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      Articles
        Daniel Hutto: CONSCIOUSNESS DEMYSTIFIED: A WITTGENSTEINIAN CRITIQUE OF DENNETT'S

Daniel Hutto: CONSCIOUSNESS DEMYSTIFIED: A WITTGENSTEINIAN CRITIQUE OF DENNETT'S PROJECT

print article

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> "Nonsense. Nonsense,—because you are making assumptions instead of simply describing. If your head is haunted by explanations here, you are neglecting to remind yourself of the most important facts…. "

—

> Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, §220

1. Introduction

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    Professor Dennett has recently embarked on what he considers a "demystifying philosophical investigation"[1] with respect to the phenomena of consciousness. In essence the strategy he has employed is one of getting us to "trade in" our ordinary intuitions so as to soften us up for the first phases of a full-fledged "scientific" explanation of consciousness in terms of sub-personal systems and their ontogenetic origins. His hope is that, once we are freed from certain misleading metaphors about the mind we will be receptive to such an "explanation."

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    In concentrating on this first stage of his treatment of conscious phenomena I would like to offer a critique of Dennett's project from a Wittgensteinian perspective. For Wittgenstein was also concerned to "demystify" consciousness but his approach differed remarkably from Dennett's. And this is ironic because in challenging our "everyday" intuitions about consciousness the latter essentially regards himself as working within a Wittgensteinian framework. For example, he tells us that "My debt to Wittgenstein is large and long-standing"[2] and he confesses that "what I am doing [is] a kind of redoing of Wittgenstein's attack on the 'objects' of conscious experience."[3]

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    I wish here to challenge the idea that the "reductive character" of Dennett's project is in any way Wittgensteinian in spirit. I want to suggest that at a crucial point in their philosophy their views diverge significantly. That is to say, although they are good travelling companions up to an

important cross-roads, in the end, their incompatible concerns take them in different directions. Furthermore, by reviewing Dennett's project of "explaining" consciousness, we might begin to see some good reasons for preferring Wittgenstein's "road less travelled." Thus, although Dennett's account of consciousness is often given centre stage in what follows, my ultimate aim is to throw light on the nature of Wittgenstein's philosophical psychology by using Dennett as a foil. This should help us to see precisely how the former's approach differs importantly from those advanced by many of today's philosophers and cognitive scientists.

2. Stuff and Nonsense

When it comes to characterising the reality of psychological phenomena many of today's philosophers in the post-Cartesian analytic tradition see themselves as faced with a choice: either to advocate some form of dualism or some form of materialism.

The dualists tend to divide into two main camps, those who support substance dualism and those who support property dualism. Substance dualists take minds to be logically distinct entities which are strongly independent of bodies. Standardly such dualists argue that minds must differ from physical substances because they "stand beneath" entirely different types of attributes or properties—i.e., *mental* attributes or properties. According to this picture other bodily organs are used as a model for "minds"—the main difference being that ordinary bodily organs, such as hearts and livers, are located spatially in the world while minds are not. Furthermore, if one thinks of the mind as some sort of non-physical *entity* or *substance*, then it is a natural next step to think of "beliefs," "feelings," "moods" and their kin as objects, processes or states that inhabit the mental domain. Nevertheless, one could separate these two ideas and allow that although non-reducible "mental" phenomena exist "minds," conceived as separate entities, do not. Those who take such a stand generally support a kind of "property dualism." Such a position is reasonably popular even today.

Strangely enough, treating the "mind" as a home for "mental episodes" is not logically tied to dualism. That is to say this "picture" of the mind as an extra non-bodily organ can get mixed up, in a most unhelpful way, with a crude materialism. This happens when one simply relocates the mind in the brain and treats mental phenomena as identical

types or token brain events. Such mind/brain events are then placed in a "physical" chain of causes. They are designated both as the end result of *incoming* brain process and as the starting point for *outgoing* brain processes. Appropriately, given the foundations of the modern debate, such a view has been dubbed "Cartesian Materialism."

