Anscombe and 'I': A New Interpretation and Analysis of G.E.M. Anscombe's 'The First Person' (1975)

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the many heroic people who populate my life and whom I daily aspire to emulate (an important although incomplete selection are listed in no particular order):

To Munzar, who effectively strives for justice and a good time.

To Garrett, who makes the majority of adults look like children.

To Alice, who exudes effortless perfection.

To Marta, who is simultaneously Penelope and Oddyseus.

To Damjan, who has time for poetry, but no time for the poetical class.

To Harriet, who persists with composure where others would crumble.

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To Anton and Timur, who manage to successfully combine Wittgenstein chat and Berliner Luft.

To George Soros, who could have kept all the money to himself.

To my family, who it goes without saying.

Contents

Anscombe and 'I': Introduction to the Dissertation

General Overview of the Dissertation

Very succinctly, this dissertation constitutes a new interpretation and analysis of G.E.M. Anscombe's 'The First Person' (1975). In particular, of that paper's central thesis - that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) - and the related notion that self-consciousness is 'subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). In providing this, I take Anscombe's philosophical texts to be worth the same level of critical attention as has been given to the texts of, for instance, Gottlob Frege, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Immanuel Kant. And I consider this dissertation to be part of a wider movement within academic philosophy to provide new narratives of human philosophical endeavours which include or highlight texts authored by women and members of other marginalised groups.[1] As I have not set about providing an interpretation and analysis of 'The First Person' (1975) blind, and as I am aware that alternative approaches to engaging with philosophical texts are both possible and respectable, I will use this introduction to introduce and explain the approach I have adopted in this thesis.

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[1] See, for instance, the Extenting New Narratives project which outlines its aim as follows: 'We are engaged in both retrieving philosophical works of women and individuals from other marginalized groups and sustaining the presence of these figures in the history of philosophy. Our overall goal is to help change the standards of practice in philosophy to enable it to become more inclusive and diverse by changing the ways we do history of philosophy.' (https://www.newnarrativesinphilosophy.net/index.html).

The Interpretation Element: My Hermeneutical Commitments

 According to Friedrich Schleiermacher - who is generally cited as the founder of hermeneutics as a discipline - there is only ever one proper interpretation of a text.[2] This one proper interpretation is largely arrived at by the interpreter acting as psychologist to the author - the interpreter is to enter the mind of the author where the text was prepared by inner discourse in order to make conscious the author's thought content which was the basis of the text's production (Schleiermacher, 1838: 7-8). In order to get inside the author's mind, the interpreter-psychologist is to consider 'the totality of [the author's] environments, via which their development and continued existence are [or were] determined [including] their nationality and their era' (Schleiermacher, 1838: 9). And it seems to me that Schleiermacher is confident that if we can just get into the mind of the author, then all our confusion regarding a text will vanish.

 As far as I can make out, something like Schleiermacher's view informs various (if not the majority) of Anscombe current interpreters. For instance, attributing a Schleiermacher type view to both James Doyle and Robert Stainton seems the only way to explain their dispute

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[2] I take this to be Schleiermacher's stance from claims such as the following ''Hermeneutics and criticism, both philological disciplines, both theories belong together, because the practice of one presupposes the other. The former is generally the art of understanding particularly the written discourse of another person *correctly*' (Schleiermacher, 1838: 3) or 'There is no other multiplicity in the method of explication than the one above' (Schleiermacher, 1838: 15). From quotes such as these, we see that the one proper interpretation will be the one which understands the written discourse of another c*orrectly* having followed Schleiermacher's method to which he can imagine no alternative - there being, he claims, no multiplicity in method. Improper interpretations will understand the written discourse of another incorrectly; presumably through an inadequate application of Schleiermacher's method - there supposedly being no other. (The italics are my emphasis and the page number in the citation is to the CUP translation of *Hermeneutics and Criticism* (1998). It is difficult to cite Scleiermacher well as the translation of his writings includes edited material from collected marginalia and lecture notes.)

over Anscombe's work. Stainton interprets 'The First Person' (1975) as supporting an account of 'I' as a pure indexical corresponding to David Kaplan's schema of indexicals and pure indexicals (Stainton, 2019: 92). Doyle has responded to a similar suggestion by Edward Harcourt by stating that this attributes ''a certain bogus sensationalism [to Anscombe], whereby relatively unexceptional doctrines are hidden behind a paradoxical façade falsely suggestive of exciting profundity' (Doyle, 2018: 152-3). And Stainton has replied 'To the contrary, however, it would be an exceptional and profound insight of Anscombe's if she had implicitly proposed in the early 1970s that [...] 'I' is roughly comparable to what we'd now label a Kaplanian (1989) pure indexical' (Stainton, 2019: 92). This dispute only seems possible if both sides assume that there is a single correct way of reading a text - namely their own - and that this single correct way of reading a text is what the author had in mind - hence Doyle suggests that a Stainton style interpretation is close to slander whilst Stainton suggests that his own interpretation shows how exceptional and profound Anscombe was.

The Stainton-Doyle dispute is consistent with other interpretive disputes in the field of analytic philosophy. For instance, Derek Parfit's *On What Matters Volume II* contains the following account of his dispute with interpreters of Bernard Williams's texts: 'When I have earlier claimed that Williams did not understand this external concept of a reason, some people have urged me to be more *charitable*. These people suggest that, like Scanlon, I should assume that Williams had this concept, and was merely making different claims about which facts give us reasons. But this assumption would, I believe, be *less* charitable. If Williams *did* understand the external normative sense, why does he so often call this sense mysterious and obscure? Though many of us misunderstand our own thoughts, I find it hard to believe, given his brilliance, that *Williams* could have been so muddled or confused. And, if Williams understood the idea that certain facts might count in favour of certain acts, some

of his remarks would be baffling. [Parfit then goes on to document the baffling remarks.]' (Parfit, 2011: 452-3). Both sides in this dispute appear to think that we reach the mind of the author, so the one true interpretation of a text, via being charitable.

I am not interested in rejecting other interpretations of philosophical texts as wrong. I also have no interest in implying that others' interpretations either verge on slander or fail to take into account the brilliance of the author. This is because I reject the Schleiermacher style approach to interpretation, a rejection which I will now briefly explain. It is important to note at the outset, however, that this rejection is not inconsistent with preferring one interpretation over another.[3] Consequently, where appropriate, I give reasons for preferring my interpretation over others.

There are three main reasons behind my rejection of a Schleiermacher style approach to interpretation. Firstly, I believe that, for a variety of reasons, some authors purposefully produce or publish ambiguous texts. Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) seems to be one case of this. In the preface to that text, Wittgenstein writes 'I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking. But, if possible, to stimulate someone to thoughts of his own' (Wittgenstein, 1953: vii). I take Wittgenstein's point to be that he isn't a dictator of how to read his text, indeed I would consider the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) to count as, what Roland Barthes terms, a writerly text - its goal 'is to

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[3] This is, I think, a similar attitude to the one adopted by Paul Feyerabend in *Against Method* (1975) towards preferring some papers over others whilst holding an epistemological anarchist position: 'Having listened to one of my anarchistic sermons, Professor Wigner exclaimed: "But surely, you do not read all the manuscripts which people send you, but you throw most of them into the wastepaper basket." I most certainly do. "Anything goes" does not mean that I shall read every single paper that has been written - God forbid! - it means that I make my selection in a highly individual and idiosyncratic way' (Feyerabend, 1975: 215).

make the reader no longer a consumer but a producer of the text' (Barthes, 1973: 4). This is to say that the goal is for the reader to take the unity of the text as it is written and to disentangle it, to play with it almost, so as to form new unities i.e. to rewrite the text (preferably in a philosophically interesting way).[4]

Barthes contrasts writerly texts with what he terms readerly texts (Barthes, 1973: 4). In the case of readerly texts, the reader is supposed to be a consumer. The reader is not supposed to disentangle the text or play with it, rather they are supposed to be largely passive - their engagement is restricted to deciphering the text and consequently accepting or rejecting what it claimed (Barthes, 1973: 4). A Schleimacher type approach to interpretation can only hope to be applicable when it comes to readerly texts. And this is my first objection to the Schleiermacher approach to interpretation - it cannot be applied to all texts. Entering into psychological communion with the author of a writerly text will not get you to the one proper interpretation of the text, because the author didn't write the text with one in mind.[5]

Even when it comes to readerly texts, however, I reject the Schleiermacher type approach. Skipping over (for the moment) my myriad of problems with applying the Schleiermacher technique, or whether it can even be applied at all in some or even all cases, we come to the issue that Schleiermacher seems to envision there to be some almost moral imperative to his way of interpreting texts. Yet, to interpret a text in this way is a choice and it may not always be a choice which suits or appeals to us. This applies to even the most readerly of readerly

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[4]Anscombe herself, I take it, does this with the *Philosophical Investigations* (1952) in her work on *Private Ostensive Definition* (2015), here she brings together otherwise disunified portions of the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) as an argument against John Locke's idea that the mind is a blank slate. Yet Locke is never mentioned in Wittgenstein's text and, for all we know, there was no substantial psychological unity between Wittgenstein and Locke.
[5] This also leads us to an epistemic problem - how can we be certain whether an author has produced a writerly or a readerly text?

texts such as an instruction manual for constructing an appliance. The author of the instruction manual presumably wrote the text wishing the reader to read it as a set of instructions for building a machine with a specific function - grinding coffee for instance. Now, it might turn out that the resulting machine is better used for mixing cement. And, consequently, people stop reading the instructions as providing directions for building a coffee grinder, but instead as instructions for building a cement mixer. Schleiermacher would be outraged, but why does it matter?

This same question informs my approach to philosophical texts including 'The First Person' (1975). I cannot decide whether 'The First Person' (1975) is supposed to be a writerly or a readerly text, either way, however, I do not try to become Anscombe's psychologist. Instead, I try to do something philosophically interesting with that text. Where I think there is ambiguity (and I think that there is a lot of ambiguity in 'The First Person' (1975)) I try to bring clarity; usually by looking beyond the text itself to Anscombe's other works and to works by others with which Anscombe may or may not have been familiar. As I don't see Anscombe to be an endpoint to my interpretation, a psychological connection between her and the work of another author is utterly unimportant to me.[6] Consequently, I do not take my interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) to be *the* interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) or, as Schleiermacher might say, *the correct reading*, but I also grant no other reading that honour. For anyone who tries to claim it, and then perhaps reject my interpretation as false, I lay down the following challenge which is my third criticism of the Schleiermacher approach:

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[6] The 'psychological unity' terminology follows from my reading of Michael Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969).

Schleiermacher is adamant that 'thinking is an inner speaking' (Schleiermacher, 1838: 9) and that 'there are no thoughts without speech' (Schleiermacher, 1838: 8). And, as we have seen, Schleiermacher thinks that 'hermeneutics is supposed to lead to the understanding of the thought-content' which is the basis of a text (Schleiermacher, 1838: 8). It is the apprehension of this thought-content which is meant to bring the clarity we need to provide the one correct interpretation. My challenge to this vision is very simple - if a text is an expression of the author's mind, then the contents of the author's mind is unlikely to provide the sought clarity. The text contains the one-time contents of the mind which conjured it up. As such, ambiguity in the text implies that there was ambiguity in the mind - as the mind is where the text started off. Hence, even if we could get inside an author's mind, it seems to me highly unlikely that we would find thoughts any less chaotic, any less ambiguous, or pertaining to any higher a degree of clarity than the text itself pertains to.

Overall, like Barthes, I advocate the death of the author and the celebration of the reader (Barthes, 1977: 148); although I am not particularly interested in readers who do not do something philosophically interesting with a work such as 'The First Person' (1975). My rejection of a Schleiermacher type approach, however, does not mean that I have no interest in what others have to say. I admire all the interpretations which others have offered of 'The First Person' (1975) in recent years and which have aided me in reaching my own interpretation of that text. Where I cite these in what follows, it is typically in order to position myself amongst the current alternatives and it is never to say that they are wrong.

Although I have just argued for a fairly radical stance to the approach of interpretation in general, I believe that I adopt a fairly conservative strategy in interpreting 'The First Person' (1975). This is because I primarily use Anscombe authored texts to interpret 'The First

Person' (1975). Where the texts I use to interpret 'The First Person' (1975) aren't other

Anscombe texts, they are texts by her contemporaries e.g. Saul Kripke, P.F. Strawson, and

Martin Heidegger. Beyond noting the potentially conservative strategy to interpreting 'The

First Person' (1975), I think it important to note that I am aware my interpretation develops

parts of that paper and not others. In particular, I have nothing to say about the floating-

woman thought experiment.[7] Omissions are typical of interpretations however, because an

interpretation tends to sanitise the text under consideration.[8] Although a good interpretation

has the virtue of uncovering the text under consideration, it also simultaneously covers that

text up. Finally, I have done my best throughout the thesis to phrase my interpretive claims in

a way which reflects my stance on interpretation. It is very difficult, however, not to

sometimes use phrasing more reflective of a Schleiermachean stance.

The Analysis Element: Internal and External Critiques[9]

 As noted above, I primarily use Anscombe authored texts to interpret 'The First Person'

(1975) and I treat Anscombe authored texts as together suggesting an overall worldview or

system involving, sometimes unarticulated, first principles. For instance, as we shall see, the

notion that there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he

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[7] See (Anscombe, 1975: 31) for this thought experiment. I am not the first interpreter to omit this part of the text in formulating their interpretation; Rachael Wiseman similarly omits stating 'the centrality that this bit of her paper has acquired is undeserved and has had a very bad effect on people's ability to see what Anscombe is saying in that paper and to recognize its significance' (Wiseman, 2017: 537).

[8] I take the santaise terminology and notion from Avital Ronell's describing the role of universities thus 'When submitted to the sanitation department of some institutions, [the works and lives of great] figures come out clean, like laundered money and safe text. They are made digestible by the huge garbage disposal systems which universities sometimes are' (Ronell, 1994:160).

[9] This section may seem to propose a false dichotomy when it comes to critiquing texts - critiques can also involve a mix of the internal and the external.

knows' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8) is an important first principle in the worldview which I take Anscombe's texts to suggest. As is the idea that intentional actions are a subset of the category of actions which we consciously know ourselves to perform.[10] In writing this dissertation, I have been interested in analysing the worldview which I interpret from Anscombe's texts. In particular, I am interested in exposing what I perceive to be an inconsistency between Anscombe's texts' presentation of conceptions as sortal with the notion of intention with which I interpret from *Intention* (1957). And I argue that this shows the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) is not ultimately supported by the worldview from which it was supposed to be derived. This constitutes, what I term, an internal critique of the texts I have interpreted.

I call this type of critique 'internal' because I am making arguments concerning how Anscombe's texts might be well interpreted and about the consistency of claims between and within those texts. I am not presenting objections to the general philosophical worldview which those texts collectively suggest, nor to any of the first principles or ground assumptions contained in those texts. To do so would be to provide, what I would term, an external critique. An external critique typically seeks to critique a text or the worldview suggested by a group of texts on the basis that it is not a good fit for the way the world is or for the way the world is presumed to be. External critiques are certainly valuable, but it is also valuable and typical to provide internal critiques of either individual philosophers' texts or of texts representing particular philosophical schools of thought.

For instance, in the paper 'The Right to Lie: Kant On Dealing With Evil' (1986) Christine Korsgaard argues that Kant's claim in 'On a Supposed Right to Lie from Altruistic Motives'

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[10] I discuss this notion at the end of the introduction.

(1797) that we shouldn't lie to the murderer at the door is inconsistent with commitments in his *Groundwork to the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). Despite the fact that Kant's ethical theory is exceptionally objectionable and has been objected to by many,[11] Korsgaard does not begin her paper by providing a long defence of Kant's basic ethical theory against external criticisms.

I am similarly unconcerned by external criticisms in writing this dissertation. I am, of course, aware that Anscombe's position as interpreted by me and as interpreted by others is objectionable. It is not, however, the purpose of this dissertation to provide a defence of Anscombe's work against all-comers. Generally, this dissertation is not an apologia. Providing an apologia would be another project.

Placing Anscombe's Texts in the Tradition of Christian Ethics

Having detailed the methodology I have adopted in interpreting and analysing 'The First Person' (1975), I wish to note an important exegetical assumption which I have arrived at. This assumption is that Anscombe texts are well understood as part of the tradition of Christian Ethics. This assumption is informed by various Anscombe texts including 'I am Sadly Theoretical: It is the Effect of Being at Oxford' (1938) - which advocates that 'there is nothing much else worth ambition [except]: to sum it up in the tritest and most obvious way, [wanting] all who are outside the Church to become Catholics, and all Catholics, saints' (Anscombe, 1938: 725); 'Modern Moral Philosophy' (1958) - which I interpret as defending

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[11] Including by Anscombe who's objections can be found in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' (1958).

a divine law account of ethics; and 'War and Murder' (1961) - which seeks to show that Christianity does not entail pacifism.[12]

Being aware of this exegetical assumption is important for appreciating the account of intentional action which I interpret from Anscombe's texts (see Chapter One) and for appreciating why I interpret 'The First Person' (1975) as presenting an anti-Cartesian position concerning personal identity rather than an anti-Cartesian position concerning whether or not there are souls (see Appendix One - Anscombe on Personal Identity). As I think it would unnecessarily clutter Chapter One, I am going to dwell a little here on how my exegetical assumption informs the account of intentional action which I interpret from Anscombe's work.

Various, although not all, authors in the tradition of Christian Ethics advocate that what makes a person good or bad is not their actions per se but the conscious psychology behind their actions i.e. what is consciously in the heart or mind of the performer. This stance seems clear in works by Héloïse d'Argenteuil (c.1130), Peter Ableard (c.1140), Meister Eckhart (c.1295-98), Martin Luther (1517a)(1517b)(1520), and John Bunyan (1678).[13] This stance seems generally related to notions that we will be subject to a future last judgement where God will raise the dead and look within the souls of humankind in order to determine who is good and can go to heaven and who is bad and will go to hell.[14] Upon this version of the last

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[12] This is not to mention the philosophy of religion papers such as 'On Transubstantiation' (1974) and 'Faith' (1981) or the series of ethics papers, such as 'You Can have Sex without Children: Christianity and the New Offer' (1963), which defend or explain acknowledged Christian standpoints on ethical matters.

[13] This notion is also found in the work of various neo or post-christian thinkers such as Immanuel Kant (1785) and Jeremy Bentham (1823).

[14] There are, of course, other accounts of what the last judgement will involve. See David Bentley Hart's *That All Shall Be Saved* (2019) for other schools of thought such as the universalist school who think that all go to heaven (eventually).

judgement, God is interested in looking at the psychology behind actions which were knowingly and purposely performed in order to assess whether a person is good or bad. As I interpret Anscombe's texts to be part of this Christian Ethics tradition, [15]I interpret everything written about intentional action in her texts to contribute to a wider discourse concerning actions which are knowingly and purposely performed. Indeed, I don't think Anscombe's text can be easily interpreted otherwise. Consequently, I read Anscombe's work on intentional action as distinct from the notion of intentional action to be found in the work of either John Searle or Sigmund Freud:

Searle's work seems to suggest that an action is intentional because it is caused by, what he terms, a prior intention. Searle conceives of a prior intention as a psychological entity which is a plan formed prior to action (Searle, 1980: 52-3) (Searle, 1991: 297). Searle's 1980 paper implies that a prior intention can be formed 'consciously or unconsciously' (Searle, 1980: 52). This suggests that perhaps a prior intention itself can be conscious or unconscious, a suggestion which I take to be confirmed in Searle's 1991 paper (Searle, 1991: 298). Searle also tells us that the representational content of a prior intention is self-referential. Searle offers an example of such representational content in the case of a man who has formed a plan to raise his arm, thus bringing a prior intention into existence: (I perform the action of raising my arm by way of carrying out this intention.) (Searle, 1980: 58).[16]

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[15] And Anscombe texts fit neatly with the aforementioned authors insofar as they contain the idea that what makes a person good or bad is their psychology and that there will be a last judgement as described in this passage. See 'Two Kinds of Error in Action' (1963) and *Intention* (1957) for examples of judging someone good or bad on the basis of their psychology (i.e. on the basis of what they know themselves to be purposely doing) and see 'The Justice of the Present War Examined' (1939) for mention of the last judgement.

[16] I wonder if (I will perform the action of …) would not make more sense and sound more plan-like. In the 1991 work it seems that the prior intention becomes an intention in acting, by which point Searle's content would make more sense.

Causation by a prior intention cannot be what makes an action intentional for Searle, however, as he repeatedly states examples of intentional actions where he believes there is no prior-to-action plan. For instance, Searle tells us 'a man might just spontaneously raise his arm for the hell of it' (Searle, 1991: 297). Such actions sound very similar to Rosalind Hursthouse's notion of arational actions e.g. of licking something furry out of a sudden desire to do so (Searle, 1991: 62). See Hursthouse 'Arational Actions' (1991) for more details. I do not think, however, that Hursthouse's analysis of arational actions is the same as Searle's.

Instead of the being-caused-by-a-prior-intention criteria for an action being an intentional action, Searle's work seems better interpreted as understanding an intentional action to be one which involves, what he terms, an intention in acting. Searle explains an intention in acting as follows: An intention in acting is 'an Intentional event that consists in representational content in a certain psychological mode' and which causes the action (which he explains as a bodily movement) to happen (Searle, 1991: 298-9). What this representational content is exactly is somewhat obscure. Searle provides us with the following example, again the scenario is that of a man raising his arm: '(My arm goes up as a result of this intention in action.)' (Searle, 1980: 60).[17] Brian O'Shaughnessey interprets this content as being the experience of the action where the action itself is the Intentional object of the representational content (O'Shaughnessey, 1991: 271). This cannot be the case however, for Searle insists on a distinction between intention-in-acting and experience of acting (Searle, 1991: 298). This is because Searle takes experience to imply consciousness and, as we have noted, Searle thinks that there are unconscious intentional actions (Searle, 1991: 298). These involve an intention-in-action and sometimes a prior intention, but never an experience of acting.

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[17] Again, I wonder if the addition of verb would not be useful here. (My arm is going up as a result of this intention in action) sounds more present moment, so contemporaneous with the action itself - which Searle's intention-in-acting is supposed to be.

For Searle, knowledge of what one is doing is not one of the criteria for an action being considered intentional. As such, Searle is writing in a quite different tradition to Anscombe. Unfortunately, I cannot find an instance where Searle provides an example of an unconscious intentional action. O'Shaughnessey tries to conjure up an example when he is interpreting Searle's work - this is a peculiar example of a man tapping his foot in time to music. Searle rejects this example, however, without offering an alternative; simply insisting that there are such things e.g. (Searle, 1991: 298). Whatever an example of such an action might be, it is unclear to me if Searle would also count such actions as purposeful.

On the one hand, it is not unheard of in the history of philosophy to count unconscious actions as purposeful. Sigmund Freud, for instance, thought that people can act with conscious or unconscious intentions (Freud, 1901: 104). Such that people's actions can be considered to be done on purpose under various descriptions which the individual would 'repudiate' (Freud, 1917: 60). If we were to derive an ethics from this view, then I think it would differ significantly to Anscombe's. Perhaps including a strong responsibility without blame aspect.[18] If Searle doesn't hold a Freudian type position, however, and wouldn't count these intentional yet unconsciously performed actions as purposeful, then it seems that he just simply isn't talking about the same topic as Anscombe at all. If Searle isn't using 'intentional action' to mean purposeful action (with a wide Freudian-type understanding of purposeful

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[18] The idea of responsibility without blame has been developed by the philosopher Hanna Pickard to aid in the treatment of persons with personality disorders. Such people do not always have conscious knowledge of the interpersonal effects of their behaviour which often causes others to suffer. Clinicians seek to bring such people to recognise responsibility for their behaviour (after all, it is they who are thoughtlessly going about harming others) yet also seek not to blame them for it - seeing as those with personality disorders 'suffer tremendously, experiencing an extreme degree of distress and dysfunction' (Pickard, 2011: 210).

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action), then Searle must mean something quite different by 'intentional action'. Perhaps 'actions involving intentionality' or 'actions involving representational content' might be a clearer way to delineate Searle's subject matter.[19] Generally, neither Searle's texts nor Freud's texts contain an understanding of intentional action which pertains to the tradition of Christian Ethics which I interpret Anscombe's texts to form a part.

Chapter Overviews Noting Their Novel Contributions to the Existing Secondary Literature on Anscombe's Texts

Chapter One - Anscombe On Referring I - Intentional Speaker's Reference: Chapter One introduces the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) - that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) - and poses the question of how we are to interpret 'referring' here. I argue that we can use Anscombe's *Intention* (1957) to understand 'referring' in the context of 'The First Person' (1975) as meaning intentional speaker's reference. This interpretation is novel for the existing literature on Anscombe's work. I subsequently argue for preferring this interpretation of 'referring' in this context over the neo-Fregean or Searlian interpretation suggested by various other authors. I conclude by interpreting the central thesis as a denial that our use of 'I' involves intentional speaker's reference. I note that this leaves open the possibility that 'I' might refer to the speaker via some other way, a possibility which puts my interpretation at odds with the more typical radically-non-referring interpretation of the central thesis.

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[19] Although even this could prove a problem given the various meanings of 'intentionality'. See, for instance, Jeremy Bentham's use of 'intentionality' in *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1823) to cover known purposeful actions.

Chapter Two - Anscombe On Referring II - Pure Semantic Reference: Chapter Two

introduces the secondary thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) - that 'Of course, we must accept

the rule "If X asserts something with "I" as subject, his assertion will be true if and only if

what he asserts is true of X' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). I argue that the secondary thesis suggests

there is a referential link between 'I' and the speaker. And pose the question of how this is

compatible with the central thesis which, in the text of 'The First Person' (1975), directly

precedes the secondary thesis. I argue that the best solution is to interpret 'The First Person'

(1975) as forwarding a purely semantic account of 'I'. I note that this exegetical move has

already been made by other interpreters, in particular by Robert Stainton. I criticise Stainton,

however, for simply referring his readers to the work of David Kaplan and not explaining

how pure semantic reference is possible upon the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts.

I then seek to explain this possibility of 'I' having pure semantic reference upon the

Anscombean worldview through taking hints from Saul Kripke's work and through

developing ideas found in Anscombe's texts on rules, rights and promises. An explanation of

how the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts can account for there being pure semantic

reference is novel for the existing literature.

Chapter Three - From Basic Sortal Conceptions to Complex-Means Conceptions:

Chapter Three contains two parts - an interpretation part and an analysis part. The interpretive

part concerns the notion of conceptions in Anscombe's work on intentional action including

in her work on referring (which has already been interpreted as typically being an intentional

speech-act). It is argued that we might prima facie interpret Anscombe's texts as suggesting a

sortal-account of referring and of intentional action in general upon which the conceptions an

agent has of any objects which they act upon are sortal. The second part critiques the notion

that Anscombe's texts really suggest a sortal account of referring. In particular, I argue that if

we look to the examples of means-end actions in Anscombe's texts and the related notion of intention with which, then we can interpret the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts as supporting our often having complex-means conceptions of the objects we act upon. I end the chapter by briefly discussing why I am not attributing an account of meaning to Anscombe's texts.

Chapter Four - The Argument From Intentional Action: Chapter Four is also divided into an interpretation part and an analysis part. The first part of Chapter Four offers an interpretation of the central argument of 'The First Person' (1975) - the argument which has the central thesis as its conclusion. I begin by providing a round-up and critical discussion of the alternative interpretations of 'The First Person' (1975) as containing a central argument which are currently available. I then provide my new interpretation which consists of the argument for intentional action which is supported by the argument from illusory success. This interpretation is novel for the existing literature.

The second part of Chapter Four provides an analysis of the argument from intentional action. In particular, I use the notion of complex-means conceptions developed in the previous chapter to argue that the argument from intentional action is ultimately incompatible with other aspects of the worldview which Anscombe's texts collectively suggest. I conclude by claiming that Anscombe's texts can allow that we use 'I' to make intentional self-reference and that there is no need, upon that worldview, to explain 'I' as having pure semantic reference. Both the argument from intentional action and the analysis of it are novel for the existing literature.

