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Expression and the Inner

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ticed in contemporary philosophy of mind. I'll argue, however, that he (McDowell) misdescribes this strand in Wittgenstein's thought. He attributes to Wittgenstein what, in Chapter 3, I referred to as "the middle path account of inner awareness," according to which items in a stream of consciousness, e.g., pains, are constituted by the actualization of conceptual capacities. This does bring sentience and sapience into contact. But if what I said in Chapter 3 is right, it fails to do justice to the richness of experiential life. And if what I'll say in the present chapter is right, it likewise fails to do justice to Wittgenstein's thought. One of my aims here is to provide a better account than McDowell does of what he gets right when he remarks that, for Wittgenstein, sapience and sentience "are not two simply different problem areas" (1998d, 296). In what follows, I shall be asking not only how sentience is related to sapience, but also how our minds are like, and unlike, the minds of nonlinguistic animals. I'll end with a few remarks on the question of whether, given what I've said in this book, we can rightly be said to *know* our own conscious inner states.

6.1. "But Isn't the Beginning the Sensation—Which I Describe?"

As we saw in Chapter 3, McDowell's views about both outer and inner sense are motivated in significant part by the thought that we must not allow ourselves to be seduced by the Myth of the Given. He believes that Wittgenstein too is moved by what amounts to this thought in (what commentators call) the Private Language Argument. According to McDowell, the real mistake made by the interlocutor sometimes referred to as "the private linguist" is to embrace the idea of the Given in connection with judgments concerning our own sensations—the idea that what justifies, e.g., my judgment that I have a headache is an inner item that, in itself, does not involve the operations of conceptual capacities. McDowell urges us to read Wittgenstein as struggling, sometimes not entirely successfully, to articulate a view along the following lines: My pain is through-and-through conceptual; it includes no pre-conceptual component. When I judge that I am in pain, I don't first experience an unconceptualized item and only then classify it as a pain; my pain is not like that of a dog or an infant with a conceptual or classificatory component *added* to it. Rather, my pain just *is* a conceptual awareness.

CHAPTER 6

Sensations, Animals, and Knowledge

In the concluding section of his essay "One Strand in the Private Language Argument," John McDowell observes that "[i]t is common nowadays for philosophers of mind to invoke a distinction between sapience and sentience, in such a way as to suggest that there are two simply different problem areas within their branch of philosophy" (McDowell 1998d, 295). This way of mapping out the terrain in the philosophy of mind would locate discussions of intentionality at a distance from talk about sensations, "qualia," or "raw feels." McDowell points out that Wittgenstein's writing does not fit well into a landscape that is divided in this way:

He is plainly interested in what other philosophers call "propositional attitudes" (e.g., in the remarks about expectation, etc., in the §400's), and equally plainly interested in the difficulties that philosophers get into over "raw feels" (e.g., in §290), and the latter interest does not look like an interest in a "residual problem," or even like an interest that we ought to regard as significantly removed from the former. . . . (1998d, 296)

According to McDowell, a lesson we might learn from Wittgenstein is that "there is something wrong with the supposed distinction" (1998d, 296), i.e., that making sense of sentience ought not to appear a completely separate task from understanding sapience.

McDowell is onto something important here: Wittgenstein does see connections between sapience and sentience that tend to go unno-

One argument against this sort of position might be put as follows: "If we grant that there is no part of a subject's sensation that is independent of her classifying it as this or that, then the pain itself seems to disappear. We're left imagining a bogus 'classification' where there is really nothing to be classified." This is tricky ground, and McDowell suggests that Wittgenstein does not always negotiate it as well as he might. He writes, "If we read Wittgenstein in this framework, we might want to question his sureness of foot in passages like this," whereupon he quotes the following from §304 of the *Investigations*:

"And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a *nothing*."—Not at all. It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either! The conclusion was only that a *nothing* would serve just as well as a *something* about which *nothing* could be said. We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself on us here.

What could Wittgenstein mean when he says, "It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either"? As McDowell reads *PI* §304, the point could be put thus: A sensation, e.g., the pain in my wrist, is "not a *nothing*"; it is real, not mere illusion or fancy. Nonetheless, it's not anything over and above my conceptual awareness of it, and this is why Wittgenstein allows that it is "not a *something*"—because he holds that it is not as *robust* a something as is, say, a pebble or a wristwatch. According to McDowell, we should question Wittgenstein's "sureness of foot" here, not because this is the wrong account of sensations, but because of the misleading way in which the account is stated. To allow that the sensation is "not a *something*" is to encourage the interlocutor's worry that, on Wittgenstein's view of inner awareness, the sensation disappears.

As McDowell reads Wittgenstein on sensations and self-awareness, *PI* §304 does not present his "best moves in this area" (1998d, 285); another section that comes a bit earlier in the *Investigations* does. This section, §290, figures as McDowell's primary datum in support of the idea that Wittgenstein would have us embrace the middle path account of inner awareness. It reads as follows:

What I do is not, of course, to identify my sensation by criteria: but to repeat an expression. But this is not the *end* of the language-game: it is the beginning.

But isn't the beginning the sensation—which I describe?—Perhaps this word "describe" tricks us here. I say "I describe my state of mind"

and "I describe my room." You need to call to mind the differences between the language-games. (*PI* §290)

According to McDowell, this section of the *Investigations* expresses more clearly than does §304 the view that while a sensation is a something, it is a *kind* of something that is not present prior to or independently of its being brought under a concept:

At *PI* §290 Wittgenstein's interlocutor says "But isn't the beginning the sensation—which I describe?" This expresses, surely for the purposes of criticizing it . . . the idea that the "item recognized" (the sensation) is present anyway, independently of being brought under a concept ("described")—that is something which happens later. . . . The notion of a limiting case of a particular/general or subject/predicate structure. . . . is a way of keeping "describe" without implying the idea that Wittgenstein is clearly trying to avoid: that what describing here amounts to is bringing under a concept an item that is there in consciousness anyway, whether or not any conceptual structure is in place. (1998d, 284–285)

As McDowell reads §290, it shows us how to understand §304. Both sections express Wittgenstein's commitment to the middle path account of inner awareness—to the idea that a sensation is nothing over and above a subject's conceptual awareness of it.

