides contends that the real question is why we take the concept of pain to have the same meaning as when I ascribe pain to myself.

Nagel's focus on the question of generality thus leaves open the possibility of the traditional epistemological problem. For, though it is assumed that mental concepts are general and that their generality is imaginatively established, it allows that minds can exist without exhibiting what would generally be for humans epistemically significant signs, grounds for believing that they exist, or grounds for attributing experiences to them. For Nagel, we can have perfectly general mental concepts as an innate part of our conceptual structure and still not be able to show *that* others have every bit as rich an experience of their lives as we do.

But it is assumed as obvious that we have some semblance of knowledge of other minds and that we have no problem generalizing mental concepts across first-person instances. And surely, we assume that the concepts we apply are the *same* despite an asymmetry in evidence. But this latter issue is, Avramides, more fundamental than the former two. For if it can be shown how it is possible that, given our general applications of mental concepts, we use the very same ones despite an asymmetry in evidence, then, Avramides contends, we would have undermined both the uninteresting epistemological problem and the generality problem.

Avramides thus implores us to ask the following question: Supposing that we do extend mental concepts to others without much difficulty, why do we take them to have the same significance or meaning as when we apply such concepts to ourselves? How is it that we understand this extension to be the extension of the *very same* concept to other instances? Why, despite the asymmetry in application conditions, do we not take the predicate "is in pain" to exhibit the same ambiguity as "is a bank" which may refer, on the one hand, to a financial

institution and, on the other, land alongside a body of water? Why are there not two dictionary entries for the word "pain," one that expresses a first-person conception and one that expresses a third-person concept?

This slight adjustment to the issue can be clarified with reference to a classic question for empiricist theories of perception: Molyneux's question. In a letter to John Locke, William Molyneux asked what sense a congenitally blind person suddenly given sight can make of the strictly visual presentation to him of a square and a sphere, which he would otherwise be able to distinguish by touch. If a person blind from birth were somehow granted sight, could they tell the difference between a square and a sphere – a difference they can tell through touch – just by looking at them? More importantly for our purposes, could they tell that a square-by-touch was the same thing as a square-by-sight?

This is Colin McGinn's interpretation of the way Wittgenstein posed the conceptual problem we've been reviewing. He takes it that Kripke's reading of the issue, whereby the extension of mentality to others is no different from the extension of duckhood to other times, places, and species, misses the point. Again, the problem when presented in this manner isn't just a matter of the way we extend our mental concepts, but how we can tell that it is the same concept we use in our own case. McGinn thus tells us that "first-person uses of 'pain' are to third-person uses what tactually based uses of 'square' are to visually based uses"; in other words, that one might warn of translating first-person ascriptions to third-person ascriptions, just as one might warn of translating tactile perceptions to visual perceptions.[102] The warning, he suggests, can only be attenuated by a "perspective-neutral" concept. Yet isn't the sort of concept we are

[102] Colin McGinn, "What is the problem of other minds?" *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (1984): 136.

looking for precisely a concept of that which is never merely perspective-neutral? What would a perspective neutral concept of perspective be like?

2.4.2 Action as Behavior Proper

According to Avramides, what makes the generality of mental concepts problematic is the apparent disunity between their applications conditions in the first-person and in the third-person. In order to negotiate this problem of unity, she attempts to tie mind and body together through the notion of action. To do this, she borrows the idea of 'behavior proper' from David Armstrong which he distinguishes from physical behavior. The former is behavior as we commonly understand it in the everyday, lived position: as somehow tied to mind. The latter is more tied to the purely physical descriptions of bodily motion. Avramides is keen to note two important consequences of this idea that are intended to speak to what she calls the "lived position", that is, the everyday assumption that our mental concepts, despite exhibiting semantic asymmetry, are unified *and* general, the position she implores us to start from rather than the philosophically contemplative position of one's own case: "The philosophical task is that of understanding how the lived position is possible."[103]

First, she notes that an appeal to action in the form of behavior proper "restricts the attribution of mind."[104] Nagel's attribution of mentality far and wide, beyond the scope of recognizability, leaves us with the classical epistemological problem. But in her appeal to action, to behavior as it is informed by or otherwise connected to the mind's worldly goings about, Avramides seeks to limit mental attributions to our more everyday experiences. We know very

[103] Avramides (2001), 230.
[104] Avramides (2001), 270.

well about the ways in which we think about other people, especially those closest to us. And we certainly have some semblance of an understanding of more far reaching applications, as to bats and perhaps even as far as organisms like cockroaches. But obviously, as we have seen Nagel admit, we hardly understand mentality attributed to rocks and stoves.

Secondly, she tells us that an appeal to action puts the conceptual and epistemological problems in their proper place:

> By appealing to an essentially intra-subjective notion like imagination, Nagel hopes to establish generality without commitment to the existence of other minds. Appeal to an essentially inter-subjective notion like behavior would lead us to see that a solution to the conceptual problem would leave no room for an epistemological problem.[105]

As we are about to see, an appeal to action, in the sense of 'behavior proper,' that is, in the sense of being directly linked to embodiment, requires the "essentially inter-subjective" concept of action. Under this construal, action would be expressive of mental states; the concept of action here is the concept of mind in bodily motion. As such, action links mind and body and thereby supports the application of mental states across first-and-third-person ascriptions. By emphasizing action as that which unifies mental concepts across first-person and third-person attributions, Avramides hopes to undercut the classical epistemological problem: if mental concepts are fundamentally tied to actions, then those actions reveal mentality directly.

How, then, does Avramides cash out her notion of action as behavior proper? She spells out her understanding of action as the link between mind and body in behavior proper by appealing to some ideas formulated by Peter Strawson and Donald Davidson. Each of them

[105] Avramides (2001), 271.

fleshed out, in his own way, a concept of mind that is deeply intertwined with the position of an acting agent in the world at large.

Strawson, for his part, attempts to elucidate our basic and common conceptual structure, a method he called descriptive metaphysics. In doing so, he points out, along a similar line of reasoning as Ratnakīrti, that if mental concepts are understood in purely reflexive terms, there would be no way to distinguish between my experiences and yours. Indeed, ascribing pains to myself would, in such a case, be virtually meaningless since there could be no questions about who is in what state of mind:

> How can it be right to talk of *ascribing* in the case of oneself? For surely there can be a question of ascribing only if there is or could be a question of identifying that to which the ascription is made, and though there may be a question of identifying the one who is in pain when that one is another, how can there be such a question when that one is oneself?[106]

The notion of ascribing mental concepts to ourselves only makes sense to the extent that we can ascribe the same concepts to others. A concept of mind that is essentially private, intrasubjective, does not allow for such mundane events as acknowledging the mentality of others since all mentality would then be mine. To be able to reflectively ascribe states of consciousness to myself, I need to be able to ascribe them to others. But this means that I need to be able to differentiate others from myself and doing so under the confines of a purely reflexive theory of consciousness seems impossible.

Strawson thus suggests that reflexively-based concepts of mentality are abstractions from a more basic particular that we use our conceptual schemes to pick out on a daily basis, namely, persons:

[106] Peter Strawson, *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* (New York: Routledge, 1959), 100.

> What we have to acknowledge, in order to begin to free ourselves from these difficulties, is the primitiveness of the concept of a person. What I mean by the concept of a person is the concept of a type of entity such that *both* predicates ascribing states of consciousness *and* predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation, etc. are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type.[107]

For Strawson, personhood is precisely the kind of concept to which, as it is used to pick out particular instances, both mental and physical predicates apply. Thus, a person is the sort of thing that doesn't just think and feel, but that can walk, lie down, write letters, travel at 55 MPH, weigh 140 lbs, etc. As a primitive part of the conceptual structure of what Avramides calls the lived position, Strawsonian persons thus give us a way to get around the problems of the solitary contemplative philosopher by emphasizing the derivativeness of purely mental concepts. In Avramides' words:

> We can avoid one of the philosopher's difficulties: the identification of consciousness is the identification of a person, and where we are identifying a person we are identifying something that has a body as well as states of consciousness. When we ascribe states of consciousness to another we do this on the basis of our observation of the other's behavior.
>
> The starting point that Strawson urges avoids the problems of the philosopher's starting point… Generality is guaranteed because it is the starting point… Conceptual skepticism is precluded once we recognize that the logically dominant concept is not that of a mind but that of a person – the concept of a type of entity to which both mental *and* physical predicates can be ascribed. The important thing about this, Strawsonian, move is that the concept of mind is no longer the concept of a thing apart.[108]

The asymmetry that defines the conceptual problem is thus merely a characteristic of mental concepts. In giving a description of our conceptual structure where mental concepts are applicable to *persons* (not just "minds"), that entity to which both mental and behavioral or physical predicates are applicable, Strawson emphasizes that mental concepts just are those

[107] Strawson (1959), 101-102.
[108] Avramides (2001), 234.

concepts which are unambiguously and adequately ascribable both on the basis of observing behavioral displays as well as independently of such observation.[109]

Mental predicates, then, are just those predicates ascribable to a person which admit of a first-to-third-person asymmetry in application conditions. Such predicates can only be ascribable to oneself if they are understood to be ascribable to others. Otherwise, we couldn't make much sense – for the reason of vacuity – of self-ascriptions. And such predicates are applicable to persons, the sorts of things to which physical or behavioral concepts can also be applied. But, asks Strawson, what is it in the natural facts that makes it intelligible that we should have this concept?[110]

He answers that the concept of *action* helps to make intelligible the fact "that we have the conceptual scheme we have," that is, one where the concept of a person is primitive: "What I am suggesting is that it is easier to understand how we can see each other, and ourselves, as persons, if we think first of the fact that we act, and act on each other, and act in accordance with a common human nature."[111] Avramides' example of writing a letter is apt:

> These predicates show a little of the common territory occupied by both uses of our predicates. My writing a letter and your writing a letter both necessarily involve the movement of our bodies. I see your movements as actions and I interpret them in terms of your intentions. I see your writing a letter as a token of the type of bodily movement which in my case I know to be the writing of a letter without the observation of the movement of my body… Our understanding of another's movements bears on and conditions our understanding of our own.[112]

Strawson thus helps describe our everyday conceptual structures in such a way as to make intelligible how mental concepts can be semantically unambiguous despite having different

[109] Strawson (1959), 108.
[110] Strawson (1959), 111.
[111] Strawson (1959), 112.
[112] Avramides (2001), 237.

application conditions by emphasizing the primitiveness of the concept of a person as the sort of thing that performs actions, and thus, the sort of thing that exhibits mental and physical properties. But, Donald Davidson contends, it does little to *explain* why the asymmetry arises.[113] This, he takes it, is essential to silencing the skeptic since there would otherwise be no particular reason *not* to suppose that we are dealing with two different concepts when we talk of my pains and your pains.[114]

His explanation of this asymmetry comes in the form of acknowledging deep connections between three irreducible yet intersecting realms of knowledge and, more specifically, how the relation between these three modes of knowledge lends content to our beliefs about the world. The three kinds of knowledge he refers to are knowledge of self, of others, and of the world. According to Davidson, although "we could not get along without all [three kinds of knowledge]," [115] it is in our tendency to reduce two of them to the privileged third that we run into conceptual confusion. What this means is that our ability to form and communicate our beliefs depends on our ability to possess and integrate the three kinds of knowledge, a process Davidson calls triangulation:

> Until the triangle is completed connecting two creatures, and each creature with common features of the world, there can be no answer to the question whether a creature, in discriminating between stimuli, is discriminating between stimuli at the sensory surfaces or somewhere further out, or further in.[116]

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[113] Donald Davidson, "First-Person Authority", in *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (New York: Oxford UP, 2001), 7-8.
[114] Donald Davidson, "Three Kinds of Knowledge," in *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (New York: Oxford UP, 2001), 207.
[115] Davidson (2001) "Three Kinds of Knowledge", 208.
[116] Davidson (2001) "Three Kinds of Knowledge", 212.

The problem, for Davidson, is thus largely a problem of interpretation, of being able to understand what others are trying to communicate to us. The question Davidson asks is: How is it possible that another's utterances are meaningful at all? In order to interpret others in the first place, we must assume several things. On the one hand, we must assume that others want to be understood, that they are rational and that their beliefs have a certain logical consistency and coherence. In other words, we have to assume that they have a kind of self-knowledge.

On the other hand, we must assume that others are largely correct about their beliefs and that they are referring to the same world that we are. That is, we must assume that they have some objective knowledge that they are trying to communicate. "Thus," says Avramides, "interpretation proceeds under an assumption of shared logical consistency and shared responses to the world."[117] Belief formation, then, requires language: the ability to attend to differences between appearance and reality, and the ability to communicate those differences to each other given the above assumptions that we all make. This ability, a kind of other-knowledge, completes Davidson's triangle.

Avramides argues that Davidson's emphasis on interpretation helps explain the asymmetry in the application conditions of mental concepts because of the constraints that make our utterances intelligible to each other. An interpreter must understand her interlocuter's utterances on the basis of assumptions about a shared world and about the other's rationality. But she must also be open to the possibility that she misinterprets what her interlocuter says and that further evidence may prompt her to reassess what she takes her interlocutor to mean. Her

[117] Avramides (2001), 242.

interlocutor, on the other hand, "can do no better than to say what he means."[118] The interpreter has to assume that the speaker knows what he is trying to say and that he wants to convey his meaning to you. As Davidson puts it, "The speaker… since it is up to him to be understood, cannot wonder whether he generally means what he says."[119] The asymmetry is thus explained in terms of the assumptions we must make to understand each other's utterances. For we must assume that our interlocutor knows what he means on his own without having to utter anything and that, in making his utterances, he intends to convey something to us about the world we share. The contents of our beliefs about others rely on just such assumptions:

> Our thoughts are 'inner' and 'subjective' in that we know what they are in a way no one else can. But though possession of a thought is necessarily individual, its content is not. The thoughts we form and entertain are located conceptually in the world we inhabit, and know we inhabit, with others. Even our thoughts about our own mental states occupy the same conceptual space and are located on the same public map.[120]

In both Strawson's account of the concept of a person in terms of action and Davidson's account of content formation in terms of the constraints of interpretation, Avramides argues that we have an understanding of mental concepts that exhibits asymmetric application conditions while at the same time having unified meanings. For to be a person, to form beliefs, implies action and a shared, actionable world: "Our concept of action draws together one's idea of oneself as subject of action, one's idea of others as subjects of action, and our idea of the world… Action is the business of a subject engaged in communication with other subjects who interact with the world."[121] This lived position dispenses with the philosopher's contemplative starting point by

[118] Avramides (2001), 246.
[119] Davidson (2001), "First-Person Authority", 12.
[120] Davidson (2001), "Three Varieties of Knowledge", 218.
[121] Avramides (2001), 248.

looking at what our mundane interactions with others are like. In the lived position, there is no need to take the problem of other minds too seriously since, under such ecologically valid conditions, we already know that others exist and that we can generally apply our mental concepts unproblematically. The business of philosophy is to work out just how this can possibly be the case:

> Once we understand how our concepts work, we see that the sceptic's questions depend on the very structure that he purports to call into question. In the case where someone loses sight of the way our mental concepts tie up with our action in the world, what we must do is once more take them through the descriptive exercise outlined above; what we do not do is take their worry seriously.[122]

2.4.3 Emotions and Behavior

Avramides argues that the generality of mental concepts is problematic because, in generalizing mental concepts, we run into a semantic asymmetry that does not seem to imply semantic ambiguity. In other words, extending the concept *pain* from first-person applications to third-person applications is problematic because the grounds for application are, in each instance, distinct and yet the concept seems to preserve its meaning across these different application conditions. Her suggestion was to emphasize the notion of *action* as the sort of concept that makes intelligible the semantic unity of first-person and third-person ascriptions of mental concepts despite the semantic asymmetry.

Action, for Avramides, is behavior proper, that is, behavior as expressive of experience. She contends that, as an "essentially intersubjective" notion, action unifies the meaning of mental concepts as it, so to speak, makes mentality public – or at least not *essentially* private. Along a similar line of thought, Bill Brewer has made a case for the emotions as expressive of

[122] Avramides (2001), 249.

experience, and thus, as doing the job that action in general does for Avramides. But his appeal to the emotions grounds semantic unity through reference to specific kinds of actions, namely those that are *elicited* when objects are presented under a certain light. Brewer articulates the conceptual problem as follows:

Being psychologically Ψ is precisely what is recognized as instantiated in a person's own subjective experience of being Ψ. This is the most basic source of her conception of what being Ψ consists in, hence of what she means by 'being Ψ', hence of what it is to be Ψ insofar as she understands this. So how could what it is to be Ψ – again, insofar as she grasps what this is – possibly be detached entirely from her subjective experience? It must, rather, be tied in some way to that very experience. But then how is she supposed to make any sense at all of *another's* being Ψ.[123]

It is important to note here the emphasis that Brewer places on the first-person experience of Ψ. This, he says, is the most basic source of our conception of such an experience. The problem is that, if this is so, then there is no way in which it could be detached from *that very experience*. There would be no way to understand how someone else could have *that very experience*. The problem Brewer is dealing with, like Avramides, is the problem of how the very same concept of experience that I fundamentally know from first-person evidence applies on the basis of third-person evidence.

What is Ψ? What is *that* very experience? How could it be *that* experience if I don't experience it? In order to answer such questions, Brewer proposes that we need to reject any description of the first-person perspective that fundamentally disconnects its phenomenal component from its characteristic behavioral expressions. "Instead," Brewer suggests, "the way in which a person's psychological condition presents itself *to her* has to be reconfigured, so that

[123] Bill Brewer, "Emotion and Other Minds," in *Understanding Emotions: Mind and Morals*, Peter Goldie, ed. (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 24.

the possibility of applying the very same psychological concepts as are accessible from within this perspective to other people on the basis of their observable behavior is built into *its* proper characterization."[124]

In order to understand how some experience Ψ, grasped as the basic source of my conception of that experience, can possibly be ascribed as one and the same experience to someone else, Brewer contends that the way Ψ is presented to me as the first-person must have built into it the elicitation of observable behavior that would count as grounds for the third-person application of that very same kind of experience. In other words, understanding what Ψ is requires, not just the phenomenal quality of Ψ alone, but undergoing that experience in such a way as to express its phenomenal presence and significance. One must be familiar with how, from the inside, that experience expresses itself externally, how it impacts behavior. In characterizing the experience, essential reference must be made to behavioral displays, the kinds of displays one uses to attribute that very experience to others.

Given this constraint, Brewer emphasizes emotional experience and the behavioral displays elicited in such experience as a way to grapple with the problem: "Reference to the appropriate expressive behavior is essential to the identification of the way in which various emotional experiences present their worldly object."[125] He thus asks what it is, from the first-person perspective, that unifies fear phenomena. In the first instance, it requires that an object is presented in a certain light: "Experiences of being afraid are precisely those which present something in a certain light, as frightening, that is, as being thus."[126] But fear, as an emotional

[124] Brewer (2002), 26.
[125] Brewer (2002), 23.
[126] Brewer (2002), 28.

phenomenon, does not rely on a perceptual demonstrative alone – on a mind-independent object being presented as thus – because emotions are internal to the phenomenal character of the experience. But, as emotions, they also essentially involve bodily and behavioral manifestations, they are affections. Brewer therefore contrasts perceptual demonstratives with behavioral demonstratives, the latter being characteristic of emotions:

> Whereas, in the case of color, the demonstrative characterization of what it is for something in the world to be red, say, is a standard *perceptual* demonstrative, the characterization of what it is for something in the world to be the way it is presented as being in a person's experience of being afraid of it, for example, is, I claim, what I shall call a *behavioral demonstrative*. In the former case, perceptual experience displays something as being *that color*, on the basis of which it is possible to grasp which mind-independent property it is which experiences of redness are individuated as presenting… In the latter case, the way things are characteristically presented as being in a person's experience of being afraid of them is once again to be demonstratively individuated by appeal to the actual performance of a certain type of (expressive) behavior: the experience presents things as eliciting just that kind of behavior in the subject.[127]

Emotional experience, then, doesn't simply require that an object in the world be presented thusly, but also that it elicits precisely *this* kind of behavioral response. In other words, being frightened is not just seeing an object thusly, but *being thus*, that is, trembling, cowering, and the like, "from the inside," after a manner of speaking, in response to the object being presented in a frightening light. It therefore involves a certain bodily configuration that would count as grounds for the third-person application of the concept *fear.* In other words, it is the bodily response elicited by frightening experiences – *just this behavior*, thought or said while that very behavior is being elicited in exactly this way.

According to Brewer, then, the behavioral demonstratives that individuate emotions offer a satisfactory solution to the conceptual problem in its unity-formulation. In individuating

[127] Brewer (2002), 28.

emotional experience from the first-person perspective, essential reference is made to the kind of behavior that is grounds for ascribing that very same experience to others. As such, Brewer contends, "There is no obstacle to the very same thing – just *that* condition – being ascribed simply on the basis of another's observable performance of that very behavior."[128]

Hanna Pickard makes a similar point as Brewer, but rather than thinking of emotions as being the elicitation of behavioral demonstratives on the basis of perceptual demonstratives, she emphasizes the ontological unity of emotions and bodily expressions. She takes it that the problem is derived from the difficulty with applying empirical principles to the generalization of mental concepts. She goes on to suggest that if the problem is to be solved under empirical constraints, "Then the demand for a public manifestation of the mind is a demand that behavior be a part of the mind. Our concept of mind must in some sense encompass the behavior which we observe."[129]

Pickard thus proposes that emotions can help ameliorate the difficulty to the extent that they can be identified with their behavioral and bodily manifestations. Emotions don't merely cause behavior – with this, she and Brewer seem to be in agreement – but are rather the way certain bodily changes *feel*:

When in the grip of certain emotions, a slew of distinctive physiological and expressive bodily changes naturally occur: this is simply a fact about our species. But we have a form of awareness of our whole bodies from the inside. So we can explain the affect of these emotions simply: as the way your body, as a whole, feels when undergoing these changes.[130]

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[128] Brewer (2002), 29.
[129] Hanna Pickard, "Emotions and the Problem of Other Minds," in *Philosophy and the Emotions*, Anthony Hatzimoysis, ed. (New York: Cambridge UP, 2003), 89.
[130] Pickard (2003), 95.