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Chapter Five - From an Account of 'I' to an Account of Self-Consciousness: Chapter Five concerns the related notions that self-consciousness is manifested by use of a first-person pronoun and that, in accordance with the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975), self-consciousness is subjectless. As per the previous two chapters, Chapter Five is split into an interpretation and an analysis part. The first part seeks to explain why we might think that an account of self-consciousness will emerge from an analysis of the first-person pronoun, what subjectless self-consciousness might be understood as amounting to, and why it might be thought to follow from the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) (as per my interpretation of that thesis in Chapter One). Because I have been unable to find satisfactory tools for doing the aforementioned things within Anscombe's other texts, Chapter Five is a departure from the potentially conservative approach to interpreting 'The First Person' (1975) so-far pursued. In particular, I have used Martin Heidegger's *Logic: The Question of Truth* (1920s) in order to make sense of the notion of subjectless self-consciousness as as-structureless consciousness.[20]

The second part of Chapter Five provides an analysis of the notion of subjectless self-consciousness and to the idea that this is manifested by use of the first person pronoun. I argue that examples of people using the first-person pronoun when reporting certain past unintentional actions, including a plausible extension of the Baldy or wagonette example from 'The First Person' (1975), will not manifest subjectless self-consciousness. And I argue that this poses a dilemma for the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts - either drop the notion that our use of 'I' manifests self-consciousness or drop the idea that self-consciousness

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[20] In a sense, I come to treat portions of Heidegger's *Logic: The Question of Truth* (1920s) as composing part of the worldview which is being investigated because the Anscombe authored texts by themselves have lacuna which requires the reader or interpreter to identify supplementary material.

is purely subjectless. Subsequently, I use the notion of substance-involving properties introduced in Anscombe's 'Substance' (1964) to argue that all self-consciousness is subject-involving or as-structured. I end by offering a brief interpretation of the alternative account of self-consciousness which Anscombe's texts collectively suggest.

Anscombe On Referring I: Intentional Speaker's Reference

Abstract

The central thesis of G.E.M. Anscombe's 'The First Person' (1975) states that '"I" is neither a name or another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). But how are we to interpret 'referring' here? Beginning from the idea that understanding any statement depends on a circular movement between part and whole, I argue for using Anscombe's *Intention* (1957) to interpret the account of reference at play in her subsequent paper 'The First Person' (1975). I first argue that Anscombe's examples of referring in 'The First Person' (1975) can be analysed analogously to examples of intentional actions in other Anscombe texts. Subsequently, I demonstrate the explanatory power of this interpretation when it comes to understanding a non-standard example of reference failure in 'The First Person' (1975). I end by arguing for the preferability of my interpretation of Anscombe's account of referring to the neo-Fregean interpretation found in Stainton (2019), Stainton and Botterell (2018), Taschek (1985), and Harcourt (2000).

Introduction

The last few years have seen renewed interpretive interest in the central thesis of G.E.M. Anscombe's 1975 paper 'The First Person'; that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of

expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32).[21]

Although this recent discussion is both rich and stimulating, few have really interrogated what exactly 'reference' means in the context of Anscombe's texts. Indeed, at least one commentator has claimed that 'It would be silly to fuss over the word "reference", or the phrase "referring expression" (Haddock, 2019: 2) when it comes to Anscombe's work.

 I disagree with Haddock, however, and think that a thorough interpretation of what 'referring' means in the context of Anscombe's texts will be essential to understanding her work.[22] In particular to understanding 'The First Person' (1975) which is very obscure. Aside from understanding Anscombe's work, however, I believe that the account of referring which her work suggests is in itself of interest. For, as I shall argue, Anscombe's texts suggest a sophisticated speech-act account of referring which might be understood as richly developing the notion that referring is something which people do; a notion perhaps first advanced in the work of P.F. Strawson.[23]

 That there is a need for a thorough interpretation of what 'referring' means in the context of Anscombe's work seems evident from the comments of other interpreters, with the general consensus appearing to be that Anscombe's texts contain a unique or at least a particular account of referring. For instance, in 'The First Person: Problems of Sense and Reference' (2000), Edward Harcourt suggests that Anscombe holds a 'non-standard definition of 'referring expression'' (Harcourt, 2000: 26). Similarly, in his monograph *Self-Consciousness*

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[21] See, for instance, Wiseman (2017), Frey and Frey (2017), Doyle (2018), Stainton (2019).
[22] At least one of Anscombe's texts - 'On Russell's Theory of Definite Descriptions' (1950s) - might be read as directing the reader to undertake such an interpretive task. For here referring is described as a topic 'of the greatest interest' (Anscombe, 1950s: 139). Contra Haddock, this text suggests that referring is something worth fussing about.
[23] See Strawson 'On Referring' (1950).

(2007), Sebastian Rödl suggests that Anscombe 'deploys a [particular] concept of reference' (Rödl, 2007: 24). Again, similarly, in his paper 'Re-Reading Anscombe on 'I'' (2019), Robert Stainton asserts that 'Anscombe must [...] be using 'reference' in some technical sense or other.' (Stainton, 2019: 82). This shared idea - that Anscombe's texts contain a technical yet particular or non-standard account of reference - leaves us with a question; namely, what exactly is the account of reference which Anscombe's work suggests?

In this chapter, I argue for using Anscombe's *Intention* (1957) to interpret the account of reference at play in her subsequent paper 'The First Person' (1975). Generally, I conclude that the account of reference in 'The First Person' (1975) is well interpreted as a sophisticated speech-act account. The grounds for my alternative interpretation are as follows: 1. Discussions in Anscombe's early work suggest that the worldview which her texts suggest involves a speech-act account of reference 2. The analysis Anscombe provides of intentional action in *Intention* (1957) is applicable to descriptions of referring which she provides in 'The First Person' (1975).

Layout of This Chapter

As I have stated, I have two reasons for interpreting Anscombe as having a sophisticated speech-act account of referring . Namely, 1. Discussions in Anscombe's early work suggest that the worldview which her texts suggest involves a speech-act account of reference 2. The analysis Anscombe provides of intentional action in *Intention* (1957) is applicable to descriptions of referring which she provides in 'The First Person' (1975). I don't think there is space to discuss Anscombe's early work here. Those interested are directed to 'On

Russell's Theory of Definite Descriptions' (Anmscombe, 1950s) and 'The Reality of the Past' (Anscombe, 1950) in particular.

Given the constraints of space, this chapter will focus solely on the second of the aforementioned reasons. I deem the second of my reasons to be an 'argument from applicability' but it is essentially a form of argument from analogy - the examples of referring in Anscombe's texts are analogous to her examples of undisputed intentional actions. This argument is split into two sections. The first section - **Argument from Applicability I: Intentional Actions in General -** provides a brief account of Anscombe's theory of intentional action**.** The second section - **Argument from Applicability II: Referring in Particular** - shows how examples of referring in 'The First Person' (1975) can be interpreted as containing all the elements of intentional actions discussed in preceding section. The argument from applicability is intended to go beyond a mere pointing out that 'The First Person' (1975) occasionally describes referring as an intentional action e.g. when it states that an agent uses a referring expression to 'knowingly and intentionally' refer (Anscombe, 1975: 22).[24]

Having provided the argument from applicability, I then argue for the explanatory power of interpreting Anscombe's text as containing a sophisticated speech-act account of referring - **Explanatory Power: Anscombe On Reference Failure**. In particular, I argue that it allows us to make sense of a particularly difficult passage in 'The First Person' (1975) where a novel variety of reference failure is introduced. I end the chapter by arguing for the preferability of my interpretation of Anscombe on referring over other available interpretations -

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[24] Given that, in *Intention* (1957), an intentional action is characterised as something which we know ourselves to perform, this is an oddly tautologous claim.

Preferability of the Above Interpretation Over Others. In particular, I argue that my interpretation is preferable to the neo-Fregean interpretation of Anscombe on referring variously found in Stainton (2019), Stainton and Botterell (2018), Taschek (1985), and Harcourt (2000). I conclude by anticipating the content of Chapter Four - The Argument from Intentional Action - through suggesting how my interpretation of Anscombe on referring could help us better understand the argument(s) of 'The First Person' (1975).

Argument From Applicability I: Intentional Actions in General

Bar one point in the account of practical knowledge which I highlight and argue for, I take my interpretation of *Intention* (1957) to be broadly in keeping with the current leading interpretations of that work - namely Rachael Wiseman's *Guidebook to Anscombe's Intention* (2016) and John Schwenkler's *Anscombe's Intention: A Guide* (2019). Given the purposes of this chapter, I hope the reader will excuse my not entering into the nuanced interpretive debates concerning this part of Anscombe's work; perhaps in particular those concerning practical knowledge and knowledge without observation. Anyone interested in those debates is advised to consult *Essays on Anscombe's Intention* (2011) in the first instance.

i. Descriptions of Actions as Intentional and the 'Why?' Question Test

In *Intention* (1957), the reader's attention is drawn to the fact that there is no such thing as *the* description of a person's action, where '*the* description' is understood as a singular description (Anscombe, 1957: §23). This can be seen in the following scenario: 'a single action can have many descriptions, e.g. 'sawing a plank', 'sawing oak', 'sawing one of Smith's planks', 'making a squeaky noise with the saw', 'making a great deal of sawdust'

and so on and so forth' (Anscombe, 1957: §6). Hopefully, this example allows us to see that there is no one description of the man's action which is *the* description of his action. Instead, Anscombe claims that 'any description of what is going on, with [the agent] as subject, which is in fact true' counts as the description of a person's action (Anscombe, 1957: §23).

It is clear that a range of descriptions can be given of a single action. Often, such as in the example of the man sawing a plank, some of the descriptions will describe the action as intentional and others as unintentional. There are also cases where every description of what happens will describe what happens as unintentional. It seems highly unlikely, however, that there could be cases where every description of what happens will describe what happens as intentional. Given that some of the multiple descriptions describe what happens as intentional and others as unintentional, we might well ask how do we distinguish the former from the latter?

Intention (1957) provides the following answer to this question: 'Intentional actions are a subclass of the events in a man's history which are known to him *not* just because he observes them. Intentional actions are the ones to which the question 'Why?' is given application in a special sense which is so far explained as follows: the question has not that sense if the answer is evidence or states a cause [e.g. 'Why did you smash the window? Because I tripped on the stairs'], including a mental cause; positively, the answer may (a) simply mention past history [e.g. Why did you blank him? Because he insulted my brother.][25], (b) give an interpretation of the action [e.g. Why did you raise your arm? To

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[25] 'Past history' here doesn't mean 'cause'. There is a distinction between these two insofar as a cause merley explains why an action occurred and a reason can be evaluated or argued with e.g. we can ask whether this man having insulted your brother is a good ground for blanking him and argue whether it is or not, but we cannot ask whether tripping on the stairs was a good ground for squashing whatever was landed on and then argue about whether it

signal that I am turning left.], or (c) mention something future [Why did you buy that hat? Because I'm going to a wedding next week.]. In cases (b) and (c) the answer is already characterized as a reason for acting; and in case (a) it is an answer to that question if the ideas of good or harm are involved in its meaning as an answer' (Anscombe, 1957: §16).[26]

It is consequently concluded that 'the term 'intentional' has reference to a form of description of events. What is essential to this form is displayed by the results of our enquiries into the question 'Why?'' (Anscombe, 1957: §47). Generally, an action only counts as intentional if we can provide a description or descriptions of it to which the 'Why?' question has application in the special sense which Anscombe's text describes.

If, like many of the people I have spoken to in writing this chapter, the reader was expecting a psychological account of intentional action, then they will probably think the answer offered by *Intention* (1957) to be thoroughly mysterious. When one considers the nature of the inquiry which *Intention* (1957) represents, however, the 'Why?'-question answer is no longer mysterious. For *Intention* (1957) is a so-called 'grammatical enquiry' (Frey & Frey, 2017: 204) and it seeks to 'define [...] intentional action in terms of language' (Anscombe, 1957: §47). For more on the methodology of *Intention* (1957) see Roger Teichman's 'Why "Why?"? Action, Reasons and Language' (2015).

Having introduced the all important 'Why?'-question method for sorting descriptions of actions under which they are intentional from descriptions under which they are

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was or not (Anscombe, 1957: §11). This is because a reason provides a consideration which makes a course of action appear desirable (to the agent) whilst a cause does not.
[26] This extract is taken from the section entitled 'Summary of results reached so far.' (Anscombe, 1957: v). Although further qualifications are provided in *Intention* (1957), this extract is largely comprehensive.

unintentional, I will now proceed to note some further aspects of intentional action which *Intention* (1957) provides us with.

ii. Execution of an Intention in Action or Intention With Which

According to *Intention* (1957), the performance of an intentional action is the execution of an intention. Hence it is that text states that 'a great many of our descriptions of events effected by human beings [e.g. hiring or paying] are *formally* descriptions of executed intentions' (Anscombe, 1957: §48). The intention which is executed in the performance of an intentional action is variously described as the 'intention in acting' (Anscombe, 1957: iii) or 'further intention with which one acts' (Anscombe, 1957: v) or the 'intention with which the act [...] was done' (Anscombe, 1957: §26). In what follows, I will tend to use 'intention with which' when describing Anscombe's texts as 'intention in acting' is widely used in texts by other authors where it doesn't mean the same thing as in Anscombe's texts.

The intention with which a person acts is always the desire to attain some end or ends (Anscombe, 1957: §40). This could be the performance of the action itself or a product of the action being performed. In order to discover the end which someone is attempting to attain when they act, we can ask them why they are doing something (or what they are doing something for) until they provide us with a 'desirability characterisation' (Anscombe, 1957: §38). A desirability characterisation can concern either an interpretation of what is currently being done or some product of the current action. Either sort will show us why what is currently being done is desirable for the person acting e.g. because it is a suitable or required means to some fitting, pleasant, or important end. A desirability characterisation will also show us what intention with which is being executed in acting.

Unfortunately, the primary example which *Intention* (1957) provides of someone giving a desirability characterisation is extremely callous (Anscombe, 1957: §38). I have adapted it as follows: Let us suppose some Nazis caught in a trap in which they are sure to be killed. They are under siege from advancing American troops. One of them selects a site and starts setting up a mortar. Why this site? - Any site which has such-and-such characteristics will do, and this has them. Why set up the mortar? - It is the best way of killing off the advancing troops. Why kill off the American troops? - It befits a Nazi, if he must die, to spend his last hour attacking his enemies. Here we have arrived at a desirability characterisation which makes an end of the questions 'What for?'.

When the Nazi selects a site or sets up the mortar he does not perform these actions for the sake of themselves. Rather, they are means to the end of attaining what is thought befiting of a Nazi about to die, namely attacking his enemies. Hence, the intention with which selecting a site and setting up a mortar are performed is that of doing something befiting of a Nazi i.e. attacking his enemies. In the terminology of *Intention* (1957), the desirability characterisation shows us the end being sought in action, so the intention with which all the means to this end were performed 'and this intention so to speak swallows up all the preceding intentions with which [the means to this end] were done' (Anscombe, 1957: §26). The mark of this 'swallowing up' is that it is not wrong to give ['to attack his enemies'] as the answer to the question 'Why?' about [selecting a site or setting up the mortar]' (Anscombe, 1957: §26).

Overall, an intention is executed when it is made true or realised i.e. when it itself or a means to its realisation is performed. (This latter is, of course, only a partial execution). The execution of an intention is akin to the coming true of a prediction or an order; which can,

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given suitable circumstances, become descriptions of what is happening or has happened (Anscombe, 1957: §2, §45). I have tried to emphasise, however, that the execution of an intention can be piecemeal, because of the 'swallowing up' which *Intention* (1957) describes.

iii. Practical Knowledge

This brings us to the last part of our brief synopsis, which is to introduce the account of practical knowledge (i.e. the knowledge a man has of his intentional actions) which *Intention* (1957) contains. A great deal can be said about this, but I will only introduce the following three aspects. Firstly, in *Intention* (1957), practical knowledge involves accurate 'unmediated agent-or-patient conceptions of actions, happenings and states' (Anscombe, 1975: 36).[27] We have already come across this in the above discussion of the man-sawing-a-plank example, but to repeat, practical knowledge involves a conception of what is happening including a conception of any object being intentionally acted upon. Practical knowledge, as I have noted, involves an accurate conception. It is to be contrasted with practical opinion which involves an inaccurate conception.

My use of the term 'practical opinion' is likely to concern some readers. Certainly, an interpreter such as Michael Thompson would likely reject it. This is because the notion that there is practical opinion in contrast to practical knowledge goes against §45 of *Intention* (1957). Here, Anscombe considers an example of writing 'I am a fool' on a blackboard with her eyes shut. Whether or not her intention to do that gets executed e.g. whether or not something is defective about the chalk, Anscombe claims her 'knowledge [i.e. her practical

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[27] Adrian Haddock also explains this quote as an account of practical knowledge in '"The Knowledge That a Man Has of His Intentional Actions"' (Haddock, 2011: 150).

knowledge] would have been the same' (Anscombe, 1957: §45). Upon my reading, however, §45 is incompatible with §8 where it is stated that 'there is point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows' (Anscombe, 1957: §8).

An interpreter such as Thompson advises us to ignore §8 as a piece of Wittgensteinian detritus and to try and make sense of §45 alone (Thompson, 2011: 198-199). As far as I understand his interpretation in 'Anscombe's Intention and Practical Knowledge' (2011), Thompson will claim that practical knowledge is knowledge of a process of writing 'I am a fool' on the blackboard which occurs whether or not the chalk is defective. It is almost like knowledge that an order has been given, which remains the same whether or not the order is executed. Hence, it makes no sense to speak of practical knowledge as opposed to practical opinion.

Speaking about practical knowledge as opposed to practical opinion is merely a way to try and capture the possibility of the contrast demanded by §8, which seems a fundamental axiom of the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. To my mind, a preferable reading of §45 (preferable because it makes §45 compatible with §8) is that it means the content of thought or belief concerning what is happening (which perhaps might be confusingly deemed 'knowledge') remains the same whether or not the intention to write 'I am a fool' on the blackboard is actually getting executed. An interpreter such as Kim Frost would, I suspect, be sympathetic to this interpretation as I am not committing myself to the idea that practical knowledge is a judgement. Frost's own interpretation of §8 tries to bring it inline with §45 in a way which suggests the need for a vocabulary to distinguish between accurate and inaccurate practical knowledge (Frost, 2019: 329).

The second aspect of *Intention* (1957)'s characterisation of practical knowledge which I wish to introduce is the idea that we can speak of practical *knowledge* only because of the possibility that a person can have an inaccurate conception of whatever they are doing (Anscombe, 1957: §8). The text of *Intention* (1957) asserts that 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'.' (Anscombe, 1957: §8). Of course, an inaccurate conception of what one is doing will not count as practical knowledge - if I pass the sugar thinking it to be salt, then I have a false conception of what I am doing, hence I don't have knowledge of what I am doing. (Or, if I think I pass the sugar and subsequently wake up from a dream, then I didn't have knowledge of what I was doing.) That there are such possibilities to make errors when acting is, according to Anscombe, what allows for us to speak of practical knowledge.

The second aspect of *Intention* (1957)'s characterisation of practical knowledge which I wish to introduce is that practical knowledge comes under the umbrella of what is termed 'knowledge without observation' (Anscombe, 1957: §8). According to *Intention* (1957), there are a class of things known without observation which includes the position of one's limbs and one's intentional actions (Anscombe, 1957: §8). That an intentional action is being performed is known to the agent performing it without observation, because nothing shows the agent that they are performing the action (Anscombe, 1957: §8). This is not to say that prior 'observation, inference, hearsay, superstition' (Anscombe, 1957: §28) etc. might not inform a person's conception of what they are currently doing - how could you conceive of yourself as painting a room yellow without having prior information about the colour of paint you dip your brush into? But it is to say that in the moment of performing (or failing to

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perform) an intentional action - including painting a room yellow - you do not need to look in the mirror or seek testimony of a witness in order to have a conception of what you are doing.

Argument From Applicability II: Referring in Particular

Having provided a brief synopsis of Anscombe's account of intentional actions in general, we can turn to the topic of referring in particular. The first task is to try and fully substantiate the claim that referring is an intentional action in Anscombe's texts. The second is to provide a full account of referring as an intentional action by addressing the topics of reference failure and unintentional reference. In order to carry out the first of these tasks, I will now present the reader with an extract from 'The First Person' (1975) which gives two examples of referring. Subsequently, I provide a brief analysis of this extract which illustrates why I think referring is an intentional action in Anscombe's texts. This analysis focuses on the aspects of referring outlined in the above synopsis, including the 'Why?'-question test, execution of an intention, and practical knowledge.

'It used to be thought that a singular demonstrative, "this" or "that", if used correctly, could not lack a referent. But this is not so, as comes out if we consider the requirement for an answer to "this what?" Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is something that it latches on to (as I will put it): in this example it is the box. In another example it might be an optical presentation. Thus I may ask "What's that figure standing in front of the rock, a man or a post?" and there may be no such object at all; but there is an appearance, a stain perhaps, or

other marking of the rock face, which my "that" latches on to. The referent and what "this" latches on to may coincide, as when I say "this buzzing in my ears is dreadful", or, after listening to a speech, "That was splendid!" But they do not have to coincide, and the referent is the object of which the predicate is predicated where "this" or "that" is a subject.' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).

Unfortunately, the above extract from 'The First Person' (1975) involves incidents of, what that text deems, 'reference failure' (Anscombe, 1975: 28) (which is something we will turn to presently) rather than successful acts of referring. This complicates the task of analysis, so, for the moment, let us just imagine a successful case. Imagine that the parcel of ashes really was in the box, so that the speaker was correct in asserting 'This is all that remains of poor Jones.'. This allows us to turn to why referring is an intentional action in Anscombe's texts.

i. Referring and the 'Why?' Question Test

The first reason for interpreting referring as an intentional action in Anscombe's texts is because the examples of referring in 'The First Person' (1975) pass the 'Why?'-question test. If we were to ask the speaker 'Why are you referring to that box?' or 'Why are you speaking about that box?', then they might plausibly reply with something like 'to inform Jones's friends that I have his ashes'. It is easy to imagine the sort of circumstances in which saying 'This is all that remains of poor Jones.' amounts to informing Jones's friends that the speaker has his ashes, so this would seem to count as an interpretation of the action.

Providing an interpretation of the action is one of the answers which gives the question 'Why?' application in the special sense which *Intention* (1957) describes. Answers which

mention past history or the future also seem plausible in this case. If we think through other examples involving referring, then the 'Why?' question seems unlikely to be refused application often (except where the object being talked about is not known under the description which the questioner provides). Generally, referring passes the 'Why?'-question test for being an intentional action.

ii. Referring and the Execution of an Intention in Action or Intention With Which

Referring typically involves the execution of an intention. This is another reason to recognise referring as an intentional action. Of course, referring is rarely (if ever) done for its own sake. Most typically, I suspect, referring is done in order to say something true to someone.[28] I do not think, however, that this should put us off the idea that referring is an intentional action - opening a tin, dialing a number, or lifting a champagne glass are all rarely done for their own sakes and are all typically intentional actions.

The intention with which an act of referring is performed will be shown by asking a person what they are referring to/speaking about something for or why they are referring to/ speaking about something, until a desirability characterisation is reached. In the example we have been considering of Jones's ashes, the desirability characterisation might be 'it's only fair to warn Jones's friends what will happen to them if they are caught trespassing on my land'. This desirability characterisation shows that 'warning Jones's friends' is the end being

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[28] I am drawing from Jennifer Hornsby's' paper 'Feminism in the Philosophy of Language: Communicative Speech Acts' (2000). Here Hornsby suggests that by 'its very ordinariness [...] saying something to someone will count as fundamental among the various things that speakers do in making meaningful noises' (Hornsby, 2000: 91). This is consistent with the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts which involves people exchanging information such as answering questions concerning why they are doing things.

sought and the intention with which the speaker uses 'this' to make reference to the parcel of ashes. This intention - to warn Jones's friends - swallows up all the preceding intentions with which the means to this end (including using 'this' to make a reference) were done. Overall, we might say that (as per this example) referring typically involves the partial execution of a further or wider intention.

iii. Referring and Practical Knowledge

The final reason for thinking that referring is an intentional action in Anscombe's texts, concerns practical knowledge. The way in which a person knows themselves to refer is just like the way in which a person knows themselves to sign title deeds, paint a room yellow, or pump poisoned water. I will now briefly illustrate how referring is consistent with all the aspects of practical knowledge which *Intention* (1957) details and which were introduced above.

Firstly, practical knowledge involves accurate 'unmediated agent-or-patient conceptions of actions, happenings and states' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). Referring certainly seems to involve this. The aforequoted example of referring suggests that referring consists in using words to latch onto things with an accompanying conception of what one is doing, which includes a conception of what one takes oneself to be referring to. In the aforequoted example, the person who says 'This is all that remains of poor Jones's surely conceives of themselves as speaking about the box containing a particular parcel of ashes which they are holding. If we coaxed them on a bit, then they would almost certainly identify 'this' as the word they had used in particular to latch onto the box.

Secondly, *Intention* (1957) states that we can only speak of practical knowledge where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'.' (Anscombe, 1957: §8). The possibility of this contrast arises with cases of referring. We can see this in the very fact that I amended the 'poor Jones's example. The speaker in this example could know or merely think themselves to know that they refer to a box containing a particular person's ashes; this is because the ashes could have been stolen without the speaker's knowledge, so they refer to an empty box. Whether or not such a contingency arises will affect whether we are to speak of practical knowledge or practical opinion.

Finally, the practical knowledge that one is referring to or speaking about something will be knowledge without observation. If I am purposely speaking about something, as the speaker in the aforequoted example purposely speaks about the box they are holding, then I don't need to be shown that I am speaking about it in order to know that I am doing this. A sculpture of my words with strings attaching them to their referents need not be presented to me to know that I am speaking about the box I am holding.

Explanatory Power: Anscombe On Reference Failure

It is stated in 'The First Person' (1975) that the following scenario is a case of 'reference failure' (Anscombe, 1975: 28): ''It used to be thought that a singular demonstrative, "this" or "that", if used correctly, could not lack a referent. But this is not so, as comes out if we consider the requirement for an answer to "this what?" Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is

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something that it latches on to (as I will put it): in this example it is the box' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).

This scenario is compared with one in which 'the referent and what "this" latches on to [...] coincide[s]' (Anscombe, 1975: 28). What we see in this scenario is, then, that the 'this' latches on to the box even though the box does not contain the parcel of ashes which the speaker takes it to contain. This latching on would seem to be a referring relation between word ('this') and object (the box), a way of 'catching hold of [an] object' as Anscombe's text puts it (Anscombe, 1975: 28). This understanding of the scenario leaves what is meant by 'the referent' as somewhat obscure. The referent isn't necessarily the thing latched onto, caught hold of, referred to. Rather, it is related to the answer the speaker will give to the question "this what?". We need a way to interpret this. I will take this up again shortly after raising more difficulties with this example of reference failure.

Another peculiarity with the example of reference failure under discussion is that it is presented as a case of 'reference failure' (Anscombe, 1975: 28), yet referring actually seems to occur. Referring actually seems to occur because something is latched on to/caught hold of. It's just an empty box rather than a box containing a parcel of ashes. What is the failure here exactly? It certainly isn't the failure of standard reference failure cases in the philosophy of language. That literature tends to focus on the topic of empty names as inherited from Gottlob Frege's philosophy of language and Bertrand Russell's development of that. P.F. Strawson describes the basic assumption of this literature as follows - successful referring involves an existence condition which fails in the case of reference failure (Strawson, 1964: 95). To put it into Anscombean terminology, the use of an empty name is considered an act

of reference failure because nothing is latched on to by the speaker at all.[29] The poor-Jones example of reference failure isn't a case of an empty name. How are we to interpret 'failure' here?

If we recognise Anscombe's texts as containing a sophisticated speech-act account of reference, as I have argued for above, then we can provide a clear account of what is going on in our non-standard case of reference failure. The failure isn't the failure of an existence condition being met,[30] it is the failure to execute the intention with which the speaker acts. We might deem this to be 'intentional action failure'. There are various examples of intentional action failure in Anscombe's texts including the following: 'Here it is helpful to introduce the old distinction between the formal and the material as in "the formal and the material object" of, say, shooting. You shoot, as you think, at a stag; what you thought was a stag turns out to be a man. In one sense - the formal - your object was a stag; in the other - the material - it was a man' (Anscombe, 1963: 5).

The intention with which the man shoots is that of shooting a stag. He fails to execute this intention when he shoots what he merely takes to be a stag, but what is in fact his father.[31] His conception of what he is doing and what he actually does do not match up. We might, in light of the fact that the man has failed to execute the intention with which he acts, speak of

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[29] Or 'nothing is latched onto by the word/empty name at all'. It depends on whether one is talking in terms of speaker's reference or semantic reference.

[30] It is nowhere stated in Anscombe's texts that Jones's ashes are non-existent only that they are not present in the box which the speaker uses 'this' to latch onto.

[31] The action of shooting, i.e. what actually happens, will turn out unintentional on the Anscombean account of intentional action. If we were to apply the 'Why?' question test to the agent in question, then the answer to 'Why did you shoot that man?' would be 'I didn't realise I was doing that!

him as having been involved in an incident of shooting failure. The same analysis can be given of the poor Jones case of reference failure:

The intention with which the speaker in the poor Jones scenario refers is, for instance, that of accurately communicating to someone else the whereabouts of Jones's ashes. The speaker fails to execute this intention when they refer to what they merely take to be a parcel containing Jones's ashes, but what is in fact an empty box. Just as we might construe the above example of shooting to be an example of shooting failure, so we might construe this example of referring to be an example of reference failure. Upon my interpretation of Anscombe on referring, this is what I take Anscombe's text to be doing.

