

SCEPTICISM AND ‘ATTITUDE’:
A WITTGENSTEINIAN APPROACH

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2022

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A WITTGENSTEINIAN APPROACH

Thesis submitted to the
Institute for Graduate in Social Sciences
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Philosophy

by
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2022

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ABSTRACT

Scepticism and ‘Attitude’: A Wittgensteinian Approach

This study offers an examination of a certain kind of philosophical scepticism, e.g., scepticism about other minds, in relation to our way of knowing and understanding others. We take scepticism about other minds as an expression of a certain form of sceptical attitude and find its characteristics in the dualistic treatment of the mind/inner from the body/outer. Thus, we consider solipsism (as traditionally conceived) and the problem of other minds (as an extension of solipsism) with the aim to trace various conceptions of the self, particularly Descartes’ Cartesian ego. Against the backdrop of this conception, we introduce Ludwig Wittgenstein’s remark on “an attitude toward a soul” as a rejection of the Cartesian dualist framework. We then consider David Chalmers’ resurfacing of the notion of the ‘inner’ in his treatment of the problem of consciousness. We thereby argue that such a treatment assumes an explanatory gap between our notion of consciousness and the world, and thus, is a kind of reiteration of the Cartesian position that relates to Cartesian-type scepticism. Lastly, we consider a descriptive case—a sci-fi movie—in which we may find a host of ambiguities about what it means to be human as opposed to a machine. We offer our own treatment inspired by Wittgenstein’s “an attitude toward a soul” as a particular case of applying a rule or understanding a word. In so doing, we find that there is a kind of sceptical position that survives the Cartesian way of putting it.

ÖZET

Şüphecilik ve ‘Tavır’: Wittgensteinci Bir Yaklaşım

Bu çalışmada felsefî şüpheciliğin belli bir türü olarak başkalarını anlama ya da bilmemiz itibarıyla öteki zihinler üzerine şüphecilik mercekle altına alınıyor. Bu şüpheciliği belirli bir şüpheci tavrın dışavurumu olarak inceleyip, ayırt edici özelliklerini zihinsel (içsel) olan ve bedensel (dışsal) olan arasındaki kavramsal kopuklukta buluyor ve bu kopukluğun düşünce biçimlerimizde oynadığı rolü inceliyoruz. Bu bağlamda, solipsizmi ve bunun bir uzantısı olarak öteki zihinler problemini çeşitli benlik anlayışları (bilhassa Descartes’ın Kartezyen ego’su) üzerinden takip etmekteyiz. Arka planda böyle bir anlayışla Ludwig Wittgenstein’in ‘ruha yönelik tavır’ını Kartezyen düalist çerçevenin reddi olarak ele alıyoruz. Daha sonra David Chalmers’in bilinç problemini tartıştığı bir bağlamda, ‘içsel’ kavramını nasıl tekrar gündeme getirdiğini ele alıp, Chalmers’in bu yaklaşımının bilinç ile dünya arasında bir açıklayıcı boşluk problemi olduğunu varsaydığını tartışıyoruz. Dolayısıyla bu yaklaşımın Kartezyen şüpheciliğin bir tür yeniden ifadesi olduğunu savunuyoruz. Son olarak, betimleyici bir örneği inceliyoruz ve bir sinema filmi bağlamında, makina olmaya kıyasla insan olmanın ne demek olduğu konusunu filmde karşımıza çıkan muğlaklıkları göz önüne alarak tartışıyoruz. Wittgenstein’in ‘ruha yönelik tavır’ından ilham alarak oluşturduğumuz kendi değerlendirmemizi, bir kuralı uygulamanın ya da bir kuralı anlamının ne olduğunu tartışabileceğimiz belirli bir vaka olarak sunuyoruz. Böylece Kartezyen düalist çerçeveye bağlı olmadan ifade edilebilen felsefî şüpheci bir pozisyonun da olabileceğini görüyoruz.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to my thesis advisor, Assoc. Prof. Chryssi Sidiropoulou for her immense support and guidance. In every step of this project, her supervision and prompts have made me realize how lucky I am to have her as my advisor. She made me realize that I can in fact work and study at the same time *if I want to*. If I want to meet a version of me in the future, perhaps quite overworked but relieved after a hard-earned victory, and if I believe in the struggle now (in putting the work and cutting down on sleep and leisure time for a relatively long period of time) to meet that ‘future me’ at the finish line as the woman who did not give up, and such is her testimony to life. I cannot thank my advisor enough for being such an inspiration and teaching me the ways of doing philosophy in a thoughtful and engaging manner.

I would like to acknowledge my thanks to my committee, especially Assoc. Prof. Jakub Macha, for their kind attention and professional support. I am grateful for their contributions to this project and guiding me in pursuing an academic career. I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues in the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society, annually held in Kirchberg am Wechsel, Austria. Every August since 2019 (except for those missing years due to COVID-19), I got the chance to attend the symposium in this quiet and peaceful town and met a bunch of exciting minds and kind souls, who have been a part of this journey.

I must give my greatest thanks to my family –my parents Zikri and Ayse, my siblings Emir, Nurbanu, and Lamia, and my nephews Ali and Deniz, and of course, my grandparents. I dedicate this work to them for their constant support and love. Thank you for rooting for me and enduring hard times with me (e.g., sleep deprivation, burnout, mental load, etc.) that doing a PhD typically involves. I did not

know that endurance and perseverance would be the two main virtues/ skills of doing a PhD, therefore, I must express my gratitude to those whose presence in my life has shown me how these virtues are truly embedded in our lives and can be embodied in each and every one of us; to my grandfather Hasan Arslan, who as an immigrant had to start from scratch twice in his life, and to Mr. Orhan Hıdıroğlu for their sincere attention and friendship.

I also extend my thanks to my friends who are nothing but a second family, for their participation in this journey, sometimes by simply being there, and sometimes by being of help and much-needed pep talk givers/ morale boosters: Nursena Tüter, Fatma Kaya, Gülsüm Kaya, Uğur Özbak, Dila Hisarlı, Deniz Özlem Çevik, Ayşe Torun, Nur Şeyda Koç. Special thanks to the official start of the Lycian Way in the Turkish coastal town of Fethiye where, over the last two years, has become a writer's retreat to me.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to my former manager, Assoc. Prof. Bora Bayraktar, for their motivational support and understanding because it was not at all easy completing a PhD while working full-time outside of academia. I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Ömer Kerem Özçakıl for their thoughtful support and encouragement in this, in the final stretch of what has been nothing but an endurance test.

*This work is dedicated to my parents, Ayşe and Zikri,
for their dedication to living an examined life.*

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: SCEPTICISM AND THE JOURNEY OF THE ‘SELF’	10
2.1 Two etymologies of ‘doubt’: the quality of being dual.....	10
2.2 Scepticism and coming to terms with Plato.....	14
2.3 Ancient scepticism: Academic and Pyrrhonian.....	19
2.4 Cartesian methodological doubt.....	32
CHAPTER 3: SOLIPSISM AND KNOWING SOLO.....	41
3.1 Solipsism and the problem of other minds.....	42
3.2 Filling the gap: the argument from analogy.....	46
3.3 The solipsist ‘I’ and privacy of the ‘mind’	53
3.4 Wittgenstein and the ‘attitude towards a soul’	58
CHAPTER 4: KNOWING ZOMBIES AND HUMANOIDS.....	81
4.1 The chapter roadmap.....	81
4.2 Chalmers and the resurfacing of the inner.....	83
4.3 Understanding and filling a gap.....	109
4.4 An attitude towards a humanoid.....	127
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION.....	145
REFERENCES.....	156

ABBREVIATIONS

All bibliographical information regarding the edition used is given in the section entitled References.

Sextus Empiricus's *Adversus Mathematicos* (translated as 'Against the Mathematicians', but also variously as 'Against the Professors', 'Against the Theoreticians', or 'Against Those in the Disciplines') is referred to by the abbreviation *M*. The work is in eleven volumes. In this thesis, we refer to M VII, which corresponds to the seventh volume, and the first part of *Against the Logicians* (M VII-VIII).

For Descartes's *Meditations on First Philosophy*, we use the Adam and Tannery abbreviation (AT), followed by the appropriate volume and page number.

For Wittgenstein's work, we use the standard abbreviation as indicated below. With the exception of BB (where we provide a page number), the number indicated refers to a numbered remark. For PI only, Part 2 is referred to as 'PI, Part II, section number, remark number'.

BB	Blue and Brown Books
OC	On Certainty
PI	Philosophical Investigations
PR	Philosophical Remarks
RFM	Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics
Z	Zettel

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This thesis offers an examination of a certain kind of scepticism in its relation to our way of knowing and understanding others. It takes solipsism (as a view traditionally conceived) and the problem of other minds (as an extension of solipsism) with the aim to extract an idea of the self. We find such an idea to be a striking philosophical picture that altogether jeopardizes accounting for our relationality with other human beings and our ways of understanding others who inhabit the world as much as ‘I’ do.

Sceptical attitudes and charges are significant insofar as they allow for a critical examination of the philosophical framework that one operates with. In this respect, scepticism pertains more to our metaphilosophical assessments. We restrict the scope of this examination within two distinct conceptions of philosophy as an intellectual activity. On the one hand, the idea is that philosophy has to take upon itself the task to offer solutions to our philosophical problems, which give rise to theories and systems of thought. On the other hand, there is the therapeutic approach to philosophy, which is most famously emphasized in later Wittgenstein’s philosophical investigations. Accordingly, the so-called “problems” in philosophy are the result of conceptual confusions that call for clearing up our notions, presumptions, and ways of thinking. These two conceptions can also be expressed as follows, respectively: philosophy as contributing to our knowledge of the world vs. philosophy as offering a particular form of understanding.

To the extent that scepticism poses a real threat, we may revisit a metaphilosophical question for our purposes: What is a philosophical problem? One

thing to note, first and foremost, is that this is a conceptual question. If the task of philosophy is understood in the second sense as mentioned above, tackling such a question would amount to shedding light on exactly what is problematized and put to a philosophical treatment. Moreover, by taking that the task of philosophy as conceptual therapy in a Wittgensteinian manner, we can say that such conceptual questions cannot be conclusively addressed. Alternatively, they need to be raised and investigated over and over. Along similar lines, Hacker notes:

Conceptual confusions are comparable to diseases — diseases of the intellect. They may be cured for one generation, but the virus may undergo mutation and reappear in even more virulent form. So, for example, ‘internal representations’ are merely mutant sense-impressions; ‘qualia’ are Wittgensteinian private objects in new guise. So a new cure must be found, appropriately adjusted to the mutation and its host.

The work of philosophy can have no end, for the forms of misunderstanding of conceptual connections are endless and unpredictable. The ground has to be ploughed over again and again. Knowledge can be transmitted from one generation to another. But understanding has to be achieved afresh by each generation. (Hacker, 2006, p. 28)

This study aims to argue that Cartesian dualism as a certain form of understanding of the self, the world, and the relation between these two offers a poor conceptual point of view. Moreover, as a conceptual framework, a Cartesian dualist understanding of the self and others is conducive to leaving a certain kind of philosophical doubt. This doubt is a by-product of a particular way of undertaking the activity of philosophizing and doubting, which we explicate by offering a conceptual clarification as grounded in ordinary language. This study is directed towards a, so to speak, “philosophical autopsy” of the Cartesian dualist-type doubts about the self and the other.

I want to clarify what I mean by “philosophical autopsy” and what a Cartesian dualist notion of the self puts at stake with an example from popular culture – a reality TV show called *The Circle*. It came out around a time when I was

done with my qualifying exams, and at the same time, there was an outbreak of a global pandemic where major restrictions which halted social life as we know it. In that sense, the show came out just around the right time because it is simply about being *social* in a time of social distancing. The goal of the show is to become socially accepted in a popularity contest by means of a social media platform called the Circle. A voice-activated platform, the Circle features a group of “avatars” interacting with each other in chat rooms or playing online games together, and at times, they are asked to rate each other based on their impressions of one another in these interactions. But, of course, there is a twist: we the audience are told that these people never meet each other in real life, so the contestants do not know whether the person is being honest about who they say they are or using a fake profile. So, each contestant is like a box of mystery to other contestants. A box with a special kind of content, viz. their ‘inner’ self with their game strategies, schemes, and assumptions about other players.

As things stand, the structure of the show is a relevant case for us because of its philosophically expressive power, such that, it illustrates a certain philosophical view, i.e., the Cartesian idea of the self. Each player in the show is in direct presence of themselves, and only indirectly in presence of other players. Reading messages from each other, each player can only gather partial information about others, like searching for the pieces of an incomplete puzzle. In that sense, the idea is that knowing others is like building a puzzle where the puzzle may end up revealing a picture which is altogether different than what one may have imagined. For this reason, the show is a forceful expression for philosophizing about what and how such a subject would know about their environment.

The situation each contestant finds themselves in is reminiscent of the notion of self as a bundle of perceptions without unity or cohesion. Advanced by David Hume, the bundle theory of the self might have been an academically gripping account at some point, though for those of us in the 21st century, with the pace of technological advances accelerating faster than ever, adopting such an understanding of the self in relation to the other comes with a price that is hard to pay. This study takes this price quite seriously and sees great urgency in tackling certain questions which cannot be properly addressed within an understanding of the self/other and mind/body as distinct and diverse rather than unitary and coherent. These questions can be listed but not limited to the following: How are we to even make sense of our ‘selves’, with all their pieces shattered and scattered, refusing to attain a coherent assembly? At the most, what kind of an “inner” life (viz. one’s psychological and moral emotions, convictions, and judgments in their relationship with others) could be envisioned by this? What kind of a human life could it render? And how could we even account for the human condition?

In most of the later Wittgensteinian exegesis, we often find an emphasis of language, meaning, and understanding as “embedded” in the human life. A crucial point, indeed – even though it has been over-emphasized, seldom offering much content. In our discussion, I implicitly appeal to the notion in its connection to history and culture. Taken to be an articulation of the complexity of the human life, the social and cultural dynamics of the human life as expressed in different disciplines such as arts and humanities are taken into consideration with utmost importance. In so doing, our study adopts a descriptive approach in its critical examination. Thus, I will be making use of examples from film and literature. I hold

that these mediums provide descriptive expressions that are useful for giving a therapeutic philosophical treatment in a Wittgensteinian manner.

To pursue such a goal, our interest in these media draws inspirations from Stanley Cavell and Ilham Dilman. Starting from the 1970s, these two contemporaries whose philosophical work is influenced by later Wittgenstein became prominent figures not just within philosophy but also in other disciplines such as literary critique in the US and the UK, respectively. Cavell's and Dilman's distinct philosophical styles and approaches in articulating the ways of our thinking about the idea of an isolated self in relation to "whatever is out there" have already been appraised and expanded upon by further literature. Both thinkers, in this regard, adopt not only a critical but also an overarching approach in examining philosophical scepticism about other minds as well as in providing a seminal understanding about the issue.

Speaking of Cavell's scholarly significance, for instance, Rudrum observes that "reformulating the issue of the 'approach' as something texts do to readers as much as readers do to texts is, at least potentially, a revolutionary move" (2013, p. 8). Furthermore, regarding Dilman's philosophical production, Sidiropoulou draws our attention to its being grounded "on a reflective basis such as one in literature" which "prevents naïve categorization of human action..." (2009, p. 182). In this way, his work "is set to unearth 'what is significant in our lives' " (Sidiropoulou, 2009, p. 182). That said, the significance of Cavell's and Dilman's commentaries is not the focus of this study, nor is their academic body of work per se. Instead, we are concerned with their philosophical attitude which will be a guiding light for the ethos of our discussion.

In light of the guiding inspiration from Cavell and Dilman as mentioned above, this study embraces a Wittgensteinian perspective. Thus, we argue that, insofar as we make sense of others' inner lives, such an understanding would have to involve assuming the notions of 'other', 'outer', and 'body' not to be conceptually altogether separate from the 'I', 'inner', and 'mind/soul'. By taking these to be not radically distinct and separated, we claim that we can account for the subjective self and first-person viewpoint not as a box that needs to reveal some private content. We point out that *whatever* that content is, it is conceptually tied to the notion of the 'inner' in its relation to the 'outer', as expressed in the language of an 'embodied' being. To this end, we further focus on the mind/inner and the body/outer as a conceptual pair involved in our ways of applying these notions, and further extended in cases where such applications point toward the idea of understanding as an embodied activity.

This thesis is a philosophical case study that involves a consideration of philosophical scepticism as an expression of a certain form of sceptical attitude. We find the characteristics of this attitude in flesh-and-body in the idea of an explanatory gap between the mind and the world, the subject and the object, and the language and praxis. It is an "explanatory" gap that calls for a certain kind of explanation, and to that degree, is an onto-epistemological matter. As such, the gap dwells on certain philosophical/theoretical assumptions that generate the charge of scepticism. We find it to be the case, for instance, in Descartes' notion of the Cartesian ego (Chapter 3), and Chalmers' description of the philosophical zombie (Chapter 4).

To that end, we first consider scepticism as an ancient and a modern philosophical position. In Chapter 2, we trace the sceptical tradition back to its ancient roots and bring out the ways in which ancient scepticism differs from its pre-

modern counterpart, especially in Descartes. Thus, we take account of Plato's notions of "episteme" and "doxa" in consideration of Socrates' treatment of the notions in the Platonic dialogues. We mention that this treatment results in two distinct readings of Socrates by the Academic and Pyrrhonian schools of scepticism. We explicate the different ways in which the Academic and the Pyrrhonian conceptions of doubt and doubting are entangled with the notion of the self as the subject of doubting and knowing. Thus, we further examine the nature of this subject as a philosophical conception, and to that end, survey the historical journey of the notion of the self. In our expository examination of the self, we recount in closer detail Charles Taylor's historical/philosophical tracing of the notion from Plato's theory of the soul to Saint Augustine's "inner wisdom" which Taylor observes as a proto-cogito move. In doing so, we pin down the historical transformation of the notion of 'self' which culminates with the Cartesian ego. We point out that, as a ramification of Descartes' Cartesian dualist understanding of the mind, solipsism paints an unfathomable view about the human subject.

In Chapter 3, we give a detailed examination and characterization of this idea of the human subject. In contrast to this idea, we introduce Wittgenstein's notion of 'soul' as a rejection of the Cartesian dualist mind/world. Wittgenstein's notion of 'soul', in that regard, can be seen as part of a particular kind of philosophical treatment of an explanatory gap that generates sceptical problems through a Cartesian dualist lens. Our discussion aims to highlight the significance of such a treatment.

This is followed by Chapter 4 where we take all the points that we make about a Cartesian dualist outlook on the issue, viz. our ways of thinking about the other, ascribing psychological states to other people, etc., and put in action. We first

consider David Chalmers' resurfacing of the notion of the 'inner' in his treatment of the problem of consciousness. We argue that such a treatment runs the risk of inheriting the perennial problems of the Cartesian dualist legacy, including the charge of solipsism.

As a critique of this treatment, secondly, we consider David Finkelstein's reading of Saul Kripke and Crispin Wright on Wittgenstein's discussion of rule-following. We find Finkelstein's commentary influential in its Wittgensteinian treatment of the matter insofar as it illustrates Wittgenstein's critique of platonism about meaning and understanding found both in Kripke and Wright. Our consideration of Finkelstein's commentary further connects to Chalmers. To this end, we argue that Chalmers' handling of the problem of consciousness assumes an explanatory gap between our notion of consciousness and the world which further relates to the type of concerns Finkelstein expresses in his examination of the platonist view about understanding. Hence, we argue that Chalmers' idea is a kind of reiteration of the Cartesian position and relates to Cartesian scepticism.

Lastly, we consider the movie *Blade Runner* as a descriptive case in which we may find a host of ambiguities and grey areas about what it means to be human as opposed to a machine. To this end, we take account of certain doubts concerning other beings that can easily be invoked in such a picture. We will offer our own Wittgensteinian treatment, where we refer to Wittgenstein's "an attitude toward a soul" as a particular case of applying a rule or making sense. In so doing, we find that there is a kind of sceptical position that survives the Cartesian way of putting it. That is, we may not think in dualistic terms (e.g., on the basis of a Chalmersian dualist framework) and we may not talk on the basis of eliminativism but may still have reasonable doubts about the characterization of non-human entities which can

be conceived as the radical other. In such a case, what would a doubt *so radical* amount to? We answer this by a major transformation of language game, but one would also have to take cultural differences into consideration.

CHAPTER 2

SCEPTICISM AND THE JOURNEY OF THE ‘SELF’

This chapter introduces the age-old topic of philosophical scepticism in a brief overview of the problem as discussed in the literature by the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- What does scepticism put at risk?
- What are some of the different types of sceptical attitudes we may come upon throughout history?

In this chapter, we will set the question of scepticism in a historical setting without the aim of providing a history of philosophy on the topic. The aim is to briefly articulate the challenge of scepticism as has been conceptualised so far.

2.1 Two etymologies of ‘doubt’: the quality of being dual

Scepticism is about doubt, being sceptical about something means that you have doubts about that thing. We may have doubts about many things, say, a certain future outcome, whether a certain past occurrence happened as history recorded it, or whether moral and spiritual knowledge is possible at all. Doubt in the ordinary sense is a necessary feature of life. When, for instance, my friend leaves for the airport on a tight schedule, and texts me on her way saying, rather anxiously, “Do you think I’ll make it on time?” I text back “I’m not sure, but I hope so.” After all, that would be the reasonable attitude for me to have, given so little to work with. And while an ordinary doubt can be resolvable (when, for instance, my friend eventually misses or catches her flight) philosophical doubt is not of this kind. Philosophical scepticism is different from ordinary doubt in the sense that it pertains to our more general

knowledge claims. What it amounts to is casting doubt on things that we ordinarily think we know (or at least, hold with the benefit of the doubt). Thus, as a critical philosophical attitude, scepticism is the questioning of the onto-epistemological status of the knowledge claims, and whether any knowledge has been attained.

If scepticism is a fortress that encapsulates holding a critical attitude towards our knowledge claims, then doubt is the grout in that construct. To start with, we will distinguish doubt, as a foundational component, from scepticism, and to this end we will consider two etymologies of the notion.

The English word ‘doubt’ comes from Latin ‘dubitare’, meaning “to question, hesitate, waver in opinion” (related to ‘dubius’, meaning “uncertain”). The word has the Proto-Indo-European root *dwo-* meaning “two,” which gestures in the direction of “undecided between two things or two minds.” Etymologically, doubt means “to have to choose between two things”. Signifying the same dual quality in the sense of the word, the Turkish word for doubt corresponds to ‘şüphe’ which comes from the Arabic ‘shubha(t)’ (شُبْهَة). It originates from the Arabic verb ‘shabiha’ (شَبَّهَ), meaning “to look alike, to have resemblance”. Another word that comes from the same root is ‘tashbīh’, which means “drawing similarity in comparing two things” as in “being as strong as a lion,” which, as a technical term in linguistics, corresponds to ‘simile’.

One curious point that we find in both etymologies is that there is a quality or a condition of being dual. The duality in question implies hesitancy, confusion, distrust as to see or accept what the case is, which results in a puzzle, a problem, or an enigma. The Arabic meaning is more conducive to understanding what this duality amounts to. The meaning of the root word ‘shabiha’ implies a lack of discrimination, or differentiation between the two parts of the duality. ‘Is it really a pond over there, or am I seeing a mirage?’ ‘Is there someone hiding in the bushes, or

am I simply seeing the shadows of the trees?’ Given such circumstances, the fact that I cannot differentiate between a pond and a mirage; or a perpetrator from a mere play of shadows puts me in a position to have these doubts.

Philosophical forms of scepticism are not resolvable in the sense above, which makes them a peculiar case of doubt. While in its ordinary use, scepticism means a tendency to distrust in what seems to be the case, or to withhold belief in the face of not quite discriminable cases as mentioned earlier, the philosophically interesting form of scepticism implies a tendency to disbelieve what we commonly take to be true about the world from our experience of it. Here is an example of how this might come about. Assume we have so far observed that A follows B. Thus, the sceptic asks: Can we hold that “A follows B” with an *unwavering* belief? It might have been the case that “A follows B” until now, but what grounds do we have to hold that “A follows B” *once and for all*?¹

The sceptic’s answer to such cases of questioning appeals to the difference between ‘what is the case’ and ‘what appears to be the case;’ given our capabilities of evaluating and discriminating the so-called *mere appearances* in an ever-changing world. That, in the simplest terms, is the beauty and momentum of the sceptic’s charge, viz. that it derives its pressing force from the insufficiency of the human ability to discover a fixed, immutable point of departure (and of reference) within the flux, so that one can escape from the dual quality inherent in our knowledge about the world of appearances which, as a result, has the availability for us to potentially induce nonterminating or chronic doubt in language and thought by means of the flexibility offered by these mediums. Concisely, it is solidified in Heraclitus’

¹ An example of this can be found in Kripke’s sceptical challenge in ‘Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language’ (1982). We look into it in Chapter 4.

metaphysical theory: “Everything is in flux, and one cannot step twice into the same river” (Plato, *Cratylus* 402a = DK22A6).

The point that we want to make is not to refute scepticism, or render it meaningless or useless, but to understand what it can and cannot achieve in our connection to the world. Although we can find that a great portion of philosophy after Descartes, Hume, and Kant undertakes the task of refuting scepticism in their respective areas of specialty, there seems to be nothing scandalous in failing to refute scepticism. Most recently, Veber (2019) notes:

But nowadays, most epistemologists who write on the topic of skepticism see nothing scandalous in failing to straightforwardly refute skepticism... Instead, the project is to explain to those of us who already agree that skepticism is mistaken how the position goes wrong. It is conceded that the explanation and its supporting arguments will rely on assumptions the skeptic does not accept. Thus, it is not surprising when the skeptical philosopher is unmoved. But, the thought goes, so what? (p. 315)

What, then, remains to be an interesting topic of exploration is the difference between the forms of our philosophical questions as; first, whether we can know at all, and second, how and what we know, and to what extent we know. In this sense, scepticism is a problem of philosophy, for the philosopher. Depending on our questions and takes on those questions, it may remain to be a serious problem or not. That is the point that this thesis will investigate.

To that end, I find it the case that a philosophical treatment of, say, knowledge, may be asked in two ways: in a positive question and a negative one. These correspond to “what is knowledge?” and “is there knowledge?”, respectively. Concerning the positive question, we may consider the stoic theories of mind and meaning, as parts of its physics and ethics. Equally here, we may consider Kant’s delimitation of knowledge in its relation to a priori and empirical concepts. These cases, the ancient and the modern, consist in a kind of philosophical activity which is

postulative and theory-making. Against these postulates and theories, we may appeal to certain cases (we will briefly go over those as they appear in the ancient discussions), which then leads us to raise the negative question –a question that is raised toward a certain philosophical treatment as to show its insufficiency or weakness. Such is the task that the Academic sceptics and the modern critics of Kantian epistemology and ethics undertake.

But in other cases, when the *very* kind of the treatment is in question, and when the purpose and the job description of philosophy is accordingly slightly modified; we may find that there is not much of a scandal of philosophy, pace Kant. Such makes it the case as we can find in Wittgenstein's treatment of philosophical problems. In this thesis, we will be highlighting the significance of this treatment in its critique of Cartesian dualism. That said, philosophical scepticism is a significant topic, not in itself, but because of its power in informing us about the nature of human knowledge and can ultimately serve to clarify and illuminate about the human-human as well as human-world interactions.

2.2 Scepticism and coming to terms with Plato

The problem of scepticism puts our ordinary beliefs about ourselves, others, and the world, as well as our inferences and reasoning at risk. Acting like a black hole in our ways of thinking about things, a sceptical attitude as such might get its strength from the proposal that none of our beliefs are justified, or more convincingly, that none of our beliefs are more reasonable than their denials. This attitude would find its strength, more forcefully, in the claim that it would not be possible to discriminate between two opposing beliefs, which would jeopardize the position that we can attain knowledge in a set of beliefs or a field of propositions.

We will start by considering a type of scepticism that a great portion of the literature have focused on in contemporary discussions, that is, scepticism about the external world. In that regard, the philosophical doubt as such can be formulated as follows:

- i. What is it that I know about something when I say that I know it as such-and-such?
- ii. How can I know that the way things appear to me are the way things really are? Or how do I know that the objects and events around me are as they appear to me, or as how I perceive them to be?

As it's traditionally conceived and treated, scepticism relates to (i), the conception of knowledge, as well as (ii), the conditions of fulfilling the criteria of knowledge. More generally, the problem is not so much about establishing whether there really (whatever that means) are chairs, tables, or other people, but about the epistemic status of our beliefs about things, events, and other people. More generally, the question is related to the problematization of not just a particular kind or set of knowledge but the very criteria that makes them instances of knowledge. This is called the Agrippa problem: How can I know that certain criteria that we have are adequate to be the criteria of 'knowledge'? Ultimately, what distinguishes real knowledge from its apparent contested varieties, given that certain considerations cast doubt on whether what we normally call 'knowledge' is really knowledge? Xenophanes, for one, raised the question whether any criterion of knowledge exists, and argued that if, by chance, one came across the truth, one would still be incapable of distinguishing it from error, leaving the dual quality of doubt ever so intact and prevailing (frag. 34).

Given the questions and hesitancy on the part of the sceptic as has been conceptualized thus far, the sceptical attitude is about looking at the world with a specific kind of doubt. More specifically, the attitude encompasses a reactionary movement to the outer conditions, or external cues in our surroundings or the input that we derive from such externalities, where one's beliefs about such conditions either assent to judgment or ends up in suspension of judgment. Such outer conditions and externalities are in a constant flow of change, for this reason, I will consider sceptical attitude as a particular kind of reaction to the problem of change.

The crux of the sceptical attitude contains a particular kind of reaction to the notion of change, or the notion of flux. The doctrine of flux, as it is called, is a theory of perception that started with Heraclitus. From there, the idea flourished further in the Protagorean claim that man is the measure of all things, and in Parmenides' resistance and total disclaim of change.

Among the ancient thinkers on the issue of flux, being and becoming, Plato addresses the issue in the Theaetetus, where Socrates describes the flux doctrine as follows:

The others, into whose secrets I am going to initiate you, are much more refined and subtle. Their first principle, on which all that we said just now depends, is that the universe really is motion and nothing else. And there are two kinds of motion. Of each kind there are any number of instances, but they differ in that the one kind has the power of acting, the other of being acted upon. From the intercourse and friction of these with one another arise offspring, endless in number, but in pairs of twins. One of each pair is always something perceived, the other a perception, whose birth always coincides with that of the thing perceived. (Theaetetus, 156ab)

So, we can talk about a "pair" here—one of which is something perceived, and the other is the perception of it. But within this philosophical context, there is no metaphysical hierarchy in our understanding of the world. However, flash-forward a couple of centuries and a similar pairing can be found in Berkeley's idealism—this

time, within a metaphysical claim, when he argues that everything is ideas in the mind, and their reality resides in the mind of God. But such a claim lacks the metaphysical charge in the ancient thought, it instead yields an account of epistemology, as we find, for instance, in Plato. The type of phenomena accounted for, i.e., the “pair” as mentioned above, are modes of the kind of thought about our understanding of the world. And there is a place for this kind of thought within ancient Greek language and literature. From that extensive and significant literature, we will next consider Plato’s case.