Asserting mental/physical identity is, of course, the natural *response* or *reaction* to dualism in its various forms—but it is little more than that. This simple "re-fitting" makes these materialists prone to misrepresent the nature of psychological phenomena in a new, perhaps more insidious, way. The mental objects, states, processes, events, and so on, which, in accord with dualism, would have inhabited the *mind*, have now simply become allegedly "unmysterious" *brain* states, processes, activities, and events. Nevertheless, all

their interesting mental properties are somehow supposed to survive the transition.

What is interesting is that neither dualism nor materialism, as sketched above, tell us anything of much interest about the nature of mental phenomena. In fact the debate over their physicality can obscure many important questions about their character. One of the initial problems in getting clear about the nature of mental phenomena is that we find it hard to free ourselves of Cartesian-style thinking on these matters. For what thwarts both the materialist and the dualist when it comes to understanding the ontological commitments of commonsense psychology is that they "accept a certain vocabulary and with it a set of assumptions."[14] The main assumption being that it is justified to debate the ontology of "mental" objects and processes without first saying what their nature is.

Wittgenstein and Dennett are united in their rejection of such talk. For example, one of the primary stated aims of *Consciousness Explained* is to undermine the Cartesian legacy in the philosophy of mind. Dennett believes that most philosophers, and those lay folk influenced by them, conjure up images of an Inner (mental) Theatre complete with a Self who examines various Objects of Consciousness (pains, colours, figments of the imagination, etc.) whenever they think of the mind. They still think of our verbal reports concerning consciousness as *based upon* what the Self *sees* "up on the screen." Apparently it "introspects" mental items in a way similar to that in which we ordinarily inspect everyday things such as watches or pieces of china.

Dennett hopes to undermine this Cartesian model of the mind. To this end throughout the chapters of *Consciousness Explained* he catalogues

the kinds of traditional problems that such a view engenders. Such problems include the interaction problem,[15] the problem of inverted spectra,[16] and problems concerning epiphenomenal "qualia."[17] However, he gives us an insight into his overarching reason for resisting the view by telling us that the "fundamentally anti-scientific stance of dualism is, to my mind, its most disqualifying feature."[18]

Wittgenstein is also particularly interested in the idea of the Inner (or "states of consciousness" as he refers to them in the preface of the *Investigations*). Nevertheless, for him, the source of our misunderstanding about the nature of the Inner is not traced back to Descartes' doorstep—rather it is generated by a primitive view of the operation of psychological language. For him the desire to reify the "psychological" is bound up with the view that all language is essentially *referential* in nature. It is linked with the idea that the primary function of words is to provide names for objects. It is also bound up with the notion that the essential aim of language is to effect a simple form of communication. The idea that when I tell you what is "going on inside me" I use words like "sharp pain" to pass on information to you. If you are acquainted with "sharp pains" yourself, if you know what kind of *things* those words designate, then by analogy you gain

an insight into my situation. For Wittgenstein, this picture of how language operates generates (and supports) the idea of an "inner realm of mental events" which looks non-trivially like the "mental realm" conjured up by Descartes' philosophy of mind.

It is the name-object view of language and its attendant metaphysics that Wittgenstein challenges with his celebrated "private language argument." That argument is meant to show that the meaning of our sensation-terms cannot be based on any appeal to inner entities. Although it is much debated how to correctly interpret the *Investigations'* passages from §243 to §275 which make up the "private language argument," I am inclined to side with those who take Wittgenstein to be attacking the idea of the name-private-object view of psychological language on the grounds that it is both superfluous and incoherent. I believe his essential criticism is that an individual trying to employ such a language must presuppose that the "signs" they are using are meaningful before they engage in the naming ceremony of private ostension which is supposed to give them their meanings. The primary problem is that in order to group sensations under a type one must already have in hand some independent standard with which to identify and classify them. Thus, it isn't possible to use the

"object" itself to provide such a standard. And, in the absence of such a standard there can be no talk of being mistaken about whether or not a "sign" hits its target and this is what robs the putative sensation "label" of any possible meaning.