Having analysed the poor-Jones example of reference failure as an example of intentional action failure, we are still left with the question of what Anscombe means by 'referent' when she describes the poor Jones scenario as being a case where the referent does not coincide with the thing latched onto. The account of reference failure as intentional action failure allows us to do this. Recall Anscombe's distinction between the formal and the material objects of shooting from the stag example. The formal object gives what the shooter intended to shoot and the material object is what is actually shot. The formal object and the material object do not always coincide. Just as the referent and the thing latched onto do not always coincide.

The formal object and the material object do not always coincide because we do not always succeed in executing our intentions in action. We are prone to intentional action failure. I suggest that the referent in the poor Jones scenario is the formal object of referring, whilst the

material object of referring in this scenario is the empty box. As per the case of intentional action failure in the stag scenario, the formal and material objects do not coincide.

Some Concerns With This Interpretation of Reference Failure in 'The First Person' (1975) Addressed

There are two likely concerns with my interpretation of Anscombe on reference failure which I believe need addressing. The first concerns how the contents of conceptions are related to reference failure and the second concerns how Anscombe's account of reference failure as the failure to execute an intention in acting is related to conventional accounts of reference failure.

The first concern regards what I mean by 'conception' and how this relates to the failure to execute an intention.[32] The conception one has of an object one is acting upon might include a whole variety of things. Consider a case in which I'm asked to pass the sugar. I might conceive of the dispenser I pass as containing sugar, as being the property of the cafe, as containing sugar sourced from Indonesia, as being designed by Louis Vuitton etc. Clearly our conceptions of things can be multifaceted and detailed, must the whole of my conception of what is being acted upon match which what is actually acted upon in order for it to count as my having executed my intention in acting?

The short answer is 'no'. The only aspect of the conception which is relevant to the success or failure of my executing my intention to pass the sugar is the conception that the dispenser

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[32] I am very grateful to Hannah Lee for pointing out to me how easy it is for the misunderstanding I now discuss to arise from my exposition of Anscombe's work.

actually contains sugar. In this scenario, it won't matter if the dispenser is the property of another cafe, or contains sugar sourced from Hati, or was designed by Vivienne Westwood; misconceptions concerning these facts cannot affect whether or not I execute the intention to pass the sugar. Hence, it is not the case that the entirety of my conception of what I am doing need be accurate for me to succeed in executing my intention in acting.

The second concern, about how our non-standard case of reference failure relates to standard cases of reference failure, can also, I think, be fairly straightforwardly settled. Standard cases of reference failure, as I noted above, are explained in terms of an existence condition failing to be met. Upon a speech-act account of reference, however, a person who uses an empty name and thinks themselves to be referring could also be explained in terms of failing to execute an intention in acting. To see this, consider the following case of reference failure involving an empty name:

In Alfred Hitchcock's film version of *Jamaica Inn* (1939), Sir Humphrey Pengallan tricks Jem Trehearne into dictating a letter to Captain Boyle (a non-existent person). Jem subsequently orders one of Sir Humphrey's servants to deliver the letter to Captain Boyle. Presumably, Jem thought that he was referring to a real person to whom the letter could be delivered and read by. As there is no such person, however, he fails to refer to anything. In Anscombe's terminology, there is a failure to latch onto anything at all. Although it is true that an existence condition fails to be met here, this is surely still a case of failing to execute an intention in action - of a person failing to do what they take themselves to be purposefully doing. As such, cases of people using empty names in order to (as they think) refer to something fall under the purview of Anscombe's account of reference failure.

Even though cases involving empty names can be explained as falling under the purview of Anscombean reference failure, we might still worry that my interpretation of the example of reference failure in 'The First Person' (1975) implies that Anscombe's texts contain a murky account of bivalence conditions for statements involving referring. For the tradition which understands reference failure in terms of existence of a referent assumes the following account of bivalence conditions for statements involving referring. Firstly, it is generally assumed that assertive statements can be assessed for being true or false because of what is referred to. A fuller account of this can be drawn from Strawson: 'The statement or predication as a whole is true just in the case in which the predicate-term does in fact apply to (is in fact 'true of') the object which the subject term (identifyingly) refers to'. The statement or predication as a whole is false [...] where the negation of the predicate term applies to the object, i.e. the case where the predicate-term can be truthfully denied of the object' (Strawson, 1964: 88).

Secondly, an event of reference failure entails either a. that the statement being made is false, see Bertrand Russell and Michael Dummett for versions of this view, or b. that the statement is incapable of being assessed as it involves a 'truth-value gap' (Strawson, 1964: 70), see Strawson, W.O. Quine, and J.L. Austin for versions of this view. If we use Anscombe's work to provide an explanation of reference failure as intentional action failure rather than in terms of an existence condition failing to be met, then how are we to account for the bivalence conditions of statements which involve referring?

I don't think there needs to be anything murky about the way Anscombe's texts might deal with the topic of bivalence conditions for statements involving reference. In fact, I think that these can be explained by Anscombe's texts in exactly the same way as the above-mentioned

authors: Assertive statements can be assessed for being true or false because of what is referred to or latched onto. Whilst the truth-value gap will only arise in those cases where reference failure occurs because nothing at all is latched onto. This is continuous with the notion of bivalence conditions accompanying the standard account of reference failure.

How this Helps Us Interpret To Anscombe II: Unintentional Reference

Towards the start of 'The First Person' (1975) the reader is provided with the following scenario involving referring: "'When John Smith spoke of James Robinson he was speaking of his brother, but he did not know this." That's a possible situation. So similarly is "When John Smith spoke of John Horatio Auberon Smith (named in a will perhaps) he was speaking of himself, but he did not know this." If so, then 'speaking of' or 'referring to' oneself is compatible with not knowing that the object one speaks of is oneself. [...] We [cannot] explain the matter, as we might suppose, by saying that "I" is the word each one uses when he knowingly and intentionally speaks of himself". For did not Smith knowingly and intentionally speak of Smith? Was not the person he intended to speak of - Smith? and so *was* not the person he intended to speak of - himself?

It may be said: "Not in the relevant sense. We all know you can't substitute every designation of the object he intended to speak of and keep the statement about his intention true."' (Anscombe, 1975: 22).

This scenario is ostensibly invoked in order to try and argue that our use of the first-person pronoun could not constitute an act of referring. I am not concerned with that argument here though. What I wish to point out is that without crediting 'The First Person' (1975) with a sophisticated account of speaker's reference, one in line with the account of intentional action

in *Intention* (1975), it is not obvious how we are to make sense of this passage. Indeed, the above extract bears a remarkable resemblance to the following aforementioned passage from *Intention* (1975): Since an action can have many different descriptions, e.g. 'sawing a plank', 'sawing oak', 'sawing one of Smith's planks', 'making a squeaky noise with the saw', 'making a great deal of sawdust' and so on and so on, it is important to notice that the man may know that he is doing a thing under one description, and not under another. Not every case of this is a case of his knowing that he is doing one part of what he is doing and not another [...]. He may know that he is sawing a plank, but not that he is sawing an oak plan or Smith's plank; but sawing an oak plank is not something else that he is doing besides just sawing the plank that he is sawing.' (Anscombe, 1957: §6).

In both cases we find actions which are intentional under some descriptions, but not under others. 'When John Smith spoke of James Robinson he was speaking of his brother, but he did not know this' (Anscombe, 1975: 22). Similarly, we might say 'When John Smith sawed a plank he was sawing an oak plank, but he did not know this.'. In this second case with the plank we see that John Smith had a conception of the object he was acting upon which did not involve 'an oak plank'. Similarly, when John Smith speaks of James Robinson, his conception of the object he is acting upon does not involve 'my brother'. Hence we can say that qua 'speaking of his brother' John Smith's action was unintentional. Overall, there seems no other obvious way of understanding the John Smith example of referring except as an example of a speech act in line with Anscombe's wider account of intentional actions.

Preferability of The Above Interpretation Over Others

In this chapter, I have presented a new interpretation of the account of referring assumed in Anscombe's philosophical works. As was noted at the beginning of the chapter, I am not the only person to have provided an interpretation of Anscombe on referring. Rödl (2007), Stainton (2019), Botterell and Stainton (2018), Taschek (1985), and Harcourt (2000) all contain direct interpretations of what 'referring' means in the central thesis of The First Person (1975).

Of these five texts, the interpretation I have offered is most in agreement with Rödl's. Rödl interprets Anscombe's texts as containing an account of reference which he terms 'receptive reference' and links to Immanuel Kant's notion of receptivity. Receptive reference is 'reference mediated by an act of receptivity' (Rödl, 2007: 124) i.e. reference which involves a relation to an object which is mediated by a representation or presentation of that object in the mind of the speaker.[33] My interpretation is, however, far more extensive than Rödl's and makes the link to Anscombe's *Intention* (1957). Whilst, although Rödl's use of Kant is an exciting exegetical move, we should have some questions about its suitability. In particular, Anscombe's texts suggest explaining conceptions in grammatical terms. See Anscombe (1965) and Wiseman and Mac Cumhail (2021) for more on this. I think this should make us hesitant to describe Anscombe's texts as being committed to an act of receptivity without some qualification.

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[33] I have used Howard Caygill's *A Kant Dictionary* (1995) in formulating this definition of receptive reference.

The other four interpretations of Anscombe on referring are unanimous in attributing a neo-Fregean account of reference to Anscombe's texts which is essentially the account of reference forwarded by John Searle in 'Proper Names' (1958), but applied to all referring expressions. I will now briefly detail this interpretation and explain why I do not favour it.

i. The Neo-Fregean Account of Anscombe on Referring

Of the four papers in question, Taschek's provides the clearest summary of the neo-Fregean account of reference which all interpret Anscombe's works as containing: On 'this 'Fregean' picture, the sense of a referring expression is to be understood as that which a speaker knows which enables him competently and successfully to use that expression to refer to some object. It is this knowledge which constitutes the 'way that object is reached by the speaker.' Earlier, [Anscombe] partially characterized this knowledge in terms of the 'conception' under which the speaker's 'mind is supposed to latch onto' the correct referent. According to this picture, a term presumably picks out an object in virtue of that object's uniquely satisfying some possibly complex condition which the speaker associates with that term as its sense. Finally, it is in virtue of his knowledge of this condition, and his intention to refer to what satisfied it, that the speaker, when he competently and successfully uses a given term, relates himself to the object which the condition picks out. Such is the knowledge that we speak of when we say that a speaker knows what object he is referring to' (Taschek, 1985: 642).

We might very briefly summarise this as follows: There is no speech act of referring. People merely utter referring expressions e.g 'Rafaella', 'this box'. When referring expressions are uttered they typically (unless they are empty names) refer to or latch onto something. What that something is is determined by a conception in the mind of the speaker which the speaker

associates with the referring expression being uttered. The associated conception in the mind of the speaker involves uniquely identifying descriptions which allow the conception to guide the referring term to a unique object. Very succinctly, for the neo-Fregean interpretation of Anscombe on referring, conception determines reference.

ii. Against the Neo-Fregean Account of Anscombe of Referring

Having detailed what the neo-Fregean interpretation of Anscombe on referring is, I will now explain why my interpretation of Anscombe on referring is preferable. I consider three points in favour of my interpretation: 1. 'Conception' in 'The First Person' (1975) is better understood as meaning 'description under which' in line with my interpretation of the account of referring suggested by Anscombe's texts, rather than as meaning 'neo-Fregean sense' in line with the neo-Fregean interpretation 2. If intellectual context is considered to provide hermeneutic justification for favouring a particular interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975), as Botterell and Stainton claim it does, then Anscombe's intellectual context does not obviously favour the neo-Fregean interpretation. 3. That the neo-Fregean account trades on a confusion which my interpretation does not contain.

ii.i. 'Conception' - Neo-Fregean Sense or Description Under Which?

If what Anscombe means by 'conception' in 'The First Person' (1975) is a neo-Fregean sense in line with her interpreters, then the examples of referring in 'The First Person' (1975) should involve conceptions determining reference i.e. conceptions determining what a referring expression latches on to. I take this to be what Tascheck means when he claims 'a term presumably picks out an object in virtue of that object's uniquely satisfying some

possibly complex condition which the speaker associates with that term as its sense' (1985: 642). That would be in line with John Searle's 1958 account of referring (at least when it comes to proper names), which Anscombe's neo-Fregean interpreters seem to (perhaps unintentionally) reflect. Searle variously describes a neo-Fregean sense as correlating a name with an object (Searle, 1958: 168), bringing the reference off (Searle, 1958: 170), setting up a connection between word and object (Searle, 1958: 170).

Unfortunately for the neo-Fregean interpreters of Anscombe, conceptions in 'The First Person' (1975) do not determine what a referring expression latches on to. This seems to me evident from the aforementioned poor-Jones example of reference failure. Recall: 'Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is something that it latches on to (as I will put it): in this example it is the box' (Anscombe, 1975: 28). The conception which the speaker associates with 'this', if we are to speak in the terms of the neo-Fregean interpreters, is going to be something like 'the parcel containing Jones's ashes'. As such, 'this' should latch onto the parcel containing Jones's ashes.[34] In this scenario, however, 'this' doesn't latch onto that particular containing-Jones's-ashes parcel. Instead, 'this' latches onto another parcel which is being carried by and demonstrated by the speaker. The speaker's conception doesn't determine what 'this' latches onto, it merely provides the speaker's understanding of what is being latched onto.

Conceptions in 'The First Person' (1975) do not fulfil the role which the aforementioned variation of neo-Fregean senses are meant to. Rather, the role of conceptions in the

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[34] I have already stated why I take 'latching on' to mean 'refer to' given its equivalence to 'catch hold of' elsewhere in Anscombe's discussion of the case of reference failure.

explanation of what is occurring in the poor Jones scenario is analogous to the role which a description under which plays in Anscombe's explanations of intentional actions. Consider the following example of intentional action failure from 'The Intentionality of Sensation' (1965): 'A man aims at a stag; but the thing he took for a stag was his father, and he shoots his father. A witness reports: "He aimed at his father." Now this is ambiguous. In the sense in which given the situation as we have described it, this report is true, the phrase "his father" does not give an intentional object' (Anscombe, 1965: 9-10).

In this example of intentional action failure the description under which the protagonist acts is 'shooting a stag'. Analogously to how the conceptions in 'The First Person' (1975) do not determine what is referred to, the description under which in the shooting example doesn't determine what is shot - the description under which doesn't cause the bullet to miss the father and swerve into the nearest stag. This leads me to think that 'conception' in 'The First Person' (1975) is better understood as 'description under which' - it is (an aspect of) the agent's practical knowledge of what is happening.

Aside from the above arguments concerning the role of conceptions in 'The First Person' (1975), the turn of phrase used in 'The First Person' (1975) suggests the equivalence of conceptions with descriptions under which. In particular where Anscombe's text describes '**a conception under which** [the referring agent's] mind is supposed to latch on to [the object being referred to]' (Anscombe, 1975: 23) (my emphasis). Shortly after this, Anscombe's text rather confusingly employs some Fregean terminology: 'if [a referring term] expresses a way in which its object is reached by [the speaker], what Frege called an "Art des Gegebenseins"' (Anscombe, 1975: 23). I do not think this use of Fregean terminology should tell against the arguments I have just made, however, as I simply take Anscombe's text to be merely

appropriating Frege's terminology for its own purposes.[35] 'A way in which an object is reached', 'an "Art des Gegebenseins"', 'a conception under which', 'a conception', 'a description under which' are all one and the same. An "Art des Gegebenseins" in this instance does not determine what is referred to, it simply provides the speaker's understanding of what they are referring to/acting upon.

ii.ii. Context as Hermeneutic Justification: Is Anscombe's Context Really Homogenous?

Botterell and Stainton attempt to provide some instructions for interpreters of Anscombe's work (or indeed for any philosophical work): 'a charitable and insightful reconstruction of the paper's arguments and conclusions requires, at a minimum, two things: [...] and second, consistency with the philosophical milieu in which [Anscombe] was working and writing.' (Botterell and Stainton, 2018: 357).[36] What is the philosophical milieu in which Anscombe was working and writing exactly? Bottherrell and Stainton only tell us that it is 'early 70s Oxbridge' (Botterell and Stainton, 2018: 359).

In another paper, Stainton appears to be embracing this philosophical milieu approach to hermeneutics when he attributes the neo-Fregean account of referring to Anscombe. Stainton writes: 'I myself take [Anscombe] to be using 'refer'/'name' in a way that dominated Oxbridge philosophy at the time: a usage inspired by Frege's works, developed by Russell and the Logical Positivists, etc.' (Stainton, 2019: 82). The milieu of soldiers for the neo-

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[35] Searle and the neo-Fregean's do this as well and it seems to me a common phenomenon that seminal terminology is often reused in other texts which do not uphold the seminal meaning.

[36] This strikes me as an austere hermeneutics and it entirely ignores or is ignorant of the variety of possible hermeneutic approaches when it comes to providing philosophically satisfying interpretations of texts.

Fregean account of reference is subsequently sketched in the haziest of fashions. The milieu consists of 'prototypical mid-century Oxbridge philosophers (inspired by a Russellian and Logical Positive take on Frege)' (Stainton, 2019: 83).

I do not entirely appreciate the logic behind the hermeneutic move being made here - why couldn't Anscombe be a loner about the exact nature of reference? Even if this hermeneutic move is accepted as sensible, then I also don't find it very plausible that there was only one standard account of reference in the local philosophical milieu at the time of Anscombe writing. Stainton does not clearly cite any texts by members of this milieu. They are ghostly. The paper which most clearly provides the neo-Fregean account of reference which Stainton seeks to attribute to Anscombe is Searle's 'Proper Names' (1958). Yet, Strawson's 'On Referring' (1950) which advances a speech-act account of reference (including explicitly for the first-person pronoun) had been around for some time.

In addition, in the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) Ludwig Wittgenstein provides the following analogy in a discussion concerning the variety of 'uses of words' (Wittgenstein, 1953: R10): 'Think of the tools in a tool-box: there is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screw-driver, a rule, a glue-pot, glue, nails and screws.—The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects' (Wittgenstein, 1953: R11). Although not clearly about referring, this is a richly suggestive remark. It suggests that we use words as tools. If words are our tools, at least akin to the sort of tools which Wittgenstein's text lists, then we wield them to do things. This doesn't sound neo-Fregean at all, it is far more suggestive of supporting a speech-act account of referring.

Overall, if those offering neo-Fregean interpretations of Anscombe's work think that they can easily justify this interpretation via an appeal to philosophical milieu as providing solid hermeneutical support, then they are mistaken. Anscombe's philosophical milieu is not homogenous and there are texts arising from that milieu which would allow a speech-act interpretation of Anscombe on referring, such as the one I have advanced, to claim philosophical milieu support as well.[37]

ii.iii. The Typical Confusion in the Neo-Fregean Account

One final objection which I have to the neo-Fregean interpretations of Anscombe on referring is that they trade on a confusion. This is particularly clear in Taschek (1985) and Stainton (2019). Taschek writes 'according to [the neo-Fregean] picture, a term presumably picks out an object in virtue of that object's uniquely satisfying some possibly complex condition which the speaker associates with that term as its sense. Finally, it is in virtue of his knowledge of this condition, and his intention to refer to what satisfied it' (1985: 642). We find something very similar in Stainton (2019): '[Inflated reference] demands a symbol: *it is expressions, not people, who 'refer' in this sense*. [...] It may also be built into 'inflationary reference' *that uttering an expression as a genuine referring term requires that the speaker intend to refer to something*.' (Stainton, 2019: 84) (my emphasis).

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[37] I have interpreted 'philosophical milieu' here to mean something like 'fellow living philosophers at hand'. But what a philosophical milieu actually amounts to should really be interrogated. Could it just mean any philosopher with which Anscombe had psychological unity? In which case, Bottrell and Stainton's claim seems even more difficult to justify. Whilst even 'fellow living philosophers at hand' has its own problems. For instance, depending on what snapshot of Anscombe's life we look at, the members of this group will be different.

The confusion here is that the neo-Freegans want it to be both the case that speakers intend to refer to something and that it is expressions not people who refer. I simply cannot see how they can have it both ways. This is because if I use a hammer to hit a nail and I intend to hit the nail, then the resulting act of nailing is intentional i.e. it is something which I, rather than the hammer and not me, does. Similarly, if I utter a word to refer to something and I intend to refer to something, then the resulting act of referring would seem to be the execution of my intention in acting i.e. something which I do.

The neo-Fregeans seek to attribute to Anscombe an account of referring which is simultaneously an exclusively semantic yet also a speech-act theory. They have to come down on one side. Stainton himself notes that 'Anscombe herself seems to include [the speaker intending to refer to something] as a condition for 'referring expressions' (Stainton, 2019: 84). And I quite agree. The text of The First Person (1975) points towards coming down on the side of a speech-act interpretation of Anscombe on referring. I.e. the sort of interpretation which I have provided in this chapter.

Applying My Interpretation of Anscombe on Referring to the Central Thesis of 'The First Person' (1975)

I began this chapter by asking how we might interpret 'referring' in the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) - that '"I" is neither a name or another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). I have now provided what is hopefully a fairly comprehensive interpretation of 'referring' in the context of Anscombe's texts. Consequently, we can now return to the central thesis in order to interpret what it is denying.

Succinctly, I interpret the central thesis to deny that speaker's use "I" to make intentional self-reference. As intentional speaker's reference is, upon my interpretation, the only variety of reference discussed in 'The First Person' (1975) prior to the central thesis itself being stated. I do not interpret the central thesis as an absolute denial that "I" does not refer to the speaker in any way whatsoever. Indeed, I think this would be a very difficult thing to deny given that referring, upon the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts, is simply characterised as 'a relation between a [e.g. proper name, demonstrative, definite description] and its bearer' (Anscombe, 1950s: 210). What is being ruled out in the central thesis is one way in which this relationship might get established, but the central thesis does not exclude that there are other ways in which this relationship might get established. Leading from this, Chapter Two - **Anscombe On Referring - Semantic Reference** - involves interpreting the secondary thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) as a claim that there is another way in which a referring relation between "I" and a speaker gets established.

Although none of the existing secondary literature involves the intentional speech act interpretation of 'referring' in the context of Anscombe's texts, the texts of various authors concur with my claim that the central thesis only denies that "I" refers to the speaker in a particular way and leaves open that it may be subject to another variety of reference. These include Stainton (2019), Bottrell and Stainton (2018), Rödl (2007), and Harcourt (2000). There is another school of interpretation, however, which interprets the central thesis as a flat out denial that "I" has a referring relation with anything. We might sloganise this as follows - "I" does not refer to anything in any way. Robert Stainton's 'Re-reading Anscombe on 'I'' (2019) suggests calling this the radically-non-referring interpretation of the central thesis or indeed of 'The First Person' (1975) itself. Representatives of this second radically-non-

referring school include Evans (1982), Kripke (2011), van Inwagen (2001), Clarke (1978), Garrett (1994) and (1997), Hamilton (1991), Hinton (2008), Peacocke (2008), Taschek (1985), Teichmann (2008), White (1979), Wiseman (2017), and Zahavi (1999).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have used the account of intentional action developed in Anscombe's *Intention* (1957) to interpret her later paper 'The First Person' (1975) as containing a sophisticated speech-act account of referring. This interpretation of Anscombe on referring has many advantages - it provides continuity between Anscombe's earlier and later texts, it allows us to interpret the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) that Anscombe can answer her critics, and it also allows us to clearly interpret a difficult passage in 'The First Person' (1975) where Anscombe introduces a non-standard example of reference failure.

I have also argued for the preferability of this interpretation of Anscombe on referring over the more typical neo-Fregean account. The neo-Fregean account offers a way of understanding 'conception' in 'The First Person' (1975) which is at odds with the role conceptions play in Anscombe's examples of referring; its proponents do not have the undivided hermeneutical support of Anscombe's wider intellectual context which they claim; and its proponents trade on a confusion. Regarding all of these things, my interpretation is preferable. If referring is understood to be a (typically) intentional speech-act in line with Anscombe's wider theory concerning the nature of intentional actions, then 'conception' is neatly accounted for in terms of 'description under which'. My interpretation is also supported by appeal to Anscombe's wider intellectual context. And my interpretation doesn't contain the confusion which I have noted in the neo-Fregean interpretations.

I will end by returning to the question of how this new interpretation of Anscombe on referring could help us in interpreting 'The First Person' (1975) further. If the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) - '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) - is to be interpreted as a denial that when we utter 'I' that constitutes an act of speaker's reference i.e. that our use of the first-person pronoun never constitutes an intentional speech-act of referring, then the task of the interpreter is to understand why Anscombe takes that to be precluded. My interpretation of Anscombe on referring strongly suggests that all the clues for understanding this are to be gleaned from Anscombe's account of intentional action. Our use of the first-person pronoun lacks some essential feature of being an intentional act of reference. Explaining this any further is, however, the task of Chapter Four.

Anscombe On Referring II: Semantic Reference

Introduction

 The previous chapter was concerned with interpreting the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). This chapter is concerned with interpreting the claim which directly follows the central thesis. Namely, the claim that 'Of course, we must accept the rule "If X asserts something with "I" as subject, his assertion will be true if and only if what he asserts is true of X' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). We might term this claim 'the secondary thesis'. The secondary thesis is curious, for it seems to suggest that there is a relation between the first-person pronoun and the person who speaks it. Namely, because "I"s presence as subject-term in an assertion makes the assertion about the person asserting. In a very early Anscombe text - 'On Russell's Theory of Definite Descriptions' (Anscombe, 1950s) - it is stated that referring is 'a relation between a [e.g. proper name, demonstrative, definite description] and its bearer' (Anscombe, 1950s: 210). Upon this very basic characterisation of referring, it would prima facie seem that the secondary thesis proposes I' refers to a bearer - the person who speaks it. This leaves us with a question, how do the central thesis and the secondary thesis coherently combine? There are two schools of thought on the matter suggested by the secondary literature on Anscombe's texts.

 The first school of thought involves the radically non-referring theorists who were previously introduced at the end of the last chapter. These interpreters take the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) to be an absolute denial that "I" refers to anything in any way.

Some of these interpreters seem to proceed without noting anything problematic about the combination of the central thesis and the secondary thesis. Others, however, appear to discern that these claims do not prima facie sit well together and seek to explain how we can account for the secondary thesis without allowing that "I" refers in any way whatsoever. I will consider some of these explanations at the end of the chapter. In particular the explanations offered in James Doyle's N*o Morality, No Self* (2018) and Vincent Descombes's 'Logic of the Egotistical Sentence' (2018).

 The second school of thought concerning this matter is currently represented by Robert Stainton (2019), Andrew Bothrell and Stainton (2018), and Edward Harcourt (2000). Interpreters of the second school of thought claim that the central thesis only rejects "I" as referring in one particular way. Typically, that "I" does not refer in the neo-Fregean or Searlian way described in the previous chapter. Consequently, the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) is understood as leaving it open that "I" might refer to the person who speaks it in some other way.[38] This lays the groundwork for explaining the secondary thesis as advancing this alternative way of "I" referring to the speaker. Botterell and Stainton in particular claim that the secondary thesis advances a pure indexical account of "I" corresponding to the account of "I" provided by David Kaplan's theory of indexical reference (Stainton, 2019: 92) (Bottrell and Stainton 2018: 350).

 I am largely in agreement with the second school of thought outlined above; although, as per the exegesis of the previous chapter, I interpret Anscombe as rejecting the idea that "I" is used in performing a speech-act of referring. Consequently, I think that the worldview which

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[38] E.g. Botterell and Stainton describe themselves as attributing different varieties of reference to the central thesis and the secondary thesis respectively (Botterell and Stainton, 2018: 357).

