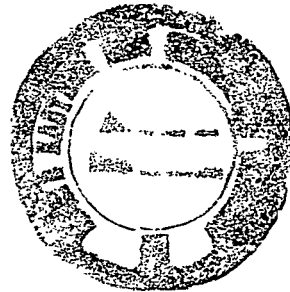


THE CONCEPT OF ACTION

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the research entitled "THE CONCEPT OF ACTION" presented by Mrs. Parul Choudhury (Talukdar), Lecturer in Philosophy of K.R.B. Girls' College, Guwahati-9, has been done in partial fulfilment of the requirements for M.Phil Degree in Philosophy for the Session 1989-90 of Gauhati University under my guidance and supervision.

I also certify that the investigations are the results of her independent and honest works and no part of this dissertation has been published in any form in any paper, magazine or periodicals etc. nor has it been submitted for any other degree in other University.

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INTRODUCTION

THE CONCEPT OF ACTION

Introduction :

The concept of action is an important philosophical concept of a particular area of philosophy known as the philosophy of mind. The concept of action and the theory of mind are inter-related in the sense that the concept of action makes clear the views regarding different theories of mind. Not only so, the extent to which the concept of action is intertwined with other areas of philosophy is very wide because philosophers have come to realize that one cannot go very far in philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, either or any other fields without confronting crucial problems in the analysis of action. There are certain important philosophical questions that can be raised so far as the concept of action is concerned. Namely, what is it to act ? What is the difference between an action and an event or a happening ? What is the nature of connection between an action and a will or a desire ? Is it logical, reasonable or causal ? Can we give a causal explanation of human action ? and so on and so forth.

To act is to take action. An act is the taking of action. An act, (say) jurisprudents is 'the foundation

of legal liability ; though this dictum neglects the importance of omissions. Action is behaviour orientated towards a goal - for psychology and sociology. Though an act is the taking of action, an act is not a species of action. There are acts, but not actions, of mercy and desperation ; smooth and beautiful actions, but not acts. Attempts are acts, but omissions are not. In trying to do x, there must be some act or acts the doing of which constitutes the attempts in omitting to do x there need not be, and usually is not any act.

Among the problems concerning the nature of acts, there is the problem of individuation. If we suppose that A does each of the following things all at the same time - (1) moves his finger (2) pulls the trigger (3) fires the gun and (4) kills B.

In this case, we have seen that on the one hand there are four distinct acts that A has performed and on the other hand, all of these are one and the same act. But actually which one is correct (1) are there four distinct acts ? Or are all of these one and the same act ? The answer to such questions will provide an answer to the question of the nature of acts.

Regarding the nature of action, there are different views. According to Miss Anscombe, actually

there is but one act in this case, which has been described in a variety of ways. Miss Anscombe writes :

"..... a single action can have many different descriptions, e.g. 'sawing a plank', 'sawing oak', 'saw one of Smith's planks', 'making a queaky noise, with the saw', 'making a great deal of sawdust' and so on.....

.....Are we to say that the man who (intentionally) moves his arm, operates the pump, replenishes the water supply, poisons the inhabitants, is performing four actions ? Or only one ?In short the only distinct action of his that is in question is this one, A. For moving his arm up and down with his fingers round the pump handle is, in these circumstances it is replenishing the house water supply ; and, in these circumstances, it is poisoning the household.

So, there is one action with four descriptions."¹

Similarly, Donald Davidson says :

I flip the switch, turn on the light, and illuminate the room. Unbeknownst to me I also alert a prowler to the fact that I am home. Here I do not do four things, but only one, of which four descriptions have been given."²

1 : Intention. (Ishaca, N.Y. Cornell University Press 1958). P. 11, 45-46.

2 : 'Action, ^RReasons, and Causes'. The Journal of Philosophy LX (1963) P. 686.

The relation of identity constitutes one clear and attractive way of individuating acts. According to Davidson, the relation between 'my pointing the gun' and 'pulling the trigger' and 'my shooting the victim' - is the relation that is that of identity. But there are several difficulties it encounters. In general if A and B are identical, then A must have all and only the properties that B has. We shall find, however, that some of the pairs of acts which are alleged to be identical do not share all the same properties.

We have no good reason to suppose the philosophical notions of act and action are different from those expressed in ordinary language. Because in ordinary language, man can properly be described as 'doing nothing' (i.e. nothing important, effective, relevant or illegal) may yet be performing what a philosopher might call 'an action'. On the other hand, a man in ordinary language may also be described as 'doing something' (e.g. lazing about, talking when action is needed etc.), while a philosopher supposed that verbs like 'know', 'believe' 'intend' signify mental acts have been making a logical mistake, they have not been introducing a philosophical sense of 'act'. Moreover, the criteria given by philosopher for 'an action' is really a criteria for 'a human action' e.g. in terms of

intention, purpose or consciousness and the criteria given for 'a human action' is really a criteria for 'a voluntary action' e.g. in terms of will, volition, choice. Therefore, it is worthwhile to indicate the features common to all actions.

To act is to bring about something, to cause it happen, an action is the bringing about of something. An agent or author is that which brings something about directly or by means of other things. In fact, what we 'do' covers both our bringing something about, directly or indirectly and our achievement of a result, which 'act' and 'action' refer to the former. The action of light bleaches cotton, but the bleaching effect of light is not an action of the light. Furthermore, not every change produced is a detachable product of something prior, as a cake is a product of baking, We produce a smile in smiling and words in talking, where as we may produce happiness by smiling and astonishment by talking. To ascribe or to attribute an act or an action to something or someone, therefore, is to call him the author or cause of what is brought about, i.e. he brought the happening about. Thus a human action is an action of a human being, but reference to any purpose, intention or motive of such a human being as an author should not appear in the analysis of action.,

Attempts to show the falsity of the statement

that all actions are events have been common in recent philosophy. Actions are events though not all events are actions. There is a distinction between things and events, that things, however, change and it is their changing that constitutes events. Thus the 'sun' 'rock' 'cloud' refer to things while the 'landslide' 'cloudburst' and 'sunset' are used to refer to events. The most obvious change that occurs to things is changes in their spatial location and what happened when the landslide occurred was that the position of the rock changed.

Events do not just happen. We can usually relate the occurrence of an event to the occurrence of some prior event that caused it to happen. But to point to a cause is not to point to a thing, but to prior event. The water that was suspended in clouds above, the mountain condensed into drops which fell on it as rainfall, the cause of landslide. Though events themselves do not change, they produce or cause change, one change following another in a complex sequence.

In our common sense, we usually make a distinction between two kinds of events that we divide the occurrence of our universe exclusively and exhaustively into two classes - the happenings and the actions. Sunrise and sunset, earthquake, showers of rain, eclipses, showers

of rain, eclipses of the 'sun and moon' motorcar accidents etc. are the examples of happenings. While the making a promise, signing cheques, choosing a new pair of shoes and dresses voting in an election etc. are the ~~example~~ of action. From this, we see that action are the outcome of human decisions and choices, and happenings are events that occur characteristically without human intervention.

Now we can consider a given piece of behaviour i.e. a man signing his name as an event and an action. As an event, it consists of a number of neural and muscular events with consequent movements of the pen and making of marks on paper. But if we explain a piece of behaviour deterministically by analysing it into a series of events that are linked in a causal chain, this explanation is certainly not the explanation of an action. For precisely the same physical movements may constitute any of a wide range of different actions. The man signing his name may, for example, be signing his will or a marriage register or a death warrant or a cheque, and so on, or he may simply be testing a new pen. Thus it is clear that the explanation of a piece of behaviour cannot be explanation of the action that embodies it. For to explain the signature of a marriage register is a very different thing from explaining the

signing of a will or a death warrant. Thus it is clear that such arguments have a wide range of application to any instances of behaviour and the actions which the behaviour represents.

But we cannot think that such examples proves that actions are not events. All they prove is that actions are not simple events but rather complicated ones. They are events taken in their context. And their context is of course a very elaborate system of inter-connected events that give the central event in our example, the signature, its characteristic nature and meaning.

It may be felt that actions are events of social and psychological significance that they cannot be explained causally. An action of the signing of a marriage register has a complex and widely ramifying network of psychological states and social conventions as the context from which it takes its significance. The desires and intentions of the parties to the marriage and the social and legal rules governing marriages in the society are necessary conditions for the action, for it would not take place in their absence or if it take place in the absence of some of them, it would be a different action. All this is true, For an action to qualify for a certain description, it must take place in the appropriate psychological and social context. But none

of this can prove that actions are not events, in the sense that they cannot be causally explained. All that has been shown is that the causal account required, will now be immensely more complicated.

An action that consisted only in the movement of an arm, even if accepted as an action, would not be thought important. But it will be important, when one moves his arm and it held a dagger and the movement of his arm caused the dagger to enter other's body and occurred death. The movement of his arm was part of sequence of events that included the movement of the dagger and the death of others. He was, therefore, regarded as responsible with others for other's death. This 'responsible' has two uses - morally and causally responsible. People are held morally responsible for their actions and in this sense responsible means morally or legally accountable, i.e. 'A' was certainly responsible for 'B's death. In an alternative use of the word, 'responsible' we say that heavy rain was responsible for the landslide, that is, the heavy rain caused the landslide. Similarly, we also say that 'A' was responsible for B's death, that is, 'A' caused B's death. Thus A was responsible for B's death, in both senses of the word. Indeed, the question of whether A was morally responsible for B's

death would normally arise only after it had been established, that he was causally responsible for it. For this reason, the subject of action is of central importance for moral philosophy and the philosophy of law. But to say that A causally responsible is not itself to say that he was morally responsible, what he was morally responsible for was causing one's death. Though the two senses of responsibility share the idea of 'bringing about' - 'A' brought B's death and the heavy rain brought about the landslide - they are nevertheless radically different. We should say that the landslide was caused not by the rain (a thing or stuff) by the rainfall (an event) since only events, not things, can occupy the role of causes.

The another analysis of action have characterized in terms of an alleged antecedent. Traditionally, the presence of such an antecedent has been made a necessary condition of something's being an action, and this antecedent has been called 'the will' but the attempt to characterize an action in terms of a contingent rather than a necessary antecedent, e.g. in terms of some effort of will resolution, intention, decision, purpose, aim etc. must be unacceptable because of such factors cannot transform a bodily happening into an action, since what they can properly be said to precede are actions, not happenings.

This human act or action cannot be described as an object or event is described. Given that what happens is a human act, that is, that it is something brought about by a human being, we can describe it in physical terms e.g. moving an arm or by its agent. And in order to qualify for one any description, the event must in addition to being something that is brought about, meet certain criteria in morals, the law etc. though these criteria are not mentioned in the description. An action may be described in explanatory terms by reference to its purpose reason or cause. The description of an action may contain the relation of the agent to the person affected, or to its consequences or to some antecedent event, or to an intention or motive or to its object.

Thus we can get a general out line of the concept of an action, which is the problems about the mind that called philosophical concern the general framework of our thinking about particular mental phenomena and its everyday relationship about the actions of other people. The frequency with which problems of action are found to underline problems in other areas is a sufficient explanation for the current prominence of the field. The

subject of action has its intrinsic philosophical interest which makes it a natural focus of philosophical attention to the fundamental question that can be raised so far as the concept of action is concerned.

This dissertation of the concept of action presented here is intended to provide answers to these fundamental questions and in so doing to develop a set of ideas and principles in terms of which various problems of action can be handled. So, an honest endeavour has been made to classify the ideas of the concept of human action into three main ideas. First, an approach to the individuation of actions i.e. all actions are though our physical movement but all physical movements are not action is explained. Secondly, the causal explanation of an action, i.e. the relationship between acts, so individuated are studied and exhibited including the causal relationship between the actions and the will. Thirdly, the reasons explanation, in which, the idea of that acts are caused by reasons i.e. wants and beliefs is not only expoused, but used in the analysis of the concept of an act. The last chapter will be the concluding chapter in which I will sum up my findings.

CHAPTER I

Physical Movement and Action

CHAPTER I

Physical Movements and Actions :

The most obvious fact about man is that he is both part of nature - and uniquely different from all other things, animate and inanimate. Like the rest of nature, man is the subject to the law of nature, but unlike any other object, he is a creator, he obeys nature so that he may command her. A man behave in nature in different ways or in different manner. Therefore, human behaviour can be described and classified in a variety of ways, We speak them as activities, actions, achievements, habitual and automated behaviour, reflexes, and so on. One's general views concerning nature of man and the sources of man's activity strongly affect one's way of conceptualizing and explaining behaviour.

Among actions we customarily include behaviour such as the following : raising one's arm, opening ~~of~~ a door, crossing a street, paying a debt, killing somebody, saying or promising something refusing or forbearing to do something and so on. These actions can be done rationally, intentionally, voluntarily, deliberately etc.

Human behaviour is not readily classifiable as either 'action' or 'movement' we neither bring it about ourselves nor yet find it merely happening to us, changing

gear on a hill or taking off one's hat entering a house are actions which, with repetition, may harden into 'habits' which are almost like reflexes, such as biting one's nails. Again there are some activities, like breathing, for example, run themselves without any attention being paid to them, but which may none the less under some circumstances be deliberately controlled or modulated and sometimes one may refrain from acting in such a way that one's inaction may be counted as a mode of 'action'

Actions involve bodily movements but all sorts of bodily movements are not actions. Action may be looked upon as bodily movements directed by an agent towards the fulfilment of some criterion conceived by him.

There is a difference between my arm raising and my raising my arm, between my muscles moving and my moving my muscles - in short, between a bodily movement or happening and an action. Now the question arises that what is the difference between a full fledged human action and a mere bodily movement ?

Regarding this question at first we must know what a person is ? Or is person identical with his body ?

If an action is considered only as a physical movement e.g. movement of an arm, then there may arise some problems. As for example, when Brutus moved his arm

on the Ides of March, it held a dagger, and the movement of his arm caused the dagger to enter Caesar's body. The movement of his arm was part of a sequence of events that included the movement of dagger and the death of Caesar. He was therefore, regarded as responsible, with other for Caesar's death.