* * *

In §290, when Wittgenstein's interlocutor asks, "But isn't the beginning the sensation—which I describe?" he is inquiring about the relation between his sensation and what he *says* about it. Notice, however, that in the above quotation from McDowell, *PI* §290 is recast so that its topic is not the relation between a sensation and a spoken remark but, instead, that between a sensation and its "being brought under a concept." As McDowell notes, his reading depends on "transpos[ing] the thought that is expressed here [in §290] with reference to language into a parallel thought about the employment of concepts" (1998d, 285). The transposed thought, the thought about concepts, could be put like this: a sensation is not first felt and only then brought under a concept; rather, it is conceptualized from the start.

This, McDowell thinks, is a "parallel thought" to the one actually expressed in §290 concerning what we *say* about our sensations.

But is it really? Let us ask: What would be the, as it were, *untransposed* version of the thought about concepts that McDowell articulates on Wittgenstein's behalf? In other words, given McDowell's reading of what a transposed version of §290 says about the employment of concepts, what must the section, as it actually appears in the *Investigations*, be saying about language use? If the transposed version of §290 says that I cannot have a sensation prior to putting it under a concept, then the untransposed, original version should say that I cannot have a sensation prior to describing it in words, i.e., that I cannot first have a sensation and only later remark on it. But this thesis is unsatisfactory to the point of being absurd. It cannot be what Wittgenstein means to be defending in §290.

So: McDowell says that *PI*§290 represents Wittgenstein's "best moves" in the area of sensations and self-awareness. Yet, as he seems committed to reading it, this section arrives at an absurd conclusion unless it is recast in such a way as to change its subject matter. We should, therefore, view his account of §290 with considerable suspicion. Moreover, since he understands §304 ("It is not a *something* . . .") in light of §290, we should question his reading of this section of the *Investigations* as well.

* * *

If we reject McDowell's interpretation of *PI*§290, how might we understand Wittgenstein when he says, regarding the avowal of a sensation, "But this is not the *end* of the language-game: it is the beginning"? Let's follow the advice offered at the end of §290 and "call to mind the differences" between describing a room and describing one's own state of mind. Imagine that, upon entering the kitchen of a house whose purchase you are considering, you say: "This room is a problem. The cabinets look cheap, and there's less counter space than I'm used to. It does get a lot of light, though." Such a description might be characterized as the last move in a little language-game. Before you can describe the room, you need to look it over. Only after you have looked around—observed things—are you entitled to talk about what you have seen. So the moves in this language-game are (1) observe and (2) describe (or, if you prefer, (1) observe, (2) judge, and (3) de-

scribe). The describing comes at the *end* of the game—after the observing. Wittgenstein's point in §290 is that we need to distinguish *this* sort of language-game from the sort in which you're engaged when you describe one of your own sensations. You are entitled to say, "I have a sharp pain in my wrist," without needing to do any observing (or judging) first. In the language-game of describing your own sensation, the first thing that you do—the first move you make—is the describing. Thus, when you say that you are in pain, "this is not the *end* of the language-game: it is the beginning."

If we read *PI*§290 this way, then we can indeed "transpose the thought that is expressed here with reference to language into a parallel thought about the employment of concepts." A parallel thought about the employment of concepts could be put as follows: Even if I don't *say* that I'm feeling a pain, I am able to apply the concept *pain* to my sensation *without first inwardly observing anything*. If I get a headache while lecturing, I may *think* to myself, "I'm getting a headache," and I can do this without needing to observe my own behavior. Now, I don't doubt that Wittgenstein would accept this thought about the employment of concepts along with the thought expressed in §290. But to accept this is not to commit oneself to the middle path account of inner awareness.

* * *

According to the middle path account of inner awareness, when I say that I am in pain, my statement is justified *by* my pain, which is constituted by conceptual capacities in operation. If Wittgenstein does not, in fact, commit himself to any such claim, what *does* he think justifies an avowal of pain? If we examine the material immediately preceding §290 in the *Investigations*, we find that the following answer emerges: *Nothing*. According to Wittgenstein, self-ascriptions of pain are not epistemically grounded; nothing justifies them. So, at §289, he writes:

"When I say 'I am in pain' I am at any rate justified *before myself*."—What does that mean? Does it mean: "If someone else could know what I am calling 'pain,' he would admit that I was using the word correctly?"

To use a word without justification does not mean to use it without right.

1. See §§5.2–5.3 for a discussion of this sort of self-ascription.

Ordinarily, an expression of pain—a pained wince, for example—requires no epistemic justification, and according to Wittgenstein, avowals of pain *are* such expressions.² A question like “What are your grounds for saying that you have a sharp pain in your wrist?” presupposes what, in §288, Wittgenstein calls “the abrogation of the normal language-game with the expression of a sensation.” It is not on the basis of epistemic grounds that I express my pain, either when I wince or when I say, “I have a sharp pain in my wrist.”