I have interpreted from Anscombe's texts could potentially allow for another non-speech-act sort of reference - namely semantic reference. And that the secondary thesis can be interpreted as asserting that "I" has pure semantic reference. I do not think, however, that this is an uncomplicated interpretive move. In order for this move to be satisfyingly made, it needs to be shown (a.) how semantic reference is compatible with the worldview which Anscombe's texts suggest, and (b.) how the possibility of pure semantic reference can be explained by those texts. As such, I find Stainton's interpretive move regarding these matters to be too quick, because he does not consider the complexity of the attribution being made:

 Firstly, Stainton does not show how such a position is justified by Anscombe's texts. Leaving us - those who interpret Anscombe's texts as collectively suggesting a worldview - with the question 'Is this interpretation really consistent with Anscombe's texts or is it an imposition?'. Secondly, Stainton appeals to the authority of Kaplan without noting that Kaplan's explanation of pure indexicals is not without its own complications and idiosyncrasies. In particular, after positing that there are such things as pure indexicals, Kaplan explains the special or alternative way in which pure indexicals refer by stating that it involves 'a rule which determines the referent' (Kaplan, 1977: 490). In the case of "I", the rule in question is '"I" refers to the speaker or writer' (Kaplan, 1977: 505). This rule, Kaplan informs us, 'is set by linguistic conventions' (Kaplan, 1977: 505). And it is an incredibly rigid rule - we cannot, apparently, escape being bound by it - 'no pointing to another or believing that [one] is another or intending to refer to another can defeat [this rule]' (Kaplan, 1977: 491).[39]

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[39] This notion of a rule is what I mean by an idiosyncrasy of Kaplan's text - Anscombe's texts nowhere either indicate there being or allow for there being such a rule except perhaps if we think of the divine moral law as a series of rules. See (Anscombe, 1958) for discussion of the bindingness of divine law.

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Unfortunately, Kaplan does not explain how this rule becomes set by linguistic conventions; all we know is that it cannot have been set via speaker's using "I" to refer to themselves.[40] This leaves open the question of how a pure indexical comes to refer. And it is worth noting that neither of the leading theories of convention - David Lewis's and Ruth Millikan's respectively - will be able to provide a quick answer; for both claim that conventions arise because humans do things. Indeed, for both Lewis and Millikan, conventions are patterns in human behaviour. In Lewis's case a convention is a regularity in the behaviour of the members of a community, where this regularity in behaviour emerged and continues to occur as a chosen solution to an acknowledged coordination problem (Lewis, 1969: 76). In Millikan's case conventions are patterns of behaviour proliferated by reproduction; where the proliferation is due, in important part, to the weight of precedent (Millikan, 2005: 2).[41] Kaplan's convention is not obviously a pattern in human behaviour however - it is certainly not a pattern involving people using "I" to refer to themselves.

Generally, through referring us to Kaplan's text in order to interpret Anscombe's text, Stainton's interpretation of the secondary thesis passes the buck of explanation.[42]

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[40] This approach to critiquing Kaplan does not appear typical for the majority of critical secondary literature on Kaplan's notion of pure indexicals. Typically, authors seek to provide counterexamples to Kaplan's thesis that various words constitute pure indexicals. See, for instance, Allyson Mount's 'The Impurity of 'Pure' Indexicals' (2006). The incredibly brief critique I provide here is merely an attempt to demonstrate that Kaplan's text is not without its difficulties. And to show that explaining our interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) through appeal to Kaplan's text, which is what Stainton appears to do, has the disadvantage of outsourcing the sort of questions which I have raised.

[41] For instance, the precedent (in the Western world) to use a knife and fork to eat one's dinner, proliferates because precedent entails that these 'implements [are] placed on the table for dining, manufactured in quantity, available easily and cheaply, and so forth' and these types of practical concerns can be said to make the precedent weighty (Millikan, 2005: 8).

[42] This passing the buck of explanation also occurs in Stainton and Botterell (2018), where it is simply stated that they interpret the secondary thesis via borrowing from Kaplan (Stainton and Botterell, 2018: 350). In particular they borrow, unscrutinised, the notion that "I"

Unfortunately, it passes the buck of explanation to a text which doesn't answer questions we might wish to put to the secondary thesis. And, even if these questions were settled in Kaplan's text, it still wouldn't have been shown that they could be similarly answered by the worldview which Anscombe's texts suggest. As someone who is primarily interested in using Anscombe texts to interpret Anscombe texts, this appeal to Kaplan strikes me as a deficiency in Stainton's interpretation, one which this chapter seeks to remedy.

 In this chapter, I provide a thorough argument for interpreting the secondary thesis as proffering a purely semantic or indexical account of "I". Because the work of Saul Kripke provides what I judge to be the best explanation of what semantic reference is and why and how we should understand it to arise, I will rely heavily on Kripke's texts in what follows. Firstly, I introduce Kripke's distinction between speaker's reference and semantic reference. I then argue that my interpretation of Anscombe's texts allows for there being semantic reference grounded in speaker's reference upon the worldview those texts suggest. Secondly, I will consider the problem of how that worldview could explain "I" having semantic reference in the absence of speaker's reference grounding that semantic reference. I draw from texts by Anscombe concerning rules in order to do this. I end the chapter by arguing for the preferability of my interpretation of the secondary thesis over the sort of interpretation offered by the radically non-referring theorists.

'obey[s] a rule-of-use that outputs an object given a context of utterance' (Stainton and Botterell, 2018: 350).

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The Basic Distinction Between Semantic Reference and Speaker's Reference in Kripke's Texts

According to Kripke's 'Semantic Reference and Speaker's Reference' (1977), 'if a speaker has a designator in his idiolect, certain conventions of his idiolect (given various facts about the world) determine the referent in the idiolect: that I call the semantic referent of the designator' (Kripke, 1977: 263). The semantic referent of a designator or referring expression is, in a sense, latched onto by the expression itself whenever that expression is spoken. This referent (or its state or situation) will determine a truth value for the claim being made. For instance, to use a very basic semantic theory, if I say that 'The tallest man in Budapest is wearing a Mackintosh.', then, provided that there is a tallest man in Budapest rather than several equally tall men, the noun phrase 'the tallest man in Budapest' latches onto that man and the claim for which it is the subject term turns out true or false depending on his current attire.[43]

Kripke's text suggests that only recognising semantic reference fails to capture the complexity of natural language. An example from a paper by Keith Donnellan is drawn upon in order to illustrate this: 'Suppose someone at a gathering, glancing in a certain direction, says to his companion,

(1) "The man over there drinking champagne is happy tonight."

Suppose both the speaker and hearer are under a false impression, and that the man to

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[43] A variation of this sort of semantic theory can be found in Russell's 'On Denoting' (1905).

whom they refer is a teetotaler, drinking sparkling water. He may, nevertheless, be happy. Now, if there is no champagne drinker over there, Russell would regard (1) as false, and Frege and Strawson would give it a truth-value gap. Nevertheless, as Donnellan emphasizes, we have a substantial intuition that the speaker said something true of the man to whom he referred in spite of his misimpression.' (Kripke, 1977: 256).

In order to make sense of this intuition - that the speaker says something true of the man he falsely described as drinking champagne - Kripke's text suggests that we must recognise there to be another sort or referring beyond semantic reference. This is speaker's reference. 'The speaker's referent', Kripke's text suggests, 'is the thing the speaker referred to by the designator, though it may not be the referent of the designator, in his idiolect' (Kripke, 1977: 264). Following the terminology in the previous chapter, we might say the speaker's referent is what the speaker uses the referring expression to latch onto, which need not be the same thing as what the expression itself latches onto. In the Donnellan example, the speaker used 'The man over there drinking champagne' to latch onto the man drinking sparkling water, the noun phrase 'The man over there drinking champagne' itself, however, didn't latch onto anything (although Kripke's text suggests that it might have done if a champagne drinker had been standing in the vicinity of our teetotaller).

In addition to the above, the following further example is provided in Kripke's paper in order to demonstrate the need for distinguishing between speaker's reference and semantic reference: 'Two people see Smith in the distance and mistake him for Jones. They have a brief colloquy: "What is Jones doing?" "Raking the leaves." "Jones," in the common language of both, is a name of Jones; it never names Smith. Yet, in some sense, on this occasion, clearly both participants in the dialogue have referred to Smith, and the second

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participant has said something true about the man he referred to if and only if Smith was raking the leaves (whether or not Jones was). How can we account for this?' (Kripke, 1977: 263).

As we can see, 'Jones' has a semantic referent of a particular person and 'Smith' has a semantic referent of a particular person and the particular semantic referents of each are not identical. When the speakers use 'Jones' to make a reference on this occasion they use it to latch onto the person they can see in the distance. 'Jones' - the name itself - however, semantically speaking, is understood as latching onto someone else.

Kripke's text provides further suggestions regarding how we are to understand the nature of speaker's reference although it is made clear that these constitute 'a rough theoretical apparatus' (Kripke, 1977: 266). The most important thing to note at this point is that when we are talking about speaker's reference, referring is to be understood as an intentional action which the speaker uses the word to perform. Hence, an account of speaker's reference will be an account of the speech act of referring.

Hopefully, the contrast with semantic reference is clear. Semantic reference is not a speech act, because on a semantic account of reference it is the designator which does the referring (or, at least, which is appreciated as doing the referring); the speaker can merely add to the circumstances which might be relevant to the word doing this. For instance, by speaking at a particular location or at a particular time (this will affect the semantic referent of "I" and 'now' as per the indexical theory of semantic reference, found in the work of David Kaplan for instance). A comparison here with inviting may be useful. People use words to invite others to social gatherings etc. (As a result of this) there are typical inviting expressions -

certain combinations of words in a language which are recognised by speakers as constituting an invitation. And these combinations of words are recognised as constituting an invitation irrespective of whether or not the intention with which they were spoken was that of issuing an invitation. Similarly, we are suggesting that people use words to refer to things and (as a result of this) there are a huge number of referring expressions which are recognised by speakers as constituting a reference.

I have now explained the distinction between semantic reference and speaker's reference as laid out in Kripke's 1977 paper, but it has yet to be shown that the notion of semantic reference is indeed compatible with Anscombe's texts. For, upon my interpretation at least, Anscombe's texts only contain examples of speaker's reference (apart from perhaps the secondary thesis which is under consideration). Fortunately, Kripke's texts explain semantic reference as emerging from speaker's reference, something I will now illustrate.

Semantic Reference Emerges from Speaker's Reference

How do certain expressions come to have semantic referents? Kripke's work suggests two answers, both of which claim that the semantic reference of a referring expression depends, in some way, upon speaker's reference. These answers are to be found in 'Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference' (1977) and *Naming and Necessity* (1972).

'In a given idiolect, the semantic referent of a designator (without indexicals) is given by a general intention of the speaker to refer to a certain object whenever the designator is used. The speaker's referent is given by a specific intention, on a given occasion, to refer to a certain object.' (Kripke, 1977: 264).

'In the case of proper names, the reference can be fixed in various ways. In an initial baptism it is typically fixed by an ostension or a description. Otherwise, the reference is usually determined by a chain, passing the name from link to link. The same observations hold for such a general term as 'gold'.' (Kripke, 1972: 135).

A rough statement of a theory might be the following: An initial 'baptism' takes place. Here the object may be named by ostension, or the reference of the name may be fixed by a description. When the name is 'passed from link to link', the receiver of the name must, I think, intend when he learns it to use it with the same reference as the man from whom he heard it. If I hear the name 'Napoleon' and decide it would be a nice name for my pet aardvark, I do not satisfy this condition. (Kripke, 1972: 96).

From the first quote we see that Kripke understands the semantic referent of a term appears to be fixed by patterns of general use by the speaker. (I say 'the speaker' rather than 'speakers' because Kripke uses 'idiolect' rather than 'dialect'. This might strike one as a little strange - after all, language is largely used for communication and that will presumably require coordination in use of referring expressions and some notion of semantic reference - but I won't dwell on this here.) The second and third quotes suggest another way through which speaker's reference determines semantic reference. The initial act of baptism - an act of speaker's reference - determines the semantic reference of the term in future cases of its being used.

Both of these explanations as to the origins of a referring expression having a semantic reference, assume that the semantic reference of a referring expression depends, in some way, upon speaker's reference.

Compatibility With Anscombe's Texts

I do not want to simply take the worldview suggested by Kripke's texts and apply it to Anscombe's texts. I'm not sure whether initial baptisms or Kripke's notions of general speaker intentions truly sit well with the worldview which I interpret Anscombe's texts to suggest. I do believe, however, that Anscombe's texts are amenable to the general idea that rules concerning semantic reference emerge from speaker's reference. The worldview which Anscombe's texts suggest would seem to allow that what speaker's typically use a referring expression to latch onto will give you its semantic referent, whilst what is latched onto on a particular occasion of a referring expression being used will give you the speaker's referent. Typically, these two - semantic referent and speaker's referent - will coincide. I will now explain this further using two discussions of rules in 'Rules, Rights and Promises' (1978a) and in 'The Source of Authority of the State' (1978b).

In the former text it is stated 'I shall be arguing that no naturalistic account of a rule, as of a promise, will work: it will follow that words and their relation to their meanings aren't 'naturally intelligible' either. For the use of words involves following rules; hence an account of language must make reference to rules. (Not merely to regularities.) (Anscombe, 1978: 97). 'Naturally unintelligible' is qualified as meaning that a rule is not something which we can embrace, touch, or otherwise perceive. This is unlike a chair or a stick of rhubarb. The names for these things are naturally intelligible because we can perceive the referents. A rule

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is more like a relation, a cause, or a promise.[44] The best account of what a rule is which Anscombe can give us is that 'rules [...] are essences created and not merely captured or expressed by the grammar of our languages' (Anscombe, 1978: 100).

Now, although Anscombe's texts state that rules are naturally unintelligible, it isn't denied that there are rules. Anscombe's text locates the generation of the concept of a rule 'in a certain kind of use of a stopping modal with what appears to be a reason attached' (Anscombe, 1978: 142). Human intelligence, it is claimed, is shaped so as to be able to build-up the concept of a rule which human children allegedly learn through being psychically stopped from doing things whilst being told 'you can't' (Anscombe, 1978: 139).[45] Overall, Anscombe's text tells us 'the general term ["rule"] is constructed because, as it were, our language feels the need for it. As, for example, a general term "relation" was invented' (Anscombe, 1978: 142). Although a rule is naturally unintelligible, it is needed by creatures who partake in and 'are trained in the practices of reason' (Anscombe, 1978: 103).

Despite Anscombe's texts claiming that rules are naturally unintelligible, they also state that rules supervene on human activity: 'At the level of generation of the concept of a rule, all rules are necessarily prescriptive and in this sense rules are wholly based upon custom. [Hence the rules of most games - such as chess and cricket - have changed over time.] The existence of such a thing as rules consists in the regular existence of certain proceedings, certain reactions, an integral part of which is the use of certain linguistic forms' (Anscombe, 1978: 142).

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[44] At least on the Humean view of the world - an interpretation of which the text references as its guide.
[45] For more on this idea of stopping modals and the generation of rules see Roger Teichmann's 'Explaining the Rules' (2002) and 'Meaning, Understanding and Action' (2020).

Now to bring this all to bear on the question of semantic reference. Using Anscombe's texts, we might say that the rule that a particular referring expression has a particular semantic referent is generated by speakers typically using a particular referring expression to refer to a particular thing or to a particular sort of thing. For instance, 'the Empire State Building' is understood to have a particular semantic referent - a specific building in New York. That 'the Empire State Building' has this semantic referent has been generated by this name being routinely used by English language speakers to refer to/latch onto the same specific building in New York. This rule, generated via regularity in use of a referring expression, entails that whenever the referring expression in question is spoken it can be understood as relating to or as standing in a referring relation to what we are calling its semantic referent. So, for instance, when we hear someone use 'the empire state building' we appreciate this name as referring to a specific building in New York, even if the speaker is demonstrating Big Ben having become muddled about the names of their historical landmarks.

I should like to try and sum up this Anscomebean account of semantic reference by adapting a description of a conventional right in Katerina Nieswandt's 'Do Rights Exist by Convention or by Nature?' (2016) which uses Anscombe's work in arguing that rights exist by convention: A word refers by convention (or has semantic reference) just in case the only justification for its corresponding with an object is that a socially shared pattern of acting - typical speaker's reference - imposes this correspondence.[46]

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[46] Nieswandt's original notion concerns a criterion for answering the question 'What is a conventional right?': 'A right exists by convention just in case the only justification for its corresponding duties is that the rules of a socially shared pattern of acting impose these duties' (Nieswandt, 2016: 315).

We have now seen how semantic reference is compatible with the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts when semantic reference is understood as emerging from speaker's reference. However, this only goes some way to helping us interpret the secondary thesis that 'Of course, we must accept the rule "If X asserts something with "I" as subject, his assertion will be true if and only if what he asserts is true of X' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). For I am suggesting that we interpret the secondary thesis as a claim that "I" has semantic reference, but it is semantic reference which does not emerge from speaker's reference. Hence, we might say that the secondary thesis attributes pure semantic reference to "I". Even if the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts is amenable to there being semantic reference, how could it explain "I" having pure semantic reference?

Using Anscombe's Texts to Explain the Possibility of Pure Semantic Reference

If the rule governing the semantic referent of the first-person pronoun was not generated and is not sustained by patterns in speakers' reference, then could it have been generated by human activity at all? The answer, I think, must be something like via an agreement: A group of humans came together and decided that whenever anyone made the noise "I" whatever came next will be true if and only if what the speaker asserts is true of the speaker. Subsequently, this rule was not maintained by the activity of people using "I" to make self-reference, but rather by the activity of listeners behaving towards this noise in a certain way. Presumably by assuming that what came after the "I" noise was true of the speaker. So, for instance, someone might say 'I am hungry' and not use "I" to refer to themselves, but other listeners would bring them food because they know the rule - '"If X asserts something with

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"I" as subject, his assertion will be true if and only if what he asserts is true of X' (Anscombe, 1975: 32).

I do not particularly enjoy just-so stories, but think Anscombe's text will require one like the above to explain how the rule "If X asserts something with "I" as subject, his assertion will be true if and only if what he asserts is true of X' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) could have been generated by human activity. With this just-so story in hand, we can allow that "I" refers to the speaker, even though the speaker who uses "I" does not intentionally refer to themselves. This explanation still leaves us with the question of what it is a speaker is intentionally doing in using "I" if they are not intentionally referring to themselves? The best answer which I can discern from Anscombe's work is that 'The First Person' (1975) states that self-consciousness is 'something manifested by the use of "I"' (Anscombe, 1975: 25). Perhaps the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts can claim that an "I"-speaker intentionally manifests self-consciousness and in doing so unintentionally refers to themselves given the listener generated rules of reference.[47]

Advantages of My Interpretation I: Answering Anscombe's Critics

I have now provided what is hopefully a thorough interpretation of the secondary thesis. At least, I take my interpretation to be as thorough as Anscombe's texts allow. I will now argue for its advantages over the radical-non-referring interpretation which is forwarded by various

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[47] I cannot pretend that I personally find this a particularly satisfying account of how the first-person pronoun refers to the speaker. In anticipation that the reader might feel similarly, I hasten to note here that the scope of this chapter is interpretive - I am merely interpreting the secondary thesis and how it fits with the worldview which is suggested by Anscombe's texts. I am not endorsing the secondary thesis. That Anscombe's texts do not ultimately seem to provide an explanation of the secondary thesis which I personally find particularly satisfying or comprehensive is, unfortunately, one of the things an interpreter has to contend with.

other interpreters. Recall, the radical-non-referring interpreters claim that the central thesis of the 'The First Person' (1975) - '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) - is a claim that "I" does not refer to anything in any way whatsoever. Consequently, these interpreters cannot interpret that the secondary thesis is a claim that "I" does refer to the speaker in some way, just not the way denied by the central thesis. This leaves them with two problems which might lead us to not prefer their interpretation. 1. They cannot easily answer challenges to 'The First Person' (1975) which also assume a radically-non-referring interpretation. 2. They struggle to explain how the central thesis and the secondary thesis are compatible and end up performing, what I term, philosophical contortions. In this section I will focus on the first of these problems.

The following criticisms of 'The First Person' (1975) are taken from the work of Christopher Peacocke, Saul Kripke, and Dan Zahavi respectively. As we shall see, they all assume a radically-non-referring interpretation of the central thesis:

'[I]n the case of, for instance, "I am hungry", the quantifiable position is [...] occupied by the word "I" which Anscombe says does not make a reference at all. "I am hungry" certainly seems to entail "Someone is hungry" and to contradict "No one is hungry". Partly as a result of this, Anscombe's claim that "I" does not refer is hard to accept.' (Peacocke, 2008: 80).[48]

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[48] This wording bears a striking similarity to Sydney Shoemaker's 'Self-Reference and Self-Awareness' (1968) where he writes 'Statements expressed by the sentence "I feel pain" have it in common with those expressed by sentences like "He feels pain" and "Jones feels pain" that they contradict the proposition "Nobody feels pain" and entail the proposition "Someone feels pain." In these and other ways "I feel pain" behaves logically as a value of the propositional function "X feels pain."' (Shoemaker, 1968: 555).

'A common criticism of Anscombe's position is that if "I" is not a referring expression, why should we be confident in the inference pattern from, say, 'I live in North Carolina' to 'Someone lives in North Carolina' (in other words, existential generalization), or in the fact that any inference pattern where "I" is treated as if it refers is valid. Indeed, such an objection is only a technical expression of one's natural reaction that Anscombe's thesis is in and of itself incredible, difficult to understand at all.' (Kripke, 2011: 312).

'[Anscombe's] conclusion is, however, confronted with several [problems]. [...] Second, the genuine indexical uses of 'here' and 'now' share the immunity to error of misidentification with "I". But nobody would conclude that 'here' and 'now' for that very reason do not refer at all, and one might consequently question whether that conclusion is appropriate in the case of "I".' (Zahavi, 1999: 11).

The two problems advanced by Anscombe's critics are hopefully clear enough, but let us just discuss them briefly. The first problem, which is found in the extracts from Christopher Peacoke and Saul Kripke, involves inference. If one adopts a radically-non-referring interpretation of the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975), then the following problem seems to follow: It would seem to be quite impossible to make an inference from an "I"-claim where there is no object referenced by the subject term "I" to a claim where an object is decidedly referenced by the subject term e.g. from 'I am in the room.' to 'Someone is in the room.'. Yet, that seems like a perfectly uncomplicated inference. It is highly obscure how the seeming possibility of such inferences could be explained away.

The second problem, which is found in the extract from Zahavi, is that 'The First Person' (1975) entails the absurd i.e. something which 'nobody would conclude' (Zahavi, 1999: 11).

The absurd consequence of 'The First Person' (1975) - if a radically-non-referring interpretation of that is understood - is that the argument which Zahavi interprets as underpinning its central thesis is equally applicable to various other terms which we typically take for referring expressions. The central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) should really be '["here", "now" and] "I" [are] neither name[s] nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all.' (Anscombe, 1975: 32).

These objections are only convincing if we adopt a radically non-referring interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975). On the alternative interpretation which I have been forwarding, however, the interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) as containing a purely semantic account of "I", the above objections are unconvincing. If it is allowed that "I" does refer to the speaker, just not via speaker's reference, then there is no clear problem inferring 'Someone is in the room.' from 'I am in the room.'. Nor is there the allegedly absurd consequence that we would have to conclude that various other referring expressions do not refer to anything in any way. Rather, if we interpret the argument of 'The First Person' (1975) in the same way as Zahavi, then we can explain these other referring expressions as referring in the same way as "I" - i.e. purely semantically and not via speaker's reference.

Advantages of My Interpretation II: Avoiding Philosophical Contortions

The second advantage pertaining to my interpretation of the secondary thesis is that I avoid the philosophical contortions which the radical-non-referring interpreters are forced into when trying to explain how the central thesis and the secondary thesis are compatible. I will examine two such efforts found in the work of James Doyle and Vincent Descombes.

Brian Garrett interprets 'The First Person' (1975) as attempting to achieve compatibility between the central thesis and the secondary thesis through claiming that "I" 'is analogous rather to 'feature-placing' occurrences of 'it' (as in 'it is raining' or 'it is snowing')' (Garrett, 1997: 507). Garrett himself argues against holding this position, but there is at least one interpreter who appears to take it seriously, namely James Doyle. Having adopted a radical non-referring interpretation of the central thesis, Doyle proceeds to explain that "I" is a dummy subject and functions more like an adverb which signals to a hearer that a predicate is being expressed in a special way, so prompting the hearer to infer that what is being said is true of the speaker (Doyle, 2016: 3581).

Although a valiant effort, Doyle's explanation appears tenuous at best and question begging at worst. If the presence of "I" in the subject position prompts a hearer to understand that what is being predicated is being predicated of the speaker, then that seems inescapably to be because the presence of "I" in a claim signals a relation between what is being said and an object, namely the speaker. Despite Doyle's impressive philosophical contortions it is ultimately unconvincing that this is not a referring relation.

It is also worth noting that the comparison of "I" with dummy subjects is totally unsuitable. This is because uncontested dummy subjects - such as the 'it' in 'It's raining.' - have nothing which they could even possibly latch onto. "I", however, does have something which it could possibly latch onto, namely the speaker. Garrett's paper makes the same point when it states 'the analogy is lame. The non-referential character of such uses of 'it' is manifested in other ways. For example, we cannot infer 'Something is raining' from 'it is raining'. But we can infer 'Someone is in pain' from 'I am in pain'. Or again, parenthetical qualification of the subject is possible in the case of "I" (as in, e.g., 'I, the person speaking to you now, am

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Scottish'). But parenthetical qualification makes no sense in the case of feature- placing uses of 'it' (e.g., 'it, the sky above you, is raining)' (Garrett, 1997: 510).

Descombes offers a somewhat similar explanation to Doyle: 'The egotistical sentence does not say who the subject is that it speaks to us about. But the fact that it is in the first person indicates to the addressee how to determine it' (Descombes, 2018: 16). I am similarly unconvinced - the presence of "I" signals to the addressee to link what is being said to an object, so the presence of "I" links what is being said with an object. That sounds like an elaborate way of saying that "I" refers to the speaker or, at very least, is appreciated as referring to the speaker by an addressee which seems like a way of "I" referring to an object. Ultimately, it sounds like Descombes is denying that "I" is brought into a relation with the speaker by the speaker, but is brought into a relation with the speaker by the hearer.

Overall, the radical non-referring interpreters have yet to devise a convincing way of interpreting how Anscombe's texts can allow that the central thesis and the secondary thesis coherently combine. We might also note that their interpretations do not contain a particularly sophisticated or in-depth account of what referring amounts to in Anscombe's texts. Generally, I prefer my interpretation for the coherence it brings to explaining how the central thesis and the secondary thesis can both emerge from the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts.

Conclusion

This chapter has focussed upon interpreting the secondary thesis of the 'The First Person' (1975). Namely the thesis that 'Of course, we must accept the rule "If X asserts something

with "I" as subject, his assertion will be true if and only if what he asserts is true of X' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). I have sought to interpret the secondary thesis in such a way that it is compatible with the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975). Namely the thesis that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). Building upon my interpretation of the central thesis in the previous chapter, as a denial that speakers ever use 'I' to make a reference in an intentional speech act of self-reference, I have argued that we can use Anscombe's texts to interpret the secondary thesis as a claim that the first-person pronoun has pure semantic reference i.e. "I" can be understood to refer to the speaker due to a referring convention generated by the responding behaviour of listeners rather than the referring behaviour of speakers.

 I have also argued that there are reasons to prefer this interpretation of the secondary thesis to one which might be forwarded by those who forward a radically-non-referring interpretation of the central thesis. Namely that my interpretation allows us to answer those of Anscombe's critics who base their critiques of 'The First Person' (1975) on the radically-non-referring interpretation of the central thesis; and that my interpretation allows us to avoid the generally unconvincing philosophical contortions which radically non-referring interpreters are cornered into when trying to explain the compatibility of the central and secondary thesis.

 I wish to end the chapter by stating that, if we accept my interpretations of the central and secondary thesis, then we are left with an account of Anscombe's worldview upon which "I" does refer to the speaker, but not because the speaker intentionally makes self-reference. If the speaker can be said to make self-reference via using "I", then this can only be understood to be unintentional and simply the result of using "I" where there is a background convention

that "I" refers to the speaker. The upshot of this interpretation is that the use of "I" by a speaker does not resemble an intentional speech act of referring. In particular, it means that when speakers use "I" they do not have a conception of an object which they are using "I" to refer to/latch onto. Recall, upon the account of intentional action which was interpreted from Anscombe's works, an agent who presumes themselves to be engaged in executing an intention with which will have a conception of what they are doing, including a conception of any object being acted upon.

This absence of a conception of an object being referred to by speakers when they use "I" will be returned to in the fifth chapter of this thesis which concerns the topic of self-consciousness. I hasten to remind the reader that the conceptions I am talking about come from my interpretation of the account of intentional action in Anscombe's work and the related interpretation of referring as an intentional action in Anscombe's work. These conceptions are not the neo-Fregean senses found in the Searliean account of reference.