It was not possible in 'Brutus was responsible for Caesar's death' to replace 'Brutus' with a description of an event without departing from our ordinary way of speaking. But if Brutus is identified either with his body or with his mind, perhaps this substitution can be made after all. From one philosophical point of view, only material bodies and the relations between them really exist. To speak of Brutus therefore, is really to speak of a physical body - the one we normally call Brutus' body. It is then both possible and, in the interest of clarity, desirable to replace 'Brutus' with a description of an event, the most likely substitution being a description of a movement of Brutus' body. For the dagger moved because 'Brutus' arm moved, and Caesar died because the dagger moved and entered his body. In this view, an action is a movement of a human body i.e. a bodily movement, though we would ordinarily include within the description of the action a reference to its immediate consequences. Indeed, we would often refer

to the action by referring to its consequences as when we say that Brutus killed Caesar.

According to an alternative view, what exists includes both physical bodies (including those of animals and men) and minds, and persons are thought of primarily as minds. Descartes for example says that - "the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body."³ Brutus is then identified not with his body but with his mind, and his mind is thought of as the locus of a succession of conscious or mental states or events. And the reference to Brutus in 'Brutus killed Caesar' can be eliminated in favour of a description not of a physical but of a mental event. Caesar died because the dagger moved and entered his body, the dagger moved because Brutus' arm moved, and Brutus' arm moved because a mental event occurred in Brutus' mind.

Thus we will consider a view of action that presupposes the second of these alternatives, the view that what we ordinarily call an action is a bodily movement caused by a prior mental event.

There are some bodily movements, however, which are the direct result of external causes, as for example, the movement of Brutus' arm caused by a rock falling from a cliff. And presumably such movements would not count as actions.

3 : Descartes R. - Discourse on Method, P.27

In the example Brutus' arm moved because Brutus moved it - and therefore, to accept the movement of his arm as an action - seemed to depend on the fact that, as far as we know, nothing external to Brutus caused his arm to move. But all cases of physical interaction are not as simple as the model of the interaction of balls on a billiard table suggests. Perhaps if we look more carefully we can relate all movements of Brutus' arm to prior events, events that differ only in complexity from the falling rock that served as an obvious external cause of the movement of Brutus' arm. There would then be no obvious grounds for picking out a special subclass of the movements of Brutus's body and referring to them as actions.

Even in the case of 'the movement of Brutus' arm caused by a rock falling from a cliff' there may have been no obvious reason why it should have fallen from the cliff at that precise moment. Nevertheless we have no inclination to say that it moved itself, rather, we assume that its movement was the product of an accumulation of small changes - the erosion of the soil supporting it, pressure of plant roots, and so on. Moreover, somethings are internally complex. They are made up of parts that are related to one another in complex physical and chemical

ways. The movements of the hand of a watch, for example, are caused by the gradual uncoiling of a spring concealed behind the watch face. The source of movement of the hands lies, therefore, at least partly within the watch. Artifacts that are capable of moving about can also be constructed, for example, clockwork railway engines.

H.A. Prichard argued in an article 'Duty and Ignorance of Fact' that to do an action is "to perform a mental activity of a special kind", that of settling ourselves to do something i.e. to bring something about."⁴ In another article "Acting, Willing, Desiring", also, Prichard's view is the "an action i.e. a human action is an activity of willing some change, this usually ~~causing~~^{cau} causing some change, and in some cases a physical change"⁵ though it may not do so. In both articles, Prichard begins with a view of action that he ultimately rejects, the view that we mean by 'an action' or doing something originating causing or bringing about the existence of something viz., some new state of an existing thing or or substance, or more shortly causing a change of place

4 : Prichard H.A. - 'Duty and Ignorance of Fact'
 Herriette Hertz Lecture for 1932 (proceeding of the
 British Academy, 1932).

5 : Prichard H.A. - 'Acting, Willing, Desiring'
 Reprinted in W. R. White, The Philosophy of Act, Page 65.

of our hand, by 'posting a letter' we mean bringing about that a letter is in a pillar box. In short, to do an action is to bring about or cause change. It is clear that though rejecting it, Prichard finds this account of action plausible and his own account is based on it and reached through criticism, of it.

According to Prichard, "We ordinarily think that in doing certain actions we bring about the things which we do directly, while in doing certain others we do so indirectly, i.e. by directly bringing about other things which in turn cause them." ⁶ Examples of originating something indirectly are '~~causing~~^{curing} our toothache by swallowing some aspirin, and killing another by pressing switch which exploded a charge underneath him."⁷ Moving our turning our hand is used as an example of directly causing some new state, though he says that what we really originated directly in such cases must have been some new state or states of our nerve cells. But what is important for his argument is the fact that we do bring, about some changes directly and this, he thinks is established once we admit that we bring about something indirectly.

6 - 7 : Prichard H.A. "Moral Obligation" (Clarendon Press, 1949) Page 19. Pages 18.

Take an action in the strict sense, such as moving one's hand, 'How did he move it' cannot mean "By directly causing what, did he cause what he did ?" 'because exhypothesis he is not thinking of the action as one in which he caused some particular thing by causing something. "The legitimate question is what was the activity by performing which I caused my hand to move ? and an answer would be 'willing the existence of the movement." Andso.....what he called moving my hand really consisted in settling myself to move it, and..... I referred to this activity, as moving my hand because I thought that this activity had a change of place of my hand as an effect." The activity of setting myself to do something "is a special kind of activity, and indeed a special kind of mental activity."....."of the special nature of which we are aware in performing it." Moreover, if we were to set ourselves to move our arms we could not be sure that we would move them, since "we never know that we have not become paralysed." But we would expect to do so, and probably would do so."⁸

It is a premise of the argument that moving one's hand is an action in the strict sense, i.e. that the movement of this hand is a change that he bring about

8 : Langford Glenn - 'Human Action' Doubleday & Company Inc. Garden City, New York, 1971.

directly. The argument could succeed therefore only by showing that the idea of bringing something about is self contradictory, and in certainly does not do that. It is because, it is a premise of the argument that moving his hand is an action in the strict sense that the question "How did he move his hand ? (i.e. 'By directly causing what, did because what he did ?) cannot be asked. It would be appropriate to ask 'why did his hand move ?' the answer being 'His hand moved because he moved it.'" This answer does not point to a prior event that caused his hand to move, it simply confirms the fact that moving his hand was an action that he performed. And it would be appropriate to ask "who moved his hand ?" the answer being, 'he did.'

It would be natural to take setting himself to do something as the cause of an action in the strict sense. But Prichard says it is itself an action, When, therefore, he moves his hand, though he brings about a change in the position of his hand, he does so indirectly by performing an action of another sort, i.e. setting himself to move his hand. Moving his hand, therefore, is not after all an action in the strict sense, so that the activity he performs in setting himself to move his hand cannot be the cause of an action in the strict sense. Thus Prichard's conclusion

seems to be that setting myself to do something is an action by performing which I probably bring about something (i.e. a bodily movement) indirectly but bring about nothing directly. In another article 'Acting, Willing, Desiring', Prichard says there 'the thing meant by 'an action' is an activity. This is so whether we speak of a man's action in moving his hand, or of a body's action such as that of the heart in pumping the blood or that of one election in repelling another. He then goes on to compare, "a man's action" and "a body's action" to distinguish that between those events that are human actions and those events that are natural events. He uses as an example of the former 'a man's action in moving his hand' and of the latter the action of 'one election in repelling another' or the sun's action 'in attracting the earth'. We think both 'that some man - in moving his hand' and 'the sun in attracting the earth, causes a certain movement'. But we do not think that the man's or the sun activity is or consists in causing the movements. Prichard thus goes on to distinguish between actions and other events in terms of the kind of activity a change requires. We do not know what kind of activity is required when one body causes another to move. "When

we speak of a force of attraction or of repulsion we are only expressing our knowledge that there is some activity at work, while being ignorant of what the kind of activity is. In the case, however, of a man, i.e. really, of a man's mind, the matter is different. For example, when we think of ourselves as having moved our hand, we are thinking of ourselves as having performed an activity of a certain kind, and, it almost goes without saying a mental activity of a certain kind, an activity of whose nature we were directly aware in doing the action, and of which we can become more clearly aware by reflecting on it,"⁹ this activity is willing - Prichard calls.

But what then is the special kind of mental activity that was first called, "setting himself to move his hand" and is now called "willing a movement of his hand" ? It is concluded earlier that it is an action by performing which one probably cause some change in the position of his hand indirectly but bring about no change directly. Prichard seems to be operating with

9 : Prichard H.A. - 'Moral Obligation', Pages 188,189

the idea of an event that may cause change but that does not itself involve change. But this hardly seems to make sense. If one move his hand, to kill a fly he changes the position of his hand even if he fails to kill the fly. But if he will a movement of his hand and being paralysed fail to move his hand, then apparently, nothing happens. But if nothing happens there is no event not even a mental event of which he can be aware, dimly or otherwise, and the world of the mind cannot be as shadow as that. Thus G. Langford remarks about Prichard's account of action. "Prichard's special mental activities therefore appear to have the peculiar status of causes that are not also events. And they are also privileged in retaining their status as causes even when they do not cause anything, their causal status is independent of any context of explanation."¹⁰

On this Prichard's account of action as a special mental activity of setting ourselves to bring about or willing some change, we ordinarily may call an action is a bodily movement, which is caused by a mental act of will. But these views have been faced to criticism as cartesian account of mind. The cartesian doctrine is

10 : Langfor G. - Human Action - Doubleday & Company Inc. Garden City, New York, 1971.

severely criticized by Prof. G. Ryle in his book "The Concept of Mind" that this view is radically mistaken since it places mental concept in the wrong logical categories which is called committing a 'category mistake' According to this doctrine, minds belong to the same category as bodies. Mind are things, but different sorts of things from bodies, mental processes are causes and effects, but different sorts of causes and effects from bodily movement. Thus cartesian account explicitly contrasts minds with bodies. Ryle says mind can be characterized only negatively by describing the ways in which their workings are not like those of bodies - "They are not motions, they are not modifications of matter, they are not accessible to public observation, Minds are not bits of clockwork, they are just bits of not clockwork."¹¹ The mind is thus supposed to function like a physical body in providing the internal causes of external behaviour. The view of person is that of a ghost mysteriously ensconced in a machine and the ghost is itself 'just a spectral machine' for which it is called the cartesian theory is a para-mechanical hypothesis and the question

11 : Ryle G. - 'The Concept of Mind' - Penguin Books Ltd. Page 21.

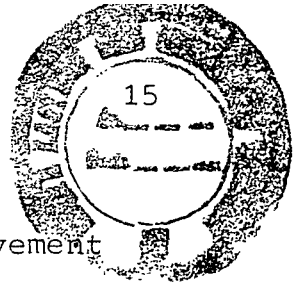
is whether the emaciated wreck of a body that is a mind can play the causal role cast for it.

Ryle's attack on the cartesian account of mind, though is not specifically directed at Prichard, but clearly Prichard's basic position is similar to that attacked. According to Ryle, there are no mental events that are volitions, but according to Prichard, every piece of behaviour is preceded by a volition of the special nature of which we are aware in performing it. Therefore, one would expect reports of their occurrence to be readily available. But Ryle says that they are not, "ordinary men never report the occurrence these acts, for all that, according to the theory, they should be encountered vastly more frequently than headaches, or feelings of boredom."¹² Moreover, Ryle also argues that if a volition is itself an action then it must issue from a prior volition and that from another ad infinitum.

Prichard does not say that every action must be preceded by a prior act of will. Philosophically, Prichard's view is that only volitions are actions. What we ordinarily call an action is an action in this narrow

12 : Ryle G.-The Concept of Mind - Penguin Books Ltd.,
Page-64.

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philosophical sense together with a bodily movement caused by it. A bodily movement therefore is not itself an action but counts as part of an action in this everyday sense only if it is caused by an act of will. So, there is involved the regress that from an event to its cause, from the cause to its cause, and so on. Prichard does not need to distinguish between a volition's occurring and one's performance of it, since he has already given his account of action in pointing to a volition rather than a bodily movement. On the cartesian view, a person is identified primarily with his mind, not with his body. Therefore, though a distinction must be made between the occurrence of a bodily movement and one's moving his body, there is not the same need to make similar distinction between the occurrence of a mental event and one's performing it.

Another difficulty to which Prichard himself, admitted is that the special mental activity in performing which we perform an action is not describable by itself solely by reference to something else i.e. by reference to what on some occasions, is caused by it. As for example, the act of will whereby one move his arm can be described only as an act of willing a movement of his

arm. Here, in this case, there is an logical connection between the mental cause and its effect. But according to Melden, a cause must be logically distinct from its alleged effect. Things may be contingently related even though one is described in terms of the other, as for example fire engines and fires, where an independent description could be produced, but it is doubtful whether this could be done for volitions. This is because of either there is no such things as volitions or of the general difficulty of producing a public description of a private mental event.

Descartes himself admitted another problem regarding the cartesian account of mind as how in view of their distinct natures, the body and the mind can interact, how, that is, a mental event that is temporal but non-spatial can cause a physical event that is both spatial and temporal. Ryle, also attached most importance to this objection that as volition cannot be both mental events and causes of bodily movements but in Prichard's account they are both. Moreover, if acts of will are thought of as autonomous as uncaused causes, the difficulty is compounded for they are the events that in being mental themselves avoid being caused while remaining

potent as causes of physical events. As willing occurs as a result of desiring to will in Prichard's account for which he himself does not have to meet this objection. Thus in conclusion regarding Prichard's account we can say that if he were right, we should be able to recognize in our own experience the occurrence of acts of will, but indeed, we cannot find out what a volition is or we do not even know what to look for.

Refuting cartesian dualism and Prichard's account of action Ryle tries to give a positive account of mental concept. The point of comparison between man and machine depends on a prior philosophical analysis of mental concepts. Question about - whether machines capable of doing certain things are possible can be answered only if what they are required to do is clear, the answer then depends only on the technical possibilities. What remains important is the positive account of mental concepts which is given by Ryle.

There is an important distinction between intelligent and non-intelligent performances (i.e. stupid). Action may be described as voluntary or involuntary, intentional or unintentional, successful or unsuccessful

moral or immoral as well as intelligent or stupid. But these distinctions apply only to that actions as opposed to mechanical movement. Thus the important, contrast is not between knowing how to do something and not really knowing, but between intelligent as compared with mechanical performance.