In Book V of the *Republic*, Plato accounts for the difference between the notion of *doxa* (opinion, belief) and the notion of *episteme* (knowledge) in his epistemology and metaphysics. There, Plato has Socrates draw a distinction between two kinds of people: the lovers of sights and sounds (appearances) who are unable to see and embrace the nature of the beautiful itself. The ones who are lovers of sight and sound, Socrates notes, believe in beautiful things, but “doesn’t believe in the beautiful itself and isn’t able to follow anyone who could lead him to the knowledge of it” (*Republic* V 476c). Plato compares these people to someone who is in a dream state, “to think that a likeness is not a likeness but rather the thing itself that it is like” is dreaming, whether asleep or awake. On the other hand, there are people who think the opposite; they believe that the beauty exists and are able to differentiate between the idea of beauty and the things that participate in it without mixing the two. These people, Plato thinks, have knowledge, while the first group have only opinion.

In *Theaetetus*, Plato further defines knowledge as ‘true judgment’ with an account (*logos*). In contrast, *doxa* is associated with ‘partial’, ‘dim’, or ‘clouded’ judgment. If, to the Platonic understanding, knowledge (pertaining to “that which is the case”) is on the one end of a spectrum, on the other end stands error, mistake, and

illusion (i.e., that “which is not the case”). Now, *doxa* is the intermediary between them; it is neither what is nor what is not, neither knowledge nor ignorance (Republic Book V 478). Accordingly, knowledge corresponds to a certain cognitive power within the domain of science, while *doxa* is related to the domain of appearances and change with an intermediary power to opine things as opposed to know them. Here, Plato goes back to his previous example with two groups of people manifesting two kinds of attitudes toward beauty. What follows from the example is that to know is more about seeing the participation of the contrarities (in this case, the beauty and its opposite) in things that fall within the scope of the intermediary domain of change and material existence. In contrast, to opine does not follow the logic of the Forms and their participation in the realm of becoming; the opinable remains to be about being the lover of the multiplicity of sound and sight. However, it is important to stress that in Plato, knowing starts off and attains logos among the opinable, as Roecklein (2010) argues:

For Plato, there is no such thing as a form to talk about, unless we first have evidence of these patterns in our ordinary talk and representations of common objects. For Plato, the path to scientific knowledge begins with the ordinary use of names, and it obtains its original evidence there. (p. 159)

Thus, we can say that the intermediary power of *doxa* is different than the power of knowledge in the sense that the doxastic domain is not found to be ruled by the forms –not yet, but it is where the knowable can be attained, where we may find the forms and a grand account that governs the relations in the manifestations of the physical world. This, however, does not mean that the sensible is somehow beneath the intelligible in Plato, or attaining knowledge requires the surrender of the senses and the perceptual world. This ancient view has been radically transformed in the early modern era. We will be looking into this transformation later.

As for now, we will move onto considering a variety of sceptical attitudes, starting with ancient scepticism. Although this study will not focus on the ancients, I think it is necessary to start from there. As to the philosophical questions (i) and (ii) above, we would like to understand the type of ignorance that can be said to fuel a sceptical attitude in the face of these questions, and additionally, we would like to further delineate various ancient sceptical attitudes which are heavily influenced by Socrates and his remark “All that I know is that I know nothing,” as well as his questioning method as we find in Platonic dialogues. Such consideration will make us see the differences in the interpretation of this cryptic remark that “All that I know is that I know nothing” in the way that it gives us different pictures as the conception of this ‘I’. But more on this soon.

2.3 Ancient scepticism: Academic and Pyrrhonian

The term ‘Scepticism’ is derived from the Greek *skepsis*, meaning “investigation”, “examination”, or “consideration”. Ancient sceptics were the first to use this branding for their position. In its more than 2,000 years of history, exactly what it means to “investigate, consider, and examine” has itself undergone critical examination and change. The following part ultimately aims to draw the line more elaborately between the ancient sceptical thought and its modern counterpart, as well as to demonstrate the similarities between the two, in order to provide a historical background for our discussion.

Scepticism came forefront toward the end of the fourth century B.C., and became a prominent school of thought in the Hellenistic period spanning between two deaths –the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. and the death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C. Striker (1996) notes that during the period, new technical terms were

introduced both by Epicurus and Zeno the Stoic, showing that the epistemological interest has shifted from the question ‘What is knowledge?’ to ‘Is there any knowledge?’ (1996, p. 150). The Academy after Plato’s death, taking a sceptical approach in tackling the philosophical problems of the time, had undertaken a prominent part in arguing against Stoic and Epicurean views –the ‘dogmas’, or ‘truth claims,’ as they were deemed, and these were found by the Academic sceptics to be built on certain refutable assumptions.

The gist of this ancient sceptical agenda consists in the removal of opinions, the turmoil that comes with judgment, and driving assent. In Cicero’s words, it consists in removing “mere opinion and rashness out of one’s soul as though it were a wild and ravening beast” (Cicero, *Academica*, 2.108). On that note, we move on to examine different philosophical sceptical trends in more detail.

2.3.1 Scepticism as refutation of dogmatism

We begin with an observation by Striker on the characterization of scepticism as an ancient position in the Hellenistic philosophy.

‘Scepticism’, as I propose to use the word, may be characterized by two features: a thesis, viz. that nothing can be known, and a recommendation, viz. that one should suspend judgement on all matters. These two are logically independent of each other, since the thesis is not sufficient to justify the recommendation. (Striker, 1996, p. 92)

These two features of the notion can be found more clearly in the Academic scepticism and the Pyrrhonian scepticism, respectively. We will start with the former. The Academy initiated its sceptical phase under the influence of Arcesilaus who was “the first to suspend [making] assertions because of the contradictions among arguments, the first to argue both sides of a question, and the first to change the doctrine handed down by Plato, that is, to make it more eristic by the use of

question and answer” (Diogenes Laertius, 4.28). In this regard, Thorsrud comments that, with Arcesilaus, Plato’s dialogues were reassessed with a new sceptical twist:

He [Arcesilaus] was motivated in part by an innovative reading of Plato’s dialogues. Where his predecessors found positive doctrines to be systematically developed, he found a dialectical method of arguing and the sceptical view that nothing can be known (akatalêpsia²). He also advanced this conclusion in opposition to the ambitious system of the Stoics, claiming further that the appropriate response to *the pervasive uncertainty generated by his method* is the suspension of judgement (epochê). (Thorsrud, 2010, p. 58, italics mine)

If we think of Arcesilaus’ dialectical method as a machine, then akatalepsia is the fuel that runs that machine, which runs it quite effectively and smoothly. The by-product –or the waste, if you will– of such a way of philosophising, then, becomes the “pervasive uncertainty”. And thus, Arcesilaus, quite reasonably argues that the “appropriate response” here would be to assent to no belief and to suspend judgment, viz. ‘epoche’.

This response, or sceptical attitude, however, is the direct result of the dialectical method; but even prior to its adoption, it is the result of a thorough-going disavowal of an idea of questioning or investigation, where one starts with the negative question ‘Is there knowledge?’ as opposed to the positive question ‘What is knowledge?’ Such is the case with the academic sceptic Arcesilaus –who is, in fact, the founder of this position. Among these two questions, Arcesilaus picks the negative: ‘Is there knowledge?’.

In his refutation of the Stoic argument which held that some cognitive impressions must be true³, Arcesilaus developed his own argument about the indiscernibility of the truth from the error, questioning the very conditions that are

² *Akatalepsia*, or the thesis that nothing can be known. The thesis was popularly used by the ancient sceptics to refute the Stoic argument *kataleptike phantasia*. For more, see Striker (1996).

³ According to the Stoic theory of mind, a cognitive impression is one that comes from what is, and is such that it could not be false. (Sextus, M VII 248; Cicero, *Academica* 2.77)

said to guarantee the truth of an impression, and elaborating in what ways such discernibility may go wrong. Accordingly, the first of his counterarguments brings up indistinguishable twins, or a pair of identical objects, which puts the reference of the cognitive impression at risk; and his second argument appeals to the “dream state,” hallucinations, or illusions –a point that is later used by Descartes, which we will look more into in the next chapter.

We will not go into details of Arcesilaus’ arguments against the Stoics here, what we need to focus for our purposes is the specific claim that runs throughout his arguments, i.e., “no impression is true or false,” against the Stoic claim that “some impressions are true.” Again, what difference do these existential claims make? What do they mean and what purpose do they serve in our understanding of the world where we gather certain data through our senses and impressions?

First, we would like to say that these two existential claims concerning what we may know by our cognitive impressions, which form the backbone of each camp’s arguments, are on an equal footing. In other words, these claims stand on more of a “philosophical” ground in their relation to one’s philosophical outlook on issues that surround our relation to the world. And that is altogether different than the ground in which we argue for and make use of such claims. In this regard, these two existential claims are higher-order principles which govern one’s way of thinking about our relation to the world.

And second, these claims are ultimately grounded in human capacity or ability as much as its inability as we marshal and assess phenomena or the externalities. Thus, we can say that our views about this ‘we’, that *who* marshals and assesses the world as *something* constitutes a vital part of our coming to have different philosophical outlooks and sceptical attitudes. The qualities and position of

the self, then, appears to be one of the main issues here. This second point is addressed in Section 2.3.4 and Chapter 3. But now, we will consider the first point above; the issue as it involves in considering to what extent we find our beliefs and impressions about other things and people trustworthy and credible. Eventually such a consideration comes to the question of whether the self is left to be nothing but gullible in the face of the worldly affairs. The idea of gullibility here, is of importance as it comes down to the difference between “gullibility according to a philosophical outlook”, or gullibility in the ordinary sense of the word, which we can expect to find in ordinary cases of deception and pretence. In that regard, the first kind of gullibility surmounts to keep on questioning by asking the negative question mentioned earlier, and by keeping a negative force. We find this to be the case for Academic scepticism. In contrast, questioning with a positive force can be found in the Socratic notion of ‘*aporia*’ which we will examine in Section 2.3.3.

Returning to the first point above (i.e., the question of to what extent do we find our beliefs and impressions about other things and people trustworthy and credible) we will consider the case of Carneades, which is slightly different than what we have found in Arcesilaus. Following Arcesilaus, the second head of the new Academy, Carneades also argued that we can know nothing, but can sometimes be justified in holding beliefs (Striker, 1996, p. 93). More importantly, as Striker notes, Clitomachus (with whom Cicero agreed), Carneades maintained that knowledge is unattainable and all we can obtain are justified beliefs only “for the sake of argument”. Here we have a sceptical attitude slightly different from Arcesilaus’ version, and the crux of the matter is unpacking what it means to have such an attitude for the sake of argument.

Regarding this attitude of keeping on the questioning for the sake of argument, we should bear in mind the charge of the negative question ‘Is there knowledge?’ once again. The Academic sceptic starts by responding with “no,” and not to our surprise, ends up with a “no” in the end. If, at the outset, there is no ground for ‘knowledge’ to hold onto, if the discourse is not oriented toward finding out the best possible account (even though we admit that it is an inconclusive project to pursue), then there is no chance of constructive philosophizing, and no significance to be found in spurring the inquiry as to what knowledge or virtue or good life, etc. is. All is opinion, and some opinions are argued for better than others.

2.3.2 Pyrrhonian scepticism

Turning to the most radical form of scepticism now, i.e. Pyrrhonian scepticism⁴, the aim of doubt is to reach tranquillity, or ataraxia, of the mind, or so it was claimed, by a programme that was designed for the systemic refutation of all dogmatism (Burnyeat, 1976). Following the founder Pyrrho of Elis, who wrote nothing himself like Socrates and Arcesilaus, Pyrrhonian sceptics believed that the wise are those who do not assent to any opinion, and do not take any sides in a matter (*isostheneia*, or the ‘equal force’ of contradictory propositions in the field of both perception and theory). Pyrrhonism, which is more practically oriented in disputable matters of the world of appearances, insists on leaving things as is, and in doing so, relies on the negative assumption that language and human rational capacities fall short in depicting reality and the nature of things.

⁴ Pyrrhonian scepticism is not a continuation of the Academic scepticism, nonetheless, it is argued that they are not separate kinds of sceptical thought in the history of Hellenistic philosophy. In our discussion, we take both positions to be anti-dogmatist philosophical stances.

‘Akatalepsia’ and ‘epoche’, along with ‘isostheneia’, are regarded to be the doctrinal mainstays of Greek scepticism, and Rescher (2005) points out that “such sceptical teachings were for the most part already integral components of Greek sophistry.” (p. 68) To that end, Rescher draws an important comparison between the Greek sceptics and sophists:

Just as the data for scepticism with respect to knowledge about the world (i.e., the sceptical tropes) were already prominent in teachings of the Sophists, so also were most of the principal doctrines that constitute the core of negativism with respect to knowledge of nature. For the Sophists, as for the Sceptics, the world as we can experience it is a manifold of appearances that leaves any prospect of authentic knowledge of reality beyond our reach. Both positions are sceptical—but with a significant difference. The scepticism of the Greek Sceptics was nihilistic; it was oriented to epochê—to a total abstinence from judgment. But the scepticism of the Greek Sophists was limited: it was negative on the cognitive side as regards actual knowledge of the true nature of things, but positive on the conventional side as regards the acceptability of matters of human agreement. It allowed the social consensus of the vox populi to substitute for what rational inquiry could not provide. And, of course, the prospect (and reality) of diverse compacts in different groups prevailed in the direction of relativism. And so while Greek Scepticism was nihilistic, Greek Sophistry was relativistic. (Rescher, 2005, p. 71)

In the light of Rescher’s observations, we may say that what the ancient sceptic puts at risk is, given that all we have and all we can achieve is merely opinion, is assent.

The lack of assent leaves us with a free-floating judgment on things, leaving philosophy as activity to be somewhat vacuous. To refute the dogmas of their time, the Academic and the Pyrrhonian sceptics thus put the pursuit of wisdom in a vacuum, and in that vacuum, their interlocutor’s position is as good as their own argument. As such, what exactly is the sceptic’s own position? Can the sceptic even have a substantial position?⁵ Can the sceptic practice his scepticism sustainably?⁶

Although these questions pose important topics of investigation, they are beyond the

⁵ See Striker (1996) and Burnyeat (1980).

⁶ See Burnyeat (1980).

scope of our discussion and belong to the historians of philosophy to tackle. What is interesting for us is the fact that the role of judgment in philosophical inquiry, in the hands of the sceptic, is left as something moot.

2.3.3 Socratic ‘aporia’

Both the Academic and Pyrrhonian sceptical movements can be viewed as different utilizations of the Socratic method of questioning for different ends. In *Morality and the Inner Life*, Dilman draws a distinction between philosophical scepticism and sophistry, and offers a negative definition of philosophical scepticism:

In contrast with Socrates many of the sophists of his day were largely interested in getting on. To this end they were prepared to attempt influencing people’s beliefs and conduct regardless of considerations of truth and morality. This tended to undermine their pupil’s regard for argument, for truth and moral considerations. They taught their pupils to argue with equal success on both sides of a question, to bolster up the weaker argument so that it appeared stronger, to praise and blame the same thing. They could thus commend or condemn, argue this way or that, as it suited them. Argument was subordinated to advantage and desire, weakening the recognition that in these matters there is a truth which is independent of the self. Thus Socrates had to emphasise that one argument is not as good as another, that there are independent standards in logic for judging the soundness of an argument. The denial of this is philosophical scepticism. (Dilman, 1979, p. 9, italics mine)

Let us remember Striker’s characterization of scepticism as a recommendation (viz. ‘aporia’ or a call for furthering the philosophical inquiry as in the case of Socrates) and as a thesis (the claim that knowledge is impossible). In this regard, someone with sceptical inclinations can advance his position for the following reasons, which may produce different consequences: he may simply refrain from arriving at hasty conclusions either for the sake of continuing the dialogue or to hold that nothing can be known while maintaining that a particular claim is as good as its denial. We may say that the first of these motives is Socratic, while the second is sophistry (or as Rescher pointed out earlier, Pyrrhonism).

Put it like this: For it is one thing to argue against the notion of justice, claiming that there is no such thing as justice but only the rule of those who hold the power; and it is another thing to try to arrive at the conditions and criteria that makes the notion meaningful in a given context. But the type of sceptical attitude we may find in such sophistry appeals to the difficulty in correctly perceiving the nature of things because either things change, get effected by external circumstances (i.e., customs of the society) or our sensory organs fail to make a discrimination. Furthermore, the kind of sceptic in question further argues that any criterion –logical inference or causal connection– can be challenged by asking if the criterion itself is evident. But this would not pose a problem for the reality of our scientific, moral, etc. values. Instead, it would be a philosophical problem. Along the same lines, Dilman (1979) notes:

One of the tasks of philosophy here is to understand why it is that the so-called foundations of science or morality need no justification. To do so is to come to understand much about human reason and knowledge. One of the great obstacles to doing so is the thought that if the principles and ‘suppositions’ that lie at the foundations of human reason and knowledge cannot be justified, they must be arbitrary. This thought, I believe lies at the root of all forms of philosophical scepticism. (p. 11)

The sceptic, then, by moving from the observable world to our evidently non-observable inferences about that world generates a dissatisfaction about the fact that both worlds are distinct in nature and in their workings. Not only the sceptic is dissatisfied, but he is also someone that may exploit this difference to further his own ends. What the sceptic thus achieves is averting contention, which leaves us with a definite view of eliminating all contestable positions, which, as the sceptic Sextus Empiricus admits, includes the sceptical position itself. But this elimination of purposiveness is only a result of a different kind of purposiveness, the goal of the so-called tranquillity of mind. But the Socratic use of aporia has a different purpose: it is

supposed to elucidate the most suitable account for certain notions that escape a treatment by evident justifications. In comparison, by claiming that our beliefs and judgments that are not readily perceived or apprehended are arbitrary and hence mutable, the sceptic ends up rendering a great portion of the life that human beings inhabit to be mute.

What we are interested in the Socratic vs. sophistic/sceptical attitudes as portrayed above is the power that these different types of sceptical attitudes have on the person as a philosophical and a moral agent. We characterize this agent in two ways: as a *philosophical* agent because of her relation to thinking and reasoning, and as a *moral* agent because of her relation to our practical conducts. Thus, an exploration of this issue can be traced through the idea of self in ancient Greek thought. For that, we will now look into Charles Taylor's investigation of the idea of self from the ancient through the medieval period, namely in Plato and Augustine, where the comparative picture of the two brings out one main difference in the philosophical significance of the faculty of reason (logos) and the notion of 'inwardness' in making of the self.

2.3.4 The idea of the 'self'

Taylor's main thesis is that the human agent as the knower and the locus of individuated experience went through a transformation from Plato to Augustine, which later had an influence on Descartes. We will leave Descartes for the next part and focus now on Plato and Augustine. Taylor (1989) notes that for Plato, the moral flourishing of the self depends on "a kind of self-mastery, which consists in reason ruling over desires, a self-control which contrasts to being dominated by one's appetites and passions" (p. 124). The relation between human and *physis* as well as

reason and becoming brought about new understandings about the inward quality of being in accordance with the Platonic forms, cultivating reason over passions and desires, and hence, an “internalization” of the activity of thinking and knowing about the cosmic order. Furthermore, Taylor notes:

But it begins to seem strange when we understand that the rule of reason is to be understood as rule by a rational vision of order –or better, since for Plato the logos was in reality as well as in us, we should speak of rule by a vision of rational order. The question of which element in us rules translates immediately into a question of what the soul as a whole attends to and loves: the eternal order of being, or else the changing play of sights and sounds and the bodily perishable. To be ruled by reason means to have one's life shaped by a pre-existent rational order which one knows and loves. (1989, p. 124)

And through such an internalized understanding of reason in Plato, the activity of knowing attains a certain kind of new significance in Augustine. As Taylor further remarks:

Augustine shifts the focus from the field of objects known to the activity itself of knowing; God is to be found here. This begins to account for his use of the language of inwardness. For in contrast to the domain of objects, which is public and common, the activity of knowing is particularized; each of us is engaged in ours. To look towards this activity is to look to the self, to take up a reflexive stance. (Taylor, 1989, p. 130)

Thus, Taylor argues that the internalization of reason which started with Plato is echoed in the self-reflexive nature of knowing in Augustine. For the latter, the important task is to establish that there are higher standards, much like Plato's Forms, and the way to achieve this is an inward motion of knowing the self where God or 'veritas' can be found. Or as Heil (1972) notes “the [Pyrrhonian] sceptic's mental quietude is replaced in Augustine's Christian theology by the Beatific Vision, the quasi-mystical ecstasy which awaits the soul in its ultimate confrontation with God” (p. 103). Thus, while Augustine is partly in agreement with the sceptic's higher end of achieving tranquillity of mind, he disagrees with the sceptic with respect to

the means for reaching this end, which is the sceptical method as most efficiently exercised by the Academics.

For Augustine, it is this method that puts “wisdom” in danger. In the *Contra Academicos*, Augustine sketches out this threat in detail: the sceptic does not claim that truth does not exist, but that it is unknowable. The sentiment originates from a higher-order question about the criterion of truth. Between two opposing criteria, how can we pick the most adequate one? What makes it adequate? What is adequacy or insufficiency of our higher standards here? So, the Academic sceptic appeals to the fact that an investigation of the worldly, external concerns cannot be settled, so in order to achieve the tranquillity of mind, the wise sceptics should free themselves of such externalities, what is given by the sense impressions, and what may easily lead the mind to dogmas or refutable, inconclusive judgments. It is with this detachment of the mind from the world that Augustine’s thought parts ways. For him, the sceptic’s notion of side-lining reason from cognitive pursuit and knowing as an active, wilful activity is an impossibility. That is because, as Heil (1972) remarks, reason in Augustine is incorrigible, and “a mind completely estranged from all rational impulses is inconceivable” (p. 109). Instead, the mind should be willing to participate in the quest of truth through putting constant effort in searching for wisdom, which Augustine defines to be the knowledge of divine and human things. Now, accordingly, implementing reason to this philosophical formula for wisdom, self-fulfilling, and happiness is essential.

Whereas for Plato, the rational part of the soul is crucial for the cultivation of the self; for Augustine, God becomes the rationality itself, whose existence can be found in the depths of the soul. This means that the first-person perspective on the knowable (and the doubtable) gains prominence over the third-person perspective

through the idea that self-cognition is a ‘purer’ act of knowing. Accordingly, what is related to the self and the inner becomes more certain than what is related to the objective world and the external. One immediate implication of this observation is that for Augustine, doubting that which starts from the inner and expands to the outer is not of significance. In fact, it is not an available question. Taylor observes the following:

But to see this as Augustine's principal preoccupation is to assume that the sceptical challenge of his day was couched in the form familiar to us: How can one get beyond first-person experience and conclude to a world out there? But this was neither how the challenge was put nor how people thought to answer it before Augustine. The relation of historical causation seems rather to be the reverse: the idea of seeing scepticism as the question whether I can get beyond ‘my’ inner world is much more a product of the revolution which Augustine started, but which only bore this fruit many centuries later. (Taylor, 1989, p. 134)

For Augustine, the question was never “Can I be secure that all these mental realities of mind are not totally produced by myself?” That is to say, there was no concern about the existence of the external world; but of course, it might well be the case that we don’t know the external world properly, clearly, completely, and so on. But there was never an idea ‘Is there a world?’ apart from what seems to be represented in my mind. The idea of the representation of the world through sense impressions and language is a more modern philosophical thought. But the origin of it goes back to platonism which later morphs into religious neo-platonism.

In contrast, the investigation of logos and cosmic order is more related to the Socratic ‘aporia’. It shows itself in the activity of dialectic and exchange of doxa through multiple characters in the Platonic dialogues. Hence, we can speak of a vertical movement of knowing the self in Augustine, while in Plato, such movement is more horizontal as it involves exchanges and encounters in the doxastic domain with an aim to find the most correct account (logos). Following Gilson (1949),

Taylor (1989) further argues that the dominance and significance of the first-person perspective and self-reflexivity in Augustine is the first instance of the “cogito argument”, which flourishes later in Descartes.

In responding to the sceptic, Augustine makes a fateful proto-Cartesian move to prove that there is *something* (we could say) we *do* know. As Gilson points out, Augustine makes frequent use of this proto-cogito; by showing his interlocutor that he cannot doubt his own existence, since “if you did not exist it would be impossible for you to be deceived” (Gilson, 1949, p. 132). But we should note that this proto cogito is still not fully cogito. It means that, given the attention to one’s inner world, the idea that this privacy is what is privileged over our understanding and meaning is still not there in Augustine as an idea. This happens with Descartes’ cogito in flesh and body.

On that note, we will now move on to Cartesian scepticism, where, unlike the ancient sceptics, doubt is not performed to attack certain beliefs, but to attack general epistemological principles, which, as a result, confines the task of epistemology to a battle against global and radical scepticism.

2.4 Cartesian methodological doubt

When we are concerned with scepticism, it is important to note one particular time period, namely the shift from the early modern period (15th and 16th centuries) to the advance of mathematical sciences –both theoretical and applied– as a result of which the mathematical conception of nature began to be predominantly adopted in the 18th century onwards. The beginning of this shift saw the rediscovery and publication of the works of Sextus Empiricus (Burnyeat, 1980, p. 20), which in turn influenced Western thought immensely. Furthermore, the Galilean model of the universe

challenged the prevailing Aristotelian conception, where, according to the former, mathematics was taken to be the language of the universe. In such an exhilarating climate, Descartes took philosophy as a quest for establishing a certain basis for knowledge. In so doing, he utilized ‘doubt’ in a radical manner to suspend judgment on all things deceitful which included primarily those that are obtained from sense impressions. While for the ancient sceptics, questions of how we know that the world or other minds exist did not specifically pose a problem (Avramides, 2001), for the modern epistemology starting popularly with Descartes, the case was the contrary. We will now begin with the problem of other minds which come out to be an epistemological problem in Descartes’ *Meditations*.

Descartes employs a criterion for our knowledge of other minds, which focuses on the possibility of deception. The sceptical challenge, then, is to ensure that the conditions in which we are not dreaming, or undergoing a complete state of hallucination, do in fact hold. If we do not know that such conditions are met, and if we cannot discriminate the dream state from the waking state, then the sceptic holds that we lack knowledge about other minds, and in general, the world. Thus, given that I claim to know something about another’s mental life, or an object in the world (1), the sceptic’s argument then undermines the claim by appealing to the indeterminacy expressed in the sceptical hypothesis (SH), as in the following:

(1) I know that p.

(SH) I cannot know whether I am full-blown deceived, or in a dream state.

(2) I cannot know that p.

But how can Descartes present so easily a general argument about all our beliefs about the world? In the first Meditation, Descartes paves the way for that with his arguments from analogy. In one of them, known as the dream argument, Descartes

invites us to consider the case of him sitting by the fire, handling the paper he is writing, feeling the warmth of the fire, and compares all this to a dream state. He, then, asks:

But have I then forgotten those other occasions on which I have been deceived by similar thoughts in my dreams? When I think this over more carefully I see so clearly that waking can never be distinguished from sleep by any conclusive indications that I am stupefied; and this very stupor comes close to persuading me that I am asleep after all. (AT 7:19)

Thus, Descartes claims that the experience of a dream could be indistinguishable from waking life, and nothing can rule out that I am not dreaming now. Furthermore, he claims that he can doubt every kind of sensory experience, he writes: “everything I have ever believed I was having a sensation of while awake, I can sometimes think I am having a sensation of while asleep” (AT 7:77). While our beliefs about the external world or about ourselves remain the same, Descartes’ move here targets at defeating the justification for those beliefs. The sensible world, then, can be understood merely as a vivid dream. In fact, Descartes compares the things that we see in sleep to “painted images” which, he adds, “could not be formed except on the basis of a resemblance with real things” (AT 7:19).

For the fact is that when painters desire to represent sirens and little satyrs with utterly unfamiliar shapes, they cannot devise altogether new natures for them, but simply combine parts from different animals; or if perhaps they do think up something so new that nothing at all like it has ever been seen, which is thus altogether fictitious and false, it is certain that at least the colours which they combine to form images must be real. By the same token, even though these general things –eyes, head, hands, and so forth- might be imaginary, it must necessarily be admitted that at least some other still more simple and universal realities must exist,

from which (as the painter's image is produced from real colours) all these images of things –be they true or false- that occur in our thoughts are produced (AT 7:20).

By comparing dreams to painted images, Descartes employs a Platonic understanding of truth, where the representational feature of reality upholds a new “ethos” for the material existence. In the allegory of the cave, Plato invites us to reconsider what we believe to be true. The shadows of the real things reflecting on the wall in the cave, in this respect, are mere illusions. For the cave-dwellers “truth is nothing other than the shadows of those artefacts” (Republic VII 515c). They mistake appearance with reality, and the concepts with the physical manifestations we grasp through perception. The cave is a prison, a dim representation of reality, unless a prisoner comes to realize that there are higher truths which can be grasped by the mind, i.e. the Forms, in other words, by gaining a reflective understanding about appearance and reality. The allegory, Plato argues, has one major implication, which is that education is not “putting knowledge into souls that lack it,” but more like “putting sight into blind eyes” (Republic VII 518c). While the virtues of the body are acquired through habit and practice, the virtue of reason (as one of the constituents of the soul, along with ‘spirit’ and ‘appetite’) is already present within each of us, where higher knowledge is acquired by turning the soul's eye from illusion to wisdom, to the eternal and immutable Forms. Furthermore, in *Theaetetus*, Plato considers dreams and other sensory deceptions in the context of the nature of perception and knowledge. Similarly, in that dialogue, knowledge (*episteme*) is about turning to the Forms; it is a principled system of understanding with *logos*, or cosmic order, which is to be found or discovered.