Chapter Three: From Basic-Sortal Conceptions to Complex-Means Conceptions

Introduction

The previous chapters provided an interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) and related Anscombe texts as collectively suggesting a particular speech-act account of reference; as denying that when we use the first-person pronoun that we are ever engaged in an intentional speech-act of self-reference; and as explaining the first-person pronoun to have pure semantic reference. This provides groundwork for my interpretation of the central argument of 'The First Person' (1975) - the argument which underlies the central thesis - which I will provide in Chapter Four. In this chapter, I want to go deeper into one aspect of the account of intentional action which I interpret from Anscombe's work. Namely into the idea that whenever an agent thinks themselves to be executing an intention they have a conception of what they are doing, including a conception of any object being acted upon. What is the content of these conceptions exactly? In particular, what is the content of these conceptions when it comes to us having conceptions of the objects which we act upon? Going deeper into this topic will lay the groundwork for my critique of 'The First Person' (1975)'s central argument, also to be found in Chapter Four.

Prima facie, Anscombe's texts suggest that we have basic sortal conceptions of the objects which we act upon. At least, as I will illustrate, this is what the examples in Anscombe's texts of executing an intention suggest. However, I will argue that these examples are typically (if not always) examples of actions presented as being performed as ends in themselves and that

consequently, we never consider the contents of conceptions in relation to actions which are performed as a means to an end. Yet Anscombe's texts include examples of means-to-an-end actions which are introduced in relation to the notion of intention with which or intention in acting. When we interpretively develop these aspects of Anscombe's texts, I argue, we see that the worldview which they collectively suggest includes, what I term, complex-means conceptions in addition to basic sortal conceptions.

As far as I can make out, no interpreter has yet delved into the topic of conceptions in Anscombe's texts in the way I will be doing. Of course, it is acknowledged that Anscombe's texts involve the notion that we have conceptions of what we are doing including of any object we are acting upon whenever we think ourselves to be executing an intention. And various interpreters have written about the topic of practical knowledge in Anscombe's work. Where the content of conceptions is touched up, such as in Roger Teichmann's *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe* (2008), the basic sortal account of conception content is provided uncritiqued. The self-evidentness of conceptions being sortal either in Anscombe's texts or more generally (depending on the leanings of the interpreter in question) is a curiosity of the secondary literature. Still, I suspect that the absence of the sort of discussion provided in this chapter is explained by the interest of the critique I raise only arising in the context of a wider project (involving a particular set of interpretive assumptions) such as the one being pursued in this thesis.

I begin the chapter by introducing the notion of sortal conceptions. I then examine their appearance in examples from Anscombe's texts including in examples of referring. I then pause to explain why I am not attributing an account of meaning to Anscombe's texts where the sortal conception provides the meaning of a word being used to make a reference. I then

introduce the notion of complex-means conceptions and argue why we should recognise these as being suggested by Anscombe's texts. I then explain why I take this to enrich the account of intentional action failure which can be interpreted from Anscombe's texts, firstly in relation to actions which are not referring and then to referring actions. Subsequently, I consider and respond to a possible objection to this way of interpreting Anscombe's texts. And, finally, I consider how what I have argued only applies to the account of intentional action which I have interpreted from Anscombe's texts and is inapplicable to the account of intentional action I would interpret from John Searle's texts.

Sortal Conceptions in Anscombe's Texts

I derive the term 'sortal' from the work of P.F. Strawson, although there is a fairly large literature surrounding the notion including work by David Wiggins and Fei Xu - see, for instance, Wiggins (1967) and Xu (1991) - the term 'sortal' is also used by Saul Kripke in describing Peter Geach's account of reference (see Kripke, 1972: 115) and appears in at least some secondary literature on Anscombe - see Teichmann's discussion of 'The First Person' (1975) in *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe* (2008) in particular.[49] In *Individuals* (1959), Strawson defines a sortal as - a 'universal which applies to, or collects, particulars [...] A sortal universal supplies a principle for distinguishing and counting individual particulars which it collects. [...] Roughly, and with some reservations, certain common nouns for particulars introduce sortal universals' (Strawson, 1959: 167-8). Strawson claims that sortals are part of the human conceptual scheme - 'we think of the world as containing particular things some of which are independent of ourselves' (Strawson, 1959: 15) and which we can

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[49] Curiously, Geach's text doesn't seem to contain this terminology and instead speaks about 'nominal essence' (Geach, 1957: 71).

count or collect as instances of kinds or members of classes. 'Colour', 'shape', 'dog', 'cat', 'object', 'man' all appear to be potential sortals, and if this is not true for Strawson work, then I think it is for Anscombe's.

With this account of sortals in mind, I want to introduce the notion of a sortal conception which I interpret as being at play in Anscombe's texts. 'The First Person' (1975) states that we have 'unmediated agent-or-patient conceptions of actions, happenings and states' (Anscombe, 1975: 36) which includes a conception of any object which we act upon. The conception we have of any object we act upon is supposedly sortal; i.e. when, for instance, I conceive of myself as picking something up, my conception of the something in question is sortal - I am picking up a bag, or a child, or a cat. I believe that this is consistent in all examples of intentional actions in Anscombe's works which include mention of conceptions. I will now illustrate this, firstly by examining examples of intentional actions which are not acts of referring, and secondly by examining examples of referring; which, as the reader is presumably now aware, I interpret as typically being presented as an intentional speech-act in Anscombe's texts.

i. Sortal Conceptions in Examples of Intentional Actions (Excluding Referring) in Anscombe's Texts

When it comes to examples of agents who think themselves to be successfully executing an intention in Anscombe's texts, the one's which clearly involve conceptions are largely ones which we have already touched upon. Namely, those involve sawing, shooting, shooting and aiming respectively. For the sake of variety, I have also included an example from 'The Two Kinds of Error in Action' (1963) which is provided to show how fraud can vitiate consent. It

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is almost certainly worth noting here that the exact terminology 'conception' is not employed in these examples. However, as was suggested in Chapter One, I interpret 'conception' in Anscombe's texts as synonymous with 'a way in which an object is reached', 'an "Art des Gegebenseins"', 'a conception under which', 'a conception', and 'a description under which' - all of which are to be found in 'The First Person' (1975).[50] In addition, I take a conception of what is being done to amount to the practical knowledge (and sometimes, more controversially, the practical opinion) which is involved in an event where a person thinks themselves to be successfully executing an intention.[51]

'Since a single action can have many different descriptions e.g. 'sawing a plank', 'sawing oak', 'sawing one of Smith's planks', 'making a squeaky noise with the saw', 'making a great deal of sawdust' and so on and so on, it is important to notice that a man may know that he is doing a thing under one description, and not under another. Not every case of this is a case of his knowing that he is doing one part of what he is doing and not another (e.g. he may know that he is sawing a plank, but not that he is sawing an oak plank or Smith's plank; but sawing an oak plank or Smith's plank is not something he else that he is doing besides just sawing the plank that he is sawing' (Anscombe, 1957: §6).

'Here it is helpful to introduce the old distinction between the formal and the material as in "the formal and the material object" of, say, shooting. You shoot, as you think, at a stag; what

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[50] I also stated that I interpret the use of Fregean terminology here to be somewhat unfortunate - for I interpret it as being used in a different way to how it is used in Frege's works. And I take Anscombe's text to be merely appropriating Frege's terminology for its own purposes. The texts of various other authors e.g. John Searle's *Intentionality* (1983) similarly take Frege's terminology and breathe new meaning into it.
[51] As was noted previously, this is consistent with other interpretations such as Haddock (2011).

you thought was a stag turns out to be a man. In one sense - the formal - your object was a stag; in the other - the material - it was a man' (Anscombe, 1963: 5).

'A man aims at a stag; but the thing he took for a stag was his father, and he shoots his father. A witness reports: "He aimed at his father." Now this is ambiguous. In the sense in which given the situation as we have described it, this report is true, the phrase "his father" does not give an intentional object' (Anscombe, 1965: 9-10).[52]

'Consent is consent to something. Thus there may be consent to one thing that has been done, such as putting one's signature on a piece of paper that is proffered to one, and yet not to another thing that one has done, such as putting one's signature to a property transfer. The document proffered to the signatory, we will suppose, actually is a property transfer; but he has it read to him (as he thinks) because his sight is impaired. What is read out to him is only a petition for someone's reprieve, and that is what he thinks he is signing' (Anscombe, 1963: 3).

To describe these agents's conceptions of the objects they act upon as being 'sortal' in nature seems apt for these examples. The signatory conceives of the thing he signs as 'a petition for someone's reprieve'. This is a sortal conception, 'a petition for someone's reprieve' being an instance of a kind of legal document. Similarly with the man who aims at what he takes to be 'a stag' and shoots at what he takes to be 'a stag'. This conception of what he is acting upon - 'a stag' - provides a conception of what is being acted upon as an instance of a kind. This is

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[52] I appreciate that the middle two examples are more or less the same, but I have included both to emphasise what I see as the routine appearance of sortal conceptions in the examples of agent's who think themselves to be executing intentions that are to be found in Anscombe's texts.

commensurate with how sortal conceptions have so far been explained. (And this goes for both stag examples.) Similarly again with the carpenter example, the man saws what he takes to be 'a plank' or 'an oak plank' or 'one of Smith's planks' i.e. 'a plank belonging to Smith'. All of these possibilities involve what is being sawn being conceived of as a member of a kind. Although, we might note, that these kinds are not all alike in number - the kind or category of 'Smith's planks' probably has less instances than the kind 'oak plank' and there are almost certainly less instances of oak planks than of the kind 'plank'. However, we might say that in all cases the agent's conception of the object they are acting upon is a basic-sortal conception. [53]

ii. Sortal Conceptions in Examples of Referring in Anscombe's Texts

 This brings us to instances of referring. Chapter One involved an argument/explanation for interpreting 'The First Person' (1975) as suggesting a speech-act account of reference with referring being a typically intentional action. I assume that interpretation in what follows. Recall that, upon this interpretation of Anscombe's texts, the conceptions involved in referring are not neo-Fregean or Searlian in nature, but are rather consistent with the conceptions involved in the account of intentional action to be found in Anscombe's texts more generally. As someone who interprets Anscombe's account of referring in this way, it is natural that I take Anscombe's texts to suggest that referring also involves agents having sortal conceptions of the objects which they act upon. And I interpret this as being explicitly

[53] I take this to be consistent with the account of conceptions in Anscombe's work that is to be found in Christopher and Jennifer Frey's paper 'G.E.M. Anscombe on the Analogical Unity of Intention in Perception and Action' (2017) see in particular their discussion under the subheading '1.3.2 Perception and the Question 'What?''.

the case in examples from 'The First Person' (1975), but also from examples of referring to be found throughout Anscombe's texts.

 In 'The First Person' (1975) the reader is told: 'Assimilation to a demonstrative will not - as would at one time have been thought - do away with the demand for a conception of the object indicated. For, even though someone may say just "this" or "that", we need to know the answer to the question "this what?" if we are to understand him; and he needs to know the answer if he is to be meaning anything' (Anscombe, 1975: 27). In this quote, we see that the conception of the object or thing referred to is given in the answer to the question "this what?". The following seem like likely answers to the question - 'this man', 'this river', 'this wolf', 'this flower', 'this cup'. All of these answers involve sortals - kinds of things - so we might call them sortal conceptions.

 If we turn to two of the examples of referring that Anscombe provides in 'The First Person' (1975), then we see that they seem to involve sortal conceptions on the part of the speaker. Recall the following from earlier in this dissertation:

 'It used to be thought that a singular demonstrative, "this" or "that", if used correctly, could not lack a referent. But this is not so, as comes out if we consider the requirement for an answer to "this what?" Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is something that it latches on to (as I will put it): in this example it is the box. In another example it might be an optical presentation. Thus I may ask "What's that figure standing in front of the rock, a man or a

post?" and there may be no such object at all; but there is an appearance, a stain perhaps, or other marking of the rock face, which my "that" latches on to.' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).

Both of these examples involve sortal conceptions on the part of the speaker. In the second example, the speaker conceives of what they are referring to as 'a figure' which seems a plausible sortal conception - the category of figures is presumably opposed to the category of appearances. The first example seems to involve a nicher sortal conception of the thing being referred to - it is conceived of as 'a parcel of ashes' - but I suppose the parcels of ashes category is simply a subcategory of the parcel category. Hence, we seem to see a sortal account of conception at play in both these examples of reference failure.

Further Anscombe texts suggest attributing a sortal account of reference to the worldview which her texts collectively suggest. For instance, in a manuscript and a typescript which have been posthumously edited together and published as 'Private Ostensive Definition' (2015) in *Logic, Truth and Meaning: Writings by G.E.M. Anscombe* (2015). In this text, Anscombe writes:

'Wittgenstein remarks that this sort of definition is supposed to give the word a meaning, and proposes to explain the word 'tove' (which is not a word in the English language) by pointing to a pencil and saying 'this is a tove'. This ostensive definition can be interpreted in all sorts of ways, e.g. as meaning 'This is a pencil'. 'This is round'. 'This is wood'. 'This is one'. 'This is hard', etc., etc. With this observation Wittgenstein has shown something of great importance: namely that ostensive definition cannot lie at the bottom, cannot be the rock-bottom foundation, of our understanding of language. For if we are to understand a formal

ostensive definition rightly, don't we have to know what (logical) kind of thing is being named?' (Anscombe, 2015: 63-64).

 Really, this is another way of claiming that the speaker must always have an answer to the question 'this what' when they are using 'this' to make a reference (at least when they know what they are talking about). For, if a speaker explains the meaning of 'tove' by pointing to a pencil and saying 'this', then they presumably conceive of themselves as pointing out either the pencil itself, or its colour, or the kind of material it is made out of etc. If the speaker lacked such a conception of what is being pointed to, then they wouldn't be able to define the word for a fellow language user. Indeed, they wouldn't even be able to explain 'tove' as meaningful including via ostensive definition.

 Thus far, we have only been looking at examples of referring involving demonstratives. I interpret Anscombe texts as suggesting that this is a general facet of referring, however, and this seems evidenced by the discussions of names. For instance it is stated in 'The First Person' (1975) - 'And so we are driven to look for something that, for each "I"-user, will be the conception related to the supposed name "I", as the conception of a city is to the names "London" and "Chicago", that of a river to "Thames" and "Nile", that of a man to "John" and "Pat"' (Anscombe, 1975: 26). Another clear example is to be found in the undated unpublished manuscript 'On Russell's Theory of Definite Descriptions' (Anscombe, 1950s):

 'That a word is a proper name is some information as to its meaning: it means that it has a very special kind of use; this is parallel to the information that a word is the name of a colour. The further enquiry 'What kind of thing is it a proper name of?' Should elicit an answer such as 'a city', 'a river', 'a man', 'a trumpet', which we may reasonably say gives the full

meaning or connotation of a word. [...] A small boy gave a moving spot of light which appeared in his room the proper name 'Tommy Noddy'. Locke writes as if one could know what individual Tommy Noddy was without knowing that this was the proper name of a spot of light. To see the mistake in this, imagine that someone who had grasped that 'Tommy Noddy' was a proper name, asked to have Tommy Noddy pointed out to him. The child points to Tommy Noddy at a time when the spot of light is on a human being.' (Anscombe, 1950s: 149).

These examples suggest that whenever we use a name to make a reference, the conception we have of what we refer to is a sortal conception. For instance, 'a city' when referring to London or Chicago, or 'a spot of light' for the name 'Tommy Noddy'. Overall, it seems straightforward to interpret Anscombe's texts as containing a sortal account of reference in line with an account of intentional action involving sortal conceptions more generally.[54]

Why I Am Not Attributing an Account of Meaning to Anscombe's Texts

The reader may well have noticed that the examples of sortal conceptions found in examples of referring taken from Anscombe's texts are peppered with the term 'meaning'. For instance: 'For, even though someone may say just "this" or "that", we need to know the answer to the question "this what?" if we are to understand him; and he needs to know the answer if he is to be meaning anything.' (Anscombe, 1975: 27). On the basis of an extract such as this, one might think that the sortal conception a person has of a word gives the word its meaning. I do not interpret Anscombe's texts in this way, however, and am not attributing such an account

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[54] Please note that I say 'a sortal account of reference'. There are other sortal accounts of reference (e.g. that forwarded by David Wiggins - see, for instance, Wiggins (1967)) but I am only concerned with the account interpreted from Anscombe's texts.

of meaning to Anscombe's texts. Although I do not wish to provide a full-blown account of Anscombe on meaning, I think it is worthwhile at this juncture to show why I am not attributing a theory of meaning to Anscombe's texts, how I might go about attributing one, and how this is related to my not favouring a neo-Fregean interpretation of Anscombe's on referring.

i. Meaning in Anscombe's Texts in Brief

Various of Anscombe's texts, such as the aforequoted 'Private Ostensive Definition' (2015), strongly suggest that an interpreter looking to attribute an account of meaning to Anscombe's texts needs to look to Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1952) for either guidance or inspiration. The most prominent statement on meaning in the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) is §43 which states 'For a large class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language' (Wittgenstein, 1953: §43). How are we to interpret this exactly? That we learn the meaning of a word through observing how it is used perhaps and that the meaning of the word itself comes from how the speakers of a language use it. We might try to summarise this by saying something like: it is what is publicly done with a word which gives the word a meaning, meaning doesn't come from a conception privately attached to or associated with a word by a speaker.[55]

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[55] This interpretation seems entirely consistent with other things we are told in and can interpret from the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) such as that it is the job of philosophers to describe the 'every day use' (i.e. the every day meaning) of words (§116) and that 'everything lies open to view' (§126) for the philosopher undertaking this task - the philosopher doesn't need to look for 'what is hidden' (§126). The same presumably goes for children learning the meaning of words - they have to observe what is open to view i.e. how fluent speakers use words in order to learn the meanings of words, a child can't check inside others' heads for a hidden private definition. This thought seems consistent with the

As the extract from Anscombe's 'Private Ostensive Definition' (2015) points out, however, this is not a complete explanation of how words come to have a meaning. It is only possible for 'red' to have the meaning 'name of a colour', for instance, in the context of language users who already have the category concept of colour and (except perhaps in the case of the blind) who appreciate themselves to be part of a coloured world. But this doesn't mean saying that the meaning of 'red' comes from a conception in the mind of a speaker (or in the mind of speakers). Rather, 'red' can and has come to mean 'name of a colour' from speakers who have the category concept of colour using 'red' to name a commonly appreciated member of the category colour that they appreciate their world to involve. Hence Anscombe's reader is informed 'that ostensive definition cannot lie at the bottom, cannot be the rock-bottom foundation, of our understanding of language' (Anscombe, 2015: 63-64).

The importance of emphasising that I am not shouldering Anscombe's texts with an account of meaning is not to be underplayed. Shortly, I will be claiming that Anscombe's texts support our often having complex-means conceptions of objects which we act upon. And I will be arguing that (following from ideas in Anscombe's texts) when we act upon an object as a means to an end, such as when we refer to an object in order to communicate a piece of true information, we must conceive of the object we act upon as a suitable means for the end sought in acting. As per with the above discussion of sortal conceptions, I will not be attributing an account of meaning to Anscombe's texts where the meaning of a word comes from the complex-sortal conception which a person has of an object which they refer to.

Philosophical Investigations (1953)'s characterisation of a child learning a language - see in particular §1, §5, and §32.

Hopefully, my turn of phrase will help things here. I will never say something like 'the conception which a speaker has attached to the word they are using to refer' or 'the conception a speaker associates with the word which they use to refer'. Instead, I talk about the conception which a speaker has of the object that they are acting upon. And I do this consistently when discussing intentional actions, whether those be instances of referring, shooting, or sawing. Referring has been described as involving sortal conceptions because referring is an intentional action and, prima facie, all intentional actions in Anscombe's texts involve agents having sortal conceptions of the objects which they act upon.

ii. Consistency of the Above with My Not Favouring a Neo-Fregean Interpretation of Anscombe's Work

At the end of Chapter One I explained why I do not favour providing a neo-Fregean or Searlian interpretation of Anscombe on referring. Neo-Fregean and Searlian accounts of reference inevitably suggest an account of meaning. This is because Gottlob Frege's account of language is often interpreted as suggesting an account of meaning whereupon the meaning of a name (i.e. the name's truth-value, the object the name refers to) is determined by a sense which is conjoined with the name in question.[56] For instance, a footnote in Frege's 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung' (1892) contains a discussion of various potential senses for 'Aristotle' e.g. 'the pupil of Plato' or 'the teacher of Alexander the Great' (Frege, 1892: 153). Of course, Frege's texts are typically interpreted as being against the idea that a sense could be a psychological entity, so introduces a third realm for senses to inhabit.[57] Neo-Fregeans such as John Searle, reject this notion (Searle, 1983: 197). Hence they talk about reunderstanding

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[56] For interpretations along these lines, see Geach (1961), Kripke (1972), Searle (1983), and McDowell (1991).

[57] See, for instance, (Searle, 1983: 197), for such an interpretation.

Fregean senses as 'intentional contents' (Searle, 1983: 198) or tell us that 'to use a proper name referringly is to presuppose the truth of certain uniquely referring descriptive statements' (Searle, 1958: 171).

Given that I do not favour or advance a neo-Fregean interpretation of Anscombe on referring, it seems entirely consistent that I do not favour or advance a neo-Fregean interpretation of Anscombe on meaning. I have not and do not claim that the conceptions involved in intentional actions, upon the account of intentional action which I have interpreted from Anscombe's texts, are anything like Fregean senses; nor do I think understanding 'conceptions' in Anscombe's texts as neo-Fregean senses a particularly satisfying interpretation.

When some interpreters of Anscombe's work, for instance Edward Harcourt or Roger Teichmann, make claims such as 'at a general level, a 'conception' is Anscombe's interpretation of Frege's notion of a mode of presentation of an object' (Harcourt, 2000: 29) or ''conception' is pretty well equivalent to Frege's term Sinn ('sense')' (Teichmann, 2008: 151), they really do seem to attribute an account of meaning to Anscombe's work. An account of meaning upon which the meaning of a referring expression comes from the sortal conception which is involved in an act of referring. Or, as Teichmann at one point puts it, which one associates with the word one is using (Teichmann, 2008: 151). Aside from the fact that I do not interpret the account of reference in Anscombe's texts as neo-Fregean, I have always been perplexed by interpreters stating that Anscombe's conceptions are 'clearly Fregean in spirit' (Teichmann, 2008: 151).

Even one holding the sort of hermeneutical stance which I outlined in the introduction can ask 'Why is this a good interpretation?'. For no textual source explicitly supporting this interpretation is cited by either Harcourt or Teichmann and I do not believe that an obvious one exists. Nor is any argument from analogy made. Overall, it appears to be the case that it simply struck Harcourt and Teichmann that conceptions in Anscombe's texts seem somewhat similar to Fregean or neo-Fregean senses and it is this striking which is the presented justification for the interpretive move. I do not consider that justification enough for me to find that interpretation preferable to my own. Namely that the conceptions involved in referring are not neo-Fregean, being the same as those involved in the account of intentional action found in Anscombe's texts more generally; an interpretation which has been explained through significant argument in the first chapter of this thesis.

Another reason to not favour interpreting Anscombe's texts as suggesting a neo-Fregean account of meaning is the obvious disunity in terms of sense content. Neo-Fregean accounts of meaning typically assume that the sense of a referring expression is a definite description or a collection of definite descriptions, not a sortal conception. This disunity in sense content provides a further disunity - neo-Fregeans think that 'an expression refers to an object because the object fits or satisfies the Sinn [i.e. the sense] associated with the expression' (Searle, 1983: 197). When senses are understood as definite descriptions or as collections of definite descriptions, then it seems that a name such as 'London' can refer to a particular city because the speaker who uses it in a sentence associates a sense such as 'the capital city of England' or similar with 'London'. A sortal conception, however, such as 'a city' is unspecific. If, as Anscombe's texts suggest, a speaker who uses 'London' will have the sortal conception 'a city', then it is obscure why that would bring 'London' to refer to any city in particular - because all instances of the kind 'city' will satisfy the sortal conception.

We risk becoming lost on a diversion here if we continue any further. But it is hoped that the main message of this section is clear viz a viz in discussing sortal conceptions and the conceptions involved in the presumed execution of an intention, I am not attributing an account of meaning to Anscombe's texts. I have tried to defend this move by showing, firstly, how I would go about interpreting an account of meaning from Anscombe's texts and, secondly, why I do not favour attributing a neo-Fregean account of meaning to Anscombe's texts which treats sortal conceptions as giving words meaning.

Introducing Complex-Means Conceptions: An Internal Critique of Anscombe's Texts

The examples in Anscombe's texts of agents who have sortal conceptions of the things which they are acting upon are presented as ends in themselves. At least, no further circumstances are provided. This is a peculiar facet of all these examples. A plank is sawn as an end in itself, a man shoots at what he takes to be a stag as an end in itself, a man signs a document as an end in itself. True, a man aims at a stag as a means to the end of shooting a stag, but the end sought in aiming is such a cruel sortal end - that of shooting a stag for the sake of shooting a stag - that we don't seem to need anything more than a sortal conception. It is my contention that the presentation of these examples as agents engaged in pursuing ends in themselves explains the agent's sortal conceptions of the objects which they are acting upon. After all, if a man signs a petition for someone's reprieve in order to sign a petition for someone's reprieve, then why would he require a more complex conception of what he is signing than 'a petition for someone's reprieve'.

That the man only needs to have a basic sortal conception of the object he is acting upon seems convincing when that action is an end in itself. But what about when the action is a means to an end? When, for instance, the signatory picks up a pen in order to sign the petition for someone's reprieve, is the conception of the object he acts upon simply 'a pen'. Doesn't the pen need to have ink in it in order for him to sign the document? So doesn't the man more complexly conceive of the pen he picks up in order to sign the document as 'a pen with ink' i.e. as 'a pen suitable for the purpose of signing a document'? This is what I term a complex-means conception - a conception of something as a suitable means to the end sought in action.[58] In this section I will argue that although Anscombe's texts do prima facie claim that we only have basic sortal conceptions of the objects which we act upon, they can also be well interpreted as suggesting that we often have complex-means conceptions of the objects that we act upon.

My argument for this is fairly simple, if we take the notion of intention with which found in *Intention* (1957) and examine examples of actions which are performed as a means to an end, such as those contained in Anscombe's texts, then it is difficult to deny that agents must have complex-means conceptions of the objects that they act upon. I will then argue that interpreting Anscombe's texts as suggesting complex-means conceptions enriches our interpretation of the notion of intentional action failure. I will then note that much of what I have to say is senseless for other accounts of intentional action, in particular those offered by John McDowell and John Searle. Hopefully this will not come as a big surprise to the reader, this being a dissertation about the worldview suggested by the texts of Elizabeth Anscombe.

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[58] I do not mean that the conception which a person will have is 'a suitable means to the end x', but rather that the thing being used as a means is conceived of in such a way that it is suitable for the end being sought in action e.g. a pen must be conceived of as containing ink if it is picked up in order to sign a document, a telephone must be conceived of as functional if it is utilised in order to call someone up.

i. An Argument for Interpreting Complex-Means Conceptions From Anscombe's Texts

We might summarise my argument for interpreting the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts as one including complex-means conceptions as follows: P1: If an action is performed as a means to an end, then the agent's conception of what they are acting upon must be a complex-means conception and cannot be a basic-sortal conception.[59] P2: Anscombe's texts contain examples of actions being performed as a means to an end. C: Therefore, Anscombe's texts contain examples of actions where the agent's conception of what they are acting upon must be a complex-means conception and cannot be a basic-sortal conception. I will now expand upon the premises of this argument in turn.

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (c. 350 B.C.E.) begins with a discussion of how there is a single end to all our intentional actions which is 'the good' (Book I: 1094a).[60] It is a curious discussion concerning human psychology, for it assumes that all human activities aim at the good (or, at least, at the presumed good - people can aim at the bad by mistake). Whatever the good is understood to be exactly - a life of contemplation or a life of wealth accumulation are examples which Aristotle's text offers - it is always a type of activity.[61] Consequently, only the activity which is understood as good activity will be performed for its own sake,

[59] In case the reader is unhappy with the apparent generalisation of the first premise, I am very happy to assert solely relative to the account of means-end action which I interpret from Anscombe's texts.

[60] I interpret Aristotle's text as discussing intentional actions understood similarly to the way that they are understood in Anscombe's texts. Namely as purposeful actions which are knowingly performed. And not as any action involving intentionality which is the way someone like John Searle seems to understand intentional action - see the introduction of this dissertation for a discussion of this.

[61] This is consistent with various famous interpretations of Aristotle's text e.g. Everson (1998), Nussbaum (1986), and Cooper (1985).

whilst everything else is done for the sake of engaging in good activity. A person puts on a suit in order to impress clients, impressing clients is done in order to receive investment, which itself is sought in order to accumulate wealth. The end of accumulating wealth is supposedly in view at every step of this chain.

