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METAPHYSICAL SYSTEMS AND
DECISION PROCEDURES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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The Ohio State University

1966

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Two more comments must be made, and are difficult to make. They are difficult for two reasons: I am not talented at such tasks, and those about whom they are made would as soon they were not. Professor Richard Severens, my adviser in this endeavor, provided a constantly high standard of philosophic work in his lectures and conversations. Clarity, cogent argumentation, and constantly relating one's work to "the tradition" are demands which he, since he exemplifies them, can make on others. Professor Marvin Fox, the remaining member of my reading committee, has constantly manifested, in his own distinct way, equally high standards of philosophic work. His courses and our conversations have been reminders that philosophy need not be divorced
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## VITA

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INTRODUCTION

In the sustained argument which constitutes this work various threads of doctrine and perspective are woven into what hopefully results in a recognizable pattern. Two questions govern the discussion: 1) What makes a philosophical system philosophical?; 2) How can one decide between competing philosophical systems? Since systems are (in the main) composed of assertions, a mark must be sought which will distinguish properly philosophical assertions from other kinds. This mark is found in the peculiar modality of philosophical assertions, a modality which is categorial in nature. Philosophical systems will then be constituted by just such modal assertions. This way of putting the matter oversimplifies my position somewhat, as the modality of philosophical assertions depends upon their systematic context and is "system relative."
The value of category-talk is not a matter of universal agreement, and our first chapter discusses the very different views as to its value held by Ryle and Hall (who offer a thesis much like my own) on the one hand, and by Warnock and Cross, for example, on the other.

Not much can be said about this issue until we become clear about what a "category" is, and my second chapter deals with several criteria for what constitutes a category. Unfortunately, all of them fail to be adequate. Nonetheless, the ways in which these criteria fail are instructive, furnishing clues as to how a more prosperous criterion can be framed.

Part of the insight gained from the failure of these criteria is that categorial clash occurs in sentential contexts rather than in single words or terms; my third chapter provides examples of categorial clashes taken from modern and contemporary philosophy. It provides, by the way, an illustration of the relevance of so-called "historical" issues to contemporary disputes.

My fourth chapter, which in effect completes
the first section of this work, offers an earmark for recognizing sentences bearing categorial commitment. My indebtedness to the work of Everett W. Hall is too apparent to require emphasis.

Since the first four chapters contain a view of what philosophy is, it is appropriate to consider other, competing views on this matter. No pretense is made to exhaustiveness in this regard, but a fair sampling, I think, is provided.

Thus my fifth chapter attacks the view (held by Carnap) that traditional philosophical questions are meaningless unless translatable into issues in the logic of science, and the view (held by Quine) that philosophical issues are simply more general than, but no different in kind from, scientific ones. Each of these views appeals to pragmatic decision procedures which also receive criticism.

In my sixth chapter I turn to G. E. Moore as representative of the view that common sense is the proper touchstone for philosophical theses, and subject it to criticism. Chapter Seven deals with the
view of Broad that philosophy may properly be divided into critical and speculative branches, and Strawson's assertion that philosophy is (at least, metaphysics is) either descriptive or revisionary. An approach to decision procedure is implicit in each of these views, and in each case both view and suggested decision procedure are critically discussed.

As a final chapter in what may be regarded as the second section of this work, Chapter Eight considers the proposal of Waismann that the metaphor of language strata is helpful in sorting out different kinds of assertions and different levels of problems. A consequence of his suggestion is that certain problems (e.g., the issue of "free will") are merely confusions. I criticise this conclusion and the view from which it arises. Thus Chapters Five through Eight deal with competing conceptions of the philosophical enterprise, with competing views of proper philosophical decision procedure implicit in these competing perspectives.

Turning from reflections about what philosophy is to specific proposals about how to decide philosophical problems, the next four chapters deal with the
falsifiability criterion, the paradigm case argument and the polar concepts argument, the two-worlds argument, and an appeal to the structure of common speech, thought, and experience. The issues are the same as in the earlier chapters though the emphasis is different. In these chapters, the mode of decision procedure is in the foreground, with systematic implications about what philosophy is in the background. Thus, only the stage setting is reversed. My view is that none of the proposed criteria for philosophic decision procedure is sufficiently neutral of categorial bias of its own to succeed as a neutral judge of inter-systematic clashes.

At this point of the argument, I am wide open to the charge of scepticism. To rebut the charge, I offer a mode of decision procedure of my own. With what success, let the reader judge.
CHAPTER I

WHY TALK ABOUT "CATEGORIES"?

The importance of the notion of a "category" is a disputed matter. Writing in the 1938-9 volume of the Aristotelian Society Proceedings, Gilbert Ryle asserted "not only is it the case that category-propositions (namely assertions that terms belong to certain categories or types) are always philosopher's propositions, but, I believe, the converse is also true."¹ Thus Ryle, here at least, regards the philosopher as one who, when at his task, deals with categorial propositions. His sustained interest in the subject of categories is sufficiently evidenced by his critique of dualism in The Concept of Mind.² There his crucial


criticisms deal with "category-mistakes," and he seems to be obviously more confident about what constitutes such mistakes than he was in the earlier article which closes with the question, "But what are the tests of (categorial) absurdity?" Another contemporary, less famous but equally a man to be reckoned with, writes almost twenty years later that "a philosopher when about his proper business is asking and trying to answer categorial questions, and differences that divide philosophers are categorially systematic, not factual." Everett Hall continues: "This gives the philosopher a special task and a somewhat odd one, for the questions of everyday life and of science are ordinarily empirical." Hall reiterates and develops his thesis in his *Philosophical Systems*.

A rather different appraisal of the significance of concern with categories is expressed by G. J. Warnock who asks,

> If one is not prepared, and indeed is

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5Ibid.
deliberately unwilling, to say just what a category is, and what categories there are, can one really be entitled to employ the term 'category'?\footnote{G. J. Warnock, \textit{English Philosophy Since 1900} (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 96.}

Responding negatively, Warnock notes that Ryle has recommended the use of "category"

\ldots not for the usual reason, namely that there exists an exact, professional way of using it, in which, like a skeleton key, it will turn all our locks for us; but rather for the opposite reason that there is an inexact, amateurish way of using it in which \ldots it will make a satisfactory knocking noise on doors we want opened to us.\footnote{Ibid., p. 97.}

For just that reason one ought to dispense with it, since a more attractive alternative is at hand:

To allocate a concept to the "wrong category" is, in actual practice, to misrepresent the use of, or to misuse, or both, the expression or expressions in the use of which that concept is applied. And this sort of use shows itself in two ways--in misrepresentation, first, of the ways in which expressions are related to each other, and second, of the ways in which assertions containing those expressions are validated, verified, or confirmed.\footnote{Ibid.}
We ought to note in passing that Warnock assumes that it is concepts, not (for example) entities, which are categorized, that he insists we appeal to "actual" (ordinary, I take it) practice, that what categorially distinguishes between one concept and another is the use of those concepts, and that the categorially relevant sorts of use concern the relation of concepts to one another or the confirmation of assertions containing those concepts. He does not tell us in virtue of what is a use of a term a misuse. This will call for later attention; suffice it here to say that lots of philosophy is done in the switch, purportedly innocent, from category talk to use talk. Perhaps all Warnock means is that Ryle could switch uses without changing anything of philosophic importance; this I do not wish to argue either way. The point here is rather that there are surely other ways of regarding category talk than as surrogate for use talk. For example, Hall would not so regard it.

Siding with Warnock in this dispute is R. C. Cross who expresses his essential agreement with Warnock's proposal to dispense with category
Manley Thompson opts for retaining it, though modestly and with a distinct view as to how "category" is to function. Passmore discusses the issue without climbing on either band-wagon. In the next chapter I will discuss the views of each of these philosophers with respect to categories.

Waiving the obvious point that one could say what any philosopher has said without using the particular sound or typescript configuration "category," and with the important reminder that whatever term one chooses brings with it its own conceptual context and connections, the issue which concerns us is this: is talking about categories a fruitful way of illuminating what philosophy is? Differently put, can one helpfully characterize what makes a system philosophical rather than, say, scientific or mathematical by means of saying that philosophical systems are categorial


systems (and do not merely employ categories), whereas the others are not? The comments which follow are offered as an attempt to answer these questions.
CHAPTER II

SOME CRITERIA FOR WHAT CONSTITUTES A CATEGORY

Gilbert Ryle begins his essay "Categories" by explaining that he wishes only to clear the brush for others' explorations. Having said this, he asserts that all categorial statements (assertions that terms belong to certain categories) are philosophical statements, and that all philosophical statements are categorial ones, which seems to go a bit beyond clearing the brush. In any case, he draws from this remark the conclusion that we "are in the dark about the nature of philosophical problems and methods if we are in the dark about types or categories."¹ I am inclined to think that Ryle is correct at this point, as will be revealed in the sequel.

Ryle notes that Aristotle's categories can be

plausibly seen as derived from the sorts of questions which can appropriately be raised about a given thing. A given thing will belong to as many categories as there are sorts of questions that can be appropriately (without absurdity) raised about it. Otherwise put, questions collect predicates. "When?" collects temporal predicates; "Where?" collects spatial predicates; "How big?" collects quantitative predicates; "What like?" collects qualitative predicates, and so on. Predicates collected by (answering without absurdity to) the same question are of the same type or in the same category. Predicates collected not by the same but only by different questions belong to distinct categories. Once one adds a category for "that of which predicates are predicated" (or a category collected by "Of what is a predicate predicated?") one has a battery of categories roughly Aristotelian in composition. Ryle's Aristotle is rather more anemic than an Aristotle to be presented by Manley Thompson, and we need not discuss him here; he is but Ryle's foil.
A single criticism of Ryle's Aristotle by Ryle must suffice:

Moreover, we need a method for exhibiting and, what is quite different, for establishing type-homogeneities and type-heterogeneities. Aristotle's method, so far as he had one, seems to have consisted in collecting the interrogatives of every-day speech... No reason is given for supposing that the Greek stock of interrogative words is either as economical as possible or as rich as might be desired.2

Ryle turns to his improved version which requires the notion of a "sentence-factor."

Let us call any partial expression which can enter into sentences otherwise dissimilar a "sentence-factor." Thus single words will be sentence-factors, but so will phrases of any degree of complexity as well as entire clauses... The word "factor" is intended to suggest... that they can occur only as factors in complexes of certain sorts, and can only occur in them in certain determinate ways.3

Consider, then, sentence S from which factor F has been removed. Represent the vacated space by dotted lines and S can appear as follows: "... is so-and-so" or "I am the one who... ." Now consider

2Ibid., p. 284.
3Ibid., p. 285.
sentence-factors F₁ and F₂. F₁ and F₂ are of distinct categories just in case F₁ will, and F₂ will not, replace F without absurdity, or conversely. In Ryle's phrasing:

Two proposition-factors (= sentence-factors) are of different categories or types if there are sentence frames such that when the expressions for those factors are imported as alternative complements to the same gap-signs, the resultant sentences are significant in the one case and absurd in the other.⁴

This criterion is more generous than one to be studied later (Thompson's) in that it is not limited to offering us only categories of substances. It is, Ryle says, better than Aristotle's in that, among other things, it deals with more kinds of sentence-factors than just terms, to which Aristotle's attention was limited.

Evaluation of Ryle's criterion may wait a moment as we canvass the article for anything else of relevance or our purposes. Under the rubric "What are Types Of?" Ryle informs us:

Only expressions can be affirmed or denied to be absurd. Nature provides no absurdities; nor can we even say that

⁴Ibid., p. 295.
thoughts such as beliefs or supposals or conceptions are or are not absurd. For what is absurd is unthinkable.\(^5\)

The criterion for "unthinkable" will hinge on how the criterion for "absurd" and "categorial difference" fares. What now interests me is the surprising similarity of the above quotation to another one:

The first, namely that It is, and that it is impossible for it not to be, is the way of belief, and truth is its companion. The other, namely that It is not and that it must needs not be,—that, I tell thee, is a path that none can learn of at all. For thou canst not know what is not—that is impossible—nor utter it; for it is the same thing that can be thought and can be.\(^6\)

The latter part of the quotation from Parmenides' poem is making the same point as Ryle makes. What is (nature) cannot be itself absurd; even what is in the sense of being a thought cannot itself be absurd. This sort of thesis stands in strange contrast, at least at first, to what immediately follows it; what follows is the recommendation that it is prudent to "talk logic

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 293.

in the semantic idiom" and to "formulate our theories and inquiries in such a way as to advertise all the time that we are considering whether such and such expressions may or may not be coupled in such and such ways with other expressions." But the remarkable thing is that the quotation above (from Ryle) can easily be construed as the reason for the counsel of prudence. Since what is (even in the sense of being thought) is incapable of being absurd, it can only be the juxtaposition of linguistic entities which is absurd, as not even expressing or formulating thoughts. This interpretation of Ryle's words is not quite consistent with something he says very shortly after counseling semantic prudence:

We try, then, to say that absurdities result from the improper coupling not of expressions but of what expressions signify, though the coupling and mis-coupling of them is effected by operating upon their expressions.8

Once again, he says:

If a child's perplexity why the Equator can be crossed but not seen, or why the

8Ibid., p. 294.
Chesire Cat could not leave its grin behind it, is perplexity about the "nature of things," then certainly category-propositions will give the required information about the nature of things. And the same will hold good of less frivolous type-perplexities.\(^9\)

If the improper coupling of expressions reveals what the world cannot be like, proper couplings ought to reveal what it is like, at least in its general (categorial?) features.

If the names in . . . a language designate specific and observable entities it would seem that, granting the categorial adequacy of the language, it must be precisely the constants that in some fashion show the categorial features of the world.\(^10\)

Ryle seems to have no final quarrel with this view.

He offers only one other reason for speaking semantically in our talk about logic (i.e., about category differences); it is that there is in fact no one general term for all the significata of expressions, since if there were all the significata would be of the same type. This reservation seems to me

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 298.

to be singularly weak, since the very sentence which asserts that there is no universal title for all significata of expressions uses a term purporting to designate all of them, and surely succeeds in doing so without supposing them to all be (or not be) of the same type. Further, such an expression can be considered of the same logical sort as Ryle's own "sentence-frame" (cf. his disclaimers concerning it on page 294).

Two more aspects of Ryle's paper require our notice. The first is the brief one that Ryle holds that "There are not English category-propositions as opposed to German ones, or Occidental as opposed to Oriental." Categories are common, it seems, to all minds. Nonetheless, Ryle avers: "Scholasticism is the belief in some decalogue of categories, but I know of no grounds for such a belief." If there is a common battery of categories shared by all minds, why could we not in principle discover and list them? Would this not give us a decalogue of categories?

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12 Ibid., p. 292.
The second aspect is the kinship which Ryle (and later Hall) finds between logical absurdities in the strict sense of actual paradoxes which lead to sheer contradictions, and logical absurdities in the hard-to-specify weaker sense in which "Saturday is in bed" is "logically" absurd. Ryle writes:

These sorts ("I am now lying" and "'Heterological' is heterological") are interesting, because their absurdities are not obvious but manifest themselves in the generation of contradictions or vicious circles, whereas "Saturday is in bed" is obviously absurd before any contradictions are seen to result from the hypothesis that it is true.\(^\text{13}\)

Further, under the topic "The Genesis of Type-Riddles," he notes the kinship of category mistakes and antinomies which arise when we begin to press concepts previously thought to be quite ordinary, or note the incompatibility of propositions previously both thought to be true. He does not explain in any detail how these connections are to be analysed and explained, but in the light of what is to come it is of interest to note that Ryle records them.

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\(^{13}\text{Ibid., p. 293.}\)
I turn now to criticism of Ryle's criterion for category difference. Crucial among these is a brief but pointed one made by J. J. C. Smart. He comments:

It is worth while to consider whether this test, if pushed to the limit, may not show every expression to be of a different logical category from every other. (In which case we should be wise not to take it too seriously.) Thus "the seat of the ___ is hard" works if "Cahir" or "bench" is put into the blank, but not if "table" or "bed" is. And if furniture words do not form a category, we may well ask what do.14

There is, of course, an easy reply to this criticism. It is that, after all, beds might very well be made with seats. But category differences surely ought not to depend on such trivial matters as that; if I can alter the categorial status of an entity by merely placing a small seat upon it, something has gone wrong. There are difficulties about "Forms" of beds and chairs; are these really asserted by Plato to have forms or is this a sort of pedagogical device but not an ontological assertion? Aristotle will not regard manufactured articles as natural bodies having their

principle of change within them. So we may argue that category differences among manufactured articles raise problems of their own. I have much sympathy with this sort of response, but it is just so much more criticism of Ryle, for it is a consequence of his criterion that no such worries about natural as opposed to manufactured articles enter our heads; Smart's criticism is perfectly apropos to Ryle's criterion as it stands.

Nonetheless, Smart offers another sort of example, this time dealing with mathematics rather than manufactured goods.

Again most logicians regard names of integers as of the same logical type, but it is easy to show that according to Ryle's test they are not. For example, "1," "2," "3," . . . and "-1," "-2," "-3," . . . all go into the blank of \(7 = 9\), and yield either an arithmetical truth or a falsehood. But "0" is different and put it in a category by itself. But then every number is different. Thus "7" will not go into an expression of the form \(x\), "8" will not go into one of the form \(x\), and so on.\(^\text{15}\)

A defender of Ryle might with fairness appeal to Ryle's

\(^{15}\text{Ibid.}, p. 228.\)
additional suggestion that we look also to the "liaisons" of sentence-frames:

Let us give the label "liaisons" to all the logical relations of a proposition, namely what it implies, what it is implied by, what it is compatible with, and what it is not compatible with. Now any respect in which two propositions differ in form, (e.g., in what can fill the blank in the sentence frame) will be reflected in difference in their liaisons. So two propositions which are formally similar in all respects save that one factor in one is different in type from a partially corresponding factor in the other, will have liaisons which are correspondingly dissimilar. 16

But whereas this may add to Ryle's criterion, it is not meant to replace it. Thus two things should be noted. First, as Cross correctly comments, "The trouble about this is that right from the start (i.e., before we check liaisons) the sentence 'The seat of the bed is hard' seems in some sense absurd." 17 Thus even when Ryle adds that "The operation of extracting the type of a factor cannot exclude the operation of revealing the liaisons of propositions embodying it. In essence


they are one operation,"¹⁸ he has not escaped embarrassing consequences (multipliable at will) of the sort which Smart notices. Secondly, the talk of liaisons is, in the first quotation, an assertion that wherever a category difference is discovered by the "fill in the blank" test there will be a corresponding difference discoverable by reference to liaisons, and the second quotation seems to assert that the connection is somehow between a logically necessary and a merely contingent one. In no way, I think, does this additional appeal save face. Nonetheless, the appeal to the "liaisons" of a sentence does properly note the relationship between categories, suggesting, if not in any very developed way, that categories occur in systems and not in isolation, a topic shortly to be pursued.

Another point worth commentary is Ryle's use of "absurd." That we are given no clear criterion for what is absurd follows from our criticism of the criterion for a category mistake. Ryle attempts to elucidate his use of "absurd" by noting that Saturday can be in bed in the sense that ". . . is in bed" is

a sentence frame such that "Saturday" can fill in the blank without producing grammatical problems. Nonetheless, it cannot be in bed; placing "Saturday" in the blank does create "logical" problems. Sentences creating logical problems of this sort are absurd. But surely this clarifies the obscure by the obscure. Exactly what "logic" in the strict, formal sense means is not so easy a thing to say, but when the word "logic" is used as it is in the phrase "the logic of ordinary language" or (adjectivally) in "logical grammar" it is at most characterized; one suspects that one has not, with the characterization, made much advance. More importantly, however, the sense of "can" and "cannot" (the "logical" sense, with "logic" used roughly as in "the logic of ordinary discourse") involved is not entirely without philosophic taint. What counts as a category mistake seems to be left up to one's good ear for what doesn't ring true in ordinary English (or some other natural language). Again, is "Saturday is in bed" literally nonsensible, or is it false since we know that in fact Saturday cannot be? Also note Ryle's criticism of Ryle's Aristotle, quoted above;
it seems to apply to Ryle's own account. The assumption seems to be that the categories are already there in the linguistic deposit of the race, at least insofar as our language is typical, and that the way to detect them is to be rather good at noting infelicitous juxtapositions of terms. As a programmatic suggestion this perhaps has merits. But it leaves one on his own with respect to the tools with which the task is to be accomplished. Ryle, indeed, closes his article with the honest question, "But what are the tests for absurdity?"\textsuperscript{19} He, at least, thinks he has not told us; I agree.

Nonetheless, it seems to me that Ryle has provided some beginning on the whole issue of categories. Turning from Oxford analysis to more traditional territory, Manley Thompson's article "On Category Differences" is worthy of some attention.

Thompson begins by sketching what he dubs the "traditional" view of categories, claiming honorable descent from Aristotle. It should be noted that his Aristotle is rather more sophisticated than Ryle's, for although Thompson has Aristotle class kinds of

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 298.
being via the sorts of questions that, _a la Ryle_, can be asked of them, he advances to the point of having Aristotle class kinds of being in terms of the commonness of a possible, non-trivial property. He then turns to three brands of objection against this view; they are, in order of appearance and with titles provided, the "formalistic," "pragmatistic," and "ordinaristic" objections. I suspect that the personalia who remain (save for the second instance) unnamed are Quine, Carnap, and Wittgenstein. Discussion of these positions and Thompson's replies will not, I think, materially aid the argument of this chapter. Thompson's criticism has as its core the thesis that unless one regards category differences as ontological differences and not merely linguistic differences one cannot sustain the notion of category differences at all. Given appropriate reparsing into my more barbaric but less committal language, this will read "No difference not ontological can be categorial," and I will argue later that (when detached from his Aristotelian commitment and interpreted generously) Thompson's thesis is correct, though this commitment both hampers the force of his argument and
restricts the scope of possible categorial differences in a most undemocratic manner.

Thompson states the traditional view concerning category differences as follows:

The difference between a dog and a bird would not be called a category difference (note: it will be remembered that on Ryle's criterion they would be in different categories), since both are animals, and as such either one indifferently may be meaningfully taken as the subject of various questions. On the other hand, consider a dog and a number. Is it possible here to find an expression applicable to both, analogous to 'animal' in the preceding example, which will enable us meaningfully to ask the same questions about either one? If the only expressions we can find applicable to both are words like 'object,' 'thing,' 'entity,' or 'existent,' we may say that the difference is a category difference. For these expressions are not analogous to 'animal.' They do not enable us to ask the same sort of question.20

Ryle's view is thus (implicitly) criticized and its fatal disease diagnosed. It is not enough that question Q about A make sense while the same question Q about B not make sense; this will not constitute adequate ground for placing A and B in different categories. Rather, the stronger requirement that there be no question Q which can be asked about both A and B, or no common

predicate attributable to both A and B (a sharper way to state the more stringent requirement, I think), is needed if we are to escape Ryle's incredible proliferation of categorial bifurcations. The "no common predicate" requirement needs qualification. One can point out (Thompson does) that, given any A and B whatever, A and B will have the common predicate "A or B"--this predicate will be true of both. But this is, Thompson argues, a matter of language and not a matter of common basis in fact. In other words, the commonality is artificial in the sense that were there no languages, there would be no commonality, whereas the common features shared by, say, dogs and birds (both being animals) would be shared even were there no language at all: it is a factual commonality. Protagoras' statement that "from some point of view everything has something in common with everything else" is true but irrelevant to categorial differences which concern the facts and not merely language.

The point, then, is that categorial differences

are differences with respect to what is, and only derivatively concern what can be said about what is. Nothing about what is which makes any categorial difference justifies our saying that an appropriately selected A and B have in common the predicate "A or B" and thus are in the same category. Consider the further point that were "A or B" sufficient to place A and B in a common category, then there are no categories at all since any A and any B have that property in common. Since "A," "B," and "A or B" serve merely as counters, the argument is perfectly general. Otherwise put, the view that "A or B" is a genuine predicate (establishes categorial community) provides (an all too cheap) proof of monism, since for however many things there are they may be disjoined into a commonality (i.e., "A or B or C . . .") which (speciously) shows that there can only be one kind of thing. Here at any rate Thompson is surely correct.

Two points seem relevant to a critique of Thompson. One is that, as Cross notes, he fails to provide an adequate means for distinguishing between different categories of processes. The other is that
he does not offer appropriate means of differentiating between things and processes.

Let us substantiate the latter claim. Consider the student reading his logic text. One wants to say that his reading is to be categorized otherwise than the text being read. The reading of the text is a process, or activity, or an action, or some such; the text is a physical object, a thing, an entity, or the like. Given Thompson's criterion, the possession of common non-trivial predicates will be sufficient to establish categorial commonality. The reading and the text share, I suggest, such relevant common predicates. Both can be, for example, in the library. "Where is the textbook?" and "Where is the textbook being read?" can have the same answer. Again, in a moment of mental wandering excusable in the readers of textbooks, our student may become dimly aware of his book, and of his reading of it, while noting that his reading has been less than scholarly (he cannot remember what he has read). "Objects of Jones' thoughts" can include the reading and the book; here too is a common predicate not much like "existent" or "entity" or "being." So
they have categorial commonality. No doubt other instances of common predicates could be offered; these should be sufficient.

A further criticism arises from these remarks. Consider the predicate "having been thought of by Sam Smith." Everything whatever will have, or not have, this predicate. Will having this predicate establish one category, and not having it constitute another? It is not a predicate very obviously like "object." Or consider the predicate "is identical with itself"; everything has this predicate, so is there only one category for Thompson? Clearly, Thompson will want to treat "is identical with itself" as somehow no more category-distinguishing than "object," "being," "entity," and the like. He will want to do the same with predicates like "having been thought of by Sam Smith," "being in the library," and many others that might be proffered. Perhaps he will want to deny that "self-identity" is a predicate at all; the same has been said about "existence." My point is that what he says does not eliminate these predicates; his criterion is thus grossly deficient.
Cross, we noted, said that Thompson's criterion would not do for categorizing various sorts of processes. What has been said above shows that he is right, but we can treat that claim briefly on its own. To "What are you doing?" either "Reading," or "Wishing" is a proper, if elliptical, answer. One can, however, wish for what he does not have (indeed, for what else can one wish, unless he does not know that he has it). One cannot read what he does not have; the object of his reading must be present to his sight. "Painting" too would do as an answer to our question, and whereas reading and wishing do not alter their objects, painting clearly does. We would have, then, considerable reason to think that reading, painting, and wishing were rather different sorts of activities or processes or actions. But one can read and paint carefully; one can attend to one's wishing (be aware that one is wishing) or one's painting or one's reading. Again, the difference between wishing and reading is not that they are different sorts of "objects" or "things"; they are not (in the relevant sense--relevant, namely, to Thompson's criterion) objects or things at all. And that wishing, reading,
and painting have common predicates has already been sug-
gested. So Cross seems correct in his criticism. Hence,
Thompson fares none too well in his attempt to do better
than his predecessor.

The beginning paragraphs of Passmore's concluding
chapter in *Philosophical Reasoning* (a chapter about
which he expresses the greatest degree of modesty) raise
an interesting topic upon which we have previously
touched, and which now deserves more careful attention.
As Passmore will receive rough treatment later, it will
not be amiss to record agreement with him here. He
begins by noting the radical difference between the sort
of classifying which occurs in common life and in
science on the one hand, and the sort of categorial
issues which arise in philosophy on the other. Issues
as to what category properly suits a given individual
are not philosophical issues; where the virus belongs
is not up to the philosopher. Given that right action
is action directed toward the well being of its recip-
ient (plus a specification of "well being"), whether a
given case of truth-telling is right is not so much a
philosophical as a casuistic question. It is rather
like the question as to whether the whale is a mammal, or virus living or non-living, or the Bible one book or many.

Problems begin when one turns to distinguishing between falling under a category and belonging to a class, and when one attempts to list what the categories actually are. This is so even if quantity, quality, and relation receive frequent mention for such a list. But the problem most relevant just now is Ryle's and Thompson's question: what are categories categories of? I will rephrase this as: "What are the proper objects of categories?" Ryle, and Thompson too at one point, opts for bits of verbalized or written language. But they both insisted that one also, in some way, regard these bits of language as telling some story about matters non-linguistic. To regard terms as the proper objects of categories has the advantage of making matters seemingly unmysterious, at least until one adds the rider that they are (at least some of them) referential (and not merely self-referential). Momentarily disregarding the rider, the difficulty this proposal obviously faces is that it makes it by no
means obvious how seeking categories is to differ from sophisticated grammar. The phrase "logical grammar" has indeed become popular, but Ryle as a practicioner denies that he is endeavoring to outmaneuver the lexicographer at his own game. However handy common sense lexicography may be for revealing categorial bifurcations, those bifurcations are not usually regarded as identical with their linguistic manifestations or clues. This does not mean that we are to regard them as entities hidden behind such clues, or epiphenomena of such manifestations.

Wittgenstein writes:

Our investigation is a grammatical one. Such an investigation sheds light on our problem by clearing misunderstandings away, misunderstandings concerning the use of words, caused, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of language.  

But no one can quite think that the Philosophical Investigations is higher-level lexicography, or that the distinction made famous by Russell between the logical form and the grammatical form is merely a matter of

super-grammar. "Grammar," in the passage just quoted, is unordinarily used. Its function, like that of "simple" in the philosophy of Leibniz, is dependent on the cluster of concepts ("language game," "use," etc.) which constitute the intellectual milieu of contemporary Oxford philosophy. Thus it is itself a philosophical term in every bit as full-blooded a sense as Descartes' "mind" and Berkeley's "idea" and Hume's "impression" and Kant's "transcendental unity of apperception." Category-seeking is not, or not simply, language classification in terms either of careful tools of lexicography or of more modest sensitivity of the educated ear. Not, I think, that (in spite of having perhaps given the opposite impression) any competent philosopher really thought it was. Ryle, for example, writes in his article "Ordinary Language" that Hume's question about causation "was not a question about a bit of the English language in any way in which it was not a question about a bit of the German language." The German language is obviously a counter;

any other would do as well for Ryle. Again, in "Categories," he remarks that "there are not English category-propositions as opposed to German ones, or Occidental as opposed to Oriental." Patently, Ryle is not posing as linguistics expert when he makes these assertions.

Again, referring to Carnap's "formal mode-material mode" distinction (of which more later), it will not substantially help to translate categorial issues from the form, for example, "Is goodness a quality?" to "Is 'good' a quality word?" For in one sense the answer to the latter question is obviously "yes"; any elementary school grammarian (student or teacher) knows that "good" is a quality word in the sense of predicating grammatically just as "red" can be predicated grammatically. The question which concerns philosophers is rather, "Is 'good' the name of a quality?" This is akin to the question "Is 'good' used assertively or descriptively ("cognitively?") at all, or merely evaluatively, or somewhat of each?".


25As asserted by G. E. Moore and denied by E. W. Hall.
for if "good" is not to a quality as "red" is to a quality, then it presumably is not assertive as "red" is in "The alternating stripes on the flag are white and red."