What is important, for the terms of our discussion, is that because he attacks the name-object view of language Wittgenstein is led to abandon the "picture" of inner mental processes. He feels that the name-object view of psychological language is not only ill-founded, it is what prevents us from seeing our psychological situation aright. As he writes:

> The main difficulty arises from our imagining the experience (pain for instance) as a *thing* for which of course we have a name and whose concept is therefore quite easy to grasp.[19]

> The 'inner' is a delusion. That is: the whole complex of ideas alluded to by this word is like a painted curtain drawn in front of the scene of the actual word use.[110]

Wittgenstein wants us to get past this picture and to attend to our actual use of psychological "concepts." That is to say, he wants us to notice how, when and in what circumstances we actually make psychological ascriptions to others or give expression to our own psychological situation. It is precisely this attitude which underwrites the following series of remarks which are typical of the later writings:

> The expression "Who knows what is going on inside him!" The

interpretation of outer events as the consequences of unknown ones, of merely surmised, inner ones. The interest that is focused on the inner, as if on the chemical structure, from which behaviour arises.

For one needs only to ask, "What do I care about inner events, whatever they are?!", to see that a different attitude is conceivable.—"But surely everyone will always be interested in his inner life!" Nonsense. Would I know that pain, etc., etc. was something inner if I weren't told so?[11]

And in the remark which follows shortly after those above we can see the beginnings of his positive account about how we do, in fact, actually speak about the "inner" lives of others:

If we're asked "What's going on inside him?" we say "Surely very little goes on inside him." But what do we know about it?! We construct a picture of it [the inner] according to his behaviour, his utterances, his ability to think.[12]

We can see from this that Dennett and Wittgenstein are allied in their attack on the tendency to reify "conscious states" (where this acts as an umbrella term for any number of mental phenomena such as feeling pain, seeing colours, experiencing dizziness, etc.). Thus, even though they attack the idea of a reified mind from different directions and with different agendas, they both object to the tendency to objectify experiences. As they see it the first things we must do if we wish to avoid becoming bogged down in the kind of interminable metaphysical squabbles that sponsor the traditional dualism/materialism debate is to recognise that the term *mind* does not refer to a kind of *entity* at all and to realise that conscious states are not special kinds of "object"—not even strange sorts of object whose *essi* really is *percepi*.

It may also appear, at first glance, that despite the difference in the origins of their worries concerning reified mental phenomena Dennett and Wittgenstein advance somewhat similar positive accounts. More specifically, we might say the "behaviourist" aspect of Dennett's "personal" level understanding of consciousness has Wittgensteinian roots. For example, in one way or another, they both agree that concentration on outward behaviour and linguistic "expressions" provides a better way for us to understand the nature of consciousness. My ultimate aim in this paper is to reveal that this apparent similarity is, in fact, an illusion. In what follows I will describe in some detail the road Dennett takes before comparing it to that of Wittgenstein in section four.

3. Dennett's New State of Consciousness

In place of the Cartesian Theatre metaphor Dennett proposes what he calls the Multiple Drafts model of consciousness. He claims that "heterophenomenology" will serve as the best means of neutrally analysing the conscious reports of ourselves and others. While engaged in heterophenomenology we effectively allow the subject to verbally "describe for us the nature of his or her conscious experiences." In reality, however, we let the subject generate a text about a "notional" world and, on the whole, we give them authority concerning the nature of that world and what is found in it. Such notional worlds are analogous to fictional worlds, such as Sherlock Holmes's London (not the *real* London).[113] In being of a like nature to such fictional worlds, "The subject's heterophenomenological world will be a stable intersubjectively confirmable theoretical posit,

having the same metaphysical status as, say, Sherlock Holmes's London or the world according to Garp."[114]

The "texts" which are generated in these circumstances (and not something above and beyond which they refer to) effectively constitute consciousness. We need take the conscious experiences described in them no more seriously at the level of ontology than we would Professor Moriarty or the hound of the Baskervilles. To put it crudely, according to this view, conscious experience is treated as nothing over and above the very "reports" we give, "judgements" we make, and "beliefs" we hold about our putative experiences. Thus, consciousness is reduced to the "intentional" in this fashion.