McDowell does not fail to notice that *PI* §289 appears to speak against his reading of §290. He tries to defuse this appearance by claiming that when, in §289, Wittgenstein talks of using a word “without justification,” he means to be rejecting only a particular *kind* of justification—justification that appeals to the Given (1998d, 286). Here, as in §304, Wittgenstein appears, on McDowell’s account of him, to be putting his point in a misleading way. I want to suggest that in his reading of this part of the *Investigations*, McDowell is in the grip of a false dilemma. In order to help bring this into view, let me call your attention to the following quotation (part of which we looked at in §3.1) from *Mind and World*: “[I]t is one thing to be exempt from blame, on the ground that the position we find ourselves in can be traced ultimately to brute force; it is quite another thing to have a justification. In effect, the idea of the Given offers exculpations where we wanted justifications” (1996, 8). In a footnote, McDowell explains why he chooses to use the word “exculpations” rather than “excuses”:

What I want is an analogue to the sense in which if someone is found in a place from which she has been banished, she is exculpated by the fact that she was deposited there by a tornado. Her arriving there is completely removed from the domain of what she is responsible for; it is not that she is still responsible, but there is a basis for mitigating any sanctions. (1996, 8)

Think of these passages as issuing a warning: If a person were merely caused to make some “judgment” by being exposed to a bit of the Given, she would be no more responsible for it than she would be for her location if she were carried off by a tornado. We must take care that our preferred account of perceptual awareness can accommodate this fact—that it allows for perceptual judgments that are justified, not

2. Or, anyway, they are akin to them in this respect (see §4.3).

merely exculpated. Let us grant this point. For present purposes, the crucial move is the one that comes next. Turning his attention from perceptual judgments to what he calls “judgements of ‘inner sense,’” McDowell proceeds as if the same sort of warning would be apposite. We must, he thinks, take care that our preferred account of inner experience allows us to represent a subject’s judgments about her own sensations and thoughts as justified, not merely exculpated. He assumes, in effect, that we must choose between saying (1) that a self-ascription of pain is the result of what we might call brute causation—something to be understood in the way that we’d understand the location of a person who had been deposited somewhere by a tornado and (2) that such self-ascriptions typically express epistemically justified judgments (where nothing can count as epistemically justifying a judgment unless it has propositional content, i.e., unless it “contains a claim”).³

Wittgenstein would reject this dilemma, and we should too. One moral that could be drawn from what I have been saying since Chapter 4 is that the relation between a pain and a subject’s ascription of it to herself is, typically, neither a matter of epistemic justification nor, as it were, mere causation.⁴ When someone complains of a splitting headache, she does not judge on this or that basis that she is in pain.⁵ Rather, she expresses her pain. And while I don’t mean to deny that a pain may be understood to cause its expression, the relation between pain and expression is not *merely* causal. A pain and its expression make sense together in something like the way that two parts of a single sentence do. To revert to language that I introduced at the end of the last chapter, a pain and its expression hang together in the logical space of animate life.

3. As we saw in Chapter 3, according to McDowell, a genuine epistemic justifier must be, for the subject, *to the effect that such-and-such*. (Thus, on the middle path account of inner awareness, what justifies a self-ascription of pain is an impression to the effect that the subject is in pain.)

4. At least not if one accepts a conception of epistemic justification much like McDowell’s (or Davidson’s or Sellars’s or Wittgenstein’s). A reliabilist would *not* draw the same moral from what I’ve been saying since Chapter 4.

5. She does not *judge* at all. I believe that McDowell would, today, agree that one needn’t make a judgment in order to honestly avow a headache. (See n. 7 in §3.2.) But, if I am reading him correctly, he would retain the idea that when someone issues such an avowal, she is, typically, expressing an epistemically justified belief, and this too should be rejected.

McDowell is drawn to the middle path account of inner awareness by a desire to steer clear of the Myth of the Given *while* accommodating the idea that whenever one describes one's own state of mind—even if only by saying, "My head hurts"—one is epistemically justified, not merely excused, in so doing. He attributes the middle path account to Wittgenstein, appealing for support to a section of the *Investigations* in which Wittgenstein says: "You need to call to mind the differences between the language-games," i.e., between a language-game in which one describes one's own state of mind and one in which one describes a room. But, for Wittgenstein, part of what it means to take these differences seriously is that one does not retain a desire to accommodate the idea that whenever one describes one's own state of mind, one is epistemically justified.

6.2. "It Is Not a Something, but Not a Nothing Either!"

Let's return to *PI*§304, the section that includes the following exchange:

"And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a *nothing*."—Not at all. It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either!

As I noted earlier, McDowell hears "It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either!" as an expression of Wittgenstein's commitment to the middle path account of inner awareness. He writes:

Wittgenstein's willingness to say that the sensation is "not a something" is a response to a thought that one might put . . . like this: in the kind of case in question we have at best . . . a limiting case of the idea of an object that we can designate and classify. The idea of encountering a particular is in place here *only because* the experience involves a concept (*pain*, say, or *toothache*); the particular has no status except as what is experienced as instantiating the concept. (1998d, 284)

According to McDowell, while this is the correct view of sensations, Wittgenstein puts things rather badly when he allows that a sensation is "not a *something*." For this lends credibility to his interlocutor's suspicion that, given what Wittgenstein has said prior to §304, the inner item of which one is supposedly aware turns out not really to exist:

[S]ometimes that item does seem to disappear, as when it is said not to be a something. (1998d, 285)

Wittgenstein could, and perhaps should, have said something more like this. The sensation (the pain, say) is a perfectly good something—an object if you like of concept-involving awareness. (1998d, 283)

As we have seen, McDowell thinks that Wittgenstein is not at his best in §304; the moves he makes are not as "subtle" (1998d, 285) as elsewhere in his writing on the topic of sensations. I'm going to suggest a rather different reading of *PI*§304—one that allows us to see this section as (1) supplementing what was said in §290 about the need to attend to the expressive dimension of sensation avowals and (2) lacking nothing in subtlety.

PI§304 comprises two paragraphs. The first reads as follows:

"But you will surely admit that there is a difference between pain-behaviour accompanied by pain and pain-behaviour without any pain?"—Admit it? What greater difference could there be?—"And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a *nothing*."—Not at all. It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either! The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said. We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself on us here.

What does Wittgenstein mean when he says, "We have only rejected the grammar which tries to force itself on us here"? What sort of grammar tries to force itself on us when we think about sensations, and what is gained by rejecting this grammar?