This seems to differ from Brewer's account since he does not seem to be making any ontological commitment to identifying the behavioral demonstrative – the condition of *being thus* – with mental states themselves. The experience of fear makes essential reference to the behavioral demonstrative, and thus to observable grounds for the attribution of fear to others. But for Pickard, fear would be precisely *the feeling of being thus*. Pickard suggests that it is this ontological commitment that helps resolve the issue since it makes the subjective feeling objectively manifest while leaving no room to divorce the experience from the behavioral manifestation.

2.4.4 Joel Smith's Conceptual Problem of Other Bodies

The approaches to the problem of unity we've been considering attempt to articulate the apparently unambiguous semantics of mental concepts despite asymmetrical application conditions by emphasizing behavioral expressions of experience. However, as Joel Smith argues, such programs may just give rise to analogous problems with conceptions of the body. He articulates two such objections to behavior-based proposals that are intended to show the incoherence of using first-person experiences of bodily transformations to ground third-person applications of mental concepts.

Smith's first objection to behavior-based approaches is that they do not provide sufficient grounds for applying mental concepts *to others*. This is particularly a problem for Brewer's demonstrative account, since the application of the concept of *fear* is grounded on a behavioral display like *this* – thought or said about one's behavioral display when one is in fear. But his account allows for my expressions of fear to be elicited in a distal body. In such a context, I could apply the concept of fear to this distal body's behavior on the basis of my experience of the

behavioral demonstrative that individuates the experience of fear in my own case. But, in this case, I would be applying the concept to my own experiences of fear, not someone else's, since the third-person application conditions that are observed to be elicited in this other body would still be a result of my response. "This account is consistent with one's feeling afraid oneself and actively responding through another body. So applying the concept *fear* as a response to perceiving a distal body to be behaving in *this* way is not yet to think of *another* as afraid"[131]

It could be argued that the intent of behavior-based approaches is not to show how mental concepts can be applied to *someone else*, only how they may be applied in such a way as to be unified across first-person and third-person evidences. Such a response prompts Smith to articulate what he calls the conceptual problem of other bodies. Behavior-based approaches take it that first-person experiences of the body ground third-person applications of the mental concepts implicated in those very first-person experiences of the body. But bodily experiences from the inside or from one's own case are evident interoceptively, through reflection or bodily awareness, while bodily experiences in the third-person mode of presentation are evident exteroceptively, paradigmatically through vision. Thus, the problem of unity arises at the level of the body: "Since bodily concepts are applied on two apparently distinct ranges of evidence, we require an account of concepts of bodily states, including bodily actions, that rules out the possibility that, despite appearances, there really are two sets of concepts of such states, some first-personal and some third-personal."[132]

[131] Smith (2010), 208.
[132] Smith (2010), 209.

In fleshing out the conceptual problem of other bodies, Smith formulates a thought experiment that parallels Molyneaux's question. Suppose that there is an individual, Inny, who has an awareness of his own bodily actions from the inside but is exteroceptively blind and thus unable to observe the behavioral manifestations of both himself and others from the outside. He would thus have the relevant awareness of Brewer's behavioral demonstrative. When frightening images cross his mind, he cowers, and he can feel his fearful cowering kinaesthetically and proprioceptively and he can think about this feeling reflectively. But he wouldn't be able to tell by looking in a mirror if his body was displaying characteristic fear-behavior, and he wouldn't be able to see others' bodily expressions of emotion either.

Smith goes on to ask, "Were Inny's external senses restored to him, would he be able to tell simply by means of the external perception of the appropriate sort of behavior, that another person was afraid?"[133] The point that Smith is trying to make in asking this question is that Brewer's notion of a behavioral demonstrative gives us no reason to suppose a positive answer to this question. Neither, Smith suggests, does any behavior-based approach. For the experience of a body from the inside and the experience of a body (one's own or another's) from the outside are fundamentally different. As such, the experience of bodily changes or of a behavioral demonstrative in the first-person does not give us a sufficient reason to suppose the applicability of an emotion in the third-person. Behaviors observable in the third-person and emotionally laden bodily feelings in the first-person are phenomenologically distinct.

[133] Smith (2010), 210.

CHAPTER 3 The Axiological Problem of Other Minds and a Critique of Cognitivism

"Everything that is familiar and intelligible has a core of strangeness. The consequence is that one cannot set aside the other simply as something unintelligible."

J.N. Mohanty[134]

3.1 Introduction

While the focuses of each of the earlier chapters was singular – one to flesh out the epistemological problem of other minds, the other to flesh out its conceptual counterpart – this chapter will have a threefold purpose. First, it will be suggested that these problems of other minds are themselves tied to yet another issue that we might tentatively call the axiological problem of other minds. Secondly, what we have been calling cognitivism will be given a general critique. Thirdly, we will propose two ways of thinking about intersubjectivity that might help kickstart a search for a more adequate account of subjectivity – that is, one that acknowledges its intersubjective aspect – than the cognitivist perspectives so far explored.

We will begin by asking, then, not just how it makes sense that we can think about others, but why others' experiences are significant at all. Indeed, the concepts we use in discourse about mental phenomena are themselves highly valenced, bound up with preferences and priorities, and thus with conflicts between what actions ought to be carried out. To conceive of ourselves as a first-person or a set of others each as a first-person, one among many, is to conceive of the sort of thing with personal sets of preferences and priorities.

But how can I estimate the value of your preferences, especially if they conflict with mine. Pursuing my own comfort or avoiding my own discomfort will often come at the expense of the

[134] J.N. Mohanty, *The Self and Its Other* (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2000), 120.

comfort or discomfort of others and may, therefore, involve doing others injustice. There is thus a tension between the partiality of personal goods and the impartiality of what is simply good, *tout court*. We will explore this tension by bringing in Caspar Hare's theory of egocentric presentism. It will be argued that his position is deeply inadequate to an account of the axiological conditions of intersubjectivity because, among other absurdities, it results in axiological solipsism and, thus, an axiological problem of other minds.

After exploring and assessing Hare's theory of egocentric presentism, we will enter into a general critique of the approaches to thinking about subjectivity discussed so far. It will be argued that they all rest on cognitivist assumptions about the nature of mind and subjectivity that neutralizes or sterilizes relationships between subjects of their complex and subtle nuances. Indeed, it is precisely because of such assumptions that the so-called problems we've been discussing arise. Even the behavior-based approaches outlined towards the end of the previous chapter will fall prey to these critiques despite attempting to circumvent cognitivist tendencies by grounding subjectivity in corporeal existence. This is because such proposals carry with them a cognitivist sense of individuality: the application of mental concepts is done by one individual onto another, linearly as it were.

In order to get at a more adequate account of what ties subjectivity and intersubjectivity together, it will be necessary to push our conceptions of mind beyond cognitivism. The last section of this chapter points towards two ways of articulating how subjectivity stands with regard to intersubjectivity, each having a non-cognitivist bent. In particular, they both give us possibilities for thinking of our embodied and affective (and, to that extent, situated) responsiveness and sensitivity in the presence of, or in any case, with regard to others without

prioritizing cognitivist emphases like logocentricity, scientism, and thin, de-situated subjectivity. However, they both have issues of their own which may put their accounts of intersubjectivity into question.

3.2 Caspar Hare and Other Less Important Subjects

This section will explore the axiological tension between the valences of experience in one's own case and the valences of experiences in general. In order to see how cognitivism might handle this tension, we will first flesh out Caspar Hare's theory of egocentric presentism, a form of perspectival realism wherein experiences are only ever present to *me*, whoever *I* am. However, it will be noted that both his theory of egocentric presentism, and his reliance on it as an approach to the axiological tension between one's own good and the good *simpliciter* are drastically off the mark. A profusion of absurdities follows from egocentric presentism.

3.2.1 Egocentric Presentism, the Peacemaker, and Harmony

Broadly speaking, Hare's theory of egocentric presentism is a metaphysical thesis about the nature of subjectivity. In particular, it is a form of perspectival realism which proposes that there is but one subject in the world who has a special metaphysical property that makes this subject unique in an axiologically relevant way. This property, called "presence", makes the subject who possesses it metaphysically special because all and only this subject's perceptual objects are present. That is, Hare claims that whoever has this feature alone has fully present experiences. Moreover, the subject who possesses it is alone the one to whom the first-person reflexive pronoun genuinely and truly refers. Thus, sentences in the first-person, referring to first-person experiences, are only ever true when uttered by whoever has this special property, that is, when uttered by *me*.

We will come back to Hare's notion of presence and his theory of egocentric presentism in a moment. First, it is worth noting what motivates Hare's position. In effect, Hare thinks that his metaphysical thesis of egocentric presentism is needed to overcome the axiological tension between egocentric-hedonistic concerns and concerns for the greater good: the tension arises, Hare seems to think, because of faulty metaphysics. On the right metaphysical picture, he contends, this tension – which one would think is just part of the human condition – would be abolished. As we will soon argue, this is a poor way of doing metaphysics, one that seems aimed at solving a non-problem.

Hare's argument for the need of a theory like egocentric presentism begins by imagining an individual, the peacemaker, "whose desire for the kind of psychological harmony enjoyed by Louis [XIV] leads her to be resolutely committed to the view that, for the most part, there is no conflict between egocentric-hedonistic considerations and considerations of the greater good."[135] The peacemaker supposes that we are all mild egocentric hedonists: "All other things being equal we prefer that pain befall others rather than ourselves, and pleasure befall ourselves rather than others."[136] As evidence, the peacemaker takes the liberty of pointing out to me (whoever I may be) that, if a hundred thousand people will suffer intensely painful epileptic seizures tomorrow, so long as I am not one of those people (and don't forget, *ceterus paribus*!), I will probably be bothered very little by this fact. But this is quite the assumption to make, as it seems to imply that, generally speaking, people think of the suffering of faceless others to be

[135] Hare (2009), 2.
[136] Ibid.

quite irrelevant. And surely, the prevalence of charities and social justice movements counts against such cynicism.

The peacemaker next proposes the thesis he would like to defend, which Hare calls Harmony: "Whenever a mild egocentric hedonist favors a situation in which she suffers less, she favors a simply better maximal state of affairs."[137] Note that, according Harmony, the mild egocentric hedonist is favoring a *simply* better maximal state of affairs when she favors a situation in which she suffers less. That is to say, when a mild egocentric hedonist favors a situation in which she suffers less, she is not favoring a state of affairs that is better in relation to herself, or some purpose, or some set of interests, but just better *simpliciter*. However, Hare tallies three problems that arise for a peacemaker bent on defending Harmony.

3.2.2 Egocentric Presentism and S-World Semantics

Before we get to the problems that confront Hare's peacemaker in his defense of Harmony, let us return to egocentric presentism and take a look at his strategy for securing a resolution to the conflict between egocentric-hedonistic considerations and considerations of the greater good. The problems that Hare is concerned with are iterations of the axiological tension we have already visited, that is, the apparent disparity between what would be better *for me*, and what would be better *simpliciter*. In order to navigate these problems and secure Harmony, the peacemaker appeals to the position that Hare calls egocentric presentism. What does this theory entail and how is it supposed to ameliorate the conflict between concerns for myself and my more general concerns for the good?

[137] Hare (2009), 2.

The basic premise of egocentric presentism is intuitive enough: things are experientially present. There is a computer visually present, typing is going on, thinking is happening, sitting is occurring, etc. According to Hare, presence is a monadic property of the experience of but a single conscious subject in the whole universe. In other words, for the conscious subject who exhibits this monadic property, things are not primarily present *to* this subject. Rather, presence implies that things are just perceptually present, *tout court*. Thus, since it is evident (despite Hare's protests) that I have this property, that I am the special subject, this computer is not present *to* me in a relational manner. Rather the computer *just is* visually present, *tout court*.

However, things quickly begin to sound strange (if they didn't sound strange already). A particular being, Joshua Evan Stoll, exists in such a way that everyone can *say* that things are present *to* him (that is, to *me* insofar as I identify as JES), in a relational manner. But, more primitively according to this theory, JES has the sense that he alone is the one to whom things are perceptually present. Although there are other sentient beings, they don't have all and only *these* present experiences, the ones JES (the person *I* take *myself* to be) takes to be simply perceptually present. Though I, experiencing the perceptual presence of objects with the conviction that I am JES, imagine that objects are also present *to* you, still, those objects aren't *simply present*. Indeed, strictly speaking, they are just absent: I can only ever *imagine* their perceptual presence to you relationally.

Under an egocentric presentist analysis, then, the proposition "I am in pain" is true if and only if I am in pain – and in this case, I happen to take myself to be JES. But pain here, being a present experience, isn't a relational property. It's not that this statement is true relative to my speaking or thinking it. Rather, this statement is simply true given that it is uttered when there is

an experiential instance of pain phenomena marked with the monadic property of presence. However, if you are in pain, though you say, "I am in pain", I must understand this, strictly speaking, as false since there is no pain present. Your pain is absent, so the truth conditions for the statement "I am in pain" coming out of your mouth are different. What meaning can what you say about your experiences have if your experiences are simply absent? Similarities with the conceptual problems we've reviewed should be obvious. Indeed, we will soon see that with this move, Hare's attempt to play peacemaker gives rise to a new, axiological, problem of other minds

At this point, Hare utilizes the monadic intensional operator *from the perspective of x* and what he calls S-world semantics. Though the proposition "I am in pain" coming from your mouth is false (because only my pain is present), were I to supply it with the perspectival operator, the statement coming from you would be rendered by me as *from X's perspective* (I am in pain), and it might then be true were you to actually be in pain, despite the fact that this pain that you have could only ever be absent. In this way, I can understand my own experiences monadically, but I can only ever comprehend your experiences relationally.

It is thanks to S-world semantics that the egocentric presentist is free to take up an imaginatively empathic stance with regard to absent experiences. The mechanism by which I can understand your experience will thus be familiar to us, as it takes a page out of Kripke's and Nagel's playbook:

> For an egocentric presentist, empathizing with an unfortunate involves imagining that the unfortunate has present experiences. This involves viscerally imagining what *from the unfortunate's point of view* (is the case). And the egocentric presentist may care about the results of this exercise because they care about what *from another person's point of view* (is the case).[138]

[138] Hare (2009), 36.

Thus, in order to make sense of your statement "I am in a lot of pain" I must supply the monadic intensional operator *from the perspective of x* in order to render the statement a true statement. Only then can I be concerned for your welfare, for otherwise the statement is at best false and, at worst, meaningless. S-world semantics is thus, as Hare would have it, false, since it renders statements true that are, when made in the first-person without the monadic intensional operator, false. But, he proposes, it is helpful since, in doing so, it supposedly opens up opportunities for concern about the welfare of others despite the fact that any claims they have of experiencing pains must be false *simpliciter*. With this tool in hand, let's now examine how Hare has the peacemaker utilize egocentric presentism and S-world semantics in order to ameliorate conflicts between egocentric-hedonistic considerations and considerations of the greater good.

3.2.3 The Grounding Problem

If I am to follow the peacemaker in reconciling mild egocentric hedonism with Harmony, it must *simply be the case* that when I advance my own good, I advance the greater good. What is good is not relative to my, or anyone's, perspective; the present experiences define the good no matter who claims to have them. I am, as Hare puts it, "extraordinary in some immeasurable respect, that I am metaphysically unique in a way that bears on the value of my suffering."[139] But this appears problematic since there can only be one individual that is metaphysically unique, namely whoever is having these present experiences. Yet everyone would claim to be that one individual.

[139] Hare (2009), 3.

To demonstrate the force of egocentric presentism and S-world semantics with regard to this problem, Hare imagines a scenario he calls ***Trial by Kettle***. In this scenario, thousands of Russians will spill boiling water on their hands. Hare asks his audience to pour boiling water on their hands and compare the degree of discomfort experienced to the discomfort felt by the northern-most anonymous Russian. Which is worse, he asks, your experience of pouring boiling water on your hand or the experience of the northern-most Russian pouring boiling water on theirs?

Strictly speaking, though Hare doesn't mention it, this question is non-sense under an egocentric presentist construal. For it is not possible to make a comparison between present experiences and absent ones: they are not analogous states of affairs because the former *defines* the maximal state of affairs and the latter merely happens to exist within that state of affairs (though their experiences are "absent"). Still, Hare proposes that it is naturally tempting to say that the burn I experience is simply worse than this anonymous Russian's burn-experience. And the reason, according to the egocentric presentist, isn't just because I am more directly aware of the scalding sensation I experience than I am of the scalding sensation of any of the Russians. For Hare, our experiences cannot be symmetrical in this respect. S-world semantics tells us that "This burns!" can be true if and only if I cry it out in response to scalding my hand with boiling water. And the burning sensation that I experience is simply present. That it can be rendered as present *to* me in a relational manner is irrelevant to its truth value because I just am the one for whom the world is illuminated.

The anonymous Russian's experiences, on the other hand, are just absent *tout court.* Though this person may experience burning sensations, these sensations are simply absent.

Although there is, *for* this anonymous Russian, a horrid burning sensation, it doesn't have the significance of a *present* burning sensation. The one whose experiences are present – namely, I myself – can only understand the significance of the anonymous Russian's experience relationally through the perspectival operator *from x's perspective*. But strictly speaking, according to this position, their burning sensations are absent and their statements regarding their own discomfort articulated in the first-person are false.

S-world semantics is thus said to ground the metaphysical uniqueness of the present set of experiences by rendering them simply true without the need to supply a special logical operator. This, Hare claims, also grounds the axiological privilege of the present experiences: insofar as "I am in immense pain" is simply true in a non-relational way when I pour scalding hot water on my hand, those experiences matter in a way that absent experiences never can. I prefer, according to Hare, that the northern-most Russian burns their hand with boiling water over me burning my hand because, simply put, their experiences are not present and mine are.

As Hare notes, however, this does not exclude other factors, such as intensity, in the consideration of preferences. For example, Hare suggests that an absent experience of a crushed leg is just worse than the present experience of a hangnail. But the point, perhaps, is that such factors can only be considered by the one whose experiences are present. Whether your (absent) experiences of being disemboweled are just worse than my (present) experiences of stubbing my toe appears to depend, for Hare, on the extent to which I can imagine being disemboweled and, perhaps, the extent to which I care about you.

3.2.4 The Generalization Problem

Hare's egocentric presentism also runs into a generality problem that will be somewhat familiar to us from the previous chapter's considerations, though here it is fleshed out in axiological terms. The problem is this: my experience, insofar as this refers to experiences which are present (whether I happen to be JES or Caspar John Hare or anyone else), is metaphysically privileged in an axiologically significant way. If the peacemaker is to defend Harmony, he must show that this privilege can be generalized to other experiences, ones that are absent. But the reason I am privileged is already because no one else's experiences are present. How can you be metaphysically and axiologically privileged if your experiences are simply absent? The peacemaker, in other words, has to show that "*any* mild egocentric hedonist, in favoring situations in which she suffers less, is favoring a better maximal state of affairs."[140]

To show how S-world semantics can navigate this problem, Hare articulates a thought experiment he calls ***Competing for a Scarce Resource***. Under this scenario, two individuals, let's say myself (knowing I am JES) and CJH, are in competition for a scarce resource. It would appear that there can only be two outcomes of this competition. On the one hand, I get the resource – *knowing myself to be* JES – and am thus happy while CJH misses out and is disappointed. On the other hand, CJH gets the resource and is content while JES misses out and is miserable.

If I am to be a mild egocentric hedonist, I (where I know I am JES) must favor the former scenario. Similarly, CJH would have to favor the latter. This would seem to conflict with Harmony since it implies that there can be two different ways in which things can simply be better. But it

[140] Hare (2009), 5.

can't be simply better that I get the resource over CJH and, at the same time, simply better that CJH gets the resource over me. For what is simply better for JES here is simply worse for CJH and what is simply better for CJH is simply worse for JES. The peacemaker needs to show, Hare proposes, that S-world semantics can explain why it is simply better for *me* (whoever I am) to get the resource in a way that allows everyone who claims to be an "I" to be simply better off.

According to Hare's egocentric presentism, the two-outcome version of the story is the wrong way to look at things. There are actually four ways in which the thought experiment can be cashed out. In the first two scenarios, presence is a monadic property of the experiences I, knowing myself to be JES, happen to have, as follows:

Case A: JES gets the resource and there is a feeling of contentment while CJH misses out and is miserable, though his misery is absent.

Case B: JES misses out and his misery is actually lived out while CJH gets the resource and goes merrily on his way, though his merriment is not present.

In the second two scenarios, presence is a monadic property of the experiences that CJH happens to have, as follows:

Case C: JES gets the resource and there is absent enjoyment while CJH misses out, resulting in present despair.

Case D: JES misses out and there is an absent experience of anguish while CJH gets the resource and there is presently experienced happiness.

Now, again, it seems rather strange that Hare thinks these cases can be compared at all, given that disanology between present and absent experiences. Nonetheless, Hare argues that in preferring Case A over Case B, I, knowing myself to be JES, would be preferring a simply better

maximal state of affairs. And CJH, under the conditions in which experience is present to him, would be preferring a simply better maximal state of affairs were he to prefer Case D over Case C. Suppose presence is a monadic property of mine where I identify as JES. Given this scenario, were CJH to bring about Case B, he would, *from his perspective*, be bringing about a simply better state of affairs – even though, as things actually stand (viz. presence being a monadic property of my experience as JES), this is a simply worse state of affairs. This is because, insofar as things are present to CJH and not me, Case B would be equivalent to Case D, where there just is the presence of experienced happiness, but also anguish being experienced *by* someone else.