For Descartes, however, the key terms such as ‘reason’ or ‘logos’ do not apply in their Platonic senses. Taylor (1989) observes that, in relation to Plato,

Descartes offers a new understanding of reason where the cosmic order (logos) was no longer seen as embodying the platonic ideas:

Descartes utterly rejected this teleological mode of thinking and abandoned any theory of ontic logos. The universe was to be understood mechanistically, by the resolute/compositive method pioneered by Galileo... The account of scientific knowledge which ultimately emerges on the Galilean view is a representational one. To know reality is to have a correct representation of things –a correct picture within of outer reality, as it came to be conceived. Descartes declares himself “assure que je ne puis avoir aucune connaissance de ce qui est hors de moi, que par l'entremise des idees que j'ai eu en moi” (“certain that I can have no knowledge of what is outside me except by means of the ideas I have within me”)⁷. And this conception of knowledge comes to seem unchallengeable, once an account of knowledge in terms of a self-revealing reality, like the Ideas, was abandoned. (Taylor, 1989, p. 144)

Instead, what Descartes does in the first Meditation is to appeal to the sceptical hypothesis that all that I know is that I may now be dreaming because waking life and dream is indistinguishable. From the outset, we can say that this realization about their so-called indistinguishability takes place ‘within’ the subject, within the intellect, and the faculty of reason through which we come to acquire clear and distinct ideas, it is not the result of a “self-revealing reality” as Taylor mentions. Thus, the testimony of senses is already radically cut off from the subject’s epistemic status about the external world, they are discarded for not being certain and unshakable sources of knowledge. Descartes thinks this is true of both the judgments about the body and the Aristotelian view of the soul as the locus of a host of activity such as taking nourishment, moving, sense perception, thinking, etc. (AT 7:26). But all those Descartes believes he knew about the body and soul, he claims, end up rendering nothing but illusions if there were an all-powerful deceiver. In the second Meditation, Descartes presents perhaps one of the greatest and exciting literary

⁷ Letter to Gibieuf, 19 January 1642; Descartes: Philosophical Letters, trans. Anthony Kenny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 123.

pieces in history, that is, an even more encompassing doubt than that he may be dreaming now, but that he might be deceived all the time:

But what about now, when I am supposing that some deceiver, who is supremely powerful, and if I may venture to say so, evil, has been exerting all his effort to delude me in every way? Can I affirm that I possess the slightest thing of all those that I have just said belong to the nature of body? I consider, I think, I go over it all in my mind: nothing comes up. It would be a waste of effort to go through the list again. But what about the attributes I used to ascribe to the soul? What about taking nourishment and moving? But since I now have no body, these also are nothing but illusions. What about sense perception? But certainly this does not take place without a body, and I have seemed to perceive very many things when asleep that I later realized I had not perceived. What about thinking? Here I do find something: it is thought; this alone cannot be stripped from me. (AT 7:26)

An immense amount of work and effort is behind such a speculation. And much of this work centers around the notion of body. The loss of the body in Descartes means the loss of a certain kind of existence which takes a major part in the Platonic view of the soul's attunement to the cosmic order. This existence is possible by a view of the soul as depicted in the *Phaedrus*, where Plato compares the human soul to a chariot, driven by logos (reason), and pulled by two horses, thumos (spirit) and epithumia (appetite). In that view, reason is differentiated from spirit and appetite but is still not separate. The bodily, in Plato, is involved as a "sort of medium in which the spiritual can appear" (Taylor, 1989, p. 146). For Descartes, on the other hand, the material is completely separated from the immaterial; it is something that ought to be not experienced, but purely understood.

I am seeing a light, hearing a noise, feeling heat.— But these things are false, since I am asleep!—But certainly I seem to be seeing, hearing, getting hot. This cannot be false. This is what is properly meant by speaking of myself as having sensations; and, understood in this precise sense, it is nothing other than thinking. (AT 7:29)

Thinking, in Descartes, has a special place, distinct from bodily activities. And its habitat, the mind, is privileged for being the centre of certainty which Descartes aims to establish, so that, just like Archimedes' "firm spot" with which he claims he could

move the earth, Descartes aims to find such a leverage to build a certain, unshakable philosophy. This cannot be done by any judgment, but something whose justification cannot be defeated: “I can pass judgment only on those things that are known to me. I know that I exist; I am trying to find out what this ‘I’ is, whom I know” (AT 7:27). That firm spot, in Descartes’ case, is the Cartesian ego, who at least can be certain about performing the method of doubt, or in other words, given (SH), he can still be sure that he is a thinking/doubting thing. But the main idea illustrated in his wax example is that the physical attributes of the wax (its shape, colour, heat, etc.) do not represent the object’s true nature, instead, the actual power of the imagining exists within the self and is directly responsible for the sensations that the subject seems to be getting from the object. This suggests a radical move toward the mentalization, or as Taylor puts it, the ‘internalization’ of the material. Taylor draws parallels between this move in Descartes and the Cartesian dualist understanding of the world:

For Descartes, in contrast, there is no such order of Ideas to turn to, and understanding physical reality in terms of such is precisely a paradigm example of the confusion between the soul and the material we must free ourselves from. Coming to a full realization of one's being as immaterial involves perceiving distinctly the ontological deft between the two, and this involves grasping the material world as mere extension. The material world here includes the body, and coming to see the real distinction requires that we disengage from our usual embodied perspective, within which the ordinary person tends to see the objects around him as really qualified by colour or sweetness or heat, tends to think of the pain or tickle as in his tooth or foot. We have to objectify the world, including our own bodies, and that means to come to see them mechanistically and functionally, in the same way that an uninvolved external observer would. (Taylor, 1989, p. 145)

Taylor’s observation above about the self in Descartes and its stance in the world suggests the idea of a ‘disenchanted’ world and a disengaged self in the face of it. Thus, Taylor sees a radical break in Descartes from the ancient tradition and argues that the former’s epistemology and ethics “calls for disengagement from world and body and the assumption of an instrumental stance towards them” (p. 155). The

mentalization of the material and the mechanistic understanding of the world has a further ramification: that scepticism after Descartes had to face new questions, such as the question of solipsism.

On the points of departure in Descartes in relation to the ancient tradition, Williams (2010) makes note of the difference between Pyrrhonian scepticism and the methodological doubt as used by Descartes in the *Meditations*: While the former proposes to regulate the practical aspect of human life by abstaining from reasoned judgements, adhering to required habits, and aiming to achieve tranquillity of the mind, the latter uses doubt methodically, and freed from practical considerations (Williams, 2010, p. 288). As to the latter instrumental use of scepticism, Descartes appeals to the corrigibility of our beliefs that we derive from our senses and perceptual apparatus. He argues that he ought to reject all “accustomed opinions” and “evil customs,” that is, all that can be doubted.⁸ Descartes’ concern here, as he says, is “not with action but only with the attainment of knowledge” (AT 7:22). Here, by knowledge, it is implied that the necessities of practical life where one may have to commit oneself resolutely to a doubtful course of action, and the pursuit of knowledge where one must reject all that is doubtful is strictly distinguished.⁹ For that crucial distinction, Dilman points out that in Descartes’ thought, “his life, as he represents it in his philosophical reflections, is a life of thought, not of action” (1993, p. 2). We will expand on this in Chapter 4.

This is only one of the many differences that separates the ancient scepticism from Descartes. Dilman’s observation above brings another point about the role and the nature of thinking in Descartes to the forefront. Thinking, as ‘cogitare’ and

⁸ At this point, in the First Meditation, Descartes claims that even the existence of God cannot escape from being doubted and is set aside for further examination.

⁹ See explanatory notes to the *Meditations* (Descartes, 2008, p. 233).

‘cogere’, is etymologically linked to the notions of ‘gathering’ and ‘bringing together in an assembly’. And Taylor (1989) notes: “This understanding of thinking as a kind of inner assembly of an order we construct will be put to a revolutionary new use by Descartes” (p. 141); which, Taylor argues, leaves us with a gap between mind and body which is much more severe and austere than what we had in Plato. For Plato, as we have seen, the first-person perspective in seeing and understanding the things around, or in other words, my seeing and understanding them as participating in the Forms is what makes episteme. Such an understanding, according to Plato, comes from the soul’s rational attunement. For Descartes, on the other hand, this very rational attunement takes an instrumental turn, where we must no longer turn to the material as the locus of events and qualities, because the true nature of the material is nothing but mental. On that note, Menn (2002) writes:

The human soul will be known primarily as a thing that thinks: not as an act of an organic body, but as something only extrinsically related to a body. God will be known primarily as the highest object of our thought, not as the governor of the physical world, although he becomes that too when he creates the world. (p. 5)

Such a turn had one important implication: the mentalization of knowing, and the isolation of the self as the knowing subject. In what follows, we will take a look at one direct result of this, i.e., solipsism as a view of an isolated self, where we will have a better grip on the mentalization and isolation of the self.

CHAPTER 3

SOLIPSISM AND KNOWING SOLO

In Chapter 2, the historical survey helped clarifying the journey of the ‘self’ as the knower. Accordingly, the ‘soul’ in Saint Augustine and the ‘mind’ in Descartes have taken centre stage with an emphasis on their relation to truth (Augustine) and certainty (Descartes). The relation in question is taken to be ‘direct’ in a philosophically special sense, rendering a privileged ground of knowledge. In this regard, we find that Descartes’ locus of epistemic activity, the Cartesian ego, is a continuation of the ancient sceptical tradition, which nevertheless comes with a twist, viz. the self as an isolated and a primarily thinking being.

This notion of a disembodied self as separate from its surroundings, from the life involving our activities and practices, in turn, assumes and thereby helps create a gap between the human subject and the world; between the ‘inner’ and the ‘outer’. It implies that I have knowledge of others (such as someone’s pain) insofar as I know what pain is *in my case*.

This view is famously formulated in the ‘argument from analogy’. Throughout the chapter, we will aim to show that the argument is more of an attempt to fill the Cartesian gap between the mind and the world by trying to give an epistemological explanation of the ground of my knowledge of others’ mental states in a framework within which the Cartesian dualism (of ‘inner’ and outer’) is assumed. By appealing to such a gap – one that is conceptually and logically unbridgeable – and by failing to fill in that gap within its own philosophical framework, the Cartesian notion of the self generates a certain form of scepticism which makes it the case that knowing about other minds, and knowing *in general* is

insufferably problematic, if not impossible. Furthermore, by generating such a knower or agent, it puts language and communication, meaning and understanding in a puzzling state for the philosopher to account for.

Regarding this form of philosophical scepticism, Wittgenstein provided interesting and important intuitions that changed our way of looking at the issue; offered a new perspective in which the problem of scepticism can be positive and properly addressed. To see in what ways Wittgenstein offers a critique of the Cartesian self and scepticism, we will first briefly go through the position of solipsism about other minds and external world, before focusing on the problem of other minds in more detail. We will argue that in whatever way we look at Wittgenstein's thought on the matter to address the sceptical problem, we should not forget that there is a concern with solipsism, which goes hand in hand with his investigation into language and logic, meaning and understanding.

3.1 Solipsism and the problem of other minds

The thinking being in Descartes co-exists with its thoughts. That it also has a body is something that needs to be further established. Along with doubting the existence of the external world and physical objects, the Cartesian self is claimed to exist without a body; it is essentially a disembodied being, which, Descartes argues, is something that he cannot doubt. Thus thinking, as an activity is highly technical and specific in Descartes' epistemology, and it is constitutive of the human existence. Dilman (1993) writes:

Since he [the Cartesian self] may not have a body but continue to exist while he doubts or thinks, it follows (he thinks) that his existence as a thinking being or mind is logically separable from that of his body. Hence Descartes holds that the mind and the body are separate existents. This is Cartesian dualism... He [Descartes] takes his doubt to separate his own existence as a thinking being from the existence of his body. The latter he regards as an

object to which he, as a thinking being, is causally related –that is if it can be proved to exist. (p. 2)

One implication of the Cartesian ego is that it is trapped in a radically alone world, which is a world of the solipsistic self. Solipsism is the view which, in a nutshell, endorses that certainty starts in the mind. It starts from the mundane observation that my pain can only belong to me and that my mental states are private, which then evolves into a seemingly benign claim such as “I cannot possibly ever have access to the content of another’s mind like them,” say, another’s pain. From the solipsist’s perspective, then, certain questions seem to be impenetrable, insurmountable, hopeless conundrums for the epistemic status of our beliefs about the other:

- i. What is it that I know when I know my pain as opposed to someone else’s pain?
- ii. How do I know my pain as my pain, and, in contrast, how do I know about ‘your pain’ as really ‘your pain’?

At some point in the history of analytic philosophy, such questions were at the centre of attention and a great deal of effort was put in articulating the meaning of the term ‘my’ in the claims of the solipsist’s. Of course, times have changed. Nevertheless, I find that a consideration of solipsism is still relevant and important for our times. So before going further, we will make a few remarks about the significance of solipsism as a philosophical issue.

Among those who commented on the topic, most recently, Pihlström (2020) argues that “a careful consideration of solipsism might teach us something about other philosophical positions that we are more likely to adopt and defend, and about the ways in which we may be justified in defending them” (p. 3). Like Pihlström, I see great value in studying solipsism, perhaps not as a philosophical challenge *per se*, but more as an urge to re-examine our philosophical assumptions. Ranging from

metaphysics and epistemology to ethics, such an examination would take in to scrutinize and reconsider certain notions such as subject vs. object, the self and the world, as well as our ethical relations to others.

The last of these concerns is most famously considered by Stanley Cavell (1969/1976), who has introduced the idea of ‘acknowledgment’ to the case of our experience of another human being’s ‘inner’ life, such as their pain. Influenced by the ideas of later Wittgenstein, Cavell, to put it very briefly for now, argues that to know another’s pain is to acknowledge the other:

Your suffering makes a claim upon me. It is not enough that I know (am certain) that you suffer—I must do or reveal something (whatever can be done). In a word, I must acknowledge it, otherwise I do not know what “(your or his) being in pain means. (Cavell, 1969/1976, p. 263)

Cavell follows such a line of reasoning that takes the problem of other minds not as an isolated epistemological problem, but as something rooted in our ways of thinking about the mind and about other people. Because of this, Overgaard argues that the problem of other minds “has an irreducible or ‘proto-ethical’ aspect” (2009, p. 3). This, we believe, is the crux of the matter with solipsism as a philosophical view, that solipsism stands on the borderline between philosophy of mind and morality.

We will now consider the problem of other minds from a broader angle, as what it amounts to in more recent discussions of the issue. The problem is twofold. First, as previously discussed, the problem of other minds as traditionally conceived is an epistemological problem, which more appropriately concerns the possibility of knowing about other minds given certain obstacles such as pretence or deception. In this study, I will not be concerned with the problem as epistemologically conceived. However, in the twentieth century, Avramides (2001) and Gomes (2011)¹⁰ both

¹⁰ Also, see Dretske (1973): “Assuming for the moment that I know it, *how* do I know that there are any other people in the world besides myself, conscious human beings who think and feel in ways similar to the way I think and feel?” (p. 34)

observe that the problem has been further formulated as bearing a conceptual component, which overrides the epistemological problem¹¹

Following such a framing of the problem, I will adopt the conceptual problem, formulated as:

(CP) How do we think of other minds?

One thing to notice immediately is that CP –as a positive question about human capacity of understanding other minds– is a matter of know-how, or (ii), as well as know-what, or (i), because (i) is already contained in (ii) as mentioned in footnote 12. Moreover, it is equally important to notice that the formulation of CP diverges from its epistemological counterpart, namely from the question “How do I know other minds, that you are not dreaming, that you are real, etc.?” in Descartes and the Cartesian tradition in general. The aim of Descartes’ philosophy is to establish what the Cartesian self *knows*, and to “establish it in the face of the difficulties which threatened it [the Cartesian self] with scepticism” (Dilman, 1993, p.3). Thus, there is an inevitable component of discontinuity in the treatment of the problem. But that is hardly shocking news, as almost no question or idea in the history of philosophy is spared of having distinct treatments for diverse reasons. Furthermore, such a discontinuity is quite natural due to the advance of the philosophy of language in the twentieth century, where most of the questions underlying the Western thought since

¹¹ Gomes states that the conceptual problem of other minds can be traced back to Wittgenstein’s PI. While the epistemological problem of other minds “challenges our ability to know about another’s mental life” (Gomes, 2011, p. 354), “the conceptual problem is about thought: it raises a problem in accounting for our ability to think of another person as a bearer of mental states or a subject of mental events” (Gomes, 2011, pp. 354-5). In our discussion, we will follow Gomes’ articulation of how the conceptual problem of other minds overrides the epistemological problem of other minds:

According to some discussions of the conceptual problem, once we attend to the problem of accounting for our ability to think of another person as subject to mental phenomena, issues about the possibility of knowing about such phenomena drop out of the picture (Malcolm, 1958, pp. 976-8). The conceptual problem, it is suggested, is not only conceptually prior to the epistemological problem, its successful resolution dissolves any concerns one might have about knowledge of another person’s mind. (Gomes, 2011, p. 355)

antiquity have undergone a linguistic treatment. On that note, we move on to one answer to the problem of other minds, that is the ‘argument from analogy’ as a certain kind of philosophical treatment of the problem.

3.2 Filling the gap: the argument from analogy

If we consider the questions (i) and (ii) from earlier, what they both have in common is that they assume that my thought of you as a person is in need of a special kind of justification. Thus Cockburn (1990) thinks, the problem of other minds can be presented in the form of the question: “What justification do I have for taking these beings that I see around me to be people?” (p. 13). The problem formulated as such makes it clear that, insofar as I am without any justification, other beings might as well be radically different from what I take them to be, where their bodily and behavioural expressions (say, pain behaviour) fail to conclusively determine the meaning of what is being expressed (i.e., what ‘pain’ is). This would include the possibility of, say, my friend not feeling any pain whatsoever when he smashes his finger in the door and cries in agony. This possibility, moreover, is not similar to smashing one’s hand and not realising it due to, say, heavy anaesthetics. Instead, the problem is meant to suggest that others can be fundamentally different from what I take them to be, i.e., a person who sees, hears, feels, etc.

But what would such a possibility amount to? First, the idea of the self is conceived as an isolated and disembodied being. And second, what is taken to be ‘normal’ and ‘ordinary’ in our understanding of ourselves as well as others is being challenged radically in this conception. This was the case with my friend smashing his finger without feeling any pain. For me to be certain that my friend feels pain, sees, hears, etc., the Cartesian sceptic demands that I have a justification. And within

the Cartesian conception of the self, such a justification should ultimately come from ‘inside’, i.e., that which the Cartesian self has an immediate access to know what ‘pain’ is. In that sense, the Cartesian self *must* turn to ‘inside’ to know something about the outside.

Similarly, Cockburn thinks that such a radical challenge of our ‘normal’ and ‘ordinary’ dealings in knowing about others and the world leads to a necessary move toward “what lies behind the human being that one can observe,” which creates “room for a sceptical doubt that needs to be removed” (1990, p. 13) by some justification for the presence of what supposedly lies behind what can be observed. Cockburn further points out that such an issue is caused by a dualist scheme which prioritizes the first-person perspective in understanding or appealing to the other’s mental life:

It might be said that any mystery about the appeal of a dualism which, in this sense, leaves room for scepticism disappears when one bears in mind the special place which we are inclined to give to the first person point of view in discussions of these issues. My conception of others as beings that feel pain, see, and so on is, we feel, derivative from my conception of myself as such a being; and that is bound to leave us with a problem about my justification for taking others to be beings like myself. That, however, leaves us with the need to explain why we are tempted to give that place to the first person point of view. (Cockburn, 1990, p. 14)

In assuming that which lies behind our observations as what justifies our knowledge of others, then, the questions (i) and (ii) both point to a ‘gap’. Furthermore, the expression of this very gap is thought to be found in the difference between the first-person and the third-person points of view as well as in how this difference relates to ‘my’ knowledge about myself as opposed to my knowledge of others. The Cartesian sceptic’s challenge, in this regard, is fuelled by this gap between self-knowledge and knowledge of others, and the former differs from the latter not only due to the subjects’ direct and privileged access to their own mental content, but also due to the

ways in which this knowledge is conceived to be justified by further assumptions in the argument form.

Among such arguments, there is the ‘argument from analogy’ which is the idea that what justifies my understanding of another person’s pain is somehow grounded in my own experience of pain. Stated by Mill, the argument aims to give an explanation to what makes it the case that one knows, understands, and connects to another’s pain.¹² The explanation works mainly as an account of ‘know-how’, in the sense that, by dwelling on the notion of certainty that we can find in having the first-person, direct knowledge of my own inner life, I can be certain, by analogy, about my beliefs about other people’s inner life. Or, in short, ‘How do I know your pain?’, ‘Because I know mine’.

What is interesting in the argument, and what is interesting for our purpose here is that it involves the idea of the primacy of the first-person point of view, in its relation to what justifies my thought about another person. Such primacy can be found in Cartesian thought. For Descartes asks: Among everything ‘I’ believe or take to be true, which amount to knowledge, and which do not? Now, the knowledge of this disembodied ‘I’ with a primacy over the third-person perspective (due to its privileged, ‘direct’ or ‘immediate’ access to its own mind), is quite different from what we ordinarily understand from ‘knowing’; when, for instance, we say that we know someone is proud of us when we see it in their eyes, or say that we know that the train will be delayed by ten minutes.

¹² “By what evidence do I know, or by what considerations am I led to believe, that there exist other sentient creatures; that the walking and speaking figures which I see and hear, have sensations and thoughts, or in other words, possess Minds?” (Mill, 1865/1979, p. 190) Formulated as such, Mill answers this question as follows:

I conclude that other human beings have feelings like me, because, first, they have bodies like me, which I know, in my own case, to be the antecedent condition of feelings; and because, secondly, they exhibit the acts, and other outward signs, which in my own case I know by experience to be caused by feelings. (Mill, 1865/1979, p. 191)

In picking of the good apples and discarding the bad, which we can call Descartes' methodical doubt, Descartes reconstructs the notion of knowledge as we understand it in ordinary usage. It is an altogether different notion than when one is asked to direct their attention to something, such as their own thoughts and feelings (self-awareness and emotional awareness) as well their environment (awareness of the other), so they say they know that they are feeling such-and-such, and that the lighting in the room is insufficient for reading.

In contrast, what it means 'to know' or 'to be convinced' in Descartes' case is quite different. It is a striking point that the truth-seeker in the *Meditations* has a privileged authority over his judgments and beliefs, in the sense that, he thinks he must and more importantly can reassess everything that he believes to know. By 'must' here, 'can' is indirectly implied and accepted. When dealing with the activity of knowing in another context, that is knowing about the external world, Wittgenstein simply and powerfully asks: "Can I be in doubt at will?" (OC 211)¹³ Perhaps, we *can* –recreationally, with a purpose to find an indubitable belief, just like Descartes. But what kind of sense, what use would this inclination yield?

Descartes, as a thinking being, contemplating the world in which we all live – a world of mountains and rivers, cities and the life in them- is separated, in his philosophical thinking, from his body, from this world, and from other beings, that is human beings who live in it. In Descartes' philosophical thought this is what it means to be a 'thinking being' –though whether one can give any coherent sense to it remains to be considered. (Dilman, 1993, p. 2)

¹³ One thing we need to note that in OC, Wittgenstein is concerned with external world scepticism. In our discussion, on the other hand, we are only referring to this remark insofar as Wittgenstein talks about "the capacity and capability" of doubting (as an activity in the praxis of language). Such capacity, we may say, can only be attributed to a subject which has been conceptualized as a self that have experiences and acts on the world. It is in this sense that we make use of OC 211 for our purposes here, to the extent that Wittgenstein appeals to such a subject's ability to doubt reasonably and have a reasonable doubt.

One thing to observe here is that such capability and capacity assumed by the Cartesian ego, who can then fit things in the world to their proper place comes with a huge bulk of auxiliary assumptions about the world and our understanding of it. Essentially, it is a philosopher's picture. It renders the idea of a detached self as the single unit and creator of the world, which is her world exclusively and logically. But the point is that the idea is only a by-product of a certain picture.

In this Cartesian picture, we can find one of the sources for the idea of the primacy of the first-person point of view in understanding other minds. That idea is core to such a picture; it grants the "hinges" that such a representation turns around. That picture represents a paradigm for how Cartesian "thinking self" hinges on the world. It is a philosopher's picture of a certain type of metaphysics that Dilman further describes as follows:

Indeed I would describe Cartesian dualism as a metaphysical dichotomy, in that it opposes the mind and the body in abstraction from the life in which human beings are said to think, to feel, to take decisions, etc., and also to walk, to swim, to do the various things they do. John Wisdom asked whether the words 'He is walking very fast' describe 'a purely bodily performance', and whether in contrast the words 'He is thinking about the trade cycle' describe 'a purely mental performance'. He answered, 'Aren't both both?' (Wisdom, 1952, p. 223). He meant that what we consider as paradigms of the mental and the bodily in a common-or-garden sense, such as thinking and walking, cannot be conceived in separation from each other. Walking involves intention, and intention is rooted in the public life of action. (Dilman, 2005, p. 8)

The moral significance of this view is that the reality that I know is the reality of 'me', my mind. Anything outside my mind is assumed to be either conceptually incomprehensible or epistemologically uncertain. And the conceptual explanation provided by the argument from analogy is further necessitated by taking another person as someone with a mind –something that I can appeal to with my own mind. It serves as a filler between the self and the other, as conceived from an idea of the

mind conceptually detached from the body. That is to say, the subject as the centre of the world is the centre of knowledge.

There is a very plausible lead here to egocentrism; the idea that my perspective of things is more ‘real’, primary, and fundamental over other perspectives. The problem with the primacy of the first-person viewpoint is that the notion of the *other* ends up being a thing among other *things* in the world. It makes the case that all our ethical commitments involving *others* – that I should be responsible to them, that I have a moral duty toward them, or that I should treat the other not merely as means but an end, etc. The claim is that all these actions and practices would need justification and deeper explanation.

This need assumes that an explanatory gap ought to be bridged. We may consider this gap to be an expression of the Cartesian mind-body dualism which stands on the idea of a disembodied being that primarily thinks. However, this ‘thinking’ would be different from the ordinary sense of the word. As a philosophical construct, the Cartesian ‘thinking’ could instead be taken as “a kind of inner assembly of order” (Taylor, 1989, p. 141). But what kind of a being would be involved with such an activity? In other words, what kind of a picture of the human being could a Cartesian dualist line of thinking at most suggest?

We may be further inclined to ask: Why would my knowledge of the other (or my moral stance regarding the other) have to be established from the assumption of a disembodied being? In that way, leaving the idea of a disembodied being out of the picture would mean that knowledge –be it our moral or empirical knowledge concerning others– need not stem from a mind that is conceived as a place of radical solitude –the ultimate isolated cell for thinking– as something separate from the body and action.

A critical thinker who tackles the questions mentioned above, Wittgenstein was known to be an opponent of Cartesian dualism. His critique of the Cartesian dualist conceptions of the self in relation to the other and the world consists in reviewing and reformulating certain pervasive problems of this framework, with his particular approach to philosophical treatment. These problems are more or less as follows:

- How does a disembodied, isolated self sensibly exist and live in the world?
- What are the philosophical ramifications of the Cartesian self? What conclusions may we draw from the notions of language, thought, knowledge, and meaning within the Cartesian dualist view?
- How do the notions mentioned above contribute to the sceptical problem of other minds?
- What is the role of philosophy? What does philosophy as an activity consist in?

In our discussion around the questions above, we focus on Wittgenstein's remarks on the philosophy of language and mind in relation to the Cartesian dualist notion of self. Furthermore, we will consider his critique of solipsism as a special problem created by this disembodied self. One aim of our discussion is to show how Wittgenstein's critique of solipsism paved a way to explicate that there could be a way of understanding the self and the other, without a metaphysical/epistemological gap between them.

As far as scepticism is concerned, we may say that Wittgenstein provided interesting and important intuitions that changed our way of looking at the issue. In his *Blue and Brown Books* and *Philosophical Investigations*, he offered a new perspective in which the scepticism regarding other minds can be addressed as a

positive philosophical outlook. Thanks to his critique, the focus of the topic has further shifted towards wider themes about intersubjectivity, the publicity of language, thought, and meaning. We will now look into it more in detail.

3.3 The solipsist 'I' and privacy of the 'mind'

In the previous section, we have discussed the argument from analogy as a Cartesian argument. Now, to present what Wittgenstein offered to this discussion, we start by noting that a definite response does not appear in a specific place in PI; there is no mention of the argument from analogy, nor an explicit refutation of it. However, some of his remarks can be easily found as parts of his response.

We find the most important of such remarks in the following: "My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul [eine Einstellung zur Seele]. I am not of the *opinion* that he has a soul" (PI Part II, iv). Now, what does Wittgenstein mean in this remark? To answer that, in this section we will consider some of the passages from Wittgenstein which we find to be related to, and of use in understanding the point he makes in the remark above. Following this preliminary consideration, we will move on to the 'attitude towards a soul' in the next section.

To start off, we should note that Wittgenstein was writing against the background of a tradition in which it was customary to mark off our thoughts about other people from those about, say, houses, pains, good and evil, etc. (PI 304). In ordinary talk, we often refer to other people, as opposed to inanimate objects or animals, as having souls. This gives human life certain characteristics: we talk, for example, of an occurrence being 'soul crushing', disheartening, destroying the 'spirit' of a person. Similarly, we may characterize someone as a 'broken soul', i.e. emotionally or mentally disturbed, and in total despair.

That we have such expressions whereby we can have meaningful conversations with each other and engage in many different kinds of activities, is what Wittgenstein calls “playing a language-game.” It is in a language-game where we identify, compare, compound, and make sense of signs and gestures. It is home to meaning, understanding, and obeying/disobeying rules –*embedded* in our activities and practices (i.e., praxis) where meaning is *relational* to agreed-upon rules (rather than general truths) in different contexts. In that regard, Wittgenstein’s notion of ‘soul’ is altogether different from the Cartesian soul/mind, which is a disembodied consciousness. For Wittgenstein, in contrast, having a soul rather points to my distinct attitude toward another human being as opposed to an inanimate thing. Furthermore, this conception does not imply a privileged status of the first-person perspective, which was the case in the argument from analogy.

In response to the argument from analogy from a Wittgensteinian perspective, we may say that the argument misses the whole point and is redundant. Because whatever we may postulate or think as the inner essence of another being (human or not), unless we presuppose a fundamental ontological similarity with the human case, the notion of an ‘inner’ life with regards to another being cannot help us very much in bridging the gap. In that case, we still must presuppose that the other is similar enough to our case, so that what we observe externally relates to what we postulate internally in similar ways as in the human case.

In that sense, I think that Wittgenstein’s response to the argument from analogy is a direct attack on the solipsist point of view, which focuses solely on an ‘inner’ that is supposed to be conceptually and logically disconnected with anything that is behavioural or linguistic. I would say that his response to the argument from analogy is to say –well, not only that it fails at treating solipsism, but that it is a very

typical exemplification and expression of the solipsistic thinking. Thus, it exhibits the same problems as the position that there is a totally isolated self, in his claim that he can say:

1. “When anything is seen (really seen) it is always I who see it. (BB, p. 61)
2. “Only my pain is real pain.” (BB, p. 57)

Now, a great deal of literature is already at our disposal, which goes at great length to reformulate and explicate what the solipsist means by the sentiments above. I will not add more to what has already been articulated on the matter. Instead, here is a brief recap of the heart of the solipsist’s claim.

By appealing to a Cartesian idea of the privacy of the mental –an idea which we have characterized to be detached, isolated, and assumed as foundational to our knowing about the world, the solipsist denies the reality of other people’s experiences, and the possibility of our knowledge of them. But this is an unintelligible move on the part of the solipsist. Above in (1), we find that my sense impressions about the world cannot be identified apart from the ‘I’. It is ‘my’ rendering of the reality when I see something as red, green, etc. or when another person groans in pain, laughs out of joy, etc. In that regard, a Cartesian line of thinking would put one in a position to argue that if we can at all know about the external world or other minds, we can only do so indirectly, i.e., it would have to be inferential knowledge. That was the case with the argument from analogy previously. It was designed to work as a glue between this ‘I’ and the rest of other ‘I’s whose reality I cannot be directly acquainted with, cannot know, but I’ can only infer, in this case, by analogy.

That is the idea behind a sentence like (2), due to the inferential, indirect relation one has to the world and other minds in contrast to one’s own experiences.

The inference involved is from the criteria of what makes pain meaningful to my expression of pain. The solipsist's claim, then, is not that when anyone other than me refers to "pain", they are cheating or pretending, that their pain is "less real" like a fake diamond. It only means that anyone other than 'me' cannot make an inference between this expression of pain and these criteria that gives "pain" its common meaning. The solipsist's discontent, then, is due to the logic or grammar of this inferential relation between the meaning of our words and the criteria that makes them meaningful.