Here, we may be guided by the section that immediately follows *PI*§304:

"But you surely cannot deny that, for example, in remembering, an inner process takes place."—What gives the impression that we want to deny anything? When one says "Still, an inner process does take place here"—one wants to go on: "After all, you *see* it." (*PI*§305)

Notice that the topic has shifted: whereas Wittgenstein and his interlocutor were discussing *pain* in §304, here in §305 they are talking about *remembering*. This sort of shift is characteristic of Wittgenstein's writing. As he understands things, many of the problems that confront

us when we think philosophically about sensations arise as well when we consider intentional mental phenomena. I'll return to this point later on. For the present, I want to focus on how §305 can help us to understand "the grammar which tries to force itself on us" in §304. §305 suggests that this is the grammar that would incline us to say, "After all, you *see* it." What's at issue is an impulse to represent us as knowing what goes on in our own minds by a kind of inner observation—as if our mental states and processes were like physical ones, at least insofar as we ourselves can *see* them, even if no one else can. We could say that the grammar which tries to force itself on us is that of observable physical states, processes, and objects.

Now, how should we understand the moment in §304 that McDowell suggests is misleading and unsubtle, the moment at which Wittgenstein presents his interlocutor with a paradox: "It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either"? We can begin to address this question by considering §304's second paragraph:

The paradox disappears only if we make a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way, always serves the same purpose: to convey thoughts—which may be about houses, pains, good and evil, or anything you please.

Think of the phrase "to convey thoughts" as here playing the same role as the word "describe" did in §290. Wittgenstein's point is not to deny that when someone speaks about her own pain, she conveys a thought; it is, rather, to force us "to call to mind the differences between the language-games" in which we are said to "convey thoughts." I might convey a thought by saying either (1) "The paint on the side of the house is starting to peel" or (2) "My wrist is starting to hurt." But the language-games are different. When I say (1), I report something that I've observed (or learned about in some other way). I don't do this when I say (2); instead I express a sensation. To "make a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way" is to bring *this* distinction into focus. It is to stop philosophizing as if our talk about pains functioned in more or less the same way as our talk about houses.

How does giving up the idea that language functions in just one way make the paradox disappear? Well, there *are* contexts in which it would make sense to employ the phrase "the sensation itself." But

when the interlocutor of P/§304 complains, "And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a *nothing*," we should hear this, Wittgenstein thinks, as mixing up language-games in such a way as to say nothing at all.⁶ A couple of paragraphs back, I said that when, in §304, Wittgenstein speaks of "the grammar which tries to force itself on us," this may be understood as referring to the grammar of observable physical states, processes, and objects. We might dwell on the word "tries" as it figures in this phrase: the grammar to which Wittgenstein refers doesn't *quite* force itself upon us; it merely tries to. If the interlocutor really *were* using words like "pain" and "sensation" with the grammar of observable physical items, then he wouldn't be moved to say in §303, "I can only *believe* that someone else is in pain, but I *know* it if I am." But he is using these terms without *any* settled grammar; he is, as it were, shifting back and forth between the grammar of sensation-talk and the grammar of talk about physical things in such a way as to say nothing.⁷

Now, it's important to Wittgenstein that to reply to this sort of grammar. In §4.1, I said, "As long as we try to 'undress' words—to strip away the context and understand them as squiggles—we will be unable to make sense of the suggestion that 'there is a way of grasping a rule which is *not* an *interpretation*.'" If we imagine that the grammar of sensations resembles that of observable physical items more than it in fact does, we'll be inclined to try the same sort of undressing here—to insist that sensations be considered in isolation from the expressive linkages that are characteristic of the logical space of animate life. This, I suggest, is how we should hear the interlocutor's "sensation itself." In §4.1, I argued that Wittgenstein is not interested in offering an account of how it is that meaningful words, considered apart from the contexts in which they can be intelligible as more than dead noises or squiggles, manage to *be* meaningful words. Similarly, Wittgenstein's response to his interlocutor's complaint in §304 is not to offer an account of "the sensation itself."

It should give us pause when McDowell speaks of "Wittgenstein's willingness to say that the sensation is 'not a something'" (1998d, 284). Wittgenstein doesn't, in fact, exhibit a willingness to say that "the sensation" is not a something. He says this about "the sensation itself," where the interlocutor's use of these words signals his desire to make sense of pain apart from what Wittgenstein thinks of as the sort of context in which it is intelligible that a creature should feel pain.

7. If Wittgenstein's interlocutor allowed the grammar of observable physical items to *fully* shape his thinking about sensations, then he would sound more like a new detectivist than he does. Instead of saying, "I can only *believe* that someone else is in pain, but I *know* it if I am," he'd say that we know our own sensations thanks to the same sorts of fallible cognitive processes that allow us to know the sensations of others. But Wittgenstein's interlocutor isn't drawn to new detectivism. My sense is that

matical conflation with *either* agreement or denial would be to participate in it. To do so would be to grant that one's interlocutor had managed, at least, to posit something ("the sensation itself"), even if the thing posited turned out not to exist. But a bit of nonsense does not posit anything. Thus, when Wittgenstein says, "It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either!" he is rejecting "the grammar which tries to force itself on us"—the, as it were, attempted incursion of one grammar into another—while signaling that he is rejecting *only* this, not the existence of some (successfully) posited inner item. So understood, Wittgenstein's odd reply to his interlocutor no longer sounds quite so paradoxical. "The paradox disappears" if we make the radical break that he calls for.

Cora Diamond notes that "[p]assages like §304 need to be *heard* in the mind's ear; one has to hear what they are directed against" (Diamond 1991, 264). When Wittgenstein says, "It is not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either!" he is speaking to an interlocutor who has just accused him of denying the existence of "the sensation itself." Rather than offering what we might think of as a straightforward answer to this charge ("You're misunderstanding me; I acknowledge the existence of the sensation itself" or "You're right, I deny its existence"), he replies with what sounds like a paradox. This reply is meant to *stop* us—to force us to think about the interlocutor's use of the words "the sensation itself" and, thereby, help us see that, as these words are being used *here*, they say nothing. *Face* McDowell, Wittgenstein's odd-sounding reply to "And yet you again and again reach the conclusion that the sensation itself is a *nothing*" would not have been better worded if he had said instead, "Actually, it's a limiting case of a *something*."