Ryle denying that the intelligent execution of an operation must have two processes, one of doing and another of theorising. Theorising is the activity of finding the answers to questions and its goal is the knowledge of true propositions or facts. Ryle argues, theorizing itself is an example of knowing how, it is itself an operation the execution of which can be more or less intelligent, less or more stupid. But if, for any operation to be intelligently executed, a prior theoretical operation had first to be performed and performed intelligently, it would be a logical impossibility for anyone ever to break into the circle.

When people are described as knowing how to perform tasks intelligently, according to which Ryle says that - "their performances came up to certain standards, or satisfy certain criteria. But this is not enough. The well regulated clock keeps good time... To be intelli-

gent is not merely to satisfy criteria but to apply them, to regulate one's actions and not merely to be well regulated."¹³ A boy is said to know how to play chess if he is 'able to make the required moves'. It is neither necessary nor sufficient that he should be able "to recite the rules accurately... in terms of which 'correct' and 'incorrect' are defined..... His knowledge how is exercised primarily in the moves that he makes or concedes and in the moves that he avoids or vetoes."¹⁴

When a performance is an exercise of a skill, it is intelligent. The movement of a clown in performing his act, for example, are not the 'effect of any hidden internal causes', but the exercise of a disposition to make some moves - the correct ones those that will make the people laugh - and not others - the incorrect ones, these that will not make people laugh. But though we learn how to do things by practice rather than percept, intelligent performance is more than just habit. The scope for continued improvement in skilled performances arises from the fact that skills are not simple, single-track dispositions, the actualisations of

13 - Ryle G. - 'The Concept of Mind' - The Penguin Books Ltd., Page-29.

14 : Ryle G. - 'The Concept of Mind' - The Penguin Books Ltd., Page-41.

which are nearly uniform but higher-grade dispositions the exercises of which are indefinitely heterogeneous. To say that a man is a cigarette smoker, for example, is not to say that he is now smoking a cigarette, but it is to say he has a disposition to do just one particular thing - smoke cigarettes. It is, therefore, to attribute a single track disposition, but there is no one particular way in which pride is exemplified ; it is reflected in actions, words, thought and feelings in a thousand different situations. To say that someone is proud is, therefore, to attribute a higher-grade disposition.

Ryle's account of knowing how includes 'knowing how to make the appreciate jokes, to talk grammatically to play chess, to fish, to argue and importantly, theorising or finding out truths or facts, anything in short, that can be said to be done either intelligently or stupidly. And it would normally be contrasted with acting such as thinking or talking as well as many things that are actions. But it is not clear whether it also includes things like putting the kettle on, going for a walk or drinking beer which would not usually be regarded as skilled account performances. Thus Ryle's account of 'knowing how' can therefore be taken as including his

account of actions.

Ryle argues that intelligent performance need not be preceded by theorizing, 'theorising' is used in a narrow, non-technical sense in which the theory is contrasted with the practice of a skilled activity as, for example, in 'theory and practice of technical drawing, education, or road construction'. And it does not follow, because skilled performance in these practices need not be preceded by theorizing in this non-technical sense, that actions need not be preceded by theorizing in the broad, technical sense in which the notion was introduced. Later it will be argued that an action cannot be said to have performed unless this action was guided by actor's belief about the situation in which and on which he acted. Thus Ryle's account of intelligent performance also suggests that actions are a species of bodily movements i.e. those that occur as exercises of a capacity disposition to make certain movements rather than others the relevant movements being those that display. Know-how or skill by satisfying or tending to satisfy standards or criteria. Dispositions that are capacities are distinguished from those that

are tendencies, and beliefs are tendency dispositions, displayed, interalia, in actions.

In describing what somebody is doing it is true that we are not, according to Ryle, merely describing the movements of their body. "We go beyond what we see them do and hear them say certainly not by making inferences to occult causes but by considering, in the first instance, the powers and propensities of which their actions are exercises.' Though, 'doing is often an overt physical affair', it cannot be written off as a merely physical process' but only because, it is an exercise of a disposition to make just such movements in just such circumstances. But physical things have the dispositional properties that they have only because their physical state is what it is."¹⁵ Here G. Langford gives an example of Rubber - as Rubber is elastic because it has a certain molecular structure hot metal burns incautions fingers because it is hot, and so on. The molecular structure of rubber or the state of the molecules in hot metal can be described independently of the dispositional properties that result from them. And there is no reason what so^oever to suppose that human bodies

15 : Langford G. - 'Human Action' - Doubleday and Company Inc. Garden City, New York, 1971, Page-43.

possess the dispositional properties which, on Ryle's analysis, are mental properties independent of their physical states, though the states in question may be neutral states of unimaginable complexity. Here, we can also mention another argument given by Braith Waite. Braith Waite gives no explicit account of action but appears to think of actions as a species of bodily movements i.e. those that are caused by and tend to fulfill the agent's 'springs of action' which are also thought of as physical.

Prof. R.S. Peters put forward the rule, following purposive model of action and claims to describe the central features of actions as they appear to us. Peters says the paradigm of a human action is when something is done in order to bring about an end. Actions are, therefore, to be explained in terms of a man's reason for doing something. The most important feature of the account of action in Peter's view is the stress on purpose. For example - 'Bikram crossed the road to buy some cigarettes.' In this case, Bikram's reason for crossing the road was to buy cigarette. Since Bikram is 'presumed to be intelligent.... he will accordingly, vary his movements in a great variety of ways' in order to attain

his goal. If the traffic is heavy, he will walk to the intersection and wait for the go signal, and if the traffic is light he may take the shortest available route. As G. Langford says, - "It is moreover a gross over simplification to think of ends merely as terminating points of activity."¹⁶ In this example, Bikram's end was, in effect, to put himself in a position to perform a further action, that of buying cigarette. Crossing the road is picked out as a means only because the end toward which it is directed is also identified. Similarly buying some cigarettes is picked out as an end of action only because steps were taken to achieve it. Thus 'means' and 'ends' are correlative terms, each defined in terms of the other. Actions also have further consequences, which may or may not be foreseen by the agent. Peters contrasts 'his reason' (i.e. the real reason). And he says that "whereas his reason - whether real or not - entails that a man is conscious of his objective, the reason why he did it does not."¹⁷

The second main feature of this account is its stress on social rules. An action is an action of a certain

16 : Langford G. - Human Action, Pages 44-45.

17 : Peters R.S. - 'The Concept of Motivation',
Pp. 4-13.

sort only because of its place in a 'systematic framework of norms and goals'. Social rules place constraints on both the choice of goals and the means to be adopted in attaining them. Bying cigarette is a socially accepted goal, bying pot or L.S.D. may not be. Some means or ends can be adopted despite the social rules that forbid them, though they are then described in special ways and became actions of a different sorts such as crimes or wicked deeds.

The purposive or goal directed character and their connection with social rules are two features of action which are taken as grounds for saying that we can never specify an action in terms of movements of the body or within the body. First, the principle of identify of an action is provided by the goal toward which it is directed, consequently the means adopted and, therefore, the bodily movements made in performing the action, will vary with the circumstances, This point relies solely on the goal - directed character of actions. Second, we apply to actions concepts that have no application to bodily movements as such, Peter says, "Movements qua movements are neither intelligent, efficient, nor correct, They only become so in the context of an action." ¹⁸ The concepts concerned

18 : Peters R.S. - 'The Concept of Motivations', P-14.

fall into two main groups, the first is efficiency and the second is correctness. Again, the concepts connected with efficiency depend for their meaning primarily on the fact that actions are goal-directed. For, though actions are directed towards goal, we do not succeed in doing everything we set ourselves to do. Therefore, in this example, we see that Brutus murdered Caesar, meaning not only that Brutus stabbed Caesar with the intention of killing him but that he succeeded in carrying out his intention clearly, if a rock had fallen on Caesar and killed him we would not say that the rock murdered Caesar. The rock did not set itself the goal of killing anybody and therefore, it could neither succeed in doing so nor fail to do so. One reason why we fail to do what we set out to do is because we do not go about it in the right way. Thus when we do so we are concerned not with whether those goals were in fact achieved, but with whether the means relied upon to achieve them could reasonably have been expected to do so.

For the efficiency and correctness of action, all action may be appraised. We make such assessment both *ex post* after the action has been performed and *ex ante* - before the action has been performed. In both cases, the appraisals made could be expressed using the word 'ought'

though it would perhaps be more natural to talk of responsibility in the case of ex post assessments. Thus the use of 'ought' that is stressed in moral theories that regard moral discourse as primarily having the practical function of guiding actions. The possibility of saying that an action ought or ought not to be done, however, depends on the possibility of describing that action, just as the possibility saying that Brutus was (morally) responsible for Caesar's death depends on the possibility of saying that Brutus killed Caesar. Therefore, if we consider that there is a logical gap between the actions and the physical movement, the relevant comparison is between descriptions of actions and descriptions of physical movements. The logical gap that results when assessments of actions are compared with descriptions of physical movements it that between assessment and description. The existence of this logical gap is grounds for claiming that there is a logical gap between action and physical movement only if physical movements cannot be assessed for their efficiency and correctness in the ^asame way as actions. Therefore, too much reliance cannot be placed on examples like 'Brutus' murdered Caesar' in which what Brutus did is both described and assessed. Much more of the language of action is ambiguous in this way than appears at first sight but the case against physicalism cannot rest on this fact alone.

From the above different account of action and bodily movement, we see that actions are sub-class of bodily movements. Nevertheless before we take a conclusion about action as a bodily movement, we may see action and those who perform them i.e. persons and agents or observer.

In this example, 'Brutus killed Caesar' we can analysed roughly as an action and bodily movement. According to Prichard, 'Brutus killed Caesar' would be analysed as an action and as a bodily movement as follows :

1. It is a special kind of mental event called a volition was causally responsible for a movement of a human body, which in turn was causally responsible for a movement of a dagger, which in turn caused Caesar's death ; and
2. The mental event was part of series of mental events that occurred in Brutus' mind.

In so far as the notion of a person occurs in those analysis, persons are thought of as minds in which mental events occur or as complex physicochemical bodies, in neither case does the notion of agency occur. Agency is of central importance for the concept of action. We attribute agency to people, not to events or things. We use an active form of verb to indicate agency in this example 'Brutus stabbed Caesar' attributes agency to Brutus. But on the other example

when we say that the fallen rocks blocked the road, we also use grammatically similar sentences in talking about physical events without intending to attribute agency. Therefore, there is the difference in logical not grammatical form between the occurrence of actions and the occurrence of other events. In order to understand the concept of action, therefore we need to look at those who perform actions, that is, at agents. We cannot, point to anyone who is simply an agent, all we can point to are people - that Brutus who killed Caesar is an agent. Indeed, both the mental event, that causes a movement of a human body and the human body that is caused to move are assumed to belong to the same person, the agent i.e. Brutus.

The most important thing people do besides performing actions is make observations. Those who makes observations may be called observers, as those who perform actions are called agents. The importance of agency and the interdependence of action and observation are explicitly stressed by Prof. Hamshire in his book 'Thought and Action'. According to him, 'the representation of human beings as passive observers receiving impressions from 'outside' of the mind, where the 'outside' includes their own bodies. In fact, I find myself from the beginning able to act upon objects around me.' "We are in the world, as bodies among bodies, not only as observers but as action experimenters.

The things that people do intentionally therefore, include what they do as observers as well as what they do as agents. The intentions with which people do things are of two main sorts - observations are made with the intention of discovering the way things are in the world, actions are performed with the intention of changing the way things are in the world.

Bodily movements play in action as well as in observation. It is commonly assumed, that bodily movement is necessarily involved in action but that, by contrast, it need not be involved in observation and as a matter of fact, usually is not. Bodily movement is not necessary for either, action, or observation but that usually, perhaps always it is involved in both. Gross bodily movement is frequently part of the process of observation. This is least obvious in the case of vision, but the content of the visual field depends partly on our location, and we frequently change our location in order to see what we want to see, And in all cases seeing involves eye movement, if the retinal image is stabilized by the use of experimental techniques, it quickly disappears. Similarly, what we hear depends on where we are, and we frequently move nearer to the source of sounds that we wish to hear more clearly. Touch and taste involve bodily contact,

and this is normally achieved by means of bodily movement, and continued tactile observation requires continued movement, as for example in reading Braille. And of course we go into the garden in the late evening to smell the honeysuckle, and breathe deeply in order to do so. It does not follow from the fact of bodily movement, therefore, that what someone is doing is acting rather than observing.

To action, it might be argued that it is a contingent matter that we need to move our bodies in order to effect changes in the world. We understand what is meant psychokinesis even if, at best, it occurs only rarely and on a limited scale. Indeed, there is no obvious contradiction in supposing that God is active in the world but lacks a body. These example might be thought to be question begging. But it is clear that no movement of the agent's body involved in what are sometimes called acts of omission. In such acts people refrain from a positive action that they would normally perform on that they would be conventionally expected to perform in the circumstances for example suspending family planning measures in order to start a family or failing to do what was necessary to keep a newly born but deformed child alive. The changes that result from such acts - the begining of a family, or the death of the child - are foreseen by the agent, and the act of omission is performed in

order to bring them about. Therefore, they are action, despite the absence of bodily movement, on the part of the agent, and people are responsible for such actions morally and legally.

We may now consider such actions, which are performed by the use of words and that involve no more in the way of bodily movement than is involved in the use of words. The use of words does, of course, involve movements of the tongue, lips, and larynx, but the role of such movements in speech is no greater than that played by eye movements in visual perception.