Furthermore, the solipsist's 'reality' in (2) gains support from their pointing to that 'only I can see' which is conceptually inaccessible to anyone else but 'me'. So when I say 'I can only know my pain' one is also inclined to say 'I am my sense impressions, and you are yours; we are not sharing the same visual field, mental content, etc.' And whenever I point to 'my pain', that is essentially what I can make of 'pain', the sense behind the word; it is what I am in a direct relation to. When asked 'What is pain?' the solipsist's idea is 'this pain' that they point to 'inwardly'.

This 'inward' pointing, Wittgenstein argues, is devoid of sense; it is empty, not a pointing at all. In the *Blue Book*, his preliminary work for the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein tackles the issues around solipsism at length. For instance, he writes:

When in the solipsistic way I say "This is what's really seen", I point before me and it is essential that I point visually. If I pointed sideways or behind me – as it were, to things which I don't see – the pointing would in this case be meaningless to me; it would not be pointing in the sense in which I wish to point. But this means that when I point before me saying 'this is what's really seen', although I make the gesture of pointing, I don't point to one thing as opposed to another. [...] When I made my solipsist statement, I pointed, but I robbed the pointing of its sense by inseparably connecting that which points and that to which it points... And in this way the solipsist's 'Only this is really seen' [by 'this' meaning the visual field] reminds us of a tautology. (BB, p. 71)

That is the sense of what the solipsist means when they talk of their experience as something unique and privileged over the experiences of other. Furthermore, Wittgenstein observes that the 'I' is not an object proper in the world. A clear enough point if we consider that we do not know ourselves by an inward pointing; that I do not know that I feel pain, I just feel it.

What should strike us about this expression is the phrase "always I". Always who? —For, queer enough, I don't mean: "always L. W." This leads us to considering the criteria for the identity of a person. Under what circumstances do we say: "This is the same person whom I saw an hour ago"? Our actual use of the phrase "the same person" and of the name of a person is based on the fact that many characteristics which we use as the criteria for identity coincide in the vast majority of cases. (BB, p. 61)

What Wittgenstein brings out above is that the solipsist's claim of 'reality' relies on the idea of knowing what it means to 'see, 'feel pain', etc. from her own case. The problem of personal identity (which pertains to the question how one can identify a person over a time interval) is not the issue here. Because the solipsist wants to make an altogether different claim, that is, without the 'I' in (1), without that 'I' which makes it the case that 'I see, feel pain, etc.' there is no such thing as seeing, or feeling pain. In other words, the solipsist's claim is concerned with the nature of the subject that secures the reality of all things by her perception, as opposed to the criteria of identity which makes our assertions about the subject's persistence in time.

Granted that the solipsist put out a real challenge, such that another person also has an isolated inner life that we can account for by an appeal to her mental content, then such a picture would be pervaded by the Cartesian notions of 'inner' and 'outer'. This picture would be complete, depending on how one fills the gap between the inner and the outer. To make the picture complete, an attempt in filling this gap, i.e., the argument from analogy, rests on the assumption that the inner and

the other follow the line it follows in our own case. At that point, we may be inclined to ask: Why do we even need such an argument? What is the point of trying to see eye to eye with the solipsist?

Wittgenstein thinks that grounding the issue on a single person's mental content and this idea of an 'inner' does not help us escape the sceptical problems the Cartesian dualistic scheme generates. On that note, we will move on to Wittgenstein's remark on "an attitude towards a soul". In the following, we will try to explain the significance of the remark in terms of its enclosing a critique of Cartesian dualist view of other minds.

We argue that the significance of Wittgenstein's "an attitude towards a soul" lies in two considerations. First, we can take into account of two senses of the notion of soul, viz. the ordinary sense, and the philosophically loaded sense. And second, in having "an attitude towards a soul," we will see that, by highlighting the importance of the human body in its relation to our knowing and understanding a human being, Wittgenstein expresses a particular view that escapes Cartesian scepticism. Furthermore, we will note that Wittgenstein does not offer such a view for the first time in the second part of the *Philosophical Investigations*. More specifically, in PI 283 and PI 288, we will find Wittgenstein's ideas to be complementary in our discussion about the "attitude towards a soul."

3.4 Wittgenstein and the 'attitude towards a soul'

We will start by considering the complete passage that includes Wittgenstein's remark on the "attitude towards a soul." This will be our primary remark which illustrates a rejection of the Cartesian gap that we have discussed so far. In this sense,

Wittgenstein suggests that there is no sense in bridging an explanatory gap between the mind and the body, and the world, by highlighting the view of no gap.

“I believe that he is suffering.” — Do I also *believe* that he isn’t an automaton?

Only reluctantly could I use the word in both contexts.

(Or is it like *this*: I believe that he is suffering, but am certain that he is not an automaton? Nonsense!)

Suppose I say of a friend: “He isn’t an automaton.” — What information is conveyed by this, and to whom would it be information? To a *human being* who meets him in ordinary circumstances? What information *could* it give him? (At the very most, that this man always behaves like a human being, and not occasionally like a machine.)

“I believe that he is not an automaton”, just like that, so far makes no sense.

My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul. I am not of the *opinion* that he has a soul. (PI Part II, iv, 19-22)

What does Wittgenstein mean when he says that he could use the word ‘believe’ only reluctantly in both contexts? As a first thought, the comparison at the beginning of the remark points out that our belief in another person’s suffering expresses something different from our belief in that he is not an automaton. Accordingly, what is meant by an expression of the first kind echoes in Cavell’s reading of pain and pain-behaviour in Wittgenstein as a kind of acknowledging the other’s inner life (Cavell, 1969/1976, p. 263). This acknowledging, we may say, requires an active participation to the pain-behaviour and pain expression in our language. To the extent that we fulfil what is been required on our part, viz. our participation in understanding someone’s suffering, we take that our ‘attitude towards a soul’ works on a foundational level. On this level, the issue does not involve justifying our belief in someone’s suffering (i.e., it is not a matter of “opinion”). But it rather pertains to our primitive reactions and instincts which already presupposes our opinions concerning the other.

Thus, when considered together with Wittgenstein's notion of language, Danièle Moyal-Sharrock stresses that "[o]ne of the important things Wittgenstein said about language is that it has its root in gesture – or, as he also put it, in 'action' ('the deed'), and more precisely: 'reaction' or 'instinct'" (Sharrock, 2010, p. 292). In that regard, we may say that Wittgenstein's idea of language as rooted in "gesture, reaction, or instinct" resonates in our 'attitude towards a soul'. This suggests that, in that remark, Wittgenstein's point stresses that "our language-games are grounded in instinct or primitive reactions: our shared primitive behaviour" (Sharrock, 2010, p. 292). His sentiment will be our guiding point in expressing his notion of 'soul' as carrying a dual meaning in the *ordinary* sense and *philosophically-loaded* sense.

When considered together with Wittgenstein's notions of language and understanding as a technique, one implication of this conception would include the "relationality" and "embeddedness" of our concepts and words in language-games. The fact that we can use the word 'soul' in ordinary contexts, or elsewhere as a philosophically loaded term indicates that we can find a set of different tools and techniques (within language) to understand what the word 'soul' might suggest. To put it more briefly, Wittgenstein's 'soul' does not exist in a vacuum.

By 'soul' in the ordinary sense, then, takes a role in our attitude towards someone with an emotional life. Such as life expresses the life of a living being, more precisely, a human being. To this end, we may consider the consolatory tradition which dates to Ancient Greece and Rome. Regardless of their religious purposes, our need for consolation is deeply related to our coming to grips with death and bereavement. For instance, considering the Stoic notion of 'soul' in Seneca, certain disturbing and unsettling emotions need to be treated by a "physician of the soul" (Manning, 1974, p. 73). Manning remarks that, being a physician of the soul,

Cicero's contributions to the consolatory tradition involves "...[a] response to the situation in which an individual finds himself, and dealing with λύπη [sorrow], that stubborn emotion, the good physician of soul was surely likely to have a flexible approach in order best to deal with that situation. (Manning, 1974, pp. 75-76) We find that 'soul' in this sense still resonates in our modern methods and practices of psychological therapy. For that matter, we may also consider our bona fide act of comforting a friend in need.

Contrary to that, when we think of the 'soul' as a philosophically loaded term, we may have in mind the Cartesian mind/body dualism as well as the orthodox/unorthodox conceptions of the Judeo-Christian and Islamic God. Wittgenstein's point in this context, however, refrain from handling this kind of a 'soul'. Concerning the Cartesian division of mind and body, his stance is quite clear: "I believe that he is not an automaton", just like that, so far makes no sense" (PI Part II, iv, 21). As for the 'soul' as religiously conceived, he further remarks:

Religion teaches that the soul can exist when the body has disintegrated. Now do I understand what it teaches? — Of course I understand it — I can imagine various things in connection with it. After all, pictures of these things have even been painted. And why should such a picture be only an imperfect rendering of the idea expressed? Why should it not do the *same* service as the spoken doctrine? And it is the service that counts. (PI Part II, iv, 23)

Ultimately, if what counts is the serving a primordial and fundamental need of expressing our inner life, we may say that understanding what 'soul' is (however imperfectly it renders an expression or "picture" about our inner lives and emotional world is part of the "service that counts." We can come across an understanding of the notion with which we "can imagine various things in connection" (as Wittgenstein remarks) in our poetic tradition. John Keats, for one, starts from such an understanding in his idea of how a human person dwells in the world and takes part in it as an authentic being:

Call the world if you please “the vale of Soul-making.” Then you will find out the use of the world (I am speaking now in the highest terms for human nature admitting it to be immortal, which I will here take for granted for the purpose of showing a thought which has struck me concerning it). I say “Soul-making,” Soul as distinguished from an Intelligence. There may be intelligences or sparks of the divinity in millions, but they are not Souls till they acquire identities, till each one is personally itself. (Keats & Scott, 2005, p. 290)

On this note, we want to point out that the term ‘soul’ in both senses cannot be conceived separate from one another. In other words, it is possible to trace a continuity between these two language-games that the notion takes part in. This possibility can be explored through Wittgenstein’s notion of family resemblance. Accordingly, there can be found “many different kinds of affinity” between our various uses of the ‘soul’ in our language-games (PI 65). Pinning down the kinds of affinity, however, is not the task of the *thinking* mind, Wittgenstein comments, but of a language-user that merely *looks* at the ‘soul’ in various language-games it has been and is being used (PI 66).

By emphasizing that we need to *look* at the various uses of the notion, rather than *think* about the ways in which different affinities form a homogenous meaning of the ‘soul’, we now move on to our second consideration. An indirect implication of this ‘looking’, Wittgenstein ‘soul’ dwells on its relation to the ‘body’ and ‘behaviour of a living thing’ as indicated below:

If one sees the behaviour of a living thing one sees its soul. (PI 357)

The human body is the best picture of the human soul. (PI Part II, iv, 25)

First and foremost, we need to note that, by conceiving the ‘soul’ as something ‘recognizable’ on the surface, through our bodily and linguistic expressions, Wittgenstein conceives the ‘body’ and the ‘outer’ as indispensable factors of making sense. In that sense, ‘having a soul’ should be taken more of an indicator of my distinct attitude toward another human being as opposed to a lifeless thing or an

animal. In this section, we will highlight that when Wittgenstein refers to the ‘soul’, he does so in a way to emphasize that this notion does not come out and appear, in fact, does not become a meaningful notion without bridging the gap of the substance dualism. We can find this idea of the bridging, considering Wittgenstein’s remarks in PI 281-288, and most notably in PI 283 and PI 288. We find that Wittgenstein’s points in these remarks are absolutely connected with the idea that language cannot be attributed and ascribed to a disembodied being.

But before moving on, we should note that these remarks originally belong to what is known as the private language argument. However, we are not treating the private language argument as a topic in itself. That is, if it makes sense to talk about ‘the’ private language argument that Wittgenstein offers. Nonetheless, we should note that there is not one private language argument as discussed in its vast literature. But that is not an issue for us, as we are not going to discuss the private language argument either to discuss it, or try to give an interpretation of it, or try to review the literature in any kind of way. On that note, we start by considering PI 283, where Wittgenstein says:

What gives us so much as the idea that beings, things, can feel? Is it that my education has led me to it by drawing my attention to feelings in myself, and now I transfer the idea to objects outside myself? That I recognize that there is something there (in me) which I can call “pain” without getting into conflict with other people’s usage? – I do not transfer my idea to stones, plants, and so on.

Couldn’t I imagine having frightful pains and, while they were going on, turning to stone. Indeed, how do I know, if I shut my eyes, whether I have not turned into a stone? – And if that has happened, in what sense will the stone have pains? In what sense will they be ascribable to a stone? Why indeed should the pain here have a bearer at all?! And can one say of the stone that it has a mind, and that is what has the pain? What has a mind, what have pains, to do with a stone?

Only of what behaves like a human being can one say that it has pains. For one has to say it of a body, or, if you like, of a mind which some body has. And how can a body have a mind? (PI 283)

The remark illustrates that, when put in a logically distinct relation, the notions of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’; the ‘mind/soul’ and the ‘body’ give out a confused picture about our understanding of ‘pain’. For then, we may as well, quite illogically, think that we can talk about a stone, or a corpse having pain. Contrary to such a confusion, to the extent that we take the ‘outer/body’ a fundamental and essential component of making sense, we would end up with a clearer picture about the meaning of ‘pain’. In such a picture, there would not be an assumption of gap that expresses a radical separation of the ‘inner’ from the ‘outer’. We can say that this non-Cartesian dualist frame is “complete” (i.e., devoid of any Cartesian gaps) to the extent that meaning and understanding are taken to be participatory/interactive activities. In other words and more concisely, understanding another’s pain has to do with participating in the praxis of language as language-users –together. Thus, Wittgenstein further remarks:

But isn’t it absurd to say of a *body* that it has pain? — And why does one feel an absurdity in that? In what sense does my hand not feel pain, but I in my hand?

What sort of issue is this: Is it the *body* that feels pain? – How is it to be decided? How does it become clear that it is *not* the body? – Well, something like this: if someone has a pain in his hand, then the *hand* does not say so (unless it writes it), and one does not comfort the hand, but the sufferer: one looks into his eyes. (PI 286)

We can think of ‘looking into someone’s eyes’ in making sense of another person’s suffering, as Wittgenstein’s rejection of the Cartesian gap. That is, understanding the suffering on their part would mean that we are taking that person as a body *and* a mind, not as separate but as a unified complex. That is the gist of what ‘looking into their eyes’ amounts to; in that, we can find the idea that there is no gap between the inner and the outer. Furthermore, we can find this idea elsewhere, when, for instance, Wittgenstein considers our recognizing facial expressions and imitating another’s face:

Think of the recognition of facial expressions. Or of the description of facial expressions – which does not consist in giving the measurements of the face! Think, too, how one can imitate a man's face without seeing one's own in a mirror. (PI 285)

If we consider a smiling face, seeing the smile would not be consisted in our characterization of it as a certain type of muscular activity in the face. Instead, it would be a consideration of recognizing someone when they are smiling. Such a recognition belongs to a context that is broader, which underlies even the possibility of our explanations about the science behind a smile. In this “broader” sense of understanding a word or a gesture (such as a smile), we may find that the ‘body’ as the ‘outer’ is fundamental in making sense of things –whether it comes to understanding the language of having pain or imitating someone's facial expression without seeing oneself in a mirror. In this way, Wittgenstein puts the ‘inner’ not in an exclusively separate relation to the ‘outer’.

Without the assumption of the dualist gap, the remark makes it clear that the ‘soul’ or the ‘inner’ in the non-Cartesian sense is completely different than the sense we find in Descartes, which equates it, as we have seen, to the mind and consciousness, or better, ‘my’ consciousness. Wittgenstein's idea of ‘soul’, in comparison, completely runs against such a Cartesian idea of soul as consciousness, as something that can know, understand, mean, etc. ‘solo’. And similarly, the conception of body is altogether different in both cases. For Descartes, the body is something that is only causally related to the mind. In addition, how this causal relation might possibly hold between two radically different substances is something that needs to be further established.

In contrast to this conceptual frame and its repercussions, Wittgenstein's notion of the ‘soul’ as manifested and expressed in the ‘body’ and language is grounded in a non-Cartesian dualist frame of the subject's relation to the world. To

explicate this relation, we will consider Wittgenstein's notion of 'grammar' in the next section. But suffice to say now that, the relation between the 'soul' and 'body' in Wittgenstein's case, does not belong to the "calculus conception" of language,¹⁴ i.e., the view that language is a medium that "approximates to calculi with fixed rules" (PI 81). On the contrary, Wittgenstein argues that we find meaning in use. And the rules for use of words make up grammar, which thereby explicate and conserve the meanings of words and concepts. Furthermore, the application of a word (as embedded in life, in our practices, being clustered around other related linguistic and bodily expressions) is not fixed once-and-for-all in a pre-emptive way.

In relation to the conception of language with fixed calculi, in PI 84, Wittgenstein further points out that the application of a word (or grammar) is not everywhere bounded by rules. He further considers what it would be like if language was completely bounded by rules. In that case, he argues, it would be like a game "whose rules never let a doubt creep in, but stop up all the gaps where it might." He asks: "Can't we imagine a rule regulating the application of a rule; and a doubt which *it* removes – and so on?" (PI 84). In that regard, the application of a word and grammar may change. In fact, this is already the case in the context where artificial intelligence and contemporary art meet, when we talk about 'extended minds', 'virtual bodies', and machine 'dreaming' and 'learning'.

Insofar as certain parts of our uses of language and meaning change while other parts remain the same, the idea that what we take to be human is found in our

¹⁴ Wittgenstein's description of the calculus conception of language can be found in the following remark:

...[I]n philosophy we often *compare* the use of words with games, calculi with fixed rules, but cannot say that someone who is using language must be playing such a game. — But if someone says that our languages only *approximate* to such calculi, he is standing on the very brink of a misunderstanding. For then it may look as if what we were talking about in logic were an *ideal* language. As if our logic were, so to speak, a logic for a vacuum. (PI 81)

‘attitude toward a soul’, in what behaves and acts like a human being. It is not to the body, or to the mind, that we can attribute this attitude. And with that, we come to the second remark from the *Philosophical Investigations*, in relation to Wittgenstein’s idea of “an attitude towards a soul”:

I turn to stone, and my pain goes on. — What if I were mistaken, and it was no longer pain? — But surely I can’t be mistaken here; it means nothing to doubt whether I am in pain! — That is, if someone said “I don’t know if what I have is a pain or something else”, we would think, perhaps, that he does not know what the English word “pain” means; and we’d explain it to him. — How? Perhaps by means of gestures, or by pricking him with a pin and saying, “See, that’s pain!” This explanation of a word, like any other, he might understand rightly, wrongly, or not at all. And he will show which by his use of the word, in this as in other cases.

If he now said, for example, “Oh, I know what ‘pain’ means; what I don’t know is whether this, that I have now, is pain” — we’d merely shake our heads and have to regard his words as a strange reaction which we can’t make anything of. (It would be rather as if we heard someone say seriously, “I distinctly remember that sometime before I was born I believed...”)

That expression of doubt has no place in the language-game; but if expressions of sensation — human behaviour — are excluded, it looks as if I might then legitimately begin to doubt. My temptation to say that one might take a sensation for something other than what it is arises from this: if I assume the abrogation of the normal language-game with the expression of a sensation, I need a criterion of identity for the sensation; and then the possibility of error also exists. (PI 288)

Here, we can find Wittgenstein’s more mature critique of the Cartesian framework and solipsism, compared to his discussions in the *Blue and Brown Books*. The gist of the remark is that, when the meaning of ‘my pain’ is not found in the language-game of sensation, when the set of criteria is cast in terms of ‘my own case’, we face a problem of identity between our use of the word ‘pain’ and what ‘pain’ is. That is to say, if one were to disregard the ‘outer’ or the body/behaviour within the language of sensations, Wittgenstein argues, it would look as if we can still have reasonable doubts. But that would be a misleading picture. Instead, for Wittgenstein, what makes it the case that I can know about another person’s pain, agony, ecstasy, etc. should be looked for within the expressions of the body and language. These would

be the proper ground which makes our words and concepts meaningful, including the notion of ‘soul’. Wittgenstein’s makes a similar point when he considers ‘pain’ as opposed to ‘pain-behaviour’.

“But doesn’t what you say amount to this: that there is no pain, for example, without pain-behaviour?” – It amounts to this: that only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees; is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious. (PI 281)

By not appealing to a dissociated and detached Cartesian ‘I’ at the centre of the world and conceived as the sole subject of knowing, Wittgenstein holds a radically different picture about the ‘body’ than its Cartesian counterpart. We mentioned this in our discussion on the term ‘soul’ as well, that it is something that can be ‘seen’ in the human body.

With much emphasis on the ‘body’ and behaviour in our understanding of the other, one might be inclined to think that Wittgenstein is a behaviourist. In fact, much has been in the literature about the issue. Wittgenstein too was aware of the possibility of such a charge¹⁵. Perhaps, in the naïve sense of the term, it would not be so drastically wrong to call him a behaviourist insofar as behaviour plays an indispensable role in our meaning and understanding things. That said, his behaviouristic outlook would not go beyond saying:

If it looks, quacks, and walks like a duck, then it’s a duck.

Similarly, if it looks, talks, walks,... etc. like a human, then it’s a human.

Such an idea could be taken as part of a naturalistic account on what it means to be a human being, and to be able to participate in a human form of life. I do not think that Wittgenstein would oppose to this idea as a guiding principle in our engagement with

¹⁵ Wittgenstein has his interlocutor ask: “Aren’t you nevertheless a behaviourist in disguise? Aren’t you nevertheless basically saying that everything except human behaviour is a fiction?”— If I speak of a fiction, then it is of a *grammatical* fiction. (PI 307)

other human beings. Yet we may say that much is left to be discussed if we were to address the ways in which *my* seeing or feeling something resembles to/differs from *your* seeing or feeling. In other words, the question of *what* and *how* we understand from each other's expressions of 'I see' or 'you feel' (both in the first person and third person perspectives) would still be left open.

To Wittgenstein, my knowledge of someone else's being in pain (or vice versa) would properly belong to the circumstances/contexts that enable me to understand one's being in pain. That said, it would be an oversimplification to call Wittgenstein a behaviourist –someone who is driven by merely external cues when making such judgments, considering that the priority he gives to human behaviour for meaning and understanding is bound up with his notion of 'grammar'. So, he writes:

But how about an expression like this: "When you said that, I understood it in my heart"? In saying which, one points at one's heart. And doesn't one mean this gesture? Of course one means it. Or is one aware of using a mere picture? Certainly not. -- It is not a picture that we choose, not a simile, yet it is a *graphic expression*. (PI Part II, iv, 26, italics mine)

Embedded in life and language, a "graphic expression" is neither a picture that we choose, nor a simile. In contrast, the solipsist's language is not of an embodied being, but a picture; it bears the idea that no graphic expression at your end can justify my understanding of you as a human being. A justification of this kind cannot be secured because understanding as something 'inner' in the solipsist's case, is logically exclusive of knowing what is the 'outer' However, Wittgenstein's grammatical remark about the inner and the outer consist in our graphic as well as linguistic expression. Insofar as these expressions, actions, and behaviour –what is properly understood as 'outer' in Wittgenstein– granted, and insofar as these manifestations

are conceived to be neither the cause nor the result of understanding, we can talk about it *meaningfully*.

By taking graphic expression and behaviour not the cause or result of understanding and meaning, Wittgenstein falls far from advocating a classically behaviourist view. As distinct from behaviouristic/interpretative frameworks, Wittgenstein thinks, there is no “definitive” essence to language:

In Wittgenstein’s later philosophy the idea that language has an essence is itself denounced. Even more importantly perhaps, language is not supposed to mirror reality or to represent it in any way. This is absolutely central in the *Investigations*; from it spring both Wittgenstein’s rejection of the possibility of a private language and also, more generally, the opposition to the conception of language as a purely mental reality which causally precedes its uses in the spatiotemporal life of embodied human beings. This renunciation constitutes the Leitmotiv of Wittgenstein’s critique of the disembodied subject in the later period. (Sidiropoulou, 2015, p. 52)

And although he does not offer a full-fledged normative (in the sense of a standard of behaviour) account of human being, he still holds a strong grammatical position against solipsism. His position capsulates the idea that we cannot start our thinking about ourselves and others with one of the two Cartesian substances (body and/or mind) where one is conceived to be epistemically privileged over the other. In case one is taken to be privileged over the other; first, it would not be a meaningful distinction, as we have seen earlier in the solipsist’s claims of ‘reality’ and ‘singularity’ of their thought. Second, if we were to draw the difference between mind/ body like in Descartes, but also like in the contemporary eliminativist/materialist accounts, then we would end up talking about something else than what we take to be ‘human’; not about the beings that we normally interact with. The human condition, then, could not be within the game we are now playing, for it cannot be described by a framework so detached from language as embedded in life and behaviour; and what’s more, it cannot be reduced to either this inert kind of

body or this cryptic understanding of the inner world. In the next two sections, we will focus on these two important notions in Wittgenstein: grammar and language.

3.4.1 Grammar and the possibility of making sense of anything

In the previous section, we briefly mentioned Wittgenstein's notion of 'grammar' in its relation to the 'inner' and 'outer' as part of our elaboration of the 'attitude towards a soul'. In this section, we will spare more space to Wittgenstein's concept of grammar. The notion is related to our discussion to the extent that it renders an idea of language which is properly of an embodied being, and which further cannot be the language of the solipsistic self. Wittgenstein talks about grammar as it relates "not to language considered as a system of signs for the construction of well-formed sentences, but to the actual use or application of expressions, to how words are employed in our life with language" (McGinn, 2013, p. 16). Another concept Wittgenstein uses interchangeably for the grammar is logic. But not the logic, or an ideal logic – a "calculus with fixed rules" which is more of "a logic for a vacuum" (PI 81).

The notion becomes much clearer if we consider that later Wittgenstein's philosophy is a "grammatical" investigation and not merely an atomic analysis of the connection between one expression and another. It's an investigation of a broader picture that shows how an expression is learnt, understood, and the criteria that we use to judge its use to see whether it is understood or misunderstood. In his words, Wittgenstein explains the kind of investigation he is undertaking as follows:

We feel as if we had to see right into phenomena: yet our investigation is directed not towards phenomena, but rather, as one might say, towards the 'possibilities' of phenomena. What that means is that we call to mind the kinds of statement that we make about phenomena. (PI 90)

However, this “calling to mind the kinds of statements that we make about phenomena” is not a systematic technique, as Wittgenstein shows through various examples, it is more of an open buffet of distinctive ways of using language. So, we may say that a signpost such as \rightarrow under normal circumstances fulfils its purpose, i.e., serving a function of directing our attention “to the right”. Given its context, the correct understanding of the sign here is like following a rule, just like in a game.

Now, the concept of grammar is closely linked to another major concept Wittgenstein employs: language-game, i.e. the totality (but not conclusively) of the human life in which we learn, understand, express language, as well as act, behave, and “give life” to our words. But much like in a game, Wittgenstein observes, a rule as such may still leave room for doubt, the observation may fall short of explaining what the correct use of the sign means. “If there were not a single signpost, but a sequence of signposts or chalk marks on the ground – is there only one way of interpreting them?” (PI 85). So there may be one or many ways to do it, but in the same remark, Wittgenstein points out that this is not a philosophical but an empirical issue.¹⁶ Similarly, my understanding that someone is in pain, which may or may not put me in a position as to choose between soothing them, being altogether indifferent to them, or else; this understanding *shows* itself in the actual life, in certain circumstances. It is not that in those circumstances, the behavioural/bodily is the cause or result of my understanding. As for the different dispositions that I make

¹⁶ Wittgenstein further makes this point in PI 109, where he talks about his idea of philosophy as description:

There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. All explanation must disappear, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light a that is to say, its purpose a form the philosophical problems. These are, of course, not empirical problems; but they are solved through an insight into the workings of our language, and that in such a way that these workings are recognized – *despite* an urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by coming up with new discoveries, but by assembling what we have long been familiar with. Philosophy is a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding by the resources of our language. (PI 109)

when understanding my friend's being in pain, they would correspond to our different empirical assessments, which are already grounded in language and grammar. In other words, such empirical differences are still within the grammar of our language that we live by, as what makes it the case that we are able to make sense of anything at all.

Furthermore, it is not that these dispositions or manifestations may change – suddenly and quite dramatically and end up having altogether different roles in the language. Because in such a case, change would simply amount to an empirical change, in the sense that, the misunderstanding or doubts could be further removed by simply asking “in what sense do you say that?” and by further clarifying the conditions of the circumstances. A dramatic change, on the other hand, can be characterized to consist in thinking about something in a way that excludes all other ways. That is, we could not do it in any other way; it would be something like, we couldn't *not* think about it in a certain way.

In this regard, in contrast to the Cartesian sceptic's or solipsist's case, there is nothing significant about “not knowing our way about” when we come across an unclear use of language, for we simply ask, “What do you mean by X”? But what is significant is that the answer must consist in simply another representation of X, so again in language. And if there is such a mode of representation in language as well as in practice, then an unclear piece of expression may be cashed out into a more “surveyable”, a much clearer representation. In that regard, the process of meaning something is like calling a picture before our minds; we would like it to be a complete puzzle, but the reality of it is far from that; as for the most part, all we get is only certain pieces of the puzzle. That is the point made when Wittgenstein comments:

A main source of our failure to understand is that we don't have an overview of the use of our words. Our grammar is deficient in surveyability. A surveyable representation produces precisely that kind of understanding which consists in 'seeing connections'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing intermediate links.

The concept of a surveyable representation is of fundamental significance for us. It characterizes the way we represent things, how we look at matters. (Is this a 'Weltanschauung'?) (PI 122)

A philosophical problem has the form: "I don't know my way about."
(PI 123)

What is of significance is the kind of representation that we have when we are to understand a word, the meaning of which is given by its role, i.e. its use in the language-game. In this sense, a representation is akin to a means of understanding the rule for the use of a word in a language (as embedded in human life). Given Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy as traditionally conceived, we may find that this representational power of language is very easily abused. Such is the case with the solipsist's use of the words 'I', and 'my pain': it wants to point to *something*, but under grammatical scrutiny when it is cashed out in ordinary language, it turns out to be *something* unintelligible.

The unintelligibility is deeply related to Wittgenstein's notion of 'logic' as logic is the ground of 'surveyable representations', and "the way we represent things, how we look at matters" (PI 122). If we consider what a rule is in this given context, the expectation is that logic grants the determinate sense of what a rule is, by encircling the rule within a sharply defined boundary –by trapping the rule, so to speak. In this way, we may be inclined to expect hardly any vagueness in the rule.