But we cannot observe or test to see if "good" is (in the relevant sense) a quality word, for the quality goodness is, Moore tells us, non-natural. Whatever "non-natural" means, it must, given its context in the Moorian text, mean at least "not perceptible" and "not empirically discernible." No looking or hearing, and no litmus-paper tests or dissecting, will reveal its presence. Nor will learning (what everyone knows anyway) about its grammar (as opposed to its "logical grammar") help in the slightest. What, then, has been gained by asking about "good" rather than about the quality itself, if any, which "good" is held by some to name? To note the apparent bankruptcy of this approach (regarding category-seeking as high-gear

26 Either as a general term for a class of qualities or a particular term referring to a single quality or a term which gains its sense from its feature of referring indiscriminately to any quality of a resembling battery of qualities. A nominalist who held that there are no qualities would of course not regard "red" as referring to a quality.

lexicography) is to return to the original perplexity. Where do we go from here?

Passmore offers succour in the following manner:

The most general answer is that the supposition that a description belongs to one category rather than another leads to inadmissible consequences. I use the word 'inadmissible' to cover consequences which are either false, self-contradictory, or 'absurd.'

The kinship of this criterion to Ryle's is worth noting, especially when we remember Ryle's remarks in The Concept of Mind to the effect that:

I try to use reductio ad absurdum arguments both to disallow operations implicitly recommended by the Cartesian myth and to indicate to what logical types the concepts under investigation ought to be allocated.

He adds "I do not however think it improper to use from time to time arguments of a less rigorous sort." In any case, the connection between category allocation and logical paradoxes on Ryle's view has been noted, and Passmore agrees, adding that one ought as well to look to informal fallacies. (Cf. also the

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30 Ibid.
connection, noted by Ryle and Thompson, of joke and type-
mistake.)

Passmore offers, in effect, a sort of continuum of means of detecting category mistakes. He begins by allowing that the distinction between a classification and a categorization is not sustained by his criterion; if one assumes that Shakespeare cannot write a play lacking psychological insight, then he cannot, Passmore says, have written *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. To say that he did would be, given the assumption, "absurd." This is, in fact, a way of acknowledging a radical defect in the criterion; "absurd" is so broad by now that anything can count as an absurdity, given only that one assume something which will (as an assumption, and given its truth as postulated) make the thing in question absurd. To be "absurd" is merely to conflict with an assumption. Surely this is too generous and innocuous a sense to be philosophically rewarding.

He moves a step along the continuum by referring to the argument that "knowing" is not categorically similar to "laughing," because if it were, since it is true that "no one can laugh and not laugh at the same
time" it would also be true that "no one can know and not
know at the same time,"[^3] and thus no one could know
anything without knowing everything. But one can know
something without knowing everything, so laughing is
not categorially similar to knowing. But, one can
respond, one can laugh at something while not laughing
at everything, just as one can know something and not
know everything, so they are really parallel after all.
The similarity of Passmore's criterion to Ryle's reveals
a fatal flaw in it: it allows that only one "absurdity"
resulting from supposing that A and B are in the same
category be enough to show that they are in different
categories. It is absurd to assert that one scrambled
his bread and toasted his egg; are bread and eggs hence
categorially dissimilar? Again, what will constitute
categorial commonality? If no absurd consequences follow
from supposing that A and B are in the same category,
then are they in the same category? What counts as
absurd? Is "Time was never created, but has always
been" absurd? According to what criteria? Ryle and

[^3]: Passmore, *Philosophical Reasoning*, p. 126. Passmore's point is that knowing is a disposition and
laughing is an activity, but I do not see that his argument shows this.
Aristotle reject it as absurd; Augustine holds such a view. By whose standards do we judge? Aristotle's or Augustine's? But this presses the issue too far too fast, for Passmore does not give us competing criteria for absurdity, but rather offers us none at all.

Passmore does note, in discussing Nowell-Smith (p. 130) that there can be different views as to whether a given criterion is satisfied, but also different views as to whether, given that a criterion is satisfied, this leads to absurdity or not. But he does not fruitfully develop this insight.

Two further features of his chapter, however, are worth at least some comment. One concerns another aspect of Ryle's remarks concerning categories, and the other concerns the further development of his notion of a continuum of category detection.

First Ryle's remarks: Passmore notes the argument from the non-transferability of epithets which Ryle traces back to Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics. Pleasure, since it does not take time, is not a process, since all processes take time. Hence, pleasure is in
a different category from the genuine processes; eating is a process but being pleased is not.\textsuperscript{32}

How exactly this differs from what Ryle has said before, I am not sure. But consider an example intended to indicate that this criterion, if different at all, is not superior to the one already considered. A trash can with lid on can properly receive the predicate "closed container," whereas the same can with top off cannot; therefore "closed container" is a non-transferable epithet; thus the topped can is categorically different from the untopped one. The obvious reply is that pleasure cannot take time, but a trash can can be a closed container. This shifts the emphasis to the modal terms "cannot" and "can," but does not save the criterion. Shoes can be tied but not made up; beds can be made up but not tied, so they are in different categories. The switch from sentence-frame to untransferable epithets brings, I suggest, no gain. The distinction between the important and the unimportant, the philosophically relevant and the philosophically irrelevant, cries out to be made, but is not.

Turning to the proposed hierarchy, Passmore offers the following set of examples for our reflection:

(1) My kangaroo is green.

(2) My kangaroo is good at arithmetic.

(3) My kangaroo is the fifth day of the week.

(4) My kangaroo is not a kangaroo.

(1) is empirical and false; (4) is self-contradictory and hence false. What of (2) and (3)? One can imagine (write a story about, be confined for suggesting adamantly) that a kangaroo was very good at mathematics. One could not imagine that kangaroos were days of the week. So there seems to be a difference. Yet if one knows much about kangaroos, presumably he will know that (2) and (3) are false of them all. Still, (2) though absurd is closer to (1) than (3), and (3) though also absurd is closer to (4) than to (2). One wants to say that (2) is (presumably) causally impossible, while (3) is something like (but not quite) logically impossible. (3) borders on meaningless absurdity and (2) is only absurd by being preposterous. But this leaves us again only sensing the problem, not resolving it. The interest and value of this hierarchy is to stress the relationship
between certain issues: the logical status of sentences, criteria for meaningfulness, and issues of categorial allotment. In that sense, our task is furthered by noting the hierarchy. To see the relation between problems is after all progress.

Two final comments. One is that Passmore spends some time worrying about the distinction between empirical and formal categorial issues. How can we distinguish between the absurdity of saying that Shakespeare wrote an uninsightful play and the absurdity of saying that pleasure is an activity? The former is based on a knowledge of the man culled from plays admittedly his own; the latter is based on the argument that activities take time, and that one can be half-through an activity, but being pleased takes no time and is not something that we can be half-through doing. The distinction between empirical and categorial issues is one into which we must delve shortly.

The other comment is that I take Passmore to be correct when he dismisses the view that the issue as to

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33 One can be pleased all day, or at an event which occurs at time T, or for a short time; pleasure can be enduring or short-lived, constant or intermittent, etc.; perhaps it is a different sort of activity than those that one can be half-through doing?
what constitutes a category is simply a matter for decision. To so argue is simply, Passmore notes, to escape from inquiry, not to engage in it. More to the point, he notes that at the least there are some clear cases of patently logical self-contradiction (cf. (4)) and some clear cases of patently empirical falsehood or truth (cf. (1)), and that if one wants to regard all other sentences as classifiable into one or the other of these rubrics he is, in addition to glossing over some important and irreducible features of such sentences,\textsuperscript{34} still forced to decide what sentences are sufficiently like (1) to be grouped with it and which sufficiently like (4) to be grouped with it, and which sufficiently problematic to receive more detailed consideration or to be rejected as meaningless. But if one does recognize how different (1) and (4) are, he ought to note, e.g., the difference between (1), (3), and (4). The decision about which sentences are like other sentences is not itself arbitrary; to class (1)-like sentences with (4)-like ones has too high a price tag, and so,

\textsuperscript{34}(2) is really very different from (3), and both are very different from (1) and (4).
I should think, does not seeing that (2) and (3) are grossly different.

Ryle offered an unsuccessful test for categorial difference, noting at the same time that differences in categories were intimately related to differences in liaisons. He argued that "Saturday is in bed" was grammatically permitted but conceptually forbidden. Having no very clear criterion for absurdity (categorial mistake) he could not very well say why it is forbidden. His most promising strategy seemed to be to appeal to considerations of the "logic of ordinary discourse," and thus to enter the philosophic lists alongside of those who are grouped loosely under the banner of "ordinary language philosophers." Ryle is, of course, so grouped; but to make appeal to the structure or logic of ordinary discourse as the correct, or only, source of deciding categorial matters is to take a quite debatable position. As we will discuss this sort of issue at length later, let it now suffice to note that Ryle raises for us the strong suspicion that categorial differences, categorial mistakes, and categorial clusters or systems are notions
by no means unrelated. He left, too, we remember, the hint of a view that categorial matters are ontological matters--another topic for investigation.

Smart's considerations were wholly negative (being a brief though cogent criticism of Ryle) and Cross'es remarks were also basically critical, both of Ryle and Thompson. Thompson offered more constructive promise, and though he failed to reveal sufficient leniency with respect to what might count for a philosopher as a categorial difference, he seemed a little more successful than Ryle in pointing out what to him (Thompson) constituted such a difference. He too, and much more strongly and explicitly and not merely by way of hint and concession, wanted to say that categorial issues are ontological issues, though toward the end of his article fear and trepidation overcame him and he cautiously opted for a somewhat mitigated form of this view. I suggest that he was correct about categories being categories of what is, not merely of what is said, on the grounds that language is irredeemably about the world, not about itself, no matter in how sophisticated a way. Thompson thus provided an example of a system
of categories which yielded the context for an explicit (if understandably biased) criterion for categorial difference. He thus illustrates a thesis already mentioned and awaiting development and defense: that "categorial difference" and "categorial mistake" gain their explicit content from the philosophical (categorial) system with reference to which they are used, and when used without reference to any such system their content is vague beyond rescue.

Finally, Passmore, while providing interesting comment and critique, added nothing of real substance in addition to our conclusions from Ryle and Thompson, though our study of Passmore's views did provide a bit more perspective and lends a bit more plausibility to what is to come.
CHAPTER III

SOME EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIAL CLASHES

In the preceding chapter, given that its criticisms have been successful, I have pointed out some philosophic sins. This is rather less than presenting an even plausible case for more positive contentions, to which task I now turn.

As a prelude to such a case, it seems pertinent to offer certain disputes which are at once, to my mind at any rate, indisputably philosophical and clearly categorial. I will propose three such, one concerning the relation between substance and attribute, another concerning the possibility of properly juxtaposing the terms "thinking" and "matter," and a final one concerning the thesis that ideas are intentional or referential. While the names of traditional and contemporary philosophers will appear alongside quotations from their works,
thus indicating an intent to deal with doctrines actually held, I should like to point out in advance that historical errors in my account will not in their own right be fatal. Even if no one had ever held the views to be discussed, they would still be possible views, and no less philosophical or categorial for not having heretofore been held. This becomes a way of admitting, too, that the sort of contentions I will advance in the following sections are subject to the accusation of being unfaithful to actual philosophic systems; there is no sense in denying that this is the case. I do want it to be clear that I am by no means advancing these cases as instances from which generalizations will ultimately be extrapolated; rather, they serve as illustrative context within which my contentions can, I hope, be more fruitfully and clearly elucidated.

Consider, then, as our first instance a clash between Descartes and Spinoza as to the relationship between substance and attribute. In the Note to Proposition Ten of the first part of his *Ethics*, Spinoza asserts:

"It is thus evident that, though attributes are, in fact, conceived as distinct . . . yet we"
cannot therefore conclude that they constitute ... two different substances. ... It is, then, far from an absurdity to ascribe several attributes to one substance: for nothing in nature is more clear than that each and every entity must be conceived under some attribute, and that its reality or being is in proportion to the number of its attributes expressing necessity or eternity or infinity.¹

The point of this remark is to undercut the dualism of Descartes. The latter, in Principle Fifty-Three of his The Principles of Philosophy, comments that "each substance has a principal attribute, and that ... of the mind is thought, while that of the body is extension."² The preceding Principle asserts that while "substance" may "be attributed univocally to the soul and to body," we must note an irreducible type-difference between body and soul. His commentary on Principle Fifty-Two reads, in part, as follows:

Substance cannot be first discovered merely from the fact that it is a thing that exists, for that fact alone is not observed by us. We may, however, easily discover it by means of any one of its attributes, because it is a common notion that nothing is possessed of no attributes, properties, or qualities. For this reason, when

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we perceive any attribute we therefore conclude that some existing thing or substance to which it may be attributed is necessarily present.\textsuperscript{3}

Since thought and extension are "principal attributes" and, according to the commentary on Proposition Fifty-Three, "there is always one principal property of substance which constitutes its nature and essence, and on which it depends,"\textsuperscript{4} there must be two distinct substances, one for each principal attribute. Thus there are at least two kinds of things.

For Spinoza, however, "substance thinking and substance extended are one and the same substance, comprehended now through one attribute, now through the other."\textsuperscript{5} His note to Proposition Seven of the second part of the \textit{Ethics} from which this quotation is taken, draws the conclusion that "a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, though expressed in different ways."\textsuperscript{6} So different attributes (even those Descartes would want to call "principal"

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{5}Spinoza, \textit{The Works of Spinoza}, p. 86.

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid.
ones) can belong to the same substance, and God or Nature is such as to be conceivable under an infinite number of attributes, among them the only two which we know, extension and thought.

Worthy of brief mention here is the difference of language between Descartes and Spinoza. For Descartes, it is a "common notion" that "nothing is possessed of no attribute" (my italics) whereas for Spinoza it is true that "every entity must be conceived under some attribute." (my italics). Attributes seem for Descartes to be, roughly, properties actually possessed by substances, while for Spinoza they seem to be only ways of conceiving substances. But this raises issues too broad to broach here; I mention it only as a possible explanation as to why the Cartesian and Spinozian views are so different at the point under consideration in these past few paragraphs (and as a further categorial difference between them).

It might be noted before moving to other matters that this same issue arises between Blanshard and Taylor. In the first volume of The Nature of Thought in the chapter entitled "Behaviourism and Thought" it
is Blanshard's seventh objection to behaviourism that "we really do mean something different by consciousness and bodily behaviour is made clear again by the different attributes that we assign to them." He asks "Can a motion be clear, or cogent, or witty?" and asserts that these adjectives are perfectly in order when applied to ideas; they become at once absurd when applied to movements in muscle or nerve; and how account for this absurdity if we do not mean different things when we speak of ideas and movements?

Blanshard clearly stands with Descartes on the relationship between substance and attribute. Taylor, while agreeing that human beings are distinctive in that they alone are rational and deliberative, thinks that

Of course none of this suggests that men are not (simply) physical objects but rather that they are precisely physical objects, like other bodies in some ways, unlike many other bodies in other ways, and unlike any other bodies in still other respects.

Taylor's view is clearly, I think, akin to Spinoza's with respect to the issue at hand.


8 Ibid.

Turning to our second issue, consider Locke's reflections in Book Four, Chapter Three, Section Six of his *Essay* to the effect that while "we have the ideas of matter and thinking" we nonetheless "possibly never shall be able to know whether any mere material being thinks or no." He continues by asserting that it is impossible for us, by the contemplation of our own ideas, without revelation, to discover whether Omnipotency has not given to some systems of matter, fitly disposed, power to perceive and think.

Thus, for Locke, the phrase "thinking matter" or "matter capable of thought" is a phrase perfectly in order, not one like "round square" or "fast-climbing triangle."

Otherwise put, "the so-and-so which is only material and thinks" could be designative of some actual entity.

Richard Taylor agrees when he writes:

> The same type of answer can be given if it is asked how a 'mere physical object' can think. If we suppose that it is a physical object of a certain familiar kind, namely, a living body having the form and other visible attributes of a man, and possessed of an enormously complex living brain and nervous system--in short, that the object in question is a living human being--then there is no absurdity in supposing that this being thinks.

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Taylor's discussion, in Chapter Three of his *Metaphysics* from which our quotation is culled, reveals that for him, too, the assertion that a "merely" physical object thinks is perfectly in order, and is, on his view, likely true.

In sharp contrast to Locke and Taylor stand Descartes and Berkeley. The former writes in Meditation Six that "there is a vast difference between mind and body, in respect that body, from its nature, is always divisible, and mind is entirely indivisible."\(^{12}\) Further, turning again to Principle Fifty-Three, "each substance has a principal attribute and . . . the attribute of the mind is thought, while that of the body is extension."\(^{13}\) If we note that "principal" attributes are essential attributes (an attribute A of substance S is essential just in case "S is not A" is self-contradictory), we note also that "Matter thinks" is, for Descartes, a self-contradiction. That this faithfully represents Descartes' intentions is revealed by the commentary on our Proposition, part of which reads, with my italics, "extension in length, breadth, and depth,

\(^{12}\)Descartes, *Philosophical Works of Descartes*, p. 196.

\(^{13}\)Ibid.
constitutes the nature of corporeal substance; and thought constitutes the nature of thinking substance. Should Leonard G. Miller's thesis that such statements are synthetic for Descartes be correct, this will in no way materially alter my interpretation, as Miller agrees that they are in some sense necessary for Descartes.

Deserting Descartes for Berkeley, we can begin by reminding ourselves of the good bishop's dictum, enunciated in the closing paragraphs of the first dialogue of his Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous that "it is most evident that no idea can exist without the mind" (his italics). We need only add that on Berkeley's view, stated toward the end of the first Dialogue, "the real things . . . are the very things I perceive by my senses . . . wood, stones, fire, water, flesh, iron and the like things." These "real things" are "perceived . . . by my senses; and things perceived

14Ibid.


by my senses are immediately perceived; and things immediately perceived are ideas, "17 so that physical objects are simply ordered clusters of ideas. These ideas cannot perceive; early in the third Dialogue Berkeley writes:

The mind, spirit, or soul is that indivisible, unextended thing which thinks, acts, and perceives . . . that which perceives ideas . . . is plainly itself no idea, nor like an idea. Ideas are things inactive and perceived; and spirits a sort of beings altogether different from them.18

Thus "thinking matter" is by no means a proper phrase for Berkeley; it is nonsensical or absurd, and could clearly not refer to anything. This can be seen even without appealing to the arguments purporting to show that the concept of matter is itself inconsistent.

As a final instance, the conflict between Spinoza and Berkeley as to the "nature of ideas" is of interest. Spinoza held that ideas are inherently referential; Axiom Six of the first book of the Ethics reads "a true idea must correspond with its ideate or object,"19

17Ibid., p. 265.
18Ibid., p. 267.
19Spinoza, The Works of Spinoza, p. 46.
and a true idea, we are told in *On the Improvement of the Understanding* is "different from its correlate (ideatum)."\(^{20}\) This doctrine is constantly reflected in his use of the phrase "idea of," as in Propositions Nineteen through Twenty-Three and Twenty-Five through Twenty-Nine of Part Two, and in his statement in the *Improvement* that the goal of human knowledge is to "reproduce in every respect the faithful image of nature."\(^{21}\) Indeed, it is enshrined in Proposition Seven of Part Two.\(^{22}\) Spinoza's views in this regard have been widely shared. Descartes, for example, comments on his Principle Seventeen that

> when we reflect on the various ideas that are in us, it is easy to see that there is not much difference between them when they are considered as modes of thinking, but they are widely different in another way, since the one represents one thing and the other another.\(^{23}\)

Bertrand Russell's criticism of Berkeley in the fourth chapter of *The Problems of Philosophy*,\(^{24}\) which

\(^{20}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 12.\)

\(^{21}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 36.\)

\(^{22}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 86. \ This \ is \ the \ locus \ classicus \ of Spinoza's "Rationalism."\)

\(^{23}\text{Descartes, *Philosophical Works of Descartes*, p. 225.}\)

distinguishes between an idea and its object and G. E. Moore's "Refutation of Idealism," which distinguishes between two elements within ideas to which the word "idea" may refer are both incompatible with Berkeley's thesis that ideas are completely simple.

In this connection we may briefly refer to Everett Hall's thesis that ideas are "intentional." While developing his "intentionalistic empiricism" in Our Knowledge of Fact and Value, he avers that "experience is semantical, referential, always about something" and argues that

Locke, Berkeley, Hume, James, Mill all use terms for the elements of experience which, in the vernacular, are referential or intentional in significance—such words as 'ideas,' 'perceptions,' 'sensations,' 'feelings.'

Berkeley, conscious of this view as a competitor to his own, has Hylas mid-way or so in the first dialogue accuse Philonous of "one great oversight" of which he too has been guilty, that he "did not sufficiently distinguish between the object from the sensation," suggesting that


the former is not, while the latter is, mind-dependent.

Berkeley's mouthpiece then subjects this distinction to critical scrutiny. It requires, in the first place, that we regard the mind as active in perception. We must, in order to distinguish between the act of perceiving and what is perceived, regard perceiving as involving a judgment. But "the senses make no inferences." Seeing consists merely in perceiving light and colors, not in making judgments about light and colors; "you are in the very perception of light and colors altogether passive." Thus, since the distinction between the act of sensing and what is sensed requires the doctrine that the mind is active or judgmentally engaged in perceiving, and since the mind is in fact passive in perceiving, the purported distinction ought not be made. Again, Berkeley turns to what he seems to regard as the very paradigm of perception, namely feeling pain; "since you distinguish between the active and passive in every perception, you must do it in that of pain." But nothing is more obvious, argues Berkeley, that in the case of pain what is felt is identical with the

28Ibid., p. 228.
feeling of it; pain is not the object of a perception, but is a (simple) perception. What is true of pain is true for any perception whatever. Nor can one appeal to a feebleness of our perceptual powers to salvage the wanted distinction. If two perceivable things can exist separately, they can be perceptually distinguished; numerically distinct perceptual entities are separately perceivable entities, and conversely. But this distinction between object of perception and the perception itself is in no way itself perceptible. We do not find the proposed complexity in our perceptual experience, nor can we produce cases so bifurcated in our imagination. So such distinctions cannot in fact exist.

There is a "factual" ring about these issues which I take to be deceptive. One could claim, for example, that what is at issue is no substantial matter, for our opposing camps of philosophers are not in fact disagreeing at all. The one camp merely uses the word "substance" or "matter" or "thinking" or "idea," as the case may be, in one way and the other camp in another. Thus if we could only get them to agree on a common use, all would be well.
The problem with this naive way of treating the conflicts noted is that what each philosopher in question desires to do is to say something which is true. Descartes, to quote from the "Preface to the Reader" of the **Meditations**, writes on "questions which have always appeared to me to be of such importance that I judged it suitable to speak of them more than once."29 (The reference is to the **Discourse**.) The letter of dedication to the "wise and illustrious dean and doctors" of the University of Paris reveals these to be the "two questions respecting God and the Soul." Spinoza in Proposition Seven of Part Two of the **Ethics** averred that "the order and connection of ideas is the order and connection of things."30 Berkeley's avowed purposes are, according to the frontispiece of the **Dialogues**, to "demonstrate the reality and perfection of human knowledge (of) the incorporeal nature of the soul and the immediate providence of a deity in opposition to sceptics and atheists."31 Taylor writes in his

29Descartes, *Philosophical Works of Descartes*, p. 137.


introduction to the volume mentioned above that "to think
metaphysically is to think, without arbitrariness, on the
most basic problems of existence."

32 Without further proliferation of quotations, suffice it to say that the
reason that the philosophers discussed used words the
way they did was because they believed that they best
described the way the world is by so doing.

This, however, may only shift the emphasis of the
"factual ring" of the noted conflicts from the use of
words to the controlled observation of the world being
described. One may well ask whether the issues being
disputed are simply issues of empirical science. The
objection continues: whether matter can think or not
depends, after all, on what matter is, which is pretty
plainly a matter of physics, not philosophy. I think
at this point the discussion at least rises from
naivete to confusion, and offer the following comments
as an attempt to attain clarity.

The issue lies, I think, far deeper than simply
the matter of what "facts" physicists turn up. It is
a matter of the framework within which one is to con­
ceive the world, of the conceptual context within which

our thinking, about the facts of physics or about anything else, may most appropriately occur. What this means, and why I suggest it, can perhaps be made clearer by taking a closer look at the sorts of assertions disputed. Berkeley's and Descartes' theses are not simply empirical assertions to the effect that no thinking matter has been discovered, nor do they occur as reports of relevant empirical findings, or as predictions about what will empirically be discovered, or as deductions or inductions or even hunches based upon experimental reports. Insofar as they are related logically to empirical searchings, they are assertions that something could not possibly be found. "No ideas can exist unperceived" entails "there are in fact no unperceived ideas" in the way that "No self-contradictory descriptions can be satisfied" entails "There are in fact no beings properly characterized by self-contradictory assertions," or as "X cannot be" entails "X in fact is not." Otherwise put, Berkeley's assertion is not a natural law (it is not causally impossible that there be unperceived ideas) but a "logical" principle. Put in jargon to which I am more receptive, it is a categorial assertion within Berkeley's philosophical scheme. Exactly analogous
remarking not surprisingly apply to the other philosophical
assertions we have been discussing.

One can of course protest that we ought not to put
such stifling limits on empirical research, but surely
to so protest would be simply to miss the point of our
discussion. That point, or at least a crucial part of
it, is that the categorial issues being disputed between
our philosophic opponents are not over "empirical" mat-
ters at all. Controlled experimentation will not tell
us if Descartes or Spinoza is correct about the relation-
ship between attribute and substance, or whether Berkeley
or Taylor is right about thinking matter, or whether
Spinoza or Berkeley is correct about ideas.

It is easy to miss the modal character of the
assertions which have recently concerned us.\textsuperscript{33} They
contain, sometimes, modal instances of "can" or "cannot,"
and sometimes they do not. Whether they explicitly
contain such or not, they are, I think, to be regarded
as modal assertions. By a "modal instance" of "can" or
"cannot" (and their analogues "must" and "must not,"

\textsuperscript{33} This modality is revealed by the fact that any
possible counter-example will refute them.
"may" and "may not," etc.) I mean either the sense of "can" involved in "Nothing can have incompatible properties" (i.e., it is self-contradictory to say that anything has incompatible properties and no self-contradictory assertion can be true) or the sense of "can" involved in "No idea can exist unperceived." This latter, and for our purposes crucial, sense of "can" means, roughly, "can, given the scheme of categories within which the assertion is made." Opposed to these senses of "can" is that involved in "Water can boil" (i.e., no law of physics entails that it cannot), and that involved in "James can swim" (i.e., he has mastered the skill). I make no pretense to having exhausted all the senses of "can" (or all its "ordinary uses"). My concern is with that special sort of modality which, I think, characterizes philosophical or categorial assertions. They are contextually modal. Their context is not empirically falsifiable but does claim to properly represent the world.

Philosophical theses are properly rebutted by possible counter-examples (not merely actual ones); if they can be false, they are false. In my next
chapter, I shall attempt to explicate the sense of "can" involved in this assertion, since it is the possibility of counter-examples that is in dispute between the philosophers we have discussed.
CHAPTER IV

HALL'S CRITERION FOR CATEGORIAL COMMITMENT

Two reservations, or confessions if one pleases, plague any attempt to say exactly what a category is; I offer them as assertions of, and not apologies for, my views about categorial matters.

The first is that there is no a priori way to say just what can count as a category. No such endeavor is feasible for the simple reason that to do so might arbitrarily rule out perfectly viable philosophical perspectives, whether as yet unproposed or merely beyond the writer's ken. But this states a consequence of the main point to be noted, which is that categories are "system relative." What appears as a category in one system may have no role at all in another, and perhaps no analogue either. Further, one definition of "category" may appear sound within one philosophic perspective, absurd within another. A view of what
categories there are, and a view as to what it is to be a category, will, on my view, constitute part of a philosophical system; different systems, qua different systems, will differ on these issues. A list of categories, or a statement of the form "the necessary and sufficient condition of being a category is . . ." or "the (ordinary, thus proper) use of 'category' is . . ." (as endeavors to define or delimit what exactly a category is) will thus constitute part of a philosophic framework. This should give preliminary notice of what I mean by saying that what a category is, is "system relative."

A second and related point is that a category need not, I think, be linguistically expressible. I should want to count 6.522 of the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus as being categorial; it reads "There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical."¹ Now of course 6.522 is expressed in words, but what 6.522 refers to (the things which are unsayable but make themselves

manifest) cannot be so expressed, and it seems to me illegitimate to rule out those unsayable things which make themselves manifest as being themselves categorically commitive. So "C is a category in system S" does not entail "C can be expressed in S (or expressed at all)"; this makes it rather difficult to define exactly what a category is. The fact, if it is such, that not every category in every system must or can be linguistically expressible (cf. the "One" of Plotinus or the vision of the Forms for Plato)\(^2\) does not entail that no criterion for categories can be expressed. "Red" cannot, other than ostensively, be defined, it seems to me; this does not by itself entail that the determinable of which it is a determinate cannot be defined. At least, I do not see that it does. It does, I think, serve to warn us that any such definition will be uncommonly elusive.

We have noted some strictures on taking category-talk too seriously. Ryle regarded it more as a door knocker than as a key, and Warnock and Cross held lower views of its value. They were prepared to return the

\(^2\)"One" is not used to describe, but to 'point to' the indescribable. For Plato’s forms, cf. the Seventh Letter.
rock with which Ryle knocked back to its earthy lair. How ease these understandable qualms?

My answer, to first be sketched lightly and then etched in with broader stroke, borrows heavily from the writings of Everett W. Hall, especially his *Philosophical Systems*. It should be clear by now that I shall not offer a definition of "category," and clear also why I shall not. What, then, is left? One thing, anyway: the possibility of offering a criterion for discovering categories wherever they appear, while neither defining "category" nor offering a list thereof. Euthyphro, if only he could prove that whatever was dear to the gods was in fact pious (and could provide us with a test for deciding what is dear to the gods), would have provided us with a test for piety without having defined "piety." "Liquid which turns blue litmus paper red" does not, I should think, give us the "essence" of acidity, but only an invariable mark. Stating chemical composition is not accomplished merely by finding an earmark. What I shall aim for is a rough statement of a test, or earmark, of categorial commitment.

Somewhat unilluminatingly, categories are concepts
crucial to their systems; a footnote on page seven of Hall's just-mentioned work reveals that he considers categories to be concepts, not words. Aristotle's list of ten (or eight) categories, or Aquinas' transcendental (being, unity, something, truth, goodness) provide examples. Patently, not all concepts are categories; philosophical systems in which "codfish," "cracker," or "cushion" purported to be expressive of categories are hard to imagine.

Insightful, but hardly lucid, is the suggestion, offered by Hall again, that categories fall under the general rubrics of ontology, epistemology, and axiology. The transcendental seems in fact to fall into these divisions nicely, the first three under ontology, the fourth under epistemology, and the last under axiology, if we follow the order of their recent mention. Any given thing, Hall suggests, can be regarded under any, or all, of these rubrics. It is his not unoriginal view that these three rubrics are appropriately regarded as treating existence, reference, and value. Still, the concepts of existence, reference, and value are not always categorial, as "Do dodoes exist?", "The references
he offered are excellent," and "The value of the dollar is declining" reveal. How can we distinguish between these sorts of sentences and "The only thing intrinsically valuable is a perfectly good will," "'Good' refers to a simple, non-natural quality," and "To exist is not merely to subsist"?

These last remarks shift the weight of our concern to sentences, where it will remain. Our earmarks will hopefully characterize categorial features of sentences. Switching metaphors, we stalk categories embedded in their sentential lair, not loosed from their native habitat.