Following Pears' view about the method for identifying actions we may construe 'bodily movement' limbs are motionless, and his posture and position do not alter, it would nevertheless be true to say that his body moved. For he might be acting at the time, hiding, waiting, or relaxing, Hence the proposal is : we report a particular deed by specifying enough of the agent's bodily movements, together with their spatio-temporal features, to enable a listener to single out the action to which they belong from other events in the neighbourhood. Against this method Pears notices the objection is that 'a physical description of (the action) would be a description of A as a bodily movement and not... as the action of A and he asserting'....."A description of A by its physical characteristics might apply only if it were A (only if every event

with those characteristics would be the same type of action as A). Such a description would be a description of it as the action A in the relevant sense of the phrase... Perhaps we ought to stipulate that the description must be a description of A by its intrinsic physical characteristics, in order to exclude descriptions which bring in antecedent brain states, because descriptions which did that might be thought to bring in desires."¹⁹

Thus if Pears' 'physical' description of A 'as the action A' is to identify A through the agent's bodily movements, it must record the physical features which every action of the same kind shares with A. This is the most plausible interpretation of the above reason. Pears goes on to stiffen his requirement for a physical description of the action A 'as the action A', it must include a general 'description of those bodily movements which are actions'. Given these demands it is hardly surprising when Pears turns down the proposal to identify actions through the bodily movements they comprise. According to him, we lack the general ability to distinguish between those bodily movements which are actions and those which are mere bodily movements, which using as a criterion the presence or absence of the relevant desire.

19 : Binkley, Broneugh Marras Blackwell - "Agent, Action and Reason" Page 135.

Evidently Pears seems to shift his attention from the question (a) whether desire is a logically necessary condition of action to (a¹) whether desire is a contingently necessary condition. Pears adds the impossible task of specifying bodily movements that actions of type K and every other type have in common.

But Pears' demands are illegitimate. We can identify an occurrence which is an action through any description, physio-logical or otherwise, that singles it out. A type of action, like shooting or swimming may be performed in various fashions. People swim by doing the dog-paddle, the crawl, they stay on the surface or go underwater, and so forth. If we can use all these quite different action - terms to characterize instances of an action like swimming, why assume that the same bodily movement terms will fit each instance of swimming? and specially why assume that not only every instance of swimming, but every occurrence that ranks as an action of any type, will exhibit the same physiological features? We can conclude that Pears' argument against neurophysiological indentifying descriptions of actions is unsound, because he mistakenly sets too high a standard for a description of an action.

Regarding the notion of action and physical movement we may mention the view of action given by Donald

Davidson. Our all motion i.e. all human motion are not behaviour. He says - "Each of us in this room is moving eastward at about 700 miles an hour, carried by the diurnal rotation of the earth, but this, is not a fact about our behaviour. When I cross my legs, the raised foot bobs gently with the best of my heaft, but I do not move my feet. Behaviour consists in things we do whether by intention or not, but were there is behaviour, intention is relevant."²⁰

This intention may be expressed in the case of an action. Because an event is an action if and only if it can be described in a way that makes it intentional. In an example, Davidson says a man may stamp on a hat, believing it is the hat of his rival when it is really his own. Then, though the man did not do it intentionally, the stamping on his own hat is an act of his, and part of his behaviour

According to Davidson, though intentional action is by no means all the behaviour there is, intention is, ~~conceptually~~ ^{conceptually} central and behaviour is understood and defined in terms of intention. Like other phenomena, human acts are clearly part of the order of nature causing and being caused by events outside ourselves, but though desire and voluntary action can not be brought under deterministic laws, as physical phenomena, can. Davidson says that psychological

20 : Davidson D - 'Psychology as Philosophy' - P.101
'The Philosophy of Mind' - P. 101.

events are describable, in physical terms, i.e. they are physical events and insists that events do not fall under strict laws when described in psychological terms. According to him, from our common sense, we can explain why someone acted as he did by mentioning a desire, value, purpose goal or aim and a belief connecting the desire with the action to be explained. He gave an example that "we may explain why Achilles returned to the battle by saying he wished to avenge the death of Patroclus."²¹ This action may be described in another way. Thus a desire and a belief may explain an action, but not necessarily. A man might have good reasons for his an action and he might have good reasons for his action and he might do it, and yet the reasons not be his reasons in doing it, and yet the reasons not be his reasons in doing it. So, we imply not only the desire and belief in a fact, but that they were efficacious in producing the action. Thus desire and belief were causal conditions of the action.

There are two ideas into the concepts of acting on a reason on the concept of behaviour generally, these are the ideas of cause and the idea of rationality. A reason is rational cause, the cause must be a belief and a desire

21 : Davidson D - 'Psychology as Philosophy' - "The Philosophy of Mind" - Page 103.

in the light of which the action is reasonable. Thus by this, we can explain behaviour without having to know too much about how it was caused. Now, it is obvious to almost every one that a theory of action inspired by this idea has no chance of explaining complex behaviour unless it succeeded in inferring or constructing the pattern of thoughts and emotions of the agent. So, we cannot hope for detailed rigid links between mental and physical descriptions. Thus he try to distinguish between action from bodily movements.

Another more influential, type of phylosophical psychology is exemplified by G.F.M. Anscombe's view of intention. Ordinarily, phisolophers have presumed that the 'intentional' acts are preceded by or incorporated, a special kind of internal act - 'the intention to act in that way'. But according to Anscombe, intentional acts are defined not in terms of psychological process which precede them but in terms of the sort of question which 'has application' to them. Anscombe says that an act, can be intèntional 'under a certain description, even although it is unintentional under a different description. On the other hand, the request for a 'reason why'. Anscombe suggests does not apply to an involuntary action of a certain type - that sort of action which we 'know without observation' but the cause of which can only be known by observation. Even with his eyes

shut a man knows that his knee kicks when the doctor taps it, but only by observation can he discover why his knee behaves in that way. Thus, in such activities, he cannot give a reason, and may not know the cause. According to Anscombe, telling us the 'mental cause' of his action - that event, not necessarily a mental event, which produced his action. Anscombe argues, "an intentional action is not 'known by observation' to come under the description in relation to which it is intentional."²² Anscombe makes no specific reference to psychology for intentions are not 'psychological phenomena'. As she claims psychology to be in some sense, the 'physics' the fundamental explanatory science of human behaviour have been wholly rejected by the philosophical psychologists. Thus, Anscombe tries to establish the distinct^{ion} between man's action i.e. behaviour from the motion of body.

According to H.W. Hamlyn in an article on 'Behaviour' there is a distinction between motions of the body, such as the knee reflex, and activities of the person, or 'behaviour'. In terms of movement of the body, behaviour can never be defined since the very same set of movements can be present in quite different kinds of behaviour. As for example, the same

22: 'Description, Explanation or Revision' - A hundred years of Philosophy, Pages 515-516.

movements of the body can take place in signalling that one is about to turn left or in pointing to an article in a shop window, and yet these are quite different piece of behaviour. The psychologists can explain the motions of a body in terms of causes, but he cannot explain human behaviour. Indeed, behaviour has no causes.

Melden also makes a distinction between physical movement and action. According to Melden a particular happening is an action if it is the exercise of power that makes it happen. There is a distinction between artificial chess move i.e. a chess move done by a child and a chess move which is not artificial. In case of non artificial chess move, the concept of rule come in. Rules are obeyed and criteria are employed. So whenever a child who is unaware of the rules of chess move, makes a chess move it is only a physical movement and not an action. In his article on 'Action', Melden writes -

"Just as in the case of concept of a chess move, so in the case of the concept of any action the context of practices in which rules are obeyed, criteria employed, policies are observed, a way of thinking and doing is essential to the understanding of the difference between such bodily movements and actions.²³

23 : B.F. Gustafson (ed) Essays in Philosophical Psychology, 'Action' by I.A. Melden, P.58.

CHAPTER II

Causal Explanation

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Causal Explanation

Causal explanation is the most important explanation of human action which give an explanation of a causal kind. The view that human act or action is a bodily movement following from or caused by will, or an act of will was presented by Hobbes, Locke, Hume and Mill.

Regarding the causal explanation, the question which arises, specifically, are these : What principles of action is operative in man ? Is human action merely a reaction to stimuli, to all the antecedent forces acting on the agent, or is man a self-mover, the first cause of his own action ? And if he is such a first cause, where exactly does the freedom to cause his action lie, and what exactly does it consist in ?

In philosophical discussion of the problems, there are, basically, only two positions on the issue of free will, the determinist position, which claims that man is subject to the law that every event has a cause, and that therefore, since human actions are events, it follows that they are caused and man has no free will, and the libertarian position which claims that man is exempt from the law of causality - because he has free will, as seen

by the fact that he holds himself responsible for his actions.

The concept of action as causal explanation is based upon the notion of causal relation between two events causality exemplifies an event - event relationship. Richard Taylor's agency theory is an attempt to show that man is such an agent, the initiator or first cause of his actions. As Taylor says - everyone 'knows that causation is - simply becauseeveryone thinks of himself as an efficient cause Everyone knows what it is to make something happen and to exercise such power as he has over his body and his environment, but no one can say, what this is, other than to say, simply, that it is causation."²⁴

Thus everyone is aware that his actions are free when - and because - they are caused by him, but when, nothing causes him to do them. Then a free act is not a random, causeless, fortitious and therefore, inexplicable change. A responsible act is an act such that, at the time at which the agent undertook to perform it, he had it within his power to perform the act and also within his power not to perform the act. But what it is that he thus accomplishes is caused by certain physiological

24 : Taylor, Richard - 'Action of Purpose' (New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc. 1966), Pp. 21-22.

events. Thus the man raises his arm, yet certain cerebral events cause his arm to go up. Hence, it is false that it is within his power not to perform the act, and therefore, he is not responsible.

We can say, perhaps misusing words, that a man makes something A happen directly, provided he makes A happen, and there is no B such that he makes B happen and happening makes A happen. Presumably if there is anything that an agent makes happen, then there is something that he makes happen directly. The things he makes happen directly may will be certain cerebral events, and therefore, they will be things he is likely to know nothing about. In understanding to make his arm go up, he made certain such events happen directly, and these events in turn made his arm go up. Hence, if raising the arm and not raising it were each within his power, then so, too, was the occurrence and the non-occurrence of the events that he directly made happen, there is no contradiction, therefore, in saying that these events caused his arm to go up and that he had it within his power not to make the arm go up. A puzzle arises because we tend to suppose, mistakenly that if a man makes B happen with an end to making A happen, he thereby does something with an end to making B happen.

In this case, we may agree with Melden's view of observation is that "One does not raise one's arm by performing another doing which has the notion of one's arm as effect - one simply raises one's arm."²⁵ Raising one arm is a basic action' - which is consisted with saying that one makes one's arm go up by making certain cerebral and muscular events happen ; making one's arm go up is 'an intentional action', as defined, but making these other things happen need not be. Even, we may say that, if the agent has learned what the muscle motions are that cause his arm to go up, and if. In the course of a physio-logical examination, he wishes to move those muscles, then he can move them by raising his arm, he can make his arm go up for the purpose of causing those muscle motions which cause the arm to go up.

It is generally agreed that science is concerned (a) with discovering the causes of what happens, and (b) with discovering general laws concerning the connections between events of different kinds. The discovery of causes and the discovery of laws are the same process, to assign a cause to an event is to bring that event under some natural law or laws. The explanatory force of a scientific explanation, consists in the logical derivation of the explanation from

25 : Melden A.I., 'Free Action (London, 1961) P.65.

the particular and universal premises. We sometimes account for the things people do by reference to some antecedent physical circumstances, we say that Smith behaved as he did because he was drunk, drugged, feverish or exhausted. It is the explanation which is of a causal kind and that Smith's behaviour is taken as an instance of some generalisation about the connection of the consumption of alcohol or drugs, high temperature, or exhaustion, with certain types of human behaviour in general. Thus a causal explanation has two distinct characteristics - in the first place, it rests on universal laws and in the second place, a causal explanation specifies the precise nature of the event to be explained.

Purposive behaviour is closely connected with the concept of 'reasons'. One might, indeed, define an intentional act as one which the agent does for a reason. When we explain an act in terms of the agent's reason, what kind of explanation is this? In particular, is this a species of causal explanation or is it an explanation of quite a different sort? Many recent philosophers claim that reasons- explanations or motive explanations are not species of causal explanations and some have even of causal explanations and some have even claimed that they preclude causal explanations.

Whether an explanation of some one's behaviour in terms of his reason for acting, can be causal - is an important philosophical bickered for some than a decade.

For the purpose of reconcile the two reasons and causal explanation, we will assume a generic notion of what it is to explain a particular event. To explain an individual occurrence is to make the occurrence more intelligible to one's listeners than it was, or to reveal how it conforms to some familiar pattern. The causal explanation will be the species that which relate a particular occurrence to other events and circumstances that proceeded or accompanied it, Thus a causal explanation is that which will show us what role these played in bringing about the event that interests us.

The upshot of our discussion is hardly novel, that a person's antics are amenable to causal explanation, and that many deeds result, in part, from the agent's reasons, desires or motives. The other two verdicts are new, first, that philosophical opponents of causal explanation are still right, in so far as they contend that there are further things worth saying about a man's reasons for acting, which render his action more intelligible than it was, These complementary forms of explanation are never causal, and causal accounts will not replace them. This disparity will be found even if, during a non-causal explanation of someone's deed, the reasons, desires or motives that come into the picture were also causal factors. The second new decision

is that which concerns a widely recognized but much disputed feature of reasons for action, namely that an agent's knowledge of them is not inductive or observational. Since all other causes are known inductively and certified through observation, how can reasons be causes? There is no inconsistency between a privileged status to an agent's report of why he acted and counting his reasons among the causes of his deed. No contradiction arises, because the agent's description of these causal factors may very well differ from the description of them which appears in a relevant causal law; and such a law forms the backbone of any fullfledged causal explanation of what the agent did. In other words, the agent may not know the cause of his action as this cause would be specified in a scientist's account of the deed.

It is often argued that we cannot argued that these awareness motive or purpose cannot be count as causes of the action, because what the agent perceives or thinks constitute a reason for his action and assigning a cause to an action and giving a reason for it are essentially different mode of explanation. "To ask what made Jones do something is to rule out that he had some reason for doing it. Similarly, to ascribe a point to his action is 'Ipso facto' to deny that it can be sufficiently explained in terms of causes."²⁶ This alleged incompatibility between

26 - Peters R.S. 'The Concept of Motivation' Pp.12-13.

reason and cause explanations has no warrant in ordinary speech. We readily answer questions like 'what made you buy that sense ?' by saying things like ' I needed an extra room for my mother-in-law' or ' I liked the view from the sitting-room window ; reasons why he should do so. The argument offered by Prof. Peters to justify his assertion is that "We never could give a sufficient explanation of an action in causal terms because we could never stipulate the movements which would have to count as dependent variables. A precise functional relationship could never be established. Although every human action is a movement in space, what makes it an action of a specific kind is not its being a movement of a specific kind. There is no set of purely physical properties which will distinguish an assault, a glad eye, a giving of help or payment of a debt, from actions not answering to these descriptions. Therefore, there can be no causal law correlating a given type of human action as effect with a given type of physical event as cause - no law to the effect that when a man is in such an such a physical condition he will pay a debt or commit an assault. We can assume, and do not show, that all causes are physical and that explanations in terms of the apprehension of reasons are not causal.