Nor is Dennett satisfied with this reduction alone. He feels that we cannot fully "explain" consciousness unless we get beneath it somehow. We won't have explained it until we give a naturalistic explanation of our ability to make "speech acts" which purportedly act as expressions of our conscious experience. For, he believes that "Only a theory that explained conscious events in terms of unconscious events could explain consciousness at all."[115] His hope is therefore to explain how it is that our "talk about consciousness" is produced by underlying sub-systems and to give an ontogenetic explanation of how those sub-systems were formed. That is to say, after having argued that the episodes of consciousness are *nothing but* the content of coherently generated heterophenomenological texts Dennett's next move is to try to explain our ability to generate such texts from within a naturalistic framework. The essence of his explanatory account is described in this quotation; "I am suggesting conscious human minds are more-or-less serial virtual machines implemented— inefficiently—on the parallel hardware evolution has provided for us."[116] The virtual machine that gives rise to consciousness he calls a Joycean Machine. That is, one which is able to generate detailed texts concerning "streams of consciousness" after the fashion of James Joyce's production of *Ulysses.*

This view has an important consequence. That is to say, since Dennett does not believe the Joycean software (i.e., that which turns us into conscious beings) is built-in, he is prepared to argue that Joycean machines are the result of cultural design. Hence, we get the result that consciousness is "… largely a product of cultural evolution that gets imparted to brains in early training…. "[117] At one point he even makes this intrepid remark: "If consciousness is something over and above the Joycean machine, I have not yet provided a theory of consciousness at all."[118]

This aspect of Dennett's account has been a major source of disillusionment for his readers—for as they see it such an admission amounts to a complete

rejection of the idea that conscious states have any "qualitative" content—a denial that there is anything that it is "like" to experience certain forms of consciousness. Their complaint is usually made by pointing to the fact that non-human animals and infants surely have conscious awareness even though they lack the ability to produce texts of a Joycean standard.[119]

The way Dennett jumps in response to this sort of criticism is instructive. In places he seems to concede the possibility that consciousness might obtain even without a full-fledged Joycean text based on our linguistically mediated capacity for "reportage." That is to say he allows that "Heterophenomenology without a text is not impossible, just difficult."[120] For example, he says of imagining what it is like to be a bat, the "task would require us to subject ourselves to vast transformations… [but] we could use our research to say what these transformations would be."[121] In this case our biological and ecological research would help by showing "us a great deal of what a bat could and could not be conscious of under various conditions."[122] That is, through empirical and controlled testing ecologists may be able to tell me that bats can only be aware of moths (or what not) at X distance. And, naturally, such information will be of help to me in the course of devising a "notional world" for the bat.

At other times he responds by arguing that our "folksy" intuitions regarding animal and infant consciousness are not sacrosanct.[123] Thus, when Fellows and O'Hear point out that: "an immediate reaction to the virtual software aspect of the multiple drafts model might be to say animals and human infants seem to be conscious perfectly well without the mediation of any culturally acquired 'software'…,"[124] Dennett has the ready reply: "I agree; they seem to be. But are they? And what does it mean to say that they are or they aren't?… I claim that this question has no *clear* pre-theoretical meaning."[125] This is the crux of the matter: Dennett doesn't feel we can make any "pre-theoretical" sense of our shared intuitions about the general quality of conscious experience (non-verbal or otherwise).

The common thread to both responses is that we must not surrender, at any cost, the streamlined and principled criterion for consciousness which is provided by heterophenomenology. For a return to our rag-tag intuitions on this score could potentially lead to the admission of all kinds

of nonsense and a re-vitalisation of the perplexing paradoxes of consciousness. But the price we must pay for having this "neat" criterion is that we must jettison some of our most deeply held intuitions concerning consciousness.