I wish to suggest that those statements which constitute a philosophical system reveal the categories of that system, that statements about a philosophical system which correctly articulate what that system is describe the categories of that system, and that empirical statements show a categorial structure. I will so use "reveal" that "Sentence P reveals the categories of a system S" entails "P presupposes the adequacy of the categories of S" (at least of those which P reveals). I am well aware of the murkiness of these
remarks. They constitute matter for analysis, not a report of results.

What, then, does it mean to say that those statements which constitute a philosophical system reveal the categories of that system? I can, I think, make clear what I mean in the following manner: it surely makes sense to speak of "Platonism" or "Aristotelianism" or "the philosophy of Plato" and the like. Just what in fact can properly be so characterized is most often (perhaps always) a problematic issue, both because there will be different readings of the philosopher's assertions and because it is by no means always clear that all a philosopher says can be packed into a fully consistent system. These difficulties, however, are matters of interpretation, not difficulties in principle. We can still intelligibly propose a battery of statements which will together, at least for ourselves, express a system properly called "Plato's philosophy," with the extra predicates "early" or "later" if we wish. Thus the twenty-five propositions listed by Maimonides in his Guide for the Perplexed as a succinct statement of

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3I am using "assertion," "statement," "sentence," "proposition" interchangeably.
Aristotelianism can be taken as constituting a system of philosophy, whether Aristotle's or not. It is this sort of consideration that I have in mind when I speak of philosophical systems, and of statements which constitute them.

Among our list of sentences constituting Plato's philosophy there might appear the assertion "Two kinds of things exist: Forms and particulars." I take the sentence "Everything whatever can be properly placed into one of two categories: being a Form or being a particular" to say just what its predecessor said; these sentences reveal, so to speak, the way (our) Plato "cuts up the world." They assert that a given pair of categories is sufficient for a stated task. This is what I mean by saying that they reveal (some of) the categories of Plato's system, and by adding that they are committed to the adequacy of the categories noted to the task to which they are assigned. I should really only speak of "this sentence" and "it" rather than "these sentences" and "they" for I hold 'them' to be identical in what they assert.

Opposed to the above sentence, then, consider
"Plato thought that everything that exists is either a Form or a particular." This can, on my view, be reread "The only ontological categories in Plato's system are those of 'Form' and 'particular'." This latter sentence does not in any way entail that Plato's categories are adequate to any task at all. Nor is that sentence constitutive of Plato's philosophy, but rather descriptive of it. It asserts only that certain categories play a role in a certain system and is not internal to Platonism or committed to Platonism. In my jargon, Plato's categories are described, but not revealed, by this sentence.

Empirical statements show their categories via their structure; empirical sentences are always framed within some categorial context from which they derive their form. What do those remarks mean? I can make my point clear best by referring to the distinction between "grammatical form" and "logical form." A philosopher can ask whether the form of "The tulip is red" is or is not misleading. What he asks, I take it,

4I enclose the category-words in single quotes to indicate that the categories in question are expressed by words but are not themselves words.
is whether the substance-accident model which this sentence strongly suggests to the Aristotelian is in fact the only one appropriate to what the sentence asserts (or if it is appropriate at all to what the sentence asserts). Are we to say that the assertion in question presupposes that there are substances and accidents? The same question can, I think, be asked by querying whether what it asserts could appropriately (without loss of meaning) be asserted by "The tulip reds." The Hopis, I am told, would say things that way. Presumably, we could too. The point of debate will not, I think, be over what is seen, but rather over how to say what is seen. Which report form best suits the matter reported? Process philosophers might well opt for Hopi practices, while substance-accident philosophers would be happier with present tendencies. Which one chooses is obviously not, I should hold, dictated by what is reported, and I would describe the difference in report forms as categorial. In this manner empirical sentences show categories. Anyone who held that only "The tulip is red" or only "The tulip reds" was the only accurate form for reporting what they report
would commit himself to one categorial context rather than another. "Misleading grammatical form" is, on my view, elliptical for "misleading grammatical form, because it does not show the proper categorial form," and "proper categorial form" is elliptical for "proper categorial form, given categorial system S."

It should be noted in this regard that "reductionism" (of physical objects to clusters of sense data, or of statements about minds to statements about bodies, or of terms with different intension to extensionally equivalent terms) is a categorially loaded endeavor. The thesis, for example, that mental processes (or actions) are nothing but brain states traditionally faces the problem, among others, of accounting for the fact that brain states can receive predicates which mental processes cannot, and conversely. A case in point of reductionism is provided by J. J. C. Smart who asserts that "a man is a vast arrangement of physical particles, but there are not, over and above this, sensations or states of consciousness." But

his case is an interesting sort of reductionism because he does not claim that all (or any) statements about mental processes (acts, states) are translatable into statements about brain processes. Were he to say this, he would either have to reject such statements as "The thought was witty" as ill-formed or meaningless or produce a satisfactory substitute for it which read something like "The brain process stimulated a behavioural response of a given sort called in common speech 'laughing'." The former proposal would clearly be itself categorically loaded, in that it would involve him in offering a criterion for ill-formed sentences or meaninglessness, which his opponent, who takes the sentence to be acceptable as it stands, could counter with a different one, or respond simply by rejecting Smart's. And, of course, the translation attempt would be perfectly open to rejection on the ground that behaviour is one thing, thought another; the issue as to whether one can properly regard thought as "the same sort of thing" as behaviour is itself categorical, as I have argued in greater detail in the preceding chapter. The issue is
whether one ontic category (bodily behaviour) or two (bodily behaviour, mental process) are required to describe "what is"; how sophisticated one makes the category "bodily behaviour" is relevant to how plausible the one-category view is, but does not erase the categorial conflict involved.

The next point to be noted is the obvious one that Smart does not escape categorial issues by means of not claiming that he can translate one sort of claim into another. He appeals to the fact that the "logic" of "nation" does not permit us to say everything about the citizens of a nation that we can say of the nation of which they are citizens, just as the "logic" of mental words does not permit us to say that behaviour has all of the predicates that mental processes have. Nonetheless, nations are no more than their citizens and mental processes no more than brain states (i.e., than the "behaviour" of brains). This issue we need not attempt to resolve; we need only to note that for Descartes and Berkeley brain states cannot in fact be mental processes; the purportedly empirical thesis that they are requires the non-empirical thesis that they
can be. The categorial issue is joined through the modal statements "Mental processes cannot be brain states" and "Mental processes can be brain states." Only after the modal issue is settled can one refer to the empirical evidence for the latter, if any. Since "Mental processes are (nothing but) brain states" cannot be true unless "Mental processes can be brain states" is true, and since, e.g., Descartes, Berkeley, Blanshard, and others deny that they can be, the issue is categorial, not empirical.

From these remarks one can gather how I would deal with other reductionistic theses or programs; I will not deal with other such endeavors in this work. I only point out that if this line of argument is successful, then issues as to the success of reductionistic programs are issues about the (possible) categorial adequacy of one sentence (or system of sentences) as opposed to that of another sentence (or system of sentences). Hence reductionism will be (as will its denial) categorially committed, and hence not a feasible way of deciding between two conflicting philosophical
perspectives. This becomes a matter of interest in the last chapter of this work.

To argue for a "realistic" theory of truth by stating that "X is true" is quite distinct from, and not entailed by, "Everyone believes X is true," to argue for a "realistic" theory of value by stating that "X is good" is distinct from, and not entailed by, "Everyone approves of X," to argue that "X is true" does not mean the same as "X is verified" because there are statements which have been verified but which are not true and statements now true though as yet unverified—all of these are cases of taking sides in a categorial clash. The "proof" offered in each case is but a restatement of (or, if one wishes, states what is presupposed by) the thesis to be proved. If, for example, "X is true" does mean "X is verified" then there cannot be cases of true but unverified statements. A part of the point of the perspective from which "true" is defined as "verified" is to rid us of the view that there are statements true 'on their own,' whether verified now or ever. The same sort of comment would apply to the
counter-theses to these theses and the analogous arguments for them. While I would in each case opt for the thesis, not the antithesis, this only reveals my categorial commitments. An obvious corollary to this view is that some philosophical theses cannot be "proved," that all those which are constitutive of a philosophical system will fall into this rubric, and that I am thus in full sympathy with what Hall calls "the categoric-centric predicament."

No sentence constitutive of a philosophical system can be "proved." Suppose we axiomatize such a system. To prove that system will be to prove its axioms. Given the independence of the axioms, no proof of an axiom can be given within the system. We cannot appeal to empirical sentences, since (as will shortly be argued in more detail) their content is unhelpful and any categorial form they possess will be determined by some system of categories. If the form of the empirical sentences is given by the system in question, our "proof" will beg the question in favor of the system being tested. If the form of the empirical sentences in question is determined by a different system, the
question will be begged against the system being tested. These remarks serve, I trust, to further point out, in a preliminary way, what is involved in my view. I may as well confess that my view is self-applicative, and thus self-illustrative.

One final comment is in order concerning proofs. If it can be shown that the pragmatic theory of truth presupposes (cannot be stated without appeal to) the correspondence theory, or that sense data statements cannot be stated without appeal to the material object statements they were intended to replace, so long as this is done by appeal only (in the first case) to the categories of pragmatism requisite to its theory of truth or only (in the second case) to the categories of phenomenalism requisite to the purported translation, then the logical status of the proof will be different. One would then have shown that on pragmatism's own grounds its theory of truth is not sufficient—that the categories involved in that theory of truth are not sufficient by themselves to provide an adequate theory thereof—or on phenomenalism's own grounds that its translation endeavor is impossible since it requires
for the intelligibility of the sense data language the very material object language it endeavors to replace—that the categories of phenomenalism as involved in the translation attempt are not sufficient by themselves to say adequately what must be said about material objects. The relevant difference in this sort of proof is that the categories of a given view are themselves the tools used to undermine the view; appeal is made only to the categories of the criticised system, not to those foreign to it. In Hall's phrase, the system is hoist by its own petard (at least part of it is). Thus the use by Descartes of animal spirits to provide the needed bridge between mind and body can with reasonable ease be shown to be futile. On his own view, everything that is is mental or material. This means that animal spirits are one or the other. They cannot be both, or be neither. If they are material, we need something to bridge the gap between them and mind. If they are mental, we need something to bridge the gap between them and matter. So the animal spirits produce no solution, but provide only another way of raising the original problem of how mind and matter interact.
I have offered, then, the promised sketch of the criterion for categorial sentences, at least by way of saying what sorts of sentences are relevant to our purposes and, roughly at least, what we mean by saying that these sentences either, as the case may be, reveal, assert, or show categorial commitment. I now turn to providing a more detailed and finished version of this sketch.

As good a place to begin as any is the distinction, already noted, between what may now be called "formal categorial sentences" and "material categorial sentences," echoing Rudolph Carnap's formal versus material mode. Sentences of the sort "Plato divides all that is into two categories" are in the formal mode. Their commitment is to categories and to philosophical systems (at least one). Sentences of the sort "Everything that is can properly be divided into two categories: Form and particular" are in the material mode, being committed to the ontological categories of Plato and to their adequacy to the task of exhausting the types of things there are. It is in material categorial sentences that categorial commitment is found in its native lair. Formal categorial sentences disengage
the commitment to categories embedded in the material categorial sentences which occur within their scope. Otherwise put, sentences of the sort "Appearance and reality are categories in Bradley's system" mention the categories of appearance and reality, but use the categories of category and system. They are committed to the existence of mentioned, and to the adequacy of used, categories. "Everything falls properly under the rubric of appearance or the rubric of reality, and nothing under both" mentions no categories but is committed to the adequacy of those it uses.

"Categorial systems differ categorially," to take a Hallian example, both uses and mentions the category of category; its commitment is to the category used, but since the used category is the mentioned one, this hybrid is properly regarded as neither material or formal.

Empirical statements occur, I have suggested, in categorial contexts. To insist that one way of reporting what is perceived when one sees a red tulip is descriptively preferable over another is to choose one way of categorizing what is perceived rather than another. "The tulip reds" can plausibly be regarded as,
in some difficult to specify sense,⁶ "saying the same thing" as "The tulip is red." In a sense that I think can be specified, they can be regarded as saying something different, or as saying the same thing (categorically) differently. One proposes that a process occurs, the other that some thing has a quality.

In this way empirical statements can, I think, be categorically committive. Any operations performed on ordinary language sentences, as well as the insistence that ordinary language sentences ought not to be twisted into new shapes (are all right as they stand), will be categorically committive. A sceptical position can be phrased in this way of talking as the view that any way of saying what is seen is as good as any other; but the sceptic too will be committed categorically, i.e., to the inadequacy of all categories to be faithful to the way the world is, and to the adequacy of his own categories to say (and presumably to show) this.

A few more remarks concerning categorial sentences must suffice for our purposes. For one thing, what makes

⁶Since to say what was perceived would be to use a report form which is categorially shaped.
the difference between a categorial and an empirical statement is not itself empirical. No observational feature of a sentence can properly be labeled "categorialness" or "categorial-making quality." Surely the mere appearance of the word "category" will not do: "When she called him fink, she sure put him in the right category" offers appropriate evidence to controvert that thesis. Nor will the sheer appearance of the words "category in a system"; "Unpaid bills is a popular category in her (filing) system" suffices to show that. To appeal to the use of a sentence as marking it off as categorial is not far from what I have been doing all along, but the relevant use (revealing, describing, or showing categories) is not itself a series of sounds or bits of typescript, though these may be its means.

Material categorial sentences can be categorially duplicative or categorially contradictory. An example of the former is provided by "There are meaningful existential statements" and of the latter by "There are

7Since another series could perform the same task or express the same meaning.
no meaningful existential statements." Such duplication ought to be kept quite distinct from that manifested by "Some sentences have five words," which is factual. No philosophical consequences result from there being in fact no sentences composed of five words or there being in fact such sentences. What is asserted by this latter example, or by its contradictory, is not categorial.

I have neglected type-considerations in the preceding paragraph; by regarding the latter examples as metastatements one can escape any (factual) duplication or conflict, it might be suggested. I should, however, want to regard such sentences as true (in the case of "Some sentences have five words") and false (in the case of "No sentences have five words"), and as such in virtue of each being an instance of a five word sentence, whatever special problems there may be with respect to the class of all classes not members of themselves. Analogously, one could regard the former brace of examples as formal categorial sentences, and thus as elliptical for a fuller sentence ending with the phrase "for . . ." or "in system S." One could, however, regard them as respectively illustrating and
conflicting with their categorial commitments, i.e., as duplicating or denying them, respectively.

We began by talking about categories, shifted to talk of categorial sentences, and have now surreptitiously been speaking in terms of commitment to categories. All that is now needed, the disgruntled critic may suggest, is that we complete the circle by talking once again about categories simpliciter. I think, really, that much has been gained by our discussion thus far. Noting the sorts of sentences which, in various ways, involve categories, characterizing how this involvement occurs, and treating the notions of formal versus material mode categorial sentences has provided some progress. We need now to move to criteria for categorial commitment.

Perhaps the foregoing cases of categorial clash will lend credence to the first feature of a categorial commitment. It is that such commitment cannot be empirically verifiable or falsifiable; no given report of sensory experience, whether of common sense or science, will entail, make more or less probable, or provide relevant evidence for or against, a categorial
commitment, or (if one prefers) the (categorial) sentence which bears such commitment. Further, neither will any scientific theory, if we mean by "scientific theory" either a battery of sensory reports, or general empirical statements about or based upon such reports, or a causal explanation of why the events reported occurred which involves reference to still further empirical events. Again, no set of empirically verifiable statements conjoined with a categorial statement (a statement of direct categorial assertion, one in the material mode) will provide a useful explanation of a set of data which that set of empirically verifiable statements do not provide by themselves. "Every event has a cause," as a categorial assertion as opposed to being a generalization from observed correlations between empirical phenomena, is no exception. If it is (as categorial) true at all, it is neither empirically verifiable or falsifiable. Any categorial system of which it is constitutive (and there are many) will deny that it is in principle possible to present any case of an event without a cause, perhaps adding that the most that we
could say about any such purported instance was that we had not yet found out (perhaps in some cases could not) what the cause was. Any categorial system of which its contradictory is constitutive will regard such a move as revelatory of inherent weakness. Since, on this view, the causal principle is possibly false, counter-examples (logically) can be provided. The relevance of purported counter-examples to the causal principle is itself a categorially loaded issue; counter-examples are possible only to possibly false theses, and for any system of which "Every event has a cause" is constitutive its falsity is not a possibility. The relevance of possible counter-examples to philosophical theses provides a related comment. Not only is the relevance of possible counter-examples (i.e., whether or not there could be any counter-example) an issue which is significant by way of marking the categorial status of "Every event has a cause" when regarded as other than simply an empirical generalization, the conclusion of an inductive argument, or merely a regulative principle; but the fact that any possible (and not merely some actual) counter-examples are relevant to cogent criticism of
philosophical theses generally argues well for their special (categorial) modality.  

Again, the categorial commitment of a system looks from within the system, indisputably true; from without, they are clearly contingent and likely mistaken. Analogously, empirical assertions shaped in the context of one's own system are obviously in proper form, while those shaped in foreign context are plainly in need of analysis or clarification. "My act of thinking when I write is located at my desk" is properly formed for Ryle, utter nonsense for Descartes or Berkeley.

Once again, if the addition of a set of sentences to a system (or, of course, the addition of just one sentence), produces conceptual chaos within the resulting system whereas the original system manifested conceptual order, then the new sentences possess categorial commitment in fundamental conflict with that of the original system. Trying to find a place for material substance in Berkeley's system or for unembodied spirits in Ryle's framework would provide relevant examples.

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8 It should be added that categorial systems purport to be adequate to saying what sorts of things there are. They claim to be "true of" reality.
Yet again, if removing a sentence or set thereof from a system would destroy the conceptual scheme thus diminished, categorial commitment has been discerned in the excluded portion of the system. Remove, for example, Berkeley's theory of notions, however difficult it may be to deal clearly with its place in Berkeley's system, and one can no longer talk about minds, and thus also one can no longer say that ideas must be "in" a mind; that would, after all, be to no longer be able to state Berkeley's views.

Though reference to Hall's *Philosophical Systems* in terms of explicit quotation has thus far been rare, my intellectual indebtedness is obvious to anyone who has perused Hall's pages. By way of acknowledging my debt, and summing up my (Hall's) remarks on categorial commitment as well, I offer an extended quotation.9

> When we see something so generally characteristic of a system that its removal would not result in a gap but in the collapse of the whole thing, something that is involved structurally in it, that cannot properly be translated into another standpoint without distortion or transformation into nonsense, that cannot be confirmed or disconfirmed observationally, that within the system appears foolish because

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analytic, but taken from outside, if not empty, then obviously synthetic — in any such something we have a categorial commitment. If directly asserted, that assertion is a categorial statement in the system; so far as it is reflected in the various aspects of empirical language, that is of sentences that can be verified or disverified observationally, then to that degree it is unasserted but real categorial commitment.

At the end of this chapter, which in effect concludes the first section of this essay, it may be helpful to stress one matter perhaps not yet made sufficiently clear. Suppose one were to ask: is categorial commitment borne by single statements, or by systems? My reply, as is surely implicit if not explicit in the foregoing, is that categorial systems are (in the main) simply constituted by categorial assertions. It is those categorial assertions (our main concern being with material mode categorial sentences; those actually constituting a categorial system) as embedded in their systematic context which are categorial. We noted that "Every event has a cause" could be used to express an empirical generalization (Mill, I believe, so regarded it), or a regulative principle. But as it appears in Descartes' system, it cannot be false; it is known by the light of man's rational nature, being clearly and
distinctly true. For Locke and Berkeley, it is also, in some sense, clearly necessarily true.

It is useful to distinguish between a given sequence of mounds of typescript as it appears in a context of experimental reporting and extrapolation therefrom, and its twin appearing in the center of an argument for the existence of God. The twin mounds may express singularly different assertions. This is only my (perhaps perverse) way of agreeing with the traditional distinction between a sentence and the proposition which it expresses, or with Strawson's distinction between a sentence and its uses (waiving as irrelevant for present purposes the questions of the 'entification' of propositions).

As a consequence of this view, if we can refute a material mode categorial assertion which is constitutive of system S, we will have refuted S. Suppose the Maimonides' summary of Aristotle's philosophy in terms of twenty-five theses is as we would wish: each thesis is independent, but each is essential to that system called "Aristotelianism." Then the refutation of any one of these assertions will refute the whole system,
though not of course any of the other theses. For the whole system can be correct only if each of its constituent assertions are, though the assertions singly are not refuted by the falsehood of one of their number. My only qualification on this way of putting the matter is that the theses which constitute a system are likely to be conceptually inter-twined in an intimate way which makes even considerations of logical independence more difficult than might appear a priori to be the case. But I do not know that I can do more to characterize that sort of inter-twining than I already have done.

The point is, then, that the refutation of a constitutive assertion (one composing part of the system) of a system is the refutation of that system, and if between systems S and S' only S fails to be constituted by refutable assertions, then S is clearly superior. Just how philosophical assertions are refutable is a topic to receive considerable attention in the pages to come; it should by now be obvious that I use "categorial" and "philosophical" synonymously, and why I think that this is legitimate. In any case, challenges to this practice appear frequently in the coming chapters, and receive reply.
Establishing the truth of a formal mode categorial statement is concerned with textual, linguistic studies requisite to valid and sensitive interpretation on the one hand, and of eliciting presuppositions of, and conceptual relationships in, a system on the other (though these activities ought not be too strongly separated). Establishing a formal categorial statement is by no means evidence for the truth of the material mode categorial statement embedded therein. As empirical statements show categorial commitment, being framed in accord with those categories expressed or expressible in a material mode categorial statement, the commitment shown will not be established as correct by those statements. The "content" of such statements will be just that observational element which cannot verify or falsify categorial commitment. The "form" of such statements will be determined by the categorial framework to be established. Even if a given content is purportedly inexpressible in a specific categorial framework\(^{10}\) (a possibility that I think Hall should eschew on his own grounds, and which I in any

\(^{10}\)As Hall contends is true with respect to the categories of Aristotle's philosophy and the laws of quantum mechanics. See *Philosophical Systems*, p. 148.
case do) the issue as to whether to regard the categorial system or the purported data as defective is a perfectly open one and is itself a matter for (categorial) disputation.
CHAPTER V

PRAGMATIC PROCEDURES AND PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS

The preceding chapters sketched a view of what categorial systems are. On my view, in so doing they sketched a view of what philosophical systems are. This view, not surprisingly, is not shared by all philosophers. In particular, certain contemporary philosophers would object to the rejection of a "given" which is implicit in my account, manifesting this objection by offering a rather different view of what philosophical systems are and how they are related to, say, empirical data.

In this chapter and its immediate successors, I shall consider some of these competing views about philosophical systems. Some of them reject metaphysics in its traditional style altogether, regarding it as meaningless (Carnap). Others regard philosophy as the most general kind of science, thus placing philosophic
endeavor on a continuum with others (Quine). Both of these approaches, which will receive rebuttal in this present chapter, appeal to pragmatic decision procedure as a basis for choosing between philosophical systems.

Yet another approach offers common sense as a touchstone for philosophical systems and construes such systems as consisting at least in part of the results of analyses of common sense statements which are known to be certainly true (Moore). The qualification that for Moore such systematic considerations as occupy our attention throughout this work may be in the end illegitimate should be kept in mind; nonetheless, insofar as Moore will allow philosophical system-making to be a viable endeavor, it presumably must be carried out in the style just described.

Still another perspective finds a bifurcation within philosophy itself, either between critical and speculative philosophy (Broad) or between descriptive and revisionary metaphysics (Strawson).

The final approach to be considered offers the metaphor of stratification as illuminating with respect to the relationship between philosophical and
non-philosophical issues, and the various levels of assertions and other uses to be found in any natural language is regarded as not only instructive about the possible connections between different types of assertions but also as destructive of purported philosophical disputes (Waismann).

Each of these suggestions, to be developed and scrutinized in turn, contains an at least embryonic view of what philosophy is. Each at least implicitly opts for a given way of deciding between conflicting philosophies. Thus each is relevant to the two questions which overarch the entire present discussion. Topics will thus be dealt with in these middle chapters which belong equally to earlier or later ones. I know of no way to avoid such criss-crossing commentary, and am not disturbed by this. It merely illustrates my view that philosophical issues are always embedded in systematic contexts. To discuss one view is to discuss others implicitly; to offer a solution to one problem is to raise others. No philosophical problem is an island. Philosophical systems are the only continents in philosophical geography.
To turn then to the topic of the present chapter, Rudolph Carnap offers a rather different view of philosophy than the one to which the opening chapters of this work are committed. It consists in the main of rejecting as pseudo-questions the issues that exercised the minds of traditional metaphysicians. These questions are not simply dropped; rather, they are rephrased in a way purportedly more illuminating and open to intersubjective evaluation.

He begins his long section on "Philosophy and Syntax" in The Logical Syntax of Language by dividing those questions dealt with by any theoretical field into object questions and logical questions. This rough distinction is characterized by noting that logical questions are questions concerning sentences, terms, and theories which purport to refer to objects, whereas object questions concern the objects purportedly referred to. The difference is roughly that between questions concerning sentences about zebras and the relations between those sentences as opposed to questions concerning zebras and their relations.

Applying this rough bifurcation to traditional
philosophy, Carnap finds that questions of both sorts have interested philosophers. Logic and epistemology (which Carnap regards as reducible to logic, or if not so reducible then as degenerate psychology) pose logical questions, and metaphysics, by speaking of things-in-themselves and the Absolute, poses pseudo-object questions which are in fact unintelligible. Metaphysics (ethics too, if not reducible to psychology or anthropology) deals with pseudo-problems; this has been shown, Carnap tells us, by "critical analysis" and is so evident that he does not bother to recite again the positivistic evidence. It is worth citing and examining, and we will do so in a later chapter.

Rid of metaphysics and ethics, Carnap dismisses the psychological questions of epistemology (I presume he means the theory of perception) as empirical insofar as they are genuine; only logic is left. As for the "philosophy of" disciplines, philosophy of history and philosophy of science are reputable enough to be salvageable by conversion. Insofar as their questions are not properly part of one of the laudable empirical sciences or are not to be rejected as pseudo-questions, their questions too are logical ones.
Thus the banner is raised and its inscription reads "we shall . . . maintain that all remaining philosophical questions are logical questions." The accompanying proclamation is worth quoting:

Apart from the questions of the individual sciences, only the questions of the logical analysis of science, of its sentences, terms, concepts, theories, etc. are left as genuine questions. According to this view . . . once philosophy is purified of all unscientific elements, only the logic of science remains . . . the logic of science takes the place of the inextricable tangle of problems which is known as philosophy.  

Whether to retain the "heavily burdened" term "philosophy" (its heavy burden is its association with metaphysics) is a matter of indifference; let expedience rule. The remainder of Carnap's volume assumes this view of philosophy, though he graciously grants that those who cannot share his assumptions may merely wish to say that what he shows is only that "the problems of that part of philosophy which is neither metaphysical nor connected with norms and values are syntactical."  

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2Ibid.

3Ibid.
Ignoring the question as to whether the surgery just performed leaves us with a rather diminutive but far healthier patient than philosophers from, say, Socrates to Kant encountered, or with something more like an artificially animated body, we can now turn to the decision procedure which Carnap offers for issues in the "logic of science."

An example or two of what happens to material mode statements is in order. Material mode sentences (unrepentently appropriate answers to the eschewed pseudo-object questions) such as "Five is not a thing, but a number" need conversion into formal mode sentences (appropriate answers to logical questions) such as "'Five' is not a thing-word, but a number-word." The issue shifts from a question which seems to be about an entity to a question clearly about how a term functions in its formal context. The answers to formal mode questions are explicitly about words as they function in a given discourse. For Carnap, this is refreshingly innocent of non-empirical ontology. Issues as to which of two competing discourses is superior are decidable by means of a procedure now to be elucidated.
For that procedure, a bibliographical shift is required; "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology"\textsuperscript{4} is our new source. This article provides a bit broader context for the rejection of metaphysical issues noted above. Consider the question "Are there any x?" This will either be a particular existence question which presupposes the qualification "Given language L" and which will be answerable by following the rules for empirical observations confirming or disconfirming x's or a logical question answerable by noting such matters as the rules governing the use of the word "x" in L. It is, that is to say, either, on the one hand, a question about the syntax of L, a given domain of science, or about the existence or non-existence of an object which (if it exists) falls under the domain of the science in question, whose existence can be empirically decided since it is (if it exists) an empirical object. Or, on the other hand, our question ("Are there any x?") may be a pragmatic usage question. It may mean "Is L, which contains 'x', the most fruitful, efficient, simple language for us to use in gaining our scientific goals,

or is some other language (not containing 'x') more felicitous to our ends?" The only other alternative open to us, according to Carnap, is to regard our question as an ontological one but not one of empirical ontology (not a question proper to one of the sciences); but alas all such questions are "non-cognitive." (Does "non-cognitive" really mean any more than "not a question of syntax or empirical science"?)

We might note in passing that what Carnap says about abstract entities will hold for all entities; since what entities one asks about depends on what language one is using, and since what language one is using depends for Carnap on pragmatic considerations, it follows that what (concrete or abstract) entities exist depends upon pragmatic considerations. This is relevant to Quine's extension of Carnap's views.

What sort of reply is appropriate to Carnap? One obvious issue to be discussed is simply the justification for mounting the program at all. I will deal with this matter, albeit obliquely, in a later chapter on the falsifiability criterion and its predecessors.

Carnap argues that to ask whether a system of entities exist can only be to ask whether the language in which we state that system is the best one to use. 'Best' languages are those which are pragmatically superior.
Another obvious point is that Carnap is himself categorially committed in his rejection of the view that "To mean is to name." Indeed, I shall recount some Hallian arguments to make this categorial commitment evident. Finally, even should one accept the Carnapian strictures, one could, I take it, still do metaphysics by giving attention to the syntactical features of a language, leaving semantical features alone. Frege (whose "Sense and Reference" provided potent criticism of the "to mean is to name" view) does just this in his "Concept and Object" to which we shall briefly turn our attention.

First, however, some brief reflections. Carnap points out that we cannot, within a language L, raise any question about the existence of the sort of entities to which the language is committed or about which the language was constructed to speak. Grant this, and it does not follow that one cannot ask the questions one wants to ask in a metalanguage, where one asks about the sort of entities of which L speaks, not about the words in L. What makes this impossible?

Carnap warns that those who do not adapt his views fall likely prey to a "Fido"-Fido theory of
meaning. One could, after all, opt for a full-blown "platonism" and regard "or," for example, as naming a universal. Or one could appeal to the syntactical features of an ideal language, or of a system of formal mode sentences, as metaphysically revelatory.