In this causal explanation which is based upon explaining an event by fitting it into a general cause effect pattern. This notion of cause, here is essentially that of Hume. Hume advanced two connected thesis, one about the meaning of the word 'cause' (and other words with causal senses), and the other about the source of our beliefs concerning causal connections. As to the causal beliefs, he maintained that we can never come to believe that an event A is the cause of another event B merely by observing these two events (as we can learn merely by observing them that A precedes B or lasts longer than B or contains more rapid movement than B). The only facts relevant to causality that we can learn by observing A and B are that A is spatially adjacent and temporally antecedent to B. But we can also have previously observed that events of the same sort as A have been regularly followed by events of the same sort as B. And it is our experience of this regular sequence of A type and B type events which leads us, when we observe an event of type A to expect an event of type B to follow, and when it does to call the former the cause of the latter. As to the meaning of the word 'cause', Hume maintained that all causal statements are implicitly general, to say that A is the cause of B is to say that the sequence A followed

by B is an instance of the general fact that events of type A are invariably followed by events of type B.

Regarding the ordinary meaning of the word 'cause' we can see the falsity of Hume's account, that we often say things like 'Anxiety is a common cause of indigestion' and 'Indigestion is a common effect of anxiety.' According to Hume, these statements would be equivalent to 'Anxiety is often invariably followed by indigestion' and 'Indigestion is often invariably preceded by anxiety', which is nonsense. So long as we keep our attention fixed on scientific investigation, with its concern for the discovery of general laws, Hume's analysis may look satisfactory. But as soon as we consider the statements we make about causal relations between particular events, it is clear that his concept will not apply. Usually when we say that some particular A was the cause of some particular B we are not making, either explicitly or implicitly, any general statement about a regular connection between events of type A and events of type B. For, with most everyday causal statements, it is impossible to formulate any such generalization which the maker of the singular statement would accept. If a doctor asserts that the cause of Johná Smith's death was cancer of the rectum is always fatal - a propo-

sition, which he knows to be false, Nor does he commit himself to asserting any other generalization of which this particular sequence of events in an instance.

There is a common concept of cause which must be distinguished from the scientifically important concept of invariable antecedent. In this analysis whoever believes that a particular event A caused a particular event B believes that (1) given the occurrence of A in all the circumstances in which it did occur, the subsequent occurrence of B was necessary - that is the occurrence of an event having the character of B could have been predicted with certainty ; and (2) if in these circumstances A had not occurred, B would not have occurred ; nor indeed that some event would not have occurred in some respects similar to B, but that B would not have occurred just as and when it did occur, in all its details. So whoever believes that A was the cause of B believes, not that events of some type to which A belongs are either necessary or sufficient for the occurrence of B, but that A was both necessary and sufficient for the occurrence of B, in the circumstances in which it actually did occur.

In Human theories of causation, caused necessity is sometimes identified with the logical necessity by which an instance of a generalization follows from that genera-

lization, and causal explanation is interpreted as the deduction of statements about particular events from general statements about sequences of events. These interpretations do not hold of our ordinary concept of cause. The fact that events of type A have often been followed by events of type B does not validate the inference that an event of type B must follow this event of type A ; it does not make it necessary that B should follow, nor provide an explanation of why it does follow. (A universal law, of cause, does these things). What it does is to provide us with grounds for believing that in this case, as in other, A was in the circumstances necessary and sufficient for the occurrence of B. Hence an inquiry into causes is not necessarily an inquiry into laws, and a causal explanation is not necessarily an explanation in terms of laws. In fact, we know a great deal about the causes of many events before we know any exact laws of sequence.

This causal explanation is somewhat differ from rationalizations, when the reason explains the action by giving the agent's reason for doing what he did - is call such explanations as rationalization. Whenever someone give the reason why he or an agent did something is after a matter characterization as of first (a) having some sort

of pro attitude toward actions of a certain kind which are to be included desires, wantings, urges, promptings, moral views, aesthetic principles, social conventions economic prejudices and public and private goals and values and secondly (b) believing (or knowing, perceiving, noticing, remembering) that this action is of that kind. These two are called the primary reasons why the agent performed the action. This primary reason for an action is called its cause.

Donald Davidson writes :

"I flip the switch, turn on the light, and illuminate the room. Unbeknowst to me I also alert a prowler to the fact that I am home. Here I do not do four things, but only one, of which four descriptions have been given."²⁷

This is the most important example of a primary reason which is to be called a 'cause' of a causal explanation of an action. To say that S's reason for doing act A was A' is equivalent to saying that S did A in order to do A'. In saying that S's reason for extending his arm was to signal for a turn we are saying that S extended his arm in order to signal for a turn. And when we say that his reason for flipping the switch was to turn on the light we are saying that S flipped the switch in order to turn

27 : Davind, D - 'Action, Reason and Causes', The Journal of Philosophy, LX (1963), P.686.

or the light. But what is the force of an 'in order to' explanation? Obviously S's flipping the switch is the explanandum event of saying that S flipped the switch in order to turn on the light. The events, states of affairs, or facts are being cited as the explanatory factors of S's flipping the switch. But it may seem that the explanans refers to another act of S viz his of turning on the light. This example will show that at first, the assertion that S turned on the light cannot be the whole of the explanans. For the fact that S turned on the light is not a sufficient condition for saying that S flipped the switch in order to turn on the light. The fact that S did turn on the light by flipping the switch does not imply that the point of flipping the switch was to turn on the light. He may have had quite different reason for flipping the switch. Secondly, the fact that S turned on the light is not even a component of the in order to explanation, for the in order to explanation can be perfectly correct though S did not turn on the light at all. Suppose S wanted to turn on the light and believed that he would turn it on by flipping the switch. But suppose that, in fact, the switch in question operates the exhaust fan rather than the light. Thus, S does not succeed in performing the act of turning on the light. Nevertheless, it is correct to say that S flipped

the switch in order to turn on the light i.e. that may reason for alerting the prowler was that I wanted to turn on the light.

Here we can turn next to a slightly different example concerning the causes or causal conditions of an actions. Suppose there is a light bulb missing from a certain socket and that Bikram fetches a bulb and screws it into the socket. A moment later John comes along, flips the switch and thereby turns on the light. Now, if we tried to list all the causes or relevant causal factors of John's turning on the light, we would certainly include Bikram's screwing the bulb into the socket. If Bikram had not screwed the bulb into the socket, then John would not have succeeded in turning on the light. Thus Bikram's screwing the bulb into the socket is a cause, or causal condition of John's turning on the light. On the other hand Bikram's action is not at all a cause, or causal factor, of John's act of flipping the switch. For John would have performed this act whether or not Bikram had screwed the bulb into the socket.

The concept of causal explanation imply the want and belief as cause or causal condition of an action. Because the explanation of 'S flipped the switch' in order to turn on the light implies that S wanted to turn on the

and it also implies that he believed (at least to some degree) that he would turn on the light by flipping the switch. The statement that S had this want and had this belief is compatible with the statement that he flipped the switch for some other reason, or not for any reason at all, i.e. accidentally, suppose S wanted to turn on the light, but decided to fetch his pipe first, while reaching for the pipe, however, he accidentally flipped the switch and thereby accidentally turned on the light. Here it is true to say that S wanted to turn on the light and that he believed that he would turn it on by flipping the switch. But it is false to say that he flipped the switch in order to turn on the light, or that his reason for flipping the switch was to turn on the light. Thus, the statement that S flipped the switch in order to turn on the light implies more than that S had the indicated want and had the indicated belief. It also thus, implies that his having this want and his having this belief caused, or resulted in, his flipping the switch.

Talk about an agent's reason for action, we see, can be analyzed in terms of the action plans which cause his action. When I ask why S did A i.e. for what reason he did A - I presuppose that he had some action-plan that included A and that caused his performance of A. If there

was an action plan that both included A and that caused the performance of A, then act A was done for a reason. And the point of my inquiry is to find out what that reason was, i.e. the point of my inquiry is to ascertain what act it was that S both wanted to perform and believed would be generated by (or on the same level as) act A. Just as we can say, without contradiction, both that John's flipping the switch caused the light to go on and that John caused the light to go on, similarly we think, when an act of John's is caused by John's wants and beliefs, it would not be incorrect to say that John caused his act.' The fact that 'John's wanting to turn on the light' caused John's flipping the switch does not preclude the fact that John caused John's flipping the switch. There is no contradiction in saying both, since John's having that want is just an even cause of the act while John is the agent cause of the act.

There are many reasons why philosophers have felt that reason explanation are not a species of causal explanation. Many of these arguments are connected with the view that wants, or motives or desires, or goals are not causally related to acts. Regarding wants, some philosophers think that a want is not the sort of thing that could explain an action at all, at least in any way at

all similar to that in which natural phenomena are explained in the empirical sciences. They regard it as a certainty that wants are not causes of actions - and indeed often think that deliberative actions do not have causes in the sense in which natural events do. Are the explanations of action on the basis of wants as we have outlined then 'causal explanation'? There is the extreme view, endorsed by many philosophers, which categorically denies that they are causal explanations and indeed that they alleged explanation of action on the basis of wants could succeed in being a genuine causal explanation. However, what these philosophers mean by 'causal explanation' is often unclear, and when it is clear, it is not at all certain that all the familiar explanations found in the natural sciences are 'causal' in any single required sense. Some times these philosophers seem to have in mind something analogous to the mechanical model of classical physics, sometimes, deductive explanation with general laws and antecedent conditions ; sometimes any explanation in which reference is made to antecedent events or states ; sometimes an explanation in which the explanation includes facts that are occurrents in a sense in which wanting, at least as we have explained it is not, and so. We find it hard to attach much importance to this issue, in the absence of a generally accepted and methodologically

interesting conception of 'causal explanation' that is appropriate to the issue at hand. What we think clear and important in this dispute is the question of whether or not sensible explanations of human actions exhibit the appropriate inferential and nomological pattern of explanations found in physical and biological sciences - in other words, whether explanations of action form a unique type of explanation with special logical and methodological requirements distinct from those of explanations in natural science. Obviously, if our analysis of wanting and of explanations of action in terms of wants is plausible, at least in basic outline, it is one good reason for thinking that explanations of action do not differ from explanations in natural science, in inferential nomological pattern.

In an example of causal explanation, we are inclined to say that 'due to' means, among other things, 'caused by'. We can admit that we are not in a position to set out the causal account of how a man's desire might beget his deed. But we can suggest a causal interpretation of 'due to' on the ground that unless the hook up between desire and deed is causal, it is an enigma. The most purposive argument we have encountered for this view appears in Donald Davidson's important essay - 'Action.

to be intelligible, Hampshire does not see how Aristotle's scheme can be appraised as true or false, for it is not clear what could be the basis of assessment or what kind of evidence could be decisive (167), Failing a satisfactory alternative, the best argument for a scheme like Aristotle's is that it alone promises to give an account of the 'mysterious connection' between reasons and actions.'

"One way we can explain an event is by placing it in the context of its cause, cause and effect from the sort of pattern that 'explains the effect, in a sense of 'explain' that we understand as well as any. In reason and action illustrate a different pattern of explanation, that pattern must be identified."²⁸

In this way, we see that Davidson's major concern is to show that the explanation of actions by reasons - what he calls 'rationalization' - is 'a species of ordinary causal explanation'. Regarding a 'primary reasons' - he says that there exists a primary reason whenever an agent does something for a reason and this reason explains his action, and that the primary reason for an action is its cause.

Davidson undertakes to prove his point in two ways. He first cites a positive consideration in favour of

28 : Davidson D. - 'Action, Reasons and Causes' - The Journal of Philosophy, 1963, Pages 691, 693 and 692 respectively.

regarding rationalization as a species of causal explanation, viz. that only by so doing are we able to understand the manner in which reasons explain actions, since we do understand causal explanation. He then criticizes and rejects five possible objections to his view. According to Davidson, there are some philosophers who are against the view that 'A primary reason for an action is its cause' of the process of to clarify the notion of causal explanation involved. The first objection against it that the primary reasons consist of attitudes and beliefs which are states or dispositions, not events, therefore, they cannot be causes.

But in reply to this objection, Davidson says that states dispositions, and conditions are frequently named as the causes of events; the bridge collapsed because of a structural defect, the plate broke because it had a crack. Mention of a causal condition for an event gives a cause only on the assumption that there was also a preceding event that causes an action. It is not difficult in many cases to find events very closely associated with the primary reason. State and dispositions are not events, but the onslaught of a state or disposition is. A desire to hurt one's feelings may spring up at the moment he anger anybody and beliefs may begin at the moment when we notice,

perceive, learn or remember something. Those who have argued that there are no mental events to qualify as causes of actions have often missed the obvious because they have insisted that a mental event be observed or noticed (rather than an observing or a noticing) or that it be like a stab, a qualm, a prick or a quiver, a mysterious prod of conscience or act of the will. Davidson says that - "Melden, in discussing the example of the driver who signals a turn by raising his arm, challenges those who want to explain actions causally to identify 'an event which is common and peculiar to all such cases' perhaps a motive and an intention any way 'some particular feeling or experiences.' But as at some moment the driver noticed his turn coming up, and he signalled is a mental event, During any continuing activity, like driving there are some more or less fixed purposes, standards, desires and habits that give direction and form to the entire enterprise and there is the continuing input of information about which we regulate and adjust our actions."²⁹ Davidson admitted with Melden that there is an event as a common and peculiar to all cases where a man intentionally raises his arm, cannot be produced. Because neither can a common and unique cause of bridge, failures, or plate breakings. But an action cannot always answer such a question, because the answer simply will

29 - Davidson D.- "Action, Reason and Causes", The Journal of Philosophy, 1963, Page 88.

mention a mental event that does not give a reason, and in the case of intentional action, we cannot explain at all why we acted when we did. Thus explanation in terms of primary reasons parallies the explanation of the collapse of the bridge from a structural defect ; we are ignorant of the event or sequence of events that led upto (caused) the collapse, but we are sure there was such an event or sequence of events.