One point that emerges from this discussion is that the "paradox" of §304 is not the statement of any thesis about what sensations are. That McDowell allows himself to think otherwise, that he hears it as an articulation of the claim that a sensation is nothing over and above a sub-

Wittgenstein himself doesn't find new detectivism appealing enough to spend much time engaging with it. Instead, he tries to show that if one presses on *old* detectivism, it dissolves into nonsense—hence, §304's "a something about which nothing can be said," a phrase that (after §261) we should recognize as nonsense. (If *nothing* can be said about it, then it can't be said even to be a something.)

ject's conceptual awareness of it, bespeaks an uncharacteristic failure on his part to bear in mind the kind of philosopher that Wittgenstein is—one who doesn't want to be advancing theses of this sort.⁸ We should not expect Wittgenstein to express views that could be put: "Sensations [or emotions or attitudes] are nothing more than. . . ." He's not *that* kind of a philosopher. He is the kind who says:

We ask "What does 'I am frightened' really mean, what am I referring to when I say it?" And of course we find no answer, or one that is inadequate.

The question is: "In what sort of context does it occur?" (PII§ix; see also Z§§532–533, quoted below.)

* * *

I have been focusing on P§§290 and 304 in part because McDowell adduces them as his main textual support for attributing the middle path account of inner awareness to Wittgenstein. I've argued that this attribution is not merely unsupported by §§290 and 304; it cannot be reconciled with them. You may recall from Chapter 3 that, in *Mind and World*, McDowell urges us to "think about 'inner sense' in parallel with 'outer sense' to the fullest extent that is possible" (1996, 22). This recommendation is consistent with Wittgenstein's position as McDowell understands it. But, if what I've been saying since Chapter 4 is on the right track, Wittgenstein would, in fact, resist any such recommendation. Indeed, P§§290 and 304 should, I think, be read as resisting any such recommendation. We need, Wittgenstein says in §304, to "make a radical break with the idea that language functions in one way." We make this break when we notice how very *different* the grammar of sensation avowals is from that of perceptual reports—when we stop trying to think about "inner sense" in parallel with seeing and hearing and instead attend to the expressive dimension of sensation avowals.

8. By way of contrast, consider the following objection that McDowell adduces against Wright: "[A]voiding platonism is supposed to require of us, according to Wittgenstein as Wright reads him, substantive and—one might naturally think—distinctly unprepossessing theses of a discernibly philosophical kind, certainly not theses that it would never be possible to debate . . . because everyone would agree to them" (*Investigations* §128) (1998e, 53).

6.3. The Mental as Such

What is the natural expression of intention?—Look at a cat when it stalks a bird; or a beast when it wants to escape.
 ((Connexion with propositions about sensations.)) (PI §647)

I began the present chapter by calling your attention to the concluding section of “One Strand in the Private Language Argument.” There, McDowell notes that contemporary philosophers of mind tend to split their subject into two separate problem areas. In one of these, we find problems about sentience (about sensations, “raw feels,” etc.). In the other lie problems about sapience (about intentionality, propositional attitudes, thought, etc.). McDowell says that Wittgenstein is “not easy to place in a landscape organized like this” (1998d, 295), and he observes that, for Wittgenstein, an interest in philosophers’ difficulties with “raw feels” should not be regarded as far removed from an interest in propositional attitudes.

We have now had a chance to see a bit of evidence that supports this observation. Recall how PI §305, whose topic is remembering, helped us to make sense of §304’s discussion of pain. Even though the former is concerned with sapience and the latter with sentience, as far as Wittgenstein is concerned, both sections are driving us toward a single realization. This sort of thing happens often in Wittgenstein’s writings.⁹ McDowell is right: Wittgenstein doesn’t carve up the philosophy of mind as contemporary writers are inclined to. Why is this? McDowell writes:

What is striking, in fact, is that in passages like §290 hc [Wittgenstein] addresses philosophers’ difficulties about raw feels with apparatus from the sapience part of the supposedly divided subject matter for philosophy of mind: he talks of language, but my point has been that his moves are easily restated in terms of concepts. It is natural to suggest that one thing we can learn from Wittgenstein is that there is something wrong with the supposed division. Not, of course, that we cannot distinguish sapience from sentience; but these are not two simply dif-

9. See, e.g., PI §§246–247, where Wittgenstein moves from discussing the sentence “Only I can know whether I am really in pain” to talking about “Only you can know if you had that intention.”

ferent problem areas—we get into trouble over sentience because we misconceive the role of sapience in constituting our sentient life. Focusing on the ideas that help us to comprehend sapience (centrally, the idea of mental life as lived in the space of reasons, that is, the space of concepts) is not, as it sometimes seems, opting to ignore much of what has traditionally counted as philosophy of mind. Perhaps we can even say that Wittgenstein’s philosophy of mind can be encapsulated in the remark that mental life is lived in the space of reasons; such a philosophy need not be forgetful of the problem of sentience. (1998d, 296)

In the first sentence of this passage, McDowell returns to a point made earlier in his paper—that the “moves” made in PI §290 are “easily restated in terms of concepts.” I have argued, however, that his restatement of these moves distorts their import. Rightly understood, §290 lends no support to the idea that “we get into trouble over sentience because we misconceive the role of sapience in constituting our sentient life.” Wittgenstein does not say (or otherwise commit himself to the view) that pains are constituted by the actualization of conceptual capacities. For him, the link between sentience and sapience is not, in this way, a matter of concepts. Still there does appear to be some sort of link. What is it?