Consider the thesis that logical connectives do not name. If we take this to simply mean that they do not designate any entities, though this itself is categorially committive, there is still a syntactical task which may be assigned to them. As Hall notes,

this would not be tantamount to saying that they in no sense refer to or reveal anything extra-linguistic. Indeed, if the names in ... a language designate specific and observable entities it would seem that, granting the categorial adequacy of the language, it must be precisely the constants that in some fashion show the categorial features of the world.6

Perhaps Carnap's best known contribution to philosophic jargon is his material mode-formal mode distinction. One point to be noticed is that, in his program of going from one mode to the other, some continuity of meaning, a claim of sameness of sense, is inextricably involved (else the formal mode translations

of traditional philosophical material mode sentences will be pointless). Meaning is a semantic, not a syntactic, topic. Further, if one can translate one way, one can retranslate the other. What, then, is to keep us from translating from formal back to material mode? Presumably, only the "anti-metaphysical attitude" which appears as neither an assumption nor thesis in Carnap’s volume. Hall concludes his critique of Carnap by arguing that "it is easy to turn the tables on Carnap" since

he wishes to say something about metaphysics without getting himself involved in metaphysics, so he finds some corresponding thing he can say about syntax. Thus for him the syntactical translations he gives of metaphysical statements are in the transposed mode; they are disguised anti-metaphysical assertions. He is trying to say with Wittgenstein that the world contains only the objects asserted and characterized in scientific statements, but he realizes he cannot say this so he says something else, something correlated, about syntax, and so of course he is deceiving himself.7

Frege, in his "Concept and Object," remarks that "the concept (as I understand the word) is predicative."8


He adds in a note that "it is, in fact, the reference of a grammatical predicate."\textsuperscript{9} As to this comment, a qualification will prevent our being misled. The relation between grammatical predicate and concept is not that the latter is the referent of the former, or the former the name of the latter. Frege confesses toward the end of his article that his way of putting things is sometimes necessarily opaque.

I admit that there is a quite peculiar obstacle in the way of an understanding with my reader. By a kind of necessity of language, my expressions, taken literally, sometimes miss my thought; I mention an object, when what I intend is a concept.\textsuperscript{10}

It will shortly become clear that grammatical predicates "stand for" concepts, but do not name them or refer singularly to them. "Stand for" is a technical, likely primitive term, not to be confused with naming or its analogues. Another infamous case of linguistic infelicity consequent upon Frege's analysis is that "the concept 'horse'" is not a concept, but is an object.

It would, I should think, be mistaken to take these

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid.
linguistic infelicities as undercutting Frege's basic program.

That program begins by marking a difference between concept-words and object-words, doing so by means of the distinct senses of "is" which can be attached to them. Suppose we take the sentence "X is the planet Venus"; we do not, clearly enough, predicate "the planet Venus" of "X" in the way that we predicate "green" of "the tall cactus." The "is" in our Venus sentence expands properly into "is identical with" or "is no other than"; but "is green" does not so expand. Object words, then (e.g., "Venus"), can only appear as flanking the "is" of identity, never the "is" of predication. Concept words (e.g., "Green") properly flank only the "is" of predication, never the "is" of identity. Further, falling under a concept is an irreversible relationship; "The cactus is green" asserts, upon analysis, that an object (the cactus) falls under a concept (green), but this can hardly be reversed. On the contrary, "X is Venus" can be reversed into "Venus is X" with no alteration of sense or truth value.

The difference indicated between concept words
and object words is not dependent on an appeal to semantic issues, such as meaning, but rather rests on syntactic issues, such as the proper functioning of two kinds of words; the structure of a language is under review, not its vocabulary. That concepts can fall under higher order concepts (Frege wishes to say that while objects fall under concepts, a first-level concept falls within a second-level concept) does not challenge the distinction between concept and object.

One can now make an obviously disputable, but perfectly possible, move. One can say that since there is an irreducible logical or syntactic bifurcation between concept-words and object-words, there is a corresponding ontological or metaphysical bifurcation between concepts (what concept-words stand for) and objects (what object-words name). This requires the thesis that ultimate logical or syntactic distinctions indicate ultimate ontic distinctions; I cannot see why one cannot, given Carnap's strictures, make that assumption about the metaphysical relevance of syntax, unless we appeal to positivistic grounds. We have already put off discussing those grounds until a later section. Suffice
it for now to note that a Fregian can, it would seem, forgo semantics for syntactics, and continue to ontologize.

I have argued, then, that even if we retain Carnapian limitations, metaphysics or ontologising has not been eliminated. It can, thus, be a meaningful endeavor, an intellectually viable task, for all that Carnap has said to the contrary. When we reflect further that Carnap's own endeavors did not seem to be fully innocent of semantic considerations and were by no means free from their own categorial features, and that the reasons for embarking on his journey were positivistic ones to come under review, we have perhaps said enough to allay fears that his contentions undermine the program outlined above. I turn, therefore, to the issue of a pragmatic decision procedure, and my remarks here apply, I should think, equally to Carnap or to Quine.

Since pragmatic attempts to decide between metaphysical schemes will get short shrift elsewhere in this work, a few remarks about them here are in order, especially in connection with Carnap and Quine who are very much inclined toward such a means of evaluation.
Carnap offers pragmatic considerations with respect to empirical matters whereas Quine, disinclined to distinguish sharply between matters empirical and matters non-empirical, wishes all questions to be so resolved. We could characterize Carnap's concerns by the question "How well does L permit us to operate in the extra-linguistic world?" and Quine's by asking "What degree of rearrangement would the acceptance of a thesis require us to make in our overall conceptual scheme?"

Pragmatic considerations would seem to relate to either parsimony of means to an end, or success in attaining the end (whether parsimoniously or not). Of two views, one which makes it possible to do what we wish and another which does not, the former is obviously pragmatically preferable. Of two views, each of which permits us to attain an end, but one of which does so more efficiently than the other, the less efficient is less pragmatically justified.

I will divide my remarks, accordingly, into two brief sections, one regarding efficiency or parsimonious means, the other related to the issue of the end to be attained.
"Don't assume more than you need to make your proof successful" is good advice; one is always safer if he can eliminate a premise from a proof without damage to cogency and completeness. But then the premise was in fact not strictly a part of the proof at all, but only a flourish or an irrelevance. But what if we have two systems which explain the same data, but one is simpler than the other? Is not the simpler better?

Two questions arise: simpler with respect to what? better with respect to what? Simpler with respect to number of axioms, number of entities, number of rules of inference, number of inferences made, or what? Better with respect to being more easily understood, or with respect to artistic and aesthetic features, or what? The only sort of "being better" that interests me here is "being truer" or "being more justified" or the like. So we can limit the issue of "being better" or "being superior" to that.

What, then, has the number of axioms, entities, inference rules, or inference moves to do with the truth or correctness of a system of philosophy? Can we even say "The simpler with respect to axioms the
less chance of error?" without meeting the just response
"The less axioms, the less true axioms, and hence the
less truth one has"?¹¹ Safety is counter-balanced by
richness and risk of error by chance of truth. Nor is
there a series of philosophical truths which must be
expressible in every philosophical system. Philosophers
tend to be timid rather than adventurous in such matters,
but this is a matter of biography and not of philosophy.
We can justify simplicity, of any of the sorts mentioned
and of any other sort that I can think of, as being
connected with "being true" or "being more justified"
only if we assume some such principle as "Nature wastes
nothing" or "God would not create a world with any more
entities and laws than absolutely necessary to accomplish
His purposes." To have three laws where two would have
done, if such cases are conceivable, would be unthink-
able given the nature of God. But there is something
woefully weak in this appeal to God or Nature. Why,
if we appeal to God, assume that God is more like the
niggardly mathematician than the effusive artist?
The more reality there is, it has been suggested, the

¹¹Different but comprehensive metaphysical sys-
tems are incompatible, not complementary.
more perfect the world is: to be is better than not to be. Again, "nature abhors a vacuum." The point is simply this: the appeal to simplicity as a relevant criterion for judging between philosophical systems is either to appeal to the nature of God or the habits of Nature in a way itself quite challengeable by counter-appeals (of which the philosophical tradition has examples) and in a way which other systems make objectionable in itself (cf. Hume's Dialogues) or perhaps simply to opt for safety with little rather than risk with much, or to simply forget to claim anything about truth and justifiedness and to appeal to pragmatic issues about being easier to learn and/or use or the like. With such matters, I have no interest here. If the only grounds for choosing between such systems is simply pragmatic or a matter of taste, for my purposes there will be no way whatever to decide between philosophical systems.

As to ends to be attained, one can, it seems to me, either assert that some end is intrinsically worth attaining (thus appealing beyond pragmatic considerations) or simply admit that one just prefers one end
to others. One could, alternatively, begin an infinite chain of attempts to justify each end pragmatically, but that constitutes no real exception to my contention.

Consider two theories in science, one of which is aesthetically more elegant and the other of which permits more and more accurate predictions. Since they are scientific theories, there is no question as to which is superior; but why opt for science over art? Carnap and Quine are interested in science and the language of science; philosophy of science is philosophy enough. But one can equally well respond that philosophy of religion is philosophy enough, or that moral philosophy is philosophy enough, or that aesthetics is philosophy enough.

The problem seems to be that either the ends which are proposed as furnishing the criteria for system evaluation (a system is adequate to the degree that it accomplishes the end in question) are themselves justifiable because good in themselves (hence, good without appeal to pragmatic considerations) or simply preferred by someone who can offer no justification of his preference over others. As with means, so with ends; if
we are to justify parsimony of means or success in attaining a preferred end, we move to what is rather than what works, to what is true rather than to what is valued or preferred.

I am aware that these remarks amount to little more than a summary dismissal of pragmatic criteria. So it must be; one cannot write on everything in one work. I am, perhaps unfortunately, not persuaded that such criteria deserve more consideration since they are not relevant enough to the adequacy of a categorial scheme in performing its proper task of saying what is the case. Hall provides, in his discussion of pragmatism in *Philosophical Systems*, and in his "A Coherence Theory of Truth" in *Our Knowledge of Fact and Value*, criticism relevant to the issue under discussion. I think it sufficient here to have sketched an argument showing that pragmatic attempts at justification must appeal beyond pragmatic considerations or collapse into expressions of preferences.

Carnap segregates philosophical assertions from polite intellectual society; Quine wishes to welcome them back in. That much, I think, is clear progress.
Quine holds, however, that all theoretical questions are pragmatic questions about language policy. Whereas Carnap wished to regard any intelligibility that could be salvaged from traditionally construed philosophical theses as concerning how we may most conveniently fashion our linguistic framework, he wanted to say that questions about wombats and unicorns were clearly empirical questions about extralinguistic reality. Quine will counter by proposing that even questions about wombats and unicorns are theoretical questions. What we do about the issue of wombat existence is determined by pragmatic considerations, not by reverence to a given set of reports of wombat viewers. As he aptly phrases it, "The unit of empirical significance is the whole of science."\(^\text{12}\) Adjustments in our ontology are to be made with reference to the effect on the whole system, and any purported discovery of new existents can be dealt with without admitting a new member to our ontology if we are willing to pay the price of the readjustment required. Any answer to a theoretical

question can be evaluated in terms of the structural merits of the theory which contains both it, and also sentences conditioned to non-verbal stimulations.

Quine's remarks in the concluding section of the Two Dogmas illuminate his thesis, particularly when he asserts that

it is misleading to speak of the empirical content of an individual statement—especially if it is a statement at all remote from the experiential periphery of the field. Furthermore, it becomes folly to seek a boundary between synthetic statements, which hold contingently on experience, and analytic statements, which hold true come what may. Any statement can be held true, come what may, if we make drastic enough adjustments elsewhere in the system. Even a statement very close to the periphery can be held true in the face of recalcitrant experience by pleading hallucination or by amending certain statements of the kind called logical laws. Conversely, by the same token, no statement is immune to revision. Revision even of the logical law of excluded middle has been proposed as a means of simplifying quantum mechanics; and what difference is there in principle between such a shift and the shift whereby Kepler superseded Ptolemy, or Einstein Newton, or Darwin Aristotle?\(^{13}\)

The reluctance one feels about placing "There are red apples" and "There are other minds" in the same logical basket can, Quine submits, be dealt with in terms of semantic ascent. Thus, toward the end of

\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 43.
Word and Object, Quine writes a section with this title, and offers a continuum between formal mode sentences and their material mode cousins. The sentence "There are wombats" can be reparsed as "'Wombat' is true of something." The value of the shift is that all parties to a wombat dispute are agreed that there is a word "wombat."

"The strategy," says Quine, in describing semantic ascent, "is one of ascending to a common part of two fundamentally disparate conceptual schemes, the better to discuss the disparate foundations." 14 This comes close, it appears, to saying, in category language, that categorial commitments if shared may be used to resolve categorial conflicts. Again, "Words, or their inscriptions, unlike points, classes, and the rest, are tangible objects in the size so popular in the marketplace, where men of unlike conceptual schemes communicate at their best." 15 This, perhaps with a bit of charity, could be read, in another jargon, as appealing to the structure of common-sense language; but these preferred


15 Ibid.
re-readings stretch the imagination. I mention them only to note structural similarities to a view to be considered in a later chapter. The crucial advantage in semantic ascent is that it avoids question begging. The appeal to language is appeal to common ground.

Quine notes two reasons why observation is felt to have no such bearing on logic and philosophy as it has on theoretical physics. One is semantic ascent; the other curriculum classifications, which one can hardly take as an adequate basis for supporting philosophic theses. He concludes that what distinguishes between the scientist's and the ontological philosopher's tasks is "only breadth of categories." His concluding paragraph in _Word and Object_ summarizes his view nicely:

The philosopher's task differs from the others', then, in detail; but in no such drastic way as those suppose who imagine for the philosopher a vantage point outside the conceptual scheme that he takes in charge. There is no such cosmic exile. He cannot study and revise the fundamental conceptual scheme of science and common sense without having some conceptual scheme, whether the same or another no less in need of philosophical scrutiny, in which to work. He can scrutinize and improve the system from within, appealing to coherence and simplicity; but this is the theoretician's method generally. He has recourse to semantic ascent, but so has the scientist. And if the theoretical scientist in his remote way is bound to save the eventual connections
with non-verbal stimulation, the philosopher in his remoter way is bound to save them too. True, no experiment may be expected to settle an ontological issue; but this is only because such issues are connected with surface irritations in such multifarious ways, through such a maze of intervening theory.\(^1^6\)

It should be obvious that I agree that there is no "cosmic exile," but I cannot follow Quine in inferring that the issues in science and philosophy differ only in terms of breadth unless one takes science as itself composed of categorial and implicitly (at least) modal assertions of the sort indicated in my first section. I doubt that many would be willing to take that view of science; to do so would be to deny that scientific theses are open to empirical confirmation or refutation. We have noted that Quine does, in a complex manner, hold a view not too unlike that, and I shall shortly express my reservations about it.

Quine's views, then, have been sketched. What sort of response is appropriate? One interesting issue concerns the question as to whether or not, say, entities properly described by self-contradictory locutions ought in principle to be permitted into any ontology.

\(^{1^6}\)Ibid., p. 275.
Quine seems not to object to saying that "No unmarried man is married" is analytic in a clear sense thereof.

The relevant feature of this example is that it not merely is true as it stands but remains true under any and all reinterpretations of "man" and "married." If we suppose a prior inventory of logical particles, comprising "no," "un-," "not," "if," "then," "and," etc., then in general a logical truth is a statement which is true and remains true under all reinterpretations of its components other than the logical particles.\(^7\)

Quine then lists a second class of analytic statements producible from the first by trading synonyms for synonyms. This second class is dependent upon the notions of synonymy, but the first is not. It would seem, however, that not even the first class of analytic statement is to escape possible scrapping when we come to "Semantic Ascent," for the so-called logical laws are in that portion of Quine's corpus amenable to being scrapped; to scrap the law of excluded middle is to do no more than the sort of thing that happened when Aristotle was scrapped in favor of Darwin. But Aristotle's biology is, one wishes to say, rather a different beast than Aristotle's logic. Quine himself seems to admit that a certain sort of statement (analytic, first class)

\(^7\)Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, p. 23.
is not open to the objections he proposes to the analytic-synthetic bifurcation. What reason, then, have we to suppose such statements, characterized by Quine as true under all conditions, may, upon reaching Semantic Ascent, be open to rejection? The grounds for that rejection, we may remember, are pragmatic. Our goals will determine what we sacrifice. What, however, if there are statements which, once sacrificed, make it impossible for there to be a consistent system at all? The law of contradiction presumably provides such an example. These statements, it may be argued, have a different status than any others. Rather than to add to our discussion here a resume of Aristotle's argument in Book Gamma of the Metaphysics against the possibility of scrapping the law of contradiction, suffice it to say that it seems to me at any rate to be a reductio of a view if one can show that the view in question makes it possible for there to be what in fact cannot be; makes it possible, for example, for there to be a true self-contradictory assertion. Quine's view does seem to do just that.

Quine might want to retain first-class analytic
statements as not open to rejection. This does, I think, violence to the text as it stands, but is a possible move for him to make. Even so, I would not be satisfied, for the issue still remains about the differences noted earlier in this work between categorial and empirical statements. Quine presumably has a real quarrel with a hierarchy of statements, and wants only a continuum. I do not know that I can say much more here about my reasons for desiring sharper delineations between assertion types, though I do not see that Quine's remarks undercut anything said here. It is certainly obvious that none of my contentions depend upon the sorts of considerations (e.g., concerning synonymy) that Quine criticizes in his "Two Dogmas." I should regard Quine as having taken empirical statements rather farther than is justified from their empirical support. It is, I think, the "form," not the "content," of empirical assertions that is categorically shaped. In some sense, "The rose is red" and "The rose reds" have the "same content," though to say what that sameness of content is, is likely impossible, as it would have to be said in one or another of a battery (however large) of assertions,
each with its own peculiar categorial form. Empirical sentences assert the content, and show the form. The content is, the form is not, empirical in the sense of being "experienced." One can, of course, experience the form of "The rose is red" (i.e., note its form) but this is different from noting the rose's redness. But this is only to reaffirm what has already been said. If I have not by now made plausible the case assertions, as opposed to a continuum of sentences differing from one another in terms only of generality, I will not be able to do so here. Insofar as that has been made plausible, I have already implicitly argued against Quine's different proposal.

There is one more feature of Quine's view which I wish to consider, namely his thesis that "to be is to be the value of a bound variable."\(^{18}\) If we dub this Quine's "doctrine of being," noting that it tells us how to discover what a theory is committed to (what must exist if a theory is to be true) rather than telling us what in fact is, I will offer a criticism of Quine's doctrine of being. This criticism will be concerned

\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. 15.
with what seems to be an undue limitation on the possible commitments of a theory. In passing, we note that Quine's criterion or doctrine of being is in accord with his view that all existential questions are, save for their generality, on the same level.

To be more specific as to Quine's criterion, and given a minimum of background in the logic of quantification, we can discern the existential commitments of any theory by translating it into the symbolism of quantificational logic, noting that each variable which appears as quantified in an existential schema indicates a commitment of the theory. We need but list all of the existential schemata of the (now formalized) system, check what the bound individual variables of each of those schemata replace, and hence compile an exhaustive list (given a finite number of statements) of entities to which the system, or anyone holding the system to be true, is committed. A system is existentially committed to whatever must exist for its statements to be true.

One familiar criticism of Quine's view is consequent upon his rejection of the thesis that names or descriptions can be the ultimate bearers of existential
commitment. Definite descriptions can, on his view, be eliminated by means of the techniques provided by Russell's theory of descriptions, and names can in every instance be replaced by definite descriptions which uniquely refer to the thing named. At worst, the name itself may be replaced by its own adjectival form; "Pegasus" by "Pegasises." For my purposes, both Quine's view and the thesis that he rejects share a fatal flaw. Both assume that existential commitment can only be made to that which is an object of reference. Both the "pronouns" for which bound individual variables are surrogate, and names, are singularly referring devices. But what if a view is committed to something which cannot be singularly referred to?

We can challenge Quine successfully if we can find an exception to the "canon of nameables" (to be is to be nameable) which he assumes. A moment's thought reveals that Frege's concepts will do nicely; only object words singularly refer, and no object word refers to a concept. There is, however, another case which is worth brief notice.

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19 The view that names are the ultimate bearers of existential commitment.

20 I owe this term to Romane Clark of Duke University who uses it in an unpublished paper.
Hall, in *What is Value?*, argues that there must be facts. His argument rests on the distinction between naming and asserting. His view is that a name which fails to name is "a contradictio in adjecto." Contrariwise, a sentence that asserts falsely does not thereby fail to assert. Reference failure discounts the claim to name of the term which so fails; false assertion does not discount the claim of the sentence to assert. A false sentence is not a sentence that fails to perform its proper assertive task (only descriptive sentences are in question); a sentence which is false is not a reference which fails to refer.

Again, as Ryle notes, an assertion is not a mere list of names. Suppose we had a list of names, one each for each entity that there is. Mere juxtaposition of those names will not yield any assertions nor will conjoining, disjuncting, etc., them by means of logical connectives do so. "A or B" and "A and B" (where "A" and "B" are names) do not assert anything; if they are taken to do so, they are taken as elliptical for such locutions as "A or B won" or "A and B are here." If we try to name facts, we shall fail. Add to our vocabulary of names the verbs and adjectives required to
say of a piece of chalk A that "A is white" and of chair B that "B is brown." Consider that "A is white and B brown" is quite different from "A is brown and B white." A universe in which the former is true is different from that in which the latter is true. "But," Hall argues, since the vocabulary of the two sentences is the same, it follows that the difference between these two universes is a difference, not in the entities in them which our vocabulary names, but in the facts which our sentences assert.\[^1\]

One might respond that all we require is to name the facts in question, thereby completing our hitherto incomplete vocabulary. Let, then, "Wa" name the fact asserted by "A is white" and "Ba" name the fact asserted by "A is brown." Then consider a universe in which "A is not brown" is true. "Ba" then will not name, though "A is brown" will still assert, though falsely. Were "A is white" purportedly the name of a fact in our second universe, it would be a case of reference failure, an unnaming name to be dropped from our vocabulary since the fact that "A is white" supposedly names does not exist in that universe. We could then not say what was false, namely that A was (in that universe) white. Hall

is surely correct that such a price is too high to pay.
Facts, then, cannot be named. But facts are required for there to be assertion. Hall clearly wishes to be committed to facts, and I should want to say that he clearly is.

Hall says

that a fact cannot itself be a particular seems to me to be established by the very argument for the existence of facts outlined above. It is precisely the uniqueness of facts as the sort of things that cannot be named but must be referred to through assertion or denial that leads to their admission. Particulars, on the contrary, can be named.22

My point is that since Quine limits commitment to that which can be an object of reference, and since Hall and Frege are clearly committed to "things" which cannot be singularly referred to, Quine's criterion is unduly restrictive. Consider, too, those unsayable (hence, unformalizable) commitments of the Tractatus. One might bravely respond that Quine has refuted each of these proffered counter instances, showing that they cannot be committed in the way that they seem to be. This is, I think, plainly false. Quine has not shown, but only assumed, that only objects of reference can be instances of existential commitment. The purpose

22Ibid., p. 27.
of the doctrine of being was to reveal such existential commitment as a conceptual scheme might have; insofar as any conceptual scheme has commitment which escapes his nets, he has failed to do what he promised. A fisherman using one sort of net might never discover that fish too small for his net existed. But when one was reeled in, he could hardly argue, "But 'fish' is defined in terms of what my net will bring in."

It might be noted that, if Hall is right about facts being necessary if there are to be meaningful assertions, then since conceptual systems consist (in part) of assertions, no conceptual system could exist (affirm anything) unless it were committed to facts. And if facts cannot be referred to, Quine would have given us a very deficient criterion indeed. All conceptual systems would of necessity have \( n \) number of assertions, and hence \( n \) number of commitments indiscernible by Quine's criterion. But this comment would become a criticism only if one showed Hall's view about the relationship of facts to assertions to be a true view.

I wish to close this section with a series of
remarks about Quine's criterion which will bring out aspects of it as yet undiscussed.

Even if Quine's criterion were exhaustive and fully satisfactory, it would only give us a list of entities, not a classification or catalogue of such entities; he would have discerned the individuals to which a system was committed, but not the classes, and it would seem that catalogues, not lists, are the philosopher's main interest. Quine admits this.23

Quine's criterion leaves us in doubt as to the essentiality of a given commitment by a conceptual scheme. Suppose proposition P in Scheme S requires that entity E exists. Suppose we can prove E not to exist. (How this proof is arrived at is not important.) Is any rational man now obliged to give up S? Obviously not yet anyway, for P may be inessential to S. Perhaps P could be dropped without damage to S. Quine could reply that, while this is true, it is beside the point, for one should not expect a criterion of existential commitment to decide such matters. Very likely not, but if some criterion for commitment which did this

23 Quine, From a Logical Point of View, pp. 100-105.
could be devised it would be worth consideration. Hall's criterion for categorical commitment seems to me to have that feature. In any case, I think we have provided sufficient reason for not replacing Hall's criterion by Quine's.
CHAPTER VI

PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS AND COMMON SENSE

G. E. Moore's influential writings include some contentions which I wish to relate to our argument. I have in mind his awed respect for common sense belief.

In his "A Defense of Common Sense" he offers a list of statements which, he says, we do (all of us) know to be certainly true.

There exists at present a living human body, which is my body. This body was born at a certain time in the past, and has existed continuously ever since, though not without undergoing changes. . . Ever since it was born it has been either in contact with or not far from the surface of the earth; and at every moment since it was born, there have also existed many other things, having shape and size in three dimensions (in the same familiar sense in which it has), from which it has been at various distances . . .

Moore continues his list by noting that many of these other three-dimensional objects are human bodies like our own, and that many are not, and that what is true

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of our bodies is true of other human bodies, and the like. His "Proof of an External World"\(^2\) contains similar considerations. Although hardly known for his systematic interests, the following remarks from an earlier work indicate that he was not entirely bereft of such concerns:

To begin with, then, it seems to me that the most important and interesting thing which philosophers have tried to do is no less than this; namely: To give a general description of the whole of the universe . . . There are, it seems to me, certain views about the nature of the Universe, which are held, now-a-days, by almost everybody. They are so universally held that they may, I think, fairly be called the view of Common Sense. I do not know that common sense can be said to have any views about the whole of the Universe . . . But it has, I think, very definite views to the effect that certain kinds of things certainly are in the Universe, and as to some of the ways in which these kinds of things are related to one another . . . it seems to me that what is most amazing and most interesting about the views of many philosophers is the way in which they go beyond or positively contradict the views of common sense.\(^3\)

Now if the views of common sense are indubitably true, and certain philosophers have contradicted those beliefs, then those philosophers have propounded false views. It

\(^2\)G. E. Moore, Philosophical Papers, pp. 126-148; I have in mind, of course, his "proof" that he has two hands, and that hence there are at least two material objects.

is likely true that Moore's systematic interests were mainly those of refuting philosophical systems which attempted to controvert common sense, and certainly the case that this was his way of attacking philosophical views (though perhaps not his only way).

This much of Moore can be accepted: should a metaphysical or other sort of philosophical system entail that a statement known or believed with good reason to be true is in fact false, then that system is known to be false. This must be added to complete Moore's view: common sense and scientific propositions are known to be true. That is, the list of propositions which Moore offers, consisting in part of statements based upon the researches of modern science (these are to be found later in the list) and in part of statements believed long before modern science began and by "all men everywhere", is a list of propositions known or believed with good reason to be true.

Now, if we grant this, we need only ask: do any metaphysical systems conflict with the list Moore offers? Insofar as they do, the way in which they do is interesting. We have suggested that it be regarded in terms of
the possibility of the form of an empirical statement being in conflict with those categories revealed by a material mode categorial statement. But there is a prior question. Ought we to accept Moore's claim that the list contains only truths?

One puzzling thing about Moore's claim in that respect is that any "result" of science is one to be tentatively accepted. However securely confirmed so far a scientific statement may be, surely the possibility that it be disconfirmed is open. To put it differently, the probability of any statement based on empirical evidence being true is always less than one, and may always be lowered by new evidence, which evidence is always possibly forthcoming. But Moore claims to know with certainty that each proposition which occurs in his list is true. I suggest that even if we only claim that every such belief is believed with good reason to be true, the comments contained in my fourth chapter as to the distinction between the "form" and "content" of empirical statements are relevant to the possibility of empirical statements falsifying philosophical ones.

The empirical element of such statements, it was there
argued, is their "content," and that content could, it was suggested, be expressed in more than one (categorial) form; I take it that enough has been said already on this issue to make detailed discussion of it here unnecessary.

Metaphysical statements, however, are modal, not tentative in the way that scientific statements are. Berkeley's "Tis repugnant that an idea exist unperceived" and Hume's move from the imaginable to the ontologically possible⁴ are not, whatever else they may be, reports of experiments or inferences from collected observed cases. Hume seems to wish to present his views as the latter, but when he makes his move from "thought to reality" the modal character of his conclusion belies this.

One can, of course, reply that "Given Hume's system, x is impossible" is paralleled by "Given Einstein's theory, absolute space is impossible." The modality is intra-systemic in both cases. But, in the first place, Moore's examples are not of this sort: they are neither modal nor hypothetical. Secondly, there is also a

tentativeness of theory in science: the shift from Newtonian to Einsteinian perspectives illustrates this.

Where, then, is our certainty with respect to scientific statements?

It should be pointed out as well that scientific theories are clearly based upon observational matters in a way in which, we have argued, philosophical systems are not and cannot be. To put the point tersely, there may indeed be a parallel between our statements in the last paragraph concerning the system of Hume and the system of Einstein, but it is a parallel resting upon the fact that both, in some sense, have systems, not on sorts of systems they have being the same.

Suppose we retreat, in continuing our discussion of Moore, from science as the long arm of common sense to common sense itself. Consider the sentence "There are physical objects." Is this sentence true? Moore distinguishes his views here from those of other philosophers. They say "it depends on what you mean." His response is, "Certainly it is." The task of discerning what the sentence in question means is left to analysis; only after analysis will we know exactly what
is true. I have no intention of trying to deal with the
difficult topic of what Moore means by "analysis" or of
discussing the "paradox of analysis." Fortunately, I
take it that what I wish to say does not depend on get­
ting those matters straight.