The idea, then, is that whatever is good for me (whoever I am) is simply good because that good is simply present, *tout court*. The monadic intensional operator *from the perspective of x* allows us to explain this scenario in a way that generalizes egocentric-hedonistic considerations such that, roughly speaking, *from the perspective of x* (considerations of x's welfare are considerations of the greater good). Since, given a scenario where presence is the monadic property of CJH, then in choosing between cases where he experiences despair or happiness, Hare contends that CJH not only would, but *should* choose the case where he experiences happiness at the expense of JES. That is, CJH, in a world where the monadic property of presence attaches to him, should choose case D over C. This is true despite the fact that in the actual world, presence is a monadic property of JES alone.

This result allegedly doesn't clash with Harmony since cases B and A are, *from CJH's perspective*, false: in the imagined world, JES does not have presence as a monadic property of his experience. As such, the good of case D isn't merely good relative to presence in CJH. It is good *tout court* since case D represents a world where presence is a monadic property of CJH

(that is, where the first-person reflexive pronoun truthfully applies to CJH and only to CJH). But this is true for any consciousness which has presence as a monadic property. It just so happens that in one possible world presence is a monadic property of CJH's experience alone while in the actual world (despite CJH's objections) it is a monadic property of JES' experiences alone.

3.2.5 The Problem of Irreducibly Egocentric Preferences

Another problem for the peacemaker arises as a result of the distinction between me myself as the one necessarily having all and only *these* experiences and myself contingently labelled by the name JES. As Hare puts it (supposing he is the one for whom experiences are present), "Caring about CJH and caring about *me* do not always amount to the same thing."[141] The problem and Hare's egocentric solution are expressed through the thought experiment Hare calls **After the Train Crash**.

In this scenario, I (whoever I happen to be) wake up in a hospital, dazed and confused, wrapped up in a full body cast, forgetful of just who I am. A television happens to be on in front of me and it describes a horrific train accident with only two survivors: JES and CJH. The news gives a complete description of the situation after the train crash, including a complete description of each individual respectively – what they are like physically, what they do for a living, who their family members are, what their hospital rooms are like, etc. I think to myself, "I am completely informed about the situation and about these two survivors. Given my current state, I must be one of those two survivors." However, the news reports that one of them, say

[141] Hare (2009), 6.

JES, will undergo a long and excruciatingly painful surgery that will take an extended period of time to recover from. My only thought is presumably: “I hope it’s not me.”

It seems, Hare suggests, that there are two ways this singular set of events can be fleshed out: either JES has painful surgery while CJH is comfortable, and I am CJH (without knowing this fact); or JES has painful surgery and CJH is comfortable, and I am JES (without knowing this fact). Naturally, I hope that I am not the one to undergo the surgery. But my primary concern here isn’t particularly for JES because I don’t know exactly what my relation is with that person. Thus, just knowing who undergoes the procedure doesn’t help me assess whether I should be relieved or not since I don’t know who I am. What matters is that *I* don’t want to undergo the painful surgery.

The problem for the peacemaker in this case is that it doesn’t seem like a scenario in which a mild ego centric hedonist can favor a simply better maximal state of affairs. This is because we would tend to think that there is one fully specified state of affairs involving two individuals with such and such characteristics in such and such a situation after one and the same train crash. We seem to have one complete description of the way things are, including the present experiences of both JES and of CJH. Thus, favoring one scenario over another does not involve the favoring of a maximal state of affairs, a fully specified way that everything is, because both scenarios are mere parts of the maximal state of affairs.

In order to play the role of the peacemaker, a mild egocentric hedonist needs to show that the states of affairs are not identical, that to prefer one or the other is to prefer a maximal state of affairs. Doing so, Hare proposes, would restore the role of his egocentric-hedonistic bias as the arbiter of the greater good and the maximal state of affairs. S-world semantics allegedly

helps us do this by showing that CJH and JES can't play equal roles in constituting the maximal state of affairs since presence is the property of only one of these experiencers.

According to the egocentric presentist then, present experience, that is, the S-world S-me, is all that exists. As such, in favoring a scenario where the experiences that are present are less painful than another imagined scenario, I am favoring a scenario that is both better and involves a complete description of the state of affairs. And, supposing that I know JES will undergo excruciating surgery, my desire to be CJH would indeed be just such a preference: it is a desire for a betterment of the maximal state of affairs since I am desiring that a scenario in which there would simply be less pain. S-world semantics is thus said to help explain why irreducibly egocentric preferences, *ceteris paribus*, align with the greater good. Then again, Hare has us once more comparing the incomparable.

3.2.6 A Critique of Egocentric Presentism

As was briefly mentioned throughout our discussion of egocentric presentism, Hare's position is fraught with a plethora of major difficulties that make it hard to take him totally seriously, despite the creativity of his proposal and its defense against the three problems just discussed. In this section, we will run through several criticisms that will demonstrate both the incoherence of egocentric presentism and its inadequacy as an account of subjectivity that takes seriously, not just intersubjective interaction, but the significance of other's experiences.

One problem quickly worth mentioning – and one we won't dwell on as it has been discussed in previous chapters – is Hare's reliance on S-world semantics and empathic imagination in understanding the first-person avowals of others. But we've already seen, in our inquiry into simulation theory and imaginative extension approaches to understanding the

generality of mental concepts, how such approaches to other minds are suspect. Above all, it is questionable to assume that our primary involvements and concerns with others require our taking an imaginatively reflective stance aiming at the truth or falsity of statements about other's "inner" lives.

Our living involvements with others, as will be argued in the next chapter, are more a matter of direct, embodied engagements guided by historically situated and pragmatically improvised contexts where we implicate each other in our co-existential activities of meaning formation. Indeed, this is arguably why our values are partial: they develop in finite individuals through finite, historically conditioned interactions. There is no need for far-fetched metaphysical musings to explain this partiality. Moreover, to be able to imagine the "internal" lives of others, to be able to establish a semantics of subjectivity, presupposes that we are already involved in direct engagements of understanding, of *meaningfully shared experiences*. Thus, before S-world semantics and its support for empathic imagination is possible, we must already be meaningfully involved with each other.

Furthermore, as has been hinted at above, in line with a challenge by Ned Markosian,[142] Hare's motivation for egocentric presentism is suspect. For the point of his metaphysical theory is to defend an axiological thesis – viz. Harmony – meant to collapse the tension between egocentric-hedonistic considerations and considerations of the greater good. But Hare does little, in terms of metaphysics, to defend his (rather strange) metaphysical theory: it's value as a metaphysical theory is being judged on whether it justifies an axiological thesis. And there is little argument for the relevance of Harmony or even the peacemaker's concerns. For part of the

[142] Ned Markosian, "Review of *On Myself and Other Less Important Subjects*," *Philosophical Review* 123 (2014): 361

human condition simply is that there will be conflict between our self-preferences and our preferences regarding the greater good. And as Markosian suggests, this "is certainly no cause to start endorsing strange metaphysical theories in a misguided attempt to achieve some kind of harmony among my varying preferences."[143]

Moreover, it is easy to get the sense that Hare is, absurdly, defending solipsism here. But Hare is optimistic about egocentric presentism's chances against some forms of solipsism. He argues, for example, that the egocentric presentist can't be an ontological solipsist since the claim isn't that others don't exist: "Egocentric presentism is quite neutral about what sorts of things there are… People are not any more or less real, fleshy, and concrete for having or failing to have monadically present perceptual objects."[144] Similarly, Hare argues that egocentric presentists aren't mental solipsists since the claim isn't that others lack consciousness or that they are philosophical zombies, but that their experiences don't have the monadic property of presence – or rather, that it can only be true *from their perspective* that their experiences have the monadic property of presence but that, strictly speaking, such a claim would be false (viz. because only *my* experiences are actually present).[145]

Do these comments rescue egocentric presentism from solipsistic prospects? I would argue that they definitively do not. In fact, Hare's position seems to imply an even more egregious axiological solipsism: you do exist as a conscious being, but your experiences, being simply absent, lack any value I do not attach to them. You may exist, but you don't matter; you are not special in the way I am. For, on Hare's picture, the one for whom experiences are simply present

[143] Marksosian (2014) 361-362.
[144] Hare (2009), 42.
[145] Hare (2009), 42-46.

is essentially the arbiter of what counts as good and what counts as bad. As such, the distinction between my good and what is simply good gets completely erased. It is as if, present experiences being mine and mine alone, whatever I prefer – *ceterus paribus*, of course – will define what it means to be good.

But then anything will be determined to be good by my arbitrary fiat – whether I am as extreme in my egocentrism as Louis XIV or I am a mere mild egocentric hedonist like Hare and his peacemaker. There is no negotiation in axiological matters under this construal and, unless I deem it so, your experiences are axiologically irrelevant. Again, you don't matter axiologically because your experiences are simply absent. Thus, Hare's egocentric presentism, in attempting to solve what is essentially a non-problem, generates a brand new and radically disturbing axiological problem of other minds. For if value is defined by reference to present experiences, that is, my experiences, thus rendering your experiences devoid of axiological relevance, what makes your existence as a conscious being relevant at all? That is, why should the pains of others matter in the absence of my decree to the contrary? Why should the violation of their rights, their oppression, matter? It only matters, under egocentric presentism, if I decide that it does. But that surely makes morality, and thus discussion of the greater good, meaningless.

It might help to see that this objection is somewhat analogous to Wittgenstein's private language argument. Essentially, this objection turns on an idea that was suggested in our summary of the three problems for the peacemaker noted above: it is impossible to compare my present experiences with your absent experiences. As such, my claim that I ought to pursue scenarios where I suffer less, even if that causes others to suffer more, being outside of public negotiation, outside of what we will call participatory sense-making, is arbitrary. But one would

suppose that the best possible maximal state of affairs wouldn't be determined by the fiat of a single individual's hedonic calculus.

As if rendering morality meaningless wasn't problematic enough for this theory, the obscure status of the monadic property of presence is further evidence of the incoherence of egocentric presentism. Hare suggests that all and only the objects of my perception are present. But what does it mean to say that my experiences are "present" and the experiences of others are "absent"? Kris McDaniel crucially points out that presence cannot imply awareness.[146] Other people, according to Hare, are indeed aware of perceptual objects – this is how he thinks, wrongly, that the egocentric presentist escapes solipsism. But since presence only attaches to my perceptual objects, though others are aware of their perceptual objects, those perceptual experiences are simply absent. This would seem to imply, rather absurdly, that there are unexperienced experiences.

McDaniel further asks whether, if some object is present, its parts are all present too. If the answer is in the "No," if the object's parts are not also present, then Hare's attempt to formulate egocentric presentism on analogy with similar issues in the metaphysics of time and modality would fail. For, according to the hypothesis of A-theorists in temporal metaphysics, all the parts of an object with the property of being temporally present are also temporally present. And, many modal theorists would contend that if an object has the property of being actual, then all of its parts are also actually.

But if the answer to McDaniel's question is yes, if the parts of a perceptually present object are also all perceptually present, then presence does not suffice for awareness. For there

[146] Kris McDaniel, "Review of *On Myself and Other Less Important Subjects* by Caspar Hare," *Ethics* 122 (2012): 406.

are surely parts of the table I am looking at that I cannot be aware of in perceiving it, the molecules that make it up for example. As such, there may be present experiences of which I am not aware. But then, what stops us from saying that other's experiences have the monadic property of presence without me being aware of it.

This means that my lack of awareness of another's perceptual objects can't imply that those objects are not monadically present as well. Presence, or something like it, may be a more ubiquitous property than Hare contends. Others' experiences may then be metaphysically distinguished in a way that is as axiologically relevant as my present experiences are. There is simply nothing in Hare's arguments that precludes the possibility that others have *some* axiologically relevant metaphysical property. So, although Hare's theory is axiologically solipsistic, it leaves open a backdoor, seemingly without Hare's awareness, to other's experiences being axiologically relevant. In addition, and perhaps more devastatingly, if this is possible, then there is no way for Hare's theory to solve the grounding problem, for nothing would make my preferences more important or valid than anyone else's *simpliciter*. And indeed, that would seem to generally be the case.

Moreover, the logical priority of the presence of my experience as articulated in Hare's account implausibly displaces subjectivity from its historical situatedness. For it is arguably the fundamental situatedness of subjectivity that grounds preference in the first place. I develop preferences through a history of experiences. Even my simple preference to have pleasant experiences rather than painful ones is enacted through intersecting histories of pleasant and painful experiences, stretching back through my ancestors. Again, as mentioned above, we do not need an extravagant metaphysical theory such as egocentric presentism in order to make

sense of partiality in value judgments. And we surely don't need such an extravagant theory to abolish a basic aspect of the human experience.

Returning to the point about historical situatedness, Hare's notion of presence appears to lack this crucial historical dimension. Indeed, he suggests that presence appears quite suddenly: "For millions of years sentient creatures existed without things being present to CJH, and then CJH was born and suddenly things were present to CJH."[147] When does presence arise? At the birth of CJH? Does it make sense to talk about experience as if there is such a first occurrence? Is presence already fully formed in that first occurrence, preferences and all? To what extent do others play a role in preference formation? Conceiving of the subject and his conscious states in terms of ahistorical logical priority seems to undercut the development of this subject through his or her conscious states. It thus seems to detach the subject's relationship with others from any conception of subjectivity. In the extreme case, as with Hare, this implies the falsity of first-person statements made by others, and thus, their veritable non-existence in ethical deliberation. Ethics, here, becomes a one-way street: I decide what is good and bad. But then, as we have already noted, that just means that there is no such thing as ethics. What sense, then, can we make of claims about the goodness or badness of experience?

It is also worth taking a moment to critique Hare's principle of Harmony, aside from our initial assessment above that it attempts to solve a non-problem. For his whole project rests on the presumption of its truth. No clear, explicit argument is made for it, though the whole of his book attempts to defend the intuition behind it by recourse to the metaphysics of egocentric

[147] Hare (2009), 51.

presentism. But the intuition itself is left at that; agreement with it appears to be expected. Yet surely, we can challenge Harmony on several grounds.

For one thing, it presupposes the truth (or at least intuitiveness), for example, of mild egocentric hedonism, again without argument. But it's not clear why we should accept this axiology: often enough when I avoid suffering, I do not make the state of affairs – mine or the maximal state of affairs – better, simply or relatively. This is true even if, implausibly, everything is equal. Furthermore, the emphasis on the radically egocentric hedonic calculus is, as we have seen, absurd. For it renders ethics a matter of one metaphysically privileged individual's fiat and forces us to face the axiological problem of other minds. And, moreover, Harmony seems to presuppose egocentric presentism, the theory that is meant to justify it, to the extent that it already collapses the distinction between what is present to experience and the maximal state of affairs.

Egocentric presentism and Hare's project to defend Harmony are thus patently absurd. Though we do not have the space to adequately address these issues, a few comments regarding them would be in order before moving on. First, as we have already seen, partiality is established on the basis of historically situated interaction between individuals. For such individuals, the world they interact with and, perhaps more importantly, those they interact with are always already meaningful for that individual – a point we will make more fully in discussing sense-making in the next chapter. Indeed, for individuals such as we are, others are always already experienced as having their own experiences, thus their own concerns and preferences. As such, they are experienced as other sense-makers who can enter into our own sense-making: intersubjectivity consists in our participation in sense-making.

On this basis, we can formulate a much less extravagant way of navigating the problem of the tension between egocentric-hedonistic concerns and concerns for the greater good. For we surely should not be abolishing such a standard human predicament with such indulgent metaphysics. Instead, we ought to acknowledge the importance of this tension and look for a way to account for it. Participatory sense-making may give us a way to do this, as it suggests that each of our individual values – our sense-making activities – are bound up with each other. The greater good, rather than being collapsed into egocentric concerns, would be negotiated between individuals participating in making sense of their world.

3.3 A Critique of Cognitivism

The so-called conceptual problems that we have been navigating, including the normative or axiological formulations just discussed, are formulated in largely logocentric terms. The discussions have been a matter of accounting for the semantics of mental concepts in a context where it is assumed that the meanings of mental concepts are naturally precise, unambiguous, de-situated, and first-personal. Given that mental concepts take on asymmetric application conditions, it has seemed that the concept *pain* applied in my own case must differ semantically from the concept *pain* that I apply to others. Indeed, as we've just seen in our discussion of Hare's egocentric presentism, some thinkers may go so far as to deny that first-person claims regarding conscious states coming from the mouths of others are, strictly speaking, true – even if they could be useful to ethical theory and practice.

In the following sections, the logocentric assumptions made by the approaches we've explored thus far will be critiqued. In the first instance, the approaches to thinking about subjectivity in its intersubjective element that we have thus far reviewed are couched in

logocentrically intellectualist terms. As such, subjectivity is conceived of along a largely epistemic and cognitive dimension, as if all experience takes up a disinterested, observational or reflective position. But this is not in tune with how human persons generally live out their lives. Such cognitivist assumptions tend to lead to implausibly thin conceptions of the subject, as if subjectivity is the same for all sentient beings.

3.3.1 Logocentric Intellectualism

The more cognitivist a construal of mind is, the more it tends towards an overly logocentric intellectualism. By "logocentric" I mean to imply that such conceptions of mentality view minds as principally concerned with seeking out and preserving objective truths – a will to truth, as Nietzsche would put it. Mental life is presented as if it is largely truth-oriented. And the problems we've discussed start from epistemic considerations regarding the truths of statements about others, as if our main orientation towards others is a matter of figuring out what, if anything, is going on in their head.

Such an orientation is often articulated in terms of accessing the content of another's mind – a task thought to be impossible in direct perception. This is often put in terms of a largely disengaged, intellectual procedure marked by scheme-neutral, amodal representations, that is, representations that lack sensorimotor-specific content or are, as McGinn put it, perspective-neutral. As we have seen, this makes knowledge of others largely a matter of inference or off-line modelling, a matter of computing input to produce output. And the application conditions of mental concepts are then always matters of observation and reflection. These are largely intellectual procedures that neglect the more primitive sensorimotor contingencies of the real, living situations we share.

Such logocentric intellectualism neglects a great deal about the actual application of mental concepts. It assumes that interaction with others is primarily a matter of accessing the contents of their minds, of making objective determinations about what others are thinking and feeling. And it assumes that our posture towards others is primarily a matter of accessing such contents: the significance of your pains for me are, under this construal, a matter of the procedures that allow me to decide the truth value of the statement "I am in pain" when uttered from your mouth.

Moreover, it assumes that concepts such as pain, happiness, belief and the like have naturally precise conditions for application, that they cut nature at its joints. Indeed, it is assumed that we naturally take such concepts to be unambiguous despite the apparently asymmetric evidence. But living situations where we actually think about others while engaged with them are hardly so neat and unambiguous. Regarding the concept of pain, for example: there are dull pains, stinging pains, burning pains, and even, in some cases, pleasant pains. In the next chapter, we will see that similar points can be made about beliefs and desires.

3.3.2 Epistemic Purity and Scientism About Other Minds

The more cognitivist one's approach to mind is, the more one tends to conceive of intersubjective relationships in epistemic terms. Indeed, understanding others becomes a quasi-scientific procedure demanding a certain epistemic purity. The so-called problems of other minds as articulated in the previous chapters seem to think through the issues of our knowledge and conception of other minds as if our primary relations to each other are in the mode of epistemically ideal disinterested and reflective or contemplative observers. Even the behavior-based theories discussed in the previous chapter are articulated in this way, as if my concept of

mind is a fixed, reliable tool applied to my situationless observation of another human body's contortions or otherwise my relatively situationless reflection upon my own bodily experiences.

We saw such positions argue that our emotional concepts, for example, are semantically unified insofar as they simultaneously exhibit outwardly and inwardly perceptible behaviors and bodily changes. But this gave rise to the conceptual problem of other bodies. Even if I do understand the semantic unity of fear or happiness through perceptible behaviors, still, this seems to be of no use in attenuating conceptual difficulties. For the concepts of fear and happiness have experiential connotations when I apply them to myself that are absent when I apply them to others. The perception of a first-person bodily feel of an emotional experience and perceiving it on another's face involve different bodies of evidence that have different phenomenological significances. As such, approaches to the conceptual problem that rely on the direct perception of mental states expressed through the behavior of others fail to hold a conceptual unity between first-and-third person applications of mental concepts.

But thinking about another's mind is first constituted out of the sloppy spontaneity of everyday, actual situations, more so than out of the contemplative solitude of a reflective observer. Our primary relation to others is through direct, interactive engagement toward *pragmatic* ends. As such, our thinking about others is not originally a matter of knowing others' minds in any classical sense of "knowing" involving disinterested, disengaged observation and reflection. The conceptual problems and their purported solutions have all been articulated as if both our knowledge and conceptions of other minds occur in a state of epistemic purity, as if removed from any of the situations in which concepts regarding subjectivity are, in their original form, enacted.

The actual enactment of mental concepts, however, is epistemically impure to the extent that it is not merely a matter of removed observation and reflection, but an engaged readiness to respond to the invitation of expression, a pragmatically improvised performance in which we implicate each other in the ways in which we carry on with our lives. The dynamics of such engagements are messier, less concerned for truth and precision than the conceptions of subjectivity that we have discussed. *In situ*, we enact mental concepts together and this involves pre-reflective, historically situated and embodied skills much more than it involves removed reflection or observation.