* * *

It is, I think, a good idea to consider the following questions together:

- (1) What has our sentience to do with our sapience?
- (2) What does the mental life of a nonlinguistic animal have in common with our sort of mental life?
- (3) How are unconscious mental states related to conscious ones?

What’s at issue when we consider these questions together is, we might say, the mental as such. And we can approach this issue by noting that the attribution of either a pain or a desire to either a person or a brute is a matter of locating an item in the logical space of animate life. My conscious desire to finish writing this book, my unconscious fear that I’ll be punished for any success it brings me, the pain I feel in my wrist when I type too much, my dog’s current desire to get outside, and the pain she feels when someone does a poor job of clipping her nails share a kind of intelligibility that the states of hurricanes and hippo-

campi lack. Part of what this comes to is that all of those mental states may be expressed in behavior. Whether we are talking about sentence or sapience, human beings or brutes, conscious mental states or unconscious ones, the inner and the outer make sense together, in light of each other, in something like the way the words in a sentence make sense together (see §5.3).¹⁰

According to McDowell's Wittgenstein, mental life is lived in a logical space of *reasons* or, what comes to the same thing for McDowell, a space of *concepts*. But the way in which a pain hangs together with a whimper, in man or beast, is not rational—not a matter of rationally coherent conceptual linkages. This is not to deny that there often *are* rational conceptual linkages between our mental states and their behavioral expressions. Our *actions*, in particular, both express and are rationalized by our attitudes (or better: the *way* in which they are expressed is *rationality*). When I order a pizza, my behavior expresses a desire that helps to rationalize it. But expressive relations between the inner and the outer are not *always* rational relations. If, after an hour of waiting in vain for my spinach and pineapple on whole wheat crust to be delivered, I pound the table in frustration, this behavior expresses my frustration, but it is not rationalized by it.¹¹

We *should* avoid the Myth of the Given in our thinking about self-ascriptions of sensation. But we can manage this—indeed, Wittgenstein shows how to manage this—without our having to claim that sensations are constituted by the operations of conceptual capacities. The claim that sensations are so constituted renders problematic not only our relations to our own sensations (as was argued in Chapter 3), but also our kinship with brutes (more on this in a moment). If what I

10. I am here stressing what's common between our minds and the minds of brutes. But this is not, of course, to deny that there are major differences. One such difference is hinted at even in this paragraph: although we speak about what animals want, fear, and think, it doesn't make sense to characterize their attitudes or emotions as either conscious or unconscious. (So we don't find ourselves saying things like "Fido *consciously* wanted to go for a run in the park, but *unconsciously* . . ." or "Fifi harbors a great deal of unconscious resentment against . . .") In §5.3, I argued that what distinguishes a conscious mental state from an unconscious one is a subject's ability to express it merely by avowing it. It makes sense to distinguish between mental states in this way only when one is talking about a creature that lives a linguistic life—a life in which avowals are possible.

11. For more on the connection between expressive and rational relations, see Finkelstein 1999a.

have said in the present chapter is correct, Wittgenstein should not be saddled with any such claim. Better to say that, for him, mental life is lived in the logical space of animate life.

I just indicated that Wittgenstein shows us how we can avoid the Myth of the Given without, as it were, over-rationalizing our inner life. The key is to make the "radical break" called for in *PI* §304, i.e., "to call to mind the differences between the language-games" that are mentioned in §290. We are driven toward the Myth by assuming that whenever someone honestly avows a mental state, he is reporting something that he has learned—something that he would be epistemically justified in affirming. Acknowledging the expressive dimension of these avowals allows us to shed this assumption.

* * *

Let's return to our three questions:

- (1) What has our sentence to do with our sapience?
- (2) What does the mental life of a nonlinguistic animal have in common with our sort of mental life?
- (3) How are unconscious mental states related to conscious ones?

A few paragraphs back, I recommended that these questions be looked at together, but it is worth our considering how each might be addressed on its own. In §5.4, I talked about how I think Question 3 should be answered. In what follows, I'll say a little bit about how Wittgenstein might address Questions 1 and 2.

Concerning Question 1: Let me call your attention back to a passage from *Zettel* that we looked at in §4.3:

Plan for the treatment of psychological concepts.

Psychological verbs characterized by the fact that the third person of the present is to be verified by observation, the first person not.

Sentences in the third person of the present: information. In the first person present: expression. ((Not quite right.))

The first person of the present akin to an expression. (Z§472; *RPP2*§63)

The phrase "psychological concepts," as used here, refers both to concepts of sentence and sapience. In answer to Question 1, Wittgenstein might point out that our pains and intentions alike exhibit a grammar according to which self-ascriptions of them are, typically, not observa-

tion reports, but akin to winces and moans. Typically, when a person speaks about his own pain *or* his own intention, he is not reporting an observed fact but rather expressing—or doing something akin to expressing—the inner state that he is avowing.

Concerning Question 2: I suggested at the end of §6.2 that Wittgenstein isn't the kind of philosopher who will put forward an account of what pain *is*. Instead, he says, in effect, that if you are moved to ask what pain (or fear or joy) is, look to the place that it occupies in our lives:

The concept of pain is characterized by its particular function in our life.

Pain has *this* position in our life; has *these* connections; (That is to say: we only call "pain" what has *this* position, *these* connexions). (Z§§532–533)

In answer to Question 2, Wittgenstein might point out that pain occupies a place in the life of a dog or a squirrel that is recognizably akin to the one it occupies in mine. It has a similar function, has some of the same connections. To borrow a useful way of speaking from Diamond (1991),¹² we can see the *face* of pain in the life of a dog or a squirrel—perhaps even in the life of a fly. Wittgenstein writes:

Look at a stone and imagine it having sensations.—One says to oneself: How could one so much as get the idea of ascribing a *sensation* to a *thing*? One might as well ascribe it to a number!—And now look at a wriggling fly and at once these difficulties vanish and pain seems able to get a foothold here, where before everything was, so to speak, too smooth for it. (PI§284)

None of this is to say that Wittgenstein is committed to some view according to which there is no significant difference between my pain and that of my dog. After all, one way in which my pain may be expressed is via a *conceptual* activity, e.g., an avowal of pain. My pain is situated within a conceptual life; my dog's is not.¹³ But we can register

12. See pp. 6, 243–266.

13. Or, if you prefer, my pain is situated within a *fully* conceptual life. I mean to be bracketing the question of whether McDowell is right to deny that nonlinguistic animals have capacities that deserve to be called "conceptual."

this difference without losing our ability to see her pain and mine as the same sort of thing.