Secondly, regarding the primary reason as a cause of action, Melden opposed that, a cause must be 'logically distinct from the alleged effect' in a causal explanation a reason for an action is not logically distinct from the action, therefore, reasons are not causes of actions. Since a reason makes an action intelligible by redescribing it we did not have two events but only one under different descriptions, causal relation, however, demand distinct events. To describe an event in terms of its cause is not to identify the event with its cause, nor does explanation by redescription exclude causal explanation, Davidson says - "Someone might be tempted into the mistake of thinking that my flipping of the switch caused my turning on of the light (in fact it caused the light to go on). But it does not follow that it is a mistake to take 'My reason for flipping the switch was that I wanted to turn on the light' as entailing, in part, 'I flipped the switch,' and

this action is further describable as having been caused by my wanting to turn on the light."³⁰ Here in this example the action is to be explained under the description : 'my flipping the switch' and the alleged cause is 'my wanting to turn on the light' and it seems more plausible to urge a logical link between 'my turning on the light' and 'my wanting to turn on the light.' The truth of a causal statement depends on what events are described, its status as analytic or synthetic depends on how the events are described. Still, it may be maintained that a reason rationalizes an action only when the descriptions are appropriately fixed, and the appropriate descriptions are not logically independent. These logical features of primary reasons show that it is not just lack of ingenuity, that keeps us from defining them as dispositions to act for these reasons.

Thirdly, Hart and Honore' allow. Hume is right in saying that ordinary singular causal statements imply generalizations because according to Hume "We may define a cause to be an object, followed by another, and where all the objects similar to the first are followed by objects similar to the second." but Hume is wrong for

30 - Davidson Donald, 'Action, Reasons & Causes', The Journal of Philosophy, 1963, Page 89.

this very reason in supposing that motives and desires are ordinary causes of actions. In brief the objection is laws are involved essentially in ordinary causal explanations but not in rationalizations.

Generalization connecting reasons and actions are not and cannot be sharpened into the kind of law on the basis of which accurate predictions can reliably be made. Any serious theory for predicting action on the basis of reasons must find a way of evaluating the relative force of various desires and beliefs in the matrix of decision ; it cannot take as its starting point the refinement of what is to be expected from a single desire. Ignorance of competent predictive laws does not inhibit valid causal explanation, or few causal explanations could be made. I am certain the window broke because it was struck by a rock - I saw it all happen, but I am not (is anyone?) in command of laws on the basis of which I can predict what blows will break which windows. A generalization like 'windows are fragile, and fragile things tend to break when struck hard enough, other conditions being right' is not a predictive law in the rough - the predictive law if we had it, would be quantitative and would use very different concepts. Like our generalizations about

behaviour, the generalization, serves a different function, it provides evidence for the existence of a causal law covering the case at hand. Hume was wrong in claiming that singular causal statements entail laws. According to Hume's version, 'A caused B' entails some particular law involving the predicates used in the descriptions 'A' and 'B' or it may mean that 'A caused B' entails that there exists a causal law instantiated by some true descriptions of A and B. Thus the version of Hume's doctrine give a sense to the claim that singular causal statements entail laws i.e. causal explanations 'involve laws'. Therefore, Hume's doctrine can be made to fit with most causal explanations, it suit rationalizations equally well.

An event's primitive explanation gives its cause or defend the singular causal claim by producing a relevant law or by giving reasons for believing such exists. But we cannot think of no explanation has been given until a law has been produced. The laws whose existence is required if reasons are causes of actions do not, we may be sure deal in the concepts in which rationalizations must deal. If the causes of a class of events (actions) fall in a certain class (reasons) and there is a law to back each singular causal statement, it does not follow that there

is any law connecting events classified as reasons with events classified as actions - the classifications may even be neurological, chemical, or physical.

Fourthly, some philosophers said that one's own reasons in acting is not compatible with the existence of a causal relation between reasons and actions, because a person, knows his own intentions in acting infallibly without induction or observation, and no ordinary causal relation can be known in this way. There is no doubt that our knowledge of our own intentions in acting will show many of the oddities peculiar to first person knowledge of one's own pains, beliefs, desires and so on ; but the question is whether these oddities prove that reasons do not cause in any ordinary sense at least the actions that they rationalize.

In reply to this objections, according to Davidson we may err about our reasons, particularly when we have two reasons for an action, one of which pleases us and one which does not. Our knowledge of our own reasons for our actions is not generally inductive for where there is induction, there is evidence, which show the knowledge is not causal. And it is for from evident that

induction, and induction alone, yields the knowledge that a causal law satisfying certain conditions exists or it is enough to persuade us that a law exists and this amounts to saying that we are persuaded without direct inductive evidence, that a causal relation exists.

Finally, some philosophers, like Melden feel uneasiness in speaking of causes of actions at all. According to Melden 'actions are often identical with bodily movements, and that bodily movements have causes, yet he denies that the causes are causes of the actions'. But according to Davidson, his view is a contradiction, because Melden was led to it by the sort of consideration : "It is futile to attempt to explain conduct through the causal efficacy of desire all that can explain is further happenings, not actions performed by agents. The agent confronting the causal nexus in which such happenings occur is a helpless victim of all that occurs in and to him (128,129)." Thus from this we can show that actions cannot have causes at all, there must be obvious difficulties in removing actions from the realm of causality entirely. Because on the earth a cause should turn an action into a mere happening and a person into a helpless victim. It is because that a cause demands a cause an agency an agent, at least in the arena of action. So we may mention Davidson's remark

as he said - "If my action is caused, what caused it ? If I did, then there is the absurdity of infinite regress ; if I did not, I am a victim. But of course the alternatives are not exhaustive. Some causes have no agents. Primary among these are those states and changes of state in persons which because they are reasons as well as causes, make persons voluntary agents."³¹

In this way, Donald Davidson criticizes and rejects five possible objections to his view. We do not, however, find his case convincing. Even if his treatment of the five objections is successful, there is no guarantee that some further objection, capable of withstanding criticism, might not be formulated. We may see some confusions within Davidson's own account of causal explanation, and may construct an objection to his view, using things that he himself says about actions and reasons, which is, we believe immune to the criticisms that he offers in his paper. Davidson has not, proved his case, but it may well be true that reasons explain action in the same way that causes explain their effects. Moreover, its central concepts action, reason, cause - explanation have not been delineated with sufficient clarity and detail to enable this issue to be decided with any certainty. Discussing Davidson's

31 → Davidson Donald - "Action, Reasons and Causes" - The Journal of Philosophy, 1963.

account of causal explanation and constructing some objections to his view, V.C. Chappell raised two questions :

"I address myself to two questions in particular ; first, the respective roles played by different sorts of causal factor - conditions, states, dispositions, events - in the etiology of natural happenings as well as of actions ; and second, the criteria of identity for actions, the grounds for distinguishing them both from one another and from their reasons and consequences, and the extent to which these reasons and consequences, in turn determine the identity, specific, if not numerical of actions."³²

Regarding the validity of causal explanation of an action we can say that - the primacy of the agent's description of his deed, in terms of his reasons, are woefully incomplete. Because when one reports someone's behaviour as one thinks he understands it, the explanation furnished by one is an essential rather than a causal one. Our concern of any items with reasons and deed - may be causally related but not the causal pattern explanation to which these reasons and this act conform. Without the knowledge of relevant causal uniformities, one can know the cause of his action by which he does not appear

32 - Chappell V.C. - "Causation and the Identification of Actions", The Journal of Philosophy - 1963.

in any accepted or promising causal law. The events or conditions, to which one's description of his reasons applies, may have to be described in different terms these events or conditions can figure in a causal explanation of what he did. Yet even if we must have recourse to the jargon of neurophysiology in order to give the causal explanation of how his reasons produced his deed, they are still causal factors.

Thus we may face mainly the following objection if we try to give a causal explanation of a human action.

Firstly, we know that in a causal explanation an alleged cause must be describable without reference to its alleged effect. Cause and effect must be independent to each other. Black cloud and rain are causally related, they have causal relation, because black cloud is the cause of rain or rain is the effect of black cloud. The black cloud and rain are two different things which are independently exist. But in the case of causal explanation of human action, we see that human action and its cause want or belief are not two different independent things. Only want or belief is not a thing which can be exist without any reference to any action or the only action is not a thing which can exist without the reference of agent's want or belief. In case of human action, we cannot identify

an will independently of an action which seems to cause the action. Since the action and the will are not independently identifiable therefore, causal explanation of human action is not possible. Secondly, if we try to give the causal explanation of the human action, it leads to the infinite et regresses. Because those who give a causal explanation of human action believe that every event has a cause and every cause becomes an event in relation to cause. Thus every event needs a cause and every cause needs another cause and thus it leads to infinite regresses. Because if an action needs the will or want or belief as its cause then, it needs another cause for his want, will or belief and that cause also needs another cause and thus it leads to infinite regresses. Therefore, for this absurdity, human action cannot be brought under the causal explanation.

Thirdly, the another factor relevant to causality is that we can learn the causation or causal relation by observation. We observe that A and B are two events and A is spatially adjacent and temporally antecedent to B. That events of the same sort as A have been regularly, followed by events of the same sort as B. And it is our experience of this regular sequence of A-type and B-type events which leads us when we observe an event of type-A,

to expect an event of type B to follow, and it does to call the former the cause of the latter. But in the case of human action it is impossible to discover its cause by observation, because we cannot observe one's want or belief or will as a cause, of an action. It is impossible for learning the causal relation of one's want or belief or will as a cause of human action, and therefore, it cannot fall under the causal explanation.

Lastly, though ordinary causal statements imply generalization, but in the case of rationalization we cannot establish generalization. One's will, belief or wants may be causes of his particular action but this particular kind of action may not be the effect of another person's will or belief. Therefore, we cannot give a causal explanation of human action.

In conclusion, we can say that philosophical opponents of causality were wrong in supporting that if a particular event is a human action, it is exempt from causal explanation but they are rightly maintained that other forms of explanation are indispensable for our understanding of whole people do. They were rightly saying that when a man reveals his reasons for action, he does not provide a causal explanation of his deed. Therefore, we can add that the agent may still have described things which are causes of his action, although the assertion that they are causes is a relatively

unimportant part of the essential explanation of what he did i.e. the explanation of the human action.

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CHAPTER III

Reason Explanation

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Reason Explanation

In the investigation of human action, we may commonly ask both what a person is doing and why human deeds and their grounds or reasons for acting appear to be distinct phenomena. They must be, if one's attitudes and thoughts ever cause one to act. Yet, we often specify what a man is doing in terms that seem to entail that he had some particular reason for doing it, and conversely, if we limit ourselves to reporting someone's conative attitudes, we nevertheless seem to be providing information about how he will act in favourable circumstances, which is called the Reason Explanation.

Reason explanation is another type of action explanation, which basically developed due to the impossibility of the causal explanation of action. Causal explanation faced with some severe criticisms as it cannot give us a satisfactory action explanation of human action. Firstly, in the causal explanation, an alleged cause must be describable without reference to its alleged effect. But when we have tried to give a causal explanation of human action, we see that human action and its cause i.e. want or belief are not two different entities. Secondly, since every event has a cause and every cause becomes an event or

happening. Therefore, it again needs another cause and thus it leads to infinite and regresses. In that way, if we try to give the causal explanation of human action, it leads to infinite regresses. Thirdly, it is possible to learn the causal relation by observation but it is impossible to learn the causal relation existing between want or belief. Thus we cannot bring the explanation of human action under the causal explanation.

As causal explanation fails to give action explanation satisfactorily, philosopher try to give another new explanation of action which is mainly based on the 'reasons for acting'. As an explanation of reasons for acting, this kind of explanation explicitly refer to the agent's effective conative and doxastic attitudes. Reason explanations are also called purposive - causal explanation, which involve the agent's activated conduct plans e.g. intention and hence his effective intendings - explicitly or implicitly. But it may also seems plausible to think that all intentional teleological explanations of intentional actions satisfying want and belief explanation i.e. "A did X because of Y" are reasons explanation. For, if explanations of intentional actions in terms of goal aims, purposes, intentions, wants obligations, beliefs, emotions, feelings etc. indeed do implicitly or explicitly refer to effective

intendings, then all these cases represent reason explanations in the sense of 'P was A's reason for doing X'.

This kind of explanation, that is, the reason explanation is offered by a person's reasons which are his desires, intentions, motives, beliefs etc. should be distinguished from those offered by other factors, which could be called as causal factors. such as environmental or hereditary conditions drugs or drunkenness the behaviour of other people, happenings in the world (e.g. flashes and noises) or the momentary feelings and perceptions of the agent himself. But there are philosophers like Davidson, Ayer, Macintyre who assimilate reasons to causes they have rightly pointed out some similarities between these two kinds of explanations. Like the causal explanation, reasons explanation also can be signified' by the words 'because and 'cause' and even 'reason'. Reason explanation also may on suitably described occasions give the sufficient conditions of the occurrence of what is to be explained. Just like generalizations link causes for happenings and happenings may also link reasons for actions and actions. Because just as damp may cause disease, the dissatisfaction may lead to rebellion. A happening e.g. a bullet hole, may be described in terms of which it refer to its cause, e.g. of jealousy as well as in terms of its reason also.

Philosophers, like Melden, Anscombe, Hampshire, Taylor, Ryle separate reasons and causes and rightly emphasize their logical differences. Because a person's reason for doing X must contain a reference either to X or to something which is thought by the agent to be a means to X, it is in virtue of this characteristic, and not of any psychological or physiological characteristic that a desire explains an action. One's reasons for his action can be good or bad, defensible or indefensible and can be known in any way but causes are not. As for example we see that if one's curiosity to see what would happen can be said to have caused him to press a button and pressing a button caused the death of some people in a room, then his curiosity might be said to have caused their death, but though curiosity to see what happened was his reason for pressing the button, it was not his reason for killing the people.