Here the complaint against an epistemically pure, quasi-scientific posture towards others links up with the previous complaint against logocentric intellectualism. For a concern with the truth of what's going on "in" another's mind comes up only under special conditions involving a kind of situational removal and is more of an exception than the rule. The ecological reality of our applications of mental concepts to others is, again, rarely from a removed, scientific and logocentrically oriented position. In a truly lived position, we apply such concepts to – or better, enact them together with – others extemporaneously as we go about our engagements. In such a lived position, concept "application" is less straightforward, non-linear, more a matter of being historically responsive to the contingencies of interaction, than logocentric intellectualism or scientism about other minds would permit.

3.3.3 Implausibly Thin Subjects

In the picture painted by Smith's conceptual problem of other bodies, the problem is that the phenomenological evidence that grounds self-ascriptions is different from the phenomenological evidence that grounds other-ascriptions. The former involves a removed, reflective stance regarding oneself. The latter involves a removed, observational stance regarding others. In each case, there is a first-person who is first; the observer or the one doing the reflecting is essential. This, we have seen, is definitive of the problem of unity. A key feature of such a problem – and this extends to the other formulations we've encountered – is that it is articulated as if the first-person is primary, as if I, fully formed and situationless, have experiences first and later decide what they were all about. But such a minimal conception of subjectivity is misleading.

When ascriptions of content, accessed through epistemically pure means for logocentric purposes, are thought of as possible due to "evidences," such ascriptions are understood to occur in an ecologically invalid manner. For such a picture makes it seem like we observe another's behavior, then we decide what their mental state was by analyzing the behavior; or that we have an emotional response to a merely observed event and can state, upon reflection what that emotion was. Everything happens as if there is first an impersonal witness-subject who, then, has experiences or collects evidence and, through an intellectual process, determines mental content. But this impersonal subject is thin, situationless, simply an observer who takes from a ready-made tool box whatever fully formed, fixed utensil is applicable to solving the pre-determined problem of figuring out what the experiential significance of other's behaviors are.

This results in the sort of conception of the subject we see in, for example, Nagel or Hare. The subject is generally and minimally a bare witness. All it takes for there to be a subject is that

there is something it is like to be that subject or for something to be simply present to that subject monadically. But it is at least as crucial to the concept of a subject or subjectivity that things are not that simple. For the what-it-is-like is emphatically *never* the same across subjects – or even, for that matter, intrasubjectively. Mental concepts are such that if they cover all subjects in any given state, they cover no subjects and no states. For to cover all subjects under any single concept is to virtually destroy precisely the concept of what it is uniquely like to be that subject in the given state. And to cover any conscious state under one concept is to unduly simplify that experience.

But *in situ*, the concepts enacted in understanding others are fluid, generally applicable but never fixed, always ambiguous despite a certain determination. Indeed, ambiguity or clarity is often not of much concern, or only becomes a real concern under special circumstances subsequent to whatever social engagement we are seeking clarification for. Emotional experience, for example, is ambiguous between felt and expressed and, in moments of intense affective rapture between us, questions about evidence or the precise emotions and feelings involved are often left unanswered.

There is nonetheless an understanding that there are intense emotions and individuals undergoing them, that the expressions are meaningful, and concerns regarding accurate applications of concepts or accessibility to content are only relevant if they are destined to arise in the course of the interaction. Understanding others, being able to think about others in terms of subjectivity, cannot be excised from the interactions through which we actually gain a sense of each other *as subjects*. The subjects involved in these experiences do not merely sit back and observe behavioral happenings or reflect on phenomenal happenings. The thinkability of another

is always already influenced by and enacted in concrete situations, even if this becomes neglected in the logocentrically minimal conception of "the subject."

3.4 Going Beyond Cognitivism

It has thus far been suggested that cognitivist and epistemic biases distort conceptions of subjectivity in its intersubjective element. For they tend to think through subjectivity and the relationship between individual subjects or streams of subjectivity in terms of semantics, in terms of precision and accuracy with respect to the possession and application of mental concepts. But, it has been suggested, this neglects a great deal of our shared experiences, of our lives together. For our togetherness is a matter of such intellectualized considerations only in specialized cases.

How else might we be able to conceive of subjectivity in its intersubjective element? Here, we will explore two possibilities. On the one hand, the captivation and enjoyment of aesthetic experience may indicate a fundamentally affective relationship tying individual subjects together. This possibility will be explored through a discussion of Indian aesthetics, particularly the concept of *rasa*. But it will be suggested that, to the extent that the rapture felt in the heart of the aesthetic connoisseur (*sahṛdaya*) implies a sort of impersonal intersubjective subjectivity, its possibility is constituted by a certain personalism in relationships. We will then move on to a discussion of Sartre's claim that avoiding solipsistic conceptions of subjectivity requires thinking about intersubjective subjectivity in terms of an ontological relation, of being to being. But Sartre's conception of intersubjectivity, it will be argued, is unrealistically discordant and pessimistic.

3.4.1 Indian Aesthetics and Affective Intersubjectivity

To be able to think about others in terms of their subjectivity, it was suggested by both Brewer and Pickard that we have an eye towards emotional experience and its connection to behavioral displays. However, this was seen as resulting in the conceptual problem of other bodies. Moreover, as suggested in the previous sections of this chapter, their conception of the intersubjective situation harbors cognitivist assumptions. Breaking the stranglehold of cognitivist conceptions of subjectivity in its intersubjective element may require that we think of the relationship between subjects in less epistemic, less logocentric terms. We may need to think through an in-between space where the importance of the question of precisely who has what experience itself is put in question.

To this end, we can look to the *rasa* aesthetics of the Indian tradition, particularly as articulated by Abhinavagupta, as a guide to understanding such an ambiguous space between us. One of the defining questions of *rasa* aesthetics is what might be called the aesthetic problem of other minds. Arindam Chakrabarti sets out the problem in the following terms: "When the audience in a play or film, the reader of a narrative poem, or the viewer of a representational painting relishes a certain work of art, whose emotion is it that they relish?"[148]

In Indian aesthetics, a work of art – theater (*nāṭya*) and poetry (*kāvya*) are among the more prominent art forms analyzed by Indian aesthetes – is thought of as presenting affective themes that are meant to represent everyday emotions (*sthayībhāva*) in their distilled essence. Such themes are expressed by the skillful mixing of various affective flavors expressed in a variety of scenarios. In these scenarios, some action depicted in the play or poem, an affectively

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[148] Arindam Chakrabarti, "Play, Pleasure, Pain: Ownerless Emotions in Rasa Aesthetics," in *Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy, and Culture Volume XV Part* 3, Amiya Dev, ed. (New Dehli: Center for Studies in Civilizations, 2009): 189-202.

significant prompt (*vibhāva*), brings about an affectively charged response (*anubhāva*). By mixing together *vibhāva*s and *anubhāva*s, a work generates various *vyabhicāribhāva*s, transitory atmospheres that exemplify the affective interactions of prompts and responses. Such transitory affective atmospheres contribute towards the themes of the work, but what is experienced isn't the everyday, stable emotion (*sthayībhāva*) that the scenario dramatically acts out.

Part of the reason for this detachment resides in the presumably unpoetic nature of everyday emotions. Simply feeling indignation (*krodha*) or aversion (*jugupsā*), though these basic emotions may be themes aimed at by a work, is quite different from the veritably untethered, distilled experiences of terror (*raudra*) and disgust (*bībhatsa*) to which they are related. The latter are understood as the savoring of an affective stew that combines affective atmospheres which, directly or indirectly, signify the enactment of terrible or revolting deeds. For indignation and disgust toward terrible and revolting deeds, at an ordinary register, is a call to action: we wish to end the horrible acts that have caused anger in us or to censure acts that conjure disgust.

However, the relishing of terror and disgust that we may experience in witnessing Hannibal Lecter's deeds, for example, can't move us towards proper action. We can't stop Dr. Lecter from his cannibalistic acts, nor do we necessarily want to. If this is the case, then the aesthetic problem of other minds arises: Since I apparently experience a delightful mixing of affective ingredients in a terrible stew or disgusting meal, but I am in no way afflicted by such emotions at an ordinary register such as to prompt what would be an ordinarily appropriate response, we must ask in what sense these emotions are felt. In other words, if I don't respond to terror in an ordinary fashion under artificially fashioned circumstances, then it can hardly be

said that I am the owner of the horrible experience. We can then ask whose terror it is that I am savoring.

Abhinavagupta, following Bhaṭṭanāyaka, suggests that the circumstances of aesthetic appreciation render the concerns of an egoistic self, concerns that define ordinary emotions (*sthayībhāva*), impotent. Thus, it is notable that such common affectivity is not mentioned in Bharatamuni's definition of *rasa* in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. This is precisely because, as a distillation of the essence of any given emotion, the connoisseur (*sahṛdaya*) that experiences *rasa* is free from the fetters and concerns of the common experience of an egoistic self. *Rasa* is thus not the enjoyment of your garden variety emotion from artistically constructed affects; it is rather a refining of emotional experience detached from the practical interests of an egotistically centered subject.

Thus, the terror (*raudra*) and disgust (*bībhatsa*) experienced in watching Dr. Lecter snack on human brains is neither the author's, the character's, the actor's, the spectator's, nor anyone else's in particular. Were the feeling a *personalized* emotion, it would prompt certain behaviors we don't see in the appreciators of a work of art: people would be leaving the theater in droves, looking for a place to vomit; or they would be actively trying to find a way to stop Dr. Lecter from continuing his terrible ways. But this isn't what happens because the experience isn't one of *personal* indignation or aversion. Such a distilled experience is a kind of metafeeling, as K.C. Bhattacharya would have it, an imagining the feeling of an imaginary character that "is not one particular person, but *someone or any person*."[149] Thus, Viśvanātha suggests that the experience

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[149] K.C. Bhattacharya, "The Concept of Rasa," in *Studies in Philosophy Vol. 1*, Gopinath Bhattacharya, ed. (Calcutta: Progressive Publishers, 1956), 353.

of such aesthetically distilled emotions is "Another person's, yet not quite another person's, mine, but not just mine."[150]

Such an account of aesthetic feeling, Chakrabarti argues, points to the "basic impersonality of subjective feelings."[151] This impersonal feeling-subjectivity is suggestive of a vague indeterminacy on a particularly affective level. Feeling in this sense has an atmospheric quality as individual subjectivity dissolves into an impersonal affective in-between space. As such there is a sense in which feeling, though singularly embodied by a feeling individual, spreads out into the atmosphere between us. Here, subjectivity is originally conceived of in impersonal terms, and so conceptual problems about emotional experiences are cut off.

However, the impersonalism of such a perspective may be subject to similar criticisms as the impersonalism of the logocentric conception of subjectivity we've been scrutinizing. For it thinks subjectivity in minimal, pragmatically de-situated terms. It is worth noting that this aesthetic conception of subjectivity may make advances over the cognitivist tendencies we've been discussing insofar as it emphasizes a relationship between affective, and not just cognitive, agents. Here, the subject is at least somewhat situated, at least with respect to the affects prevalent in the playing out of imagined scenarios. Still, it may unduly reduce the personal to the impersonal. One must ask what makes such rapturous aesthetic experiences so enjoyable.

As an answer to this latter question, it may be tentatively suggested that our impersonal understanding of feeling in the moment of tasting the delicious concoction of emotions is deeply conditioned by the personalism of everyday subjective experience. Art captivates us both

[150] Quoted in Chakrabarti (2009), 189.
[151] Chakrabarti (2009), 201.

because it allows us to escape the tedious personalism of everyday living experience – irrevocably intertwined as it is with other's experiences – and because it feeds back to us distilled, easily digestible morsels of precisely what it is like to be an intersubjective subject.

Perhaps, then, the aesthetic experience points to the basic impersonality of subjective feelings, to a sense of intersubjectivity prior to personal consciousness. But the connoisseur's appreciation of this basic impersonal intersubjectivity is possible precisely because of the culturally informed personalism through which we get a taste for such experience. And this is at least in part constituted through our fundamentally personal intersubjective experiences – our living out actual embodied and historically situated scenarios, pregnant with linguistic and cultural meaning, towards pragmatically improvised ends.

3.4.2 Sartre and Ontological Intersubjectivity

We can find in Sartre's existentialism another conception of subjectivity in its intersubjective element that may appeal to us if we remain skeptical of cognitivist tendencies. For his considerations of intersubjectivity start from a rejection of the propensity to emphasize epistemic relationships between people. This rejection, he suggests, defuses the specter of solipsism: "If we are to refute solipsism, then my fundamental relation to the Other is first and fundamentally a relation of being to being, not of knowledge to knowledge."[152] What does he suggest such a relation consists of?

In Sartre's account of subjectivity in its intersubjective element, the presence of others is a limitation to my free experience of the world. Though something *cogito*-like is the basis of experience, it is always tied to and encroached on by the Other, an *a priori* feature of

[152] Sartre (1956), 329.

consciousness. For Sartre, the ontological relation between myself and others de-centers my sensibility and spatiality, and drags the world away from me, as it were: "We are dealing with a relation which is without *parts*, given at one stroke, inside of which unfolds a spatiality which is not *my* spatiality; for instead of a grouping *toward me* of objects, there is now an orientation *which flees from me*."[153]

The sense that others are not merely objects of my consciousness is exhibited in Sartre's example of observing someone else sitting in a park. Here, the Other is a peculiar sort of object for me which exhibits its own spatial sensibility: "The Other is first the permanent flight of things toward a goal which I apprehend as an object at a certain distance from me but which escapes me inasmuch as it unfolds about itself its own distances."[154] As I observe someone sitting on a park bench, I am viscerally aware of the world as not *belonging* to me, as not being centered on or otherwise orbiting around me. The Other has "stolen my world from me"[155] as possibilities are disclosed and closed off, making my limits salient: I can't sit in that same exact spot on the park bench as you and see the same exact sights or even feed the same exact birds.

But in observing this Other, he is still an object for me, even if this is not true in the sense in which an inkwell is an object for me: "He belongs to *my distances*."[156] In my observation, the Other is only a probability in the sense that, in the unfolding of the world to my senses, an object unfolding before me is *seen* as a locus of the "disintegration of the universe."[157] The Other is thus an object which drains my reality of its ownness. As I look at the Other, I see the Other looking at

[153] Sartre (1956), 342.
[154] Sartre (1956), 343.
[155] Sartre (1956), 343.
[156] Sartre (1956), 343.
[157] Sartre (1956), 344.

their environment. But this seeing remains at the quintessentially epistemic register of the *cogito*, for whom the world is doubtable, a set of probabilities. Still it indicates a probability towards which my world escapes.

Thus, my observation of the Other is not my original relation with the Other in *their* subjectivity. But my observation of the Other hints at what Sartre considers to be a more elementary relation with the Other. For in considering the probability that this Other can see, that a new spatiality unfolds around this Other's body, we allow for the possibility of being made an object beyond our own control: "My apprehension of the Other in the world as *probably being* a man refers to my permanent possibility of *being-seen-by-him*."[158] Sartre thus locates the original relation between subjects in the concrete, everyday terms of sight, of what he calls the look.

The notion of the look does not merely refer to ocular gazing: "It is not the eyes that look at us; it is the Other-as-subject."[159] Eyes are not in the first instance objects of knowledge, sensible organs of vision, part of the human anatomy, but are rather "support for the look."[160] Their orientation in my direction weighs on me and alters my very being. Sartre exhibits this in his discussion of shame. In peering through a keyhole, my egocentric concerns absorb me as I snoop in on what is happening on the other side of the door. But the moment I hear footsteps, the moment I feel someone looking at me, I am made to be outside of myself. Shame, in the Sartrean sense, is this visceral shock of feeling looked at.

[158] Sartre (1956), 345.
[159] Sartre (1956), 369.
[160] Sartre (1965), 346.

Thus, in the look, part of what I am is recognized as beyond my control, beyond my awareness, beyond the world I can know and interact with, and I become conscious of myself as an object *for* another. But just what this object amounts to is inaccessible to me. The relation of being-looked-at is thus ontological as it effects my very being beyond any knowledge that I can have of it: "The Other's look makes me be beyond my being in this world and puts me in the midst of the world which is at once *this world* and beyond this world."[161]

But this feeling is visceral, pre-reflective in Sartrean terms, and thus is not an object that I take up in the conscious terms under which I know other objects. In feeling looked at, I feel myself as a body, as vulnerable, as an object of another's gaze. I am made out to be something, but just what I am forever escapes me. As Matthew Ratcliffe puts it, Sartrean shame in the face of another's look is "A self-altering feeling through which one's body becomes conspicuous… Registering the presence of another involves a change in one's own orientation towards the world, a *feeling* of being scrutinized that breaks up the coherence of one's prior concerns."[162] I am thus given an outside, a shell that I must live without being able to choose or recognize it. The shock of the Other's look therefore alienates me from myself.

For Sartre, then, there is no question of alterity. His conception of intersubjective awareness, though irreducible to first-person conscious awareness, is an *a priori*, necessary component of certain forms of first-person conscious awareness. Importantly, intersubjectivity is conceived outside of epistemic or semantic terms: I may be mistaken that anyone is looking at me. But the extent to which I am right or wrong about being looked at is beside the point. For

[161] Sartre (1956), 350.
[162] Ratcliffe (2007), 159.

the point is that alterity is a necessary component of the conscious life of human subjects insofar as there are experiences of *feeling* looked at. Subjectivity such as we experience it is implausible without existing in this intersubjective element.

However, this ontological relation is, according to Sartre, essentially unstable and perpetually in conflict. Since my being is altered by the free spontaneity of your conscious awareness, a freedom that escapes me and nullifies my possibilities, intersubjectivity is, for Sartre, a site of strife: “Conflict is the original meaning of being-for-others.”[163] I am made responsible for whatever it is others take me to be despite this being beyond my freedom. But as a free subject, I desire to be my own foundation, and so I struggle to retrieve myself from what the Other makes of me in order to make something of myself: “Thus my project of recovering myself is fundamentally a project of absorbing the Other.”[164]

For someone skeptical of cognitivist understandings of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, Sartre’s conception of subjectivity is commendable for similar reasons as the *rasa* theorist’s conception. They each found intersubjectivity in a pre-reflective or impersonal feeling in response to the imagined actions of others. There is no question of the presence of others since the feeling directly reveals alterity. To be sure, *rasa* theory leads the connoisseur to a deeply impersonal experience grounded in the intersubjective happenings of emotional content whereas Sartre’s being-for-others is a pre-reflective, visceral sense of one’s own objective manifestation outside of one’s conscious powers. But each of these conceptions releases the subject from the logocentric concerns of cognitivism.

[163] Sartre (1956), 475.
[164] Sartre (1956), 475.

Still, Sartre's ontological approach relating subjects as being to being is flawed in its insistence on conflict being the original meaning of this relation. For as doers, as agents, our original relation may not be one of opposition. Our original posture with regard to each other does not simply stifle our respective senses of freedom. The asymmetry between us, then, is not one of my freedom against yours, as may be gleaned from Sartre's notion of being-for-others. It may rather consist at least as much in the extent to which, as doers relating to other doers, we invest each other with freedom. As Emmanuel Levinas suggests, "The presence of the Other... does not clash with freedom but invests it."[165]

[165] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* (Pittsburgh: Dusquesne UP, 1969), 88.

CHAPTER 4 How to Do Things with Others

"When taken to be like a genus that unites like individuals the essence of society is lost sight of." _Emmanuel Levinas _[166]

4.1 Introduction

Thus far, we have explored some epistemological and conceptual problems of other minds and several approaches to these problems. The epistemological problem was generally a matter of whether and how it is that we actually know another's mentality. Given that "the mind" of another is inherently invisible to me, what allows me to claim knowledge of this other – *that* he or she exists and *what* he or she is thinking, feeling, or wanting to do. But this problem, it was suggested, is couched in a deeper conceptual problem: how is it even possible for me to think of mentality as not mine.

It has been argued that these problems arise due to several intersecting assumptions about the nature of mind and the nature of our understanding of others. In particular, they favor a logocentrically intellectual and epistemically scientistic account of our understanding of others and emphasize an ecologically unrealistic first-person. If we want to get beyond such a cognitivist starting point, we must locate new grounds for intersubjectivity, a new way to think through questions like "What makes it possible to think of minds other than my own?" and "Why do your gestures and expression have a subject-laden significance for me?"

The present chapter attempts to gesture in the direction of such a starting point. This would involve accounting for subjectivity in more socially situated and embodied terms that would involve a less logocentric and scientistic view of mental processes. Taking cues from

[166] Levinas (1969), 213-14.

approaches to the conceptual problem of other minds that emphasize action as a link between cognition and behavioral displays, this chapter will explore the notion that mental concepts are developed and enacted through the extent to which we share or participate in each other's experiences. In particular it will be suggested that we have a basic enactively embodied recognitional capacity for understanding others as "minds" that can be addressed, and thus with whom a world can be shared. Any adequate understanding of "mind" must incorporate some such account of its second-person aspect: that to be such as to "have a mind" or "be a person", one must be situated in an enactively embodied matrix of participatory sense-making.

Thus, we will first make the argument that mentality is to be understood more along biocentric than logocentric lines. That is, "mind" is more concerned with the maintenance and invigoration of an individual than with accessing truths and gaining propositional knowledge. Such biocentric sense-making opens us up to others, makes us available to each other: we recognize each other as readily responsive to prompts to participate in sense-making. We thus develop a sense of the significance of bodily actions in mental or psychological terms between ourselves and not just remotely in our own first-person.

This will bring us to a second point that must be developed in an account of the mind in its intersubjective aspect: recognizing the availability of others for participatory sense-making involves a historically conditioned readiness to respond that is enacted in the form of value-laden, improvised engagements. That is, the recognition of others does not involve a removed establishment of some capacity or property; it is a continuous, dynamic trading off of prompts. We make ourselves available for sense-making in recognizing each other vocatively, in addressing each other. Importantly, I am always addressed first before I can recognize myself as myself.