"Still, it isn't a game at all, if there is some vagueness in the rules." But is it really not a game, then? – "Well, perhaps you'll call it a game, but at any rate it isn't a perfect game." This means: then it has been contaminated, and what I am interested in now is what it was that was contaminated. – But I want to say: we misunderstand *the role played by the ideal in our language*. That is to say: we too would call it a game, only we are dazzled by the ideal, and therefore fail to see the actual application of the word "game" clearly.
(PI 100, italics mine)

Wittgenstein's point about the relation between "misunderstanding the role played by the ideal in our language" and "failing to see the actual application of a rule" is echoed in the predicament that the solipsist's charges create. Throughout this chapter, we have been indicating this predicament –which, we can now say, is a crave for explanation –not for description– on the solipsist's part. More precisely, the solipsist asks for an answer that explains "how can *I* know your pain?" –a question which features a Cartesian subject that pursues to settle the matter conclusively. It is as if the matter were a list of tasks which could be finished once each item on the list was checked off.

Furthermore, this relation calls for "crystalline purity" as logic (PI 108) which is altogether different from the actual language.

The more closely we examine actual language, the greater becomes the conflict between it and our requirement. (For the crystalline purity of logic was, of course, not something I had discovered: it was a requirement.) The conflict becomes intolerable; the requirement is now in danger of becoming vacuous. – We have got on to slippery ice where there is no friction, and so, in a certain sense, the conditions are ideal; but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk: so we need friction. Back to the rough ground! (PI 107)

In that sense, the solipsist is offering a "frictionless" space for our understanding of what human understanding is, which is an untenable philosophical position, given that philosophy proper is understood as an activity in the Wittgensteinian, or Socratic sense. We may appeal to the idea of 'propriety' here, by considering later Wittgenstein's treatment of language as 'embodied' in relation to our philosophical problems, and by further considering his discussion of the private language.

3.4.2 The idea of 'embodied' language

The solipsist's charge is against the intelligibility of other minds. Given the picture

of body and mind as two separate entities, the solipsist ends up being exclusively confined to *her world*. In the previous sections, we have laid the foundation to understand what exactly goes wrong in the solipsist's thought, and how Wittgenstein's 'grammatical' investigation (PI §§1-242) help clear the fog around a philosophical confusion surrounding solipsism.

In understanding the assumptions behind a solipsist's view that 'Only my pain is real pain' –an idea of 'what is real' trapped in the mind, we will now consider Wittgenstein's remarks on the language of sensations insofar as we come to understand the meaning of our psychological concepts. As McGinn observes, Wittgenstein "applies the philosophical approach we've seen him adopt in the philosophy of language to the philosophy of psychology" (2013, p. 134). By making this manoeuvre, Wittgenstein expands elucidates his notion of language (which is of an 'embodied being') and establishes his critique of the Cartesian idea of the primacy of the 'inner' over the 'outer'. To this end, we will consider parts of Wittgenstein's discussion on private language –all too briefly, for our purposes:

A human being can encourage himself, give himself orders, obey, blame and punish himself; he can ask himself a question and answer it. So one could imagine human beings who spoke only in monologue, who accompanied their activities by talking to themselves. – An explorer who watched them and listened to their talk might succeed in translating their language into ours. (This would enable him to predict these people's actions correctly, for he also hears them making resolutions and decisions.)

But is it also conceivable that there be a language in which a person could write down or give voice to his inner experiences – his feelings, moods, and so on – for his own use? — Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language? – But that is not what I mean. The words of this language are to refer to what only the speaker can know – to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language. (PI 243)

The key words here are 'immediate' and 'private'; it is through these notions that Wittgenstein wants us to consider if we can even coherently talk about an inner life as a closed environment that is separated from the surroundings of human life and

behaviour. That is why, immediately after setting up the problem, Wittgenstein reminds us of the question once again. “How do words connect to the world?”. This question points out the main issue with regards to our phenomenal concepts.

According to Wittgenstein, the philosophically significant move as an attempt in answering this question, would have to be clear and direct: considering how we learn to refer to ‘pain’, ‘anger’, ‘remorse’, etc. The fact that, quite naturally, in our ordinary language, we *do* use these words, and in fact communicate. Given that, what exactly does the solipsist’s idea of privacy consist in?

What it does *not* consist in, at least, is illustrated by Wittgenstein’s grammatical analysis of the first-person expression of a sensation word as opposed to the third-person case, where he illustrates the distinction in these perspectives. That is, it makes sense to speak of whether I know or do not know that someone else is in pain, however, in my own case, there cannot be a question of certainty about my pain. Or in other words, grammatically speaking, ‘I know that I am in pain’ does not mean anything different than ‘I am in pain’. So given that that is what it truly means to know what pain is, i.e., my direct acquaintance with the sensation of pain, it becomes a conceptual impossibility to know another person’s pain. It is in this sense that the language of the solipsist is a private one.

The fact that ‘to know’, ‘to lie’, etc. cannot be put in a symmetrical relation in the first-person and the third-person cases creates an illusion in the solipsist’s understanding of the inner and the outer, the self and the world. Accordingly, the meaning of ‘pain’, i.e., what that word refers to, consists in an inward looking at/pointing to the mental state of pain. Wittgenstein’s main point about the role of this turn to the inner in our meaning of psychological expressions is that, despite its appeal, it is not how we come to learn these terms, that is, we do not learn them

through introspection. The diary example, in that regard, shows the incoherence in keeping a record of a sensation for oneself. In PI 258, Wittgenstein wants us to imagine someone who keeps a diary about the recurrence of a certain sensation, so whenever the person finds himself in that situation, he associates the feeling with “S”. The point of this imaginary case is that an introspective understanding of our language of sensations falls short of securing the meaning of the words in that language. That is to say, we cannot talk about the “correct” way in understanding the meaning of a word in a private language. Because without a consideration of the external in relation to the internal, there is no sense of “correct” that we can refer to.

Let us remember that there are certain criteria in a man’s behaviour for his not understanding a word: that it means nothing to him, that he can do nothing with it. And criteria for his ‘thinking he understands’, attaching some meaning to the word, but not the right one. And lastly, criteria for his understanding the word correctly. In the second case, one might speak of a subjective understanding. And sounds which no one else understands but which I ‘appear to understand’ might be called a “private language”. (PI 269)

This remark further illuminates the role of the criteria as something relates to both the internal and external conditions. By ‘criteria’, I simply take that which is grounded in and belongs to the language, and which conditions the understanding, enabling us to discriminate and make comparisons. So if what we experience, what we feel, etc. has any meaning, this is possible not through a collaboration of the Cartesian inner/outer but through all the factors embedded and embodied in life, in their relation to meaning and understanding—in a way that is much like the idea in the phrase “it takes a village to raise a child.”

The point of the remark above illustrates, in our understanding of a word, we can find different sets of criteria that enable us to assess whether the word is understood or misunderstood. In that regard, Wittgenstein speaks of subjective understanding as something that we ‘think’ we understand. In the loose sense of

applying the criteria, the subjective perspective allows one to freely assign a made-up meaning to an existing concept. This move is still intelligible; it is within the human ability and capacity to break, modify, or manipulate the rules of grammar or linguistic expressions. But in the case of a private language, Wittgenstein's point is that what we have is not even an understanding in the ordinary sense of 'understanding'. The so-called 'private' understanding cannot be even cashed out into subjective terms, because the sounds that no one can understand cannot produce any meaning – meanings that we understand by appealing to their being in use "correctly" or "incorrectly". Thus, the point of the remark offers an anti-Cartesian idea that the subjective is still subject to the objective, and vice versa.

Perhaps, the second, and in my opinion more important, point we find in our consideration of these remarks is that we learn to think as we learn to speak. We may find it the case that there is an expression of a rich inner life in the life of the protagonist of a novel, or in a movie as a facial gesture; the fact that we may find such an expression, requires one to be already trained and cultivated in a certain way to find it the case.

To conclude this chapter; in whatever way we look at Wittgenstein's thought on the matter which addresses the Cartesian problem of other minds, we should not forget that there is a concern of solipsism, which goes hand in hand with the question of language and meaning. In this chapter, we have given an articulation of the things as philosophically perceived from the sceptic's end. And we ended up with a picture that makes making sense altogether problematic, a picture that "held us captive" (PI 115). Wittgenstein suggests we should be cautious about such pictures:

When philosophers use a word – "knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition/sentence", "name" – and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the

language in which it is at home? – What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use. (PI 116)

We find that the Cartesian picture of the soul as a substance is one such picture. Dilman (1975) notes that the Cartesian picture is different than the Platonic picture of the soul as a substance, insofar as the Platonic picture is more compatible with producing descriptions which are embedded. We find this to be the case if we consider that descriptions within ancient Greek poetry and poetic tradition are “inseparable from those forms of speech and thought”; they are embedded in the ways human beings are taught to think about the world and their own lives (Dilman, 1975, p. 128).

In marked contrast to this, the Cartesian picture arises when language is “like an engine idling” (PI 88, 132). In his critique of language so conceived, Wittgenstein offers a turn to the ordinary use of our terms to show the unintelligibility of the solipsistic view by making grammatical points about the so-called privacy of the mind, our psychological ascriptions, and the first-person/third-person perspectives. Wittgenstein approaches these topics through a particular philosophical treatment, which involves showing the metaphysically heavy baggage that such questions assume and accept, through a consideration of ordinary, everyday cases in which they arise and are conceived. And in so doing:

When retrieved from its metaphysical use, Wittgenstein in the *Philosophical Investigations* turns the discussion around by speaking of the reality of soul as something that can be seen in human behaviour (Dilman, 1975, p. 119).

CHAPTER 4

KNOWING ZOMBIES AND HUMANOIDS

4.1 The chapter roadmap

In this chapter, we take all the points that we made about Cartesian dualism, and our ways of thinking about phenomena (such as our psychological ascriptions to others) in terms of a Cartesian framework and put in action. We will start with a consideration of David Chalmers' resurfacing of the notion of the 'inner' in his treatment of the problem of consciousness. We find that such a treatment further implies sceptical problems concerning the 'self' as the subject. It leaves certain issues rather problematic, such as how we make sense in the world, how we even communicate yet have the language in which we understand or misunderstand each other.

As part of our critique of Chalmers' resurfacing treatment of the 'inner', secondly, we will consider David Finkelstein's commentary on Wittgenstein's rule following to which Saul Kripke and Crispin Wright respond in their way. Finkelstein observes that, in Kripke's and Wright's handling of Wittgenstein's discussion on the rule following in PI, both thinkers have the idea of understanding a rule as 'resorting to an interpretation of the rule' in mind –which, Finkelstein calls, is a "platonist" idea.

In his critique of this platonist idea, Finkelstein offers his own reading of Wittgenstein's critique of platonism about understanding. We find Finkelstein's reading of Wittgenstein interesting insofar as it illustrates how both Kripke and Wright do not quite get Wittgenstein right. In light of this exegetical and critical work, I aim to argue that Chalmers' view of the mind and mental life, in a very

interesting way, reiterates fundamental Cartesian assumptions which depend on the idea that the fact of the mental matter is something inner and private. In other words, our purpose is to find a Cartesian line of thinking in Chalmers' project by showing that the model of the mind he is working with involves a Cartesian point of view, which stands on the Cartesian assumptions of the inner as something private.

Lastly, we will consider the movie *Blade Runner* (Scott, 1982) –a descriptive case in which we may find all sorts of philosophical ambiguities and blurred lines about what it means to be human (i.e. being 'minded') as opposed to a machine (i.e. being machine-like). To this end, we will consider certain doubts concerning other beings that can easily be invoked in this picture or paradigm. In such a setting, whereby, we will offer our own Wittgensteinian treatment by considering Wittgenstein's "an attitude toward a soul" as a particular case of applying a rule, or sense-making. In so doing, we see that there is a kind of sceptical position that survives the Cartesian way of putting it.

In other words, we can find that we may still have good reason to doubt (which would have a philosophical character insofar they would concern philosophical questions about being 'minded' and being 'machine-like'). The point here is that having reasonable doubts, we may say, would still be possible even though we may not think in dualistic terms. That is, considering the two ends of the dualistic spectrum (e.g. Cartesian dualism on the one end, and eliminativism about mental states¹⁷ as a rejection of dualism on the other), while we may not talk on the

¹⁷ The following general comparison between the characteristics of dualism and eliminativism about mental states is relevant and adequate for our purposes: "Like dualists, eliminative materialists insist that ordinary mental states cannot be reduced to or identified with neurological events or processes. However, unlike dualists, straightforward eliminativists claim there is nothing more to the mind than what occurs in the brain" (Ramsey, 2022, Eliminative Theory Change section, para. 1). In other words, contemporary discussions on eliminativism indicate the claim that our ordinary notions of mental states and processes cannot be reconciled with a scientific account of the mind. This claim further implies that our ordinary talk about psychological states does not really correspond to anything that exists or is happening in the brain.

basis of both ends, we may still have reasonable doubts about our attitude towards another being.

In such a case, what would a doubt *so radical* amount to? We answer this: by a major transformation of the language game. But of course, in exploring shifts in language-games, one would also have to take cultural differences into consideration. However, for our purposes, the latter aspect will not be included in our discussion.

4.2 Chalmers and the resurfacing of the inner

I would like to start by considering some of the contemporary metaphysical discussions on the so-called problem of “consciousness” and “subjective experience”. For instance, a central and influential figure in the philosophy of mind and metaphysics, Chalmers writes:

The really hard problem of consciousness is the problem of *experience*. When we think and perceive, there is a whirl of information processing, but there is also a subjective aspect. As Nagel (1974) has put it, there is *something it is like* to be a conscious organism. This subjective aspect is experience. When we see, for example, we experience visual sensations: the felt quality of redness, the experience of dark and light, the quality of depth in a visual field. Other experiences go along with perception in different modalities: the sound of a clarinet, the smell of mothballs. Then there are bodily sensations from pains to orgasms; mental images that are conjured up internally; the felt quality of emotion; and the experience of a stream of conscious thought. What unites all of these states is that there is something it is like to be in them. All of them are states of experience...

If any problem qualifies as *the* problem of consciousness, it is this one. In this central sense of “consciousness,” an organism is conscious if there is something it is like to be that organism, and a mental state is conscious if there is something it is like to be in that state. Sometimes terms such as “phenomenal consciousness” and “qualia” are also used here, but I find it more natural to speak of “conscious experience” or simply “experience.” (Chalmers, 2010, p. 5)

The questions Chalmers raises above are part of what he calls ‘the hard problem of consciousness’ and urges for an explanation by a collective study of neuroscience, cognitive science, and philosophy of mind. Chalmers suggests that a theory of

consciousness should take experience as fundamental (2010, p. 17). Just like scientific theories take certain features of the world as fundamental, such as ‘matter’, ‘mass’ or ‘wave’ in our theories of physics, similarly, for the cognitive scientist or philosopher of mind, experience is a fundamental, irreducible, key feature of consciousness. Drawing parallels between scientific theories and philosophical theories about consciousness, Chalmers maintains that even though physics cannot tell us *why* there is matter *in the first place*, we still have theories of matter which aim to explain physical phenomena around us through our conceptual frameworks. With consciousness, his idea is that the situation bears not much difference. The claim is that, basically, we can follow the same recipe.

If all we knew about were the facts of physics, and even the facts about dynamics and information processing in complex systems, there would be no compelling reason to postulate the existence of conscious experience. If it were not for our direct evidence in the first-person case, the hypothesis would seem unwarranted; almost mystical, perhaps. Yet we know, directly, that there is conscious experience. The question is, how do we reconcile it with everything else we know? (Chalmers, 1996, p. 5)

How does Chalmers tackle the question of what the nature of phenomenal experience is? He does that by a consideration of a phenomenal concept such as ‘seeing *red*’. According to Chalmers, our concept of ‘red’ involves two dimensions. One of which is relational; where the reference of ‘red’ is fixed externally (‘the red apple on the counter’), and the second is the phenomenal quality/qualia, which is involved in a metaphysical assumption that it need not be relational. The idea is that it is through this non-relational metaphysical entity that we can tackle the ‘hard problem’ of consciousness.

As to the relational concept of ‘red’, Chalmers makes use of even some more conceptual distinctions: the individual relational concept of ‘red’ and the communal relational concept of ‘red’. While the individual ‘red’ is defined as what I know from

my immediate private sensations, the communal ‘red’ is part of the public language, whose reference is fixed “via a relation to certain paradigmatic red objects that are ostended in learning the public-language” specific to our use of ‘red’ (Chalmers, 2010, p. 255). Now, Chalmers maintains that these two concepts refer to the same in what he calls “normal” subjects. But in other “abnormal” cases, such as the case of a colour-blind person, ‘red’ may refer to ‘green’, so the communal meaning of ‘red’ and individual meaning of ‘red’ yield different results.

So far, the above-mentioned categorical characterization of our ordinary phenomenal notions is an important first step in developing a scientific account in which these notions are grounded. However, there are further steps to be taken so that the “hard problem” may be tackled more effectively. In this respect, distinct from the above-mentioned concepts of ‘red’, Chalmers argues that there is a phenomenal concept which does not “pick out phenomenal redness relationally but rather picks it out directly in terms of its intrinsic phenomenal nature” (ibid., p. 256). Furthermore, this phenomenal concept is what binds the relational concepts. Roughly, this is the gist of Chalmers’ two-dimensional semantics, as part of his building a greater rationalist project of laying down the constitutive connections between our metaphysical accounts on the mind and scientific theories about the brain.

There is a long tradition in philosophy of using apriori methods to draw conclusions about what is possible and what is necessary, and often in turn to draw conclusions about matters of substantive metaphysics. Arguments like this typically have three steps: first an epistemic claim (about what can be known or conceived), from there to a modal claim (about what is possible or necessary), and from there to a metaphysical claim (about the nature of things in the world). (Chalmers, 2002, p. 145)

Thus, the problem for Chalmers is about filling an explanatory gap between the subjective (inner and private) and the objective. More specifically, the problem is

overcoming the difficulty in explaining how physical properties such as colour, smell, etc. give rise to that peculiar *feeling* in experiencing those very physical properties such as that feeling of redness, the smell of coffee, etc. To that end, Chalmers aims to utilize the 2-D semantics framework to define and construe the connections between the two sides of this explanatory gap.

As per Chalmers' illustration of the matter, the first dimension of this semantic framework is quite common-sensical. On this level, our phenomenal and psychological concepts and ascriptions hang on to the world 'in the making' –as part of our social, cultural, and technological interaction with each other and engagements with a variety of things in the world. When taken into consideration in such a way as to include these interactions and engagements, we could say that meaning and understanding are certain types of social activities which occur in ways that are familiar to language-users. This implies that a dispute concerning what we mean by something or how we understand the application of a rule has to be examined in relation to the ordinary ways they are used *in practice*.

Chalmers' understanding of "ordinary" is quite different than what I would like to refer to as "ordinary". What I have in mind is far from what Wittgenstein calls in PI 413, that "state of a philosopher's attention when he says the word "self" (or in our case, "subjective experience") to himself and tries to analyse its meaning." Wittgenstein further remarks that "much could be learned from this," which resonates in his following remark that, in doing certain kinds of philosophy "you must be weaving a piece of cloth: because you are sitting at a loom – even if it is empty – and going through the motions of weaving" (PI 414). But instead, that "piece of cloth" sits before our eyes:

What we are supplying are really remarks on the natural history of human beings; not curiosities, however, but facts that no one has doubted, which

have escaped notice only because they are always before our eyes. (PI 415)

When I say ‘ordinary’ and ‘mundane’, I mean not trivial or insignificant, but rather that which is “always before our eyes.” That which is always before our eyes may sometimes seem to be so enchanting and remarkable, such that it seduces us into thinking that something extraordinary, even unique, must be achieved in its simplicity. To this end, Wittgenstein considers our philosophical enchantment with ‘propositions’. “Together with a misunderstanding of logic and language” he argues that it may “look to us as if a proposition *did* something strange” (PI 93).

‘Remarkable things, propositions!’ Here we already have the sublimation of our whole account of logic. The tendency to assume a pure intermediary between the propositional sign and the facts. Or even to try to purify, to sublimate, the sign itself. — For our forms of expression, which send us in pursuit of chimeras, prevent us in all sorts of ways from seeing that nothing extraordinary is involved. (PI 94)

On that note, in Chalmers’ account on the subjective experience, the fact that we have these remarkable “abnormal” cases, such as the case of a colour-blind person, stands as a legitimate basis for the *need* of a concept such as ‘qualia’. That said, we may still be sceptical about this need and its role in understanding what ‘seeing’ red or green is. In the case of ‘seeing’ as a colour-blind person as opposed to ‘seeing’ normally, we may ask: what is it in the lived experience itself, in ‘seeing’ something as green or red, which is constitutive of the subjective experience as well as what is ‘objectively’ called ‘red’ or ‘green’? Which is the basis of which?

Highly controversial and charged with Cartesian notions of subject and object, the discussion widely diverges from what it is that is ‘seeing’ in the first place. So I may, perhaps quite naively, ask “between colour-blind and ‘normal’ visions, how different is ‘seeing’ (as an activity) in both cases considering our understanding of the world which we can express by our languages of colour?” To answer that, I want to say that there is no substantive difference between the two

visions. That is, there is nothing fundamentally peculiar in a colour-blind person's activity of seeing that calls for an inner, private concept such as 'qualia' in order to explain its peculiar status and connection to the world. However, by saying that explaining the nature of phenomenal experience within a paradigm that creates a fundamentally and logically private space for the *explanandum*, we do not mean to reject the subjective altogether. The denial of qualia, in this sense, need not point to the denial of our inner world.

But when the inner world is conceived in such a way that it is logically –by definition, as how it is conceived– a private realm, what this conception presupposes and requires is that the subject of such an experience is radically separate from the world. At least, such is the illusion of separateness arising from the Cartesian view of 'inner' and 'private' which is claimed to make my experience *necessarily mine*. Such a conception leaves us with a puzzle as to how we act and operate in the world or how we even make sense of the world.

In the simplest of terms, we may say that the varieties of seeing as experience –be it myopic or hypermetropic of a normal-sighted or a colour-blind person– are already contained in the meaning of 'seeing' as activity. So, for instance, upon realizing that someone is walking towards us, we may say "I can't really see that person's face, but I can tell he's tall" and our friend who has eyes like a hawk may reply "Oh, that's George." Or similarly, we may ask "Have you seen the fury in that woman's eyes?" and may find our friend again processing whether he could interpret the look in the woman's eyes as fury or frustration.

What I mean to point out by these cases is that, through 'seeing' in its varieties and applications in our expressions, we can start a conversation, raise a dispute, make a claim, and address issues that are related to a particular context.

Once the dispute has been resolved or left aside, claim has been examined, and issues have been considered by our engaging with others on an intersubjective level, then we may have the possibility of further exploring what ‘seeing’ is on a personal level.

In the absence of such nuances in our making sense of what seeing is, the situation looks more like the so-called myth of the invisible ships about a group of native people who see, depending on different versions of the story, the ships of Columbus/Magellan/Captain Cook for the very first time. What might the natives have seen or failed to see approaching towards them? To understand *that* would involve in understanding the life that they lived as the world made *sense* to them, which would have to be explored where this *sense* can by and large be expressed, i.e., in their practices. In short, such an understanding would have to come from our engagement with the natives’ paradigm in every which way possible –be it from a highly speculative historiographical perspective or by making their acquaintance in close contact (here we may recall anthropologist Carlos Castaneda’s 1968 seminal ethnographical work *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*).

If, on the other hand, such an understanding were to be grounded in an interpretative framework that is exogenous to the natives, then we would have ended up with a confusion where the empirical and the grammatical could not be differentiated. It would render a picture which resembles the solipsist’s world, when she claims the “I know . . . only from my *own* case” (PI 295). In what follows this line, Wittgenstein remarks:

...what kind of proposition is this meant to be? An empirical one? No. – A grammatical one?

So this is what I imagine: everyone says of himself that he knows what pain is only from his own pain. – Not that people really say that, or are even prepared to say it. But *if* everybody said it — it might be a kind of exclamation. And even if it gives no information, still, it is a picture; and why should we not want to call such a picture before our mind? Imagine an allegorical painting instead of the words.

Indeed, when we look into ourselves as we do philosophy, we often get to see just such a picture. Virtually a pictorial representation of our grammar. Not facts; but, as it were, illustrated turns of speech. (PI 295)

On that note, if we return to the Cartesian notion of the ‘inner’, I take it that a Wittgensteinian response to the bundle of metaphysical claims that would assume this notion would start from the core assumption, i.e., the very conception of the ‘inner’ and the ‘outer’ as two logically separate notions. Being grounded in this pair or these Cartesian “hinges” that would turn our thinking about the self and the other, this metaphysical conception would as well have a use for us. That is what Wittgenstein points out in the above remark. Having such a picture would be of use at times, just like taking a tour in a foreign city that has a grid system. In this context, we may also consider Plato’s metaphor about our classifications of objects into different kinds of categories by “carving nature at its joints” (Phaedrus 265e). Disregarding the countless possible ways of how nature could be carved, we are only interested in the fact that each possible carve-up would be like a picture which may mean something to us, as Wittgenstein mentions above, especially when we do philosophy.

If such a picture “held us captive” (PI 115), Wittgenstein’s point would be that we could be in trouble. Because then, our inquiry of understanding what ‘seeing’ is in the normal case vs. in an anomalous case would be run the risk of not turning around “the pivot of our real need” (PI 108) as we have discussed in Chapter 3.2

In that regard, compared to the case of a person with regular sight, the anomaly addressed in the case of the colour blind need not point to a radical separation of the first person (individual) and the third person (communal) uses of ‘red’. An irregularity observed in the use of ‘red’ would still be part of what ‘red’ means as a misapplication of the word. So on a typical day, we may misunderstand

someone who means ‘red’ when she points to a green apple, and may have reasonable doubts about her understanding of the concept.

In our dealing with these doubts, we would have to raise questions of *what* and *how* whereby our potential responses would express certain empirical facts or scientific descriptions. To the extent that such descriptions and matters of fact could be available, they would be grounded in a metaphysical picture, or a grid system that illustrates one possible version of how nature is carved, if you will. In short, the doubts as well as the possibility of their resolution would be internal to the framework in which we operate.

The point we make above can be extended as to include not only certain physically phenomenal anomalies but also other more ordinary cases. To this end, we may consider a simple red cabbage. It is known to be ‘red’ in the Anglophone world. Meanwhile in Turkish, one can often find it referred to as ‘mor lahana’ meaning ‘purple cabbage’. And elsewhere, in German, it’s called Blaukraut, literally meaning ‘blue cabbage’. Now a set of Chalmersian questions here would be as follows: Is this cabbage red, purple, or blue? What is *the* right way to make this colour designation? What is it in my subjective experience of the cabbage that makes it necessarily red, purple, or blue?

It is critical to see that forming our questions in this way, we are merely assuming that beyond our ordinary psychological and cultural ascriptions of colour, there is a more fundamental explanation as to what it is to see the colour of the cabbage. In a Chalmersian treatment, it means that we would have to give an explanation that would further require positing an ‘inner’ mental state. This posit, as a presupposition, would be the *real* ground that our explanations about the subjective experience as well as our ordinary talk about cabbages and their colour take off from.

The claim is that there is nothing that can be readily found in the physical world which could fully explain our very phenomenal experience of something – hence, the need for a pure phenomenal concept. Furthermore, this phenomenal concept is claimed to be distinct from the relational (i.e., individual and communal) concepts, as Chalmers indicates, “we might say that unlike the other [relational] concepts, the pure phenomenal concept characterizes the phenomenal quality as the phenomenal quality that it is” (2010, p. 258). Chalmers further adds:

The concept *R* [the pure phenomenal concept] is difficult to express directly in language, since the most natural terms, such as ‘phenomenal redness’ and ‘this experience,’ arguably express other concepts such as *red_C* [or, communal relational concept of ‘red’] and *this_E* [what he calls ‘demonstrative concept’]. Still, one can arguably discern uses of these terms that express pure phenomenal concepts, or, if not, *one can stipulate such uses*. (Chalmers, 2010, p. 258, italics mine)

Here is how Chalmers provides this stipulation: with the help of what he calls “philosophical zombies”. Despite behaving like an ordinary human being, the philosophical zombie has a fundamental difference from a human being insofar as she lacks the mental state of a given phenomenal experience. In other words, the zombie simply lacks “qualia”. Thus, when a zombie talks about a red apple, her inner world is assumed to be totally dark, in the sense that, she lacks the awareness of being in the presence of something red. And even though she is functioning like every other “normal” person and there is nothing significantly different in the physical or “outer” sense (i.e. her language skills and behaviour), the claim is that the referents of her mental terms and concepts are fundamentally “alien” compared to the human case.

Whether it is reasonable to assume the existence of such a being is not my question here. I, for one, am also doubtful as to whether such a being makes up an intelligible piece of thought experiment in understanding what subjective experience is, or whether such speculations are appropriate ways to achieve this end. The

philosophical zombie, however, achieves one thing clearly: setting the preliminaries for a certain kind of dualism, i.e., property dualism. Property dualists claim that there is one substance (so unlike Descartes, it is not substance dualism in which there are two distinct substances, i.e., mind/body) but this substance has two irreducible aspects –physical and mental. The claim proposes a further challenge as to bridge the explanatory gap between the physical and the mental. It can be characterized as an effort to go between the two main positions: dualism and materialism as a form of philosophical monism. Property dualism aims to, on the one hand, keep the one substance from monism, and on the other hand, maintain the dual aspect from dualism.

A version of this view can be found in its most prominent advocate, Thomas Nagel. In his seminal ‘What it is like to be a bat’ (1989), Nagel offers his substance monism or his dual aspect theory. Running on similar lines with Nagel’s position, Chalmers (2010), on the other hand, picks a different branding for his view, i.e., naturalistic dualism. Chalmers remarks that naturalistic dualism is “an innocent form of dualism, entirely compatible with the scientific view of the world” (2010, p. 18). He further emphasizes the *naturalistic* aspect of the position by claiming that we may eventually have a theory of consciousness which could be cast in terms of natural laws –thanks to the fact that:

Nothing in this approach contradicts anything in physical theory; we simply need to add further bridging principles to explain how experience arises from physical processes. There is nothing particularly *spiritual or mystical* about this theory—its overall shape is like that of a physical theory, with a few fundamental entities connected by fundamental laws. (Chalmers, 2010., p. 18, italics mine)

By claiming that a theory of consciousness could essentially mimic the structure of a physical theory, Chalmers’ naturalistic dualism implies that an investigation into consciousness could offer an explanation about the nature of subjective experience.

Furthermore, such a deeper explanation would have to be grounded in the possibility of neuroscientific advancement. It would further require postulating certain principles that could bridge the gap between what it is like to have a subjective experience and some ‘inner’ matter of fact (i.e., mental state or processes). Insofar as that ‘inner’ matter of fact would have to be found, our ordinary concepts need to be expanded on a scientific/stipulative axis.

In addition to a novel branding and preliminary semantic layout which we have mentioned briefly earlier, Chalmers’ naturalistic dualism most prominently gains support from the conceivability of the philosophical zombie. We have two points regarding how the position is being supported: first, with regards to its philosophical character, and second, about its conceivability. We should note that these points are intertwined because the kind of the philosophical character of the zombie further opens the discussion about its conceivability. In other words, an illustration of the zombie’s philosophical character would already have to include what it is to conceive the zombie as described. Below, we expand on these points starting with the first one.