One might expect that in doing away with the very idea of "objects" of consciousness Wittgenstein must be advancing a revisionist line as well. But importantly he does not. On the contrary he is concerned to "leave everything as it is." In the next section I want to explain how he does this and to show how this makes his views on the philosophy of psychology more plausible than Dennett's.

I have claimed that Wittgenstein offers an understanding of consciousness that differs significantly from that of his self-styled "follower" Dennett. I maintain that the key difference between these two thinkers revolves around their attitudes towards the behaviour and speech acts which are regarded as deliverances concerning "consciousness." Wittgenstein is concerned to understand those deliverances as expressive in character while Dennett, on the other hand, hardly gives them any attention at all in his eagerness to engage in his larger project of "explaining" consciousness.

I said at the outset that I wanted to use Dennett's account to help throw light on Wittgenstein's position—to show in what ways the latter's position was superior. I hope to achieve this by revealing the naïveté inherent in Dennett's attitude toward the nature of psychological language. It is his lack of attention to the issue of how we interpret speech acts that makes his treatment of consciousness thoroughly inadequate. It is because he lacks any positive account of how such language operates that, unlike Wittgenstein, he has trouble making room for the "inner" after having evacuated the Cartesian Theatre. Let me make my complaint more specific.

Despite having partially seen that it is a serviceable objection to Cartesianism to show that there are no mental *items* which are "designated" by our talk of conscious experience, his very description of the heterophenomenological method nevertheless encourages the view that language, when it is performing its true office, is essentially referential in

character. That is to say, he feels no discomfort in treating the deliverances concerning consciousness as referring to objects in the subject's *notional* world. The idea, as I understand it, looks something like this: we can make space for conscious entities so long as we don't take them too seriously at the level of ontology. This is why his account of consciousness is truly deflationary. Dennett's "irrealism" about consciousness is non-accidentally linked with the fact that he still treats talk of conscious experiences as "kinds of report" whereas Wittgenstein does not. My objection to Dennett is that one will only feel the pressure to treat conscious deliverances less than seriously if one thinks that the purpose of language is simply to "name"—hence having failed to name a "real" thing we should think of this talk as naming "notional" things.

What is worse, despite his appeal to "notional worlds," Dennett still owes his reader an account of how we are able to interpret the content of "reports" that others make and the content of the beliefs they hold. And even he realises that the heterophenomenological "process depends on assumptions about which language is being spoken, and some of the speaker's intentions."[126] But he gives no explanation as to how we are able to interpret these quasi-'reports' of others. For example, in collaborating to create your heterophenomenological world I hear you say "I see a purple cow." But what is it that I take you to be saying? How am I to understand the meaning of that report if it is referring to some item in your notional world? What is it about my knowledge of English that enables me to know what you mean? It cannot be that I understand you because I know what kind of notional objects your words designate. For, to put the point succinctly, the private-language argument will work just as effectively against objects in a notional world as in a private inner world. Beetles in boxes are beetles in boxes, whether they are real or notional.

Having seen the folly of thinking that you are referring to a private object of experience when making an utterance about your state of mind, Dennett does not go on to provide any plausible positive account as to how we might make sense of such utterances even though "typically, he has subjects being conscious only of the content of their mental states."[127] But if this is the case why doesn't Dennett give more attention to the content of the "seeming" reports about conscious seemings? He doesn't even begin seriously to address such questions other than to appeal to the fact that for most conscious beings who speak the same language it will

be unproblematic to determine what they mean. I believe he is faced with this problem because, despite his reduction of consciousness to the intentional, Dennett is also deeply suspicious of "meaning" and follows a Quinean eliminativist line in treating "meaning" as non-objective and hence of second-rate importance.

I believe that it is Dennett's complete lack of concern for the workings of psychological language that crucially divorces his project from its Wittgensteinian origins. Furthermore, it is because he rejects the idea of the "reified mind" for very different reasons than Wittgenstein that he feels no pressure to address these sorts of issues.