This vision of human psychology is criticised in *Intention* (1957). '[Why must] human beings [...] always act with some end in view [or] with some one end in view[?] Can't a man just do what he does a great deal of the time?' (Anscombe, 1957, §21). The text of §21 then asks why we should attribute a further purpose to an action if an agent doesn't understand there to be one in it. Contra the *Nicomachean Ethics* (c. 350 B.C.E.), *Intention* (1957) advises that plenty of actions are performed as ends in themselves, typically because we just feel like doing whatever it is. This is not a denial, however, that there aren't actions which are performed as the means to an end. Although plenty of actions are performed as ends in themselves - so the agent has no end in view beyond the action itself, many other actions do involve agents having an end in view - as they seek to attain something apart from the activity itself.

This notion of acting with an end in view is highly pertinent to the discussion of intention with which in *Intention* (1957) in particular regarding the related notions of desirability characterisations and of swallowing up. Recall that, according to *Intention* (1957), the performance of an intentional action is the execution of an intention (Anscombe, 1957: §48). Recall also that the intention which is executed in the performance of an intentional action is variously described as the 'intention in acting' (Anscombe, 1957: iii) or 'further intention with which one acts' (Anscombe, 1957: v) or the 'intention with which the act [...] was done' (Anscombe, 1957: §26).

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The intention with which a person acts is discovered, we are told, by asking a person what they are doing something for until they provide us with a desirability characterisation (Anscombe, 1957: §38). This desirability characterisation can concern either an interpretation of what is currently being done, or of what will be done, or of some product of the current action. For instance, if we see someone picking up a champagne bottle and ask them what they are doing that for, they may answer 'in order to pour myself a drink' and if we pose the same question again, they might respond 'because I want a glass of champagne'. Here, the desirability characterisation of the action of drinking a glass of champagne shows us that drinking a glass of champagne is the person's intention in acting - it is the desire informing the picking up of the bottle, the pouring of the contents etc. and the explanation for why these actions are done. Drinking a glass of champagne is the end this agent has in view when performing these actions of picking-up, pouring etc. The desirability characterisation marks the end of a chain of actions held together by a common intention with which.

At another point in *Intention* (1957), we are given the same account of intention with which, but with the new vocabulary of 'swallowing up' (Anscombe, 1957: §26). I will discuss this in more detail presently when re-examining intentional action failure. But for the moment we might note that *Intention* (1957) instructs us to understand there as being a single intention with which at play in a chain of means to end actions. In the champagne example, the intention of drinking a glass of champagne 'swallows up the preceding intentions *with* which earlier members of the series were done. The mark of this 'swallowing up' is that it is not wrong to give [to drink a glass of champagne] as the answer to the question 'Why?' about [picking up a bottle] (Anscombe, 1957: §26).

This discussion brings us to the first premise of the argument for my internal critique. Namely, that if an action is performed as a means to an end, then the agent's conception of what they are acting upon must be a complex-means conception and cannot be a basic-sortal conception. The reason for thinking this is because, if an agent doesn't act upon an object for its own sake, but because they have a further end in view, then they must understand the object that they act upon as a suitable means for attaining the end which they have in view. In the case of the person who wants to drink a glass of champagne, they must conceive of the bottle they pick up as containing champagne - a bottle containing water, or an empty bottle isn't a suitable means to the end they have in view. Of course, if they were just picking up a bottle for the sake of picking up a bottle, then a basic sortal conception would suffice. But picking up the bottle is not done as an end in itself.

I have so far used my own example of someone wanting to drink a glass of champagne to illustrate my point concerning the need for complex means-conceptions. Hopefully I have secured the first premise of my argument through doing so. I will now provide an illustration of having an end in view drawn from *Intention* (1957). This should demonstrate the accuracy of premise two - that Anscombe's texts contain examples of actions being performed as a means to an end. And, consequently, the conclusion that Anscombe's texts contain examples of actions where the agent's conception of what they are acting upon must be a complex-means conception and cannot be a basic-sortal conception. It is important to note that conceptions are not discussed in relation to this example in *Intention* (1957), so I am interpreting out the text on the basis of what has already been argued.

Recall, if you can, that in Chapter One an example adapted from *Intention* (1957) involving a desperate Nazi performing various acts: Let us suppose some Nazis caught in a trap in which

they are sure to be killed. They are under siege from advancing American troops. One of them selects a site and starts setting up a mortar. Why this site? - Any site which has such-and-such characteristics will do, and this has them. Why set up the mortar? - It is the best way of killing off the advancing troops. Why kill off the American troops? - It befits a Nazi, if he must die, to spend his last hour attacking his enemies. Here we have arrived at a desirability characterisation which makes an end of the questions 'What for?'.[62]

This example is supposed to show how we are to find the intention with which a person acts - we keep on asking them why they did something until they provide us with a desirability characterisation. In this case, it is a desirability characterisation of killing off advancing American troops. Hence 'killing off advancing American troops' is the intention with which the Nazi acts, and it swallows up the intentions with which the other acts in the chain or series of acts are performed. I.e. the intention with which selecting a site and setting up a mortar are performed is that of killing off advancing American troops. To use the terminology of §21, in selecting a site and setting up a mortar, the Nazi has an end in view - namely the end of killing off advancing American troops.

The Nazi example is one the few examples which Anscombe's texts provide involving actions being done as a means to an end. But one is good enough to prove my point that Anscombe's texts contain examples of actions performed as the means to an end. And this brings us to the conclusion of my internal critique. Namely, that Anscombe's texts contain examples of actions where the agent's conception of what they are acting upon must be a

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[62] The example was adapted from the highly callous original which involves Jewish children rather than American troops.

complex-means conception and cannot be a basic-sortal conception. And we can see this if we consider the Nazi example a little more fully.

Given that the Nazi has the end of killing off advancing American troops in view when he selects a site and sets up a mortar, is it sufficient that we understand him to have a sortal conception of the objects which he acts upon? I think not. If the Nazi set up a mortar with the intention of killing off advancing American troops, then he need to set up a working mortar. A mortar with a defect such that it is no use for killing off advancing American troops is no use for attaining the end sought in acting. Conceptions are not discussed in relation to this example, but it is insufficient for the Nazi to have a basic sortal conception of what he is setting up as 'a mortar' - he isn't setting up a mortar for the sake of setting up a mortar. Instead of a basic sortal conception, the Nazi must surely have a complex-means conception of himself as setting up 'a functioning mortar' or 'a mortar suitable for killing off advancing American troops'.

Overall, despite the prima facie commitment to conceptions being basic-sortal conceptions, the worldview suggested by Anscombe's text can be interpreted as also suggesting our having complex-means conceptions as well.

ii. Complex-Means Conceptions and Referring in Anscombe's Texts

My critique of Anscombe's texts as suggesting that we sometimes have complex-means conceptions of the objects we act upon applies for any intentional action performed as a means to an end. I will now show how this applies to referring, referring having been interpreted as a type of intentional action in Anscombe's work. Very succinctly, I will argue

that referring is typically a means to end action, so an agent's conception of what they are

acting upon when they refer to something must be a complex-means conception and cannot

be a basic-sortal conception.

 The idea that we refer to things as an end in itself is rather comical. I don't know anyone

who would walk down the street casually referring to everything they see simply for the sake

of referring to everything they see. Perhaps the only scenario in which I could imagine

referring being done as an end in itself is in a contemporary philosophy seminar. Referring

would seem to be like raising a glass or opening a tin - an activity rarely if ever pursued as an

end in itself. Various philosophers would seem to agree with me.

 For instance, Jennifer Hornsby observes that in the history of analytic philosophy many

appear to discuss language use as if it were not 'a phenomenon in the real social world'

(Hornsby, 2000: 2) and consequently are 'prone to a sort of individualism' (Hornsby, 2000:

5). In the real social world, communicative speech acts such as 'saying something to

someone[,] will count as fundamental among the various things that speakers do in making

meaningful noises' (Hornsby, 2000: 3). And Hornsby suggests that when language is

understood as a social institution we must recognise that its function, the purpose or intention

with which we tend to use it, is to communicate (Hornsby, 2000: 8). P.F. Strawson would

seem to concur with this observation. In 'Identifying Reference and Truth Values' (1964),

Strawson variously states 'perhaps the primary, but not of course the only, purpose of

assertive discourse is to give information to an audience of some kind' (Strawson, 1964:

76),[63] that 'the intention [of a speaker is] to impart just such-and-such a particular point of

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[63] The page references here are to Strawson's *Logico-Linguistic Papers* (1971) in which
'Identifying Reference and Truth Values' (1964) is collected.

information' (Strawson, 1964: 76), and that 'stating is not a gratuitous and random human activity. We do not, except in social desperation, direct isolated and unconnected pieces of information at each other, but on the contrary intend in general to give or add information about what is a matter of standing or current interest or concern.' (Strawson, 1964: 92).[64]

Do Anscombe's texts support this idea that referring is done as a means to an end? One consideration for thinking that they do support this idea is that the people in Anscombe's texts are supposed to be human beings and are presented as communicating with each other - in particular through asking and responding to 'Why?' questions concerning their actions. It is quite difficult to converse with someone and not to refer to something at some point. A second consideration is that examples of referring in Anscombe's texts would also seem to present referring as something done as a means to an end. Let us turn again to my favourite example of referring from 'The First Person' (1975):

'Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is something that it latches on to (as I will put it): in this example it is the box.' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).

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[64] I have not included a mention here of Paul Grice's notion of the intentions involved in language use. According to Grice, when someone speaks to another they 'intend the utterance to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention' (Grice, 1948: 220). See Grice 'Meaning' (1948, 1957) for a discussion of this. I find it hard to credit speakers with a Gricean understanding of what they are doing when communicating - it is simply too complex. (Hornsby notes having the same problem, see Hornsby (2000).) As such, Grice's theory of the intentions involved in language use is not a good fit with Anscombe's work. This is because, upon Anscombe's theory of intentional action, the agent must have knowledge of what they are doing (be able to describe what they are doing) in order for what they are doing to potentially count as intentional. Both Hornsby and Strawson discuss communicating as an intentional action in a way in which I suspect at least approaches the way in which the majority of speakers would or could describe their own speech acts. Hence, in a way which could count as intentional upon Anscombe's theory of intentional action.

Now, at very least the box-carrier refers in order to predicate. But it seems peculiar for someone to come with a box and say "This is all that is left of poor Jones." if they aren't seeking to communicate true information to someone. I think there is justification for interpretive licence here to interpret out the example. For instance, we can add a little bit more context to the above example in order to make clearer the intention with which the person speaks. Following from Hornsby's and Strawson's respective observations, we might say that the speaker speaks in order to communicate a particular accurate piece of information. Namely, that the box in question contains Jones' ashes. Perhaps the speaker would give this a desirability characterisation such as that they wish to inform Jones's relatives that he is dead. Such a desirability characterisation gives us an intention with which for the arriving, referring, and predicating series of actions.

Now, if the intention with which the person refers is to communicate a particular accurate piece of information (namely, that the box in question contains Jones' ashes), then I don't think that they can simply conceive of the thing they refer to - the thing which 'this' latches onto in this case - as a parcel of ashes. This is because referring to any old parcel of ashes will not suffice to execute the intention with which they refer. If the parcel of ashes contains the ashes from an allotment bonfire or from the cremation of a stag or from the cremation of someone who was not Jones, then referring to the parcel of ashes will not allow the speaker to correctly predicate 'is all that remains of poor Jones', to successfully communicate an accurate piece of information concerning the whereabouts of Jones' ashes. Given the end the box-carrier has in view, given the intention with which the speaker refers in this case, they must understand what they refer to as fit for the end sought in acting. That is to say, they

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must have a complex-means conception of the thing they refer to as a parcel containing Jones' ashes.

iii. Complex-Means Conceptions Enrich Our Interpretation of Intentional Action Failure in Anscombe's Texts

Having argued for interpreting the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts as involving complex-means conceptions, I will now argue that this enriches the interpretation of intentional action failure which can be drawn from Anscombe's texts. Very succinctly, it was already discussed in Chapter One how, upon the worldview which I have interpreted from Anscombe's texts, intentional action failure occurs when our conception of an object being acted upon doesn't match with the object actually being acted upon.[65] That discussion was limited to sortal conceptions however, following the examples of intentional action failure involving sortal conceptions drawn from Anscombe's texts. I have now introduced complex-means concerptions, however, so it follows that I interpret intentional action failure to occur when a complex-means conception doesn't match with the object actually being acted upon.

Perhaps it is best to start this discussion by revisiting some of the basic ideas surrounding intentional action failure from Chapter One. Firstly, intentional action failure is the failure to execute the intention with which one acts. Secondly, this typically occurs when the conception we have of what we are acting upon doesn't match with what we are actually acting upon. For instance - if I take myself to shoot a stag, but I actually shoot a man. Thirdly, the conception a person has of an object one is acting upon might include a whole

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[65] Provided the other elements for the action being an intentional action discussed in Chapter One hold. I am not talking about conceptions of objects which we, for instance, are falling towards or which we knock off a table through tripping up.

variety of things, however, not everything which a person knows about an object they are acting upon is relevant to the success or failure of executing the intention with which they act. Only this relevant content has to match with what is actually acted upon. If I intend to pass the sugar, then it is irrelevant if I conceive of the dispenser as having been manufactured in 1902, but it is relevant that I conceive the dispenser to contain sugar.

Now, we have already seen how Anscombe's texts advocate that in a series of actions which might be described as involving means and an end; how the agent always has the end in view and the same desire underlying the performance of each part of the series; and it was briefly touched upon how there is a single intention with which at play in a chain of means to end action. I will now expand on this briefly.

I think it is worth quoting from Anscombe extensively at this point and then examining the quoted text. In this extract, Anscombe is revisiting an earlier examples about a man pumping poisoned water: 'For moving his arm up and down with his fingers round the pump handle *is*, in these circumstances, operating the pump; and 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, each dependent on wider circumstances, and each related to the next as a description of means to end; which means that we can speak equally well of *four* corresponding intentions, or of *one* intention - the last term that we have brought in the series. By making it the last term so far brought in, we have given it the character of being the intention (so far discovered) *with* which the act in each of its other descriptions was done. Thus when we speak of four intentions, we are speaking of the character of being intentional that belongs to the act in each of the four descriptions; but when we speak of one intention, we are speaking of intention *with which*; the last term we

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give in such a series is gives the intention *with* which the act in each of its other descriptions was done, and this intention so to speak swallows up the preceding intentions *with* which earlier members of the series were done. The mark of this 'swallowing up' is that it is not wrong to give [poisoning the household] as the answer to the question 'Why?' about [moving his arm up and down with his fingers round the pump handle] (Anscombe, 1957: §26).

The first thing to note about this extract is that the four different ways of describing the same action are explained as being related in terms of means to end. And I interpret the text as meaning 'operating the pump' describes the action as a means to the end of poisoning the inhabitants. This is the case even though, given the circumstances, 'operating the pump' and 'poisoning the inhabitants' describe the same action. We can understand the description 'operating the pump' as a description of the action as a means to the end of poisoning the inhabitants because 'in order to poison the inhabitants' might be given as an answer to the question 'Why are you operating this pump?'. Not all means to one's end need to be bruter descriptions of the same action, however.[66] The means to a person's end can be a series of actions apart from each other. We have already considered this in my champagne example and the Nazi example adapted from *Intention* (1957).

The second thing to note is that all of the means to an end have the character of being intentional because they would pass the why question test, but this does not mean that they have their own individual intentions with which. Rather, the means to an end and the end itself - the whole chain - share the same intention with which, which is given by the end sought in acting. Recall, if you can from the discussion in Chapter One, Anscombe claims that we will discover this end by asking someone why they are doing something until they

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[66] I use the word 'bruter' after Anscombe's use in 'On Brute Facts' (1958).

provide a desirability characterisation of the action being performed - as befitting or pleasurable perhaps. I interpret Anscombe's texts as assuming that this is the case for a series actions apart from each other where these are means to the same end. For instance, the actions of selecting a site, setting up mortar, and firing a shell in the Nazi example all have the same intention with which. Namely, that of killing off advancing American troops.

 If the intention with which the Nazi sets up the mortar is that of killing off advancing American troops, then it really matters for the successful execution of this intention that he set-up a working mortar. Setting up a defunct mortar will not execute the intention of killing off advancing American troops, because a defunct mortar cannot be used to kill off anyone.[67] The object that the Nazi sets up cannot simply match the sortal conception 'a mortar' because a defunct mortar is a mortar and setting up a defunct mortar will not execute the Nazi's intention in acting. Rather, the object the Nazi sets up must match the complex-means conception which I earlier suggested - either 'a functioning mortar' or 'a mortar suitable for killing off advancing American troops'. Where the object being acted upon fails to match with the complex-means conception of the agent, the intention with which the agent acts fails to be executed. So we see that complex-means conceptions enrich the account of intentional action failure which can be interpreted from Anscombe's work.

iv. Applying this Enriched Understanding of Intentional Action Failure to Referring

 So far, my internal critique of Anscombe's texts has argued that intentional actions including intentional acts of speaker's reference will typically involve agents having complex-means

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[67] Unless of course you bludgeon them to death, in which case it would be unnecessary to set it up.

conceptions of the objects which they act upon. I have also argued that this enriches our interpretation of intentional action failure in Anscombe's work. As I already interpreted reference failure as a type of intentional action failure in Chapter One, I naturally think that our interpretation of reference failure in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts is also enriched by the admission of complex-means conceptions. I will now illustrate this by looking, once again to the poor-Jones example:

'Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is something that it latches on to (as I will put it): in this example it is the box.' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).

Fortunately, perhaps, the poor-Jones example of referring is already an example of reference failure. The interpretation of reference failure which I have taken from 'The First Person' (1975) has already been discussed at length in Chapter One. Very succinctly, reference failure has been interpreted as the failure to execute an intention consistent with the account of intentional action failure interpreted from Anscombe's work in general. The poor-Jones case is presented as an example of reference failure because the box is not a parcel of ashes but an empty box. As per the stag shooting example, the failure to execute the intention in action arises because the fairly basic sortal conception 'a parcel of ashes' doesn't match up with the actual instance of a kind which the person is holding, namely an empty box. Once we recognise, however, that the speaker in this scenario most likely has a complex-means conception of the thing which they refer to, then we can see other ways in which reference failure can arise from the conception of what is being acted upon being inaccurate. I have

already started us towards this with my explanation of the ashes case as involving a complex means conception of the thing referred to.

Attributing the rather basic 'a parcel of ashes' conception to the speaker in this scenario only seems possible if we ignore the likely wider context in which the full claim 'This is all that remains of poor Jones' is made. Once we acknowledge that likely wider context, however, we see that such a basic sortal conception seems unsuitable. As I have noted, the box may be an instance of the kind 'a parcel of ashes' yet not contain Jones' ashes. But containing Jones' ashes is key to the box being a suitable means to the end sought in acting - the end of successfully communicating an accurate piece of information concerning the whereabouts of Jones' ashes. If the speaker claims 'This is all that remains of poor Jones' of a box containing all that remains of poor Wieland, then they will have failed to execute the intention with which they act, namely that of successfully communicating an accurate piece of information concerning the whereabouts of Jones' ashes. And they will have failed to execute this intention even at the stage of referring because they refer to (latch onto) something which they think they know to be a means to their end, but is in fact no such thing. This will be a case of reference failure as long as we understand reference failure as intentional action failure.

This section on reference failure has been relatively short, but hopefully this will be acceptable to the reader given the large amount of groundwork already laid out in the previous sections. The main point of this section is that, upon my interpretation of Anscombe's texts, reference failure cannot be simply understood as typically arising from the mismatch between a basic sortal conception and an actual instance of a kind. Rather, as per other intentional actions, the agent who refers will often have a complex means conception of

the thing which they refer to. What is actually acted upon needs to match with this complex-means conception of what is acted upon otherwise what happens isn't a means to the end sought in acting and doesn't execute the intention with which the agent acts.

This interpretive development of the account of reference failure derived from Anscombe's work in Chapter One entails that reference failure is probably more common than we think. Certainly, when reference failure is defined in the way we have defined it - as intentional action failure - it is far more common than when reference failure is defined in terms of empty names. This does not mean, however, that we are constantly making statements which cannot be assessed for truth or falsity. As was already noted above, reference failure on our account does not entail that nothing is latched onto by the speaker. The failure is the speaker's failure to execute the intention with which they act, occasionally this may also be the failure to latch onto something, but it is often not so.

v. Objection To My Enriched Interpretation of Intentional Action Failure and a Response

Someone might try and object here that if I were to ask the Nazi setting up a mortar 'Why are you setting up a mortar?' he might reply 'Because I want to kill off the advancing American troops.'. According to the the 'Why?'-question test from *Intention* (1957), this would reveal the Nazi's action to be intentional under this description. Whilst the Nazi would presumably answer the question 'Why are you setting up a defunct mortar?' with 'I didn't realise I was doing that.'. According to the 'Why?'-question test, this would reveal the action to be unintentional under this description. Shouldn't we consequently conclude that this just a case of an action being intentional under some descriptions and not under others? Shouldn't

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we say that qua 'setting up a mortar' the action is intentional whilst qua 'setting up a defunct mortar' the action is unintentional? And if we do say this, then we can leave our understanding of failure as derived from Anscombe's work as it is.

I do not believe that this objection holds much muster. If I pick a mushroom in order to eat it for dinner, then it might be true that under the description 'picking an edible mushroom' my action is intentional, whilst under the description 'picking a mushroom last seen by a local farmer' my action will be unintentional. In this case, however, there is no description of my action which reveals it to not in fact be a means to my end of having mushrooms for dinner. Yet, in the Nazi case there is a description of the act which reveals that it is not in fact a means to the Nazi's end despite appearances to the contrary. And it is true that the Nazi might reply to the question 'Why are you setting up a mortar?' with an answer which passes the 'Why?'-question test, but the answer the Nazi gives reveals that the intention with which he acts - that of killing off advancing American troops - and the action (i.e. what is actually happening) to be in conflict with that intention with which.

It is nowhere considered in Anscombe's texts that the notion of intention with which, when closely examined, might come into conflict with the 'Why?'-question test as stated. Consequently, an interpreter must decide to either drop or amend the conception of intention with which or amend the 'Why?'-question test. To my mind, the interpreter should prefer the latter and add a clause to the 'Why?'-question test which says that any answer which reveals what is actually happening not to be a means to the end sought in acting reveals what is happening to be unintentional. This strikes me as preferable because, if we do what we do as a means to an end, then our desire to do it comes from our taking it to be a means to an end.

If we are mistaken and what we are doing isn't a means to our end, then it isn't something we would have done except for the misconception.

Comparison With John Searle's Account of Intention With Which

Everything that I have argued for in this chapter relates solely to an interpretation of the account of intentional action contained in the texts of Elizabeth Anscombe. This should hopefully be unsurprising as this thesis involves providing an interpretation and analysis of Anscombe's texts and is interested in providing an internal rather than an external critique of them. Consequently, I am not claiming that anything I have to say about complex-means conceptions or enriched notions of intentional action failure hold for other accounts of intentional action. In particular, what I have argued concerning intentional action failure does not apply to John Searle's popular account of intentional action or, I think, to John McDowell's related theory. Although strictly irrelevant to an internal critique of Anscombe's texts, it is perhaps worthwhile to note why this is the case.

We have already encountered John Searle's account of intentional action in the introduction to this thesis. There it was explained that Searle uses 'intentional action' to mean something like 'actions involving intentionality' or 'actions involving mental representation' and not to mean purposeful action as per the meaning of 'intentional action' in Anscombe's texts or in the tradition of Christian ethics to which I interpret Anscombe's texts to belong. As part of his account of intentional action, Searle also has a notion of intention with which or intention in acting, which is very different to the one found in Anscombe's texts. For one thing,

Searle's account appears to assume that an intention in acting is a psychological entity. [68]The account of intention in acting in Anscombe's texts, however, does not assume this.[69] For another, following a critique of Searle's work offered by Brian O'Shaughnessy, Searle states that he is forwarding a theory upon which intentional acts typically, if not always, involve double intentions in acting - a prior or organising intention which, where applicable, has the final end in view, and a series of subordinate particular intentions organised by the prior intention which do not have the final end in view.

 Consideration of an example will almost certainly aid comprehension here. O'Shaughnessy provides the example of swimming from Dover to Calais in his interpretation of Searle's work on intentional action. On a Sunday someone reaches the decision to swim the English Channel on Tuesday and forms a prior intention to do this. Come Tuesday, they start swimming. Throughout the whole event of the person swimming the channel, the prior intention to perform this action organises a series of particular intentions in acting -mainly the particular intentions to extend swimming arms (O'Shaughnessey, 1991, 274).

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[68] See, for instance, the following extract - 'an Intentional event that consists in representational content in a certain psychological mode' and which causes the action (which he explains as a bodily movement) to happen (Searle, 1991: 298-9).

[69] This aspect of the account of intentional action to be found in Anscombe's texts often surprises people; however it is very explicit in Anscombe's texts and various arguments are provided for holding that position. One short argument is that there is no good phenomenological evidence for the notion of an intention as a psychological entity. Very simply, this argument states that when we introspect we do not find such a thing as an intention. Or, to quote from *Intention* (1957), 'when we remember having meant to do something, what memory reveals as having gone on in our consciousness is a few scanty items at most, which by no means add up to such an intention; or it simply prompts us to use the words 'I meant to…', without even a mental picture of which we judge the words to be an appropriate description' (Anscombe, 1957: §3). Any reader who at this point finds themselves registering a sort of philosophical distrust is advised to consult Anscombe's work for themselves, in particular *Intention* (1957). Defending this aspect of Anscombe's work would take us too far off topic. This thesis, as already stated, provides an internal critique of Anscombe's work and doesn't provide an apology for Anscombe's work against external critique.

It is, I think, important to note that the governing prior intention sends out intentions in acting blind. That is to say, an intention in acting, unlike the prior intention, does not have the whole of the action in view. And we can see this in the swimming example. The prior intention is to swim the channel, but the intentions in acting are simply particular intentions to extend swimming arms - their contents does not include anything like 'in order to swim the channel'. In a sense, each subordinate intention in acting is for a movement which is an end in itself relative to the subordinate intention in acting, but which is a means to an end for the organising prior intention.

If it makes sense to speak of intentional action failure upon Searle's account of intentional action, then it seems possible for an agent to fail to execute the overall prior intention in acting, whilst succeeding in executing a subsidiary particular intention in acting. For example, the swimmer, who is a good sportsperson but hazy on geography, might have set off from the wrong coast by mistake and be swimming towards Ireland not Calais. In this scenario, the swimmer is not executing the prior or organising intention - not realising the end in view, however, the subordinate particular intentions are solely intentions to extend swimming arms or take a stroke forward and they are being executed. Consequently, Searle would presumably say that the Nazi setting up a defunct mortar isn't a case of intentional action failure because, although a prior or organising intention to kill off advancing American troops isn't executed, the subsidiary setting-up-a-mortar intention in acting is executed. In the event that someone preferred a Searlian interpretation of Anscombe's texts, something which they would need to argue for via exegesis rather than basing it in whim or being struck, then they probably wouldn't arrive at the enriched account of intentional action failure which my interpretation has done.

Fortunately, however, I think there is good reason to not interpret Anscombe's texts as Searlian. Firstly, because I don't think intentional action failure makes much sense on the Searlian view. As per the Introduction, Searle's intentional actions appear to be actions involving intentionality. Shooting a stag and shooting a stag which you take to be your father are acts involving intentionality, so if you shoot at what you think is a stag, but is in fact your father, then your act is intentional in the Searlian sense, but unintentional in the Anscombean sense. There is failure in this scenario upon an Anscombean account of intentional action - because the shooter fails to execute the intention with which they act i.e. fails to attain their end in acting, but it is unclear what exactly the failure would consist in on a Searlian account of intentional action - because that account of intentional action isn't obviously about purposes and realising ends.

Secondly, there is nowhere in Anscombe's texts where double intentions are discussed. If double intentions are to be well interpreted as part of the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts, then I think we would find them discussed not only in the various texts which touch upon the nature of intentional action, but also in the ethical texts. For double intentions would pose an obvious and important intricacy for both an account of actions as intentional but also our judging someone good or bad, if, as per Anscombe's texts' advice, we should think that 'intention is all important' in determining whether a person is good or bad (Anscombe, 1961, 59). In the stag scenario, are we to judge the person good or bad if they fail to execute the overall intention in acting but do execute the subordinate intention in acting of shooting? Which intention are we interested in? No such questions are considered in Anscombe's texts, making it difficult to interpret them as suggesting a worldview upon which such questions should arise.

Overall, it is important to note that what I have argued for in this chapter regarding complex-conceptions and an enriched understanding of intentional action failure has only been argued for in the context of providing an internal critique of Anscombe's texts. I make no claim that what has been argued for will apply to any other theory concerning the nature of intentional action. And, as we have just seen, given the different commitments of different theories, the internal critique I have made of Anscombe's texts is not clearly transferable to other theories of intentional action such as John Searle's.