If "There are physical objects" were, before analy­
sis, entirely without assertive content for us there
would be something very odd indeed about our pronouncing
on its truth value. So there must be some assertive
content (some meaning) to the common sense statement
prior to any analysis thereof. Part of what it means
must indeed be clear to Moore, for he criticizes philos­
ophers for denying it. For Moore it means, at least in
part, that there are mind-independent objects which would
exist even if there were no minds of any sort at all.
What these objects are, in more detail, is unknown prior
to our learning the statement's correct analysis, but
that these objects (physical objects) are ontologically
independent in the way indicated is, for Moore, certain.
If one asks Moore how he knows this, all he can say is
that he does, and that his interrogator really does too.
Since Berkeley denies that there are physical objects,
in the sense of "physical object" which Moore finds embedded in our pre-analytic understanding of "There are physical objects," Berkeley, Moore holds, is mistaken. Berkeley, however, claims to know quite the opposite; he claims to know that there are no such physical objects as Moore describes. It looks very much as if the dispute, to put the point in Moorian jargon, is one about the proper analysis of "There are physical objects" and that Moore has simply packed one (among many possible) such analyses into the "common sense belief" before he brings it to the court of philosophic disputation. I wish now to argue that how things look is, in this case, how they in fact are.\footnote{Moore's criticism of Berkeley is, I think, too well known to require much documentation. He says "... it may fairly be said that Berkeley denies the existence of any material objects, in the sense in which Common Sense asserts their existence. This is the way in which he contradicts Common Sense." \textit{Some Main Problems of Philosophy}, p. 21.}

The argument is, I think, not hard to provide. For one thing, Moore does manage to argue for his common sense beliefs; his argument is a dialectical one, rather analogous to the one Aristotle uses to prove that the law of contradiction cannot meaningfully be denied. One cannot speak to other philosophers without assuming that
there are other minds (those of the philosophers with whom one speaks) or other bodies (those of the same philosophers). Just as he who speaks presupposes that his words do not both mean what they do mean and the opposite, he who speaks presupposes that he speaks to someone. This dialectical response is revealing. Moore here is clearly not making a report of sense experience or an inference from such reports. His claim is modal in some sense; since philosophical discussion presupposes minds other than that of the one reading or writing a paper, unless there are other minds the discussion is impossible. But the "impossibility" is not analogous to that of Aristotle's argument. If one asserts that the law of contradiction is false, one says what could not be true unless what one says is false. But one can speak without speaking to someone; intential or unintentional monologues are possible. But philosophical monologue is, in a way, pointless save as surrogate for dialogue. Still, a solipsist could be a philosopher. Moore's dialectic is a dialectic of what is reasonable or plausible, not of what is possible. And what is reasonable here pretty clearly depends on Moore's criterion
and the context in which that criterion appears. Even if we read Moore's dialectical argument as a means of eliciting the claims of common sense rather than as a means of defending those claims, the clash between the solipsist, whose position seems not inconsistent with itself, and Moore's common sense beliefs is clearly a clash of the sort that we have described as categorial. And if we read Moore's argument as literally a defense of common sense, as the title and content of the article suggest that we should, one can (e.g., by paying the price of buying solipsism) escape its bite. If one does pay that price, then Moore is unreasonable in his claim to certainty about the existence of other minds.

We can offer further argument for our contentions in another manner. Solipsists are rare and fragile creatures; what of Berkeley, who at least never intended to be one? He denied that there are mind-independent objects, though he asserted that some are independent of human minds. But he also denied that common sense required mind-independent objects. The problem, the good bishop said, in effect, is that common sense requires things not entirely consistent with one another.
For example, it seems to require mind-independent objects of which we can be immediately aware and which (qua mind-independent) are composed of matter. Then follows an intricate, if fairly familiar, story. Moore does not include in common sense all that common men do (he is far too good a philosopher to do that). Moore's common sense is appropriately laundered and pressed before he wears it to the philosophic court. Berkeley launders common sense too, but differently; he will rid it of what is anyway a perversion of it—the doctrine of matter imported into it by materialists. Indeed, since Moore himself holds that sense data are inextricably involved in the task of analysing "There are physical objects," why cannot Berkeley simply respond that he too is doing no more than analysing that sentence, which he too agrees to be true. He does, after all, agree to admit "matter" into the language (i.e., to leave it there) but only insofar as we use it for clusters of ideas. One can respond, then, in Berkeley's interests, either by saying that he too offers an analysis of a sentence upon which there is agreement as to its truth but room for dispute as to its meaning, or by arguing that
the sentence is false when read Moore's way because of the arguments of the Principles and the Three Dialogues.

We can put our contentions, which are not here concerned after all with whether Berkeley is correct or not, in this manner: if a given reading of "There are physical objects" does conflict with a statement expressing part of a metaphysical system, then that reading is itself a metaphysical reading. Any metaphysical system can, I suggest, be stated in ordinary language; hence such language is not decisive between such systems. About the "logic of ordinary language" we have already had something to say. Common sense belief, on the other hand, is in some of its aspects open to revision on the basis of empirical findings and, in other more basic aspects, is dependent for its defense upon dialectical argumentation. Further, it is open to dispute as to whether such belief is fully self-consistent taken as a whole. I have suggested that Moore's version is somewhat rarefied and purified.

I have argued thus far, then, that in the conflict between Moore's reading of "There are physical objects" and Berkeley's idealism one can discern categorial
clash; there is clash as to whether the sentence (read Moore's way) is properly part of, or fully consistent with, the rest of common sense belief. There is also clash as to whether, read in Moore's sense, it is true; and whether read in Berkeley's sense (as requiring the existence only of minds and their ideas) it is true. There is clash as to whether, even if Moore's way of reading the statement expresses an inextricable part of common sense, this proves anything philosophically. The problem of determining just what is part of common sense belief need not detain us; my point is that insofar as Moore reads it as incompatible with Berkeley, Moore reads it from a categorial, not a merely empirical, perspective. If he protests that it cannot be read in any other way without distorting its nature, or that it is true when read in his sense but in no other, or that common sense (of which his reading of the sentence in fact is part) is the ultimate arbiter of truth, then he merely adds to the list of his own categorial commitments.

There is a final feature of Moore's purportedly indubitable assertions to which I wish to call attention.
They belong to distinct logical levels. "This is my right hand and this is my left," uttered in appropriate contexts by Moore, is something which no common man would wish to deny, though whether Moore can know this statement to be true or not is another matter. "There are physical objects" is a conclusion Moore draws from his statement about his hands. Thus some of Moore's statements, even within the group roughly characterisable as common sense (as opposed to those which have become common sense by 'filtering down' from scientific research, I have in mind here those believed by "all men everywhere"), serve as premises for others. Further, the common sense ring of "This is my right hand and this is my left," insofar as it has this sort of ring, becomes fainter when we switch to "There are physical objects." Further still, surely one can deny the entailment if it is incompatible with "Physical objects are a collection of ideas," but accept it if it is not incompatible with this statement (which serves as both an example of a philosophical analysis of the statement "There are physical objects" and as representative of other possible analyses). Thus the use Moore makes of "There are physical objects" is worth
noting. Insofar as he accepts the inference from hands to physical objects, he is presumably accepting something which no one can plausibly deny, and something which Berkeley, Hume, and Ayer can accept. Insofar as one denies the inference, one denies it because the conclusion is read as being incompatible with certain possible analyses. Moore uses the sentence in both ways: the common sense way (a way not incompatible with any given analysis) and the philosophical way (a way not compatible with certain analyses). If he did not, his argument would not be relevant to philosophical positions. He wants to argue that the inferred statement means something (enough, e.g., to rid us of Berkeley) but not too much (enough to leave room for "analyses"). These analyses will be philosophical analyses and may involve reference to sense data. But then one can certainly deny that Moore's hand-sentence entails or presupposes "There are physical objects" in any philosophically committive sense, and admit that it does presuppose or entail this in a sense not in any way philosophically committive. To put the point differently, either Moore's conclusion is a metaphysical assertion or not.
If not, then it can presumably be accepted by any metaphysician, at least so far as his metaphysics is concerned. If so, then it is one among others in the dust of metaphysical conflict. If it is a metaphysical assertion, it becomes Moore's thesis that common sense is itself such as to presuppose or entail a metaphysic, but then this makes the status of common sense belief problematic. The statement about hands permitted, on one view, an inference to the existence of physical objects; it did this by way of presupposition or entailment. The more likely alternative is that Moore held that "This is my right hand and this my left" presupposed "There are physical objects." Then, were the former sentence false, the latter might still be true. There is great plausibility in claiming that "There are physical objects" presupposes that "There are objects in time"; one can thus see one reason why Bradley as well as Berkeley receives Moorían censure. So common sense also presupposes that time belongs to the world of reality, not merely to the world of appearance. One could counter, of course, that since common sense has certain

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6 G. E. Moore, Some Main Problems of Philosophy, p. 208.
presuppositions which are false, common sense is mistaken. (Is it part of common sense that it is not itself mistaken?) Common sense seems patently challengeable by anyone not already committed to its adequacy; it is patently laden, on Moore's reading of it, with categorial commitment. Of course, if we choose to regard it as categorially uncommitted, we can do so; then it will be expressible in the jargon of any categorial framework and no longer be a candidate for the touchstone for philosophical truth. The noted ambiguity in Moore's use of common sense belief may well explain the difficulty in saying just exactly what the relation between common sense and metaphysics is for Moore.

A moment ago we parenthetically asked if part of common sense was a commitment to its own truth. Moore offers yet another class of statements for his list. He claims to know that there are physical objects; not only "There are physical objects" but "I know that there are physical objects" appears in Moore's list of indubitable truths. But this meta-statement can be attacked analogously to that on the statement itself. If the meta-statement is true then "There are physical objects"
must be true. Suppose we read that statement so that it is metaphysical. Our meta-statement then claims that a metaphysical statement is true. But whether it is true depends on the truth of the metaphysical assertion purportedly known, which again is true not on the basis of reports or experiments or intuitions, but on the basis of a given inference. Whether that inference, already discussed, is acceptable is surely debatable, as is the question as to whether the sort of rebuttal that Berkeley or Bradley would make to it is acceptable. If the first-order statement is not a metaphysical statement, then to claim to know that it is true is irrelevant to Moore's purposes.

I have, then, argued as follows: Moore's indubitable statements fall into several classes. Some common-sense statements depend on the results of the sciences: thus they are tentative. Some are common-sense statements in the stronger sense of not so depending, and they are used to argue to other more general statements which they presuppose. These latter statements are the interesting ones, and the inference to them depends on how they are taken. One can accept the inference and claim
that what is inferred is innocuous in the sense of not being metaphysical, or accept the inference to a statement purportedly metaphysical and by denying the metaphysical statement by means of a dialectical argument deny the promise as well. Or, one can simply say that common sense is committed to a metaphysic which is true because common sense is committed to it. I find this last move less than convincing; it resembles Hume's "natural belief" which is not rationally justifiable. Moore's point may be just that Hume was right, save that such beliefs need no justification, being known to be true without the necessity of offering arguments. But this seems to me to merely opt for a "given" which is itself system-dependent. On that issue, more later. Finally, I suggested that the move to "I know . . ." simply raised the old problems at a new level.
ON SOME PURPORTED BIFURCATIONS

There are, C. D. Broad tells us in the introduction to his _Scientific Thought_, two sorts of philosophy. One, dubbed "critical," clarifies the concepts involved in beliefs presupposed by common sense and scientific thought, and criticizes the clarified products. The other, tabbed "speculative," has as its object to take over the results of the various sciences, to add to them the results of the religious and ethical experiences of mankind, and then to reflect upon the whole.  

The hopeful consequence of this reflection is to "reach some general conclusions as to the nature of the Universe, and as to our position and prospects in it."  

Presenting philosophy as a sister discipline distinct from the special sciences with its peculiar subject

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²Ibid.
matter, Broad presents his *apologia* for philosophy's respectability. By clarifying such concepts as "thing," "place," "date," "cause," "mind," and the like, it performs a part of its unique task, for philosophy alone "deals with such questions for their own sake."  

Though such analyses are presented in words, they are not about words. As with Cantor's definition of "continuity," says Broad, so with philosopher's analyses: they involve "not a question of words but of things and their properties."  

By criticizing "a number of uncriticized beliefs, which we constantly assume in ordinary life and in the sciences" critical philosophy in its other aspect endeavors to separate reasonable belief from prejudice; its task "can only be done by resolutely and honestly exposing them to every objection that one can think of oneself or find in the writings of others."  

This too is "not performed by any other science." Whereas

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common sense and science use the concepts which critical philosophy clarifies, and assume the beliefs which critical philosophy criticizes, the requisite clarification and criticism is a philosophical undertaking. Such clarification and criticism of concepts and beliefs presupposed by common sense and science will patently not be accomplished by experimental technique: "The method of philosophy thus resembles that of pure mathematics, at least in the respect that neither has any use for experiment."7 Nevertheless, philosophy is concerned with the truth of its assertions, not merely as evidenced in their being entailed by axioms which remain unquestioned, but as true of the world.

Broad's high regard for critical philosophy turns to distain as he treats speculative philosophy. At best, speculative efforts are "happy guesses" being mainly determined by our health and finances. Critical philosophy, more modestly concerned with "our analysis of truth and falsehood, or of the nature of judgment, is not very likely to be influenced by our hopes and

7Ibid, p. 19.
Judging from Broad's remarks, speculative philosophy is salutary only insofar as it broadens the mind; for example, it can reveal the parochiality of subjective idealism or materialism to their respective proponents.

I confess to being less than persuaded that Broad has underlined any very genuine division. A first counter consists in remembering that Kant managed to ask his triad of questions (What can I know? What should I believe? What may I hope?) without engaging in reflections on the sum of man's scientific, religious, and ethical experience. Kant's Critiques could, I should think, be described as involving a good deal of "conceptual clarification" and a good deal of "belief criticism," but hardly as reflections on a list of results culled from science, religion, and morality. True, Kant did reflect long and hard upon the experience of obligation, but he did so by analysing the experience in terms of what must be the case for it to be valid. "In virtue of what is the categorical imperative possible?" could, given Kant's treatment of it, be regarded, so far as I can see, as a question for critical philosophy in Broad's sense.

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8Ibid., p. 21.
Switching from example to principle, if we note that critical philosophy criticizes beliefs about the external world, other minds, morality (ethics is part of critical philosophy), and causation, why cannot the beliefs which survive such criticism be formulated into a system which reaches "some general conclusions as to the nature of the universe, and as to our position and prospects in it." This was, it will be remembered, the proffered description of speculative philosophy.

"Speculative philosophy," it seems evident without much reflection, is surrogate for "systems of philosophy"; one can read out of Broad's pages the emphasis on the analysis of concepts and the concentration on particular problems which characterizes a decent proportion of contemporary philosophic publications. Hall's commentary on this attitude, seems apropos:

We are living in a period when philosophic contributions, like scientific, are short, definitive, and quite neutral on all issues save those under immediate scrutiny or debate.  

Need I refer to the obvious irony?

In all fairness to Broad, he was not insensitive

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9Ibid., p. 20.

10Hall, Categorial Analysis, p. 231.
to systematic considerations, or to speculative philosophy; witness his *The Mind and Its Place in Nature*, \(^{11}\) which fits rather well its author's notice as to what "speculative philosophy" should be taken to mean. My only point is that the beliefs which survived the examination procedures of critical philosophy could be clustered together to form a conceptual community properly designated as both "systematic" and "speculative."

Strawson's distinction between revisionary and descriptive metaphysics calls for brief comment, if only because of conceptual kinship to Broad's distinction between speculative versus critical philosophy. In the opening paragraph of his Introduction to *Individuals*, Strawson tells us that "descriptive metaphysics is content to describe the actual structure of our thought about the world, revisionary metaphysics is concerned to produce a better structure."\(^{12}\) Revisionary tactics depend on descriptive accomplishment, so even metaphysicians of the former sort must dabble in description.

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One hesitates a bit when he is told that Berkeley and Descartes are revisionary and Aristotle and Kant descriptive. Berkeley makes the criterion for an adequate metaphysic the degree to which it salvages as much as possible of common sense. Philonous claims to save more of common-sense belief than Hylas can. Descartes notoriously begins by doubting what is not certain, but ends by giving us not only the self and God but also the external world whose primary qualities are as perceived. Purportedly at least, our old beliefs are but clarified and given new surety. Kant, on the other hand, posits the noumenal world as the ground of the phenomenal, and we can know that the noumenal world exists because of the patently contingent character of the organized appearances which compose the phenomenal world. Further knowledge of the noumenal world, save in our own person as rationally autonomous beings, is limited to the single case of moral obligation in which we are noumenally confronted. Does this not seem rather more revisionary than descriptive? Again, is the existence of an Unmoved Mover whose mode of necessary existence seems to consist of eternal self-reflection not a revisionary rather than a
descriptive thesis? Strawson claims no clear line of demarcation between revisionary and descriptive metaphysicians; indeed he disavows any such lucid division. But at least one can question his examples. I shall shortly question the distinction itself.

Again, who is meant by the pronoun "our" in Strawson's phrase "our thought about the world"? Anglo-Saxon culture, or Western culture, or what? Are the Hopis included, with (I am told) their tenseless language? Here Strawson offers his doctrine of a "massive central core" of concepts shared by all thinkers. One is reminded of Ryle's assertion in his April, 1953 *Philosophical Review* article on "Ordinary Language" that "the job done with the word 'cause' is not an English job, or a continental job." Strawson deepens and broadens this suggestion when he contends "there is a massive central core of human thinking which has no history—or none recorded in the histories of thought." This core consists of "categories and concepts which, in their most fundamental character, change not at all."\(^{13}\) Descriptive metaphysics is concerned with discerning these

\(^{13}\text{Ibid., p. 10.}\)
categories inextricably embedded in the structure of all thought, and noting their relationships to one another. What philosophy is to do is to continually redescribe this massive central core, for philosophic idiom changes as surely, if with more reserve, as hat styles and skirt lengths. This notion of the purpose of philosophy (describing the massive central core) shows why Strawson classes Aristotle and Kant with the descriptivists; both offer a doctrine of categories which can be read as descriptions of, so to speak, the "necessities of thought," of what thought must be like.

With an eye to the practice of his cohorts, Strawson insists that although "reliance upon a close examination of the actual use of words is the best, and indeed the only sure, way in philosophy"14 it remains true that the general categorial structure for which the descriptivist seeks "does not readily display itself on the surface of language, but lies submerged."15 Close examination of actual use yields connections and discriminations not general enough and not far-reaching enough to meet the

14Ibid., p. 9.
15Ibid., p. 10.
full metaphysical demand for understanding. Limiting ourselves to such examination we find that "our answers, however revealing at a certain level, are apt to assume, and not to expose, those general elements of structure which the metaphysician wants."\textsuperscript{16} Strawson admits that even descriptive metaphysics involves abandoning the philosopher's "only sure guide" (examination of actual use), but is refreshingly willing to make the effort.

It should be obvious that there is much in Strawson's approach which will appeal to the present writer. Seeking general, categorial features of our thought about the world, is, I take it, not at all a bad description of philosophizing. I do wonder about any very sharp division between descriptive and revisionary tasks. I can best express my reservations about this issue by relating it to another, that of the massive central core.

Strawson seems clearly to appeal beneath common sense belief to the structure of the language in which such belief is couched. He wishes, it would seem, to say that assertion has certain necessary conditions which can be laid out with reasonable clarity, or that thought has

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.
certain inescapable features no matter what its object or circumstances and that these features can be stated with passable precision. To discern categories common to all thought will not, after all, be to establish that all thought must be in terms of, or presuppose, those categories. The latter claim, a modal one and hence far stronger than its merely descriptive predecessor, offers not only insight into what categorial systems are, but also possible grounds for decision procedure between them. If we can say what the conditions of thought occurring at all are, we can say that any system which leads to the conclusion that such conditions do not or cannot occur will be self-defeating. More on that topic later; for now, let it be noted that Strawson's claim is not merely that a massive central core can be found, but that, once found, it will reveal to us the forms which all thought must take. Otherwise descriptive metaphysics will be rather like a study in extremely general linguistics. Strawson, we may remember, describes the general categorial features being sought as the "indispensable core of the conceptual equipment of the most sophisticated human beings" as well as "the
commonplaces of the least refined thinking," and contends that these categories "in their most fundamental character, change not at all." He thus is off on a Kantian endeavor to determine what the categories of our thought must be. But those core categories, once found, could not be revised; such revision would be in principle precluded by the inevitability of the categories themselves.

If revisionary metaphysics is possible at all, there must be a certain degree of flexibility, or perhaps of tension in the relationship between the categories being tracked. This is no problem unique to Strawson's thesis; Hall too admits that the demands of the structure of common sense thought, language, and experience is not altogether neat and orderly. But how can what changes not be flexible so as to permit revision, or how can that which is necessary for thought be accessible to alteration by thinkers?

I suggest that what is at issue here is the degree to which, once a massive central core of common concepts and categories is elicited, this massive central core is servicable as a touchstone for categorial systems. If it is really shared by them all, not coincidentally but
necessarily, then it will be futile for any system to endeavor to deny its intellectual progenitors, at least without trying to say what cannot be said, namely that thought is itself appearance and reality unsayable. So long as a system remains within the bounds of rational discourse, such recourse in unavailable and all systems will have to appear before the court of inescapable categorial commonality.

If, on the other hand, the massive central core also contains categories sacrificable without intellectual suicide, these will be possible candidates for repair or replacement; should the common stockpile contain inessential parts, or parts subject to replacement by currently unpopular or unmanufactured counterparts, then the revisionist will have a task to perform. If the common massive core is not altogether consistent, then describing its content will be prerequisite to revision, but also prescriptive of revision, as one of the demands sure to be present in the core is that of consistency.

To evaluate Strawson's endeavors further would require us to leave the introduction to which our
discussion has been without exception confined, and turn to the actual description. That task, in turn, would require a volume in itself. In any case, revisionism and descriptivism have served our purposes by helping us to focus more clearly on crucial issues closer to our immediate concerns.
CHAPTER VIII

LANGUAGE STRATA AND PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS

Friedrich Waismann's "Language Strata" is a fascinating paper. Its remarks are terse and its intention programmatic. It should in fairness be noted that he later expressed great reservations about its contents. What follows is an argument to the effect that Waismann is, in effect, insightful with respect to his premises and mistaken with respect to his conclusions. What I mean by this should become clear in the sequel.

Beginning, for our purposes, by noting the difference between the sort of question represented by "Does p entail q in S?" and the sort of question represented by "Is S itself consistent?", he deals in turn with the issues of language strata, the systematic ambiguity of truth, verification, and completeness, and a "new

picture of language" as a stratified hierarchy. The picture intended might be expressed by saying that language is more like the layers that archeologists investigate (stratified, with each stratum revealing its own characteristics and to be investigated on its own terms) than like a series of rows of bricks of the same make. Insofar as the remarks which I shall now summarize suggest the sort of considerations which support Hall's views concerning categorial systems, I am obviously sympathetic to them; many of Waismann's comments can be placed into a Hallian context without much twisting, though I shall not perform that task. I think it indisputible that there are, if one pleases, different sorts or levels of statements, and that it is grossly misleading to model them all on the pattern of empirical, descriptive assertions. Again, that statements are not "loners" but appear in logical contexts, or in a nexus more or less tightly knit, appears to me to be highly plausible. It is the way in which Waismann develops these themes that disturbs me; he tries, I think, to drive the wedge between strata too deeply, or to pretend that what separates language strata is walls rather than bridges.
With the model of the "micrological" question "Does $p$ entail $q$ in system $S$?" and the "macrological" question "Is $S$ itself consistent?" (plus the tenet of intuitionistic logic that the law of excluded middle does not apply to non-finite mathematics) in the background, Waismann argues that there are other cases analogous to these. Consider, he suggests, "What did the bathroom look like that I saw the other day on a visit?" According to Waismann statements concerning "half-faded memory pictures," are such as not to fall under the scope of the application of the law of excluded middle. It is not decidable; **ergo**, it is not true or false. Now I confess that the argument stated in the last sentence seems to me to be a sheer **non-sequitur**. It does not follow from "I do not know that $p$ is true" that $p$ is not true. Nor does it follow from "I cannot know that $p$ is true" that $p$ is not true. And it certainly does not follow from the fact that I cannot know if $p$ is true that it is neither true nor not true. I suppose the point at issue is something like this: if truth is an intrinsic property of a proposition (something a proposition has, so to speak, on its own) then the
entailment obviously does fail. But if truth is something which depends on the relationship between a proposition and its known supporting evidence, then in the absence of either term the relationship fails to hold. Hence if there is no way of deciding that the evidence is for $p$ or against $p$ because there is no such evidence, $p$ cannot be either true or false. It equally follows, it should be noticed, that if there is equally good evidence for both "$p$ is true" and "$p$ is false," then $p$ cannot be either true or false. And this seems to me to be an absurd conclusion to draw in that sort of case. Just how to prove my underlying contention that a proposition (sentence, if one prefers) is, if true or false at all, true or false whether we know it or not, and whether we can find out or not, I do not know. But I think that it is clearly true nonetheless. That Waismann has not by any means refuted this view shows that he has failed to offer any proof that we must regard the law of excluded middle as non-applicative to the case he offers. The same can be said, I think, about the relevant propositions offered as exceptions by intuitionist mathematicians and philosophers of mathematics. Surely it is

\[ \text{But cf. Everett Hall, } \textit{Categorial Analysis}, \text{ p. 271ff.} \]
absurd to say that my memory image yesterday was two incompatible colors at the same time; if so, then given that c and c' are colors which cannot be shared by anything at the same moment, "My image was c" cannot be true when "My image was c'" is true. Nor, of course, can "My image was c" be true when "My image was not c" is. Further, I should want to argue that if any assertion was such that the law of excluded middle did not apply to it (i.e., was not such as to be either true or false) then, as it is neither true nor false (surely no one wants to say it is both?) it is not in fact an assertion at all.

There is a defect in Waismann's example in that he deals with the relationship of a memory image to a public physical object but nothing of substance changes if we deal (as I have done here) with the image itself, not considering its "object." So I do not see that we must hold that memory image sentences are in a different stratum than physical object sentences since the law of excluded middle applies to the latter but not the former.

Once again, I do not see how the way in which one verifies "The light is on" is different from the way in which one verifies or supports a law of nature shows that the laws are "true" in a different sense than simple descriptions are. It only "shows" that the way in which we find out whether such sentences are true differs, which is no point of dispute and may, for all I can see, itself be a reason to argue that laws and descriptions are in different strata. When we note that the truth of simple descriptions is a necessary condition of the truth of law-like statements (the verifications of law-like statements can be expressed in descriptive assertions dealing with single cases), we note that there are logical liaisons between the strata. The liaison is as important as the bifurcation. Analogous considerations perhaps apply to statements of "immediate awareness" and physical object statements, though the issue there is too complex to deal with now.

Waismann notes that mathematical definitions can be complete in a way in which physical object definitions cannot.

Geometry provides us with a model in which a complete (closed, perfect) description isattainable
and with a finite number of statements. Thus a triangle is determined when its three sides are given: nothing can be added to these data that is not entailed by, or in contradiction with, then. Here, then, is an example of a description which, on logical grounds, cannot be extended.

A quite different situation seems to hold with regard to experiential statements. However many features I may assert of a thing, say of this chair, or however many relations I may state which hold between it and other things, or however many statements I may make about its life history, I shall never reach a point where my definition can be said to be exhaustive.⁴

On the basis of this, he asserts that there is no one meaning of "definition." But does not the very possibility of asserting what Waismann asserts in these paragraphs entail a common meaning for "definition," or presuppose it? And even if it does not, that some definitions can while others cannot be complete does not show that there is no one meaning for "definition."

The pattern, then, of noting different sorts of verification levels or different sorts of criteria for meaningfulness does not, I take it, provide sufficient evidence for the contentions which Waismann bases on it. That I can show that a word is meaningful by pointing to what it names, giving instances of its proper use,

and noting its occurrence in the O.E.D. does not show that there are three senses in which the word is meaningful; nor do Waismann's somewhat analogous suggestions. One can consistently and without implausibility accept his premises and deny his conclusions.

The final case to which Waismann applies his stratification argument concerns the possibility of truth-relations between sentences of different strata. Here again, I cannot agree that he draws the right conclusions. He argues that since terms change their meaning from stratum to stratum, one cannot have conflicting metaphysical schemes. The argument goes as follows (adapting it to the issue of evaluating metaphysical systems): proposition $p$ will mean one thing in system $S$, another thing in $S'$; so $p$ in $S$ cannot be incompatible with $p$ in $S'$. That $p$ in $S$ means something different than $p$ in $S'$, however, patently does not entail that they are incompatible, compatible, or irrelevant to one another; it depends on what each assertion says.

Waismann argues:

It is generally believed that an action is determined by both causes and motives. But if the causes
determine the action, no room is left for motives, and if the motives determine the action no room is left for causes. Either the system of causes is complete, then it is not possible to squeeze in a motive; or the system of motives is complete, then it is not possible to squeeze in a cause.5

He then suggests that when we write a letter, which is after all doing one thing, not two, we can regard the action of letter writing in two ways; analogously, we can view a sentence as a vehicle of thought or as a series of noises or marks. For the latter there are causes, for the former reasons. But which way is better or correct with respect to viewing the action? Neither. They are different, but not capable of being compatible or incompatible.

Consider the obvious relevance of this sort of move to the free will problem. How can we be free with respect to our actions when our actions are causally determined by causal antecedents over which we have no control? We can view causation as mere constant conjunction, leaving out any notion of "producing" or "bringing about." Or we can attempt a theory of causation which permits non-empirical factors (the choices

of a self not part of the causal nexus) to affect actions. But the new sort of move makes unnecessary (indeed, illegitimate) all such attempts. It argues that cross-strata considerations are impossible to consider; the parallel to category mistakes is easy to see. Thus what count as strata will be system-dependent. But what concerns us now is the legitimacy of the move we have been considering.

First of all, "This action was caused by motives" and "This action was caused by physical events" are perfectly sensible in themselves as applied to the same action. This much is common ground. But, in court, say, the dispute over which is true might be a life-or-death matter. Suppose the defense lawyer wants to prove that his client's act of killing was a direct result of temporary insanity produced by the placing of a potent drug in his client's coffee. The client, drinking his morning coffee in all innocence, goes beserk as soon as the drug reaches his brain and kills his companion. All that occurred is explicable in terms of body chemistry. The client was in some clear sense a patient and not an agent; his act was caused by insanity which was caused
by the drug. So he is innocent because not in his right mind at the time of the action, and that through no fault of his own. Suppose, however, the prosecutor wishes to argue that the accused hated his companion for keeping company with his wife, and thus had an excellent motive for murder. He thus intentionally killed his companion in cold blood out of deep thirst for revenge; the desire for revenge was so great that it altered the body chemistry in such a way as to cancel the effect of the drug so that the action was indeed the agent's own. He is hence guilty.

The dispute (to leave a less than gripping narrative) is over whether the act was intentional or not. "This act was caused by motives" entails "This act was intentional," whereas "This act was caused by physical events," as applied to the case outlined above, entails "This act was not intentional." Clearly, then, our original assertions are incompatible.

The distinction Socrates made in the Phaedo between the account of his remaining in prison merely in terms of his bodily position (which he holds to be a necessary but not sufficient bit of explanation) and the account
which includes his choices and intentions (which he holds to be required for any adequate explanation) are accounts of the same event.⁶ (To what purpose is Waismann's reminder that writing a letter is one event; whoever denied it?) And that the event must not be one event if it is regarded as brought about both by (physical) causes and motives is what Waismann intends to prove. Thus Socrates provides us with just such a case where causes and motives are together, on his view, required to explain an event; it is not merely a matter in this case of two ways of viewing an event.

Thus what Waismann describes as merely two ways of looking at an event which are logically unrelated to one another can in fact be logically incompatible ways of explaining that event. Also, and equally relevantly, what Waismann describes as two logically unrelated ways of looking at an event may both be required to give sufficient explanation of an event: Socrates' remaining in prison is a case in point.

As to the bulk of the remainder of Waismann's

contentions as summarized in the foregoing, I have no real dispute with them, save as they should prove recalcitrant to rephrasing in a more Hallian manner. In the main they are quite compatible with, and lend support to, Hall's contentions. I obviously exempt from this claim the conclusions which have been criticised, having rather in mind the premises from which those criticised views were drawn.
CHAPTER IX

THE FALSIFIABILITY CRITERION

A proposed test for the meaningfulness of statements is the "falsifiability criterion." Whether, as in Popper's use,\(^1\) it is meant to mark out empirically meaningful statements from non-empirically meaningful ones, or, as in Flew's use,\(^2\) to mark out meaningful statements from non-meaningful ones (tautologies excepted), this criterion goes as follows: statement \(S\) is (empirically) meaningful if and only if there is some actual or possible observable state of affairs which is or would be evidence against \(S\). "Observable" must be included, or else one can say that the state of affairs which is (quite conclusive) evidence against "The Absolute is green" is that state of affairs which makes "The Absolute is not green" true.