Thus, vocative practice conditions my sense of self; I am a second-person to others first before I am a first-person to myself.

4.2 Recognition and Enactive Intersubjectivity

The problems of other minds we encountered, then, arise due to assumptions that mischaracterize what it is actually like, and especially *what it has actually been like*, to engage with others in concrete situations. Of course we can't make sense of a unified concept of mind when there are differences in application conditions, but there are only differences because the application of mental concepts is framed as if an isolated first-person with logocentric concerns and an intellectual disposition is applying them from an epistemically pure, disembodied perspective. But such framing is ecologically unrealistic and phenomenologically implausible.

At this point, we would do well to ask: What are the actual conditions under which we "apply" mental concepts? For the conditions under which we apply such concepts is not originally epistemically pure, a matter of removed, scientific observation and reflection. And they never involve a whole, completed person that stands beyond the contingencies of life development, searching for and computing perspective-neutral truth. The original conditions for mental concept application are messy, embodied engagements linked to historical determinations of concepts where the concern of an individual is more a matter of persistence and invigoration than truth and knowledge.

We will thus inquire into the notion of embodied concepts, that is, concepts that are sensitive to sensorimotor contingences and are concerned more with navigating pragmatically improvised situations rather than matching representations to states of affairs. These embodied concepts are enacted in the processes by which an organism makes sense of its lifeworld. For

humans, this involves a kind of sense-making that occurs between us: participatory sense-making. Sense-making processes are more biocentric than logocentric in that they are oriented towards the maintenance and activity of a life rather than towards truth.

Furthermore, these processes involve a kind of engaged perception that isn't merely observational and scientistic, but instead involves an historically determined readiness to respond to another's expressivity. But, it will be argued, enactive perception doesn't merely make an object out of others. Through a recognition of your enactive engagement with me in a situation, I have a sense of your subjectivity as being involved with me in the process of making objective determinations. This sense shapes my understanding of the conditions under which mental concepts are applied.

4.2.1 Embodied Concepts

Cognitivists often think of concepts as being amodal, abstract, symbolic representations of the "external world" that allow us to think about, and thus act on, a scheme-neutral world, a world which, in itself, lacks all sensorimotor significance and which is thus not contingent on some perspective. Such a framework thinks of the mind as being like a computer: it manipulates abstract symbols according to syntactic rules in order to bring about an isomorphism between pure thought and a scheme-neutral world, and thus produce non-coincidental, that is, justified beliefs in true propositions independently of sensorimotor contingencies.

Knowledge, under the cognitivist construal, is thus thought of as a "dictionarylike"[167] collection of amodal, scheme-neutral representations and meaning is considered to be the

[167] Daniel Hutto, *Folk Psychological Narratives* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), 130.

referential correspondence between such representations and a fundamentally, if not essentially, mind-independent world. And the concepts applied in knowing about others are sterile, applied from the situationless position of an isolated observer or contemplator who is trying to match representations with a true world. Such a concept of mind and of a mind's conceptual capacity is the very basis upon which such theories and problems of other minds as we have been discussing are constructed. If there was no such cognitivist theory of concepts, we arguably wouldn't have the problems of other minds we've discussed.[168] To demand a non-circular account of the application of mental concepts under these conditions[169] is to rig the game.

If the concepts used in our understanding others are largely amodal symbolic representations that are intended to correspond to the actual state of the world, our primary relationships with each other would be that of detached observers concerned with the truth-conditions or the appropriate applicability conditions by which we may rightly ascribe contents to the minds of others. But this is not what our practical engagements are like, at least for the most part. Our most common engagements are embodied, unprincipled, skilled ways of making sense of the world together. And indeed, enactivists and advocates for the embodied mind thesis in general suggest that our bodies play a role in conditioning and determining our concepts and how we understand our world.

[168] Compare this point with Avramides' complaint against Nagel's hard realism: "According to Nagel there may be creatures, sufficiently unlike ourselves, to whom we would be unable to attribute a mental life because their movements would not be recognizable by us… But if our mental concepts *are* divorced from the concept of action, how are we to understand the generality inherent in them?" Avramides (2001), 258

[169] Smith (2010), 205.

Embodiment is the lynchpin that holds mind, body, and world – including other mind-bodies – together. The manner of our embodiment determines in advance how and what we can think about, not to mention what we can perceive and know. The neural architecture of our brains plays a role in determining our conceptual abilities; were our brains not structured the way they are, we would not be able to think – or act – the way we do.[170] Again, if our sensorimotor apparatus were different, we would perceive and think of the world differently. As George Lakoff and Mark Johnson suggest, "The peculiar nature of our bodies shapes our very possibilities for conceptualization and categorization."[171]

The embodiment of concepts is illustrated particularly well by our basic conceptions of space. Indeed, our embodiment has a dramatic impact on our spatial concepts. It is certainly tenable that our familiarity with concepts like the concept of up would be quite different were we not bipedal organisms who stand upright in a gravitational field. It is our embodied engagement with the environment that determines how we think of up-down, front-back, in-out, near-far, etc.

Such concepts are directly dependent on the ways in which we are embodied – that is, on what we can do with our bodies. They are constituted by the ways in which we are capable of engaging with our environments. Were our enactive embodiment – our capacities to engage with an environment under continuous, historically stable conditions – different, we wouldn't think of these concepts in the same way. Lakoff and Johnson thus note that a spherical being living outside any gravitational field, having no knowledge of or ability to imagine any other way of

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[170] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *In the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 16.
[171] Lakoff and Johnson (1999), 19.

experiencing the world, would have very different spatial concepts than we do.[172] They would arguably not even have these concepts of spatiality at all. It would seem that any consideration of our "basic concepts" must pay heed to the way we are embodied and how we engage with the environment.

Concepts, insofar as they are embodied, thus have something to do with what we are capable of doing with our bodies in the environments we find ourselves acting upon and through under historically stable conditions. Under this construal, concepts aren't merely systems of language-like symbolic representations that minds compute to produce amodal, scheme-neutral knowledge. Instead, thinking, knowing, and perceiving are all kinds of doing. As Dan Hutto suggests, "In order to understand what it is to 'have' a concept one must ask what kind of abilities someone would have to have in order to satisfy the criteria for practical mastery of said concepts."[173]

Concepts, in this sense, are thus capacities for action and for engaging whatever environment is afforded by one's capacities for action. Mind, body, and environment are co-constitutive, and concepts are an embodied mind's deeply engrained, historically effectuated abilities to navigate a world; they are what allow us *to do* things by highlighting action-possibilities. A.M. Glenberg captures this notion quite well in his investigation of memory: "To a particular person, the meaning of an object, event, or sentence is what that person can do with the object, event or sentence."[174]

[172] Lakoff and Johnson (1999), 34.
[173] Hutto (2008), 130.
[174] Arthur Glenberg, "What is memory for?" *Brain and Behavioral Sciences* 20 (1997): 3.

This way of understanding thought is often taken to imply that our sensorimotor capacities and our ability to think, reason, and use language are much more closely intertwined than has often been supposed, at least in Western traditions of thought. There is potentially some empirical support for the idea that at least some concepts are, in some fundamental sense, embodied. Several studies have suggested that sensorimotor and linguoconceptual systems interact.[175]

Boulenger, et al. found, for example, that processing verbs, relative to nouns, has a significant impact on the performance of motor tasks.[176] Pulvermüller supplies evidence to the effect that words and sentences suggestive of actions performed by the arms, legs, or face exhibit somatotopic activation of the somatosensory cortex and that stimulation of the motor system significantly affects the recognition of action words.[177] In addition, Glenberg and Kaschak describe what they call the action-sentence compatibility effect whereby listening to an action sentence that implies a certain directionality – for example "Close the draw" implies a pushing away – interferes with the ability to make judgements that require a response in the opposite direction.[178] There is also evidence suggesting that people with compromised motor systems exhibit impaired performance in the comprehension of verbs.[179]

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[175] Lawrence Barsolou et al. "Grounding conceptual knowledge in modality-specific systems," *Trends in Cognitive Science* 7 (2003): 84-91; Vitorio Gallese and George Lakoff, "The brain's concepts: The role of sensorimotor systems in conceptual knowledge," *Cognitive Neuropsychology* 22 (2005): 455-479.

[176] Veronique Boulenger, et al. "Cross-talk between language processes and over motor behavior in the first 200 msec of processing," *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 18 (2005): 1607-1615.

[177] Freidemann Pulvermüller, "Brain mechanisms linking language and action," *Nature Reviews Neuorscience* 6 (2005): 576-582

[178] Arthur Glenberg and Michael Kaschak, "Grounding language in action," *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 9 (2002): 558-565.

[179] Bettina Neininger and Freidemann Pulvermüller, "Word-category specific deficits after lesions in the right hemisphere," *Neuropsychologia* 41 (2003): 53-70; Veronique Boulenger, et al. "Word processing in Parkinson's disease is impaired for action verbs but not for concrete nouns," *Neuropsychologia* 46 (2008): 743-756.

Thus, there seems to be a link between our sensorimotor skills and our ability to utilize concepts. This lends some support the notion that mentality is embodied, that subjectivity is grounded in capacities for engaging with an environment. Given this possibility, we will argue that human persons have a basic, embodied concept of something like "intentionality", that is, an organism's autonomous activity of sense-making.

4.2.2 Autonomous Sense-Making

As we've already seen, traditional conceptions of mind liken it to a computer. In such a construal, cognition is the process of generating amodal representations out of modality-specific input. The mind has access to pre-determined content through specific sensorimotor modalities as input. Through a series of computations, these pre-determined contents are manipulated so as to neutralize their modality-specific input and produce an output that corresponds to the scheme neutral, pre-determined content their perceptions gave them access to. Cognition is fundamentally a computational process that accesses content by neutralizing specific experiences of embodied engagement and sensorimotor contingency.

However, enactivists see such approaches as thoroughly misleading since they tend to neglect the active engagement of agents in a world. Enactivists tend to rest their notions of cognition on the intuition that minds are not computers that access scheme neutral content through computing modality specific input. Rather, action and cognition are taken to be one and the same thing. Perception is understood as action where possibilities of action – embodied concepts – are engaged. This is an autonomous process whereby an organism makes sense of whatever world its capacities to act, think, feel, and perceive afford. In doing so, the organism brings about a world by regulating its own limitations.

Enactivists thus focus on the notions of autonomy and sense-making in their accounts of mind and cognition over representation and application conditions. Autonomy, the organizational structure and internal processes of an organism that allows it to sustain and grow itself, is, for enactivists, fundamental to mentality. “Cognition” as an autonomous process thus refers to the capacities for an organism to act in such a way as to sustain and perpetuate the precarious unity of its own organization under dynamic and historically effectuated conditions. This is paradigmatically realized in living organisms: “What makes living organisms cognitive beings is that they embody or realize a certain kind of autonomy – they are internally self-constructive in such a way as to regulate actively their interactions with their environments.”[180]

Autonomous systems like living organisms are thus operationally closed. That is, if we analyze any given process involved in the maintenance of the system, we will always find another process or set of processes also involved in the maintenance of that system conditioning the process being analyzed: “There are no processes that are not conditioned by other processes of the network.”[181] This is the sense in which autonomous systems aim at sustaining their own delicate identity under dynamic conditions: “An organism that regulates its coupling with the environment does so because there is a direction that this process is aiming at: that of the continuity of the self-generated identity or identities that initiate the regulation.”[182]

But the maintenance of the unity of an operationally closed network, such as the cognitive agency of a living organism, is *precarious* because such systems, while being *operationally* closed,

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[180] Evan Thompson and Mog Stapleton, “Making sense of sense-making: Reflections on enactive and extended mind theories,” *Topoi* 28 (2009): 24.
[181] Hanne De jaegher and Ezequiel Di Paolo, “Participatory sense-making: An enactive approach to social cognition,” *Phenomenology and Cognitive Science* 6 (2007): 487.
[182] De Jaegher and Di Paolo (2007), 488.

are nonetheless *causally* – or in Thompson and Stapleton's words, thermodynamically – open.[183] Living organisms, in order to survive, must be able to manage the flow of energy and matter through themselves so as to maintain their own internal, constructive processes as well as their exchanges with whatever environment they are afforded by their historically situated embodiment. And this management involves the adaptation to and overcoming of continuously unique and ever uncertain events in the course of relatively regular historical backgrounds.

Thus, the cognition of autonomous systems is not a matter of information processing so much as a dynamic regulation whereby the system takes part in the imposition of its own limits. What counts as "internal" and "external," that is, the emergent identity of the organism as a unity, is the precarious balancing act of the individual's self-regulated couplings between what is required to sustain itself and whatever world or worlds are enacted on that basis. In this sense, an autonomous system is always oriented towards the maintenance and growth of its own fragile unity under precarious conditions.

We have here a primitive mode of intentionality: the directedness of cognition at its own situated and embodied identity. Living organisms, engaging their environments, are always already attuned to whatever is significant for their survival and growth, for the maintenance of their lives. In regulating their own internal dynamics so as to maintain their own precarious existence, organisms enact historically conditioned norms, making sense of their environments by readily responding to whatever allows for the successful continuance of their respective, delicate identities:

An autonomous system produces and sustains its own identity in precarious conditions and thereby establishes a perspective from which interactions with the world acquire a normative

[183] Thompson and Stapleton (2009), 24.

status… Sense-making is behavior or conduct in relation to environmental significance and valence, which the organism itself enacts or brings forth on the basis of its autonomy.[184]

Such a conception of cognition is diametrically opposed to more cognitivist conceptions. For cognitivism in its logocentricity assumes that an organism learns about its world by taking in discrete packets of pre-formed information that have no significance for the organism until the information is computationally processed. Significance, under the cognitivist construal, is in the cognitive system's computations and not that system's engaging and self-regulated relationship with an environment to which it is dynamically coupled.

Sense-making, for enactivists, is thus not merely the removed computation of an inherently neutral environment. For an organism to make sense of its environment, the environment, as the organism can relate to it, must always already be significant, and thus never inherently neutral. And this is so because of a history of dynamic structural couplings between the organism – including its ancestors – and the environment that it can navigate. Thus, as Thompson and Stapleton suggest, sense-making is the interactional and relational side of an autonomous system.[185] Hanne De Jaegher and Ezequiel Di Paolo put the point as follows:

Exchanges with the environment are inherently significant for the cognizer and this is a definitional property of a cognitive system: the creation and appreciation of meaning or sense-making in short… Reaffirming the implications of autonomy, sense-making is an inherently active concept. Organisms do not passively receive information from their environments, which they then translate into internal representations whose significant value is to be added later. Natural cognitive systems are simply not in the business of accessing their world in order to build accurate pictures of it. They actively participate in the generation of meaning in what matters to them; they enact a world.[186]

[184] Thompson and Stapleton (2009), 25.
[185] Thompson and Stapleton (2009), 25.
[186] De Jaegher and Di Paolo (2007), 488.

Perhaps an example of sense-making is owed to further illustrate the point. Erik Myin explains sense-making through our understanding of what it means for a sponge to be soft.[187] No sponge is inherently soft. There is no neutralized softness-content that excites our tactile senses which is then processed – attributed to the sponge in such a way as to render the proposition "The sponge is soft" true – so as to cause appropriate sponge-use like, for example, wringing it out. Our understanding of this softness depends on our tactile explorations of the sponge: the softness-content is accessed by enacting sponge-concepts in a dynamic embodied engagement with the sponge and commonly practiced sponge-use.

In other words, the sponge's softness – our experience of it, our understanding of it, and thus our very conception and use of the sponge – is contingent on our sensorimotor operations. Because I push the sponge, because it cushions my prodding, I comport myself in such a manner as to respond appropriately: I understand its softness through squeezing water out of it, wringing it dry. I could not understand what a sponge is without being able to do such things with it. As an autonomous sense-maker, I adjust my course with regard to the felt environmental signals I experience as I go about living, thereby in turn ensuring that the environment is felt in some way that guides my behavior with respect to what I can do in a given environment. Thus, an environment is not something that comes "prior" to the organisms which live "in" it; nor do the organisms come "prior" to their environments. The specifics of what is to be part of the environment are conceived through the organism's self-regulated enactment of its relation to its environment. The environment is always already significant for the organism and the organism has always already influenced the environment in making its own embodied determinations.

[187] Erik Myin, "An account of color without a subject?" *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 26 (2003): 42-43.

4.2.3 Enactive Social Perception and Participatory Sense-Making

Sense-making is an organism's coordinated enactment of its historical couplings with an environment aiming at the maintenance and enlivening of the organism itself. This involves contingent yet non-accidental (i.e. intentional) correlations between an individual and the environment it is coupled to and interacts with. These correlations are historically effectuated, developed through repeated patterns of interactions between an individual's ancestors and the environments to which they were coupled and with which they interacted and then honed and further developed in an individual's own sense-making activities.

Human sense-making activity is conditioned by intersubjective or shared sense-making. We are born ready to recognize and interact with others. We don't simply access others as neutral contents in one's own lifeworld. Others are *included* in our sense-making activities; we *participate*, *together*, in the sense-making activities that lead to intersubjectively defined objective determinations. As such, another's presence has a certain fundamental directness to it: we directly perceive each other's presence. To the extent that we are perceptually keen to the intentional significance of others in early interactions, we may be said to already have a basic embodied concept of intentionality, a concept that is being perpetually reconceived and re-enacted in each interactive engagement. In what sense, however, can we say that others are perceptually available?

When we talk about our awareness of others, we often talk about our perceptions of them. Max Scheler tells us that, "We certainly believe ourselves to be directly acquainted with

another person's joy in his laughter, with his sorrow and pain in his tears."[188] Wittgenstein suggests that, "We do not see facial contortions and make inferences from them (like a doctor framing a diagnosis) to joy, grief, boredom. We describe a face immediately as sad, radiant, bored."[189] Fred Dretske notes that "We routinely speak about seeing that there are people in the waiting room, passengers on the bus, students in the office, a crowd of people listening to the speaker."[190] Moreland Perkins lists examples from Jane Austen's writings that speak of our seeing another's surprise, of people's mental disturbances being visible to everyone in the room, of hearing other's emotions in their voice.[191] And Peter Strawson points out that "x's depression is something, *one and the same thing felt*, which is felt but not observed by x, and observed but not felt by others than x."[192]

It has been argued that such language is suspect since, for one thing others could be faking their expressions and, for another, we can't really perceive emotions because they are just not the sorts of things that can be externally observed. As C.W.K. Mundle argues in a challenge to Strawson's identification of an emotion felt by one person with observations made by others, we can't simply identify mental states with *observed behaviors*.[193] But Moreland Perkins points out that we don't need to understand Strawson as identifying observed behaviors with emotions because his point is that, whatever else is observed – and this may include observed behaviors – it is natural to say that we see emotions. Perkins argues that, just as when we see shingles on a

[188] Scheler (2009), 260.
[189] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967): §225.
[190] Fred Dretske, "Perception and Other Minds," *Nous* 7 (1973): 34.
[191] Moreland Perkins, "Seeing and Hearing Emotions," *Analysis* 26 (1966): 193-194
[192] Strawson (1959), 109.
[193] C.W.K Mundle, "Mental Concepts," *Mind* 72 (1963): 577-580

house we also see a house, when we see a facial expression, we also see the external happenings of a mind.[194]

Perkins further neutralizes objections against the perception of others' emotions brought up by Fred Dretske and Bruce Aune to the effect that mental states aren't the sorts of things that are perceivable since perception is always of "particular" objects[195] and mental states are generalized dispositional states the manifestations of which are the objectified particulars that we perceive. Aune, for example, says that,

> Depression is not the sort of thing it makes sense to say one observes: the only thing strictly observable about depression, I believe, are its manifestations… I think it is true that we very often see *that* our fellows are depressed. But notice, nevertheless, that there is a very important difference between observing his depression and observing *that* he is depressed.[196]

However, Perkins replies that such objections revolve around the idea that to perceive someone's depression and not merely particular manifestations of it, we must perceive a dispositional state that conditions a particular manifestation of that state. And, so the story goes, since we don't see a general tendency to frown so much as the facial contortions we call a frown, we don't see the emotion itself that supposedly causes the frown.

But, Perkins argues, we see in frozen water a disposition to remain solid, and thus not just an instance *in which* water is frozen, but the persistent state of frozenness. We don't see *that* the water is frozen, so much as the frozen water itself. And just because we see such states in particular manifestations, and so piecemeal across space and time, this does not necessarily imply that we don't see the state itself.[197] Thus natural expressions like, "I can see the sadness in

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[194] Perkins (1966), 195.
[195] Drestke (1973), 25.
[196] Bruce Aune, "Feeling, Moods, and Intropsection," *Mind* 72 (1963): 198, my emphasis
[197] Perkins (1966), 197.

your eyes" say exactly what they mean. We are not at all mistaken in our common assumption that we not only see others, but that we can see detailed articulations of their mentality. Perkins thus argues as follows:

> It is true that, where 'V' is an everyday verb, if we never say that we V then we never V, and conversely, that if we do say that we V then we do V. Then I contend that it is false that we never observe, in the sense that we see or hear, others' emotions. For we do say we do this; so we do sometimes do it.[198]

More recently, phenomenological considerations backed by empirical support have strongly suggested that we directly perceive others' mental states. Shaun Gallagher criticizes the notion that there is a problem of perceptually accessing the mental states of others: "The supposition is precisely that the other person's mental states are hidden away and are therefore not accessible to perception. I cannot see into your mind; hence I have to devise some way of inferring what must be there, based on evidence that is provided by perception."[199] He notes that such problems of access arise when we take perception to be merely a matter of third-person, passive observation, entirely removed from socially interactive contexts.