Conclusion

This chapter constituted an investigation into the nature of conceptions in the worldview suggested by the texts of Elizabeth Anscombe. It began by defining a sortal conception as a conception of an object as an instance of a kind. I then showed how such conceptions appear explicitly in examples of agents thinking they know themselves to be executing an intention in acting including in examples of referring. I then explained why I do not consider the involvement of sortal conceptions in acts of referring to constitute my attributing an account of meaning to Anscombe. This seems to go against the writings of certain other interpreters who (roughly) equate conceptions in Anscombe's texts with Fregean senses. I also explained why I do not prefer that interpretation of Anscombe's texts with reference to her writings on Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Following this interpretive section I moved on to critique the idea that the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts only supports our having sortal conceptions of the objects we take ourselves to be intentionally acting upon. I began by pointing out that although

Anscombe's texts contain examples of actions performed as the means to an end, the examples of conceptions in Anscombe's texts typically occur in discussions concerning actions which are ends in themselves. Subsequently, I argued that when we consider conceptions occurring in examples of actions performed as a means to an end, we see that a sortal conception is insufficient. Rather, because in a means-to-end action an agent has an end in view, agents will often have complex-means conceptions of the objects which they act upon. I then argued that recognising the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts as supporting our having complex-means conceptions enriched our understand of intentional action failure. This critique - the introduction of complex-means conceptions and the enriched understanding of intentional action failure - will be called upon in the next chapter in proving a critique of the central argument of 'The First Person' (1975).

Chapter Four - The Argument from Intentional Action

Introduction

This chapter builds upon the previous chapters in order to provide both an exegesis and analysis of, what I interpret to be, the central argument in 'The First Person' (1975) for the central thesis that "'I' is neither a name, nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all" (Anscombe, 1975: 32). The chapter is divided into three main parts - a survey of the relevant existing literature, my new interpretation, and an analysis of the argument which my new interpretation offers.

I begin the chapter with a round-up of what I consider to be the four major existing interpretations of 'The First Person' (1975) as containing a central argument.[70] This is done in order to place my interpretation within the existing secondary literature on Anscombe's work, whilst also displaying the novelty of my own interpretation. Although I began this thesis by noting my personal commitment to a radical hermeneutical stance, that stance is not incompatible with our preferring one interpretation over another. Consequently, I accompany my summaries of these alternative interpretations with brief critiques concerning why they are not my preferred interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975). Doing so serves the purpose of demonstrating why I think my new interpretation should be welcomed.

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[70] I have chosen my wording carefully to reflect the fact that there is disagreement in the secondary literature concerning what constitutes the central argument of 'The First Person' (1975) including which bit(s) of the text pertain to the central argument.

After considering existing interpretations of 'The First Person' (1975), I provide my new interpretation. This new interpretation takes Anscombe's text to contain, what I term, the argument from intentional action. This section of the chapter is split into two main parts reflecting the two main premises of the argument. The section on the second premise is considerably longer, as that premise is defended by its own argument - which I term the argument from illusory success. I maintain my stance as an interpreter seeking to provide an internal critique of Anscombe's work throughout. Consequently, although I do note and consider potential external critiques to the notions which are being taken from Anscombe's text, I do not engage with them at great length. The task in hand is to provide an interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975), not to reject it as relying on suspect first principles.

The final section of this chapter provides an analysis of the argument from intentional action. My analysis constitutes, what I termed in the introduction, an internal critique of Anscombe's work. The point of my internal critique is to analyse the argument from intentional action through comparing it to other Anscombe texts and other commitments in the worldview those texts collectively suggest. As outlined in the introduction, an internal critique is opposed to an external critique which analyses an argument or theory for its fit with either other texts and theories or the way the world actually is or is presumed to be, typically by taking issue with first premises informing the argument or theory in question. This is not to say that I have anything against external critiques of philosophical works, I just prefer to offer an internal critique here.

My internal critique develops the notion, first introduced in Chapter Two, that Anscombe's texts on intentional action are committed to our having complex-means conceptions of

objects as well as more basic sortal conceptions. As was argued in Chapter Two, this affects the scope of what is to be understood as intentional action failure including reference failure (which was defined in terms of intentional action failure in Chapter One). Through developing this interpretation further, I argue that the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) isn't supported by the argument from intentional action and is ultimately inconsistent with other commitments in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts.

Existing Interpretations

Before proceeding to outline my own novel interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975)'s central argument, I want to first provide a brief roundup of the major existing interpretations accompanied by brief accounts of why they are not my preferred interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975). These interpretations are the following: the reductio-ad-absurdum interpretation found, for instance, in (Taschek, 1985), (Ming, 2016), (Garrett, 1997), (van Inwagen, 2001), and (White, 1979); the compatibility-with-lack interpretation found in (O'Brien, 1994); the no-identifying-concept interpretation found in (Haddock, 2019); and the category-pariah interpretation which I find implicit in (Geach, 1986). Unfortunately, the circularity-problem interpretation in (Doyle, 2018) is simply beyond my comprehension, so is not included here.[71] I have not been able to consider all interpretations due to concerns of space, but I believe the aforementioned to be the major ones.

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[71] This is not meant to be a dismissal of Doyle.

i.i. The Reductio-Ad-Absurdum Interpretation

 Interpreting 'The First Person' (1975) as forwarding a reductio ad absurdum argument for its central thesis - "'I' is neither a name, nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all" (Anscombe, 1975: 32) - is by far the most popular exegetical move in the existing secondary literature. Despite not forwarding this interpretation herself, Sofia Miguéns provides the following neat summary of the typical reductio argument:

'1. Let us assume that 'I' is a referring expression.

2. Then I-reference must be immune to error through misidentification.

3. Then 'I' should refer to nothing short of a Cartesian Ego.

4. Yet there are no Cartesian Egos, only human beings.

5. So there is no referent for 'I'.

6. Therefore 'I' is not a referring expression' (Miguéns, 2019).

 The reductio ad absurdum interpretation has been criticised before. Racheal Wiseman, for instance, objects that 'It is true that Anscombe's paper contains a reductio argument: she says,"[I]f "I" is a 'referring expression', then Descartes was right." However, the centrality that this bit of her paper has acquired is undeserved and has had a very bad effect on people's ability to see what Anscombe is saying in that paper and to recognize its significance' (Wiseman, 2017: 537). In addition, Sofia Miguéns approvingly describes Vincent Descombes as raising a similar objection: 'In a 2014 article entitled "Le Marteau, le Maillet et le Clou,"

the French philosopher Vincent Descombes called this interpretation the interpretation of "The First Person" that gets transmitted if we never stop to read the article ourselves (plus, he remarks, it is an interpretation based on three of the twenty something pages of the article)' (Miguéns, 2019).

 Another problem with the reductio ad absurdum interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) is that it simplifies Anscombe's paper. For 'The First Person' (1975) begins with a long footnote stating '*Principles of Philosophy*, I, LX, contains Descartes' best statement, which is I think immune to the usual accusation of substitutional fallacy [...]' (Anscombe, 1975: 21). The reader is then supplied with an extract from Descartes and an explanation of why that is immune to the charge of substitutional fallacy.[72] I interpret Anscombe's text as recommending that the standard objection to Descartes is unsatisfactory and that an alternative must be provided if we are to prove him wrong. That is to say that Descartes is presented as a serious and formidable philosophical opponent with a powerful argument for the conclusion that I am an ego.

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[72] I take 'substitutional fallacy' to mean the masked man fallacy. This fallacy is derived from a Stoic's riddle in Lucian of Samosata's play 'Philosophies For Sale' (c.165-199 C.E.). The riddle involves getting an interlocutor to agree both that they know their father and that if a veiled figure were put before them then they wouldn't know that person. The stoic then reveals that the veiled figure is the father. The fallacy here is to think that just because we don't know something under one guise doesn't entail that we don't know it at all. Descartes supposedly commits this fallacy when he claims to clearly and distinctly conceive of himself to be the bearer of thoughts and then concludes that the bearer of thoughts (i.e. himself) is not identical with the man Descartes. For, the challenge goes, is Descartes not just conceiving of the man Descartes but under a different guise to normal? Is it not as if the man Descartes were conceived of but was wearing a mask or a veil so the grasper doubted that it was the man Descartes? Descartes avoids committing this fallacy through his doctrine of clear and distinct ideas which 'have God for [their] author. [Their] author, I say, is God, who is supremely perfect, and who cannot be a deceiver on pain of contradiction [which is a form of imperfection]' (Descartes, 1641: 62). (Of course, this is but one way of interpreting Descartes's texts.)

Given this footnote, it is difficult to interpret 'The First Person' (1975) as setting out with the assumption that Descartes' position is absurd. The later explanation of Descartes' position that an ego is one and persists through time as encountering 'intolerable' difficulties isn't a flippant dismissal (Anscombe, 1975: 31). Indeed, Vincent Descombes' 'Logic of the Egotistical Sentence' (2018) provides a suggestion for how to read this section of 'The First Person' (1975) without describing it as a reductio-ad-absurdum. This interpretation goes as follows: P1 - 'I' is individuating; P2 - There can be no principle of individuation for egos; Therefore, what 'I' individuates is not an ego. Overall, the reductio ad absurdum is a lot more nuanced than interpreters tend to let on and is not the only argument which 'The First Person' (1975) contains.

i.ii. The Compatibility-With-Lack Interpretation

In 'Anscombe and the Self-Reference Rule' (1994), Lucy O'Brien forwards another interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) as containing the following argument: P1 - Our use of a first-person pronoun is expressive of first-person self-consciousness; P2: Use of a first-person pronoun is possible in the absence of genuine first-person self consciousness (e.g. in the case of robots); Therefore, an account of 'I' as a device of reflexive self-reference is insufficient to capture our use of the first person-pronoun (O'Brien, 1994: 277-278).[73] O'Brien objects to Anscombe's argument on the grounds that a human subject who makes reflexive self-reference 'will inevitably succeed in self-referring self-consciously. She will do so because of the fact that a subject who is engaged in producing an utterance, does so self-consciously: A subject knows that she, herself is using a term' (O'Brien, 1994: 280).

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[73] At least, this is the argument I can best distil from O'Brien's paper.

Explaining 'I' as a device of reflexive self-reference in the case of humans already incorporates the notion of self-consciousness, so no further explanation is required.

I admire O'Brien's interpretation and analysis of 'The First Person' (1975). I think it is correct that Anscombe's paper can be well interpreted as containing this argument. And I think O'Brien is perceptive in noting that in explaining our use of 'I' as an act of reflexive self-reference in the case of humans we already assume self-consciousness on the part of the speaker. Indeed, this would be consistent with interpreting Anscombe's texts as containing a (typically) intentional speech-act account of referring (as I do) because intentional actions are self-conscious actions.

Still, O'Brien is only concerned with the first part of Anscombe's paper. In particular with the thought experiment concerning 'rather inhuman people' (Anscombe, 1975: 24) who have a device of reflexive self-reference, but lack self-consciousness. I understand 'The First Person' (1975) to contain further arguments which raise difficulties for the notion that our use of the first-person pronoun constitutes an intentional act of self-reference. So O'Brien answers one of the problems which Anscombe's text raises, but not others. In addition, the material which O'Brien draws upon can also be interpreted as linked to other concerns of 'The First Person' (1975). And, in presenting my own interpretation of Anscombe's central argument, I will offer an alternative interpretation of the significance of the material which O'Brien draws upon; in particular of the rather-inhuman-people thought experiment.

i.iii. The No-Identifying-Concept Interpretation

 A further interpretation of the argument of 'The First Person' (1975) is to be found in Adrian Haddock's 'I am "NN"' (2019). Haddock's stated main gambit is that the argument of 'The First Person' (1975) must be administered by the reader in the first person (Haddock, 2019: 3) and that the point of Anscombe's paper is to show that it is not possible for anyone to have an identifying conception of an object which accompanies their use of 'I' (Haddock, 2019: 1). The argument is as follows: P1: If our use of 'I' involves an accompanying identifying conception of an object, then that accompanying identifying conception would be immune to errors of identification; P2: No sensible identifying conception of an object which might accompany our use of 'I' is immune to errors of identification; Therefore, there is no identifying conception of an object which accompanies our use of 'I'.

 Although I admire Haddock's interpretation, there are two reasons why I prefer the one I am about to offer in this chapter. Firstly, because Haddock interprets 'The First Person' (1975) as containing a neo-Fregean account of reference (Haddock, 2019: 2). According to Haddock's account of this, there is no reference without sense i.e. whenever a speaker uses a word to make a reference, they have an accompanying Art des Gegebenseins or conception of the object being referred to which constitutes identifying knowledge of that object (Haddock, 2019: 2). This is what makes the conclusion to the argument I have taken from Haddock's paper significant - upon the neo-Fregean account of referring there is only reference when there is sense, our use of 'I' doesn't involve a sense (i.e. there is no identifying conception of an object which accompanies our use of 'I'), therefore, our use of 'I' is not referential.

I think Haddock correct in according significance to the notion that if we use 'I' to make a reference, then our use of it is guaranteed to be successful; however, the attribution of a neo-Fregean account of referring to 'The First Person' (1975) entails that he only explains why this is significant for a neo-Fregean account of reference. My interpretation, however, through being rooted in an alternative interpretation of referring in Anscombe's work, will show how this notion is significant in relation to a first principle in *Intention* (1957)

Secondly, I think that Haddock's version of the central argument is ultimately question begging. Perhaps we just haven't hit upon the accompanying identifying conception which would be immune to errors of identification. Concluding that there can't be one may well be premature. Upon my interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975), however, it doesn't matter if this question is begged.

i.iv. The Category-Pariah Interpretation

Finally, although not explicitly stated, I find a summary of 'The First Person' (1975) in Peter Geach's review of Gareth Evans' *The Varieties of Reference* (1982) to be richly suggestive of another interpretation of Anscombe's paper. Geach writes 'Now Anscombe in her essay 'The First Person' maintains (1) that tokens of 'I' in different people's mouths are not tokens of equiform proper names, like tokens of 'Jones' in Wales; (2) that I is not to be assimilated to demonstratives like 'here' or 'this man'; (3) that I is not short for a definite description' (Geach, 1986: 535). The interpretation of the central argument which I find to be suggested by Geach's summary goes as follows: P1 - If 'I' is a referring expression, then it must be a member of one of the recognised categories of referring expressions. P2 - 'I' isn't a member

of one of the recognised categories of referring expressions. Therefore, 'I' isn't a referring expression.

 Although it is true that 'The First Person' (1975) is ordered in such a way as Geach describes, I do not favour this interpretation for two reasons. Firstly, because the argument is quite obviously question begging. If 'I' isn't in the category of proper names, definite descriptions, or demonstratives, then why couldn't it be in another category of its own or perhaps with some other referring expressions which fail to fit into the other categories? Secondly, this argument seems to assume that there is no essence to being a referring expression. Rather, it seems to suggest that referring expressions form a family in the Wittgensteian sense.[74] Hence the text takes us through the various members of the referring expressions family to see which one it overlaps with. Yet, Anscombe's 'Human Essence' (1988) contains a very clear statement of a commitment to there being conceptual essences.[75] Whatever it is that makes 'I' not belong in a category with proper names, definite descriptions, demonstratives, or in any speaker's reference referring expression category at all must be something which our use of 'I' lacks which our use of referring expressions essentially involves.

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[74] Wittgenstein introduces the idea of family resemblance concepts in the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) with a discussion of the concept 'game' (Wittgenstein, 1958: R.66-67). Wittgenstein claims that there is no essence to this concept and that instead 'we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing [between all those activities which we call games]: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail' (Wittgenstein, 1958: R.66). At least one critic, Bernard Suits, has argued that Wittgenstein begs the question and that a convincing essence of our concept 'game' can be produced. See *The Grasshopper* (2005).

[75] This should also be clear from the beginning of *Intention* (1957). Here Anscombe explains the project of that book as describing the character of our concept of 'intention' i.e. the project is to describe the essence of our concept of 'intention' which is common to our speaking of expressions of intention, intentional actions, and of the intention with which a thing was done (Anscombe, 1957: §1).

I hope that the above clears the thicket of existing interpretations somewhat. And that it serves, to some extent, as an explanation for why a new interpretation should be welcome. Existing interpretations tend to either be objectionable or to develop the isolated parts of 'The First Person' (1975). An interpretation which develops another part or thread of that paper, as mine does, should, I think, be of interest. As the reader will hopefully notice, my new interpretation draws upon my disagreements with the above interpretations. In particular, I don't have anything much to say about the reductio ad absurdum section. Instead, I draw on other features of 'The First Person' (1975) especially the idea that if we use 'I' to make a reference, then we could never be subject to reference failure which is repeated as important throughout Anscombe's paper.[76] I also assume that what precludes our use of 'I' from being an instance of speaker's reference is that our use of 'I' lacks something which is essential to our performing an act of speaker's reference whether that involves the use of proper names, demonstratives, or definite descriptions.

A New Interpretation

The general basis for my new interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975)'s central argument is twofold. Firstly, I assume the interpretation of Anscombe on referring developed in Chapter One. Secondly, I take the following extract to be the key to understanding why the central thesis is ultimately arrived at: 'Getting hold of the wrong object *is* excluded, and that makes us think that getting hold of the right object is guaranteed. But the reason is that there is no getting hold of an object at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). This quote is taken from within

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[76] As defined in Chapter One.

the same discussion which the central thesis appears to end. I interpret the central thesis to be a rewording of the second sentence of this quote. Whilst I interpret the first sentence to show us the reasoning behind the central thesis. My job as interpreter is to show how it is that we reach the central thesis via the observation that 'getting hold of the wrong object *is* excluded' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). The significance of this immunity to reference failure (as per the account of reference failure earlier derived from Anscombe's work) needs to be explained.

We have already seen how various of Anscombe's interpreters have attempted to explain the significance of the observation that 'getting hold of the wrong object *is* excluded' (Anscombe, 1975: 32). The reductio ad-absurdists interpret the significance of this claim as arising from it following that if getting hold of the wrong object *is* excluded, then Descates was right that we are souls. Haddock argues that the significance arises from it following that if getting hold of the wrong object *is* excluded, then it is because there is no identifying conception of an object which accompanies our use of 'I' as is required for (neo-)Fregean reference. Even interpreters who do not use this observation in their interpretations of the central argument tend to note the significance of the idea which it contains. Lucy O'Brien, for instance, notes that an important part of Anscombe's argument is that 'it is clearly not a contingent matter that 'I' refers to the person who uses it. As Anscombe herself points out, whatever state of information a subject is in with regard to themselves, their comprehending uses of 'I' will be guaranteed to refer to themselves' (O'Brien, 1994: 279). Overall, I am certainly not the first person to have noted the significance of this observation within 'The First Person' (1975).

I am, however, the first person to explain this observation's significance via recourse to Anscombe's account of intentional action. My train of thought is the following - there is

something about the nature of referring (as interpreted from Anscombe's work in the first chapter of this thesis) which is such that getting hold of the wrong object cannot be excluded in order for an action to count as an act of speaker's reference. I believe that this something comes from understanding speaker's reference to be a typically intentional action, understanding intentional actions to be a subset of the category of actions which we know ourselves to perform, and thinking that 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8). Quite simply, if we used 'I' to make a reference, then the possibility of the know or merely think you know dichotomy does not arise. For if we use 'I' to 'knowingly and intentionally speak of [ourselves]' (Anscombe, 1975: 22), then how could we get hold of the wrong thing and merely think that we knowingly and intentionally speak of ourselves? These thoughts are best set out in terms of premises and conclusion:

The Argument From Intentional Action

P1: If we used 'I' to make a reference, then that would be an intentional action

P2: Yet using 'I' to make a reference could not be an intentional action[77]

Conclusion: Therefore, we do not use 'I' to make a reference

Let us examine each premise in turn.

i. P1: If we used 'I' to make a reference, then that would be an intentional action

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[77] This premise assumes that if 'I' were used to make a reference, then that would be self-reference.

I hope that this premise requires little explanation. I have interpreted Anscombe's texts as suggesting a speech-act account of referring upon which speaker's reference is typically an intentional action. It follows that, upon the worldview I have interpreted Anscombe's texts as suggesting, if we used 'I' to make self-reference, then that would also be a typically intentional action.

ii. P2: Using 'I' to make a reference could not be an intentional action

Now, why could using 'I' to make a reference not be an intentional action? This is where the significance of the observation that 'getting hold of the wrong object *is* excluded' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) enters. A first principle in the worldview which Anscombe's texts suggest is the idea that 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8) and it comes into play in the theory of intentional action which *Intention* (1957) provides. For intentional actions are actions which we know ourselves to perform.[78]

The best way to show how the second premise of the argument from intentional action is interpreted from Anscombe's texts is via introducing a subargument which I term the argument from illusory success:

P1: All intentional actions admit of illusory success

P2: Using 'I' to make a reference would never admit of illusory success

Conclusion: Therefore, using 'I' to make a reference could not be an intentional action

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[78] At least upon the Anscombean account of intentional action which, as was discussed in the introduction, is descended from Christian Ethics. Please see the section on this topic in the introduction for a comparison with Sigmund Freud who doesn't hold this. And with John Searle who is interested in actions involving intentionality which is to be distinguished from the notion of intentional actions in the Christian Ethics tradition.

I will now examine the premises of this subargument in detail.

ii.i. P1: All intentional actions admit of illusory success

Upon Anscombe's theory, the performance of an intentional action is the successful execution of an intention with which. If it only makes sense to speak of knowledge when it comes to intentional actions because 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8), then this is surely because the performance of any intentional action - the successful execution of any intention with which - isn't necessary. I.e. the world could have been different such that the person who acted failed to execute the intention with which they acted rather than succeeded to execute it.

Let us briefly consider an example of this. Anscombe has an example in *Intention* (1957) of a man setting up a camera in order to photograph Marylin Monroe. Let us elaborate that the camera was a large old-fashioned camera with a tripod and that the man is setting it up on a street corner because he believes that Monroe will pass by this way. And let us also elaborate that someone pases by who the photographer takes to be Monroe and whom he photographs. Let us also elaborate that the person he photographed wasn't Marylin at all, but someone similar looking. In photographing someone whom he wrongly took for Marylin Monroe, the photographer failed to execute the intention with which he acted. Namely that of photographing the actual Marylin Monroe - the woman born Norma Jean, the star of *Some Like It Hot*.

The photographer merely thought himself to know that he was executing his intention of photographing Monroe, but the world could have been different. The actual Monroe could have walked past and he would have photographed her. In that case, he would have successfully executed the intention with which he acted. This is how the notion that 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8) enters into Anscombe's account of intentional action. We might try to succinctly capture this by saying that, for Anscombe, every intentional action admits of illusory success.

Now, this idea that every intentional action admits of illusory success is controversial. Firstly, it is controversial because it is derived from Anscombe's first principle that 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8). Michael Thompson, for instance, deems this notion 'one of the impediments to our comprehension of G. E. M. Anscombe's *Intention*' and little more than a 'peculiar obsessive theoretic tic' (Thompson, 2011: 298). The weight which one grants to any claim in a text seems the business of the interpreter however and I do not see why a reader should be dictated to by Thompson. Other interpreters, such as Kim Frost, recognise that the aforementioned notion is an important principle in Anscombe's texts (Frost, 2019: 329). I side with these latter interpreters. Secondly, Anscombe's first principle is controversial because works by other authors appear to suggest potential counterexamples. In particular Brian O'Shaughnessy's examples of trying and Donald Davidson's example of acting in uncertain circumstances. I will briefly discuss these.[79]

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[79] The reason for this briefness was discussed in the introduction to this chapter where I noted my stance as an interpreter seeking to provide an internal critique of Anscombe's work. This aspect of the thesis is also discussed in the introduction to the thesis overall.

O'Shaughnessy's 'Trying (As the Mental "Pineal Gland")' (1973) is aimed at an anonymous interlocutor who holds the view that all intentional actions admit of illusory success. To an extent, this anonymous interlocutor might be interpreted as Anscombe. O'Shaughnessy argues that the 'all intentional actions admit of illusory success' claim is false because trying is an intentional action (O'Shaughnessy, 1973: 373) and 'success is not in doubt' when it comes to trying (O'Shaughnessy, 1973: 365). O'Shaughnessy's first example of immune-to-illusory-success trying is that of a mental act of trying which it is claimed precedes all other intentional actions (and one presumes, all failed intentional actions) (O'Shaughnessy, 1973: 371-372). What I take O'Shaughnessy to have in mind is what philosophers generally call willing.[80] Willing isn't part of Anscombe's worldview, however, and its intelligibility is argued against in *Intention* (1957).[81] Consequently, even if O'Shaughnessy's mental trying is accepted by some as an example of an immune-to-illusory-success intentional action, it is entirely irrelevant to one interpreting the Anscombean worldview.

O'Shaughnessy's second example of immune-to-illusory-success trying is any bodily movement preceded by a, just discussed, mental act of trying (O'Shaughnessy, 1973: 365-370). For O'Shaughnessy, such a bodily movement constitutes an act of trying to do something. For instance, for O'Shaughnessy, trying to crack a walnut with my palm consists in the bodily movement of clenching my fingers around what I take to be a walnut where this bodily movement is preceded by an appropriate mental act.[82] What is actually inside my palm

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[80] Both Phillipa Foot and Immanuel Kant are examples of this. See Foot's *Natural Goodness* (2003) and Kant's *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785).

[81] See Anscombe (1957: §29).

[82] The walnut example is my own. It allows for a clearer contrast with Anscombe. O'Shaughnessy's original example is of trying to get from A to B which he defines so: 'it consists in walking along such terrain as one thinks will get one from A to B' (O'Shaughnessy, 1973: 369). This entails that even if one mistakes C for B and walks towards C, then you will still be trying to get to B.

is, for O'Shaugnessey, irrelevant to whether or not the bodily movement constitutes an act of trying to crack a walnut with my palm. If trying to crack a walnut with my palm simply consists in the appropriately preceded bodily movement of clenching my fingers around something (anything) thought to be a walnut, then it seems that the intentional action of trying to crack a walnut with my palm is immune to illusory success. For it is difficult to see how we could merely think we know that we are clenching our fingers together in the cracking-a-walnut way. Hence the contrast between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows' does not arise when it comes to trying actions as O'Shaughnessy understands them.

This will not be the case, however, upon Anscombe's theory of intentional action. Upon that theory, trying to do something (as long as trying to do something is an intentional action) will consist in what is actually done.[83] This is because, for Anscombe, an intentional action is something which actually happens (Anscombe, 1957: §19, §29). What actually happens isn't just the bodily movement, however, it is the bodily movement in its circumstances.[84] As such, for Anscombe, trying to crack a walnut with my palm doesn't simply consist in the bodily movement of clenching my fingers around something taken to be a walnut. Rather, it consists in actually clenching my fingers around a walnut. Clenching my fingers around something else, perhaps an oversized peach stone which I took for a walnut, isn't trying to crack a walnut with my palm, it is trying to crack an oversized peach stone with my palm.

[83] At least, this strikes me as the most obvious way of interpreting Anscombe's work in this respect - her texts never explicitly addresses the topic of trying.

[84] Jennifer Hornsby's paper 'Actions in their Circumstances' (2011) draws out this feature of Anscombe's account of intentional action and how it differs from Davidson's competing theory. Davidson's theory assumes that the action is the bodily movement and that this causes events such as the cracking of a walnut.

It is only when we conceive of trying as O'Shaughnessy does - as a bodily movement + related mental event in whatever circumstances - that the notion of immune-to-illusory-success trying seems plausible. If, like Anscombe, we understand circumstances as relevant to whether or not we are indeed trying to do something, then there seems no question that illusory success is possible. Again, it transpires that O'Shaughnessy's notion of immune-to-illusory-success trying is irrelevant to the interpreter of Anscombe's worldview.

Let us move on to Davidson. Davidson doesn't directly take on the 'all intentional actions admit of illusory success' claim, but his work nevertheless suggests a potential counterexample to it. In 'Intending' (1978), Davidson claims: 'It is a mistake to suppose that if an agent is doing something intentionally, he must know that he is doing it.' (Davidson, 1978: 91). Now, strictly speaking, this is irrelevant to the Anscombean theory of intentional action. As discussed in the introduction, upon Anscombe's account of intentional action - which is part of a long tradition of theorising about intentional action - an intentional action is something which we know ourselves to be doing. It is possible, however, to construe the example which Davidson provides to try and prove his point as a potential counterexample to the notion that 'every intentional action admits of illusory success'. To see why we need to first consider Davidson's example:

'in writing heavily on this page I may be intending to produce ten legible carbon copies. I do not know, or believe with any confidence, that I am succeeding. But if I am producing ten legible carbon copies, I am certainly doing it intentionally.' (Davidson, 1978: 92). We can see that the legible carbon copier neither knows or merely thinks himself to know that he is making ten legible carbon copies. This is because the carbon-copier is working in circumstances of uncertainty. Knowing or merely thinking he knows what he is doing doesn't

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seem to enter at all because the uncertainty has been acknowledged. It is a case of hoping one is doing something. Does this spell defeat for the Anscombe-derived notion that every intentional action admits of illusory success? I think not. Somewhat satisfyingly, it is a comment from O'Shaughnessy which shows us how Davidson might be responded to.