Those who separate reasons from causes have a choice of two alternatives. On the first alternative, an explanation of an action by reason excludes and is incompatible with an explanation of the same action by causes. The second alternative is to take the two forms of explanation as being quite compatible. What appears at one descriptive level as an action to be accounted for by reasons may appear

at another descriptive level as a physical movement to be accounted for causally by reference to antecedent circumstances, and laws of nature. If the former alternative is true we must distinguish between two classes of happenings, one causally and the other non-causally explicable. If the latter alternative is true we must distinguish not between two kinds of happenings, but between two modes of explanations, in both of which the same event may find a place in respect of different characteristics it possesses.

We do inquire into the causes of people behaving as they do, even when what they do is rational and purposive. Reasons do not operate in the absence or to the exclusion of causes (or other kinds of causes) ; they function in a context in which causes (of other kinds) are also functioning. No reason by itself provides a complete explanation of any action, we need to know why that reason appeared as a reason to that person on that occasion. In an example, an infant puts his hand into a flame, and thereafter automatically and without consideration recoils from flames. Later, as he matures, he can formulate the principle of action 'Flames burn, therefore, keep away from flames'. But it is impossible to specify a time in his history when he passed from a causally to a rationally determined mode of behaviour.

To give a reason for an action is to connect it with agent's desires and factual beliefs. Because a statement of agent's reason will always rest on three descriptions, explicit or implicit in what he say a description of his action, a description, of his operative desires and a description of his relevant factual beliefs. In assigning reasons for people's action, we thus always cite facts of two different kinds in the first are the facts concerning what the agent knew or believed or supposed, noticed or perceived, and the second kind are the facts about what he wanted, desired wished, meant, intended or purposed.

But one cannot analyse 'S desires X' entirely in terms of what S does, because the way a person behaves depends not only on what he desires but also on what he notices or believes, so that two people in a similar situation with similar desires may behave quite differently because they notice different facts about it or hold different belief about it. And people in similar situations with similar beliefs will behave differently if they have different desires. Of course, we can infer a person's desire and beliefs from an adequate sample of his behaviour. But the connection between any desire or belief and any piece of behaviour is contingent, not necessary, since any

piece of behaviour is the possible manifestation of more than one combination of desires and beliefs.

Some Philosophers have said that there are actions which are not done from desire but from reason, or sense of duty, or some such things. If 'desire' here means felt longing, or pleasurable anticipation, this is indeed true, and there are host of actions which are not due to 'desire' in this sense. But if we interpret 'desire' and 'want' in a dispositional sense, then it is necessarily true that we want to do all the actions that we do. The logical connection between, desire and action holds only where 'action' implies intention. A man necessarily wants to do the things he does on purpose. He does not necessarily want to do the things he 'does' inadvertantly, accidentally, unintentionally, by mistake. So, there is no logical tie between desire and behaviour as such, but only between desire and intentional behaviour. Thus desire is conceptually tied to intention and intention to an awareness of what one is aiming at. We are ready to construe our intentional action as influenced by features of our situation that we notice or infer. As long as we are conscious we are acting ; awareness always has a conative element. We are always in a willing or unwilling attitude to the movements our bodies are making.

Thus when people claim that the concept of reason for action only applies when persons have certain desires, they may be supposing that all reasons for action are defined by the principles of rationality. Miss Anscombe seems to take the same view as she sees the crucial mark of practical reasoning in all its forms as being a plan calculation of 'the way of getting or doing the thing wanted'. Philosophers have ordinarily presumed that the 'intentional' actions are preceded by or incorporate, a special kind of internal act - 'the intention to act in that way'. In contrast, Anscombe, takes it to be the distinguishing feature of an intentional act that the question 'why', asked in relation to it, can be a request for a reason, not for a cause. Thus intentional actions are defined not in terms of psychological processes which preceded them but in terms of the sort of question which has application to them.

According to Anscombe, the request for a 'reason why' does not apply to that action when the agent does not know that he is performing this kind of action for which we are seeking the reason.

Similarly the request for a 'reason why' does not apply to another involuntary action which we 'know without observation', but the cause of which can only be known by

observation. Even with his eyes shut a man knows that his knee kicks when the doctor taps it, but only by observation can be discovered why his knee behaves in that way. Asked 'why' in relation to such activities, he cannot give a reason, and may not know the cause.

When a man is asked 'why' and he replies by referring to some past act, then it will be either a reason or a cause. As for example, when a man is asked why did he kill that man, and if he replies that because of he felt something go snap in his brain or because of he felt that he just had to kill somebody then he is telling us, according to Anscombe - the 'mental cause' of his action - that event, not necessarily a mental event, which produced his action. But on the other hand, if he says that he acted in revenge, because that man killed his father, then he is giving a reason the difference being that in this case, his action is a response to what he regards as a harmful act and is an attempt to repay that harm.

According to Anscombe - 'mental causes are possible, not only for actions ('The martial music excites me, that is why I walk up and down,') but also for feelings and even thoughts."³³ There is a distinction between 'mental

33 - Anscombe G.E.M. - 'Intention' - The Philosophy of Action, A.R. White, Page-145.

causes' and motives and other objects of feeling. Anscombe says that a mental cause need not be a mental event i.e. a thought or feeling or image. A mental cause is what someone would describe if he were asked the specific question as what produced this action or thought or feeling in him? And this mental cause is distinguished from the ordinary sense of 'motive' and 'intention'. A man's intention is what he aims at or chooses, his motives is what determines the aim or choice, and it suppose that 'determines the aim or choice, and it suppose that 'determines' must hereby another word for causes. As for example - if a man kills someone, he may be said to have done it out of love and pity, which might indeed be cast in the farms 'to release him from this awful suffering', but though this is a form of expression suggesting objectivities, they are perhaps expressive of the spirit in which the man killed rather than descriptive of the end to which the killing was a means - a future state of affairs to be produced by the killing. And this shows the distinction between 'motive' and 'intention'. Motive for an action has a rather wider and more diverse application than 'intention' with which the action was done'. Though motive may explain action to us, but that is not to say that they 'determine' in the sense of causing actions.

Miss Anscombe defines "an intentional act as one which

the agent does for a reason, which is not 'known by observation' to come under the description in relation to which it is intentional."³⁴ A man's intention is what he aims at or chooses with which a man acts. To act is to act on something and so to change it. The something that is acted on and that becomes changed by the action is a state of affairs in the world. In human action, the change is brought about by the agency of a person who has the beliefs about the situation in which and on which he is acting. The agent must also have an intention about the way in which that situation is to be changed by his action. The belief as a reason, on which a person acts are an important part of his action, which is not 'intelligible' as an action apart from those beliefs. Actions are performed in order to, or with the intention of, bringing about ends. The intention with which a person act is a principal element, together with belief, in action.

Thus the concept of desires and the factual beliefs are connected with our reasons which are given by us for our action. But according to D.F. Pears there are two problems about reasons for actions which are about the available descriptions of desires actions. 'Is it possible to take any agent's reason for his action and to find

34 : Anscombe, G.E.M. - 'Intention' - The Philosophy of Mind - White, A.R. - Page 151.

a description of his operative desire under which given his factual beliefs, it contingently produced his action ? And is it possible to find a description of his action under which it contingently issued from his operative desires ?

Suppose that someone shoots a rabbit, and asked why, says that he shot it because he just felt like shooting it. The description by which we identify a man's action and its psychological antecedents seem to create logical ties between them. This predicament will be illustrated by supposing that we correctly describe someone as shooting a rabbit. If we assume that one's performance was in some sense 'intentional' it does logically follow that he had some kind of desire to shoot the rabbit'. Surely he wanted to, or just felt he would like to shoot it, and from the converse side Pears remarks that 'it may be hard to see how his desire described in his way, given certain background conditions, one of which would be his factual beliefs, could conceivably have failed to produce his action, as originally described. It may also be hard to see how his action as originally described, given that it was intentional, could conceivably have issued from any other desire than the one described. There are clearly two distinct difficulties. First, the

desire is taken as a sufficient condition of the action which was to be explained, and the question is whether its sufficiency can be presented as contingent sufficiency. Second, it is taken as a necessary condition, and the same question is asked about its necessity."³⁵

But there is no difficulty to answer about the above problems. Because, if the desire, taken as a sufficient condition of the action, has an apriori connection with it, that is only because the desire and the action are happen to match one another. It just happens that the action is described as shooting the rabbit, and that the desire is described as the desire to shoot the rabbit. But even if the agent has to use the desire his reason, he might still apply a non-matching description of his action. For there are many different ways of shooting a particular rabbit, so that even with the description of his desire it is an open contingency which way it was shot. And on the other hand, the problem about the desire taken as a necessary condition of his action may seem even easier to answer. For even if the agent has to use that description of his desire, it is only a contingent fact that he has to use it. Because he might have shot the rabbit as he wanted to eat it. So, the original description of the action 'shooting the rabbit', leaves it an open contingency from what desire it issued.

35 : Pears D.F. - 'Two problems about Reasons for Actions' Book - 'Agent, Action and Reason'-Edited by R. Binkley R. Bronaugh, A Manas, Page-129.

Regarding the question whether an action can be given a description under which it is contingently connected with whatever desire is offered as its necessary condition - it is worth observing that, when an agent states his reason he does not always either state or imply that a certain desire was a necessary condition of his action. The agent makes a clear statement in this way "I would not have shot the rabbit, unless, I had just like shooting it". Then, the original difficulty is his description of his action seems to imply that his desire as described by him was a logically necessary condition of it. But this difficulty vanishes when we reflect that it is only a contingent fact that he shot the rabbit for reason, which is, incidentally, the limiting case of a reason for an action, he might have shot it because he wanted to eat it. It is true that if the agent, when asked for his reason says - 'I would not have shot it unless I had just felt like shooting it,' this does exclude other possible reasons. Because it implies that his desire to shoot it did not consist of one or more component desires describable in other ways. For instance, that it did not have as its single component the desire to eat the rabbit, and that it did not consist of two component the desire to eat it and the desire to protect his vegetables etc. For whatever the composition of

his desire to shoot it, if he shot it intentionally, his shooting it must have issued from that desire. So, though the agent's statement of his reason does not run foul of the Human requirement something else namely the statement that his desire to shoot it, does seem to run foul of it, was a necessary condition of his shooting it. But this statement, that his desire to shoot it was a necessary condition of his shooting it, would more naturally be taken to exclude a certain class of other possible reasons. For it implies that his desire to shoot it was wholly spontaneous.

The second problem is concerned with desires taken as sufficient conditions of actions. The question is whether desires have descriptions under which they are generally and contingently connected with the actions which they produce. This question too ought to be posed in the wider setting of the generalized Human requirement without regard to the special features of the concept of cause. But we can assume that the Human requirement should not be abandoned at this point. It is most obviously difficult to find a description when we take a case in which the description of the desire, which will meet the requirement i.e. matches the description of the action : "I shot the rabbit just because I felt like shooting it."

This statement normally means that that desire was the sufficient condition of the action of the action given certain background conditions, whether it was also its necessary condition or not. But in this sort of case, we find the difficulty is that because when the desire and the action are given matching descriptions, the desire is presented as the logically sufficient condition of the action, given the background conditions.

A desire consists roughly, of two elements an object and an attitude of a certain strength towards the object. No difficulty is produced by the fact that a desire is and for some purposes must be, described through its object. For when an attitude is described through its object, the actual realization of the object is not always a logically necessary condition of the existence of the attitude. As for example, fear of stammering may contingently produce stammering because this result is logically necessary condition of the existence of the attitude. It is, therefore, an illusion to suppose that it is the description of the desire through its object, the action which makes it difficult to present the connection between the two as a contingent connection. This difficulty is not resolved by the observation which was made earlier, that therefore, for instance, many different ways of shooting

a particular rabbit. For all the various possible successful bodily movements must be collected under a description under which the desire to shoot the rabbit is their sufficient condition (given the background conditions). Both the exclusion of successful but accidental and the inclusion of genuine but unsuccessful attempt to shooting of the rabbit - would be achieved by the description in this way 'Bodily movement which is believed by the agent at the time to be going to result, or at least to have some chance of resulting in the shooting of the rabbit.' But it is important to remember that in using this description, we have to add a stipulation about the way in which the desire produces the bodily movement. For the agent might make a movement which caused the gun to go off and resulted in the shooting of the rabbit and he might believe at the time that it was going to have this result and yet the movement might only be a gesture of impatience produced by his desire to shoot the rabbit. Some have to stipulate that the movement be produced not by the desire alone, but by the desire together with the agent's relevant factual belief. Though this is the right description of the result, it leaves us in the original difficulty that when the result is described in this way, the desire seems to be its logically sufficient condition

given the background conditions.

Regarding to the solution of this problem D.F. Pears says that "so my solution to the second problem is that when desires are taken as sufficient conditions of actions, given the background conditions, the Humean requirement can certainly be satisfied, whereas my solution to the first problem was that, when they are taken as necessary conditions of actions, it may be satisfiable. This does not show that there is nothing which ought to lead us to treat the connection between desires and actions as a special kind of connection, All that it shows is that the idea that the Humean requirement cannot be satisfied and that this ought to lead us to treat the connection in a special way, is an illusion."³⁶ Thus we can see that Pears' goals are to establish a) that desires are not logically necessary conditions of actions, b) that desires are not logically sufficient conditions of actions. Regarding the reason explanation of human action, it may be mentioned here Gilbert Ryle's dispositional analysis of mind. Ryle in his book, 'The Concept of Mind', presents a dispositional analysis of mind and thereby a dispositional analysis of action. Ryle's dispositional analysis of action

36 - Pears, D.F. 'Two Problems about Reasons for Actions' Books- Agent, Action and Reason, Binkley, Bronaugh, Marras Black Well., Page-153.

is a reason explanation and not causal. Because Ryle maintains that dispositions are not causes.