Indeed, as we have seen, the empirical studies cited in favor of approaches to our understanding of others that suggest such an access problem, namely those approaches involved in the theory of mind debate, often study children who observe situations and report on them rather than contexts where they interact with others. But social perception, it is argued, requires being involved in situated interaction. As De Jaegher rightly notes, "Social interaction is not derivative, but constitutive of the process of social understanding and also of direct social

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[198] Perkins (1966), 193.
[199] Shaun Gallagher, "Direct Perception in the Intersubjective Context," *Consciousness and Cognition* 17 (2008): 536.

perception."[200] In our ordinary experiences with each other, we do not commonly have logocentric concerns and we don't necessarily need to enact intellectual procedures from epistemically pure starting points to understand each other. We are directly acquainted, through interaction, with others; we are accessible to each other due to shared embodied architectures and situated social practices. As Gallagher puts it,

Practically speaking, direct perception, etc. delivers what I need to interact with others most of the time. In the broad range of normal circumstances there is already so much available in the person's movements, gestures, facial expressions, and so on, as well as in the pragmatic context, that I can grasp everything I need for understanding in what is perceptually available.[201]

Such considerations appear to have empirical support. Early on in life we exhibit capacities that form the basis of our embodied possibilities for interacting with, and thus our embodied conceptions of, others – what Colwyn Trevarthen calls primary intersubjectivity.[202] Human neonates can visually distinguish between agents and inanimate objects and are particularly attuned to facial features.[203] In addition, they are capable of mimicking facial expressions, exhibiting the ability to isolate and identify the organ used in the facial expressions they mimic (e.g. the tongue or the lips) and the kinds of things the organs are able to do.[204] More recently, it has been discovered that infants ranging from as young as 42 minutes to 72 hours old can mimic facial expressions, suggesting that we are born ready to respond to visual experiences

[200] Hanne De Jaegher, "Social Understanding Through Direct Perception? Yes, by Interacting," *Consciousness and Cognition* 18 (2009): 538.
[201] Gallagher (2008), 540.
[202] Colwyn Trevarthen, "Communication and cooperation in early infancy: A description of primary intersubjectivity," in *Before Speech*, Margaret Bullowa ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1979): 321-348.
[203] Maria Legerstee, "The role of person and object in eliciting early imitation," *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 51 (1991): 423-433
[204] Andrew Meltzoff and M.K. Moore, "Imitation of facial and manual gestures by human neonates," *Science* 198 (1977): 75-78.

of faces proprioceptively.[205] Further evidence suggests that such neonate imitation employs a kind of memory and that infants' performance in imitating facial expressions improves with successive efforts.[206]

It may be thought that these capacities are mere reflexes, but as Gallagher notes, these studies rule out the possibility that these imitations are such unintentional reactions.[207] Reflexes are specific to a limited array of stimuli. However, these studies required infants to perform various mimetic feats, copying faces with protruding tongues in a variety of directions, open mouths, smiles, frowns, etc. Perhaps, Gallagher points out, it would make sense for the imitation of a smile to be a reflex, but why would nature instill in us a reflexive imitative response for the protrusion of tongues at various angles?

In addition, the evidence that some form of memory is at play and that infants can improve their imitative performance rules out these imitations as reflexes. Together, these studies suggest that we are born ready to match visual experiences of faces with responsive proprioceptive control over the expression of one's own face. As Meltzoff and Decety put it, "Infant imitation provides clear behavioral evidence for an innate link between the perception and production of human acts, which suggests shared neural representation."[208] Indeed,

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[205] Andrew Meltzoff and K.M. Moore, "Imitation in newborn infants: Exploring ranges of gestures imitated and the underlying mechanisms," *Developmental Psychology* 25 (1983): 954-962.
[206] Andrew Meltzoff and K.M. Moore, "Imitation, Memory, and the Representation of Persons," *Infant Behavior and Development* 17 (1994): 83-99.
[207] Shaun Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind* (New York: Oxford UP, 2005), 72.
[208] Andrew Meltzoff and Jean Decety, "What imitation tells us about social cognition: A rapprochement between developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B* 358 (2003): 493.

neurophysiological studies of adults indicate just such a cross-modal link between perception of action and performance of action.[209]

Infants display other remarkable, primordially social behaviors. Even when they don't imitate, infants as early as 3-4 weeks are interactive with other persons, smiling, waving, and frowning, as the case may be, in response to the activity of a second person, usually the mother.[210] Infants thus generally vocalize and gesture in a way that is attuned to the vocalizations and gestures of other people.[211] A bit later in infancy, at 5-7 months, babies are capable of detecting correspondences between emotionally pregnant visual and auditory information.[212]

These examples suggest that human infants are born with an embodied conception of intentional agents, and not just intentional agents in general, but intentional agents with specifically human possibilities. That is, we are generally born attuned to each other's intentionality, each other's capacity for going about a world, and we learn to make sense of what we can do through our interactions with others, through enactively perceiving how they navigate a situation. We can perceive the subjective significance of another's presence, see their mentality, their intentionality, their sense-making, in their engaged expressions before we can ascribe mental states to them in a removed, scientific manner. And we can do this because, in Gallagher's words, we as infants "already apprehend, with quickly improving precision, the

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[209] L. Fadiga, et al. "Motor facilitation during action observation: A magnetic stimulation study," *Journal of Neurophysiology* 6 (1995): 2608-2611; R. Hari, et al. "Activation of human primary motor cortex during action observation: A neuromagnetic study," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science of the USA* 95 (1998): 15061-15065; G. Buccino, et al. "Action observation activates premotor and parietal areas in a somatotopic manner: An fMRI study," *European Journal of Neuroscience* 13 (2001): 400-404.
[210] Trevarthen (1979), 321-348.
[211] Gopnik and Meltzoff (1997), 131.
[212] Arlene S. Walker, "Intermodal perception of expressive behaviors by human infants," *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 33 (1982): 514-535.

equivalences between the visible body transformations of others and their own invisible body transformations which they experience proprioceptively."[213] He continues,

> What I see of other's motor behavior is reflected and played out in terms of my own possibilities… There exists in the newborn infant a natural intermodal coupling between self and other, one that does not involve a confused experience. Rather than confusion, a self-organizing collaboration between the visual perception and proprioception, between sensory and motor systems, and between the self and the other is in operation from the very beginning. Body schemas, working systematically with proprioceptive awareness, constitute a proprioceptive self that is *always already* 'coupled' with the other.[214]

We are thus perceptively attuned at birth to a shared body schematic, what Gallagher and Zahavi call a "common bodily intentionality,"[215] a blueprint of the possibilities of the average human body as has been enactively embodied in our biology over the millennia. But such perceptual ability isn't merely a one-sided, passively observational affair. When a baby perceives their mother smiling, the baby tends to mime the mother, getting a sense of their commonality by exercising its own bodily schematics through the perceptual experience of its mother's bodily presence. This process of mimetic assimilation allows a baby's understanding of what he or she will in a few years call "smiling" to start growing. The already attuned connection between the perceptions of a human face smiling and the proprioceptive response whereby smiling is felt anew is strengthened through each encounter and helps determine the future enactment of "smiles". Thus, we learn, on the basis of already natural tendencies and through the continuous interactive enactments of those tendencies, that there is a sense of reversibility in our sensorimotor capacities – not just that we can do the things we see, but that others are *doing* things, not merely passively reacting to their environment.

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[213] Gallagher (2005), 80.
[214] Gallagher (2005), 81.
[215] Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 210.

It must be reiterated that enactive perception understood as a readily responsive, autonomous sense-making in the form of mimetic assimilation could not work if the baby were to merely view a picture of a smiling face, or even something resembling a smiling face, like the front of a car. Such a consideration comes from the first-to-third prejudice we've seen in the more traditional paradigms. For we never merely view a smile. Rather we see smiling faces and (in most cases) we interact with them in historically choreographed embodied practices. Murray and Trevarthen have shown, for example, that children interacting with their mothers through a television screen display become agitated when the display freezes.[216] Similarly, when parents are interacting with their babies in person and abruptly stop, taking up a neutral posture and facial expression, babies become upset. [217]

Around 9 months we see the onset and expansion of these embodied social capacities in the form of joint attention and the capacity for what Trevarthen calls secondary intersubjectivity.[218] At this time, we start to become increasingly aware of how others engage with their physical environment. Infants begin to track the eyes of others,[219] ostensibly understanding through a visual-proprioceptive cross-modal link, and thus at least at a pre-reflective, embodied level, that others are *looking* at the world around them. Around 10-11 months, infants begin to show evidence of an ability to parse action by intentional boundaries.[220]

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[216] L. Murray and Colwyn Trevarthen, "Emotional regulation of interaction between 2-month-olds and their mothers," in *Social Perception in Infants*, ed. T.M Field and N.A. Fox (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1985): 177-197.
[217] E. Tronick, "The infants' response to entrapment between contradictory messages in face-to-face interactions," *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry* 17 (1978): 1-13; D. Muir and K. Lee, "The still-face effect: Methodological issues and new applications," *Infancy* 4 (2003): 483-491.
[218] Colwyn Trevarthen and P. Hubley, "Secondary intersubjectivity: confidence, confiding and acts of meaning in the first year," in *Action, Gesture and Symbol: The Emergence of Language*, ed. A. Lock. London: Academic (1978): 183-229
[219] A. Senju, et al. "The developmental and neural basis for referential gaze perception," *Social Neuroscience*, 1 (2006): 220-234.
[220] D.A. Baldwin, et al. "Infants parse dynamic action," *Child Development*, 72 (2001): 708-717.

By 18 months, they show evidence of understanding the unfulfilled goals of others by re-enacting to completion the other's unfinished goal-directed behavior.[221] In doing so, they become capable of engaging with others in ways they haven't yet. Rather than being guided through interactions by others, they begin to more deliberately *participate* in interactive pragmatic contexts where others can be jointly involved with oneself in broader world-oriented, goal-directed activity.

The intercorporeal coordination we've seen in primary and secondary intersubjectivity suggest that our sense-making is always already primed for participation. We are born readily responsive to other's intentionality, and through repeated interaction, our expressive skills grow, and our interactive engagements become more sophisticated, the coordination between us more complex. Our coordination with each other is different from that of purely physical couplings, as De Jaegher and Di Paolo explain:

[In social interaction,] patterns of coordination can directly influence the continuing disposition of the individuals involved to sustain or to modify their encounter. In this way, what arises in the process of coordination (e.g. gestures, utterances and changes in intonation that are sometimes labelled as back-channeling or turn-repair, etc.) can have the consequence of steering the encounter or facilitating (or not) its continuation.

In our sense-making activities we are naturally able to coordinate with other sense-makers in such a way as to have our sense-making affected by the coordination process itself. Human sense-making activity, as an embodied activity that expresses and is readily responsive to intentionality, is able to become involved with the sense-making of others. We are naturally ready to engage in participatory sense-making:

If regulation of social coupling takes place through coordination of movements, and if movements – including utterances – are the tools of sense-making, then our proposal is: social agents can coordinate their sense-making in social encounters. This means that the sense-making

[221] Andrew Meltzoff, "Understanding the intentions of others: Re-enactment of intended acts by 18 month-old children." *Developmental Psychology*, 31 (1995): 838-850.

of interactors acquires a coherence through their interaction and not just in their physical manifestation, but also in their significance. This is what we call *participatory sense-making*: the coordination of intentional activity in interaction, whereby individual sense-making processes are affected and new domains of social sense-making can be generated that were not available to each individual on her own.[222]

4.2.4 Perception and Accessibility: Another Conceptual Problem

The idea that, through interactions, we directly perceive each other's mental lives, then, is a challenge to the idea that the minds of others are inaccessible. However, such a perspective falls short of some powerful intuitions we have about the experiences, thoughts, and feelings of others. For it drops the problem of accessibility to other's minds from its purview. While there does seem to be some intuitive truth to the idea that we are in direct contact with others through our interactions with them, it would be wise to ensure that we account for the opposite intuition as well, namely, that we can't directly perceive another's mind entirely, that some remainder is still beyond our perceptual reach. For if *my* perceptions of someone gives me direct access to the contents of their experiences, then it would be difficult to understand how the content that is accessed is content of *their* experiences and not *mine*. We have another form of the conceptual problem.

Such is the critique of direct social perception approaches delivered by Nivedita Gangopadhyay and Katsunori Miyahara. They argue that, insofar as our perceptions of others do not fully manifest another's mentality, then direct social perception approaches cannot simply brush off the accessibility problem. For although we get some semblance of knowledge regarding other's experiences, thoughts and feelings through perception, we certainly do not have access

[222] De Jaegher and Di Paolo (2007), 497.

to every detail of their experiences, thoughts and feeling. There is still an accessibility problem even for these proposals. As they put it,

> Even if some aspects of the other's mind are immediately given in his or her expressive behavior, as long as the mental state is not fully manifest to us, we still need to go beyond the immediate experience to gain a better understanding of the other. Accordingly, one could remove the access problem from the explananda of a theory of social cognition only if one assumes that mental states are given in expressive behavior in a way such that not a single significant aspect of mental states qua mental states are hidden from our view in the experience of expressive behavior. This assumption, however, contradicts a fundamental intuition about other minds: the intuition that other minds are characterized by an "otherness" partly because they are always transcendent of what we experience.[223]

The proposal that direct social perception overcomes the access problem, then, seems to come at the expense of our fundamental intuitions of our experiences of and with others. It does not properly respect the access problem, which Gangopadhyay and Miyahara understand as being motivated by two intuitions. On the one hand, it appears that another's mind is never fully accessed in our perceptual acquaintance with them. On the other, even these hidden aspects are given as potentially accessible; they are "*perceptually accessed as transcendent*."[224]

Gangopadhyay and Miyahara appeal to Husserlian phenomenology to give an account of the perceivability of others' minds that respects the problem of access. They focus on the notion that all of our perceptual experiences are apprehended with a certain co-presentation. When I see a coffee table, my perception of its surface is given with a sense that it has an aspect that is unseen by me, namely its underside. The underside is said to be co-given or co-presented with the surface of the table. The content of my perception of the table is the immediate givenness of its surface. But that content is always co-presented with the content of its underside, a feature

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[223] Nivedita Gangopadhyay and Katsunori Miyahara, "Perception and the Problem of Access to Other's Minds," *Philosophical Psychology* 28 (2015): 701.
[224] Gangopadhyay and Katsunori (2015), 702.

of the table I could see if I were to look underneath it. The content of what is co-presented with the presentation of an object in perception is that which it is possible to perceive if I look at a different aspect of the object. In Husserilian terminology, the content of our perception of an object is determined, in part, by the horizonal structure of the co-presented content.

This basic idea can be put in terms of our perceptions of others. What is co-presented in our perceptions of others is what Husserl calls "harmonious behavior."[225] Whereas my perception of the table is partly determined by my anticipations of what else can be presented were I to look at another aspect of it, my perception of others is partly determined by my anticipations of what sort of things others could or would do as our interactions run their course. However, as Husserl notes, the co-presentation of other aspects of an object and the co-presentation of harmonious behavior differ in that the former is amenable to verification whereas the latter is not.[226] Still, the content of our perception of others is partly determined by the co-presentation of further possible behaviors that continue (or, for that matter, discontinue) our interactions. That is, such content is partly determined by further content that is not *immediately* accessible.

Gangopadhyay and Miyahara thus propose a co-presentation account of social perception that is intended to take seriously our intuitions regarding the accessibility and transcendence of the content of another's mind. This account respects the immediacy of our perceptions of others: I see your happiness in your smile directly. Still, the content of this perception is co-presented with anticipations of further expressive behavior, aspects of your

[225] Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditions: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, Dorion Cairns, tr. (The Hague: Martinua Nijhoff, 1960), 114.
[226] Husserl (1960), 109.

mentality that are not immediately present. Indeed, what gets co-presented are aspects of your mentality that "do not even involve the possibility of revealing themselves in the form of sensory presentation."[227] Thus, this account adheres to the intuition that something about you transcends my present perceptions of your expressive behavior. It also accommodates what Gangopadhyay and Miyahara call the accessibility constraint. This states that despite social perception immediately presenting an expressive behavior while co-presenting a transcendent aspect of that behavior not immediately accessible to perception, still, the transcendent aspect is presented as able to be made determinate by going beyond these immediate experiences.

Gangopadhyay and Miyahara thus refer to this view as a "rich content-lean object view."[228] Such a view takes social perception to involve two types of content. First, there is the presented content. This is what is immediately perceptually available: the joy in your smile. But this is co-presented with content that transcends what is immediately given, namely the possibilities of behavior that may further our interaction and, thus, that may further determine the content of what is immediately available upon my direct perception of your smile. There is thus one object, "a happy person," and this object is apprehended through dyadic content, that which is presented to perception immediately and that which is co-presented as transcendent with respect to that immediate perception.

However, what is transcendent to this immediate perception is further content. And this further content, though relatively indeterminate, can be made more determinate by going beyond what is immediately given. This may involve the further evolution of our interaction or

[227] Gangopadhyay and Katsunori (2015), 705.
[228] Gangopadhyay and Katsunori (2015), 706

an inferential procedure. Nonetheless, this so-called transcendent aspect of you, though not immediately given in the direct perceptual content of my experience with you, is still content that is possibly accessible to me. Indeed, as Gangopadhyay and Miyahara's view posits two types of content corresponding to a single object.

It is worth asking to what degree it is appropriate to describe another's life-experiences in terms of *content* that is *accessible* to *me*. For doing so makes an *object* of you. It must be considered whether there may be some aspects of experience that are not entirely formulable in terms of content. Embodied concepts provide just such an aspect of experience. For they are conceived through sense-making, through the activity of determining content. And that activity, in its autonomous determination of content, is not amenable to contentful determinations without losing its character as autonomous sense-making activity. It will thus be argued that embodied concepts allow us to recognize a kind of *availability* in others that opens us up to each other without being able to make fully determinate the determining activity itself.

Suppose you know someone who has gone through several traumatic experiences. Others have mistreated him extensively, and his trauma figures in his behavior. Perhaps he discusses his life experiences with you, among the only outlets he has to alleviate the intensity of anxious memory. You see the pain in his eyes. You even, to some degree, feel the pain. You try to console him with your words and embrace. You try to reassure him that everything is ok, that you understand his pain. In all of this, is your familiar's pain accessible?

The co-presentation view of social perception would suggest that, though his pain is accessible in your perceptions of his eyes, his body language, and his words, respecting the transcendence of the other requires an account of what goes beyond these immediate

perceptions. The horizon that determines the presentation of the content of his suffering is thus the co-presentation of the sorts of things that can be expected in the evolution of the interaction – consolation, tears, silence, embrace. These co-presentations are accessible as transcendent, that is, as accessible in a way that goes beyond immediate perceptions – content that *can* be accessed nonetheless. But in all of this, do you have any inkling of what your familiar is going through? Even the pain you see and feel when you look into his tear-soaked eyes: is that content at all capable of giving you access to what the other *actively suffers* as their mentality? Does the trajectory of your interaction, the co-presented content, really respect the transcendence of the other?

Taking the presentation and co-presentation of content as accessing the very experiences of the other – his past trauma and the intensity of their contemporary manifestations – would be to unduly circumscribe the other's experiences. Doing so is a kind of violence, for it defines possibilities *for* the other, foists upon the other a determination of his activity that figures in my determining activities and influences how I participate in making sense of the situation. It puts the other in opposition to the self, makes the other an object for me, an object of perception, of reflection, of knowledge, of concern.

Thus, conceiving of the other's experiences as content that I can be at one with him on encroaches on his autonomous sense-making. Yet, in our interactions with others, they freely provide us with content of their own making. They *tell* us things about *themselves*, they sit with a certain posture and have a look of desperation or delight in their face. They are involved in their own sense-making, in enacting their own objective determinations, and this influences how they make themselves available to us to make sense of things together.

No matter how accessible or inaccessible another's experiential life might be in terms of content, something always escapes me. Yet that which escapes me is precisely the experience that is determined in the content of my perceptions or, for that matter, in my inferences. Subjectivity is not capable of total objectification, of being made completely determinate content. And yet, sometimes subjectivity offers itself in terms of determinate content. An account of other minds that respects their transcendence must, then, make sense of the *availability* of access that others display such that their availability is not merely accessed as further content. That is, we must be able to account for the sense that others are available to participate in formulating determinate content.

We can turn to the Pratyabhijñā school of Kaśmīr Śaivism, particularly the work of Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, to guide us on this account. For this school of thought, consciousness or subjectivity (*cit*, *saṃvid*) is essentially the autonomous (*svatantra*) activity of self-manifestation, of articulating determinate content. Although in articulating itself, it manifests itself as determinate content, as objectified, nonetheless subjective experience itself is beyond cognitive formulations. As such, consciousness can't cognize itself without relieving itself of its indeterminate, non-objective nature. As we've already seen Abhinavagupta suggest, "One cognition is not to be made manifest by another. For if one cognition were to shine in another it would cease to be self-manifest."[229]

It must be noted here that, for Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, all consciousness is ultimately the autonomous self-manifestation of Śiva. It is therefore unlimited, hence absolutely autonomous or free (*svatantra*), and can manifest itself through infinite articulations. This

[229] *IPV,* 33.

happens through the contraction (*saṃkocana*) of Śiva's consciousness into limited forms, such as the human body. As Utpaladeva puts it, "Even in practical life, the Lord, because of His free will, enters into body, etc. and manifests externally the mass of objects which shine within him."[230] What is important for our purposes here is that consciousness participates in enacting its own limitations.