Compare what McDowell is in a position to say about the pain of a dog. In answer to Question 2, McDowell, like Wittgenstein, *could* point to the myriad similarities between the place that pain occupies in the life of a dog and the place it occupies in a human life. Nothing prevents him from acknowledging that my behavioral expressions of pain are similar in various ways to my dog's. But in the context of a position according to which my pain just *is* the actualization of conceptual capacities—capacities that my dog entirely lacks—such similarities between my life and hers can't but seem superficial, as if the behavioral overlap in our expressions of pain is akin to the overlap between two quite different diseases both of which happen to produce, say, an itchy rash as a symptom. The middle path account of inner awareness induces an inability to see the face of pain in the life of an animal (i.e., an inability to see an animal's expressions of pain *as* expressions of pain). What Wittgenstein has to say about self-ascriptions of pain does not.

* * * * *

In the opening chapter of his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Richard Rorty writes:

The obvious objection to defining the mental as the intentional is that pains are not intentional—they do not represent, they are not *about* anything. The obvious objection to defining the mental as "the phenomenal" is that beliefs don't feel like anything—they don't have phenomenal properties, and a person's real beliefs are not always what they appear to be. The attempt to hitch pains and beliefs together seems ad hoc—they don't seem to have anything in common except our refusal to call them "physical." (Rorty 1979, 22)

What ought we to say about this passage? McDowell says, in effect, that pains and beliefs have more in common than is suggested here: they share a kind of intelligibility. To understand someone either as feeling a pain or as holding a particular belief is to situate items in "a logical space that is *sui generis*, by comparison with the realm of [natural] law" (McDowell 1996, 72), i.e., it is to make things intelligible in a way that the natural sciences do not. This seems to me the right approach to

wand answering the challenge posed by the passage from Rorty. But, for McDowell, coming to see that this *is* the right approach must be, in part, a matter of bringing oneself to deny what is, according to the first sentence of the quotation, “[t]he obvious objection to defining the mental as the intentional”: one must maintain that pains *represent*—that the pain in my wrist is about something, namely itself.

The picture of mind that emerges in McDowell’s remarks about inner awareness is one according to which our attitudes and sensations alike are wholly conceptual affairs; they are constituted by the operations of conceptual capacities. In Chapter 3, I argued that this picture misrepresents our experience of sensations. In the present chapter, I have urged that it leaves too little room for our sense of ourselves as not wholly disconnected from animals—our sense that they, like us, enjoy and suffer sentience. I have, moreover, argued that McDowell misascribes it to Wittgenstein.

As I have suggested that he be read, Wittgenstein shows how we can embrace the idea that pains and beliefs share a kind of intelligibility, without our having to claim that the former are *about* anything, without our having to distance human sentience so much from that of brutes that we are unable to continue seeing the latter as genuinely sentient at all, and without our subscribing to the Myth of the Given either. Paying the right sort of attention to what Wittgenstein has to say about expression and the expressive dimension of mental state self-ascriptions can help us to think about not only first-person authority and consciousness, but also the mental as such.

6.4. Self-Knowledge?

I’ve suggested at several points in this chapter that we ought to avoid the Myth of the Given—not as McDowell does, by understanding our pains to have propositional content, but by rejecting the idea that self-ascriptions of pain are, as a rule, epistemically justified. Perhaps I’ve made doing this sound easier than it is. Consider the following objection to my suggestion: “Suppose Hank reads in a medical journal that someone who gets a sharp pain in the back of his knee is more likely than the average American to get Green’s disease. At some point thereafter, Hank experiences just such a pain and infers that he’s more

likely than the average American to get Green’s disease. At this point, Hank is justified in believing that he’s more likely than the average American to get the disease. But he couldn’t be justified in believing this—the *conclusion* of his inference—if he were not justified in believing the premises, one of which is that he has a sharp pain in the back of his knee. In order for Hank to have gotten himself into the epistemic position that he’s now in, he must have judged that he has a pain in the back of his knee or, anyway, ascribed such a pain to himself, and he must have been epistemically justified in so doing. Moreover, there’s nothing extraordinary about this self-ascription of Hank’s. Our self-ascriptions of pain and other mental states just *are* available to figure as grounds when we make inferences. Thus they must, in general, be epistemically justified.”

The right reply to this argument is, I think, to deny its central presupposition, viz., that whenever someone comes to be justified in believing something by virtue of making an inference from a number of premises, he must be epistemically justified in believing (or would be so justified in asserting) all of the premises. In §6.1, I discussed Wittgenstein’s saying, “To use a word without justification does not mean to use it without right” (PI §289). I would urge that when Hank infers that he is more likely than the average American to get Green’s disease, he is using a statement about his pain—as a premise—without epistemic justification but not without right.¹⁴

But now, am I subscribing to the Myth of the Given by allowing that Hank’s self-ascription of pain can be an unjustified justifier? No. The Myth of the Given is not the idea that justifications come to an end somewhere. One subscribes to the Myth if one holds that something (some state or episode or whatever) without propositional content that’s available to a subject is, nonetheless, the subject’s ground (or justification or reason) for believing (or judging or asserting) that such-and-such. If I said that although Hank’s pain has no proposi-