Ironically, because he does not fully appreciate Wittgenstein's purposes Dennett accuses him of lacking the courage of his conviction in this matter. For instance, while he approves of the famous remark: "The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all; not even as a *something*; for the box might even be empty"—he accuses Wittgenstein of "Hedging his bets" when he adds shortly afterward "Its not a *something*, but not a *nothing* either."[128] Dennett, on the other hand, tells us that he is willing to take the bull by the horns and claims in doing so to be more "radical" than Wittgenstein.[129] But this sort of talk only reveals how little Dennett really understood Wittgenstein's positive views.

It is true that many have found the "not a something but not a nothing" remark to be deliberately and unnecessarily cyptic. But I think Wittgenstein is simply being careful. What he is doing is partly re-stating his dismissal of the "reified mind"—i.e., repeating that he is not prepared to treat consciousness as "thing-like"—while at the same time making it clear that he nevertheless remains committed to taking our talk of consciousness seriously. We are not reporting to others about objects in a real 'inner' world nor non-objects in some notional world. What we are doing is giving expression to our psychological situation. Unlike Dennett, at least Wittgenstein tells us a story about how psychological language operates.

Wittgenstein is like Dennett in that he realises that once we give up on the myth of a "reified mind" we cannot construe judgements about our psychological situation as being kinds of report. We cannot treat them as being based on some kind of inner evidence because the very idea of inner evidence is an oxymoron. That is to say, we are not making judgements about "inner objects" when we give expression to our "inner" situation. And this also means we have no *evidence* to back up statements about our

inner life. And just as the idea of "inner" evidence is nonsense it would be equally wrong to think that we rely on "outer" evidence in order to decide how we feel. I do not decide that I am in pain by first noticing a cut on my leg, nor do I decide this by *noticing* that I am having an "inner" sensation of pain by some process of introspection. I simply feel pain and say so. Psychological language is expressive, not referential. This is why "a lie about inner processes is of a different category

from one about outer processes."[130]

My linguistic utterances of pain are natural extensions of, or replacements for, my earlier ways of expressing pain—i.e., shouting, bawling, etc. A development of more primitive forms of response that we share with animals. It is because psychological language is expressive that Johnson tells us that the basis of our sophisticated kind of language game has more to do with sincerity than accuracy.[131] Accuracy presupposes some independent means of verification and that is precisely what we lack in this case. Hence, Wittgenstein encourages us to treat the speech acts concerning our "inner life" as confessional in nature. He writes; "What is the importance of someone making this or that confession? Does he have to be able to judge his condition correctly?—What matters here is not an inner condition he judges, but just his confession."[132] And note "… confession is of course something exterior."[133]

But we may wonder: how are we to understand "pretence" on a view that insists that 'nothing is hidden' and that psychological language is essentially expressive? For of course it is still possible that a person could be lying with their confession. And what are they lying about? Here Wittgenstein reminds us that: "Above all pretence has its own outward signs. How could we otherwise talk about pretence at all?"[134] Moreover he makes it perfectly clear how we are to treat such cases when he talks about the role trust plays in dealing with another's psychology. He writes: "Do I pay any mind to his inner processes if I *trust* him? If I don't trust him I say, "I don't know what's going on inside him." But if I trust him, I don't say I know what's going on inside him."[135] That is to say, if I do trust him I treat his utterances as being genuinely expressive—just as in a more primitive setting his facial or other bodily expressions would be transparent to me. If there is an asymmetry between these cases it is just the opposite of what one would expect if we thought there were objects of consciousness. In the case where there is pain we can get by with just the "expression," in the case of pretence, where there is no pain, we must treat

the utterance as serving a different and potentially deceptive function. The point is that we need not return to the idea of a reified mind in order to make logical space for the possibility of "pretence."

Is this, in effect, a reduction of the inner to outer behaviour? Wittgenstein constantly rejects this interpretation of his project. This occurs in many places in the later writings. I have collected but a few to support my view that it is wrong to read him as sponsoring behaviourism in any form.