Thus, in its embodied forms of life, subjectivity participates in the making of objective determinations, thereby limiting itself while making itself available to other limited, embodied forms of consciousness. This contraction of Śiva into the individual human form is thus suggestive regarding what it is about consciousness that is beyond the confines of cognitive content. For it is precisely this freedom to self-manifest, to express content, that is the availability of consciousness, of experience. But the mind, in its availability, is fundamentally indeterminate, unable to be fully encapsulated contentfully, by inference or perception, or by any other objectification.

Thus, insofar as consciousness illuminates (*prakāśate*) its own world through its self-reflexive articulating activity (*vimarśa*), it is not accessible as an object of awareness. For it is the very transparency and freedom of awareness itself. Utpaladeva thus tells us that "Experience is self-luminous. It cannot be the object of any other experience."[231] Making an object out of experience itself would thus strip experience of that which defines it, namely its subjectivity understood as the autonomous articulating activity of consciousness.

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[230] *IPV*, 93.
[231] *IPV*, 33

However, by participating in the activity of making objective determinations of its own, subjectivity qua subjectivity is made available, albeit under quasi-objective conditions. Accounting for other minds, then, must start with the nature of this availability, of this involving oneself in the making of determinate content. For Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta, you as a limited subject make yourself available in your accessing content, in your actively making objective determinations. This availability is manifest in the form of a recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) that is beyond, yet makes possible, the content of both perceptions and inferences regarding others.

4.2.5 Recognition and Availability

In touching on our knowledge of others, Utpaladeva, in his *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārika*, tells us that "The power of knowledge (*jñānaśakti*) and the power of action (*kriyāśakti*) are self-established. The latter, when associated with a particular body, is perceptible to other limited perceivers. From that, the presence of the power of knowledge in others is guessed (*ūhyate*)."[232] We can notice two things from this verse. Firstly, knowing others involves direct perceptual experience of their actions. Secondly, any given subject's awareness of the presence of other subjects is guessed (*ūhyate*).

Why does Utpaladeva consider our knowledge of others to be a kind of guess? In commenting on these remarks in his *Vimarśinī*, Abhinavagupta tells us that Utpaladeva avoids using the terminology of valid inference (*anumīyate*) in describing our cognition of others because "the power of knowledge is not an object of any means of right knowledge."[233] As we've

[232] *IPV*, 16.
[233] *IPV*, 17.

noted, subjectivity as the free activity of self-manifestation, qua subjectivity, sits beyond any determinate content that can be formulated regarding it. It cannot be made an object of valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) because it cannot be wholly determined.

Still, as Utpaladeva suggests, perception plays an indispensable role in our availability to each other for sense-making. Abhinavagupta elaborates: "In this [awareness of others], there is also, in part (*amśe*), an activity of the senses, and therefore, a 'guess' [also] implies a direct perception (*sākṣātkāra*)."[234] What is it that is readily apparent (*sākṣātkāra*) in our awareness of each other's minds – and of subjectivity in general?

The Pratyabhijñā system suggests that it is autonomous action. Under this construal, action is not something distinct from knowledge, as if located in a body rather than in consciousness. Rather, action is identical with consciousness, the end point or final stage (*paryanta*) of the continuous unfolding process of consciousness. Action itself is not essentially different from knowledge. It is an autonomous self-manifestation of the power of subjectivity to engage in, and thereby continuously be involved in the creation of, a world. Thus, as Ratié puts it, "We are aware of the existence of other subjects when we are aware of their actions for the simple reason that consciousness *is*, in its essence, action."[235]

In perceiving another's embodied activity, we thus perceive their subjectivity directly since embodied activity is merely the endpoint of subjective experience, the objective determinations of autonomous consciousness. There is, however, also something inferential to our awareness of each other, which is why Abhinavagupta says that our awareness of others is

[234] Ratié (2007), 355.
[235] Ratié (2007), 347

only “in part” (*amśe*) a matter of being readily apparent to the senses (*sākṣātkāra*). Indeed, the experience of others might also be considered, in part, a particular kind of inference that doesn’t require reference to entities outside of what is stated in the proposition to be proven.

That is, Abhinavagupta suggests that we can infer from what is readily apparent to perception the presence of subjectivity external to my experiences. This inference, however, can’t be a causal inference (*kāryahetu*) but rather must be more like a constitutive inference (*svabhāvahetu*). Our awareness of each other doesn’t work like a causal inference which infers an unperceived fire on the basis of a perception of smoke, given that smoke has always been perceived to come from fire and that fire is never perceived without smoke. Rather, it is more like inferring from the fact that I am seeing a particular kind of thing – a conifer, for example – that I am seeing something that constitutes its identity as the kind of thing it is, namely, a tree. Ratié’s explanation is illuminating:

> In this case [i.e. the case of *kāryahetu*] I achieve the knowledge of fire through the perception of a completely different entity, smoke, and the only entity that I actually perceive remains different from that which I infer to exist. Besides, it is only a concept different both from smoke and fire (namely, that of causality relation), by linking together rationally two distinct entities of fire and smoke, that enables me to reach the idea of fire; whereas in the case of *svabhāvahetu*… the entity that I actually perceive and that which I infer are in fact one and the same… The other’s consciousness should not be regarded as the unperceived cause of a perceived effect (action) that would remain irreducibly distinct from it; and it is not the kind of entity that I would be drawn to suppose only by virtue of a rational necessity, without having any kind of perceptual contact with it. The other’s consciousness and the action that I am perceiving here and now are in fact *one and the same entity*, for action is nothing but the “final stage” of the other’s cognition.[236]

Thus, insofar as consciousness, in imposing its own limitations on itself, in being autonomous (*svātantrya*), makes itself available through its embodied presence, then the bodily

[236] Ratié (2007), 357.

manifestations of its actions are just the end stage (*paryanta*) of mental activity. And if such bodily manifestations are just the far end of subjectivity's autonomous activity, then the latter is readily apparent to perception (*sākṣātkāra*) in our interactions with others and is accessible as the content of a constitutive inference (*svabhāvahetu*). Subjectivity articulates itself, in part, through embodied encounters. Insofar as subjectivity articulates itself, then, it is made available to perception and inference. This means that in my accessing content, in my sense-making activity, I make myself readily available to you as another consciousness. And in your formulating objective determinations, you make yourself available to me. In what does such availability consist then?

In answering this question, we may refer to Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta's notion of recognition (*pratyabhijñā*). The notion of recognition is, for them, reducible to a singular cosmic subjectivity with the free ability to emanate itself, place itself outside of itself, see itself in multiple forms and return to itself as a unified experience. All objectifying determinations of the form "This is that" thus reduce to the experience of a singular subject for whom there is a simultaneous recognition of the manifold of objects and the subjects' role in constituting the manifold of objects involving a passive illumination (*prakāśa*) and an active articulation (*vimarśa*) of multiplicity in the unity of subjectivity. The subject, in making objective determinations, can thus recognize itself in the determinations it makes.

Regarding recognition, Abhinavagupta states, "But the help in bringing about the recognition of Self is nothing but bringing to notice the powers of Self, which, though known, yet is not fully realized."[237] The Pratyabhijñā conception of subjectivity as a kind of eternal self-

[237] *IPV*, 12

recognition is the conception of a subjectivity that rediscovers and reintegrates itself *in the act* of fragmenting itself through activities of cognition like ordinary linguistic ascription. Insofar as the mind makes objective determinations, it can be recognized in its manifesting the power of making objective determinations without itself being objectively determined.

But we don't need to accept the premise of a universal consciousness, which many contemporaries would find metaphysically extravagant, to take a lesson about subjectivity here. As we've seen, the enactivist lines of thought in contemporary theories of embodied cognition suggest a very similar idea. They propose that cognition is an organism's autonomous regulation of its internal constitution in relation to an environment afforded by its internal constitution. In this self-regulation, an organism accesses a world through its own activity. That is, as enactivists say, organisms make sense of their environment through the regulation of their own precarious unity. Autonomy, here, is the activity of self-manifestation, of self-limitation in the process of holding oneself together. It is the process of self-definition, of the regulation of one's own boundaries. Sense-making is thus the autonomous enactment of objective determination in conceiving ever new possibilities under dynamic yet historically regular conditions.

What we can take away from all this, then, is that insofar as we conceive of subjectivity as that which performs the activity of objectification, of defining boundaries and formulating determinate content, subjectivity makes itself available to be accessed, to be, in part, objectified. This is because in articulating itself, along linguistic or bodily dimensions, an embodied mind turns itself into a quasi-object, an object which is directly perceived as partly and perpetually unperceived. In perceiving your tears, in seeing your eyes well up, I access content regarding your mental state: you are sad. But I also recognize something powerfully familiar despite being

absolutely other. For you make yourself known this way. Your tears are the culmination or tip of an experience, of the capacity for that experience to manifest itself, a capacity I recognize from my own experiences, but which manifests itself objectively outside of my limitations.

I thus recognize you in your power, your freedom to manifest yourself, to make yourself available for formulating and accessing content. And though this partly objectifies you, still what I perceive is partly your objectification of yourself, your active self-manifestation. And in this, I recognize, with a distinct immediacy and directness, a familiar capacity to exist; I recognize the same sort of autonomy I myself enact in existing. Ratié nicely sums up this notion of recognition (*pratyabhijñā*):

> It is a kind of recognition, for in it I don't make manifest for myself, by using an instrument of knowledge such as perception or inference, an entity that would passively wait for me to be manifested; I encounter an entity capable of action (*kriya*), that is to say free (*svatantra*), and I recognize in this freedom the self-luminosity (*svaprakāśatva*) that characterizes my own consciousness.[238]

4.3 Address and Situatedness: Enacting the Recognition of Other Minds

An enactive conception of mental concepts, then, requires the dynamic interaction between sense-makers where they make themselves available to each other by making objective determinations and enacting content-accessing procedures, such as perception and inference, that are recognized as capacities they share in. Mental concepts are largely conceived through direct embodied engagements where we recognize each other's capacity for making objective determinations and accessing content. In an ecologically realistic situation, we engage each other

[238] Ratié (2007), 364.

with biocentric concerns, quasi-objectifying ourselves and each other in the play of our conceptions about what happens next.

So far in our exploration of second-person experience, we've emphasized the role of embodied interaction. It was noted that we are born primed and ready for responsive participation in basic, embodied capacities that are definitive of human sense-making. We are generally primed and ready to see each other as "minds" in the sense of being readily responsive to common bodily intentionalities, ways that we can both go about doing things together in characteristically human ways. And we learn to engage with our environment through our embodied interactions with others: miming them, following their goal-oriented activities and joining in on those activities with them.

In this final section, it will be argued that recognition plays a formative role in the most basic capacity for self-consciousness: address. It is only through our constant prompting of each other, the continuous opening of a space between us, that we can recognize each other's embodied actions as *personally* meaningful. For such vocative relations prompt us to self-consciousness. Through the constant solicitations of address, we enrich and enliven our recognition of each other and our situated togetherness, our sharing in the making of objective determinations, and thus together we drive the evolution of what happens between us. It is here that the sense of asymmetry apparent in the contents of mental concepts arises.

It will be further noted that normative dimensions come into play through address. This gives rise to questions of how we may go about understanding others whose modes of address are colored by sociocultural conditions that are unfamiliar to us. It may be suggested that this is where folk psychology could be involved in helping us think about other minds. But, it will be

argued, even here, meaning and significance develops directly out of engaged activity. Norms, like mental concepts in general, develop extemporaneously out of situated, embodied engagements wherein we recognize each other's availability and address each other as such.

4.3.1 Address: Situated Recognition

Recognition, it has been argued, is the recognition of another's availability to participate in sense-making, that is, to share in the making of objective determinations. An infant is born capable of recognizing distinctively human capacities for action. But this recognitional capability is merely a set of basic embodied concepts of intentionality and affect that can be enriched through interaction. In being prompted by adults to be involved in the unfolding of a situation, these basic embodied concepts, recognized as instantiated in another's activity, develop in such a way as to be tailored to the capacity to address and be receptive to the address of others. We thereby become more and more capable of engaging with others in more and more complex ways.

Though we are born ready to recognize others, readily receptive of and responsive to their embodied sense-making activities, it is through their communicative activity that a shareable world is established. Such a shareable world gets its significance from a receptivity to the act of address, an act that is partly bodily and partly normative. This vocative dimension of human consciousness enriches the recognition of embodied intentionality by opening up a world between the addressor and addressee that would otherwise be devoid of shareable meaning. Just such a notion of address can be found in the *Paratrīṃśikā*, a Kaśmīr Śaiva text commented on by Abhinavagupta, which describes the very generation of the world through an interaction between Śiva and Śakti. It begins by Śakti asking Śiva a question:

Oh divine one (*deva*), how does the ultimate spontaneously confer beauteous union of this individual subject on the universal subject (*kaulikasiddhidaṃ*) by the very moment of awareness on account of which there is a sameness of consciousness-power (*khecarīsamatāṃ*) achieved? My Lord, tell this same-self (*kathayasva*) about that which, in its abundant clarity, is concealed.[239]

The answer is in the question itself. As Abhinavagupta pointed out in his *Vivaraṇa*, Śiva is being *addressed*. Both "God" (*deva*) and "My Lord" (*mama prabho*) are in the vocative case. As such, "God" and "Lord" are not mere nouns, designating an object in the world. They "have a greater connotation than an ordinary noun."[240]

This connotation is the seconding of the other. Here, there is not just the opening up of an interactive space for our continuing spontaneous solicitations of each other. There is also an enrichment and maintenance of the in-between space where we make ourselves available for engagement in a world mediated by language. Śakti infuses Śiva with power in addressing him and represents his astonishment (*camatkāra*) at his own self-consciousness. Such a conception of consciousness implies the centrality of the second-person to world-creation and world-maintenance. As John Dupuche notes, "Since Śiva essentially involves Śakti, and Śakti implies you, the 'I' essentially implies 'you.' The 'I-Thou' is at the heart of it all."[241] Whereas recognition involves a readiness to respond to the self-manifest sense-making of others, address is that responsiveness actively manifesting a world between ourselves.

Address is thus, so to speak, a world generating and world maintaining power that is conditioned by perceptual and inferential capacities for recognition. Through address, our

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[239] *anuttaraṃ kathaṃ deva sadyaḥ kaulikasiddhidaṃ tena vijñātamātrena khecarīsamatāṃ/ etad guhyaṃ mahāguhyaṃ kathasva mama prabho//* My translation. Quoted from, Abhinavagupta, *Parātrīṃśikāvivaraṇa*, Jaideva Singh, tr. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1988), 5. Henceforth cited as *PTV*.
[240] *PTV*, 55-56.
[241] John Dupuche, "Person-to-person: The *Vivaraṇa* of Abhinavagupta on *Parātrīṃśika* verses 3-4," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 44 (2001): 2.

recognition of other minds develops an increasing complexity beyond simply intercorporeal conditioning. Thus, in the lifetime of a limited agent, a human being, a person, recognition is a starting point that always already incorporates a concept of mind that is multi-centered, and address is the enhancement of that starting point through the essential vocativity of communication. In what does this enhancement consists?

The starting point of cognitivism, including its influence on action and behavior-oriented approaches to the conceptual problem of other minds, seems to imply that we are fully formed subjects first and then subsequently find others, entering into relationships with them after the brute fact of subjectivity. But the starting point of recognition as enhanced through address flips this script: we always already find ourselves as finite subjects among a plethora of other finite subjects. It is through vocatively tinged engagements with those we recognize as available for participating in sense-making that our sense of our own subjectivity develops.

Under this more enactivist construal of mind, it is through being addressed, being prompted by others to respond that I learn of my first-personhood. As Ramchandra Gandhi puts it, address is a uniqueness recognizing event: "Of all the things in the universe, an appeal is made to *me*. Indeed the concepts of 'I', 'me', have their seat in the experience of being vocatively picked out… It is only when I am summoned, called forth, etc. that I realize my uniqueness."[242] Before we can think of ourselves as first-persons, we are second-persons for someone else. As Annette Baier avers, we are second-persons in the first instance: "A person, perhaps, is best seen as one

[242] Ramchandra Gandhi, *The Availability of Religious Ideas* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1976), 27.

who was long enough dependent upon other persons to acquire the essential arts of personhood. Persons essentially are *second* persons who grow up with other persons."[243]

Through being addressed, my sense of the distinction between myself and others is enriched. I feel myself being picked out, as having been uniquely acknowledged. I become capable of vocatively responding to being addressed, of thereby stirring others to participate in more complex forms of sense-making. I become more adept at prompting your responsiveness, your recognition of me. You become more and more apparent as a unique "I". In developing my vocative powers, I begin to relinquish some of my causal power over your responsiveness and call you forth in your unique ownness. In R. Gandhi's words, "In prompting you uniquely vocatively to attend to me, I really prompt you to attend to yourself, I move you to self-consciousness."[244]

Through address, then, minds are conceived and continuously re-conceived in being prompted to respond autonomously, not merely as a matter of causal conditioning. It is only as such, according to R. Gandhi, that linguistic communication has any meaning: "If my behavior directed towards you is of a vocative kind, i.e., if it involves *inviting your attention* to myself as opposed merely to causally securing it, then and then alone can my behavior be interpretable by you or anybody else as conveying meaning."[245] The securing of another's attention through causal conditioning may have some semblance of significance or meaning for that other. But it does not necessarily involve the uniqueness-acknowledging prompting of others to self-

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[243] Annette Baier, "Cartesian Persons," in *Postures of the Mind: Essays on Mind and Morals* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 84.
[244] Ramchandra Gandhi, *I Am Thou* (Pune: Indian Philosophical Quarterly Publications, 1985), 232.
[245] Gandhi (1985), 24.3

consciousness that supports a sense of personal meaning. This is the effect of address, and it helps explain the apparent asymmetry of mental concepts in an ecologically valid manner.

An example of this asymmetry as effected by address may help us along. A baby cries and thereby secures its mother's attention. The infant's cries are meaningful to the mother without the infant intending to secure anyone's attention in particular, and without the infant being aware of the fuller significance of its cries. But so far, the uniqueness of this particular mother and her particular relationship to this particular infant is not in play. If the story is completed at this point, then all we have are the impersonal mechanisms of biological necessity at play. But the mother approaches the infant with her characteristic style of mothering. She addresses the infant with certain names, in a particular language that she uses in her own characteristic way. She acknowledges the baby's cries, asks the baby about what's wrong, about what can remedy his or her discomfort. And she is responsive to the infant's responses to the way she addresses the infant, to the way she invites the infant to share in the moment.

These early intimate moments are definitive of subjectivity in its intersubjective element. It is through such *shared* moments that personal meaning first starts to develop. Here, our bonds with others shape our conception of ourselves and our experiences. We learn about the personal significance of impersonal or subpersonal psychological and biological mechanisms such as pain, pleasure, belief, desire, and the like through the continuous enactment of vocative behavior grounded in a mutual recognition of availability. Thus, we don't simply know what "pain" is from our own experiences; pain-phenomena get colored by the extent to which we are responsive to the vocative behaviors of others who recognize us as in pain. And herein lies the apparent asymmetry: others, addressing me as in pain, do so under the normative assumption that "pain"

has a first-person significance that, in this context, is only available to them insofar as its significance is partly determined by our second-person interactions. We address each other *as if* pain phenomena are essentially in the first-person, recognizing each other's capacity to determine the significance of such phenomena in our responsiveness to vocative activity.

With the development of such personal meaning comes the capacity to interpret and enact sociocultural meaning. As noted in the example of mother and infant above, the mother will address the infant using language in a way that is characteristic of her personality, that reflects her personal relationship with a culture, her interpretation and enactment of its norms. That is, in her address, she will expose the child to a vast system of references, of interpersonal use and development, and will be asking the child, as if he or she were minimally conversant with the culture, to define him or herself against that background. She treats the child as if it is already capable of participating in her world and asks for its continued participation. She presumes, so to speak, a contemporary witness to herself.[246]

Thus, as R. Gandhi puts it "Addressing comes off as a full-fledged act when my act of addressing you solicits your communicative attention – as it were your readiness to enter into a communicative relationship with."[247] However, this communicative attention, this contemporary witness to myself, is not a *pure* witness; contra R. Gandhi's contention, when we address each other, we rarely if ever do so by picking out a bare particular. The uniqueness-recognition that is enacted in address is deeply entrenched in biological and sociocultural histories.

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[246] Gandhi (1985), 236.
[247] Gandhi (1976), 33.

When we address each other, we always address each other *as* someone in particular, that is, as having been situated in such a way as to be ready to respond to my call for their presence under certain expectations that we each may have regarding our shared situation. Address, as a communicative intention to solicit communicative attention, can thus never fully divorce the causal conditioning of biological necessity and socialization from the calling on an autonomous contemporary witness to myself. The language in which we address each other, the sociocultural and political conditions of our prompts, lend as much personal meaning to our engagements as the freedom that we invest in each other by addressing one another.

4.3.2 Between Us: Situating Minds and Norms

Thus, address invites us to a multicentered form of self-consciousness where personal meaning is informed by the causal conditions of signification direction and our autonomous responsiveness to these conditions. As such, our bodies are not just primed to enact and recognize meaning and significance, particularly in the sense of possibilities for interactive engagements with common bodily intentionalities. Our interactions and second-person experiences are also always already imbued with and engaged in the creation and regulation of socioculturally relevant meaning and significance. As Lakoff and Johnson put it:

> Cultural assumptions, values, and attitudes are not a conceptual overlay which we may or may not place upon experience as we choose. It would be more correct to say that all experience is cultural through and through, that we experience our 'world' in such a way that our culture is already present in the very experience itself.[248]

Address thus exerts normative force, not just causal force. As Monique Roelofs puts it, "Address comprises a level of meaning at which cultural productions both participate in existing

[248] Lakoff and Johnson (1999), 57.

patterns of social differentiation and can work to reshape these patterns."[249] This participating and reshaping of existing patterns of social differentiation – of defining ourselves against sociocultural backgrounds in response to being addressed – means that *how* we address each other matters. For the modes through which we address each other frame the norms, the expectations, of our engagement.