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The criterion seems reasonably straightforward. If S is to be true about universe of discourse D, then there must be something in D which S is about; if that something is as S says it is, then S is justified and if that something is not as S says it is, S is unjustified. More carefully, if S is about D, it must be possible for S to be false about D.

One wonders a bit, however, about the "neutrality" of this criterion. Consider "Every event has a cause" interpreted in Descartes' rather than Mill's sense—i.e., as a metaphysical statement, one which cannot be false but which is not such that its denial is strictly self contradictory, as opposed to treating it as an inductive generalization. Even if we find some case C in which there is no evidence that C was caused, we can either say that C is in fact uncaused or that C was caused though we have not, and in fact may never, find the cause of C. The man who holds that the apparent counter example shows that "Every event is caused" is false for at least one event (case C) evidently is treating the proposition in question as an inductive

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3I omit considerations concerning the null class.
generalization. The man who holds the latter view (that the counter-example is only apparent) evidently is not, though we ought to distinguish between the man who holds that we have such good evidence for the proposition that we ought not to admit this apparent counter-example until we have others, and the man who would say that even were there many cases in which we sought for a cause and found none that the proposition would still be unquestionably true.

It may be useful to say that the man who holds that "Every event has a cause" could be falsified by enough apparent counter-examples (whether "enough" is one, or many more than one) regards this proposition as an inductive generalization, whereas the man who denies that it could ever be falsified regards it as a metaphysical axiom. And one could think of different reasons that the latter sort of philosopher could offer for his views. He could argue that we must hold the axiom in question as an axiom (i.e., as incapable of being falsifiable by apparent counter-examples) in order to account for our having experience at all. (Obviously, I have Kant in mind.) Or, one might note that to
deny this proposition would be to admit an "irrational" element into the universe, and argue that this would be psychologically disturbing, or not useful for the development of science. That is, one could view the proposition as a regulative principle which functions as a necessary condition of human thought, or as a pragmatically justifiable and pragmatically essential assumption or presupposition. Or differently put, one might hold that the proposition in question was an intuitive truth—a statement "seen" to be true. One would then be committed, it seems, to trusting one's intuition over the detection of apparent counter-examples. The counter-example could then not be absolutely decisive against the principle in question. Just as our not being aware that we are caused to choose in a given manner does not entail that we are not so caused, so our not being able to find a given cause of case C does not entail that there is no cause of C. One could in fact argue that he "saw" the truth of the proposition in question and that he was far more confident of at least that intuition than he was of the genuineness of the purported counter-example. To agree, or to disagree, at this
point is to "take sides" in a philosophic dispute.

One can put at least part of the point about "seeing that every event must have a cause" in a different way. One can ask the question: what price must I pay if I yield the proposition? what price must I pay if I yield the genuineness of the purported counter-example? The price of yielding the latter, one might argue, is less than that of yielding the former; so the counter-example must be taken to be spurious. Of course, there is the possible reply: yield this counter-example and you yield, in principle, the whole practice of testing statements via counter-examples, and thus you yield a method of testing statements which is crucial to science, and to philosophy too since the method of presenting counter-examples is hoary with tradition and powerful in force. (I do not mean to commit myself to the view that the uses of counter-examples in philosophy and in science are perfectly analogous.) But this reply is revealing. "Every event has a cause" is not like "Every swan is white," which is straightforwardly an inductive generalization. Finding a black swan brings us without
hesitation to switch from our original assertion to "Most swans are white," and no great loss is felt. To drop "Every event has a cause" is more like dropping "Presenting counter-examples is a relevant method for testing inductive generalizations" than like dropping "Every swan is white," however much this last statement may resemble the causal statement in terms of its verbal formulation.

This presents some evidence for its being dubious that the test for meaningfulness for "Every event has a cause" will be the same as "Every swan is white," but perhaps not much evidence until we clarify the status of the former statement in some stronger way than merely suggesting that its status is different from that of the latter. The limits of what we have said so far are roughly these: that there is indeed an important difference between "Every event has a cause" and inductive generalizations, a difference which brought philosophers to claim to intuit the truth of the former but not of the latter, to build philosophical systems on the former but not on the latter, to be far more loath to give up the former than the latter, and the like. But what is that difference?
An obvious suggestion concerns the comparative scope. One concerns every event and the other concerns only a very limited number of events or things. I mean to use "event" here in its most general sense. Another is that to say that something is white is to ascribe an observable quality to it, whereas to say that something has a cause is not to ascribe an observable quality to it, or indeed to ascribe any quality to it at all. From "X has a cause" it follows that "X is contingent" or "X depended for its coming into being on something other than itself." But one cannot "read off" contingency as one reads off colors. More carefully, contingency is not a proper object of any one sense, or a common object of any combination of senses; if a quality at all, contingency is not an observable one (in the sense of "observable" in question).

Here, then, is an interesting feature of "Everything has a cause": it entails "Everything is contingent." No inductive generalization of the order of "Every swan is white" or "Water boils at x degrees" or the like entails a statement about the "ontological status" of
everything whatever in the way that "Everything has a cause" entails (or, perhaps, is) a claim about, so to speak, the way in which everything exists; "Every swan is white" is not a claim at all about the way in which things exist, but only far more modestly about what qualities some things have. It may in fact follow from, or be presupposed by, the statement that "X is white" that X exists in a certain manner; to be capable of receiving color predicates may be to be one sort of being rather than another; that is a separate point not to be pursued now.

Thus we have attempted to give at least one crucial difference between "Everything has a cause" and "Every swan is white" which goes beyond merely their scope, and which their grammatical similarity ought not to obscure. To say that everything exists in a given manner is not capable of being refuted by the same kind of counter-example as will refute the claim that a given being, in whatever manner it exists, is characterized by a certain quality. Not only does our causal statement apply to anything whatever, it does so in a particular way. The indestructibility of
matter, provided it is an intrinsic indestructibility and not merely one dependent on our not having found the proper resources, or the existence of the Judeo-Christian God will cause us to qualify "Every event has a cause." But note how different these sorts of "counter-examples" are from finding a white swan or boiling water at 20 degrees. The "falsifiability criterion," then, is not so straightforward as it seemed if it blurs the distinction between these two sorts of counter-examples. For neither God's manner of existence, nor matter's manner of existence, is observable in the way that the whiteness of a swan is (or perhaps in any way).

To deny that questions about different kinds of existence are meaningful, or to assert that any argument from contingent to necessary being is meaningless, is quite clearly to reveal a categorial commitment. Adopting the falsifiability criterion is plainly, I think, adopting a distinct philosophical position which eliminates alternative positions and requires the adequacy of a restricted battery of categories to the task of asserting all that can be asserted. Consider, for example, that anyone who adopts it seems committed to
the thesis that "to be is to be observable, or inferrable from what can be observed." The falsifiability criterion is not a touchstone for deciding between systems so much as it is an important portion of an at least implicit systematic or categorial context of its own. Analogous comments apply to its predecessor, the verification principle, which will be briefly considered in our next chapter.

I have suggested that the criterion for meaning expressed by "Sentence S is meaningful only in case S is empirically falsifiable" is philosophically provincial. To continue the argument, it obviously faces the dilemma which its ancestor, the verifiability criterion, faced: either it is self-applicative or not. If so, then it is meaningless, since not itself empirically falsifiable. If not, then it is a meta-statement about first order statements, and has a contradictory in the meta-statement "It is false that sentence S is meaningful only in case S is empirically falsifiable." One then wants reasons relevant to choosing the one meta-statement over the other; these reasons cannot themselves be first-order statements, for it is just those first-order statements
whose meaningfulness is in question. What meta-statement, then, will ground the falsifiability criterion rather than its contradictory to be correct?

Consider both (1) "Only words which in some manner correspond to impressions or their resultant ideas are meaningful" and (2) "Sentences are meaningful just in case they are composed entirely of meaningful words" as a way of eliminating the denial of the falsifiability thesis. But will this do? Are there impressions for all of the words in (1)? Surely not, which is all that is required to make the following response legitimate: the first assertion (1) in support of our meta-statement is either self-reflexive or not. If so, it is meaningless on its own criterion. If not, then it has a contradictory meta-statement in the form of "It is false that to every idea there is a corresponding impression" and we now need further reasons for accepting the one meta-statement rather than the other.

Since (1) contains the words "only," "in," "which," "manner," "correspond," "or," "their," "are," and "meaningful," which are not all such that it is
obvious that impressions correspond to them, exactly analogous considerations arise with respect to it as arose concerning the falsifiability thesis itself. And so also with our second statement in (2) support of the falsifiability thesis.

The very fact that we can say that the falsifiability thesis, if self-applicative, entails its own meaninglessness may be used as a demonstration that we do in some sense understand the thesis and hence that it is in some sense meaningful. But this response is in no way a defense of the thesis because if it is accepted the obvious entailment is: since it is self-violating if self-applicative and according to the present reply nonetheless meaningful, its meaning must be in virtue of some other feature than satisfying itself, which it does not do. Further, if it is meaningful, so is its denial meaningful.

The positive conclusion to be drawn from this criticism of the falsifiability criterion is that it is not self-sufficient. To claim for it a self-evidence which lifts it beyond question and criticism can be countered with equal propriety or impropriety by the
opponent doing the same for its contradictory. To argue for it will be to appeal to some other statement (such as the example provided concerning impressions and ideas) which is itself quite open to question and leads to a set of problems not at all unlike those connected with the falsifiability thesis itself. It may well be a sort of wisdom, then, which causes the falsifiability proponents to just state their thesis and go on to criticize sentences which fail to qualify as citizens of the realm of meaningful discourse and to reject their purportedly phony passports.

I do not know how to argue that it is impossible in principle to justify the falsifiability thesis by providing unexceptionable statements which will reveal its correctness, but I think that I have made good the claim that such principles are not readily available and that any strong enough to bear the burden of "justifying" the thesis will also be controversial enough to be plausibly denied. Hence, I do claim plausibility for my assertions but do not claim to have provided a demonstration. Indeed, I should think any demonstration of my assertions would itself be open to rebuttal in the
way that I have attempted to rebut the falsifiability thesis as itself unquestionable.

What I want to say, then, is that the falsifiability thesis is unquestionable within a context, and quite questionable outside of it. To simply assert it is either to be naive to the point of dogmatism if one does not realize its sheer openness to ambush by the assertion of its contradictory and the ensuing clash of philosophical theses, or to be prudent to the point of wisdom if one realizes that its denial must also occur in a challengeable context. It is the context as both necessary and challengeable that I wish to stress with respect to the purportedly more modest falsifiability thesis as compared to the verification principle. Any modesty the former may have concerns only the number of kinds of meaningful statements that it permits, not the lack of necessity to appear in a given battery of thought and argumentation, which is categorically committed and challengeable from other categorial orientations.

I have argued, then, that the "easy" answers are both longer and harder than they are often made to seem. The question arises, then, as to how in the world one is to resolve the sorts of questions that I have raised.
One can, of course, choose a context and operate from within it. But can the choice be supported in any way? One can say that he likes one system rather than another, that it "feels more natural" or "seems to fit," that it is "more beautiful" or "clearer" or "simpler" than another, that it is more parsimonious or less lush, or more complex and challenging: but can one say that one context is "truer" or more justified, and give good reasons for saying so?

One might easily suggest, then, that I have made my task far too difficult. To argue that metaphysical questions cannot in principle be decided by appeal to empirical evidence is, it may be argued, simply to cut metaphysics from any possibility of decision procedure of any sort as between competing assertions or competing systems within the discipline. Worse yet, to have no tie to empirical data may be to fail even to be meaningful; metaphysics, on my view, might be simply nonsense in the way that some of Lewis Carroll's poetry is. The dialectical rebuttal to this is by now painfully obvious. What counts more is the question as to whether or not one has not been altogether too stringent about the qualifications of what may count as evidence for metaphysical assertions.
An opponent might suggest that I consider the issue as to whether there are minds. Berkeley said "yes" and Hume said "no" (if we neglect for the moment that Hume was not entirely happy with his "no"). We can settle their dispute. If contemporary psychology finds it necessary, or useful, to speak of souls in order to deal fruitfully with the data they derive from maze and couch, then there are; if not, there are not. Of course, psychological theory may change, but the point remains that the only sort of justification one could have for siding with the bishop or the sceptic would be the theories of the psychologists as based on their findings.

This sort of objection seems to me to be plainly too simple, and once it is refined I claim that it turns into an additional piece of favorable evidence for my thesis. Berkeley held that there were minds; so far, so good. But these were not Cartesian substances, for ideas were not their modes. Substances did, and Berkeleyian minds did not, possess modes, for mind perceived its ideas and only ideas and these were not modes. Hume held that there were no substantival minds, but only clusters of impressions and ideas. Berkeley
was aware of a self over and above his ideas; Hume is not aware of anything but impressions. Why? Because for Hume to perceive is to perceive an impression, and no impression is possible of a mind, which purportedly is that which perceives, and thus is not itself perceivable. But for Berkeley there is self awareness which is not itself an idea, but rather a "notion." That is to say, man is not limited for his knowledge to sense perception, and has the capacity to be aware of himself as a conscious being. Further, were minds not to exist, ideas would not exist either, for the latter depend on the former. To clarify this, one will need to note the difference between what Hume and Berkeley mean by "idea." Failing even that, one can note that the Berkeleian claim to have a given sort of self-awareness is an obviously true one given Berkeley's system, and an obviously absurd one given Hume's. It is not merely as if the bishop could say to the Scot: look more carefully. If Hume's system is correct, there could be nothing to find. Nor is it merely that the sceptic can say to his Irish colleague: you are seeing what isn't there. For mind must be there, since ideas are, given Berkeley's system.
The point is this: for Berkeley, one can show that minds exist by noting the empirically true premise that ideas exist, and the metaphysical principle that "'tis repugnant that ideas exist unperceived," and by thus inferring that mind exists. For Hume you can note that the mind is defined as what perceives, and that what perceives cannot be perceived, and thus that there can be no impression of the mind, and hence that the word "mind" having no corresponding impression or idea has no meaning either. Hence, as "mind" (taken as anything more than a bundle of impressions and ideas) is meaningless, there can be no substantival minds for the reason that no purported description which does not in fact describe can possibly be fulfilled. That "Ideas exist," by the way, will not really be an empirical statement for Berkeley either, for ideas are such that it is a necessary truth about them that their being is their being perceived, and that the being of an idea is its being perceived is not an empirical matter at all. The issues, then, between Berkeley and Hume do not simply rest on what does in fact happen, but on what can happen, and on how what happens is to be categorically
interpreted. Berkeley and Hume have different categorial systems; this is the source of their dispute.

Well, then, can we check to see what can happen and decide between them? No, for what will count as being an idea which exists unperceived? And what will count as a successful self-awareness effort? An appeal to the "facts of self awareness" will do nothing for Hume who has no such facts and for whom no such facts can be; nor will it do to say to Berkeley that he misreads his experience, for unless there is a mind then we cannot for him have experience at all. To deny these assertions is of course possible; but on what empirical grounds can one decide between them? Is it really more legitimate to appeal to "I know I am aware of myself" or "I know that I am not aware of myself" than to appeal to a priori synthetic judgments? Indeed, do not such appeals have all the ear-marks of being the same sort of appeal as that? And with good reason, for "There are minds" is constitutive of Berkeley's system and "There are only bundles of impressions and ideas" is constitutive of Hume's. "There are minds," then, will not do as a case of deciding a metaphysical issue by an appeal to empirical data.
We have discussed but one sort of case. What others will be more helpful? None, I should argue, if they are metaphysical cases. The "metaphysicality" of the issues between the bishop and the sceptic arose from the modality of the statements involved—about what can or cannot or must or must not be. Their modality is easily missed, being expressed by none of the words in the sentences (at least it is not necessary that the sentences contain modal words), since it (the modality) depends upon and is strictly relative to the system in which the sentence occurs and (in the case of our examples) of which they are constitutive. To reiterate, the requisite modality is constituted by the role of a modal assertion in its categorial framework of which it expresses an essential portion.

Further criticisms can be made. One is that it is difficult to see that "non-meaningful" in the falsifiability criterion meant more than simply "not empirically verifiable." My point has been that even if no such criticisms were available, even then the falsifiability criterion cannot successfully pretend to sufficient philosophic innocence to authoritatively eliminate philosophic positions by way of pronouncing the assertions constituting these positions meaningless.
CHAPTER X

PARADIGM CASES AND POLAR CONCEPTS

The paradigm case argument has played a significant role in modern philosophy. Consider, for example, Flew's criticism of the "free will defense."^1 Strawson's purported refutation of the sceptic also seems to presuppose this argument in a manner shortly to be discussed in detail.2 The question thus arises as to the value of this sort of argument.

Closely connected with the paradigm case argument as another prong of contemporary philosopher's attack on their opponents is the argument from one concept to its opposite. I wish to consider what I take to be a legitimate use of the polar concepts argument, and then some illegitimate instances. Frege argues:

It is only in virtue of the possibility of something not being wise that it makes sense to say


^2Strawson, Individuals, p. 35.
that "Solon is wise." The content of a concept diminishes as its extension increases; if its extension is all-embracing, its content must vanish altogether.\(^3\)

If Frege means "possibility of" seriously, then for many concepts\(^4\) I have no objection to his first sentence, though I am by no means sure about the remainder of the quotation. If he means, however, that something must actually fail to be wise, then he seems to be mistaken, as I will argue shortly.

Leibniz argues in the *Monadology* as follows:

There must be simple substances, since there are compounds; for a compound is nothing but an aggregate of simple things.\(^5\)

Wittgenstein replies, in effect, that any ordinary use of "simple" and "complex" or "compound" is a use in contrast to something not simple or not complex or compound, and never of anything which is absolutely simple or absolutely complex or compound.\(^6\) The appropriate response seems to be that not all uses of these


\(^4\)But not, e.g., for 'self-identity.'


words are intended to be ordinary in the sense of "man-of-the-street" uses, and that scientists do talk about elements which enter into the compositions of things but which cannot themselves be broken down. Scientific theory may require such talk, and to rule it out \textit{a priori} seems to be rather high-handed and to legislate rather unreasonably against technical language. But the passage in question seems to be saying primarily that one's standard for what is simple depends on the perspective from which one speaks or the purposes he has in mind. Leibniz' response can surely be that his "perspective" is simply his metaphysical system and his purpose is to say what is true, given that system. Something more is clearly required before any philosophical issue is decided. Without dealing in any greater detail with the \textit{Philosophical Investigations}, I wish to note several cases where the paradigm case and polar concept arguments have been used to decide important philosophic problems.

Norman Malcolm argues against G. E. Moore that:

\begin{quote}
Certain words in our language operate in pairs. . . . In their use in ordinary language a member \textit{requires} . . .
\end{quote}
its opposite—for animate is contrasted with inanimate, probability with certainty, vagueness with clearness. 7

This in itself seems unexceptionable. But Malcolm goes on to argue that anyone who claims that all sentences are vague is automatically mistaken, since the very use of "vague sentence" is to contrast vague sentences with clear ones. Now the appropriate reply seems obvious. "All swans are white" is not to be rejected in virtue of its failing to distinguish some swans from others. Its rejection arises from its empirical falsehood; some swans are black. But were all black swans to cease to exist, surely "All swans are white" would not thereby become meaningless. We sometimes predicate a property of an object to characterize it as having something in common with all members of its kind even though that property is not kind-defining. The notion of an accidental property universally shared by all the members of a kind (and even only by them) is not logically suspect. It might have been true that only

brown-haired people existed, but the existence of perox­
ide would not, under those conditions, threaten the ex­
tinction of the human kind.

Malcolm's response would surely be in terms of our example. Color words have no opposites--they are contrary but not contradictory to one another. More carefully, "X is white" is not contradicted by "X is black" but only falsified by the latter; the contradic­
tory of "X is white" is "X is not white," but "not white" can only be unpacked successfully in terms of the com­
pound predicate "not colored at all or colored in some manner other than white." But "X is not animate" is contradicted by "X is not animate"--"X is inanimate," yielding a simple and direct opposite rather than a complex and contrarily opposed predicate.

Malcolm's criticism, in part anyway, is that Moore leaves no use for "clear sentence" when he says "All sentences are vague." That seems just false; its use will now be, if Moore is right, to say what is not the case ("No sentences are clear") and to say what might possibly be the case (given the success of an analysis--namely that "Some sentence is clear") and to
say what the ideal would be ("All sentences are clear"). This leaves us several uses for "clear sentence."

The more interesting point is that Malcolm denies that these uses can occur unless there are clear sentences. But this move shifts to distinctly new ground; the paradigm case argument is thus brought in to support the polar concepts argument for we are now told that "clear sentence" cannot have a meaning unless it has a use in the sense of referring to an actual instance. What Malcolm does to Moore, Walsh does to Descartes and, if I am correct in my reading of Individuals, Strawson does to Hume. Without the requirement that "clear sentence" refer successfully or designate an actual sentence which is clear, Moore can simply reply that of course I can have the concept "clear sentence" only if I have the concept of "vague sentence" and conversely (admitting that trivial point which lies behind the polar concepts argument) but denying that having either concept requires that there be actual cases of

both concepts, i.e., actual cases to which "vague sentence" applies and actual cases to which "clear sentence" applies. If one holds that both concepts must actually designate, then all sentences could not possibly be clear either. In any domain within the confine of which "clear sentence" can be used, "vague sentence" can also be used, since (on the supposition being considered) to have use is to designate (how different is this, after all, from the much-maligned 'to mean is to name'?). No mathematician could, say, ever hope to produce a system of only clear expressions, since for any to be clear one at least must be vague. The mathematical expressions can be stated in a natural language, so the fact that they happen to be expressed in symbols of a different sort is patently irrelevant; the system can be stated in ordinary language, with all the magic that the mother tongue imparts. This approaches, I should think, a reductio of Malcolm's argument.

In one sense of "clear," some sentences are and some are not. But the sense of "clear" here used is a common sense one; nor is it obvious that just what that sense is can be clearly stated. The last use of "clear"
is not intended to be a common sense one; it means something like "Given the standards of discipline D . . .". What those standards are will determine whether a sentence is clear or not; spelling out the standards will be spelling out part of the discipline. It will be obvious that "system" can replace "discipline" for which it is the clearly intended substitute. There is no reason why a given science cannot adopt its own standards of clarity, or a given system of philosophy its own, and do so without making any recommendations about the ordinary everyday use of "clear." An awed reverence for the "ordinary sense" or "ordinary use" of "clear" ought not, after all, to cause us to militate against its use in other, somewhat different, ways. The relation between ordinary and other senses of "clear" may or may not interest us; but the fact that the meaning of "clear" may vary systematically does not seem philosophically pertinent.

One might reject what I have suggested on the grounds that what I in fact do is to regard a metaphysical system as a "language game," which in fact it is not. Since I am by no means sure just what a "language game"
is, I find it hard to agree or disagree. But if the point is that the metaphysician, since he uses ordinary terms extra-ordinarily, cannot be saying anything at all, the argument of the present work may be referred to as my response.

I propose, at this point, to underline one remark, and then state a thesis to be subjected to severe criticism. The remark is this: without the paradigm case argument, I cannot see what force the polar concepts argument could have. Moore can reply to Malcolm in the manner suggested and remain completely unscathed; Descartes can reply analogously to Walsh, and Hume to Strawson. What bears the full weight, it seems to me, is the paradigm case argument. Its central thesis seems to be this: with respect to polar concepts, to mean (or, have a use) is to actually designate—to successfully refer or to correspond to something in the real world. This is, so to speak, the spectre of the "Fido"-Fido theory of meaning. What can be said concerning that theory has in part been dealt with in terms of our discussion of existential commitment. This thesis (restricted for our purposes to polar concepts) seems to be the
central point of the paradigm case argument, and hence of the polar concepts argument which rests, if I am correct, squarely on the shoulders of the paradigm case argument, with which it stands or falls. I wish now to consider whether the thesis crucial to the paradigm case argument is correct. It will do no harm if I do so by way of a rather detailed consideration of Strawson's critique of the sceptic.

In this context, the "sceptic" is anyone who denies that we are every justified in claiming to successfully reidentify a particular in cases of a non-continuous observation of that particular. Strawson's argument seems to me to be open to more than one interpretation; thus I shall attempt to interpret the argument in the most sympathetic way possible without claiming that he cannot properly or profitably be read differently than I shall read him.

Strawson's argument is an intricate reductio; indeed, I take it to be a pair of reductios. This explains his insistence on what we do possess by way of conceptual apparatus:

There is no doubt that we have the idea of a single spatio-temporal system of material things;
the idea of every material thing at any time being
spatially related, in various ways at various times,
to every other thing at every time. There is no
doubt at all that this is our conceptual scheme.9

Obviously this is, for Strawson, an assertion such that
any statement incompatible with it is patently false.
I want to suggest that Strawson develops two specific
reductio, both of which, though in different ways,
revert to this assertion.

Before endeavoring to state the first reductio in
detail, I wish to offer an analysis of its general struc­
ture. I take Strawson to be committed to some such line
of reasoning as the following:

(A) It is a necessary condition of our having the
conceptual scheme that we in fact do have that we have
the concept of particular-identity.

(B) It is a necessary condition of our having the
concept of particular-identity that we have the concept
of successfully re-identifying a particular.

(C) It is a necessary condition of our having the
concept of successfully re-identifying a particular that
we assert that there are in fact cases of successful re-
identification.

9Strawson, Individuals, p. 35.
Thus (D) It is a necessary condition of our having the conceptual scheme that we in fact do have that there are in fact cases of successful reidentification. From our having the conceptual scheme described in the above quotation from Individuals it follows that there are cases of successful reidentification of a particular. I now turn to documenting the claim that Strawson does seem to argue in this way.

What I call "Reductio One" is phrased as follows:

Now I say that a condition of our having this conceptual scheme is the unquestioning acceptance of particular-identity in at least some cases of non-continuous observation. Let us suppose for a moment that we were never willing to ascribe particular-identity in such cases. Then we should, as it were, have the idea of a new, a different, spatial system for each new stretch of continuous observation. Most of the common concepts of material things that we have would not exist; for the continuous stretches of observation are not long enough or comprehensive enough to allow of any use for them. (ibid.)

I take it that the above argument can be restated as follows:

(1) Suppose that we rejected every case of purported reidentification of a particular save in cases of continuous observation.

(2) Then in each case of purported identification of a particular, the particular in question would--ex
hypothesis—never have been identified before.

(3) For any particular \( p \), it would—ex hypothesi—be false of \( p \) that it existed through two cases of perception (i.e., it would be impossible for us ever to know of any \( p \) that it did).

(4) For any particular \( p \) to count as a material object, \( p \) must exist in more than one perceptual case.

(5) Thus nothing would count as a material object.

(6) Thus there would be no use for the words "material object."

(7) But there is a use for the words "material object."

(8) Hence, -6; thus -5; thus from -5) and 4) -3); hence -2).

(9) Therefore, -1).

Thus, given that the term "material object" has a use, a series of applications of \textit{modus tollens} yields the falsehood of the supposition contained in the first premise. The argument yields a \textit{reductio} of the thesis that we do (or can successfully) reject every case of purported reidentification; to do so flies in the face of the obvious fact that the term "material object" has a use. This way of rephrasing Strawson's argument only
requires that we take the concept of a material object as itself one of those "common concepts of material things" which would not exist did we not accept cases of reidentification. Another way of saying this is that, were we not to accept reidentification, certain concepts which do in fact have a use would not have a use. It should be noted that the sceptic only claims that a particular cannot be known to be the same as the one previously identified, not that we fail to have the concept of particular reidentification.

Reverting to our preliminary comments on the argument in question, we can provide Strawsonian texts to replace our premises (A) through (C):

(A) "A condition of our having this conceptual scheme is the unquestioning acceptance of particular identity in at least some cases of non-continuous observation."

Given (A), "One can accept cases of particular identity only if one has the concept of particular identity" (which seems innocuously true), we can conclude:

(B) "A condition of our having this conceptual scheme is our having the concept of particular identity." The concept of particular identity is admittedly a crucial
part of the conceptual scheme in question. To (A) and (B), Strawson adds:

(C) If "we were never willing to ascribe particular identity . . . most of the common concepts of material things . . . would not exist."

Again, Strawson asserts "the condition of having such a system (in which we can doubt a case of particular identity) is precisely the condition that there should be satisfiable and commonly satisfied criteria for the identity of at least some items in one sub-system with some items in the other." (P. 35, my italics.) This is, I take it, just my (C). As (A) through (C) entail (D), no textual evidence for Strawson's holding (D) is required only if I have made plausible my claim that he holds (A) through (C).

It should be obvious by now that, at least on my reading of Strawson's remarks, Reductio One depends upon, or is a case of, what has been labeled the "paradigm case argument" which Antony Flew characterizes as follows:

Crudely: if there is any word the meaning of which can be taught by reference to paradigm

10 It will be remembered that (D) is "It is a necessary condition of our having the conceptual scheme that we in fact do have that there are in fact cases of successful reidentification of a particular."
cases, then no argument whatever could ever prove that there are no cases whatever of whatever it is. More generally, we can in some cases properly infer from the fact that a word has meaning (or, if one prefers, use) that it does in fact apply to actual cases or paradigms. Reductio One seems to require that "reidentified particular" or "material object (thing)" be capable of proper appearance in a use of the paradigm case argument. What this involves will be appropriate matter for later inquiry.

The previous argument claimed to reduce to absurdity an assertion which denied the (to Strawson, at any rate) obvious fact that our conceptual scheme is of a certain kind by making it impossible for us to have the concept of a material object, which we do in fact have. The argument awaiting discussion will attempt to show that the supposed doubts of the sceptic are impossible in that they both require and deny a necessary condition for their being doubts at all. Thus Strawson argues:

(if we never accepted particular-identity in cases of non-continuous observation) each new system would be wholly independent of every other. There would be no question of doubt about the identity

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of an item in one system with an item in another for such doubt makes sense only if the two systems are not independent, if they are parts, in some way related, of a single system which contains them both. But the condition of having such a system is precisely the condition that there should be satisfiable criteria for the identity of at least some items in one sub-system with some items in the other.¹²

I suggest that we rephrase the above argument in the following manner:

(1) If no reidentification of a particular p ever occurred, then no p in perceptual situation A could ever be known as the same particular as p' in perceptual situation B.

(2) If no p in perceptual situation A could even be known as the same as p' in perceptual situation B, then there would be no way of justifying "p = p'" or of falsifying it.

(3) If there are no satisfiable criteria for justifying or falsifying "p = p'", then there is no sense to the claim that "p = p'" is doubted.

(4) But, as the sceptic claims to have this doubt, he must claim that there is sense to doubting "p = p'."

(5) Thus the sceptic must hold that "p = p'" is justifiable and/or falsifiable.

(6) Hence he must hold that reidentification is possible.¹³

This gives us a Reductio Two which argues that the

¹²Flew, Essays in Conceptual Analysis, p. 35.