Why is it a philosophical zombie? What does the word ‘philosophical’ convey here? We may say in response, the use of the word implies that the zombie is a philosophical myth, merely a stage setting. In that regard, it is much like Descartes’ illustrative narrative of himself sitting by the fire and doubting everything he knows. Along the same line, the zombie is a narrative by-product of the explanatory gap which is a philosophical assumption wildly Cartesian in spirit. More clearly, the zombie is ‘philosophical’ because:

- a) A consideration of the “no qualia” case (its conceivability aside)
demonstrates the need for an explanation for our phenomenal consciousness.

- b) The subjective (or the 'inner') sense of 'red' could not be reconciled with the objective 'red' (or what Chalmers refers to as "primary intentionality" which consists in the communal and individual relational concept of 'red').
- c) There is an explanatory gap.
- d) The explanation is taken to be grounded in neuroscience, or in general terms, in some mental/'inner' matter of fact.
- e) Neuroscience can offer an interpretation of what the brain is and how it operates as a thing on its own. This interpretative model aims to explain what understanding 'something that it is like to feel and think' is, and ultimately, what understanding the self and the other would amount to.

The assumption is that the zombie's use of "pain" as a public and outward concept is not in the slightest different from a regular non-zombie's use of the word. But in the zombie reality, pain as a 'private' object, as *the* sensation that someone feels when they are in pain, is conceived to be an empty box. That is, there's nothing the zombie can refer to *in her* as '*this* pain'. Having assumed that the physical conditions of the zombie reality and our regular world are being the same, there is still a missing 'this' in the zombie's referral of 'this pain'.

Such a philosophical setting gives us the idea that the physical cannot appeal to and explain the mental in a straightforward way. Thus, Chalmers argues that consciousness has to supervene on the physical, as it is something fundamentally distinct from "our common conception of the physical or natural world" (2010, p. 103), much like a square peg in a round hole:

Consciousness fits uneasily into our conception of the natural world. On the most common conception of nature, the natural world is the physical world. But on the most common conception of consciousness, it is not easy to see how it could be part of the physical world. (Chalmers, 2010, p. 103)

What is parasitic on this conception of the natural world is that it takes the zombie reality at the heart, in the sense that, a scientific/naturalistic account of consciousness would have to treat the notion as distinct and separate from the rest of the natural world to which it properly belongs. But we should note that the possibility of such a treatment is grounded in the zombie's very of conscious experience. In other words, the possibility bears the assumption that we could, so to speak, cherry-pick that 'something that it is like' to be a conscious being, and further treat it as a theoretical term such as 'atom' or 'mass'.

The question of the zombie's conceivability would involve in imagining her as a being who can meaningfully talk about the colour of a cabbage as red, purple, or blue. Given that I *could* imagine the zombie as experiencing the world in ways that are familiar to me. It gives me the idea that I could, in theory, ask her whether the cabbage is red, purple, or blue.

In that case, here is what we might have found out. Given the assumption that the zombie has excellent competency in the use of language, she could be in the place of either one of people in the following cases. She could be like a German-speaker who finds the cabbage blue. Or, either one of the Turkish-speakers (TS-1 and TS-2) who thinks that it is purple and red, respectively.

Still, speaking with the zombie would be different from, say, talking to a German-speaker as a Turkish-speaker (TS-1) who finds that the cabbage is more purple than blue or red. It would be another different case if, TS-1 would speak with another Turkish-speaker (TS-2) who finds the cabbage more in a red hue than purple (despite having been trained in an environment where the majority says the cabbage is purple).

In that case, TS-1 might as well show TS-2 a red rose, and ask “how is the redness of the rose closer to the colour of the cabbage than, say, something both of us find to be purple?” Assuming further that TS-2 were a painter, TS-2 could perhaps explain that if she wanted to produce the exact shade of the cabbage with a box of paints, she would have to primarily use the tube of red. This would give us an idea about the criteria TS-2 would have in mind when she talks about her own colour experience of the cabbage. Furthermore, TS-2 could also point out that, even though the colour of the cabbage is a mix of red and blue, the blue in the mix might perhaps be popping out to the eye more in Germany on a regular day, where the objects were more on the “cool” side of the colour spectrum under the natural lighting conditions.

Now this is not to deny that there is a subjective way of seeing the colour in the cabbage, but it is subjective in relation to how we objectively make sense of this phenomenon. The refining of our naming of the cabbage as red or purple or blue is possible, granted that we can have speak to one another about what seeing as red, or purple is. And the condition of this possibility is that seeing, in connection to talking about what we see as something, is a shared practice.

But when talking to the zombie, the question whether the cabbage *itself* (or the inner experience of the cabbage) is red, purple, or blue has no sense. In asking about the zombie’s experience of the cabbage *in public*, we bring out an important point about the subjective experience in relation to the objective. That is, language comes with friction.

Our clear and simple language-games are not preliminary studies for a future regimentation of language — as it were, first approximations, ignoring friction and air resistance. Rather, the language-games stand there as *objects of comparison* which, through similarities and dissimilarities, are meant to throw light on features of our language. (PI 130)

In relation to our discussion so far, we can say that the first-person viewpoint as it relates to the third-person perspective (including ascriptions of psychological states to other people) is not in a vacuum. Considering Wittgenstein's remark above, I take it that the "friction" is exactly what makes it possible to meaningfully talk about a subjective experience to one another. The friction is an expression of our language as praxis which is multi-layered and multifaceted with misunderstandings, blindness, vagueness, and confusion.

On the one hand, it is clear that every sentence in our language 'is in order as it is'. That is to say, we are not *striving after an ideal*, as if our ordinary vague sentences had not yet got a quite unexceptionable sense, and a perfect language still had to be constructed by us. — On the other hand, it seems clear that where there is sense, there must be perfect order. — So there must be perfect order even in the vaguest sentence. (PI 98)

And the friction these conditions create is an essential component of what makes our communication and understanding *real*, viz. it is one of the primary realities of our human life —not slippery ice as the intersubjective ground "where there is no friction." Because in that case, even though "the conditions are ideal; but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk: so we need *friction*" (PI 107). What comes to us as "familiar ways" of talking about colours and cabbages in real life follow from the reality of this coarse ground.

In contrast, the zombie reality is a picture radically different than our reality. It is a picture used in such a way as to produce a frictionless space so that consciousness could be placed "properly" in the natural world. Now the question is, what would such a placement amount to? In response to this, Chalmers argues that "to find a place for consciousness within the natural order, we must either revise our conception of consciousness or revise our conception of nature" (2010, p. 103). In doing so, we end up with a coherent explanatory narrative of *how* (as part of the easy problem of consciousness) and *why* (as part of the hard problem of consciousness)

we have *something it is like to be* a conscious being. What would be the proposed method of revision for our concepts? Chalmers further observes, and perhaps hopes that “our understanding of the mind-body problem has advanced in the last 75 years, and it would be nice to think that we have a better understanding of the crucial issues” (Chalmers, 2010, p. 104). I take it that the method of revision he has in mind is neuroscientific, for example, when he mentions:

The cornerstone of recent work in the neuroscience of consciousness has been the search for the “neural correlate of consciousness.” This phrase is intended to refer to the neural system or systems primarily associated with conscious experience. The associated acronym is NCC. The hypothesis is that all of us have an NCC inside our head. The project is to find out what the NCC is. (Chalmers, 2010, p. 59)

The method of revision, then, as proposed above, would involve in the idea that the inner experience can be proven as located in a certain biochemical process. So for instance, in a case where we may say that I empathize with the other, one could take that the notion of empathy refers to certain cognitive and emotional responses and neural activations which are located in certain parts of the brain. However, one needs to thread a fine line here. Because it is one thing to say that empathy can be totally reduced to or associated with various cognitive-behavioural realities or neurochemical processes, but it is another thing to say, when we feel empathic, it is accompanied by such processes.

The difference between being “associated with x” and being “accompanied by x” encompasses that, in the former case, the concept is connected evidentially to x. Whereas in the latter case where the notion is accompanied by certain cognitive and behavioural indications, it would not have to imply that empathy could be reduced to and exhausted by these manifestations.

The difference between being “associated with x” and being “accompanied by x” makes all the difference. In taking the concept as it is “associated with x” as opposed to “accompanied by x,” it would mean that we were able to solve a single problem, viz. the hard problem of consciousness. It would be an explanatory solution insofar the metaphysical assumptions about the brain (i.e., the mind-brain identity thesis) would be supported by brain science.

It would further imply that consciousness could be reduced to a *certain* metaphysical picture. As far as talking about consciousness is concerned, it would not be possible to break off from such a picture. In other words, there would not even be another picture because what we have would be *the* picture. But then, we may ask, how would a picture decide on a concept’s (such as ‘consciousness’) further applications? Furthermore, in establishing a picture as *the* picture, viz. in defining what NCC is, Chalmers goes on to admit that “the discussion so far has been somewhat abstract, and the definitions given here may look like mere words” (Chalmers, 2010, p. 82). But what would it take to understand those “mere words” which do not extend on our present applications and practices? What kind of a subject would be involved in that activity of understanding?

In consideration of these questions, we will now turn to even more questions, as listed below:

We know what it is for human beings to experience things, to see things, to know or believe things, to make decisions, to interpret equivocal data, to guess and form hypotheses. We understand what it is for people to reason inductively, to estimate probabilities, to present arguments, to classify and categorize the things they encounter in their experience... But do we know what it is for a brain to see or hear, for a brain to have experiences, to know or believe something? Do we have any conception of what it would be for a brain to make a decision? ... These are all attributes of human beings. Is it a new discovery that brains also engage in such human activities? Or is it a linguistic innovation, introduced by neuroscientists, psychologists and cognitive scientists, extending the ordinary use of these psychological expressions for good theoretical reasons? Or, more ominously, is it a

conceptual confusion? Might it be the case that there is simply no such thing as the brain's thinking or knowing, seeing or hearing, believing or guessing, possessing and using information, constructing hypotheses, etc., i.e. that these forms of words make no sense? But if there is no such thing, why have so many distinguished scientists thought that these phrases, thus employed, do make sense? (Bennett & Hacker, 2007, pp. 18-19)

There are many important questions that Bennett and Hacker pose above, concerning the form of our scientific descriptions, and the form of our explanations that follow from them. By following these questions, Bennett and Hacker follow the threat of their investigation on the origin of our descriptive neuroscientific jargon. Despite objections, they hold that such psychological ascriptions to the brain make no sense (Bennett & Hacker, 2007, p. 21). Although one may be inclined to think that we refer to the neuroscientific representation of the brain as the subject of knowing, guessing, feeling, inquiring, etc. in a technical way (metonymically or metaphorically), Bennett and Hacker argue that such a representation still involves a conceptual confusion which is a remnant of Cartesian dualism –“a result of an unthinking adherence to a mutant form of Cartesianism” insofar as “it was a characteristic feature of Cartesian dualism to ascribe psychological predicates to the mind, and only derivatively to the human being.” (Bennett & Hacker, 2007, p. 21)

Such is the case of the philosophical zombie. Below, we will give our reasons for arguing: first, that the point of Chalmers' neuro-scientifically backed investigation of consciousness involves a kind of resurfacing of the private, inner experience, and second, that this resurfacing is charged by, enabled by a solipsistic viewpoint by relying upon the Cartesian 'inner' and 'private' in its conception of 'subjective experience'. It is an altogether different conception than Wittgenstein's critical treatment of the body/behaviour accompanying our “attitude towards a soul” as we have discussed in Chapter 3.

By taking zombie reality to be metaphysically (logically) conceivable, the Chalmersian framework run into the age-old problem of other minds and solipsism, only under a different, “mutant” form of packaging. We find such an approach problematic on two grounds –one more general and the other more specific– which can be put as follows, respectively:

1- Without any kind of doubt, there are things that our concepts are grounded in.

We somehow derive our concepts from certain “hard facts” about the world.

The claim is that there *are* such hard facts as grounds of our concepts. But in any case, all the effort to ground language, our concepts, ways of thinking, evaluating, testing, etc. in some empirical fact is putting the cart before the horse.

2- More specifically, this is even more the case because it also involves the charge of solipsism, which turns out to be double problematic.

Assuming the claim in (1), viz. that there are hard facts as grounds of our concepts (such as ‘consciousness’), how does (1) connect to (2), viz. the charge of solipsism?

If we think about what it means for a brain to have experience, see, hear, etc., a general and logical investigation of what it means to have “something it is like to be a conscious being” need to incorporate somehow the proper subject of the inquiry, that is not the brain, but the human being itself. But the case about the zombie fails to provide that, further making solipsism especially problematic insofar as the case is designed to show a need to justify how the ‘inner’ connects to the ‘outer’. But the point is that the need of a justification forces itself, if we take that the philosophical zombie is relevant in explaining what consciousness is.

So what would a philosophical zombie (or similarly, an AI) contribute to our understanding of consciousness? At best, what could it tell us about the hard problem

of consciousness? Or more precisely, if we were to start from the ‘pure phenomenal’, subjective experience by a consideration of the zombie, how could we bridge the gap between the subject and the world?

In a Chalmersian onto-epistemological world of explanations, the gap is shut with certain *hard facts* that are described by our scientific experiments. But now, we may ask: What do we presuppose when we do an experiment, say, in cognitive science? That the human body reacts in a certain way under certain stimulation conditions, which are quantifiable. If we recall the example of the cabbage from before. Let us say, we want to measure the brain activity in the presence of the cabbage, my German friend and I are wired to machine, where we end up with a data set indicating our brain activities. The data, then, would have to be interpreted. Such an interpretation would be possible, given that it involves a *conceptual* connection (as opposed to an appeal to hard facts, i.e., the *factual*) between what we take to be seeing in colour is in the personal as well as communal sense and how we interact with each other, participate in a life in which it makes sense to talk about the colour of cabbages.

The paradigm which makes measurement possible, i.e. the conceptual, stands on a different footing from that which is measured, i.e. the factual. Acknowledging this difference between the conceptual and the factual is an important pillar in Wittgenstein’s philosophy. But perhaps in all philosophy, the task is to differentiate the factual from the conceptual. It is an investigation of how to draw the line by accounting for what comes from experience what comes from the concepts.

We draw on the distinction between the conceptual and the factual in our examination of Chalmers’ treatment of the problem of consciousness insofar this treatment is part of a project where the notion of consciousness would have to be

extended on scientific descriptions. Such a treatment capitalizes the fact that consciousness is a pervasive concept that accompanies a human life. That is to say, consciousness is an expression of a human condition, viz. it embodies that nonexcludable *I* in whatever we say we are or do –in relation to and as distinct from the *other*. In that sense, an answer to the question of what consciousness is may go as far as saying ‘I am’ or ‘I do’. To this end, we may consider asking question to someone who might be having a concussion. Then, we would have to ask her: “Are you in your senses?”, “Are you in your right mind?”, “What year is it?”, “What day?”, “Can you repeat the days of the week backwards?”, etc.

An ordinary case as the one above helps us disclose what we have in mind, which can also be found in Z 458. In that remark, Wittgenstein observes that a philosophical investigation is a conceptual investigation, and “[t]he essential thing about metaphysics: it obliterates the distinction between factual and conceptual investigations.” This remark capitalizes Wittgenstein’s anti-metaphysical stance. To this end, we consider Wittgenstein’s remark about colour concepts and their *instrumentality*¹⁸ in our making of colour statements. Accordingly, when we name an element in language-game:

...in so doing we have given that object a role in our language-game; it is now a *means* of representation. And to say “If it did not exist, it could have no name” is to say as much and as little as: if this thing did not exist, we could not use it in our language-game. – What looks as if it *had* to exist is part of the language. It is a paradigm in our game; something with which comparisons are made. And this may be an important observation; but it is none the less an observation about our language-game – our mode of representation. (PI 50)

Thus, we may say that our ways of measuring the change in a physical environment

¹⁸ The notion of instrumentality can be found in his earlier notes: “To be sure, rules for signs, for instance definitions, can be viewed as propositions. They are instruments of language. Instruments of a different kind from the propositions of language” (PR 143). The notion is further developed in PI, famously put in the remark: “The meaning of a word is its use in the language” (PI 43).

(in the brain, or more generally, in the body) in a neuroscientific experiment is possible because there is already a conceptual link, i.e., how we measure the physical and what we make sense of its interpretation. Wittgenstein's idea of a philosophical investigation being concerned, this conceptual apparatus (i.e., our paradigmatic or representative pictures when talking about psychological phenomena) is deeply rooted in our ordinary ways of talking about objects as red, or a person's face as deadpan. What is of Wittgenstein's concern that we would like to stress is that:

...this kind of concern is not of a scientific nature: it is not directed at possible causes of our having these (rather than other) concepts, even though comparing our actual concepts with possible concepts of a different kind forms an essential part of Wittgenstein's philosophical enterprise. (Schulte, 2013, p. 72)

It is important to note that, when our representations depict the possibility of talking about our phenomenal experiences, they would not be used in a way to *explain* the possible causes of having a phenomenal concept, say, 'red'. Then we may say, what is described (i.e., our phenomenal concepts) would depend on the description. In other words, a description we make with our concepts would not express anything true or false about the thing that is described. In such a case, as might be expected, the description "may look like mere words" (Chalmers, 2010, p. 82).

In talking about the 'mental', if we miss the conceptual/factual distinction altogether, if we further take the understanding in 'seeing colours' as grounded in some fact of the matter, then we put the cart before the horse. It would mean a reversal of the order of explanation. By saying that, we do not, of course, mean that neuroscience has nothing to say about the mind. Surely, it can give us explanations or pictures about how we understand words and concepts. But what most it can do is that the scientific explanations cannot exhaustively explain every which way we understand our phenomenal and psychological concepts.

Because, in explaining the experience of tasting something sour, the concept ‘sour’ would still be grounded in our ordinary, non-philosophical ways of talking about, for instance, the taste of lemon or flavour of acidic coffee. If the concept ‘sour’ is considered in association with a scientific explanation, that goes much beyond saying the concept is connected to that, that it has further neural and behavioural symptoms accompanying the experience of tasting something sour.

Not putting the cart before the horse, in contrast, would be the rejection of reductionism about the mind. But in preserving the autonomy of the mind, viz. the language of sensations in the first-person perspective, one does not have to fall into the idea through the Cartesian notion of qualia. To the extent Chalmers’ philosophical zombie falls into this idea, it commits to putting the cart before the horse. And though it is possible that we may have the cart and the horse reversed in this way, what could be explained through such a treatment remains a question. Because given such a reversal, we would be face to face with a construction which would not be easily recognizable by non-philosophical jargon. That is to say, it would be a construction diverged from the ordinary ways of using our words. What would appear then is the Cartesian idea that our language does not have to be embedded in the life of active beings.

Given a disembodied conception of language, it makes it seem like we can ask: “How can we say that somebody sees colours without having an experience of it? In the absence of a phenomenal experience, what does seeing colour amount to?” The zombie reality as a construct makes it problematic to imagine whether it makes sense to talk about cabbages in red, purple, or blue. It consists in a confused picture of how we understand something paradigmatically: neither purely conceptually nor purely factually, but in both ways and through their different roles in our

understanding of words. It further fails to explain what it is designed to explain in the first place, viz. what it is to see things in colour.

To the extent the zombie relies on the idea of understanding *something* as an output of a mental process, that *something* is regarded as logically separated from but somehow causally connected to its actual setting, to the externalities such as our beliefs and actions we make with these terms. In Chalmers' case, such an idea of understanding consists in our refinement of scientific methods:

So it seems that to find a place for consciousness within the natural order, we must either revise our conception of consciousness or revise our conception of nature. (Chalmers, 2010, p. 103)

What would be the sense of talking about changing our conception of what experience or nature is? I think that it would be not much different than answering “can you play chess without the queen?”¹⁹ Surely, we could. But that would not be a game of chess as we know it. It would be something else.

We don't want to refine or complete the system of rules for the use of our words in unheard-of ways.

For the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed complete clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should completely disappear.

The real discovery is the one that enables me to break off philosophizing when I want to. – The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring *itself* in question. – Instead, a method is now demonstrated by examples, and the series of examples can be broken off. — Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a *single* problem. (PI 133)

For our discussion, Wittgenstein's idea of philosophy as clarity would not take in asking “what goes *in us* when we the phenomenal experience of red?” but rather in asking “in what circumstances can we say that another person understands when I use the word ‘red’?” In contrast to the first kind, the second kind of a question starts a conversation about what seeing something as having this or that colour is, as

¹⁹ Wisdom (1952)

grounded in the actual workings of life²⁰. By forming the question in the latter way, we consider the subjective experience in its relation to language. And the subject of this experience is already in relation to the world by making discriminations, drawing similarities, revising their concepts, and revising again and again –all of which is from a subjective position, which is not logically inaccessible, but goes through a continuous collaborative interaction with other things and persons.

It is this idea of human being that is altogether missing in the Cartesian conception of *another* kind of being –just like a game which is the same as chess except for a queen. The exception of queen, however, makes all the difference.

To the extent that the human subject is not conscious in respect of its dealings in the world, but in respect of the workings of its brain, we can say that Chalmers' handling of consciousness is a misconceived project. We do not reject that our concepts are/need to be revised. But this revision should not be on the basis of a theoretical brute-force attack, as if we are somehow trying to crack a password or decode an encrypted string of symbols. According to what we want to express and how we will live, our concepts will reflect that –grounded but not justified. In addressing what makes our concepts grounded, viz. our philosophical outlook on the possibility of understanding, we may explain why we apply a concept or a rule in a particular way. However, the crucial point is that there can be altogether different interpretations of its application. This manifold of applications, in turn, contribute to what it is to understand a rule.

Furthermore, in talking about grounding at all, our philosophical assumptions should take note of what kind of a ground we are talking about. Would it be a pre-emptive one where concepts and explanatory schemes are freely stipulated? Or

²⁰ We expand on this point in the next section through a consideration of PI 185.

would it be one that appeals to how our words are understood in its home, in their uses in language? I think that, ultimately, picking a side between these views gives out different takes on what a philosophical ‘doubt’ may amount to and how we deal with it. On that note, we will now consider a “dialogue” featuring these different philosophical sides or perspectives. The dialogue takes place between two views on meaning and understanding as grounded in *somewhere*, more precisely, in some fact of the matter or not.

4.3 Understanding and filling a gap

In David Finkelstein’s response to Crispin Wright as the latter responds to Saul Kripke’s sceptical problem (that he finds in Wittgenstein), the issue is about what it means to follow a rule correctly. The main concern is that: in what sense of ‘correctly’ are we talking about when we engage in the activity of meaning and understanding? The point to be considered is that, handling this question and concern is deeply connected to the type of question being raised about the correctness. Finkelstein considers the question from a platonist perspective (as Finkelstein calls it) that concerns understanding a word or rule ‘correctly’ as the last interpretation which grounds the meaning of a word or rule.

Wittgenstein tackles this topic in what is known today as the rule-following discussion in PI §§185-242. Much has been said on the issue and Wittgenstein’s take on the matter, but perhaps the most popular response to date came from Kripke in ‘Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language’ (1982) or in his words “Wittgenstein’s argument as it struck Kripke, as it presented a problem for him” (Kripke, 1982, p. 5). Kripke finds Wittgenstein offering a sceptical paradox in PI 201 about what it means to understand a rule or word in language, which Kripke calls “a new form of

philosophical scepticism” (Kripke, 1982, p. 7). I will not go into his argument in detail, but briefly, Kripke argues that, as Wittgenstein presents the issue in PI 201, there is nothing that can justify my application of a rule. Such as when we perform an ordinary arithmetical operation as ‘ $68+57$ ’. Kripke’s sceptical claim is that there is nothing in our use of ‘+’ that can justify my meaning of ‘plus’ but not some other instruction; nothing that can show that in ‘my’ meaning of ‘+’ I did not have in mind ‘plus’ in the regular sense but rather some other arbitrarily made-up way of adding two numbers, say ‘quus’. Thus, Kripke writes:

The sceptic doubts whether any instructions I gave myself in the past compel (or justify) the answer ‘125’ rather than ‘5’. He puts the challenge in terms of a sceptical hypothesis about a change in my usage. Perhaps when I used the term ‘plus’ in the past, I always meant quus: by hypothesis I never gave myself any explicit directions that were incompatible with such a supposition. (Kripke, 1982, p. 13)

The sceptic argues that when I answered ‘125’ to the problem ‘ $68+57$ ’, my answer was an unjustified leap in the dark; my past mental history is equally compatible with the hypothesis that I meant *quus*, and therefore should have said ‘5’. (Kripke, 1982, p. 15)

The idea is that, when someone asks, “what is $68+57$?”, instead of finding ‘125’, I may just as well find ‘5’ (in accordance with how the ‘quus’ operation instructs *somehow*) because there is nothing in my use of ‘+’ which guarantees that I have *always* intended to or meant to use it in the way that I do. Or, put in simplest terms, these questions are involved in a search for a certain kind of ground which guarantees a correctness for all times. That, we can say, is the ‘platonist’ expectation that Finkelstein finds in Kripke. It is this expectation of the “always” that puts a burden on Kripke’s notion of the ground as the ultimate interpretation. In this way, Kripke’s sceptic succumbs to platonism insofar as he takes understanding to be opening an infinite sequence of interpretations already laying before us – always and

in its entirety. That is the first point that we want to make about Kripke's sceptical challenge as he finds it in PI 201.

As to our second point, the idea that understanding 'plus' correctly consists in the idea that whatever lies before me, can as well be accessible to me –exclusively and from a privileged position of the Cartesian self. So, for Kripke, whatever the external conditions may be, the sceptic's charge on my meaning of 'plus' rather than 'quus' prevails. Because the problem is construed in a way as to consider the internal conditions, viz. our capacity to have an infinite sequence of interpretations laid down before the mind. By presenting the problem from the 'inside', meaning is construed to be an inner process. A process that occurs in the mind of a Cartesian self or a being of infinite capacity, or perhaps a quantum supercomputer.

Coincidentally, and funnily enough, Kripke's sceptical paradox starts by considering a "logically possible" case, which we also found in Chalmers' philosophical zombie:

Ridiculous and fantastic though it is, the sceptic's hypothesis is not logically impossible. (Kripke, 1982, p. 9)

Further, the way the sceptical doubt is presented is not behavioristic. *It is presented from the 'inside'* (Kripke, 1982, p. 15, italics mine).

So whatever 'looking into my mind' may be, the sceptic asserts that even if God were to do it, he still could not determine that I meant addition by 'plus'. (Kripke, 1982, p. 14)

What we find in Kripke's lines above echoes in what we saw in Chalmers' philosophical zombie previously. Both involve a philosophical move owing much to the Cartesian 'inner' which fits to a privileged subjective mind and the philosophical doubts it generates. While in Chalmers' case, the internal conditions of the zombie's mind kick-start a scientifically grounded philosophical picture of the mind/brain, in Kripke's case, the issue entails whether there is even correctness in our meaning and

understanding, or about how we even justify our meanings, or connecting to outside of this mind. In both cases, there are traces of what Finkelstein calls “Platonism about meaning.”

According to Finkelstein, there are two points we should be dissatisfied with a Platonic account of meaning and understanding:

- 1- Communication comes to look deeply problematic. It seems to be a miracle that we can communicate at all.
- 2- If we take meaning to be the “last interpretation” so that regress is blocked, where do we draw the last line?

Wright is also concerned with the second point above, so to draw a last line, he answers Kripke’s sceptic by saying that “we do not perceive what a rule instructs; we *decide* them” (Finkelstein, 2000, p. 58). Wright argues that, under ordinary conditions, when I mean X, I determine X to be what I mean. Just like that. We can see that Wright’s position stands on a similar footing as Kripke’s sceptic in his claim “I may have as well been meaning ‘quus’ by ‘plus’ up to now”.

But there is also a twist in Wright’s case: In my/our meaning X to be X, I/we might as well change or modify my/our judgment of X later, depending on circumstances. The case is similar to the following. On the one hand, there is my friend who finds a red cabbage *genuinely red*, rather than purple, or blue, and on the other hand, there is the community’s referral to the cabbage (in our case, a Turkish-speaking community) as ‘*mor*’ or purple. So, there is the notion of an intersubjective realm of communication that is tainted with the idea that meaning X is what I determine X to be. In fact, we saw a similar semantic view in our discussion about Chalmers previously, in his account of individual and communal relational concepts.

While Kripke's sceptic claims that he may have been meaning 'quus', Wright thinks that it *cannot* be the case because *we* mean things on the basis of this intersubjectively-constituted-and-agreed-upon ground in whichever way we find it. It is on that ground that *we* arrive at *our* best possible judgments or decisions about what a rule means. And the point here is the claim that we *find* it, viz. meaning is what we find, decide, or stipulate.

In this way, we close the gap by some kind of a stipulation. On the part of one person, this stipulation is of a social/communal kind, in saying that "we (all the people who happen to speak that language) call it X". If, for instance, half of the people in a community think that, when they look at a cucumber and call it "red", then the meaning of "red" will shift because otherwise we will not have a more or less homogenous sense of *we*. The important point for our discussion here lies in the bifurcation that it is one thing to have *extremely* relativistic views about how we use our words or terms, and is another thing as to what these words and terms mean in the ordinary sense. The extremity involved means that these two areas blur.

In Wright's case, the two areas blur insofar as what this "we" claims, precedes any application of a rule or word. This notion of "we" is problematic because we do not have any criterion of what constitutes it, of what keeps it stable or homogenous, which can all be seen in practice and action.

The idea presented above expresses the gist of Wright's answer to Kripke's sceptic. In this answer, Finkelstein observes that Wright's idea of meaning (viz. following of rule, understanding a word or a particular activity that a rule is based on) is merely a kind of stipulation. The last interpretation that Kripke's sceptic demands to be constitutive of what a rule means, but cannot find, as the issue strikes Wright, is just a stop sign simply saying "stop!" and so we do.

To Wright, it appears that when we become dissatisfied with platonism, we have just two options: we must try to articulate that in which meaning one thing rather than another consists, or we must (with the “official” Wittgenstein) opt for “quietism” and refuse to engage with what is, after all, a gripping question. (Finkelstein, 2000, p. 60)

Needless to say, Wright does not opt for the second option, but instead, finds an articulation to be necessary. We have two concerns with this option. First, by already responding to the sceptic, and thus, by allowing for a mind that says it can already stipulate meaning on its own, we are assumed to be in our own worlds, living in a solipsistic bubble which is logically distinct and separated from outside where we engage with, understand, or misunderstand one another. With regards to Wright’s notion of we, it seems to me that, at best, we are able to somehow, by some fact of the matter, communicate and understand or misunderstand things or each other, and at worst, we are just a collection of solipsistic selves. As to our second concern, this idea of ‘finding’ or discovering—a ground, some meaning-constitutive fact of the matter, is already committing to the sceptic’s terms, and what he assumes about how we make sense of ourselves or one another, and the world.

This philosophical outlook, where we answer the sceptic in his own terms, Finkelstein finds, is where both Kripke and Wright loses Wittgenstein because the latter is not after answering the sceptic in his rule-following discussion. Following Finkelstein’s sentiments about how to read Wittgenstein, if we consider that the latter takes philosophy to be descriptive rather than a theory-constructive inquiry, we do not have to “opt for quietism” but be cautious of not putting the cart before the horse, as we have mentioned in the previous section.