It might be at this point that the defenders of folk psychology and theory of mind argue their position becomes most relevant. For it would seem that our more sophisticated, socioculturally nuanced and linguistically rich understandings of each other require the specialized cognitive abilities of theory construction, analogical – or, in any case, inductive – inference, and simulation. Indeed, certain instances of social life, such as interpreting, explaining, and predicting the behaviors of faceless third-persons, especially from other cultures, seem to call for such refined cognitive abilities.

But it is important to understand just how such third-person ascriptions relate to second-person interactions and first-person experiences. First-to-third person ascriptions of mental properties, the source of the conceptual problems of other minds, can't occur without the regulation of personal perspectives by the interactions that go on between embodied, socially situated and culturally embedded "selves." Indeed, insofar as our first-and-third-person ascriptive abilities are conditioned by and constituted through second-person interactions, it may be the case that such ascriptive abilities do not require the sorts of abilities touted by these theorists' conception of folk psychology. We will thus argue, in line with Matthew Ratcliffe's

[249] Monique Roelofs, "Navigating frames of address: María Lugones on language, bodies, things, and places," *Hypatia* 31 (2016): 373.

suggestions, that third-person ascription is thereby never merely an impersonal ascription of properties onto a dead object independent of second-person interactive elements. The backgrounds that situate the possibilities of interactive embodiment along sociocultural milieus always condition such ascriptions, making them as personal as any other experience.

Let's recall Gallagher's challenge to theories of folk psychology in the form of the starting problem. The problem was that theory-theory and simulation theory each argue that we have a mechanism which, given appropriate inputs, can produce outputs that are scheme-neutral representations of the mental states of others. But there is a difficulty in just how they can specify their inputs. In order for theory-theory to work, we need to be able to input the appropriate beliefs and desires and let the rules of folk psychology work on them to infer an explanation or prediction of behavior and/or mental states. In order for a simulation routine to work, we need to similarly figure out what input to start with – what kinds of beliefs and desires others are holding given the situation they're in that will influence their behaviors and subsequent beliefs and desires.

But in both cases, there is no reasonable way of making the necessary determinations. Both approaches appear to run into a vicious circle: I can only get the input that will help explain and predict your current behavior and/or mental state if I have already explained and predicted your current behavior and/or mental state. For either theory-theory or simulation to work, I need to already have accomplished the feat of understanding your situation in terms of your beliefs and desires – exactly the goal of such folk psychological practices and theories.

Gallagher suggests that the inclusion of a "background" into these considerations can eliminate the starting problem. Taking cues from John Searle, Gallagher tells us that "the

background includes all kinds of capacities, practices, skills, and some finite range of knowing-how and knowing-that."[250] But unlike Searle, Gallagher argues that such a background is not reducible to neurophysiology. The skills enabled by our respective backgrounds, and which are thereby enacted through interactive social practices, are "formed in response to physical and social environmental factors, and are in this respect not reducible to neurophysiological states."[251]

Even our embodied architecture, shaped by our biophysiological background – our respective evolutionary histories – are deeply impacted by our sociocultural backgrounds. My embodied style of motility, partially due to my readiness to respond to others' style, is inevitably subject to cultural conditioning. Gallagher mentions, in particular, that posture and gait are profoundly influenced by our social setting and not just by the functioning of our basal ganglia:

> If I live in the mountains or teach at Cornell, my physical condition and way of moving may be very different than if I live in the desert or teach at NYU. If I live immersed in a hip-hop culture, it is very likely that my gait is affected by a cultured movement; if I am a ballet dancer, or a military officer, my posture is likely quite different from that of the general population. More generally, what I am able to do and the particular skills I have are enabled and limited by the particular culture that I live in.[252]

An individual's background is thus not merely a set of competencies that make our embodied interactions possible, but a set of norms that regulate interactive possibilities *in situ*, moment-to-moment, at the intersection of neurophysiologically embodied and socioculturally embedded skills, practices, abilities, etc. We can interact in the first place because our backgrounds intersect in appropriate ways, because we are situated so as to always already

[250] Gallagher (2011), 26.
[251] Gallagher (2011), 26.
[252] Gallagher (2011), 26-27.

assume the position of being a single subject among many along a massively common milieu and because, in interaction, we enact our already intersecting backgrounds in ways that influence, update, and alter our understandings of the possibilities for further interactions.

It is in this sense that our backgrounds are hermeneutical, according to Gallagher, and thus why reference to massively shared, intersecting backgrounds overcomes the starting problem. For in order to interact, we need not figure out what input to start with, what sorts of beliefs and desires we need to get folk psychology off the ground, or even what constitutes beliefs and desires in general. We need only share, or at any rate, take for granted that we share, common backgrounds that prime us for certain ways of interacting with each other.

Where, then, do our more sophisticated cognitive abilities – to give nuanced interpretations and explanations about others and predict their thoughts, feelings and behaviors – stand in such a construal? Gallagher, in line with what Daniel Hutto calls the narrative practice hypothesis, suggests that we can learn these folk psychology skills through our first linguistic interactions with others. In particular, this occurs through the sharing of narratives, through the stories adults tell us when we are children. Narrative, according to this perspective, consists of stories that include reasons for acting. As Hutto describes it, understanding reasons for action "would require ascribing to X a complex state of mind, minimally consisting of a belief/desire pair with interlocking contents."[253] That is, minimally speaking, narrative practice involves an ability to understand the ways in which beliefs and desires interrelate.

As children are exposed to narratives, they develop a competency for understanding the basics of folk psychological practice, for how propositional attitudes combine to form reasons for

[253] Hutto (2008), 26.

action – not just in isolated, neutralized, logocentric contexts, but against the backdrops and settings appropriate to the story.[254] As such, children learn to appreciate the normative forces associated with certain situations, social roles, or artefact functions as they hear of people's actions and their reasons for actions. They thus learn, not just the principles by which folk psychology operates, the general significance of belief and desire, but the application conditions for these principles.[255] Exposure to narrative in early storytelling interactions between children and adults contributes, not just to the development of the sorts of specialized cognitive capacities of folk psychology, but to the development of a more extensive folk psychological practice of understanding minds in broader, socially situated contexts:

By putting examples of people acting for reasons on display, [narratives] show how the items in the mentalistic toolkit can be used together to understand reasons in general, as it were, and also how and when these tools might be used – that is, what to adjust for – in specific cases.[256]

Sustained experience with folk psychological narratives primes us for this richer practical understanding by giving us an initial sense of which kinds of background factors can matter, why they do so, and how they do so in particular cases. Stories can do this because they are not bare descriptions of current beliefs and desires of idealized rational agents. They are snapshots of the adventures of situated persons, presented in the kinds of settings in which all of the important factors needed for understanding reasons are described – that is, those that are relevant to making sense of what is done and why.[257]

But it is debatable that such a folk psychology toolkit is necessary in the first place. Folk psychology, under the narratively influenced revision suggested by Hutto and by Gallagher, is a practice more than a theory or a model. And it is developed out of and conditions further interactive practices. This is surely good progress in an ecologically realistic conception of our

[254] Hutto (2008), 28.
[255] Hutto (2008), 29.
[256] Hutto (2008), 33.
[257] Hutto (2008), 34.

general understandings of others. But there are reasons to question the very notion of such folk psychological practice, even if it is developed out of and influential for socially interactive practices. Ratcliffe adduces reasons to be suspicious of folk psychology in general, and the narrative practice hypothesis in particular.

Let us start with Ratcliffe's objection to the very terms of folk psychology, namely its obsession with the third-person ascriptions of belief/desire psychology. Folk psychology, whether as a practice or as a theory, is presumed to deal mainly in the attribution of propositional attitudes, namely belief and desire. But to rely on these notions is to rely on "abstract placeholders for a wide range of states that we manage to distinguish in our everyday discourse about people."[258] As Ratcliffe argues, our everyday understandings of what can be covered by the terms belief and desire are far more nuanced and messy than is covered in the patterns of belief/desire psychology that are argued to be integral to folk psychological theories and practices.

For example, we can, in everyday discourse, easily distinguish between cases where "belief" implies facetiousness (as in "I don't believe I will" when responding to a ridiculous request to do something), polite refusal (as in "I don't believe I will" when asked if you'll have a drink), anger (as in "I can't believe you did that!"), cautious optimism (as in "I do believe it's working"), and uncertainty (as in, "I don't believe so" when asked whether something is the case). Moreover, we ordinarily and effortlessly distinguish between belief as a background conviction and as a particular sentential attitude towards the truth-value of a statement.[259]

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[258] Ratcliffe (2007), 187.
[259] Ratcliffe (2007), 187-190.

In regard to desire, we can easily tell the difference in everyday discourse between the different sorts of desires we have to see a world wonder, to eat ice cream, for sexual intercourse, to get to my meetings on time, etc. Even an apparently simple and unified notion of desire, for example for world peace, can take on the nuances of a deep commitment that drastically affects what one does, or an inconsequential utterance of virtue signaling spoken without conviction. Indeed, the so-called desire for world peace may require a certain conviction that one is committed to enact, and thus doesn't fit into the neat picture of psychology being determined by a combination of strictly different informational (beliefs) and motivational ('desires') sets. The belief/desire psychology that is attributed to the folk doesn't match our the situated, polysemic appreciation of the various subtly different uses of the terms 'belief' and 'desire' nor does it match our ability to navigate these messy nuances with ease.[260]

That being said, and returning to the narrative practice hypothesis, perhaps our facility with understanding reasons for action in situated contexts is gleaned largely from our familiarity of the ways the normative force of reasons for actions shift depending on contextual factors including individual characters, social settings and roles, and artefact functions. In this way of thinking, we learn to ascribe mental states to individuals in a third-person manner by understanding the sorts of things "one" thinks, feels, and does under certain situations by hearing about such norms from the stories we are exposed to early in life. We learn the scripts of good behavior from fairy tales. We appreciate what is done at the store because our mother comes back and tells us about the different characters she met and the things she did there. We learn appropriate classroom behavior because the bedtime stories we were read prior to school age

[260] Ratcliffe (2007), 189-190.

teach us about listening to the teacher and being friendly and respectful to fellow classmates. In sum, we appreciate that others follow certain norms, and more generally that there are norms that are followed at all, because we are told stories that exemplify normative activity. And with a mastery of the narratives that inform us about normativity comes the ability to ascribe reasons for acting in a third-person, impersonal fashion, that is, to think of subjectivity in objective terms.

But Ratcliffe argues that narratives aren't the sole or even primary source of our appreciation for norms, and thus, of a kind of folk psychological capacity to ascribe reasons for action on the basis of an appreciation of normative factors relevant to a given situation. Indeed, in order to appreciate what narratives are telling us, we must already have some minimal semblance of an appreciation of most of the norms the narratives put on display. And this is possible, not because we've learned them by hearing stories, but because we've learned them by being involved in interactions, by being addressed and variously responsive to the "multisensory forms of signification direction"[261] of how we are addressed and what we are addressed about.

Our abilities to interpret, predict and explain thoughts and behaviors are, under this line of thought, largely grounded in the learning of norms *in situ* and not primarily through the mediation of storylines that connect characters with each other and explicate the reasons for the things they do. We learn norms, and thus gain interpretive, explanatory, and predictive abilities regarding others – that is, conceptions of others as centers of subjectivity – through situated interactions only some of which are given a narrative form. Our understanding of minds and their

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[261] Roelofs (2016), 371.

responsiveness to normative force is more a result of how we address each other than of hearing stories about the impact of normative force.

Thus, as Ratcliffe explains, learning what we need to know to interact with others "seldom originates in intricate tales with plots, dramatic events and so forth" but rather involves simply being in circumstances where contextual cues and the enacted backgrounds of others with whom we are involved in our interactions situate us in such a way as to prompt understanding or a lack thereof: "People might come to accept norms like 'drive on the left', having been briefly informed of simple prescriptions, rather than as a result of being told dramatic stories about people who drive on the right and meet with moral disapproval or come to a sticky end."[262]

Although the narrative practice hypothesis proposes, in its own way, that our capacity for third-person ascription of psychological characteristics is the result of specific second-person interactive abilities, it neglects the importance of that activity in general – as opposed to a specialized kind of that activity in the form of storytelling – as the source of our ability to think of first-person concepts in the third-person. In living out situations, already replete with the normative forces of sense-making, we are already being taught how to make such ascriptions. Minds are conceived in and through situations. Intricate stories might indeed facilitate our understanding of the norms involved in going to the store or using a hammer or talking to a police officer – but so do actually going to the store, using a hammer, or talking to the police (or, for that matter, being present with someone familiar with these events when such events occur). Ratcliffe puts the point as follows:

> The script that guides our conduct is not something that we have knowledge of before entering into the situation. Instead, with the right kind of behavior in the right kind of environment, a

[262] Ratcliffe (2007), 214.

script can be assembled as we go along. No prototype is required, if the environment is configured so as to make the steps involved in a social situation predictable as the participants proceed. In other words, the environment itself amounts to a dynamic script of sorts and 'what is to be done next' by oneself and others is revealed through one's on-going interactions with them in a structured but open-ended social environment.[263]

Thus, we don't need to be told stories to learn the importance of the normative factors that contribute to the meanings and trajectories of our interactions and which themselves are constituted by our interactions; we simply need to interact. For it is in our interactions themselves that we find an ample supply of material by which we can orient ourselves to each other – whether we can "fully understand" each other or not – making us available to one another under the conditions of a common bodily intentionality and massively shared, intersecting backgrounds: "Situational understanding is more encompassing than narrative understanding."[264]

Conclusion

We have been exploring what it means for there to be subjects that are not myself and experiences that are not my own. Our guiding questions have been: In what sense can a "you" also be a "me" too? Why should your experiences be at all meaningful to me, especially when "meaningful" means subjectively phenomenally contentful? Our response has emphasized the embodied and normative dimensions of the human experience. In particular, it has been argued that if we drop certain cognitivist assumptions regarding the purely witnessing nature of subjectivity, the problems dissolve. The cognitivist position is, we proposed, an ecologically unrealistic point from which to start philosophizing about experience. Instead of implausibly trying to regain an ecologically realistic sense of experience, one that incorporates

[263] Ratcliffe (2007), 114.
[264] Ratcliffe (2007), 114.

intersubjectivity, on the basis of cognitivist assumptions, we recommended trying to make sense of the ecological reality of intersubjective experiences, of how our "lived position" is possible.[265] To do this we appealed to the intersubjective nature of situated, embodied recognition and address.

All of this, of course, brings up further questions. If the traditional problems – conceptual and epistemological – of other minds have been "dissolved", yet other problems of other minds have emerged at the intersection of philosophy of mind, social epistemology, consciousness studies and neurophenomenology. Are mirror neurons responsible for the neonatal capacity to mimic others? Is imitation of others, whether voluntary or involuntary, a basic ingredient even of our self-perception? What is the evolutionary significance of this capacity to imitate? What does privacy consist in if even the apparent privacy of one's own mind is conditioned by intersubjective encounters? What do "the facts" consist in if third-person knowledge is conditioned by second-person interactions? Does being a second-person first mean, contra Nagel, that there would be no fact of the matter as to the existence of mental states in others if we can't recognize that they are in some mental state? If we learn social norms, including informal semantic practices, through being directly addressed by specific others, can we understand social norms that we do not have experiences of being directly addressed about? What would be the significance of the experiences of faceless third persons? Is it possible to truly care about faceless third persons and their circumstances if we are never directly engaged in addressing each other? How do the atmospheres or environments created by our modes of addressing each other contribute to the evolution of our interactions, and thus, our understanding of each other? These and other

[265] Avramides (2001), 230.

questions would have to be more carefully focused on as we take the *you*-turn in philosophy of mind.

Before concluding, we should look at some objections that might arise regarding our inquiry. It may seem that, in our response, we have challenged the very significance of the epistemological and conceptual questions that prompted us. And if these questions are vacuous, then so was our inquiry. One way this objection might go is by focusing on how the alleged "difficulty" of knowing others' minds springs from the seductive but incoherent idea that I know only my own self with certitude and can never be sure of any other streams of consciousness except mine – the dead house of solipsism. It is obvious that other people are not merely automata or zombies and are never looked upon as any less capable of "inner states" than oneself. Assurance about this is natural, while doubt about it, like doubt about the external world, is artificial and "methodical", as Descartes explicitly says. Only in two scenarios – disease and philosophy – is this understanding called into question. As such we generally understand what it means for others to have experiences. So why are we asking these questions at all? What is their point?

Though the very use of science in solving philosophical issues or testing the genuineness of a philosophical problem can be controversial, from an evolutionary and neuroscientific standpoint, our guiding questions may not even get off the ground. For mental concepts would thereby be grounded in what happens to the brain when the mental phenomena they represent occurs. Take pain or suffering, a philosopher's favorite in these discussions. What does it mean to be in pain or to suffer? Whatever else it may mean to be in pain or to suffer, it *must* imply that some pattern of physical activity is occurring. In humans, this pattern of physical activity

invariably involves neural activity, though it may not necessarily involve behavioral activity. So, what it means to be in pain, at least for humans and related animals, is for there to be certain kinds of neural activities.

Among the regions of the brain associated with the experience of pain is the anterior cingulate cortex.[266] There is evidence indicating that this region of the brain colors pain-experiences with a psychological or affective dimension. For example, people who are given morphine to cope with pain still feel pain but are less bothered by it.[267] This suggests that for pain to be suffered by a subject requires the possession, by that organism, of an anterior cingulate cortex or some functionally equivalent physical structure. We can then suppose that animals with such structures, like rats and bats and humans, suffer their pain; they don't just feel pain but are anxious over it.

The objection can be strengthened by noting that our inquiry appealed to just such facts. We suggested that the significance of other's experiences to ourselves hinges on the manner of our embodiment and how that is enacted. If our brains were structured or connected up to our bodies otherwise than the ways they actually are, our experiences and behavioral repertoire would be different. In particular, our recognition of and readiness to respond to each other would be different. It seems that in addressing the conceptual and epistemological problems, we have already rejected them.

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[266] C.A. Porro, "Functional imaging and pain: Behavior, perception, and modulation," *Neuroscientist* 9 (2003): 354-369.
[267] Martha Farah, "Animal Neuoroethics and the Problem of Other Minds," in *Neuroethicss: An Introduction with Readings*, Martha Farah, ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 344.

But to argue that intersubjectivity requires such physical elements is not to reject the significance of the questions we have asked. Indeed, taking those questions seriously means that we take seriously our embodiment. For we cannot have any concept of mind at all, such as we now "have" it, if our concept did not evolve through a history of intersubjectively attuned embodied interactions. Indeed, what is at the heart of the issue is the sense in which bodily action or neural activity can be indicative of mental activity. We are asking precisely *why* neural activity and behavioral activity can be significant for us as mental activity. For mental activity, it seems, is not accessible in the same sense as neural or behavioral activity.

The problem is thus a matter of the apparent asymmetry in accessibility between mental and physical states. And this is problematic whether or not we accept any noncontingent relationships between mental and physical states. Our response to it is not that the issue is non-sensical, that there is no asymmetry to be addressed. Rather, we addressed that asymmetry by appeal to our embodied practices of making sense of our world-experiences, including each other's world-experiences, together. In particular, we explained the asymmetry by appealing to an asymmetry in the enactment of our capacity to recognize others' embodied intentionality, namely in the differential yet mutual recognition between ourselves as infants and the adults who address us as developing minds before we can make sense of ourselves as such.

But this may raise a further problem. For if our explanation of the asymmetry appeals to such embodied activity, it seems that we fall prey to Smith's conceptual problem of other bodies by rejecting the phenomenal quality of bodily states. For it appears that we are saying that what matters in making sense of others as first-persons is that we can read their first-person experiences off of their third-person presentations. Have we forsaken the basic phenomenality

of experience in accounting for the asymmetry of mental concepts by appealing to collective, embodied sense-making activity?

In responding to this question, we must acknowledge that what is important in our account is precisely that *both* first-person and third-person aspects of experience are made salient through second-person engagements. Before we can be explicitly self-conscious or observe that others are self-conscious, we must first be directly engaged with others. And these direct engagements, despite exhibiting a mutually ready responsiveness, have an asymmetrical structure: I am addressed by others before I can address them, and I recognize that I am being actively prompted to respond without any explicit or theoretical understanding of this.

That is to say, recognizing the first-person quality of another's experience is usually *not* a matter of reading it off of third-person evidence. This latter ability – mindreading – is grounded in more fundamental intersubjective capacities. It may sound a bit cliché during the current boom of research on interpersonal emotions and alterity, but the insight that there is no subjectivity without intersubjectivity is not trite, because it is true. Our sense of first-personhood arises from a history of being prompted by others to respond to the significance of their experiences. What we have argued, then, is that it is through repeated intersubjective interactions which have a mutual yet asymmetric structure that I develop a more and more robust sense of consciousness: I become self-conscious in response to your solicitations.

The very notion of consciousness is thus strung along through the mutual yet asymmetrical quality of our interactions with each other. We learn what it means to be conscious, not *just* through our own experiences, but through the experiences we attribute to and share with others and the experiences others presume in us and share with us. If self-consciousness

arises on the condition of already having been addressed, and we learn what it means to be in pain from our own self-conscious experiences of pain, then knowledge of what it means to be in pain arises on the condition of our already having been addressed as in pain. We can call ourselves selves because we are called forth by others as such.

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