¹³Strawson seems to want also to claim that the very concept of particular identity depends on the possession of the concept of one system in which the whole gamut of particulars reside; but the sceptic does not deny that we have that concept, but only that we can be sure that it is correct, that it "says how things are."
sceptic's doubts are self stultifying in that any doubts are doubts about what can be justified and/or falsified, and that, with respect to doubts about particular identity, being justified and/or falsified requires the possibility of just the sort of reidentification the sceptic wants to hold never to be legitimate.

The sceptic, then, in striking at the foundations only drives in the supports, for without the falsity of his views he could not doubt that successful reidentification occurs, since he could neither meaningfully be said to have anything to doubt about (i.e., would have none of "the common concepts of material things") nor any possibility of doubting, since what he would doubt, if he could, cannot be justified or falsified and thus it is not meaningful. It should be noticed, however, that all this depends on the success of our two reductios, the first of which rests squarely on the value of a given application of the paradigm case argument and the second of which requires the truth of a thesis about what can be doubted. The sceptic may be ignored only if all goes well on at least one of those counts, to which we now turn.

The obvious issue with respect to the paradigm
case argument is to discover what words can properly function in its instances. Flew, remarkably enough, refutes certain traditional replies to the problem of evil by arguing that "free will" is paradigmatically applicable to all cases of happy couples who walk the aisle to wedlock without "having to" or under parental pressure, and that "free will" thus elucidated (through soft determinist precepts) does not provide what the "free will defense" demands. However dubious this procedure may be, it reminds us at least that what words can be paradigmatically taught is not a matter upon which all will agree. It would be a source of particular embarrassment to supporters of the value of the argument were either "round square" or "troll" to be legitimate words for appearance in the argument; both purported objects with contradictory descriptions and possible objects with poor empirical pedigree should presumably be eschewed. But how do we

14See Flew's essay "Divine Omnipotence and Human Freedom" in New Essays in Philosophical Theology.

15The paradigm case argument, and Flew's use thereof, have received detailed attention in a vigorous interchange between J. N. W. Watkins and Flew in the December, 1957, number of Analysis to which I here acknowledge my indebtedness.
tell what words can, and what words cannot, be taught paradigmatically?

One suggestion might be that only words which are ostensively defined can appear in paradigm case arguments, that only with respect to such words can one infer referents for the words from the fact that they (words) have use. But if I know that a word is ostensively defined, no inference at all is required to yield the knowledge that the word in question refers; to know of a word that it is ostensively defined or definable is just to know that something exists to which the word refers (I do not by any means suggest that this is a complete analysis of the notion of "ostensive definition").

Equally important is the fact that whether "free will" or "material thing" can be ostensively defined is not barred from dispute; indeed, it is a crucial part of the position of the sceptic that it cannot be truly said that "material thing" is ostensively definable. Another way of saying this is that elucidating "can be paradigmatically taught" by "can be ostensively defined" leaves the important question as to what can be ostensively defined open.
Flew offers little help in further specifying the relevant restrictions. His major contributions toward this end consist in the assertion that an unrestricted paradigm case argument "would indeed . . . be the ontological argument universalized," in the remark that "we are not dealing with some compound descriptive expression correctly formed of words which can (be) and have been given sense independently," and in the comment that a word can function in the paradigm case argument if it can be (and not just if it must be) paradigmatically taught.16

One danger, it seems to me, of talking of "uses" instead of "meanings" is that the distinction between denotation and connotation becomes blurred. Flew admits to this sin, or to one very much like it, when he says that he had "obscured an important distinction between defining ostensively in terms of particular instances and explaining by reference to examples which have to satisfy a general specification."17 Purely denotative expressions could, of course, function properly in the

argument under discussion. Perhaps all words possessed of both denotation and connotation could, though this is less obvious. And no word, of course, with connotation only could function in a paradigm case argument. Once we put the matter this way, it becomes obvious that for every word not purely denotative the fact that that word has a "use" may only mean that it has connotation, so that the additional fact that that word has denotation is required in order to establish existential conclusions. Another way of putting the point is this: given that a word connotes in such fashion that it expresses general or specific conditions which anything to which it will properly apply must fulfill, then that anything does fill those conditions is an open and debatable question not to be settled merely by reference to the fact that the word does function in a language. I assume that it is obvious that our concern here is only with such terms as might be used referringly or defined ostensively, or both.

There is an ambiguity, of course, in the phrase "such terms as might be used referringly or defined ostensively, or both." It reproduces the ambiguity of
the remark by Flew which we noted to the effect that it is sufficient for a word to properly appear in a paradigm case argument that it can be paradigmatically taught, and not necessary that any such word must be paradigmatically taught. But "can be paradigmatically taught" may mean: (a) can in fact be so taught; (b) could in conceivable circumstances be so taught. With respect to (b), the sceptic need not, I think, deny that "material thing" or "reidentified particular" could in conceivable circumstances be paradigmatically taught. Given continuous observation, the former could be taught in this manner, perhaps; whether such circumstances can be elicited seems to be a question of time and ingenuity, and not a matter on which the sceptic must pronounce judgment. He must, however, deny that (a) is the case with respect to "material thing" and "reidentified particular." And we have found no reason why he may not deny that.

Another point is perhaps worth making briefly. The terms capable of paradigmatic teaching which seem to have been discovered thus far are ostensively definable terms. There seems to be good reason to doubt that these terms can be primitive to the language in which they occur. There is Wittgenstein's discussion of how sophisticated
"pointing" really is. And there is Strawson's comment that logical-subject terms are "worthless without a backing of descriptions which can be produced on demand to explain" their applications.¹⁸ Of course, there might be paradigmatic examples of what is described by descriptions which would have connotations even if they failed to have denotations; but as we have noted, whether there are such paradigmatic cases of "free will" or "material thing" can be intelligibly disputed.

One may grant, then, that of course if a term must or can be (sense (b)) paradigmatically taught, then the fact that it has a use entails that it refers, though that it could be so taught has no such entailment. It seems plausible that any word with connotation need not be paradigmatically taught, though this claim might be mistaken. If the point made above about the necessity of general terms for ostensive definition and indeed for any identifying reference is sound, it follows that some words (those general ones required for identifying

¹⁸Strawson, Individuals, p. 20
references) must be definable without paradigms. But that a term must, or can be so taught is an intricate issue not decided by the fact that a word has use. Otherwise stated: connotation never entails denotation. In the case of being provided with a valid ontological argument with true premises, I will willingly admit one exception.

I turn now to Reductio Two which contains the following crucial premise: "If there are no satisfiable criteria for justifying or falsifying "p = p'" then there is no sense to the claim that "p = p'" is doubted." This may be expanded to the general claim: "If a proposition cannot be justified or falsified, it cannot be doubted"; there seems no reason to limit the principle expressed by the premise to identity statements. Calling the above general claim "P," we may note that if P is false Reductio Two fails. I will now argue against P.

Perhaps my reasons for doubting P can best be approached indirectly. It is common philosophic coin

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19 Since were the general terms in question ostensibly definable they would have paradigms.

20 Since then it would be contradictory to say "'God' has a meaning (use) but no referent." No issue about paradigm cases arises here.
that one cannot know falsehoods,\textsuperscript{21} that "X knows S and S is false" is contradictory. Another way of putting this is to say that there is a restriction on what can properly complete "X knows---"; no false statement can fill in that blank and yield us a truth for the whole resultant statement. A further restriction is often placed on candidates for completing our schema, namely that for any statement which X knows, X must be able to give good reasons for that statement being true. Thus the truth-status of a proposition, and the reasons which X can offer for the truth of a proposition, are both relevant to whether or not that proposition can complete our schema. Or so it can be, and has been, argued.

A third element in a common analysis of propositions of the form "X knows S" is independent of the two we have mentioned in that these restrictions do not apply to it. The third element, "X believes S," can be true by itself even though S is false, and even though X cannot produce any reason at all for S being true. Thus, that S is false, or that X be void of evidence for S, counts

\textsuperscript{21}Whether counterfeit or genuine does not concern us here, though it seems true for at least an important sense of "know."
against "X knows S" in a way in which these matters are perfectly irrelevant to "X believes S." What counts against "X believes S," if anything does, will be other things that X says and does.

The obvious suggestion is that "X doubts S" is far more like "X believes S" than it is like "X knows S." That is to say, either true or false statements can be doubted (though of course one cannot doubt a statement he knows to be true—or one he knows to be false either). Again, that X doubts S does not require that X have reasons against S. To require that X have reasons against any statement that he doubts would be insensitive to the fact that one can "just doubt"; to respond to the question "Why do you doubt S?" by saying "I have no reasons, I just doubt" is not to contradict oneself. The admission "I have no reasons" does not in any sense disclaim a doubt (or a belief), though it does for (at least many) claims to know. One can argue that a doubt or belief for which no reasons or only bad reasons are provided is an irrational doubt or belief, and one can criticize those who hold such doubts or beliefs. This in itself constitutes evidence that there are, or can be, doubts for
which no reasons are, or can be, provided. Thus it seems
that neither the restriction on the truth value of the
proposition nor the restriction provided by the reason-
providing capacities of the subject which apply to any
statement which can replace "S" in "X knows S" applies
to candidates for replacing "S" in "X doubts S" or "X
believes S."

One might reply that even though the doubter need
not know any reason for or against a statement, still if
that statement can really be doubted there must be some
justification or falsification which could be provided
with respect to that statement. This move reminds one
of the assertion that only those statements for which
justification or falsification could be provided are
meaningful. (This was, of course, restricted to non-
tautologous statements.) One objection to the Verifica-
tion Principle (in which the above restriction was
embedded) was this: when the verification principle was
strictly stated it ruled out too much and when it was
stated broadly enough to allow the obviously admissable
it ruled out hardly anything. Thus when it read "a
proposition is meaningful if and only if it entails an
observation statement or is a tautology" it ruled out
"Anything which is a crow is black." Since this statement
(on the view of the positivists) says only that, "for any­
thing at all, if it is a crow, then it is black," it
entails no observation statement and it is obviously not
a tautology. But when so interpreted as to allow our
crow example, it read "a proposition is meaningful if and
only if either it is a tautology or there is some other
proposition such that it and that other proposition
together entail an observation statement that the other
proposition does not entail by itself." Thus our crow
statement plus "this is a crow" entails "this is black."
But then "if the not nothings itself, then Heidegger is
six feet tall" and "the not nothings itself" together
entail "Heidegger is six feet tall" which is not entailed
by our conditional statement alone.

If we may leave the history of the verification
principle22 (giving due credit to the Hempel article in
Linsky's Semantics and the Philosophy of Language for the
criticisms just noted), and return to "P,"23 we may note

22Leonard Linsky, Semantics and the Philosophy of
Language (Urbana, Illinois: The University of Illinois
Press, 1952).

23P was "If a proposition cannot be justified or
falsified, it cannot be doubted."
that for any consistent sentence \( S \), given enough time and ingenuity, some way of justifying it could likely be suggested. Thus the assertion "I will survive my death" is surely one for which a simple decision procedure is possible. I need only take a strong dose of arsenic and wait. That I could not discover my hypothesis to be false is true but irrelevant; it could, in principle, be justified. So if all that is required is that the statement which completes "X doubts . . " be such that some justification or falsification or other can be conceived, then not many candidates seem to be eliminated. This is not to say that I think that adequate reason has been provided for making that restriction in the first place.

On the other hand, we have already argued against the restriction that the doubter be capable of providing a justification for his doubts, and if one wishes to object that some actual justification or falsification be possible before doubt can occur, the reply seems to be just that one can (if unreasonably) doubt that there is sentient life on Mars, or in other solar systems, though no actual justification or falsification exists. Thus, when we interpret the restriction which \( P \) makes on doubttable propositions in a generous sense (requiring
only conceivable justification or falsification) not much seems eliminated; we are left wondering why we should accept the restriction in any case. But when we tighten the restriction so as to require actual justification or falsification the restriction seems just too strict; one can doubt that baseball is played on far-off planets or believe that it is, and do so without providing relevant reasons. A statement not actually justifiable or falsifiable can, without resultant absurdity, complete sentences of the form "X doubts . . ." or "X believes . . . ." Hence, P seems false.

It will be well to conclude by reviewing our argument and drawing some conclusions. We have interpreted Strawson as presenting those arguments which we dubbed reductios one and two. The former depended on the move from "re-identified particular" or "material object" having a use (or being meaningful) to there being actual cases of particular reidentification or of material things. More generally, it depended an an application or instance of the paradigm case argument. We argued against that instance of the argument, wondering in the process about the value of any paradigm case argument as a means of
settling philosophical disputes. The latter seemed to re-
quire the truth of "P," a thesis about what can be doubted. 
P seemed to fail, as no falsehoods arose from completing
the schema "X doubts . . ." by statements which violated
the restriction which P expressed. Strictly interpreted,
P seemed false; generously interpreted, even if accepted
it seemed to exempt very few statements indeed from being
possibly doubted.

The conclusion is that, if the preceding is sound,
the sceptic can still state his case. Of course, other
interpretations of Strawson might be offered; his argu-
ment has a feature common to many profound arguments,
that of fecundity. It can produce many readings. Nor
do I claim that I have exhausted the argument against
the sceptic; far less do I claim to have shown that his
views are true. Rather, it seems to me that the sceptic's
view can, despite Strawson, still be stated. But Straw-
son's argument is instructive even if mistaken, and
perhaps it can be interpreted in some other way so as to
be fatal to the sceptic.

I have argued that P is false. From that, I draw
two conclusions. The first is simply that, as P was an
essential presupposition or thesis of the paradigm case argument, that argument is at best a way of begging the question when used as we have seen it used against Moore, Descartes, and Hume. I know of no other sort of philosophical use to which it might fruitfully be put, though perhaps there are some. The second conclusion is that, without the paradigm case argument, the polar concepts argument is no longer a club with which to beat the metaphysician. Even Plato (or at least his successors) who held that "evil" is a negative concept (privation of goodness) would not deny that in order to have the notion of a privation of goodness one had to have the notion of the presence of goodness, and conversely. So the polar concepts argument (I have already dealt with it as a club used by itself against Descartes, Hume, and Moore) seems to me to be, though in many instances quite correct, nonetheless inefficacious in the indicated attempt to use it as a means of deciding metaphysical issues, and thusly to some degree to decide for or against metaphysical systems.
CHAPTER XI

MONISM, DUALISM, AND THE TWO WORLDS ARGUMENT

John Passmore contends that "if philosophy can really show, by its own peculiar arguments, not by experimental inference or by mathematical deduction . . . that dualism is untenable, it has made a contribution of the first importance, sufficient by itself to dispel the view that philosophy is either no more than personal vision or no more than analysis."¹ Here, then, is a way to deal with metaphysical systems in a decisive way and with sweeping scope, since Passmore believes that philosophy can show by its own peculiar arguments, that dualism is untenable. Here is decision procedure with a vengeance; a whole class of metaphysical views, namely, all those which hold that there are at least two kinds of things—is refuted by what Passmore calls "the two-worlds argument." In particular, to follow Passmore's

¹Passmore, Philosophical Reasoning, p. 57.
list, any view which holds that there are universals and particulars, minds and bodies, appearance and reality, God and nature, or the like, will be refuted.

I wish to show that Passmore has failed to refute generic dualism, where "generic dualism" is just the view that there are two kinds of entities, irreducible the one to the other. Otherwise phrased, I wish to argue that the thesis "Any categorial system with two or more ontological categories is in principle mistaken" is not justified by anything that Passmore asserts.

To refute Plato, Descartes, Berkeley, and Judeo-Christian theology in one chapter (at that, the list is partial) is a remarkable feat. Passmore, we have noted, claims to accomplish it. The chapter in question is entitled "Infinite Regress" and the argument is the old one that any dualist will be incapable, without positing a third sort of entity, of relating his two basic sorts of entity, and that even a third sort of being won't help because he will still have to relate the third sort of being to the other two, and so on ad infinitum. This is the chapter's minor theme: dualism is inherently deficient

\[^2\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 19-37.}\]
as an explanation—this is the epistemological objection. There is a major theme as well: dualism is inherently ontologically deficient—this is the metaphysical objection. It arises from the purported fact that no such relation as the dualist requires can arise; that is, it can be shown that no two types of entity can be related, not merely that they cannot be known to be related. My intention is to ask whether one cannot escape the regress and to discern how the major and minor themes are related.

While Passmore makes no point of it, the major and minor themes seem to be related in this manner: the minor entails the major. What does the claim "X cannot be known" mean? Unless we merely mean "cannot be known given the present stage of experimentation, or the present refinement of our instruments," we must mean either that some well-established feature of the world prevents our knowing it or that somehow we are logically precluded from knowing it. Passmore means the latter. But what then does the major theme add to the minor? Just this: that what (for reasons of "logic") cannot be known,

3Cf. one view of the possibility of knowing both the position and velocity of an elementary particle at the same time.
cannot be. The unknowable cannot exist. Only so can we move from the minor theme to the major, and that move is crucial to Passmore's argument. Without it, the dualist can reply that he has shown that there is a limitation in our knowledge (some things cannot—in the requisite sense of "cannot"—be known), but we can know some other things. For example, we can know (for the dualist's arguments show this) that there are at least two sorts of things, but cannot know how they are related, if they are, or perhaps can know that they are related but not know how they are or even how it is possible that they are. Thus one way to challenge Passmore's argument is to challenge the evidence for the major theme; one could grant the minor theme, deny "The real is the knowable and anything unknowable is not real," and hence hold that Passmore's major theme is entirely gratuitous. Passmore's refutation of generic dualism does patently require the statement which appears in quotes in the last sentence.

But what of the argument for the minor theme? One form of the argument, used obviously against Platonism, is this: the Forms are meant, in part, as an explanation
of how many things can share one quality. They do so (Passmore's Plato replies) by virtue of being related to one Form. But then one wants to know, if "being Q" is to be explicated by "being related to Form Q," how this latter locution (or the state of affairs which it describes) is to be construed. Will we not need a new predicate "being related to being related to the Form Q"? The answer might be that we do not, for nothing could have such a relation. That is, a phrase succeeds in expressing a relation only if there is some relation which could correspond to the phrase; but none could correspond to the phrase in question. Thus, there is no regress. If one can provide relevant argument for the new predicate not being able to correspond to a new relation, the argument toward infinite regress can perhaps be cut short. Passmore does not show that no such argument can be provided, though he would presumably claim that the onus rested with the "Platonist" to prove that the new predicate, so similar to the old one, cannot express a possible relationship.

If the regress cannot be stopped, then one has to ask if the regress is innocent or not. It can be made
so, Passmore argues, only by giving "privileged status" to certain entities. The phrases "persuasive definition," "privileged access," and "privileged status" are themselves bits of argumentum ad hominem; one suspects that their users aim them to sensitive equalitarian readers who will dismiss any such lack of democracy. However that may be, such a status is often given to certain entities—to God in the causal argument, to self-knowledge in the Cartesian system, to the sentence "Nothing can be known" by a sceptic, and to "The Philosophical Investigations is a philosophical book" by those who hold that philosophy arises when language goes on holiday. The reason why such status is afforded varies. One reason is to evade type-problems. Another is to provide adequate explanation—explanation which does not appeal again to the type or kind of thing being explained (the appeal to necessary being is an example of this reasoning). Thus if necessary being exists, no further explanation, so the argument goes, is required, but if only contingent being exists we can have no adequate explanation of why there is something rather than nothing. It surely will not do to simply deny that such a move is ever justified, and whether it is in a given case is a matter for careful evaluation in that
case. Passmore certainly gives no reason to believe that such moves are always to be rejected.

The mind-body dualist appears next at the guillotine. Ryle plays the role of executioner and, in Passmore's rendition, reads the following sentence of death:

... by definition the transaction between the mind and body can belong to neither the mental or the physical series ... But then you have no room left for transactions between the mental and the bodily series.

But consider the following argument: there are only physical things; temporal relations are not physical things; hence there are no temporal relations. Is this argument in any way inferior to the preceding one? Relations are neither mental nor physical and thus dualism makes no place for them; so goes the argument (with particular respect to mind-body relations). But then relations, being neither mental nor physical, are not physical; thus materialistic monism fails to account for them too. Again, being neither mental nor physical, relations are not mental; so idealistic monism also fails to account for relations. Therefore, one might argue, relations are unreal and we ought all to be on our way

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to becoming Bradleyians. But the argument obviously goes too quickly.

As the views considered become less popular, the criticism becomes correspondingly less penetrating. Perhaps this is because Passmore is relying on his reader to provide the application of the argument in the first portion of his chapter to new views; I have indicated certain reserves about the effectiveness of that argument. In any case, parallelism is criticized because the relations it asserts between mental and physical events ". . . are not close enough. The only possible parallelism is a temporal one" if parallelism is true, and simultaneity is not enough to distinguish the relationship between a mental event and any one physical event as opposed to the relationship of that mental event to any other cotemporaneous physical event, or between any physical event and any one mental event as opposed to the relationship of that physical event and any other cotemporaneous mental event. Indeed so, but this again goes much too quickly. One needs some way of identifying a mind and a body, and thus of relating only the events

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5Ibid.
of that mind and that body, but any view of mind and/or body must provide for some mode of identification of one member of each of the kinds of entities it posits. Identification-conditions, as well as identity-conditions, may well be required of any view of mind and/or body, but that fact constitutes no objection to any such view unless one provides an argument as to why that view cannot in principle meet such conditions. Passmore provides no such argument with respect to parallelism. Indeed, the relationship cannot, for parallelism, be a causal one; but why not some other kind? Pre-established harmony would provide a sort of relationship beyond mere simultaneity. One could (qua parallelist) deny any causal connection between the mental series and the physical series, but claim that (since parallelism is true) it is a necessary condition (logically, not causally) that if an event occurs in one series, its correspondent occur in the other. To explain the necessary condition involved would presumably involve one in positing a Deity who manipulated the series so as to produce the requisite correlation, though one could
leave the explanation of the necessary condition uninvesti-
gated.

Further, Passmore appeals to the fact that "to make
the relation more intimate, as it very clearly is, at
once threatens the ontological gap." But if one pre-
sents a dualist with the alternative: either reject
dualism or drop the common sense belief that physical and
mental events are "intimately connected," one presents in
fact no alternative at all. If the alternative is gen-
uine, to accept the former is to reject the latter. To
appeal to the belief, however common-sensical, that
bodily events cause mental events and conversely, as
an objection to parallelism is patently question-begging.
What it presents as a "fact" cannot be a fact if the
categories of parallelism are adequate to the mind-body
problem, which is the point at issue. If one replaces
"parallelism" by "dualism" in this last sentence, the
generality of the issue becomes obvious.

It is, then, the battery of argument for dis-
tinguishing between minds and bodies in a radical way

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6 Ibid., p. 56.
which leads some dualists to become parallelists; if their choice is to give up their arguments or to conflict with a portion of common sense, surely they can opt plausibly for the latter. Again, that the body differs from the mind is itself a matter of common sense belief for what that is worth. Thus it becomes a question of which part of common sense belief to sacrifice and which to retain, if Passmore is right that the common sense connection is closer than any the dualist can provide for. This thesis remains undemonstrated by Passmore's argumentation. Even if this thesis is correct, the issue as to what to reject and what to retain, the dualist may assert, will properly be decided by philosophical considerations, in particular the arguments for dualism. Such arguments are, by the way, conspicuous by their absence in Passmore's chapter; if he can show that the position is in principle unreasonable, there is some justification for this, though we have seen reason to doubt that one can say he has shown this to be the case. Further, it is open to doubt whether one can divorce a position in philosophy from the arguments for it. If Passmore does fail, one will be forced to return to the arguments for dualism (and
those of its competitors). With respect to parallelism Passmore's critical arguments are very weak. Nor, if we are correct, have the preceding arguments been suf-
ficient to discredit generic dualism; neither it nor any of its species have, I think, been refuted. Hence, no philosophical disputes have been settled.

It may be worth a moment's reflection to see why the arguments fell short of cogency. I suggest that, in each case, they did so because they were framed in categories foreign to the thesis under attack. In each case, they refused to take the position in question fully seriously, and imposed upon it criterion of evidence which it would not accept or requirements of explanation foreign to its own canons, or distinctions it denied, or the like. This proves instructive for considerations to occupy us in the remainder of this work.
CHAPTER XII

THE STRUCTURE OF COMMON SPEECH,

THOUGHT, AND EXPERIENCE

The question which recurs through reading these pages is whether or not there is, or can be, any way of deciding between competing categorial systems. Given what has been said so far, have I not in effect argued for a radical kind of philosophical scepticism, one which says that while solutions to a problem can be offered within a system (and these solutions will be different from each other, as will the systems in which they are proffered) no possible way of deciding between competing systems is available? I think not. The following chapter constitutes an attempt to present grounds for that denial.

The natural place to begin the present endeavor is to turn to the writings of Everett Hall himself to see what he offers by way of philosophical decision procedure. I confess that his views on this topic
do not seem to me to be either altogether clear, or altogether compatible with his views as heretofore presented. The one thing that is, I think, indubitable about Hall's position is that he refuses to embrace the sort of scepticism mentioned above.

Hall writes of his interpretation of G. E. Moore, "I grant that this interpretation does not tally perfectly with what Moore explicitly says, but it makes sense of what he does."¹ The same holds, I fear, of my reading of Hall; it does not tally with all that he explicitly says (it does with some of that), but it (hopefully, anyway) tallies with what he does.

My problem in following Hall's last chapter in Philosophical Systems (the one relevant to our present inquiry) is that he seems both to say that empirical data "leads to" his candidate for the basis of categorial evaluation and that his criterion is itself a categorial commitment (thus being exempt from the possibility of empirical verification). Differently put, he both appeals to the products of linguistic study and proposes conditions logically required by any system. The products of any empirical study should patently be stated in assertions

¹Hall, Philosophical Systems, p. 155.
empirical and non-modal. The assertions stating logical prerequisites for being a system should be categorial and modal. How can the one "lead to" the other? My way of escaping the difficulty will be to play down the empirical issues and to stress the categorial ones. I hope to show that in so doing I follow Hallian orthodoxy and eliminate Hallian heterodoxy and thus follow Hall's deepest intentions. If I am wrong about this matter, it will nonetheless be true that I cannot agree with Hall in all that he says about categorial evaluation.

We begin by providing Hallian texts relevant to the portion of his thesis which I find untenable. Unfortunately, these texts are not limited to a single work, nor are they easily ignored in that they are offered as a portion of his explicit argument. Thus in Philosophical Systems, Hall writes:

It is scarcely open to doubt that it is through ordinary communication and particularly through its pervasive forms and syntax that we become assured of the existence of other personal experiences and that our own assumes a shape largely distinguishable from them. As I have just formulated it, this is a causal (empirical?) judgment, but it leads naturally to the philosophical contention that everyday speech furnishes the objective grounds we are seeking.²

²Ibid., pp. 149-150.
Aside from the obscurity of "leads naturally to" (surely not another causal judgment?), my unhappiness about this move can be partly expressed by repeating a remark of Bertrand Russell's in his "Lectures on Logical Atomism." Russell confesses that his lectures constitute an outline of "a kind of logical doctrine which seems to me to result from the philosophy of mathematics—not exactly logically, but as what emerges as one reflects: a certain kind of logical doctrine, and on the basis of this a certain kind of metaphysic." Compare Hall's statement, just quoted, to some comments randomly selected from the writings of George Herbert Meade:

That which creates the duties, rights, customs, the laws and the various human institutions in human society, as distinguished from the physiological relationships of an ant nest or a beehive, is the capacity of the human individual to assume the organized attitude of the community toward himself as well as toward others. In fact, we find that in the case of the deaf and dumb, if no care is given to the development of language, the child does not develop normal human intelligence, but remains on the level of lower animals. . . . Only in terms of gestures as significant symbols is the existence of mind or intelligence possible; for only in terms of gestures which are significant can thinking . . . take place.

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Hall's (causal) proposal seems no different in kind, and not too dissimilar from Mead's. Two questions thus arise: how do we get from such reflections to a philosophical touchstone? and why take work in such reflections as more helpful for this purpose than, say, Russell's reflections on logic? The fundamental issue, then, is how the empirical is to "lead to" the categorial.

Were this an isolated instance in the Hallian corpus we could in good conscience suggest a momentary lapse on his part (though even that is a dangerous business with a thinker of Hall's capacity). A passage, all the more problematic for appearing as a brief account of Hall's technique which is obviously cut to the barest proportions consistent with intelligibility, is the one from Our Knowledge of Fact and Value:

The approach to philosophy taken in the present study does involve the assumption that mankind as a whole has a modicum of common modes of thought, that there are categories to which we are all more or less committed and that these are discernible in everyday speech. Perhaps advances in linguistic anthropology will force the abandonment of this assumption.\(^5\)

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\(^5\)Hall, Our Knowledge of Fact and Value, p. 9.
Again, and with some discomfort, Hall admits very late in Philosophical Systems:

It may be that with the sympathetic understanding of exotic languages it will be seen that there are few, perhaps no common categorial features of all vernaculars. This seems rather unlikely in view of the relative success of anthropologists in learning to speak diverse primitive tongues, but the investigations and speculations of Whorf and his disciples have opened this as a conceivability.\(^6\)

Hall's discussion in this context seems to me to be strained. My impression is that he feels that something has gone seriously wrong, and is very glad to note that as yet we do not have to worry about the actuality of what Whorfian studies have made conceivable.

Another, and more promising, ploy is to be found in Hallian documents. A moment's reflection, for example, on the argument in What is Value? that there must exist facts in order for assertion to be possible provides a case of dialectically argued categorial commonality. Any language in which systems may be formulated must possess resources for assertion, and thus is committed to the existence of facts. Should, then, any system make no place for the existence of facts, or deny their existence, \(^6\)Hall, Philosophical Systems, p. 162.
it would be self-defeating; its being a system at all would require facts (for the assertions comprising the system, or a part thereof, would be fact-committed), and yet the doctrines explicitly expressed in the system would be inherently deficient if no doctrine of facts were included among them, or entirely self-defeating if facts were denied. Thus if any system could be convicted of holding that "There are no facts" is true, it would be conclusively refuted, in that "There are no facts" can assert only in virtue of presupposing that there are. It is just this sort of argument, which I shall dub "self-stultification arguments," that seems to me to hold evaluational promise. That topic will occupy us shortly. For now, that sort of move is very much open to Hall; the argument is in his written works.

Turning again to Philosophical Systems, Hall suggests that we look to "the chief resources of colloquial language as revealing our most basic and pervasive ways of thinking about things." What is Value? contains the same thesis in more picturesque phrasing:

Now all this does make an assumption—a "Whopper" if you please. But it is not that there is any

7Ibid., p. 150.
knowledge of the categorial features of the world wholly independent of linguistic analysis. It is rather than the language of common sense, purified of the nonsense it itself recognizes to be such but yet retains, shows us, in the ways in which it says things about the world, the categorial features of the world. And this assumption, so far from being circular, so far from starting with a supposed knowledge of the categorial features of the world, is rather an acceptance of a "lingua-centric predicament." So far as our categories are concerned, we can never escape from a domination of our thinking by the forms of our language.  

This thesis is inextricably embedded in Philosophical Systems: "I submit that in them (our categories) we are attempting to be in some sense fair to the structure of the extra-linguistic world, not just to shape up our talk."  