> … the impression that we wanted to deny something arises from our setting our faces against the picture of the 'inner process'. What we deny is that the picture of the inner process gives us the correct idea of the use of [psychological] word[s]…. [136]

> "Are you not really a behaviourist in disguise? Aren't you at bottom really saying that everything except human behaviour is a fiction?"—If I do speak of a fiction, then it is of a *grammatical* fiction.[137]

> … we have to deny the yet uncomprehended process in the yet uncomprehended medium. And now it looks as if we had denied mental processes. And naturally we don't want to deny them.[†38]

> But am I not really speaking only of the outer?… it is as if I wanted to explain (quasi-define) the inner through the outer. And yet it isn't so.[†39]

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          4. Expressing Wittgenstein's Position

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I believe it helps to see how unbehaviourist he really was when we contrast his position to that of Dennett's. For in concentrating solely on the "grammar" of our mental discourse, by rejecting the name-object picture of language as *altogether* inappropriate in this domain, Wittgenstein is led to a more satisfactory view of the nature and importance of consciousness. He has not tried to equate "consciousness" with talk of the outer behaviour of bodies, rather he has reminded us that in treating others as conscious we are always engaged in an interpretative project (broadly conceived) informed by our form of life.

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The important thing to notice is that talk of "our experiences" is not to be treated as analogous to the language we use when talking about physical objects. Psychological talk has its own unique grammar that must be attended to if we are to understand it. In other words the strength of Wittgenstein's approach is that when he rejects the idea that reified conscious states have reality rights he simultaneously attacks the name-object picture of language. Thus, as he has a different, more sophisticated conception of how language operates, he is not even tempted to be

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"irrealist" about consciousness. He writes: "The connection of inner and outer is part of these concepts. We don't draw this connection in order to magically remove the inner. There are inner *concepts* and outer *concepts*."[†40] Thus, although Wittgenstein is often regarded as the grand guru of "logical behaviourism" with respect to "the mental," it is in fact more appropriate that Dennett should wear this title. For Witttgenstein the inner is not demystified through elimination. It is demystified because in attending to the nature of psychological language our understanding of "consciousness" is, to use Mulhall's words, "de-mythologized."

5. Conclusion

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What would Wittgenstein make of Dennett's "demystifying investigation"? I think he would regard the latter's counter-intuitive "theory" as a bad response to a series of problems which rest on a house of cards. In offering us such a "theory" Dennett is falling into the trap of trying to give "new information" or a "new discovery" to solve a philosophical problem[†41] when instead what is needed

is an investigation into the way psychological language operates.[†42] Ironically, by advancing his "metaphysically minimalist" account of consciousness which introduces us to such things as "notional worlds" Dennett has simply generated a new sort of mythology of his own. Rather than settling the issue with his "new set of metaphors" he simply creates different puzzles to confuse the metaphysician.

Wittgenstein's attitude, on the other hand, is that philosophy finds peace when it understands the nature of the problems that concern it (and bedevil it). Thus, in taking the road he does, in the end we must regard Dennett as being mistaken in believing that he is, in fact, "more Wittgensteinian than St. Ludwig himself."[†43] It is not that Dennett has been more thorough in his application of Wittgenstein's principles, rather it is that he has thoroughly misunderstood those principles. We must correctly describe our psychology by attending to our ordinary psychological talk. We will not escape our philosophical problems by supplanting such talk (or surpassing it) by advancing a superior *theory*. This reveals the crucial difference in the character of their "demystifying" investigations. To successfully demystify consciousness Dennett thinks we need to develop a principled, and revisionist, theory of consciousness—but, if Wittgenstein is right what we require is a rearrangement of facts we have already

always known. We need to get a clear view of the nature of our psychological language.

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Notes

[1]. Dennett, D. C. *Consciousness Explained*. (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 22.

[2]. Dennett (1991), 463.

[3]. Dennett (1991), 462.

[4]. Searle, John R. *The Rediscovery of the Mind*. (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1992), 2.

[5]. Dennett (1991), 33, 34, 35.

[6]. Dennett (1991), ch. 12, §4.

[7]. Dennett (1991), ch. 12, §5.