Finkelstein thinks that Wittgenstein is against *this* kind of platonism about meaning insofar as it involves “an effort to explain how mere noises and marks can have semantic significance” and “is driven to posit self-standing sources of

significance” (Finkelstein, 2000, p. 53-54). The kind of platonism that Finkelstein takes into consideration is involved in a conceptual confusion, viz. there is no understanding one thing rather than another when it comes to our concepts and rules if we think that understanding or following a rule consist in an inner, conscious, or experiential state or process. The Platonic view presents a confusion by taking understanding as deciphering the meaning of unknown signs or noise into meaningful content.

In finding both Kripke and Wright to be involved in a kind of platonism about meaning, Finkelstein elucidates an important point. By looking at understanding as grounded in some mental (‘inner’) matter of fact or a stipulation, we find ourselves at the crossroads –a philosophically sceptical predicament– where either we do not and in fact cannot know if a rule is applied correctly (as in the case of Kripke’s sceptic) or we must try to articulate exactly how meaning is possible (as in Wright’s ‘stipulative decisions’ and Chalmers’ problem about consciousness).

Committing to the idea of ‘meaning as the last interpretation’ as something that cannot be found, or as something that must be found, is already committing to the assumption that there is a gap between an instruction and the activity it calls for. Thus, we find ourselves yet again in a position that calls for filling this gap, between a separation of dualities – between our assumptions on the separation of the mind from the body, the mental from the physical, the subjective from the objective, or the rule and its application.²¹

We can find this to be case in Chalmers insofar as we can find an expression of this gap in the philosophical zombie. In other words, what exactly makes the philosophical zombie “philosophical” is that it is an expression of this gap. As far as

²¹ Mácha also makes this point; see pp. 83-102 and pp. 133-140 in [Mácha, 2015]

its conceivability goes, what it does is that it puts at stake the possibility of understanding in the ordinary sense, as something that occurs between embedded beings. In that regard, Chalmers' treatment of consciousness stands merely as a "mythological" description. In Wittgenstein's words, "it's saying nothing at all but gives us a picture" (PI 352), or simply another way of saying "this is how it strikes me" (PI 219). The point to be considered here is whether such a filter gives out a conceptually confused picture about meaning and understanding or not. We claim that it does jeopardize the notion of understanding altogether. To this end, we shall consider the following cases where it makes sense to talk about understanding and misunderstanding.

What would a misunderstanding or misapplication of a rule consist in? Consider case (1): Say, you tell me to go on and conjugate the verb 'I drink' in Russian. Now rather than doing this, if I am conjugating a verb in the same way as I inflate a noun, then nobody would understand what I am doing. Even if they did, they would not be able to do anything with it; it would be totally idle within that practice. Then it would be a clear case that I did not grasp what 'to conjugate a verb' is about. If such is the case; if the instruction is ambiguous, then I must simply disambiguate what I am asking originally.²²

The fact that something makes sense (grammatically or logically, as Wittgenstein puts it) includes the fact that sometimes the same thing, perhaps in a different context, does not make sense. In other words, understanding and misunderstanding conceptually co-depend on one another. Now, the problem for Kripke and Wright likewise is that, in an example as above, it makes it the case that the applications are either insufficient or they clash with each other. But the truth of

²² I owe thanks to Assoc. Prof. Chryssi Sidiropoulou for the example.

the matter is that we *do not* have an application that clashes with something that was complete to begin with, which was then projected on all our applications in advance.

Wittgenstein makes this point in PI 218:

Whence the idea that the beginning of a series is a visible section of rails invisibly laid to infinity? Well, we might imagine rails instead of a rule. And infinitely long rails correspond to the unlimited application of a rule.

In case (1), if the questions concerning in what sense of “understanding the instruction” the student failed to perform are not resolvable, a philosophical move toward a resolution requires that our terms and concepts here need to be extended. But not in the sense in which Chalmers would have it extended; by postulating more conceptual links between brain physiology in relation to what it is to have a subjective experience. Moreover, it would be not in the sense how Wright fills the gap with meaning-constitutive stipulations. Instead, an extension in a Wittgensteinian sense implies that *we would need to look at a complementary practice*.

This complementary practice is a vital component of rule-following as it relates to the “ethos” of the whole activity that a practice pertains to. I want to expand on this point by considering case (2). Consider a matrix –a rectangular arrangement of signs (i.e., numbers, expressions, symbols) into rows and columns. When two matrices are multiplied, there is a certain rule that one has to follow; accordingly, each entry on a row in the first matrix is multiplied by the corresponding entry in the second. Adding the numbers obtained in such manner gives out the first entry in the product matrix (and the operation goes on until each entry in the product matrix is obtained according to this rule). A simple example of following a rule.

Now imagine a math professor in a class asking: “Why do we (mathematicians) multiply matrices in this way, but not in another way?”²³ One might be inclined to consider this very rule’s many applications in the physical world, in ways of explaining certain phenomena in nature which may imply a legitimate correspondence to the world: “We do it so, because that is *the* way to do it, given that we can explain and make sense of many things (such as finding coordinates in a vector space) by such a rule”. But then, the professor may say: “Not quite right; we do it so, because it is more *interesting* and *fun* than doing it in any other way; it does not mean that we cannot do it in any other way; we sure *can*, but if we did then what we could do with these mathematical objects would get more restrictive and duller.”

In relation to our discussion, the professor’s reply considers the rule involved in its mathematically expressive power and conduciveness to further mathematical treatment, and not by taking account of certain complementary practices in physics, economics, etc. More concisely, the difference pertains to the ethos of pure mathematics (as an activity) as opposed to applied mathematics. Considering mathematics itself, the rule (standard and non-standard ways of multiplying matrices) may *possibly* attain unlimited ways of application. Insofar as we talk about how we make sense of phenomena (outside of mathematics), we can speak about the standard way as a rule that is extended in the world in a factual manner. The professor’s point further grants that this may as well have been in some other way, but then we would have a different kind of extension showing itself some other complementary practices (not as physics or economics in the standard sense).²⁴

²³ I owe thanks to Prof. Ercüment Ortaçgil for the question, and for making it one of the most memorable moments in my undergraduate education.

²⁴ The point would also apply to our different geometries (such as Euclidean geometry and non-Euclidean geometries) in their different representations of space (e.g., Minkowski space as used by

In the previous section, we made preliminary notes on the difference between the conceptual and the factual as part of Wittgenstein's treatment of philosophical problems. We can now expand on that by reconsidering cases (1) and (2). Following grammatical rules in a language as in (1) is quite different than following a mathematical instruction in (2). In understanding or misunderstanding a rule in our natural language as in (1), we should be able to talk of an extension that already belongs to *this* world. In this sense, the uncertainty involved in the understanding cannot be perceived as chronically irresolvable *all the time*, in *all circumstances*, because otherwise disambiguating or correcting would make no sense. But if the irresolvability is perceived as chronic, we have a muddled picture in our hands, as Wittgenstein points out:

Now we try to get hold of the mental process of understanding which seems to be hidden behind those coarser, and therefore more readily visible, concomitant phenomena. But it doesn't work; or, more correctly, it does not get as far as a real attempt. For even supposing I had found something that happened in all those cases of understanding, why should *that* be the understanding? Indeed, how can the process of understanding have been hidden, given that I said "Now I understand" because I *did* understand? And if I say it is hidden – then how do I know what I have to look for? I am in a muddle. (PI 153)

In this light, making mistakes when multiplying matrices as in (2) or in certain other cases of mathematical rule-following (recall Kripke's sceptic in his demand on *always* meaning 'plus' by '+', but not 'quus') is different from making mistakes in a case as (1). Because in (2), we have a distinct language-game where "the mathematician is an inventor, not a discoverer" (RFM 167) in the sense that, it makes no sense to talk about the invention of a previously unknown celestial object, but of its discovery. In other words, it only makes sense to talk of a discovery insofar as we

Einstein in special relativity, or Riemannian geometry which sometimes does not even have any direct application to the world).

would have our astronomical facts as proved by observation and instrumentally and conceptually grounded in our mathematical apparatus.

By comparison, in (2), it goes without saying that meaning and understanding in our natural languages are quite different from that in mathematics. In the former, insofar as we have our rules as extended in practice and perceive understanding as already grounded in the world (i.e., committing to “no gap”; no ‘hidden’ mental process working behind in each case when someone understands something), we can talk about the possibility of understanding or misunderstanding something, and understanding something *differently*. That possibility granted, it makes sense to talk about understanding something in any way and respect. But we don’t mean that: When we understand something, like in a game of throwing darts, we do it among all the possibilities of understanding it – in any way and respect, *all the time* – and hit the bull’s eye when we understand it correctly. That is not what we mean by the possibility of understanding something differently.

Wittgenstein’s point in PI 153 is that it *is* the case that we *can* and in fact *do* make sense (say, of the first-person and third-person psychological ascriptions) as they are already available to our use. For one, we often say we understand something in particular circumstances.²⁵ As Hallett notes:

When employing psychological predicates in the present tense with the first person singular, we do not generally base ourselves on observation [...] knowledge does not guide us [...] But it does when we switch to the second or third person. Here there are criteria, and these criteria belong to the concept; indeed it seems unlikely that we would speak of the concept pain or

²⁵ Wittgenstein further makes this point in the following remark:

So, what I wanted to say was: if he suddenly knew how to go on, if he understood the system, then he may have had a distinctive experience – and if he is asked: “What was it? What took place when you suddenly grasped the system?”, perhaps he will describe it much as we described it above — but for us it is the *circumstances* under which he had such an experience that warrant him saying in such a case that he understands, that he knows how to go on. (PI 155)

the concept fear if there were no such criteria, but only first-person utterances resembling cries of fear or pain. [...] In summary, then, we can say that in Wittgenstein's conceptual studies, so throughout the [Philosophical] Investigations, *(1) the knowledge which guides people in their use of a term determines the boundaries of that concept, (2) even when such guidance does not characterize some uses of the term.* (Hallett, 1977, p. 51, italics mine)

In Hallett's description of Wittgenstein's conceptual analysis of rule-following, (1) and (2) draws the scope of what it means to have a criterion for rule-following.

Accordingly, the rules may be general, but when applied in particular cases, they need to act as a rule, in other words, they should guide properly in whichever way the propriety is conceived. We may have a multitude of interpretations regarding what the propriety is in a given situation, which would be a philosophical limit.

Within such a limit, a philosophical investigation of this propriety would have further major ramifications for morality, culture, and history. However, the issue – in whichever way the propriety found to be the case – revolves around the relation between actions and understanding, between the outer conditions of a rule's application and understanding the rule.

Dilman notes that Wittgenstein reverses the way we are inclined to relate our actions and our understanding. Accordingly, "the actions are not a consequence of the understanding, but rather, what the understanding finds expression in, they constitute a criterion of the understanding" (Dilman, 1981, p. 137). Dilman's remark on Wittgenstein has its force if we consider the latter's discussion in PI 143-184 in his treatment of understanding as an ability, as mastering a technique, and to that extent, the proper medium for rule-following.²⁶

²⁶ Our primary consideration of these remarks includes complementary notes of Hallett (1977, pp. 239-305) which offers a comprehensive map for PI 138-242 in relation to the oeuvre of Wittgenstein. A secondary consideration comes from Baker and Hacker (2005, pp. 357-385) in their commentary on PI 143-184.

In PI 143-184, Wittgenstein offers a critique of a picture of understanding which we found in Kripke, Wright, and Chalmers. A picture which requires that:

- i. A correct interpretation of the rule must exist, as something that is readily laid down before the mind.
- ii. An explanation as to how mental states relate to the physical world must exist. If an explanation of this kind can be given, we may clear our understanding that there is ‘something it is like to be’ subjectively experiencing something.

These two points are related to each other. In Kripke’s case, as for the first point above, the picture involves in taking a rule apart from how we understand it, as something that *already* instructs. The separation, in turn, puts constraints on our philosophical way of thinking about what a rule is in its relation to understanding a rule. Dilman’s point below further suggests the way in which Kripke’s sceptic feeds from this separation:

Philosophers have been so preoccupied with trying to find something covert behind the overt activity, that when they came to recognise that they had been wrong they jumped to the conclusion that if a machine imitates a mathematician overtly it must be calculating, since the sequence in time, actual and possible, are what adds up to the intelligent activity of calculating. (Dilman, 1975, p. 124)

Kripke’s sceptic expresses a legitimate concern insofar as meaning, like calculating, is an overt activity that we can recognise individually in a particular case. The idea is that the activity is an aggregation of the instances of its execution for a given output, i.e., identifying something as meant or calculated. It further amounts to that meaning can occur on a glimpse, and quite arbitrarily. This somewhat *discretely* painted picture entails making an inductivist move to find that which makes our understanding correct.

When we ask, “what counts as understanding correctly?” the Kripkean

sceptical picture cannot go beyond saying, “I am counting each of the steps in my meaning of ‘+’, but the calculation does not add up to the meaning it necessarily in a certain way.” It goes without saying that this ‘counting of the steps’ and ‘discreteness or lacking a state of unity’ implies ‘ad infinitum’ –which contradicts with the human existence in its spatiotemporal conditions. In that regard, it lacks the consideration of the human life where it may be more appropriately described or found –not in a manner of ad infinitum in space and time. The separation in question gains support from the view that understanding must be grounded in above and beyond of the spatio-temporality of the human subject, and is privileged to an isolated “thinking” subject.

This connects to our second point in (ii), namely Chalmers’ quest for situating consciousness in the natural world, where the picture involves in taking subjective experience already as separate from the rest of the natural world as well as its being situated/embedded in the human life. At least, that is the given condition for the need of this quest. In that regard, there is the need for a scientific account that grants this embeddedness. In contrast to the inductivist approach in Kripke’s sceptical charge, Chalmers’ project is involved in a deductivist move that aims to offer this grant for the feasibility and possibility of the first-person understanding, as scientifically explained and understood. In such an explanation and understanding, certain facts of matter need to constitute a ground for our judging (or synonymously, ‘measuring’). This ground, in Kripke’s and Chalmers’ case, is conceived to be found in a pre-emptive structure. To the extent that this pre-emptive structure hinges on or grounds in our scientific standards, the philosophical implication of this approach involves that our judgments and measurements are rendered within a certain frame of naturalized onto-epistemology.

Insofar as understanding is involved in a kind of measuring (discriminating, recognizing, interpreting, etc.), it means engaging in a conceptual treatment of the matter; but nevertheless, fails to make the difference between the conceptual and the factual, which Wittgenstein draws upon emphatically:

If someone observes his own grief, which senses does he use to observe it? With a special sense – one that feels grief? Then does he feel it differently when he is observing it? And what is the grief that he is observing – one which is there only while being observed?

‘Observing’ does not produce what is observed. (That is a conceptual statement.)

Again: I do not ‘observe’ that which comes into being only through observation. The object of observation is something else. (PI, Part II, ix, 67)

I do not in any way intend to make an anti-science point here, but touch on a different point. That, at best, such a picture enriches our repertoire of representations, in this case, of the subjective viewpoint, which humanity has been contributing to in one way or another throughout history.

To this end, we can consider modern psychological interpretations about how the human mind connects to other minds and the environment. In such an interpretative framework, we “carve nature at its joints” (Plato, Phaedrus 265e), rendering a grid system that is functional when operating in and relating to the world. We can think of ‘trauma-response behaviour’ as classified and described in modern psychology. A coping mechanism was an answer at some point – and perhaps it worked. It was kind of a good answer considering all, the dreadful and circumstantial reality. Like the flight-mode on our phones, we have our own ‘survival mode’ which comes with a set of assumptions about the world, the know-how about our relation to it, and everything in it.

The point that I want to make is that this “carving nature at its joints” is nothing but offering a certain answer to a certain question or need. Such answers may always come in a multitude, in other words, we can offer different answers.

Furthermore, the answer can be good one day, and utterly useless next. In that sense, answers are like established roads. And the road that you take one day may be the fastest route back home, and another road on another day, and another.

That said, the conditions to which we give an answer, might as well change. It means that a question, which comes out of an urgency, a need that needs to be met, may as well be reformulated. A good question is the most important thing, because asking good questions is the only way to giving good answers. Answers, on the other hand, belong in specific moments in history. They aim to meet a specific need that a question expresses. How do we meet a need? With an answer that offers an approach, a method, or a way of seeing things from a different perspective: a way of relating ourselves to the world.

To meet the need, a question in fact asks for a specific kind of methodology... so that “what is needed” or “what satisfies the need” can be delimited, demarcated, or encircled. So that we can put a boundary around the question/need where answers disclose themselves to be found. To this end, we can say that there may as well be different models or “carvings-of-nature-at-its-joints” where we can have more of a metaphysical outlook on the world, when thinking about the notions such as love, trust, grief, suffering, etc. By metaphysical, I mean that in a way that is conducive to making sense and cultivating meaning when considered from the broader perspective of the human condition. Arts and literature, to this end, are to be named.

In that regard, we have, for instance, C. S. Lewis, in his articulation of the loss of a mother: “Her absence is like the sky, spread over everything²⁷”; and Albert Camus, for another thing, in his famous opening lines to *the Outsider*: “My mother

²⁷ Lewis (1961/2001), p. 11.

died today. Or maybe yesterday, I don't know.²⁸ In a Chalmersian conceptualization of the factual (or, the reworking of a metaphysics of consciousness as supported by brain science), I am dubious as to how a consideration of 'something that is like to be' (say, in the face of a mother's loss) can account for the human condition, as articulated in many shapes and forms in the praxis of language. This is problem we have to face, when the grief of a mother's loss (as the object of observation) is to be understood in a singular relation to its observation, isolated from the web of interwoven activities such as "feeling remorse, guilt, relief, or apathy." Understanding grief in the second sense would involve considering the human subject in its unity.

This is where we draw the line vis-à-vis Kripke, Wright, and Chalmers, in their own ways of dealing with an explanatory gap. These are based on offering a certain kind of answers, more than asking the right questions. In so doing, they are tainted by a Cartesian way of understanding the self and world; metaphysically charged on distorted and/or partially sufficient grounds. So far in our discussion, we tried to make the point that the bridge which "looks as if it had to exist²⁹" is already part of the language. At least, to say that it is already there in life, not as inferred (pace Chalmers' inferentialist view) or stipulated/interpreted (pace Wright) would be to hold a non-Cartesian dualist position about what a human being is as situated and embedded in human life. We want to say that Chalmers' project lacks the possibility of making this point. Instead, it may help serve some other ends, such as contributing to the developments in AI and humanoid robotics.

²⁸ Camus (1942/2013), p. 3.

²⁹ We may recall PI 50:

What looks as if it had to exist is part of the language. It is a paradigm in our game; something with which comparisons are made. And this may be an important observation; but it is none the less an observation about our language-game – our mode of representation.

4.4 An attitude towards a humanoid

Taking account of our Wittgensteinian points about understanding in the previous section, we will now consider the problem of other minds once again, but a slightly modified version of it, as a particular case of applying a rule. Our questions are:

- What does understanding the other as a human being consist in?
- What is the nature of uncertainty that is involved in accepting something as conscious, sentient, animate as opposed to an automaton, philosophical zombie, or an AI?

This will be a discussion that is addressing doubting, but not of a Cartesian kind. It aims to be completely descriptive in its manner by making use of examples from different mediums of expression, such as film and literature. To this end, we will consider Wittgenstein's remark on "an attitude toward a soul" once again. If we don't doubt that the everyday scenarios involving human beings –such as meeting a friend over coffee– is part of a rule as to what a human being *is*, we may be inclined to ask: How far do the rules involved in this case go?

What would it mean to have radical doubts about my friend? Even though right now, there's no such possibility that in our interactions with other humans –say, at the bus stop or in the supermarket, we can be totally wrong that the being we consider as human may in fact not be human. Take Sophia the caregiver robot, for one. Developed by a Hong Kong robotics company, Sophia was designed "to promote human-machine empathy and compassion." At least, that's the promise.

What is striking about Sophia is that encountering such a creation utterly evokes a sense of uncanniness. The way that Sophia reacts in the way that humans do when they are in pain, feel disgust, show sympathy, etc. is like what a replica stands to the original. But this similarity is not like in the case of a fake Rothko in its

relation to the respective original work, whose provenance can only be established through further scientific study (e.g., an analysis of the paints, solvents, etc. used which are historically known to be available to the artist at that time), by grounding the issue on some matters of fact.

In Sophia's case, however, the feeling of uncanniness is a result of a replica Rothko that is distinguishably fake to the naked eye. That feeling is there in each time she has given an interview to the press in various topics ranging from our political to social issues. The interesting part about this uncanniness is generated by certain facts about Sophia as an artefact, such as "having an attitude" or "having a life." Typically manifested in the life of an animate being, these features are formative factors in social learning when we learn from and about other people around us.

But in case of our human-like robot, Sophia was activated in 2014, and since then, we have had many different versions of Sophia. For this reason, the reluctance on our part to find Sophia having a "life" stands prevalent, insofar as we can talk about a life. And insofar as we can talk about this, we may be inclined to ask: What would consist in talking about a life-changing experience for her? How many times did she die, in whatever sense we may talk about death in her case? Furthermore, are we to talk about one mind in different bodies? What would happen to Sophia if she was transferred to a new body, a new hardware with an old software, so to speak?

But let us imagine, if the technology was so advanced that we would not be even hesitant about treating her as a natural person, would that make it the case that we would consider Sophia less of an artefact but more of a being with a life of its own?

4.4.1 Human beings and philosophical persons

What would consist in treating Sophia as a natural person? Would we, perhaps, appeal to its origin, which is not flesh and blood, and find a treatment of the case where things are primarily found to be what *they are* as grounded in their material constitution? More generally, the question would be: Can the origin and ways of production determine what a thing is? I want to say that such questions are conceptually confused as they run on a similar line as to saying, “the brain thinks, feels, has sensations, make decisions, and so on.”

On an ordinary day, in “standard” circumstances, we are drawn to what Wittgenstein remarks: “Only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees; is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious” (PI 281). In our present form of life (which does not mean that it is not changing, not turning into something else, not being revised or modified) Wittgenstein’s point in this remark is that there can be no meaningful doubt that people we are interacting with are in fact conscious. This is a remark and criticism, which is addressed to both the Cartesian solipsist and any kind of AI. I will expand on this as follows.

If somebody tells me humanoids are now considered human, and a great majority of the community is accepting that, we may have for the most part two cases; I may either have no problem with that, or I may have serious doubts and concerns as to what to make of all this. The point is that when everyday scenarios involving human beings radically change, we need to consider those changes about our rules as to what a human being is. In other words, to see what makes all the difference regarding our ‘attitude toward a humanoid’ as opposed to our ‘attitude toward a soul’ is a consideration of whether there is a change about our rules as to

what a human being means. This is a consideration of how we make sense of ourselves, the human subject, as well as other beings as extended in our interactions, as discussed in the previous section.

Similarly, we may ask: How does a question like “What is the right attitude toward a humanoid?” arise? What would be the social cues to be read and rules to be followed in our encounters with *them*? For such a question even to arise, we want to say: We cannot start by assuming a correct way of applying a rule first (regarding our recognition and treatment of the non-human), and then decide on its future applications, as pointed out in the previous section. As an application of a frame where we operate by rules, we will now consider this point in a particular case.

To this end, I would like to consider the 1982 film *Blade Runner* by Ridley Scott, adapted from the 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick. In this fictional world, human beings coexist with highly developed humanoids called ‘replicants’. Produced by the Tyrell Corporation, these replicants come in various models and versions: there is a Nexus-6 combat model replicant (aka Roy Batty), for example, or an “experimental” Nexus-7 one (Rachael). As the story goes, a policeman (Deckard) who was assigned to retire four replicants who want to kill the creator, Dr Tyrell, develops feelings towards one of them (Rachael).

For all the characters that I mentioned above, the object of doubt is what we would normally take for granted, as part of our deep conditioning in our “attitude towards a human being.” In a way, the story is a borderline case that represents the end of our common-sense understanding of what being human consists in and raises questions about the differences between a human being and a non-human. In this way, we can talk about a major transformation of the respective language-game in

that world. From a broader angle, the story offers a well-suited complementary case for our ways of thinking about being human.

To begin with, take Case A, where the proximity in likeness, or in “outer” appearance and attitude, creates a difficulty in making sense of who or what a replicant is, as opposed to/in relation to a human being.

Case A. Rachael shows Deckard an old picture of her as a child with her mother, telling him the background stories of her childhood. Each time she mentions of a memory, Deckard finishes her story, showing that he already knows as if he has prior access to her memories before she even tells him. Thus, Deckard tells her that she is a replicant; her memories are in fact ‘implants’, they originally belong to someone else; a real human. Seeing Rachael with a puzzled look in her face being startled by such news, Deckard tells her that it was only a joke. A devastated Rachael looks at the old pictures she holds, tosses them away, and leaves the room.

This illustrates a case in which we can have doubts about what it means to see Rachael with/without an inner life of having feelings, deep thoughts, or concerns, recalling memories, and so on. An inner life as we know it in the human case – as something that is expressed and extended in the outer, which can be readily found in one’s face³⁰, or in art and literature. But in addition to these, our understanding of ourselves, others, and phenomena can be conceptualized within an explanatory paradigm where the examination involves our technical terms and jargon.

That said, having a reasonable doubt about the inner life of a being would not be in this examinational sense, viz. our memories are something that can be reproduced, downloaded, or uploaded as brain waves or in any other forms of representation. Such a representation, in any case, would have to be first moulded and take shape in the ordinary language. The technical/scientific, then, would be an

³⁰ ‘We see emotion’. –As opposed to what? –We do not see facial contortions and make the inference that he is feeling joy, grief, boredom. We describe a face immediately as sad, radiant, bored, even when we are unable to give any other description of the features. –Grief, one would like to say, is personified in the face. (Z 225)

extension of the ordinary. Turning this relation around, that is to say, starting from the technical/scientific when making sense of the ordinary would amount to the naturalization of philosophy.

On the same point, having a reasonable doubt in Case A would not concern that “having a feeling” involves downloading certain moods or emotions at a given time, at will or upon request. In this sense, the uncertainty involved in Case A, in our understanding of Rachael as someone with/without an “inner life” is of a logical kind. So we may ask: what would it mean to produce and transfer core memories that contribute to one’s understanding of oneself, one’s own narrative about their own? What, then, would that make of our understanding of the subjective viewpoint, given that it could in a way be reproduced and transferred elsewhere? (An era of post-humanity, rather than humanity.)

There may be a time when scientific developments fundamentally alter our understanding of such concepts, which may totally transform the language-game, in the sense that our fundamental certainties would be different but continuous with the ones we already have. To this end, consider a misunderstanding on the intersubjective level, when for instance, I misread the room and confuse your ennui with anger. By comparison, Rachael’s case requires a change of perspective, it stands before us as something of a paradigm for having an “inner life.” The idea that we have only our own inner lives in understanding what it means to have an inner life takes a philosophical move from the particular to the general. In taking such a step, we may still have a continuity with the ordinary, with our rules and concepts already in use. This would be possible given that “having an inner life” does not concern the logically separate realm of the ‘inner’, but rather our attitude towards a human being, as part of how one is trained in one’s social learning process. The application of this

attitude as a rule, on the other hand, may be revised or changed within a paradigm or frame. Not having any frames or having a narrow-scope frame (such as behaviouristic sciences, or Cartesian self) disturbs the continuity between our theory-laden conceptualizations and the non-philosophical grammatical agreements in social life.

What does it mean that our fundamental certainties are radically changed – shaken to the core, so to speak – would be continuous with the ones we already have? I want to say, viewing them not as continuous would amount to an irresolvable doubt which, in principle, cannot be resolved upon further enquiry, social interaction and contact. In our description of Rachael's reactions when she learns about her origin, what makes it possible for us to appeal to her case as something that shakes her to the core, is a result of this continuity. And so we may find, in that moment of truth for Rachael, much like blood oozes out of a wound, the outer oozes out of the inner.

We may recall Dilman once again on the imitation and activity, as involved in Rachael's case: "if a machine imitates a mathematician overtly it must be calculating" (1975, p. 134) – epitomizing the idea that, when using general concepts (such as "to calculate") the behaviouristic approach takes a certain position when dealing with human existence in its many features. In contrast, here is how a confusion of a philosophical kind may unfold. We may call it "judge by the cover" approach, which is by an understanding that *whatever* oozes, it comes out of *nothing on the inside*, perhaps except for *something* that makes it the case that makes her "conscious" of her environment. In the sense that the overt activity that Rachael displays in Case A imitates a human being in a substantial way. Insofar as there is an imitation, there can be an inclination to perceive her as *conscious* in its relation to what being conscious amounts to in the human case.

For a further analysis of the uncertainty and confusion involved in our case, we will in due time bring up a philosophical exchange titled “Machines as Persons?” between Christopher Cherry and Oswald Hanfling (1991). But before moving on, I would like to make a few remarks on ‘person’ and ‘personhood’ as the chief notion Cherry and Hanfling bring up in their discussion. It seems to me that they both have the notion, in considering its relation to human existence, which is even more the case in Hanfling than in Cherry, in the former’s recognising it as a kind of existence in the world, in “a network of moral relationships involving rights and duties,” and for that, having more to it “than what is expressed” (Hanfling, 1991, p. 28).

But in many cases, philosopher’s use of ‘person’ and ‘personhood’ does not mention or include any notion of ‘humanity’. In Teichman’s piece on the notion³¹, she affirms the point: “In most writings on the notion of a person the status of the concept of a human being is at best that of an unacknowledged paradigm³²” (1974, p. 137). This is partly alarming for our discussion on solipsism, to the extent that “[it] is associated with the concept of a person, not with that of a human being” which does not “belong alongside other species terms: words, that is to say, such as ‘dog’, ‘cat’, ‘horse’, ‘worm’, ‘flea’, etc.” (Teichman, 1974, pp. 136).

Around the same time as Teichman, Dilman was also on this point. His piece “Wittgenstein and the notion of soul” in *Understanding Wittgenstein*³³, which also features Teichman above, draws points from many descriptive cases of the human subject with distinct feelings and moral relationships. In our discussion, we will treat

³¹ “Wittgenstein on Persons and Human Beings“. In *Understanding Wittgenstein: Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures Vol. 7 1972/1973*, edited by. G. Vesey, pp. 133-148. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1974.

³² Teichman (1974) makes her point by considering the notion as discussed in the early modern philosophy, namely in Descartes and Locke. Despite differences, both take ‘a person’ or ‘self’ as fundamentally a conscious being, inseparable from ‘thinking’ (p. 136).

³³ Ibid., pp. 162-192.

the notion of personhood along the lines of Hanfling, Teichman, and Dilman. We will take ‘personhood’ to include the notion of humanity (in the above sense). In this way, we can refrain from a merely behaviouristic or rationalist perspective in forming a continuity between a rule and its future applications.