Such statements could be multiplied, but to do so seems pointless. Hall is clearly committed to the thesis that language is inherently referential. This is itself a categorial thesis; the referentiality of language is no empirical feature to be read off the sounds or marks which go under the title "language." This Hall admits, and insists upon. The question "Suppose we find a non-referential language in which assertions are nonetheless

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8Hall, What is Value?, p. 197.
9Hall, Philosophical Systems, p. 11.
made?" must be, for Hall, like the question "Suppose we find a creature with incompatible qualities?"; the answer to each ought to be "Nonsense!" Given the categorial status of Hall's present claim, it is impossible, if that claim be correct, that any such language exist. Why then worry about the researches of linguistics in exotic tongues? Any language which asserts will be referential, on Hall's own grounds; it will also be committed to the existence of facts. Why, then, the tentativeness on Hall's part?

I can provide a sort of answer. Hall is obsessive about rejecting certainty; he thus leaves open the door to the falsity of his commitments. His commitments regarding language could, thus, be falsified; the Whorfians could, he says, do him in. But this is, happily, unlikely.

I have deliberately used psychological terms; my "explanation" is a bit of amateur psychology, and I mention it only to note that at best it would account causally for Hall's theses. I hasten to add that I mention this approach to reject it; I take it to be no part of philosophy to offer psychological accounts of why philosophers said what they did. Plainly, in any case, it blurs the crux of the matter. I find it necessary to
accuse Hall himself of neglecting his own bifurcation between categorial issues and empirical ones. If Hall's theses are, qua categorial theses, overthrown, they will be overthrown on categorial grounds, not empirical ones. And any non-categorial views Hall has are no concern of mine here. I point out that lack of certainty can be attained at lower price than treating categorial matters as empirical; one can simply admit that one's categorial commitments are always challengeable in terms of their proper competitors—other categorial claims. So doing, I propose to offer categorial considerations against Hall's proposed "given to."

We had best begin by giving more careful account of Hall's criterion for categorial evaluation, now that its categorial status has, I hope, been made clear.

Let Hall speak for himself:

I should vote for some kind of combination of what might be called the structure of natural experience and syntax of natural language to do what we are after. Such a combination seems almost forced on anyone favorably inclined toward either of its elements; for they are in the last analysis inseparable.10

10Ibid., p. 150.
And again,

The grammar of common sense united with the structure of our natural experience forms, I suggest, the highest court. Beyond it there is no appeal. 11

Again, our philosophic touchstone is to be the structure of common sense language:

Here there are imbedded our unsophisticated or "natural" categories; to put it differently, in its repertory of devices of assertion, primarily though not exclusively its syntactical features, taken in the broadest sense of this phrase including all the chief ways it has of saying things, ordinary language is already a first and unconscious analysis. Not, of course, of language, but of the world. 12

I have suggested that Hall confuses an empirical with a categorial issues. The categorial issue concerns Hall's thesis about the necessary conditions of being a system; inconsistent systems are inherently defective, and systems in any relevant sense require assertion to be possible—thus presupposing facts. The empirical issue concerns whether or not there are categories common to every natural language. But suppose that there are categories common to every natural language; must these be present in any possible natural language? Must they be present in any possible constructed or ideal language?
If not, why view them as of particular philosophical relevance? If so, then one has passed from non-modal empirical description to modal categorial assertion. This is but another way of saying that Hall's candidate is categorial, not empirical. Hall admits this, but muddies the water by trying to justify his categorially loaded candidate by appeal to empirical linguistics.

Hall distinguishes between "given in" and "given to"; that is "given in" system S which is peculiar to S, which when translated into S' makes S' chaotic. That is "given to" S which is not peculiar to S, which bears translation into S' without wreaking conceptual chaos in its new home.

It will be sufficient reply to Hall's claim that his candidate is "given to" all systems rather than "given in" some one or more of them if we can show that there are systems in which Hall's own offering brings conceptual chaos. That a transferred element of a system should wreak chaos in its new home was a mark of the categorial committiveness of that element, and of its foreign categorial load with respect to the categorial system into which it is newly forced. My point is this:
Hall is undercut by his own criterion, guilty on his own ground, categorically committed given his own touchstone for such commitment, hung by his own petard. Such a task ought not to be too lengthy or difficult.

It was Kant's view that he had exhibited the necessary conditions of all human experience. The spatial and temporal ordering of appearances, and the categorization of the results under the categories whose exhaustive list is purportedly provided by deducing them from the table of judgements give, on his view, adequate analysis of the logically necessary conditions of our experience. But the forms of intuition (space and time) and the categories apply only to objects of possible sense experience. The things-in-themselves, denizens of the noumenal world, lie forever beyond our knowledge. That they exist can be inferred from the contingent nature of our appearances; what they are is an irresolvable mystery. The categories logically prerequisite to human experience might well be exhibited in all possible natural languages, and all possible artificial ones. Suppose this is so. We cannot, for Kant, then move to any conclusion about the world as it is (the noumenal
world), but can only say how the world must be experienced by us. The phenomenal world is as the categories require, but the noumenal world is as it is in itself—a matter beyond our reach. It is unknowable. Waiving the issues of rational autonomy, the connection between freedom, rationality, responsibility, the confrontation of the noumenal world in moral obligation, and the like, we can now frame our objection in terms of the Kantianism just developed.

One way of putting my objection is this: if we place into the fabric of Kant's contentions the thesis that the order and connection of the categories is the order and connection of things, we import an obviously foreign element. Hall does not mean to say that the categories of common sense thought and speech reveal how we must talk and think; he means to say how things are, or at least he means to say how things must be if our categories do represent reality (which they purport to do). If we read Hall as saying that the order and connection of categories is the order and connection of things, we can respond that for Kant the order and connection of categories can only be the order and
connection of our experience of things, which is a rather
different matter. If we read Hall (more profoundly, I
think) as saying that if our categories represent reality
properly to us then reality is like . . . (where we fill
in the results of an analysis of what our categories
require), we can respond for (our) Kant that reality
cannot be as our categories require, for they apply only
to our experiences and to nothing beyond them.

A brief review is in order. Suppose we express a
quasi-Kantianism which avers that our categories (as
deduced from the logical forms of judgement) are inextric-
ably embedded in all natural and artificial languages.
Suppose we hold also, as Kant holds of his categories,
that they apply only to sense experience, and not to the
noumenal world. Then our categories will not reveal what
reality is like, nor will they purport to do so. Read
one way, Hall says they do reveal what the world is like.
Read more profoundly, he says they purport to. Either
way, his contention will conflict with the philosophical
perspective taken by the Kant of our pages. It is hence

13Everett Hall, Categorial Analysis, pp. 69-92
offers a beginning analysis. That our categories do
represent reality properly is basic categorial commitment
for Hall.
the case that Hall's "given to" is possessed of its own categorial load, is itself categorially committed, and is hence in fact "given in," not "given to." Kant's distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds would collapse if he were to accept Hall's dictum; Hall's dictum would lose its point were he to grant Kant's distinction between phenomenal and noumenal worlds. Hall's dictum, we may remember, is that our natural categories purport to represent the world as it is.

The disarming thing is that Hall admits this.

I reiterate, I have not avoided all commitments. I accept the charge that in appealing to ordinary experience as revealed in the resources of ordinary language I am already on challengeable ground.14

The appeal to common categories for all natural languages was intended to make this appeal more plausible; I have argued that it does not do that. Empirical claims do not make categorial ones more, or less, plausible. Hall further argues that all philosophers must in the end state their convictions in ordinary talk. While his appeal, then, is challengeable, Hall claims that he has post-posted this predicament as long as possible (much longer than many others), and made it consist of something almost indecent for any

14Everett Hall, Philosophical Systems, p. 160.
philosopher to deny. For must he not talk and debate with others? And, however technical and peculiar his jargon, is he not forced to recast it somewhere, at some primitive level, in the form of his mother tongue, and in the inherited categories of his everyday speech?\footnote{Ibid.}

Perhaps so; nonetheless, certain considerations militate against the force of this consideration as relevant to how to decide between competing systems. Let us give Hall his due; he is not making the trivial claim that we must speak in ordinary language to communicate with those unfamiliar with our jargon if we are adept in an argot known only to an elite. He is rather asserting that a necessary condition of the intelligibility of any argot is that it be expressible in ordinary talk. Suppose that we grant this; in so doing, however, we ought to note that it seems plausible that every philosophical view can be stated without distortion in such talk, in which case it would not be helpful to appeal to the categories of ordinary language as our court of appeal. Further, Hall follows his assertion that there is no appeal beyond the structure of common speech and common
experience with the confession that its verdicts are not certainly true; it itself challenges them; it does not speak with one voice; and since we are concerned with truth, and not merely legal decision, we must acquiesce to the insecurity that this finally forces upon us.16

One is reminded of Berkeley’s Philonous who recommends to Hylas that they “be content to admit that opinion for true, which upon examination shall appear most agreeable to common sense, and remote from scepticism.”17 Nor is Berkeley’s appeal only to common sense belief; he appeals to what can be rightly said given the categorial structure of common sense language: “It is then good sense (on Hylas’ view) to speak of motion as of a thing that is loud, sweet, acute, or grave.”18 Since this is not good sense, one of Hylas’ proposals, which entailed that it was good sense, must be rejected. When Hylas objects that though the deduction that Philonous correctly makes from Hylas’ premises "sounds something oddly" nonetheless

common language . . . is framed by, and for the use of, the vulgar: we must not therefore wonder

16 Ibid., p. 164.
17 Berkeley, Selections, p. 225.
18 Ibid., p. 238.
if expressions adapted to exact philosophical notions seem uncouth and out of the way.\textsuperscript{19}

Philonous replies:

Is it come to that? I assure you, I imagine myself to have gained no small point, since you make so light of departing from common phrases and opinions; it being a main part of the inquiry, to examine whose notions are widest of the common road.\textsuperscript{20}

A case can be made, I suspect, for reading Berkeley as offering the same court of appeal as Hall, if less explicitly. Hall is, and Berkeley is not, of the opinion that ideas refer. Since common speech and experience is a court of more than one voice, do we follow Berkeley or Hall here? My reference to Berkeley is meant to put a bit of meat on the bare bones of the following criticism: if there is lack of clarity or actual inconsistency in the structure of ordinary speech and experience,\textsuperscript{21} how do we decide what to retain and what to reject? How indeed, save by already having a categorial system?

Hallian candor again triumphs in one of the most

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., p. 239.

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{21}Whether there is or not is a categorial issue, disputed e.g. between Bradley and Moore.
honest (if least philosophically persuasive) passages in

Philosophical Systems:

Of course it must be admitted that just how one
is to bring everyday modes of thought and speech
into a self-harmonious pattern is not already
clearly revealed in the grammar of our mother
tongue, not even when it is brought into complete
agreement with natural experience. But what
would you have? The philosopher should be left
some job to perform.22

Presumably how he goes about this task will depend on what
sort of philosopher he is, on the sort of categorial
commitments he has made. What view, then, is ruled out
by the touchstone? Probably, none whatever. But then
what of the value of the touchstone?

I am very much inclined, then, to view the passages
in Hall dealing with the evaluation of philosophical
systems to be an incisive description of Hall's way of
so evaluating, given his own commitments. That is, I
have offered an elucidation of Hall's "given to." In
the end, I don't think he would really disagree. As to
the self-stultification considerations involved in Hall's
final chapter, I will devote the next (and concluding)
chapter to such issues.

22Everett Hall, Philosophical Systems, p. 159. Hall does not tell us how to bring the grammar of our mother tongue "into complete agreement with our natural experience" either.
CHAPTER XIII

SELF-STULTIFICATION ARGUMENTS

Suppose that I am accused of being an egotist, and deny it. Does not my avid denial lend some credence to the charge? Or suppose that I am accused of not being humble, and reply that I am in fact very humble indeed. Does not my assertion belie my humility? Such cases are not type-violations; they are not self-predicative. But they are self-stultifying, and in the following manner: asserting them reveals, or at least raises the suspicions of my auditors, that what I say is false. "The lady dost protest too much methinks," says the Queen to Hamlet.¹

It is assertions which in some manner undermine themselves, arguments which if successful would defeat their own purposes or destroy their own rationale, viewpoints whose correctness would leave their own existence inexplicable, that interest me here. Whether rightly or

¹William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 2.
not, I believe it is only these sorts of considerations which tell compellingly against philosophical or categor­
ial systems.

An apt slogan for my contention might be "Philosophical systems cannot be killed, save by themselves" or "In philosophy, suicide but not murder is possible." In turning from slogan to argument, I make no pretense to exhibiting all possible self-stultification arguments. Indeed, I know of no way to prove that any given list is complete, though the incompleteness of any list could be shown merely by presenting a self-stultification argument which did not appear on it. More accurate statement re­quires that we speak of types of self-stultification arguments, and I do not pretend to have noted all the available types, much less all possible instances of each type.

Perhaps offering some historical cases of what I take to be self-stultification arguments will illustrate what the term means and serve to point out their import­ance in traditional philosophy. The interpretation of historical figures is obviously intended to be correct, though once again nothing will rest on the acceptance of my reading of them rather than another's. I take Plato's
Theatetus to be a "negative defense" of the Forms in arguing that unless one accepts the Forms one can claim no knowledge at all. At least one of its crucial theses could, with a bit of extrapolation, be put as "Either there are Forms or utter skepticism results." Thus what is involved is the contention "There are no Forms" entails "There is no knowledge," since knowledge (and speech in which to formulate it) requires a fixed object; but "There is no knowledge" cannot itself be true (even as a meta-statement) or even expressed unless there are Forms.

Aristotle's argument in Book Gamma of the *Metaphysics* is to the effect that anyone who asserts that the Law of Contradiction is false must presuppose in asserting this that his terms mean what they do and not the opposite and that his statement is true and not also false—thus presupposing the law in the very critique of it. This too is a self-stultification argument; to state the refutation of the Law of Contradiction would, were that possible, still be to presuppose it and not to have refuted it after all.

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Berkeley's argument against any representative form of realism is another case in point. The argument endeavors to prove that any such theory leads to skepticism while pretending to escape it—that the objects purportedly represented are unknown and unknowable (and for that matter could not exist unperceived anyway). It would do an injustice to this argument to characterize it merely as showing that representative realism leads to skepticism about the objects purportedly represented. Rather, it shows, if successful, that representative realism cannot do what it was constructed to do, namely permit us to claim knowledge of the external world. Its very arguments make its purpose unattainable; here is self-stultification with a vengeance.

Kant offers a complex argument aimed at showing that what he calls "rational autonomy" is a necessary condition of knowledge and that since determinism denies the existence of "rational autonomy" determinism cannot consistently permit any knowledge, including that of its own truth. I will look at this argument in more detail

3Berkeley, Berkeley Selections, p. 128.

shortly; let it suffice for now to merely note its existence as an instance of the phenomenon being investigated.

As a final instance, consider the argument against Plato (or Descartes) that the intent of his system is to explain how two sorts of entities are related, though the very sort of explanation offered makes it impossible to explain that connection without importing an infinite regress of new entities raising problems exactly analogous to (and as disturbing as) the original ones.

If we wish to cull from these cases some classification of self-stultification arguments, we can, without claiming exhaustiveness even of the various sorts of argument any one instance may represent, gain some insights.

One sort of self-stultification argument concerns itself with showing that, if a given position were taken seriously, assertion would be impossible. Aristotle's argument fits this description, as does Hall's concerning facts. Presumably any philosophical system will be composed of assertions, or at least require such to show what cannot be said. Were, then, a philosophical system, if taken seriously, to entail that assertion was impossible, it would be false or mistaken. The denial of the
Law of Contradiction, and the view that there are only particulars but no facts, have been accused of such categorial sinning. They make themselves impossible; so, at least, it is charged.

Another sort of self-stultification argument concerns itself with showing that, if a given position were taken seriously, true assertion would be impossible. The charge is that a philosophic position makes impossible its own truth-conditions. Plato's argument falls into this rubric, insofar as it claims that "knowledge is of the Forms," i.e., that true statements are such in virtue of the Forms, or that the Forms and their relations ground the truth of all statements that are true. Hence, "There are no Forms" denies its own truth-conditions. It also falls into our first classification insofar as it argues that intelligible speech (hence, the possibility of assertion) requires fixed objects of predication (the Forms).

Immanuel Kant offers an argument in which he tries to show that determinism makes it impossible for us to know that any statement is true. The thrust of the argument is not that determinism makes assertion impossible,
but rather that it makes it impossible for us ever to dis- 
cern what assertions among those actually made are true. 
This entails that we cannot know that "Determinism is the 
correct view" is true, or that "Man is completely deter-
mined" is true; so determinism, if true, makes it impos-
sible for us to know that determinism itself is true. 
Here again is a self-stultification argument; if a given 
view is true, then its truth-conditions cannot be dis-
cerned, so that we cannot know that it (or its denial) 
is true. Thus the first sort of self-stultification argu-
ment concerned the possibility of assertion at all, the 
second the possibility of true assertion, and the third, 
now being considered, the possibility of knowing that an 
assertion is true.

Choosing brevity of exposition and thus risking a 
reduction of plausibility proportionate to the reduction 
in complexity, Kant's argument can be at least character-
ized in this way. The phenomenal world is a world of 
causally ordered events; each event is what it is because 
of its relationships with its predecessors in the causal 
complex. Man is indeed a denizen of this world, but is 
also a member of the noumenal world. "Man really finds
in himself a faculty by means of which he distinguishes himself from himself as affected by objects, and that is reason.\(^5\) This faculty is exempt from the determining influence of phenomenal events. Such events are non-rational; neither "rational" nor "irrational" are appropriate predicates of "phenomenal event" ("appearances," in Kantian jargon). Whatever is determined by non-rational causes cannot itself be rational; thus if the functioning of the faculty of reason is determined by non-rational events, this functioning itself will be non-rational, as will its assertions. As one assertion is neither more nor less the product of non-rational events or factors than any other, no assertion is more likely to be true than any other. While one may be so fortunate as to assert truly, he is so unfortunate, if his assertions are determined by non-rational factors, as not to be able to know that he asserts truly. Thus knowledge, the sense of knowing that an assertion is true, is impossible. Hence we cannot know whether an assertion expressing determinism is true or not. Hence if we take determinism seriously (claim that it is true) we must, to be consistent, also claim that we cannot know

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 69.
that it is true. Note that Kant's argument is an instance of a third sort of self-stultification argument.

Our other two illustrations lead us to a fourth type of self-stultification argument. This type concerns itself with showing that, if a given position is taken seriously, it cannot accomplish its avowed purposes. Thus the "third man" argument, in one way of reading it, argues that Plato has said that only two kinds of things exist (Forms and particulars) and that in some way appealing to the existence of Forms will help us understand why there are particulars. But how is a particular related to its Form? If by another Form, then how is that Form related to the particular? If by a particular, how is that particular related to its Form? And there are only Forms and particulars. Thus Plato fails to explain the relationship between a particular and its Form, since any answer he gives will involve a new problem to be explained, namely that of the relation of a new particular to its Form, or a new Form to the original particular. One is offered an explanation of a phenomenon which explanation involves another phenomenon of the same sort, ad infinitum. The regress here is a regress of explanations, all of which are on the same level of involve the very sort of
phenomenon which is purportedly being explained. Thus nothing at all is in fact explained. If we wish to explain kind K of phenomena, an adequate philosophical explanation will not include reference to a phenomenon of kind K, and if we wish to explain an instance of kind K of phenomena, an adequate philosophical explanation will not include reference to another phenomenon of the same kind. Plato's explanation is of the latter sort, and thus is inadequate.

This sort of self-stultification argument, then, argues that an explanation is inadequate because its explanation-attempts never escape reference to the very sort of phenomenon to be explained. Let us call this sort of explanation a "same-level explanation," as it offers instances of the same sort of phenomenon in its explicans as occur in its explicandum. It is interesting to note that the argument from contingent to necessary being makes, in one of its formulations, just this accusation against the thesis that all the explanation that a contingent being requires is an infinite series of contingent beings; thus, this kind of self-stultification argument has been classically directed against versions of monism as well as versions of pluralism.
Berkeley's argument is different: for while it accuses the representative realist of being unable to perform what he promised, it does so on different grounds. Plato's explanation never ends; the representative realist's never begins. The problem with other views, the representative realist avers, is that they make it impossible for us to know the external world. Suppose, however, that our ideas properly represent that world; then we can know what the external world is like, though we cannot be directly acquainted with it. Berkeley responds that, as we are directly acquainted with only our ideas, we can never be sure that the world is as they represent it. So the realist in question has not escaped scepticism, but rather provided a basis for sceptical argumentation. If the realist is right in claiming that our ideas represent the world then, since our ideas but not the world are open to direct inspection we can be sure about our ideas but never about the world they purportedly represent. Comparison of an idea with its purported object is admitted on both sides to be impossible. This means that the external world, if it exists at all, is simply unknowable, and scepticism about it is built into
representative realism. As the realist is committed to the thesis that we know our ideas directly and the world indirectly, Berkeley is not criticizing the realist from an idealist perspective, but from the realist's own. "Direct" versus "indirect" knowledge of sensible objects is not a contrast which Berkeley will, on his own grounds, admit; his use of the phrase is but reflective of the use of his opponents, whom he criticizes from within their own categorial framework. If we call viewpoints intended to avoid a given position while nonetheless leading to just that position when dealt with on their own terms "self-ingestive" positions, we can note that there is an important contrast between what makes a system (or a part thereof) objectionable for "same-level" reasons and what makes one objectionable on "self-ingestive" grounds.

While there may be many more sorts of self-stultification arguments, it is no part of my purpose here to try to elucidate them. Sufficient commentary has, I think, been provided to elucidate and illustrate what I mean by "self-stultification" arguments, and to reveal that I think that only "internal" arguments are of final philosophic force. Unless a categorial system can be
shown to violate its own canons, or assertions, or intentions, it is not refuted, though it may be defamed in all sorts of manners ranging from slandering its author to (correctly, but inefficaciously) accusing it of violating the categorial commitments of competing systems (e.g., that of the critic). Criticism of philosophers for allowing "privileged status" to certain assertions or "privileged access" to certain states are cases in point of combined (implicit) recognition of categorial clashes and argument from abuse. It is, I hope, obvious that the implicit invective is to be distinguished from the categorial clashes involved in a criticism. It is my opinion that arguments based on categorial commitment peculiar to the critic are without cogency against the accused, and that only common categorial commitment (if any) or commitment peculiar to the accused are appropriate bases for criticism. Otherwise what will be demonstrated is at most the ineptness of the philosopher criticised, not the inadequacy of his categorial system. To argue here that any of the arguments offered above do, or do not, succeed in their endeavors is beyond the scope of the present task. What I am trying to say is how, on my view, categorial systems can be evaluated.
One final comment. What, it will be asked, if we have two competing systems, each of which seems innocent of self-stultification difficulties? My reply obviously must be that they are equally justified. But surely this is quite unsatisfactory.

My answer to this sort of response consists in a categorial commitment of my own to the effect that mistaken systems are self-stultifying. The idealists used to propound the doctrine that all false systems entail a contradiction. If we may treat "contradiction" broadly enough, using it to encompass being self-stultifying, I accept the doctrine. I do so because the whole approach taken in this work seems to me to presuppose it, and if the approach is itself correct whatever it presupposes must be accepted. That a system is self-stultifying is no guarantee that we will discover that it is; but except for presenting a philosophical system with the problems of the tradition (plus any new ones discovered), developing its appropriate responses, and checking for self-stultification, there seems to me to be no decision procedure at all.

In a famous passage in the Phaedo, Socrates sustains
his cohorts' flagging faith in rational inquiry in the following words:

Let us take care that we avoid a danger ... (that) we become misologists ... no worse thing can happen to a man than this. For as there are misanthropists or haters of men, there are misologists or haters of ideas, and both spring from the same cause, which is ignorance of the world. Misanthropy arises out of the too great confidence of inexperience .... The point of comparison ... (is) that a simple man who has no skill in dialectics believes an argument to be true which he afterwards imagines to be false whether really false or not, and then another and another, he no longer has any faith left. ... Let us then ... be careful of allowing or admitting into our souls the notion that there is no health or soundness in any arguments at all.6

Rational conviction without certainty, and continued inquiry without misology, is all that Socrates offers to his philosophic companions. It seems to me at any rate that the proffered decision procedure offers that much, though no more.

It is not without point, however, to remind my readers that other endeavors to provide philosophic decision procedure have been discussed and rejected. One such attempt is the appeal to a "given." Moore's common sense was a "given," and we argued that it was itself

6Plato, The Dialogues of Plato, pp. 474-475.
categorically committed. Immediate sensory experience, naked of categorial structure, is another candidate. While I have no idea what such experience would be like, even should it occur it would offer no help. Insofar as naked of categories, it could not decide between categorial systems. Further, it seems plausible that it could be given different categorial interpretations. Uncategorized sensory experience cannot, just because it is a-categorial, be in conflict with a system of categories. If already categorized, sensory experience is either categorized in terms of categories common to all categorial systems (if any) or categorized in terms of categories peculiar to some categorial system or systems. In the former case, such experience is obviously irrelevant to deciding between categorial systems. In the latter case, such experience could presumably be categorized in terms of quite different categories. Anyone wishing to appeal to sensory experience categorized in such a way as to rule out certain categorial systems must argue that no other categorial reading of that experience can be given; simply to argue that sensory experience is categorized in one way is not sufficient to show that it cannot with equal propriety
be categorized differently. Further, any criterion for "proper" recategorization will be a further locus for categorial commitment. I refer to my discussion of "The tulip reds" versus "The tulip is red" in Chapter Four to make clear what I mean by sensory experience being "categorized" and to indicate why I think sensory experience can be variously categorized.

"Reductionism" is sometimes proffered as a means of deciding between philosophical systems. E.g., if crude behaviourism can successfully reduce statements about minds to statements about bodies, with nothing lost in meaning and no change of truth value, it has made good its case against dualism. But it must do so on criteria acceptable to dualism; it must show that the reduction can be performed within the categories of dualistic metaphysics. Otherwise, it will not have refuted dualism but will merely have provided a different set of categories which competes with, but has not yet been shown to be superior to, its competitor. To show that system S is in part constituted by "Things of type A cannot be reduced to things of type B," whereas the reduction of A's to B's
is permitted by the categories of S, is in fact to criticize S on self-stultification grounds.  

My charge, then, against any other decision procedure than that provided by self-stultification arguments is that they beg the question. They deny something crucial to the view being criticised, gaining easy but cheap victory. Internal criticism, revealing that a statement crucial to a philosophical system is self-stultifying or that a conjunct of statements constitutive of a system is self-stultifying, are patently not question-begging. Aristotle's argument against those who assert that the law of contradiction is mistaken provides an example of a single statement being self-stultifying. The criticism of Plato noted above is an example of a conjunct of sentences constituting a system being self-stultifying, or at least purportedly being so: "There are only two kinds of things" and "Positing two kinds of things explains how one kind is related to the other" provide the raw material for a possible self-stultification criticism of a conjunct of two statements constitutive of a system. The criticism, it will be remembered,  

7 This provides a new type of self-stultification argument.
concerns the charge of "same-level" explanation. Nonetheless, the obvious objection is that my appeal to idealist dogma is a matter of blind faith. I categorically deny that the appeal is a matter of faith, blind or otherwise. It should be clear by now that I unrepentently regard philosophizing to be a search for truth, and, since philosophical issues are systematically related, a search for the true system. The thesis that there can be two true, but incompatible, systems is self-contradictory. But the true (correct) system can be found only if all competing systems can be eliminated. Thus the very act of philosophizing presupposes a decision procedure in philosophy. I have argued that the only acceptable decision procedure is that provided by self-stultification arguments. All other decision procedures beg the question in favor of or against some system. If I have made plausible my claim that self-stultification arguments provide the only viable decision procedure in philosophy, and if it is true that philosophizing presupposes a viable decision procedure, then I have made plausible the claim that philosophizing presupposes the possibility of
eliminating all systems but one by means of self-stultification considerations— for philosophizing presupposes the possibility of finding the true (correct) system and hence of eliminating all systems but that one.

Another objection can be posed: perhaps one cannot reasonably do philosophy. A first move in response is to ask why this is so. If it is so because of the inherent paucity of man's intellectual endowment, then that paucity must be demonstrated in such a way as not, by our very ability to demonstrate it, to reveal that our intellectual endowment exceeds the proposed limitations. My claim is, obviously that analogous comments apply to any other attempt to justify the thesis that one cannot reasonably do philosophy— for example, that reality is unknowable because self-contradictory or ineffable. Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding and Hume's A Treatise on Human Nature and An Enquiry Into Human Understanding are classic cases of an attempt to discern the limitations of human intellectual capacity. Need I reiterate that such endeavors are implicated categorically? Need I press the obvious further point that the adequacy of the categories involved in justifying the thesis that our intellectual
prowess is quite modest must be demonstrated? How else can this be done save by appeal to the by now familiar candidate for philosophic decision procedure? Even scepticism has its own categories, and must presuppose them to be adequate to the task of showing that scepticism is the only viable position. If scepticism is the truth, it is the truth because all other views are self-stultifying, whereas it is not.

Further, my quotation from Plato is no apology. It is a way of stressing what he stressed: the difficulty of the task of deciding between competing philosophic perspectives. It is also a way of emphasizing that the task is both viable and worthwhile.
EPILOGUE

We began by contrasting two appraisals of the value of talking about categories. Noting the reasons why several attempts to say what a category is failed, we were led to consider the thesis that "category" is a system-relative term. What it means is determined by its philosophic context, and the system of which it is a part. This thesis explained the elusive nature of "category" but also promised a more fruitful approach. As prolegomena to that approach we considered sample philosophical clashes which illustrated competing categorial commitments. With these clashes as background, we then developed a criterion for eliciting categorial commitment. This commitment appeared primarily in material mode categorial sentences insofar as embedded in their systematic context. Philosophical systems are constituted of such sentences.

At this point an answer had been provided to the
question, "In virtue of what are philosophical systems philosophical?" Philosophical systems are systems of categorial sentences. There are various alternative answers. While it would have been impractical to try to consider them all, some prominent ones required discussion. Thus we argued against Carnap, Quine, Moore, Broad, Strawson and Waismann insofar as they proposed conceptions of philosophy incompatible with our own.

The second question remained unanswered: how can we decide between competing philosophical systems? The falsification criterion, the polar concepts and paradigm case arguments, the two-worlds and infinite regress arguments, and an appeal to the structure of common sense thought and speech were considered and rejected. Finally, our own decision procedure was defined and defended. Its major advantage was that it was innocent of categorial commitments prejudicial to the system being tested. We argued that this innocence was not possessed by any of the other decision procedures considered.

The argument was not quite so neat as all this suggests. Decision procedures were implied in the explicitly formulated conceptions of philosophy and
implicit conceptions of philosophy were involved in the explicitly defined decision procedures. In each case, I think, sufficient argument was given to reject both insofar as they competed with my own views. Those views, particularly with respect to an answer to the first question, are deeply indebted to Everett W. Hall.

Also, reductionism was criticized and evaluated. Reductionist procedures provide philosophical refutation, we argued, only if successful in terms of the categorial structure of the system in which they are articulated. Again, the thesis that a sensory given provides the touchstone for evaluating philosophical systems was considered and rejected. If naked of all categories, such a given cannot decide between categorial systems. If already categorized, it also appears within a particular categorial context and thus is no longer, in Hall's phrase, "given to" all systems. Further, the issue as to how sensory experience is to be correctly expressed is itself categorial and not determined by that experience itself.
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