Ryle's account of action is that it is nothing but the exercise of disposition. For him an intelligent action is an action which is done with thinking and applying criteria. Intelligent performance though involves the application of criteria yet it does not consist of two activities - one the application of criteria and the other the actual performance. A person must 'preach to himself before he can practice. Intelligent action involves doing one thing and not two. Intelligent action involves application of rules or criteria. However, as against Ryle's analysis of intelligent action it can be asked whether the application of criteria is an occurrence or a disposition? If it is not an occurrence then it must be a disposition. If it is a disposition then we ^{can} ask whether the disposition to apply criteria is itself intelligent or not. If it is not intelligent then it must be automatic. But it cannot take place in an automatic way because if it is automatic then there cannot be distinction between intelligent and not intelligent action.

For Ryle, all motive explanations are reason explanations. Explanations in terms of motive are always explanations in terms of reasons. To ascribe a motive to an action

is to explain it by showing that there is a reason behind the performance of an action. To ask for the motive behind an action is to ask for the explanation as well as for the justification of an action. Motive explanations are reason explanations, but all reason explanations are not motive explanations. Explanations in terms of traits of character are reason explanation but they are not motive explanation. But Ryle does not make any discriminations among disposition. All dispositional explanations ~~are~~ reason explanations no doubt, but not motive explanation. Explanation in terms of traits of character like kind, polite, punctual are dispositional explanations no doubt, but not motive explanation.

CHAPTER IV

Conclusion

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Conclusion

This topic 'The Concept of Action' is an extremely broad one. In my dissertation of this topic, while discussing the concept of action, I particularly dealt with some problems concerning actions. These problems are discussed in different chapters. The first problem is - what is the difference between an action and a merely physical movement? This problem is discussed in the first Chapter of my dissertation where I have presented the views of different philosophers regarding the difference between physical movement and action. It is seen that the distinction between physical movement and action lies in the fact that in case of action, apart from the physical movement there is the person's intention, desire, will, purpose, belief and so on. These intentions, desire, purpose make a physical movement an action. Now, naturally the question arises like - Do these intentions, desire, belief, will cause an action? Or is it possible for us to give a causal explanation of human action in term of intention, will, desire? Thus in the 2nd chapter of my dissertation, I dealt mainly with the causal explanation. In the chapter I have contended the concept of a want, at least an 'occurrent,

want' is the concept of a mental event that has a tendency together with beliefs, to result in action. So, there is a logical connection between the concept of a want and the concept of action as well as causal connection between particular wants and particular action. But this causal explanation is not acceptable as a sole explanation of human action. Because when a man reveals his reasons or cause for acting, he does not provide a causal explanation of his deed as other forms of explanation are indispensable for our understanding of what people do. The infallibility of causal explanation leads to the development of reason explanation of human action. Thus in the third chapter of my dissertation, I dealt with reason explanation. This reason explanation is offered by a person's reasons - which are his desires, intentions, motives, beliefs etc. is distinguished from those offered by other factors which could be called as causal factors. The concept of intentional action was analysed in terms of causation by a desire to do a certain act together with beliefs and wants of act. The notion of a reason for action was explicated in this way that we can say that A' was the reason for S's doing A, if S wanted to do A believed that A would level generate A' and as a result of this want and belief, did A. The concept of agency was also said to be compatible as well as

explicable in terms of want and belief causation. Though an agent's acts are caused by his wants and beliefs, does not imply that he is not the source of his acts, it is said that they are his acts implies that they are dependent on his desires.

But the concepts of motive and reason as used in the content of action explanation are rather vague and ambiguous. Among possible motives, it includes emotions, feelings sensations and personality traits for what actions may be motivated by e.g. love, fear, pain and patriotism. Among reasons it will count pro|attitudes and doxastic attitudes which produce intentional actions. Thus it will be seen that 'A's wants (conative attitudes) brought about his doing X', and 'A's beliefs (doxastic attitudes) brought about his doing X' are contained in and can be transferred into an answer to 'A's reason for his doing X'. It should be noticed here that 'A's wants brought about his doing X' and 'A's beliefs brought about his doing X' presuppose that wants and beliefs on the occasions in question did bring about the actions. Here 'bring about' is a (broadly) causal phrase. It is undeniable that this or related causal phrases are used in the context of action explanation. All proper explanation of intentional of intentional actions are intentional teleological, which indicates that such an explanation refers to a goal of the agent. The word 'intentional' again specifies that the agent's intendings are somehow involved, although not necessarily referred to

in the explanation. Thus because of explanations of intentional action, all reason explanations must be purposive causal explanations given that they satisfy 'A did X because of Y'.

As reason explanations are purposive, causal explanations which involve the agent's activated conduct plans and hence his effective intendings - explicitly or implicitly. But it also seems plausible to think that all explanations of intentional actions are reason explanations and that our thesis holds in both directions. For, if explanations of intentional actions in terms of goals, aims, purposes, intentions, wants, obligations, beliefs, emotions feelings and sensations indeed do implicitly or explicitly refer to effective intendings, then all these cases represents reason explanations.

Thus I have given intentional action a central place in our account of dynamic action explanation. Regarding the question of how much of our conduct is intentional, a number of philosophers have claimed that all human action is intentional. If this is understood to mean that all act relations are relations of acting intentionally, the claim is clearly mistaken for, as for example, there are actions such as miscalculating, which preclude the corresponding intentions. Because of the existence of such act relations

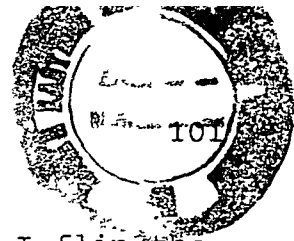
not every act instance can be intentional either. But the claim can be understood differently, it can be understood to mean that whenever an agent acts in relation to an individual then he acts intentionally in relation to some individual or other. For example, that a man unintentionally moves some gravel on a garden path. If the claim is correct, the man at the time also acts intentionally in relation to some individual. In this way one can speak of the omnipresence of intentions in acting without commitment to the view that every act instance is intentional. On the other hand, if the thesis of 'intentionality', understood in the second way, is probably mistaken. For assume that the man moves some gravel on the garden path while walking in his sleep. In this case, it is highly unlikely that the man would be acting intentionally in relation to some individual or other and yet he moves the gravel.

From the logical point of view, understanding an act relation or an agent as the carrier of an intention is not in principle different from understanding a relation of some other type or from understanding the nature of an individual of some other kind. The same may be said about knowledge of actions and intentions.

However, there are important differences in practice. These are entirely due to the fact that intentions cannot be defined in terms of observable overt behaviour alone. This has been argued on the ground that one and the same behaviour pattern can be consistent with the supposition of any of a variety of completely different intentions. As for example, there is no end to the number of intentions to indicate that something is the case with which the act of raising one's arm, say, can be done. In other cases, the variability is more restricted, but this in no way undermines the soundness of the argument that, though observable behaviour gives evidence of intentions, these cannot be defined in terms of such behaviour alone. ✓

In the context of action explanation, understanding is in general, connected to one's knowing something. To understand, for instance, that light comes on when the flip is switched, or to understand why the light comes on, is related to one's knowledge of the causal connections involved. Understanding is also connected to one's power to reason in various ways and to perform various linguistic and non-linguistic actions. For instance, if I understand why the light came on in a standard

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case, I can reason about what happens when I flip the switch and about what happens when there is a blackout, and so on. I can also produce and prevent, the light's coming on by operating with the flip. These are the basic elements involved in the causal pattern of action understanding.

In this action explanation, there is another pattern which is called the 'hermenetical pattern of understanding'. This is what is involved in understanding a text and in understanding intentional aboutness, understanding behaviour as intentional action. Thus both pattern of understanding are essentially involved in this analyzation of action explanations, as they are conceptually intentional because in our analysis it is a conceptual truth that actions are purposively caused by suitable effective intendings.

We may see that Mr. Peter Winch view of understanding and explanations in the social sciences in terms of a two stage model. At first, an action is made intelligible as the outcome of motives, reasons and decisions ; and is then secondly made intelligible by those motives, reasons and decisions being set in the context of the rules of a given form of social life. These rules logically

determine the range of reasons and motives open to a given set of agents and hence also the range of decisions open to them. Thus Winch's contrast between explanation in terms of causal generalizations and explanations in terms of rules turns out to rest upon a version of the contrast between explanations in terms of causes and explanations in terms of reasons. Thus latter contrast must therefore, be explored, and the most useful way of doing this will be to understand better what it is to act for a reason.

Many analysis of what it is to act for a reason have written into them an incompatibility between acting for a reason and behaving from a cause, just because they begin from the apparently simple and uncomplicated case where the action is actually performed, where the agent had one and only one reason for performing it, and where no doubt could arise for the agent as to why he had done what he had done. By concentrating attention upon this type of example, a basis is laid for making central to the analysis a contrast between the agent's knowledge of his own reasons for acting and his and other's knowledge of causes of his behaviour. For clearly in such a case the agent's claim that he did X for reason

Y does not seem to stand in need of any warrant from a generalization founded upon observation ; while equally clearly any claim that one particular event or state of affairs was the cause of another does stand in need of such a warrant. But this may be misleading. There are two somewhat more complex cases. The first is that of a man who has several quite different reasons for performing a given action. He performs the action, how can he as agent know whether it was the conjoining of all the different reasons that was sufficient for him to perform the action or whether just one of the reasons was by itself alone, sufficient or whether the action was over-determined in the sense that there were two or more reasons, each of which would by itself alone have been sufficient ? The second case worth considering is that of two agents, each with the same reasons for performing a given action, one does not in fact perform it, the other does. Neither agent had what seemed to him a good reason or indeed had any reason for not performing the action in question. Here we can ask what made these reasons or some subset of them productive of action in the one case, but not in the other. In both these types of cases we need to distinguish between the agent's having a reason for performing an action and the agent's

being actually moved to action by his having such a reason.

The importance of this above point can be brought out by reconsidering a very familiar example, that of past hypnotic suggestion, under which influence, a subject will not only perform the action required by the hypnotist, but will offer apparently good reasons for performing it, while quite unaware of the true cause of the performance. So, someone enjoined to walk out of the room might, on being asked why he was doing this, reply with all sincerity that he had felt in need of fresh air or decided to catch a train. In this type of case, we would certainly not accept the agent's testimony as to the connection between reason and action, unless we are convinced of the untruth of the counterfactual. The question of the truth or otherwise of the first of these is a matter of the experimentally established facts about past hypnotic suggestion and these facts are certainly expressed as causal generalizations. But to establish the truth of such causal generalizations entails consequences concerning the truth or untruth of generalizations about reasons, the question inevitably arises as to whether the possession of a given reason may not be the

cause of an action in precisely the same sense in which hypnotic suggestion may be the cause of an action. The Chief objection to this view has been that the relation of reason to action is internal and conceptual, not external and contingent, and cannot therefore, be a causal relationship, but although nothing could count as a reason unless it stood in an internal relationship to an action, the agent's possessing a reason may be a state of affairs identifiable independently of the event which is the agent's performance of the action. Thus it does seem as if the possession of a reason by an agent is an item of a suitable type to figure as a cause, or an effect. But if this is so, then to ask whether it was the agent's reason that roused him to act is to ask a causal question, the true answer to which depends upon causal generalizations. But there are different questions of the agent's authority as to what roused him to act, for it follows from what has been said that this authority is at best prima facie. For more of course needs to be said on this and the related topics, but perhaps the argument so far entitles us to treat with scepticism Winch's claim that understanding in terms of rule-following and causal explanations have mutually exclusive subject matter.

Understanding is often thought of as linked to meaning, understanding, is might be said a knowledge of meaning ; and not a matter of knowing how to classify elements, in view of which we must say something about meaning, if only to further clarify our notion of understanding. The question of 'what do you intend to do' is exactly same as the question of 'what do you mean to do' Therefore, a meaning is something intended, the 'object' of some intention. 'I mean to make hay tomorrow if there is sunshine', might answer the question by making clear that making hay when there is sunshine is what a person intends to do. We cannot use 'mean and 'meaning' in this very general sense for 'intend' and its derivatives serve perfectly well here. We shall reserve 'meaning' for the objects of intentions of a select kind, namely, intentions to indicate (to somebody) that something is the case with 'when I spoke, this way my meaning', the speaker clarified what he intended to indicate in an earlier speech act. The nature of intentions to indicate can be further elucidated by means of the notion of reference. If A indicates to B that he is on speed trials, one of the things he does is that he refers to himself and another thing he does is that he refers to the property of being on speed trials. Specifying the object of A's intention

to indicate to B that he is on speed trials requires a specification of these two intended references. The intention to indicate to B that he is on speed trials and the intention to indicate to 'X' that he is on speed trials are alike in that in both A intends to refer to the property of being on speed trials, but they differ with respect to other intended references in the first A intends to refer to B whereas in the second intention he intends to refer to X. Thus, the notion of reference is required in the specification of the structure of intentions to indicate that something is the case. Therefore it is for a good reason that we often have an intended reference in mind when we speak of meaning or a meaning.

To understand a meaning is to understand an intention to indicate that something is the case and, minimally, to understand an intention to make a reference. To understand an action with a meaning, or the meaning of an action, is to understand it as the action of an agent who makes his action conform to such an intention. Since understanding an intention to indicate is a matter of understanding an intention, it follows that understanding a meaning, or an action with a meaning is a species of our general category of understanding intentions and intentional actions. It may similarly be said that knowledge of

meaning is a species of the general category of knowledge of facts and of the category of knowledge of intentions and intentional actions.

In the conclusion, I would like to say that the explanation of human action is radically different from other physical phenomena. In case of physical phenomena, causal explanation is possible because in case of physical phenomena there is a regularity or physical law. But so far as human actions are concerned, there is no regularity and as such, human action cannot be reduced to simple causality. Apart from possessing a human body, the human beings also have intentions, desire, purpose and so on. And these intentions desire and purpose cannot be discovered by empirical means. Explanation is different from understanding. Explanation always has a causal force in it. Any theory which involves explanation is ultimately a causal theory. Therefore, in case of human action it would be better to say that human action needs understanding and not explanation. It is a matter of interpretation. It is a matter of interpretation and not explanation. To interpret is to discover a meaning and to discover a meaning is to refer to the person's intention or purpose which is something subjective. To ask why some one acted as he did is to ask for an interpretation.

tation. And when we came to learn about the person's intention or desire, we have an interpretation of his action. Therefore, to go for the person's beliefs and attitudes, intention and desires is always to go for interpretation and not for explanation.

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