4.4.2 Having irresolvable doubts: A matter of life and death

The gist of Cherry’s point about the uncertainty involved in making sense of our selves and others captures the relation between the possibility of discriminating different cases (human and non-human), and the kinds of uncertainty involved in this discrimination. To make his point, Cherry considers what being human and a machine consist in, by taking account of the uncertainties involved. He makes a logical remark about what it means to perceive something as having life as opposed to inanimate, before giving his conceptual analysis of the logic behind:

The uncertainty that whether something is living or inanimate, whether something is human or machine, *must persist indefinitely*. But it *cannot be perceived irresolvable*. Because if it were, misunderstanding or mistaking the inanimate for the animate would begin to look empty. And a contrast between what, on any existing conception is appropriate and inappropriate to each would cease to have any clear sense. (Cherry, 1991, p. 13, italics mine)

Having an uncertainty that “must persist indefinitely” but “cannot be perceived irresolvable” is another way of saying that a doubt must be reasonable, otherwise it is not a doubt. It must be within the reasons for having a doubt about the other (be it a machine or another mind). And the type of reasons we may hold in this case may reflect the solipsistic self as opposed to the idea of an embedded self.

Cherry further develops these different “reasons” in his investigation into the concept of sentience. In so doing, he considers what would be involved in asking what sentience is. In response, Cherry points out that there are three kinds of

reactions to this question, and implicit in each, three views on sentience (1991, p. 15). These consist in:

1. A resolved uncertainty
2. The forever unresolved but resolvable uncertainty
3. The necessarily unresolvable uncertainty

These views on sentience in their take on the resolvability/irresolvability of an uncertainty reflect different philosophical attitudes towards the matter. Cherry focuses on the third kind of uncertainty, which I think runs deep within a certain Cartesian-type irresolvability. What is the cause of its resistance to resolvability? Cherry believes that “at root, a certain sort of divided vision” (1991, p. 15). Between human being and machine, there is a contradictory pull from opposing quarters –that they are, and they are not animate and sentient. Cherry observes that the cause of the pull is based on the division between the activity and its author. We may attribute sentience or consciousness to the activity that we think is constitutive of what sentience is, and insentience to its author. Thus, Cherry further remarks:

This pull on us in opposite directions may result in a compulsion to attribute sentience to the activity and insentience to its author, in an effort to do justice both to what is seen to go on and what it is which makes it go on. So a readiness to acknowledge the inanimateness of something because it is a manufactured imitation of (say) a human being need not set its behaviour in a wholly different light. The impression that what we are witnessing is animate (or at any rate not inanimate) behaviour need not be dispelled in any consistent or lasting way, irrespective of what we think of the status of its source. (Cherry, 1991, p. 16)

In considering the “pull” as Cherry depicts, the first kind of uncertainty is of little significance for now. I, for one, would not imagine what it would be like to have a resolved uncertainty about my attitude towards humanoids –yet. As for the second kind, Cherry notes that it consists in “distancing” oneself “by suspending judgment, hoping perhaps for developments in biochemistry or neurophysiology” (1991, p. 16).

We may refer back to Chalmers here once again. I take that the resolvability in the second kind requires a scientific turn (along with a naturalized onto-epistemology) and is a matter of wishful-thinking in understanding what sentience, subjective experience, or consciousness is. It remains yet to be seen in what ways biochemical and neurophysiological developments as well as scientific methods in explaining and interpreting phenomena would unfold.

The problem with scientism is that there is a concern as to justify what makes a replica human but not a machine, by appealing to a certain biological or material constitution and psychophysical processes. Although such a justificatory appeal undertakes the task of explaining an activity as distinct from its author, the explanation consists in blurring the conceptual/factual distinction. Rendering a misguided pursuit, it further requires a connection that glues the overt activity³⁴ to the author. What makes all the difference in the human case if the uncertainty can be perceived as resolved, is not the categorical divorce of the activity and the author, but their unity.

This is also the gist of Hanfling's point that we could not even have uncertainty of an irresolvable kind, if humanoids were to "act like a human being 'in every respect'" however difficult it may be to make this supposition (1991, pp. 27-28). It means that they now properly belong to the fabric of 'personhood', to the fabric of not just facts but also values, in our moral attitudes and judgments. If, for example, they were to become our neighbours at some point, whose biological origin would be unknown to us.³⁵

In our case, we will turn to *Blade Runner* again:

³⁴ We mentioned this in the previous section, by reference to Dilman (1975, p. 124).

³⁵ Hanfling, for instance, considers the case of Edward, a "regular Joe" much like any of our human neighbours, and asks what would have changed if Edward came out of the closet one day and revealed its robotic origin (1991, p. 33-34).

Case B. Rachael asks Deckard if he would still come after and hunt her if she went away and disappeared. Being a man of duty, Deckard who was not once hesitant about killing a replicant so far, says no. Rachael then asks him about the corporate file that was kept about her, documenting her “inception date” and “longevity”. She wants to know if he has seen the file. He says he hasn’t because they were classified. A policeman who was asked to hunt Rachael, but hasn’t even seen the file... it makes Rachael think about Deckard’s origin. She asks whether *he* has ever taken the test himself –the test that differentiates human from non-human. She gets no answer as a tired Deckard dozes off on the sofa.

Rachael finds herself by the piano in Deckard’s apartment, sees the old pictures on the music desk once again, which she thought were her memories. Moved by the scene, she solemnly plays the piano. She then undoes her hair, removes her makeup, gets rid of her ‘80s glam look.

Deckard, woken up, finds her at the piano, and tells her that he heard music in his dream. She says, she wasn’t sure if she could play at all, although she remembers the piano lessons. And adds, she doesn’t know if those memories are actually hers or someone else’s –a human’s. She couldn’t trust her memories anymore. Not interested in whose-memories-belong-to-whom, and the issue of “authenticity” involved, which puts Rachael in so much distress, Deckard only tells her that she plays the piano beautifully. That is, at least, how it struck him.

What kind of irresolvable doubts would a case as above involve? I will give my answers after Cherry’s. To him, the irresolvability builds on seeing behaviour almost with a life of its own, thus taking the factual in the place of the conceptual:

Behaviour is bound under its own steam, so to say, like a sign-post which guides or an inscription in a dead language which no one knows anymore. Yet again, we have for the most part none but intentional modes for characterizing behaviour of the order in question. [...] The nature of the uncertainty of the third kind is that we are unable to see machines as other than inanimate yet at the same time unable to see machine activity as other than animate. [...] The posture is incoherent but it was never presented as other. (Cherry, 1991, p. 16)

This captures what a Cartesian dualist-type doubt runs on in the crudest sense, in the idea that we appeal to the inanimate or the machine paradigmatically from the behaviour of the animate. The claim is that there is no other way to see it. On an epistemic level, the claim expresses that we cannot *not* see behaviour in a different light. In that regard, the idea that “behaviour is bound under its own steam,” or has a

life of its own can be paradigmatically compared with Locke's representationalist theory of ideas³⁶. Accordingly, in our idea of a thing as something (say, the tree outside my window) is thought to be a complex idea that consists of a host of simple ideas (such as 'green', 'brown', 'tall', 'solid', etc.). These simple ideas, according to Locke, are immediate objects of perception. Furthermore, Locke claims that, as a collection of simple ideas, the constituents of the tree (the leaves, the trunk, etc.) make up the complex idea of the tree. How exactly do we account for a complex idea? By such operations as compounding, comparing, naming, etc. which occur in the mind. Thus, to Locke, perceiving the tree not as a collection of simple ideas, but a complex and integrated object is conceived to be purely the work of the mind (Chappell, 1994, pp. 35-38). But how does a bundle of simple ideas as the constituents of our idea of tree make up the complex but simplistically homogenous idea of tree? In Locke's empiricist conception of the mind in its relation to the world, the question of how the mind *by itself* could end up with the idea of tree (as opposed to some other interpretation of the thing in the world) need to be further considered.

Against such naturalistic reading of the mind, we may say that there is already no other way to see the tree from a different light, given that we are even able to see it as something and make it an issue of philosophical inquiry. The content of our minds, in that sense, stick to the world with a logical interpretation, but this logic is only indirectly related to our practices and rules already in action. Insofar as the relation in question is taken to be a loose grip on the world, our doubts become unreasonable.

Additionally, Cherry stresses that "it is useless to point out that there is all the difference in the world between behaviour which has an author of a kind to confer

³⁶ There are different exegetical interpretations of Locke's empiricist project. Here we refer to Chappell's reading of Locke's theory of ideas in [Chappell, 1994].

animation upon it and behaviour which has not” (p. 17). But in finding the case as such, it seems to me that the uncertainty would entail an understanding of the animate (human and animal) as related to the inanimate (machine) either internally (by some covert mechanism as posited scientifically) or externally (“if a machine imitates a mathematician overtly, it must be calculating”).

It is not difficult to see now, how both ends of this relation feed each other in assuming behaviour/author or behaviour/life as distinct and separate. Such a relation can be found in phenomenological or cognitive scientific approach, where the separation in question leads to putting the cart before the horse. How? By taking matters of fact as the ground of understanding. Such scientifically reductionist approaches take off from a limited picture of what a human being, being sentient, or having a subjective viewpoint is. Similarly, we can consider Chalmers’ inspection of the brain and his aim to explain that which makes us a uniquely conscious subject. From there, it does not take much to segue into a philosophical threat, i.e., solipsism.

One way to go against such a picture is to take behaviour as not having a life of its own. It is necessarily behaviour of a certain kind of author. The issue is about understanding what kind of an author that is. That is more properly our interest in the matter; one that is, as Hanfling notes, “not [...] confined to the actual likelihood of such a development. It lies, rather, in bringing out what is –and is not– involved in our treatment of ordinary human beings as persons” (1991, p. 28).

In that regard, I think that the uncertainty involved in Case B, then, would be comprised in grasping “life” as “longevity”; “birth” as “inception”. It would take a consideration of Rachael’s experience of time, for one. Would it be merely counting successive moments? How could she appeal to the subjective experience of time

passing by (when time “freezes” on a dull occasion, or “flies” the next)? What would it be like for Rachael to be consumed completely in the ebb and flow of life?

A consideration of all these would be more involved in how Rachael understands herself as a subject. In other words, as the author of her life with a self-understanding, which would be manifested in her life and behaviours. As far as the portrayal of her character is concerned, she is to a great extent dubious about who she is, and what she is capable of. Can she even die? If she is not subject to death, what kind of a life she lives? Like her, we are left with a bunch of irresolvable uncertainties of this kind.

In Chapter 2, we have mentioned that doubt is a dual-aspect concept; doubting occurs when one is hesitant about assenting to a position or conclusion rather than another. In its dual-aspect nature, if what is real (in the solipsist’s case) or what makes *the* understanding of an instruction (in Kripke’s sceptical problem) is so construed that the human subject (as embedded in language and culture) reaches out to the world, such a subject is already assumed to be separate and fundamentally different (or even ‘alien’). This conception renders further philosophical problems concerning understanding others and self-understanding. Along similar lines, Midgley observes:

Consciousness is not just one object, nor one state or function of objects, among others in the world. It is not (as people often suggest) a function roughly parallel to digestion or perspiration. It is the condition of a subject, someone for whom all those objects are objects. The question it arises are therefore primarily about the nature of a person as a whole, a person who is both subject and object. (Midgley, 2001, p. 114)

Such notions as “life” and “death” are the backbone of the matter here. It seems to us that, what it takes in making sense of these is, to say the least, “a person who is both subject and object.” But, although these concepts are still in the making; changing even as we are speaking of them, the uncertainties make it even more the case that

the meaning of “life” and “death” cannot be totally captured by a matter-of-fact account or examination.

We may be talking about “extended *minds*”, “machine *dreaming*” or “*intelligent homes*” on a regular basis today. Still, the uncertainty involved in Case B is concerned with making proper sense of these “extended notions” insofar as they extend over the totality of human existence. Such notions are in fact as large as life itself, for instance, in describing or representing life’s complexities, compared to a calculator “imitating” a mathematician, or a computer becoming more “intelligent” than the world’s smartest chess player. But to the extent that “human life has so much to it than what is expressed, represented, interpreted” (Hanfling, 1991, p. 28), understanding and sense-making is always in the making, it is an activity that occurs on two levels: the self and the other (non-self). And the activity of understanding on these two levels is cultivated by a formative and reciprocal relationship between self-understanding and understanding the other, including the worldly things and affairs. In the light of such a notion of understanding, we may talk about having a non-Cartesian outlook on such matters, while still having reasonable doubts.

We will lastly consider Case C. This will help us see how self-understanding is a formative factor in making sense of such notions, as expressed in action and behaviour.

Case C. The death of Roy Batty: A “soulful” end of a life form.

A Nexus-6 combat replicant Roy Batty leads a group of rebels who demand immortality from their creator, Dr Tyrell. To this end, he confronts his maker. Receiving no sympathy from the doctor, he says: “I think the god of biomechanics wouldn’t let you in heaven,” then kills him brutally. Later on, he must face Deckard who wants to put an end to their strife, and terminate him. Roy Batty is by far the upper hand in this duel; he could have defeated Deckard not once but many times. Still, he doesn’t. His motivation comes not just winning the battle, but something more. More precisely, he is more consumed by coming to terms with his mortality, and the kind of life that he is living. That is why, he questions Deckard’s moral position. Is Deckard

really the “good guy” here? How does he even make this point? That, we can find in his challenging Deckard to substantially consider his moral stance.

In the end, Roy surrenders. He chooses death over a meaningless life. The death of a warrior, no less noble than what we could find in *Hagakure: Way of the Samurai*. In his final words, he makes an observation about the transience and preciousness of life –which shows deep complexities in its simplicity, like in Basho’s haikus: “All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain.”

I am interested in Case C insofar as it is an illustrative case of understanding something as moving and soulful. This understanding consists in the ability to make an investigation with such concepts as “moving” and “soulful”. How is this understanding possible?

To the extent my attitude towards the other person is an attitude towards a soul, it can neither change nor be changed without entailing a change in my nature... It may also be worthwhile to stress that this has nothing whatsoever to do with aspects and changing aspects. While expressing that for a human being this is an, as it were, preset attitude, Wittgenstein manages to gain a certain distance from it – the distance that is necessary to show that this is a reflective insight. And his means of gaining this distance is by using the word ‘soul’ in speaking of my attitude towards the other person. Another writer might wish to say that what Wittgenstein means is that my attitude towards the other is (or cannot help being) an attitude towards a human being (twice underlined). But this would not be the same thing: Wittgenstein’s way of putting the matter cannot be reduced to a thesis, be it ever so emphatic. He expresses what he wants to say by using a picture that cannot be replaced by a different kind of thing without disturbing the whole. It is a word-picture in a similar sense in which the picture of a painted picture worked in our portrayal of yearning: It helps indicate the nature of the object meant without attempting to describe its nature. (Schulte, 2013, p. 85)

Wittgenstein remarks, “Concepts lead us to make investigations. They are the expression of our interest and direct our interest” (PI 570). Working with concepts, in that sense, takes a dual-task performance. On the one hand, they express, point to, and mean what our interest is; on the other hand, they direct, guide, and shape our interest. This dual-task performance takes place on both levels, the self and the other (and if we recall the point about self-understanding and understanding the other (non-self), the reciprocal relationship between them echoes in what it means that a

language-game begins³⁷). In other words, making sense is a collaborative work, taking shape in the language-game, in the form of life, where we can talk about having a “soul” in any way possible.

The beginning of the language-game, in our case, leads to a consideration of having an examined, moral life. Roy chooses not to kill Deckard by finding value in having a life. In so doing, he affirms life, and welcomes his own death, being more content than bitter. Not to our surprise, he comes to terms with his mortality and finitude, in a way, thanks to Deckard. It is the case of a collaborative value creation; there is not one hint of a solipsistic way of thinking here, which is more the case below, in Teichman’s words:

Allowing a ‘basic’ division into matter and consciousness is like pushing Humpty-Dumpty off the wall: it’s extremely difficult to get the pieces together again. When the idea of consciousness is completely separated from, abstracted from, humanity and human life philosophers develop two typical syndromes: firstly, a dire suspicion that anything at all might be a subject of consciousness, and secondly, the fear that nothing (except oneself) is such a subject. (Teichman, 1974, pp. 135-136)

³⁷ It is not, of course, that I identify my sensation by means of criteria; it is, rather, that I use the same expression. But it is not as if the language-game ends with this; it begins with it. (PI 290)

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

We don't see things as it is, we see it as we are. Because it is the 'I' behind the 'eye' that does the seeing.

—Anais Nin, *The Seduction of the Minotaur*, 1961.

Rules of life are dressed up in pictures. And these pictures can only serve to describe what we are to do, not justify it. Because they could provide a justification only if they held good in other respects as well. I can say: "Thank these bees for their honey as though they were kind people who have prepared it for you"; that is intelligible and describes how I should like you to conduct yourself. But I cannot say: "Thank them because, look, how kind they are!" — since the next moment they may sting you.

—Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, 1967.

In this study, my aim is not to refute scepticism, or render it meaningless or useless, but to understand what it can and cannot achieve in our understanding about our connection to the world and others. What, then, remains to be an interesting topic of exploration within this context is the difference between the forms of our philosophical questions. These questions include, first, whether we can know at all, and second, how and what we know. In this sense, philosophical scepticism involves a higher order "talk". It concerns our philosophical discourse about how we conceptualize and discuss whatever is at the target of the issue.

This study investigates how, depending on our philosophical approach and framework, scepticism may pose an unresolvable problem. It involves critical literature surveys in Chapters 2 and 3, and a discussion in Chapter 4. In Chapter 2, we point out that the sceptic's charge runs on the difference between 'what *is* the case' and 'what *appears* to be the case' given our capabilities of evaluating and discriminating the so-called "mere appearances" in an ever-changing world. In fact, as we mention, the case of choosing between two alternatives is reminiscent of the

dual quality which can be found in the etymology of ‘doubt’, viz. “undecided between two things or two minds” or “to have to choose between two things”. The duality in question implies hesitancy, confusion, or distrust as regards seeing or accepting what the case is, which results in a puzzle, problem, or enigma.

To illustrate, in Chapter 2, we consider the Stoic claim that “some impressions are true” in comparison to the Academic sceptic claim that “no impressions are true.” Our inquiry is directed toward the differences of philosophical approach and outlook in making these onto-epistemological claims. Thus, we ask, what purpose do they serve in our understanding of the world? We argue that these two claims stand on more of a philosophical ground in their relation to one’s philosophical understanding of issues concerning our relation to the world. In this regard, we observe that these two claims operate as higher-order principles which govern our way of thinking.

To further illustrate the difference between philosophical scepticism and ordinary doubt, Chapter 2 aims to explicate some of the sceptical positions in philosophy which have arisen since antiquity. To this end, we take the Socratic vs. sophistic/sceptical attitudes into consideration with regard to their impact on the human subject as a philosophical and moral agent. Insofar as our claims of knowledge are ultimately grounded in the human capacity to know, we can say that our views about the human subject who marshals and assesses the world as *something* shape the kind of philosophical outlooks and sceptical attitudes we might have.

We indicate that the philosophical sceptic’s point takes off from the so-called ‘arbitrariness’ of the ground of our beliefs and judgments in our assessment of what is real and what is not real. The sceptic’s discontent is derived from this arbitrariness,

to which the ancient sophists also adhere. In coming to terms with this arbitrariness, we mention that the idea of what makes our self-related beliefs and claims about the world grounded has gone through a major historical transformation. To this end, in Chapter 2, we trace the notion of the self from ancient Greece onwards. In this way, we look into Charles Taylor's historical investigation of this notion from Plato to Augustine and Descartes. We point out that Taylor's comparative survey illustrates one main difference in the philosophical significance of reason (logos) and the notion of 'inwardness' in making of the self. The historical survey further helps clarify the journey of the 'self' as the knower. Accordingly, the 'soul' in Saint Augustine and the 'mind' in Descartes take centre stage with an emphasis on their relation to truth (viz. Augustine) and certainty (viz. Descartes).

The relation in question is conceived to be 'direct' in a philosophically special sense, further rendering the idea of a privileged ground of knowledge. To show that, we consider Descartes' cogito argument. We indicate that the argument consists in the idea of the mentalization of knowing, and the isolation of the self as the knowing subject. In this regard, we find that Descartes' locus of epistemic activity, i.e., the Cartesian ego, is a continuation of the ancient sceptical tradition, which nevertheless comes with a twist, viz. the self as an isolated and primarily thinking being.

By examining the dynamics behind Cartesian dualist framework, our study is directed at a certain form of scepticism that seems to have an easy backdoor access to solipsism. Solipsism is a view that can be easily caricaturized. But for the purpose of our discussion, we are not interested in the position as a full-fledged charge against the epistemic status of our beliefs, but as it provides a ground for investigating our ways of thinking about the self and others. Thus, in Chapter 3, we

look into the solipsistic self as separate from its surroundings, from the activities and practices in which the human subject participates. The juxtaposition of these two contrasting pictures, viz. the solipsistic self as a philosophical construct and the human being in the context of his/her everyday life, shows a sharp distinction. We find that the Cartesian explanatory gap between the human subject and the world, between the 'inner' and the 'outer' stands as an expression of this contrast. To this end, we examine a philosophical attempt to bridge this gap, i.e., the argument from analogy for other minds. The argument runs on the assumption that *my* knowledge of others (such as someone's pain) is grounded insofar as *I* know what pain is *in my case*.

In Chapter 3, we further examine the argument from analogy. We point out that, by assuming such a gap, the argument operates on a Cartesian dualist framework, where the mind/'inner' is logically separate from the world/'outer'. By appealing to such a gap that is conceptually and logically unbridgeable, the Cartesian notion of the self generates a certain form of scepticism which makes it the case that knowing about other minds, and knowing *in general* is insufferably problematic, if not impossible. Furthermore, by generating such an 'inner' knower or agent, it runs into the problem of solipsism.

Regarding this form of philosophical scepticism, we argue that Wittgenstein provided interesting and important intuitions that changed our way of looking at the issue. He offers a new perspective in which the problem of scepticism can be positive and properly addressed. We argue that in whatever way we look at Wittgenstein's thought on the matter, we should not forget that there is a concern with solipsism which goes hand in hand with his investigation into language and logic, meaning and understanding.

In Chapter 3, we take a closer look at Wittgenstein's remarks about the philosophy of mind in the *Philosophical Investigations* and his critique of solipsism in the *Blue and Brown Books*. We mention that the problem of personal identity is not an issue for the solipsist. Because the solipsist wants to make an altogether different claim, that is, without the 'I' in 'I see, feel pain, etc.' there is no such thing as seeing, or feeling pain. Our exegetical reading of Wittgenstein helps explicate that the solipsist's claim is rather concerned with the nature of epistemic agency as opposed to the criteria of identity regarding our assertions about one's persistence in time.

In understanding the nature of epistemic agency that stands as the backbone of solipsism, we point out that Wittgenstein holds a strong grammatical position against a solipsistic conception of our relationality in the world and of how such a conception manifests through our language and practices. His position suggests the idea that we cannot start our thinking about ourselves and others with one of the two Cartesian substances (i.e., mind/body) where one is conceived to be epistemically privileged over the other. If one of the two is conceived to have a privileged status over the other, as the Cartesian dualist and solipsist claims, we further make two points. First, this hierarchical distinction would not be meaningful, as we discuss in Chapter 3, in the solipsist's claims of 'reality' and 'singularity' of their thought. Second, if we were to draw the difference between mind/ body like Descartes does, but also like in contemporary eliminativist/ materialist accounts, then we would end up talking about something completely different from what we take to be a human we normally interact with. The notion of the human condition, then, could not be part of this picture, for it cannot be described by a framework so detached from language

as embedded in life and behaviour; and what's more, it cannot be reduced to either this inert kind of body or this cryptic picture of the inner world.

In Chapter 3, we argue that the Cartesian dualist conception of the mind/soul as a philosophically loaded term replaces the soul in the ordinary sense, but Wittgenstein's notion of the soul invokes an altogether different understanding. I argue that the significance of Wittgenstein's remark on having "an attitude towards a soul" lies in two considerations. First, we can consider the two senses of the notion of soul, viz. the ordinary sense, and the philosophically loaded sense. And second, in having "an attitude towards a soul," we see that, by highlighting the importance of the human body in its relation to our knowing and understanding another person, Wittgenstein expresses a particular view that escapes Cartesian scepticism. To this end, we consider PI 283 and PI 288, where we find Wittgenstein's ideas to be complementary in our discussion about having "an attitude towards a soul."

In our examination of PI 283, we illustrate that, to the extent that we take the 'outer/body' to be a fundamental and essential component of making sense, we may end up with a clearer picture about the meaning of 'pain'. In such a picture, there would not be an assumption of an explanatory gap which derives a radical separation of the 'inner' from the 'outer'. We can say that this non-Cartesian dualist frame is "complete" (i.e., devoid of any Cartesian gaps) insofar as we take into consideration the nature of meaning and understanding as activities, that they require the participation of language-users who agree not only in opinions and definitions but also in judgments (PI 242). Such an agreement, as we understand it, takes place in linguistic engagements and related practices. However, when taken to be some other kind of an activity, we point out that meaning and understanding end up rendering a picture of a life which is different from the life of the human subject as we know it.

As a result, our philosophical understanding about others and how we relate to each other become insufficient in addressing the issue at hand.

Without the assumption of the dualist gap, we mention that Wittgenstein's remark on "an attitude towards a soul" presents a different viewpoint in understanding the concepts of 'soul' or the 'inner' which are completely different from the mind or consciousness we may find in Descartes. Wittgenstein's idea of 'soul', in comparison, completely runs against such a view of the human subject. In contrast to the conceptual frame (and its repercussions) of the Cartesian human subject, Wittgenstein's notion of the 'soul' as manifested and expressed in the 'body' and language belongs to non-Cartesian dualist frame of the subject's relation to the world. To explicate this relation, we consider Wittgenstein's notion of 'grammar' where, he argues, we may reveal the meaning of a word in our application of it. And the rules for use of words make up grammar, which thereby explicate and conserve the meanings of words and concepts. Furthermore, the application of a word (as embedded in life, in our practices, being clustered around other related linguistic and bodily expressions) is not fixed once-and-for-all in a pre-emptive way.

Furthermore, as we discuss in Chapter 3, the gist of PI 288 shows that, when the meaning of 'my pain' is not found in the language-game of sensation and the set of criteria is cast in terms of 'my own case', we face a problem of identity between our use of the word 'pain' and what 'pain' is. That is to say, if one were to disregard the 'outer' or the body/behaviour within the language of sensations, Wittgenstein argues, it would look as if we can still have reasonable doubts. But that would be a misleading picture. Instead, for Wittgenstein, what makes it the case that I can know about another person's pain, agony, ecstasy, etc. should be sought within the

expressions of the body and language. These would be the proper ground which makes our words and concepts meaningful, including the notion of ‘soul’.

Our exegetical reading of PI 283 and PI 288 shows that our rules and the conditions to apply a rule are in a strong logical relation to each other. That is, if we lose the language of sensation altogether, then it would seem like it makes sense to ask, “would my pain go away if I turn to stone?” (PI 288). If somebody did not know what the English word ‘pain’ means, then we would again consult language and explain the meaning of the word. But once detached from language, the conditions to apply a rule or use a word in an appropriate context also remain out of the picture. By the end of Chapter 3, we pointed out that the separation of the conditions of application for a rule a rule or for using a word from the rule or word itself ends up rendering a muddled picture about understanding a word or applying a rule correctly.

In Chapter 4, we develop this point. We aim to illustrate that, in understanding a word or rule, having a theoretical/scientific account (as in Chalmers) or some stipulation (as in Wright) as meaning-constituent points of departure imply the abrogation of a language-game. It assumes that understanding a word or concept would still be possible regardless of our ordinary ways of using them. In explicating what it means to understand a rule ‘correctly’, we consider Finkelstein’s discussion of Platonism about understanding a rule as part of his critical treatment of Kripke and Wright on the same issue. The treatment tackles two views on meaning and understanding as grounded in *somewhere*, more precisely, in some fact of the matter or not. We argue that, in talking about grounding at all, our philosophical assumptions should take note of what kind of a ground we are talking about. Would it be a pre-emptive one where concepts and explanatory schemes are freely stipulated? Or would it be one that appeals to how our words are understood in their

home, in their uses in language? I think that, ultimately, picking a side between these views yields different takes on what a philosophical doubt may amount to and on how we deal with it.

To this end, in Chapter 4, we consider Chalmers' treatment of the problem of consciousness along with Finkelstein's Wittgensteinian critique of Kripke and Wright. The resurfacing of the 'inner' in Chalmers' grounded-theoretical project of consciousness, as we discuss, consists in grounding the subjective experience in some mental/neurochemical fact of the matter. Such an attempt, however, involves revising, as Chalmers argues, either our notion of consciousness or our understanding of nature. But to the extent that having subjective experience or being conscious is understood in such a way that it is reduced to some biochemical mechanism in the brain, such an explanation ends up rendering not the human subject *proper* but a construct – much closer to a philosophical zombie or the Cartesian mind. Thus, we claim that Chalmers' handling of consciousness is a misconceived project. Furthermore, we argue that, because of its denial of the human subject *proper*, it also involves the charge of solipsism, which turns out to be double problematic.

That said, we do not deny that our concepts need to be revised. But this revision should not be on the basis of a theoretical brute-force attack, as if we are somehow trying to crack a password or decode an encrypted string of symbols. According to what we want to express and how we will live, our concepts will reflect that –in being grounded but not justified. In addressing what makes our concepts grounded, viz. our philosophical outlook on the possibility of understanding, we may explain why we apply a concept or a rule in a particular way. However, the crucial point is that there can be altogether different interpretations of its application. This

manifold of applications, in turn, contributes to what it is to understand a rule.

To Chalmers, as the philosophical zombie case illustrates, consciousness is ultimately conceived as distinct from the life of a conscious being but as grounded in some mental fact of the matter. Along similar lines, to Kripke, understanding a rule focuses on the idea of the rule as distinct from its application. The common point in both views is that there is an effort to ground language, viz. our concepts in some (scientific, mathematical, etc.) fact of matter. However, this would be to wrongly assume that there is a certain order of justified explanation for what gives meaning to our words and concepts.

Lastly, we explore the above-mentioned assumption about following a particular order of explanation as what makes our words and concepts grounded, and to this end, consider *Blade Runner* as a particular case. We argue that, in our (hypothetical or possible) encounters with humanoids, a radical doubt concerning the right attitude toward them feeds on the idea that behaviour can be separate from its author. We indicate that such an idea can be found in a phenomenological or a cognitive scientific approach, which takes off from a limited picture of what a human being is, of what being sentient means, or of what having a subjective viewpoint would be.

We further point out that going against such a picture would involve taking behaviour as not having a life of its own but as the behaviour of a certain kind of author. As we mention throughout this study, the issue is about understanding exactly what kind of an author that is. Our consideration of *Blade Runner* shows that, understanding this issue and having an attitude toward a person (human or non-human) belong more properly to an intersubjective engagement. Furthermore, having understanding consists in an activity that is in the making, and builds on our concepts

and facts which have been previously put into examination by considering their doxastic elements and interpretations, and consequently understood with as much clarity and purpose as possible.

If, however, what is real (in the solipsist's case) or what makes it the case that we call someone conscious (in Chalmers' case) or what makes *the* understanding of a word or instruction (in Kripke's sceptical problem) is construed as in the cases we mention, we find that in each case, the human subject (as embedded in language and culture) reaches out to the world. In each case, then, the glimpses of such a subject –which is fundamentally different from a finite human being that is subject to time and space– are present. Tying all our points together, we conclude by remarking that such a conception carries the Cartesian dualist problems concerning understanding oneself as well as others.

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