14. I should say, however, that I would have no serious objection to someone’s using the words “with justification” in the way that I’m using “not without right.” In that case, to say that someone was *justified* in self-ascribing a pain would not imply that he was *basically* his self-ascription on anything (e.g., the pain or an observation of it). The point is not to insist on this or that way of speaking, but to avoid philosophical confusion.

tional content, it can serve as a premise on the basis of which he may be justified in making an inference, *then* I'd be subscribing to the Myth. But, on the view that I'm recommending, what serves as a premise for Hank is a fully conceptual self-ascription of pain. There *is* a sense in which this self-ascription could be described as *given*: Hank doesn't need an epistemic justification—he doesn't need to find out that he's in pain, or to be under the impression that he is—in order to be, so to speak, *entitled* to ascribe pain to himself. But I've argued, in effect, that there is nothing problematic about something's being given in this way.¹⁵

* * *

At this point, the following question might be put to me: "On your view, does Hank *know* that he has a sharp pain in the back of his knee? If his self-ascription of pain is not epistemically justified, this suggests that he shouldn't be said to know. On the other hand, imagine that two people are discussing how it is that Hank knows about his increased likelihood of getting Green's disease. Couldn't one of them

15. What I've said in this paragraph might suggest to some readers that I mean to be taking Davidson's side against the account of *outer* experience that McDowell defends in *Mind and World*. (For a very brief discussion of McDowell's disagreement with Davidson, see §3.1.) In fact, I'm not, in this book, committing myself one way or the other on the question of how we should think about outer, perceptual experience. If I deny that *pains* have the kind of propositional content that would suit them to be epistemic justifiers, this is not to say that perceptual experiences also lack such content. On my view, it is a mistake to think of pains as perceptual experiences (or as very much like them). It would be perfectly consistent with what I'm saying here about pains to hold, *with* McDowell, that when someone sees, and so comes to believe, that there's a pencil on her desk, her belief is justified by a conceptual visual impression to the effect that there's a pencil on her desk. Indeed, it is arguable that this central commitment of *Mind and World* is rendered *more* attractive if it is divorced from the middle path account of inner awareness. Even setting aside the objection I adduced against the middle path account in Chapter 3, it is *prima facie* much more plausible to claim that outer, perceptual experience has propositional content (to say, e.g., that I'm right now under the visual impression that there is a dog on the floor to my right) than to say that pains have such content (to say, e.g., that my headache is to the effect that I have a headache). The position I have been defending in this book shows how it might be possible to retain the former, plausible claim while giving up the latter, implausible one.

say: "He knows *both* that anyone who has a sharp pain in the back of the knee is likely to get the disease *and* that he has a sharp pain in the back of the knee. So he's made the obvious inference?"

A famous passage from the *Investigations* runs as follows:

In what sense are my sensations *private*?—Well, only I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise it.—In one way this is wrong, and in another nonsense. If we are using the word "to know" as it is normally used (and how else are we to use it?), then other people very often know when I am in pain.—Yes, but all the same not with the certainty with which I know it myself!—It can't be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I *know* I am in pain. What is it supposed to mean—except perhaps that I *am* in pain? (PI §246)

The point here is not to insist that one could never make good use of the words "I know I am in pain." One might use them in a joke. And the final quoted sentence suggests that one *might* use these words to mean the same thing that's usually meant by "I *am* in pain."

Someone *could* say (meaningfully, truly) of Hank: "He knows *both* that anyone who has a sharp pain in the back of the knee is likely to get the disease *and* that he has a sharp pain in the back of the knee. So he's made the obvious inference." But one might *just as well* say: "He knows that anyone who has a sharp pain in the back of the knee is likely to get the disease, and he *has* a sharp pain in the back of the knee. So he's made the obvious inference." What's important is that we not take the possibility of employing the first formulation instead of the second to imply that Hank's "self-knowledge" is of a piece with someone's knowing that he has termites in his basement.

Imagine three philosophers who are talking about Hank's case. The first says: "Hank has a sharp pain in the back of his knee, but it's wrong to speak of him as either *knowing* or *not knowing* about it. Such talk is, at best, unnatural and misleading and, at worst, sheer nonsense." The second philosopher says: "Hank has ascribed a pain to himself, and he is entitled to make inferences on the basis of this self-ascription. But such an ascription of pain is not epistemically justified; he *doesn't know* that he's in pain." The third says: "Hank *does* know that he's in pain; we *can* say this about him. The mistake is to think that knowledge al-

ways requires epistemic justification. He knows that he's in pain, but knowing this isn't like knowing that one has termites in one's basement." I don't see that these philosophers need be disagreeing about anything of genuine philosophical import. Moreover, it seems to me that all three of them might agree with everything I've said in this book.

POSTSCRIPT

Deliberation and Transparency

At the end of Chapter 2, I argued that constitutivism is bound to represent us as responsible for our own inner states in ways that we are not. This problem, you may recall, is more apparent when we consider the authority with which a person says, "I have a headache," than when we think about someone's speaking about his own attitudes. A constitutivist account of the self-ascription of pain has very little *prima facie* appeal. But because we are responsible for, e.g., our intentions, it does not seem an obviously bad idea to claim that first-person authority about them derives from the fact that they are somehow constituted by what we think or say about them. The problem with this suggestion (we saw) is that the responsibility we bear for what we intend is different in character from the responsibility we bear for what we say or believe about our intentions. (Thus a person may be admired for his honesty in avowing an intention while being blamed for having the intention.)

That we are responsible for our intentions at all is not unrelated to the fact that we are able to reflect on them deliberately and decide what to do. Richard Moran's recent *Authority and Estrangement* may be understood as an attempt to take seriously—more seriously than a constitutivist is in a position to—this kind of deliberative reflection and to explain thereby the authority with which we speak not only about our own intentions but about our desires, beliefs, fears, and other attitudes as well. Moran's position is neither a version of constitutivism nor a middle path between constitutivism and detectivism. While both Wright and McDowell could be described as holding that