O'Shaughnessy informs us that 'we speak of trying only when success is in doubt' (O'Shaughnessy, 1973: 365). We might well accept that as true for an Anscombean account of trying as well as O'Shaughnessy's. (Of course, I am interested in an Anscombean account of trying in what follows.) Success is indeed in doubt in the Davidson case - the doubt arises from whether or not the protagonist is pressing hard enough to make ten legible copies, so it would appear to be a case of trying. Given that success is in doubt, the agent in Davidson's case would surely describe themselves as trying to make ten legible carbon copies rather than making ten legible carbon copies. Once we accept this, the possibility of knowing and merely thinking oneself to know enters again. For instance, the man may have miscounted the sheets of carbon paper and is in fact trying to make nine legible copies, so merely thinks himself to know that he is trying to make ten.

To recap, I have briefly engaged with O'Shaughnessy and Davidson because they are likely to be cited as authors who provide counterexamples to the notion that 'every intentional action admits of illusory success'. Although in providing an exegesis of Anscombe's work I am willing to note potential external critiques, I am not interested in a long discussion of the work from which external critiques might arise. In general, the claim that 'all intentional actions admit of illusory success' is derived from a first principle of Anscombe's philosophy which is that 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8). Anyone seeking to

understand Anscombe's work cannot simply discard the 'every intentional action admits of illusory success' claim because some other philosophers may not agree with it, that claim is a first principle in the worldview which Anscombe's texts suggest.[85]

ii.ii. P2: Using 'I' to make a reference would never admit of illusory success

Let us begin by considering the question 'What is illusory success in the case of referring?'. And let us remember that this question is being asked in relation to Anscombe's philosophy and the account of referring which has been interpreted from it. A case of illusory success, when it comes to referring, will be an example of speaker's reference where someone fails to execute the intention with which they act. I.e., as per the explanation offered in Chapter One, it will be a case of reference failure. This will occur by the speaker getting hold of or latching onto the wrong thing i.e. something other than the thing which they intended to refer to. We have already come across an example of this in Chapter One, but there is no harm in repeating it here: 'Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is something that it latches on to (as I will put it): in this example it is the box' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).

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[85] This is not to say that Anscombe would not have defended her theory against O'Shaughnessy or Davidson. Indeed, I've suggested how Davidson might be responded to. In the case of O'Shaughnessy, however, it seems that we must simply choose between theories. On what basis are we to make our choice? O'Shaughnessy appears to appeal to 'linguistic rule[s]' (O'Shaughnessy, 1973: 365) as theory arbitrator. It is unclear if this is best interpreted as an appeal to convention. However interpreted, the linguistic rule for 'trying' supposedly favours his theory. Meanwhile, Anscombe would, I think, advise us to choose between theories on the basis of which best fits our form of life. (I base this claim upon my reading of Anscombe's methodology.) Anscombe would argue that if O'Shaughnessy's theory were really true, then our form of life wouldn't be the same, so O'Shaughnessy's theory is a bad fit for our form of life. I suspect this would be right, but there is neither space nor need to elaborate further given the aims of this thesis.

What is the illusory success here? The speaker refers to (latches onto) something other than the thing which they take themselves to be referring to (latching onto). Namely, they refer to an empty box rather than a box containing Jones' ashes. The intentional object of referring and the material object of referring do not coincide. So referring, where that is an intentional act of speaker's reference, admits of illusory success because a speaker can know or merely think they know that they are latching onto the thing which they intend to refer to. The intentional object of referring need not match with the material object of referring. Reference failure is always possible. Is this possible with the first-person pronoun? 'The First Person' (1975) is emphatic that this is not possible. If 'I' is used to make a reference, then our use of it is 'secure against reference failure' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).[86]

The longest statement on this topic in 'The First Person' (1975) comes at the end of a discussion concerning in what sense our use of 'I' would have guaranteed reference, if we used it to make self-reference. A logician interlocutor has just suggested that an adequate account of this guaranteed reference would be that there is guaranteed existence of an object for the speaker of 'I' to latch onto. Anscombe responds to this suggestion as follows: 'If our logician takes this as an adequate account of the guaranteed reference of "I", then he will have to grant that there is [another] sort of 'guaranteed reference', which "I" does *not* have. [This other sort of guaranteed reference] would entail a guarantee, not just that there is [a thing to latch onto] but that what I take [myself to be latching onto] is [the thing I am latching onto]' (Anscombe, 1975: 30).

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[86] As has already been discussed at some length in Chapter One, and as is already assumed in this paragraph, reference failure for Anscombe is the failure to execute the intention with which one refers. This will typically occur when one refers to something other than what one intends to refer to as per the poor Jones example.

Anscombe's text proceeds to consider this possibility: If "I" does not have this sort of guaranteed reference, then an "I"-user 'would not be immune to mistaken identification of someone else as' "I'' (Anscombe, 1975: 30). That is to say, we could latch onto someone else when using 'I' whilst taking ourselves to be latching onto ourselves. Anscombe concludes bluntly 'the suggestion seems absurd. It seems clear that if "I" is a referring expression at all, it has both kinds of guaranteed reference. The object an "I"-user means by it must exist so long as he is using "I", nor can he take the wrong object to be the object he means by "I"' (Anscombe, 1975: 30).

This somewhat convoluted passage contains not simply an affirmation that if we used 'I' to make a reference, then it would be immune to illusory success, but also suggests an explanation as to why we should think this. It is assumed that the only way in which "I" could be subject to illusory success, would be if we could refer to/latch onto a material object distinct from ourselves whilst intending to refer to/latch onto ourselves. We are simply told that this is absurd, but why is it absurd exactly? I believe that the absurdity has already be explained earlier in 'The First Person' (1975) in the discussion of the rather-inhuman people:

The aforementioned discussion begins with the question 'is it really true that "I" is only not called a proper name because everyone uses it only to refer to himself? Let us construct a clear case of just such a name [we are then told what creatures whose language included a word that everyone uses only to refer to himself would be like]' (Anscombe, 1975: 24). What is implicit in this question, although not carefully drawn out, is that referring is an intentional action. Given the Anscombean notion that every intentional action admits of illusory success, the 'constructing of a clear case of just such a name' involves constructing a clear case of

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creatures whose language includes a word that everyone uses only to refer to himself and the use of which is capable of illusory success. It is suggested that only the following sort of creatures could have such a term in their language:

'Imagine a society in which everyone is labelled with two names. One appears on their backs and at the top of their chests, and these names, which their bearers cannot see, are various: "B" to "Z" let us say. The other, "A", is stamped on the inside of their wrists, and is the same for everyone. In making reports on people's actions everyone uses the names on their chests or backs if he can see these names or is used to seeing them. Everyone also learns to respond to utterance of the name on his own chest and back in the sort of way and circumstances in which we tend to respond to utterance of our names. Reports on one's own actions, which one gives straight off from observation, are made using the name on the wrist. Such reports are made, not on the basis of observation alone, but also on that of inference and testimony or other information. B, for example, derives conclusions expressed by sentences with "A" as subject, from other people's statements using "B" as subject' (Anscombe, 1975: 24).

Anscombe's text confirms that these creatures's use of their first-person pronoun would admit of illusory success - 'Of course, a man B may sometimes make a mistake through seeing the name "A" on the wrist of another, and not realizing it is the wrist of a man whose other name is after all not inaccessible to B in the special way in which is own name ("B") is.' (Anscombe, 1975: 24). Anscombe is also explicit that we are not like these creatures which she deems to be 'rather inhuman' (Anscombe, 1975: 24). According to Anscombe, these creatures are unlike us because they only know what actions they are performing from observation. We, however, know ourselves to perform at least some actions (namely

intentional actions) without observation.[87] And it is because these creatures are unlike us that their use of a first-person pronoun admits of illusory success. As O'Brien puts it 'reference to others by use of 'A' is still open as it is possible for others' wrists to fall under a subject's observation in just the same way that its own does' (O'Brien, 1994: 279).

Overall, I interpret Anscombe's text as arguing that only these rather inhuman sort of creatures who know their actions via observation could have a language with a first-person pronoun the use of which would be capable of illusory success. We are not such creatures, however, because we know ourselves to perform certain actions without observation. Consequently, because we are not these sort of creatures, it would appear correct to conclude that using 'I' to make a reference would never admit of illusory success, at least for human creatures. And I interpret the claimed requirement that we would only have observational knowledge of our actions to be the absurdity which Anscombe perceives in the idea that our use of 'I' might not have guaranteed success in terms of the material and the intentional object of referring not coinciding.

Aside from the above argument that if we used 'I' to make a reference, then our use of it would be immune to illusory success, we might note the presence of versions of this notion in the work of various of her contemporaries. Sydney Shoemaker, for instance, assumes that we

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[87] This is a key aspect of Anscombe's account of intentional action. It has been touched upon in Chapter One. It is difficult to explain this notion briefly - it is a topic of discussion in the secondary literature on Anscombe's work (see, for instance, McDowell (2011)) and a notion which Anscombe came to revisit (see Anscombe (1962)). We might try to say that this is knowledge which does not arise from sensory e.g. auditory, gustatory etc. clues. In the case of intentional actions at least, Anscombe's idea seems to be that knowledge of what we are intentionally doing does not come from sensory clues, rather it comes from the intention with which we act actually being executed or coming true. We can, of course, confirm that we are chopping onions by looking at what we are chopping, but as long as we are in fact chopping onions, then we don't need to look to know that. A good explanation along these lines can be found in Rödl (2007: 49).

use 'I' to make a reference and asserts that first-person claims are typically 'not subject to error through misidentification relative to 'I': it cannot happen that I am mistaken in saying "I feel pain" because, although I do know of someone that feels pain, I am mistaken in thinking that person to be myself. But this is also true of first-person statements that are clearly not incorrigible; I can be mistaken in saying "I see a canary," since I can be mistaken in thinking that what I see is a canary or (in the case of hallucination) that there is anything at all that I see, but it cannot happen that I am mistaken in saying this because I have misidentified as myself the person I know to see a canary' (Shoemaker, 1968: 557).[88]

Shoemaker doesn't obviously have the same sophisticated speech act account of referring which I have derived from Anscombe's work - so we cannot easily speak of his immunity to error through misidentification as being immunity of the intentional object of referring not corresponding with the material object of referring. However, we can translate this into more Shoemaker-type terms and instead say that there is immunity of the presumed identity of the identified object not corresponding with what the identified object actually is.[89]

At least one author terms immunity to error through misidentification relative to 'I' Shoemaker's 'foundational philosophical idea that we cannot misspeak the first person pronoun' (Barry, 2016: 183). Although this isn't strictly true - Shoemaker does allow that there are occasions on which we 'misspeak' the first person pronoun[90] - 'foundational' seems

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[88] Shoemaker is almost certainly following Ludwig Wittgenstein's discussion of 'I' in *The Blue and Brown Books* (1933-1935/1958).

[89] Curiously, Shoemaker claims that a first-person claim which is not not subject to error through misidentification relative to 'I' involves 'reference without identification' (Shoemaker, 1968: 558). This is very close to my interpretation of Anscombe's position which is that 'I' always somehow involves reference without intentional action/intentional object.

[90] These are strange cases where we are in a heap of bodies and mistake someone else's bleeding arm for our own.

an apt choice of word because Shoemaker doesn't really provide an argument for this claim. Rather, Shoemaker just expects his reader to agree that a phenomenon of immunity to error through misidentification relative to 'I' is obvious when it comes to first-person claims. This leads me to think that even if we find the rather-inhuman people argument for the claim that 'using 'I' to make a reference would never admit of illusory success' question begging, we can see that the claim itself is just a variation on contemporary philosophical gospel; an unrestricted version of Shoemaker's earlier restricted claim.

ii.iii Conclusion to the Argument from Illusory Success

Recall, the argument from illusory success goes as follows:

P1: All intentional actions admit of illusory success

P2: Using 'I' to make a reference would never admit of illusory success

Conclusion: Therefore, using 'I' to make a reference could not be an intentional action

I have just explained why I interpret Anscombe's texts as suggesting the argument from illusory success. The first premise - all intentional actions admit of illusory success - is derived from the first principle that 'there is a point in speaking of knowledge only where a contrast exists between 'he *knows*' and 'he (merely) *thinks* he knows'' (Anscombe, 1957: §8). This first principle is applicable to intentional actions because these are actions which we know ourselves to perform.[91] I have noted that this is likely to be a controversial premise and

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[91] That intentional actions are actions which we know ourselves to perform is a foundational notion in the tradition of Christian Ethics of which Anscombe is a part. There are, of course, thinkers outside of this tradition who do not hold this notion. Sigmund Freud, for instance, claims that we unconsciously perform intentional actions and this is related to his wider philosophical worldview. I have already provided some discussion of these two schools of thought in the introduction and will not provide more than a reminder here.

have noted some likely detractors - namely O'Shaughnessy and Davidson. I have declined to provide a long defence of this premise, however, because it is foundational to the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts and because I am not, as was stated in the introduction, providing a defence of that worldview against (what I term) external critiques.

The second premise of the argument from illusory success - using 'I' to make a reference would never admit of illusory success - is taken from Anscombe's notion that if 'I' is used to make a reference, then that reference would be guaranteed in the sense that we would be immune to mistakenly identifying someone else as' "I'' (Anscombe, 1975: 30). I have shown how 'the First Person' (1975) might be interpreted as containing an argument for this premise - namely in relation to Anscombe's rather inhuman people thought experiment. I have also noted how the second premise of the argument from illusory success is related to Sydney Shoemaker's notion that first-person claims are typically 'not subject to error through misidentification relative to 'I'.

I hope it is now clear how the conclusion to the argument from illusory success - using 'I' to make a reference could not be an intentional action - (which is also the second premise of the argument from intentional action) emerges from Anscombe's texts. If it is accepted that (a.) all intentional actions admit of illusory success and (b.) that if we used 'I' to make self-reference, then that wouldn't permit of illusory success (unless, of course, we were very different creatures which only knew their actions via observation), then we seem compelled to conclude that our using 'I' to make a reference could not be an intentional action.

iii. Conclusion to the Argument from Intentional Action: Therefore, We Do Not Use 'I' to Make a Reference

Concluding the argument from illusory success, so securing the second premise of the argument from intentional action, allows me to also conclude the argument from intentional action. Recall that that argument is as follows:

P1: If we used 'I' to make a reference, then that would be an intentional action

P2: Yet using 'I' to make a reference could not be an intentional action[92]

Conclusion: Therefore, we do not use 'I' to make a reference

I have elucidated both of these premises showing in each case how they are drawn from 'The First Person' (1975). The conclusion to the argument from intentional action is, we must recall my interpretation of the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) that "'I' is neither a name, nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all" (Anscombe, 1975: 32). The argument from intentional action is my preferred interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975)'s central argument.

Although I enjoy the argument from intentional action, I will now provide an internal critique of that argument. As noted in the introduction, an internal critique is one which does not assess an argument or a theory for its fit with the way the world actually is (or is presumed to be), but rather its fit with other texts e.g. in this case texts which are related by a single author which are being interpreted together as suggesting a worldview. The heart of

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[92] This premise assumes that if 'I' were used to make a reference, then that would be self-reference.

my critique is the following: although the argument from intentional action is prima facie in accordance with *Intention* (1957)'s general account of intentional action, it rests on a particular reading of that account which sees intentional actions as involving basic sortal conceptions. As per my argument in Chapter Two of this thesis, *Intention* (1957)'s account of intentional action, in particular the notion of intention with which, entails that intentional actions often involve complex-means conceptions of objects we intentionally act upon. Once it is recognised that *Intention* (1957)'s account of intentional action entails our often having complex-means conceptions of the objects we intentionally act upon, then it is possible to allow that if we use 'I' to make self-reference, then that use of 'I' could be subject to illusory success.

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

Complex-Means Conceptions and the Possibility of Illusory Success: An Internal Critique of 'The First Person' (1975)

This analysis section of the chapter is dedicated to critiquing the argument from intentional action and arguing that it does not follow from the worldview which Anscombe's texts otherwise suggest. In particular, the notion that if we used the first-person pronoun to make intentional self-reference, then that action would be immune to illusory success. I have divided this section into three parts. The first part briefly discusses Michael White's objection to the idea that if we used the first-person pronoun to make intentional self-reference, then that action would be immune to illusory success. The second part recalls my argument for interpreting Anscombe's texts as supporting our having complex-means conceptions in addition to sortal conceptions. It also recalls my explanation of how this leads to a richer

interpretation of when intentional action failure and reference failure occurs. The third part uses the notion of complex-means conceptions to argue that if we used the first-person pronoun to make intentional self-reference, then that action would not be immune to illusory success.

Michael White Against Immunity to Illusory Success

Before beginning my own critique, I want to note that the secondary literature on Anscombe's work does already contain a critique of the idea that if we used the first-person pronoun to make self-reference, then our doing that would be immune to illusory success. This is found in Michael J. White's paper 'The First Person Pronoun: A Reply to Anscombe and Clarke' (1979). White doesn't interpret 'The First Person' (1975) as containing the argument from intentional action, rather he is one of the reductio-ad-absurdist interpreters mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. However, White's version of the reductio-ad-absurdum argument includes the notion that using 'I' to make a referent would never admit of illusory success (White, 1979: 122).[93] And White relates this to the rather-inhuman-people argument as I have done.

Contra Anscombe, White argues that if we use 'I' to make a reference, then that use isn't immune to illusory success. This is done by offering the following counterexample to the immune to illusory success claim 'White (an I-user) is listening to a voice on a tape recording reading a lecture he (White) taped yesterday. Unbeknownst to White, a talented mimic has

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[93] Of course, White does not use this wording. But he is drawing upon the same assertion in 'The First Person' (1975) that if 'I' is used to make self-reference, then it has guaranteed reference not just in the sense that there is such a thing as I, but that what I take to be I is I (Anscombe, 1975: 30). This is the assertion which the immunity to illusory success claim seeks to capture.

also recorded his lecture and White is listening to that lecture. White comments, 'I evidently - though I did not notice it then - was hoarse yesterday'. This, in fact, is false' (White, 1979: 122). White takes this scenario to be an example of a speaker latching onto a material object which is not a match for the intentional object of referring (White, 1979: 123).

Unfortunately, White's analysis of his recording example is unclear regarding whether the 'I' speaker is the material object or the intentional object of referring on this occasion. But presumably, there is supposed to be a non-correspondence between the two. If we accept White's case as a counterexample, then I am unconvinced that a supporter of Anscombe's work would need to totally drop the idea that if we use 'I' as a referring term, then our use of it would be immune to illusory success. It could just be qualified to exclude cases such as White's. This would mean that the argument from intentional action would stay largely intact.

Still, I think it important to mention White as someone who has mounted a critique of the same notion in 'The First Person' (1975) which I wish to critique. My critique of the notion of immunity to illusory success is, however, quite different. Firstly, White provides an external critique of the 'The First Person' (1975) in so far as he objects that it doesn't fit with the way the world actually is. I, however, will be providing an internal critique, one which seeks to show that the immunity-to-illusory-success claim is inconsistent with other commitments of the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. Secondly, my critique isn't limited to a small number of examples which arise in special circumstances involving unbelievably talented mimics. Rather, what I have to say regarding complex-means concepts and the possibility of illusory success is likely applicable to the majority if not all uses of the first-person pronoun.

Recall: Complex-Means Conceptions, Intentional Action Failure and Reference Failure

Now, I ended Chapter Three - **From Basic-Sortal Conceptions to Complex-Means Conceptions** - by arguing that Anscombe's work on intentional action entails that in executing or failing to execute an intention with which, our conceptions of objects we are acting upon are often complex-means conceptions rather than the more basic sortal conceptions of Anscombe's examples. I will be relying heavily on that material here, so let us recall it a little.

Firstly, recall that the performance of an intentional action is explained in *Intention* (1957) as the successful execution or successful partial execution of an intention with which. And that intentional action failure occurs whenever an agent fails to execute an intention with which. Whenever an intention with which is either successfully or unsuccessfully executed,[94] the agent acting will have a conception of what is happening including a conception of any object being acted upon. In the examples of intentional actions or intentional action failure in Anscombe's texts the conception of an object being acted upon is always a basic sortal conception.

Upon my interpretation of Anscombe's texts, to have a sortal conception of something is to conceive of it as a kind of thing i.e. as a member of a class.[95] As I have noted, sortal conceptions are a feature of all examples of intentional actions and intentional action failures to be found in Anscombe's texts. This includes examples of shooting (Anscombe, 1965: 9-

[94] Or successfully/unsuccessfully partially executed.
[95] The reader may recall that this definition draws upon the work of P.F. Strawson and Saul Kripke, but is tailored to describe what I interpret as going on in Anscombe's texts.

10), sawing (Anscombe, 1957: §6), and referring (Anscombe, 1975: 28) which all involve fairly basic sortal conceptions. It was also noted that all these examples involve actions which are presented as being understood to be ends in themselves for the protagonist.

I previously argued that Anscombe's account of intentional action entails that agent conceptions of objects being acted upon must often be more complex than the basic sortal conceptions of her examples. This is not for the paltry reason that we often know (or merely think ourselves to know) a lot of information about an object: Although it is true that we often know a lot of information about an object, Anscombe's conceptions only involve information relevant to whether or not an agent executes the intention with which they act. For instance, I might pick up a key from the table in order to drive myself somewhere. That I think the key to be made of steel, or to have been left on the table by my flatmate, or to have been made in a factory on the outskirts of Leipzig is irrelevant to whether or not I succeed in executing the intention with which I act.[96]

Rather, I argued that because intentional actions are often performed as a means to securing some further end,[97] so are instances of the partial execution of an intention with which, agents must conceive of any objects they act upon as a suitable means to the end sought in acting. To return to the key example, because I am picking up the key in order to drive myself somewhere and not simply for the sake of picking up a key, I must surely conceive of it as a car key.[98] This is because a key to a refectory will not be a suitable means for executing the

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[96] This point is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three and is related to a point in Chapter One.

[97] This is consistent with Anscombe's texts and I have elsewhere drawn attention to the examples of means-end actions which her texts provide.

[98] And we can elaborate further: for instance, I must conceive of the key as a key to a working car.

intention with which I act. No one purposefully picks up a refectory key in order to drive a car. (Unless, of course, one's car is located in a locked refectory).

This line of interpretation led me to conclude that the account of intentional action suggested by Anscombe's texts entails agents often having complex-means conceptions of objects that they act upon. I then argued that this leads us to interpret a richer account of intentional action failure from Anscombe's texts. Namely, that intentional action failure occurs when an agent's complex-means conception of the object they are acting upon fails to correspond with what they are actually acting upon.[99] E.g. when the agent who intends to drive to work doesn't fail to pick up something matching the basic sortal 'key' or even 'car key', but does fail to pick up the specific key to their car. It was also pointed out how, although this follows from interpreting Anscombe's work, it will not be applicable to the work of others such as John Searle. This contrast was discussed at length before and I think it unnecessary to repeat it here.

Upon my interpretation of Anscombe's texts, referring is (typically) an intentional action. I also noted that referring is typically, if not always, performed as a means to an end - usually the end of communicating something true. As such, referring will often involve an agent having a complex-means conception of the object being referred to. (Recall that I explained how this isn't an account of meaning in Chapter Three. There isn't space to address that topic again here.) In Chapter Three, I provided the following illustration of referring involving a complex-means conception on the part of the agent. The example interprets out an example provided by Anscombe:

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[99] Provided the other requirements of Anscombe's theory of intentional action are met.

'Someone comes with a box and says "This is all that is left of poor Jones." The answer to "this what?" is "this parcel of ashes"; but unknown to the speaker the box is empty. What "this" has to have, if used correctly, is something that it latches on to (as I will put it)' (Anscombe, 1975: 28). We might add the speaker speaks in order to communicate a particular accurate piece of information. Namely, that the box in question contains Jones' ashes. This gives us an intention with which for the agent. Given the end sought in action, given the intention with which the speaker refers in this case, they must understand what they refer to as fit for the purpose sought in acting. That is to say, they must have a complex-means conception of the thing they refer to as a parcel containing Jones' ashes. 'A parcel of ashes' is too basic a conception, the parcel must contain Jones's ashes in order for the speaker to execute the intention with which they act. That any old ashes will not suffice will be reflected by the agent having a complex-means conception of the object being referred to.

It was also noted in Chapter Three that the above example is a case of reference failure; reference failure having been defined as a form of intentional action failure in Chapter One. Reference failure occurs when a speaker fails to execute the intention with which they refer. The speaker in our example has failed to execute the intention with which they refer - namely that communicating accurate information concerning the whereabouts of Jones' ashes. For, in order to execute the intention of communicating accurate information concerning the whereabouts of Jones' ashes, the speaker must use 'this' to refer to a box actually containing Jones' ashes in order to then truthfully predicate of it 'is all that remains of poor Jones'. And we can see the agent's failure to execute the intention with which they act in the way that the intentional object of referring - a box containing Jones's ashes - does not correspond with the material object of referring - an empty box.

Complex-Means Conceptions and 'I'

Now, to return to the notion that using 'I' to make a referent would never admit of illusory success - the second premise of the argument from intentional action. I contend that, if we used 'I' to make a reference, then Anscombe's philosophical worldview doesn't preclude that use admitting of illusory success I.e. reference failure involving the first-person pronoun is possible upon the Anscombean worldview. This becomes clear when we interpret Anscombe's worldview as entailing complex-means conceptions and apply the above analysis of their involvement in intentional action failure to the use of 'I' in first-person statements.

It strikes me that the argument from illusory success trades off the reader's likely assent to the notion that our use of 'I' could never be subject to reference failure. We simply couldn't latch onto the wrong thing when using 'I' that would be too incredible. The idea that we couldn't latch onto the wrong thing certainly does seem incredible if we have some picture of people referring for the sake of referring. I don't think this notion of possible failure is so incredible, however, once we examine the notion of reference failure which I have interpreted from Anscombe's texts more carefully: If speakers were to use 'I' to make a reference, then, as per most acts of referring, that would almost certainly always be done as a means to an end. We may well presume again that a common intention with which people refer to things is to communicate a particular accurate piece of information. The claim 'I'm on the train to Budapest' might well be made with such an intention and seems like a good claim for us to analyse.

If the intention with which 'I' is used to refer in this scenario is to communicate a particular accurate piece of information concerning the speaker's location, then I assume that the speaker must have a complex-means conception of the thing they refer to as a suitable means for executing this intention. That is to say, they must have a conception of themselves as someone present in a particular location, in this case onboard a train with a particular destination. Using 'I' to refer to someone in a different location - on board a different train perhaps, even if that someone is the speaker, will not be a suitable means for executing the intention of communicating a particular accurate piece of information concerning the speaker's location. Provided, that is, that the speaker goes on to predicate 'on the train to Budapest' of the thing they have referred to.

Given that the speaker in my scenario is actually on the train to Prague, I would say that this act of referring fails to execute the intention with which the speaker acts. This is because the speaker merely thinks they know themselves to be referring to someone located on the train to Budapest, but in fact they are not doing this. As such, given the definition of reference failure that we are working with, it would seem that our use of 'I' is subject to reference failure. As noted earlier, this doesn't mean that the speaker fails to refer to anything at all, it just means that they are failing to execute the intention with which they act.

The speaker in my scenario has the illusory success of using 'I' to refer to someone located on a train to Budapest. Upon the Anscombian account of reference we are working with, our use of 'I' to make a reference could admit of illusory success. I could come up with many more examples and I believe this refutes the second premise of the argument from illusory success that 'using 'I' to make a reference would never admit of illusory success'. This entails that the second premise of the argument from intentional action - that 'using 'I' to

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make a reference could not be an intentional action' - loses its support. And the conclusion to the argument from intentional action which is the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) is exposed as unsupported and in fact incompatible with the rest of the worldview which I have interpreted from Anscombe's texts.

Now, as per the key example and the poor Jones example above, the intentional object of referring in my wrong train case - a located-on-the-train-to-Budapest speaker - does not coincide with the material object of referring - a located-on-the-train-to Prague speaker. This signals that the intention with which the agent acts has failed to be executed. At this juncture, an objection previously raised in Chapter Three might be raised again: It might be objected that the speaker still uses 'I' correctly, that they still latch onto the meaning of 'I'. I do not deny this, but it is an irrelevant observation.

It is irrelevant because I'm not talking about the meaning of words, I am talking about an act of referring as a partial execution of a wider intention with which. And we might make a comparison here with using a saw. A saw is supposed to be used for sawing things like planks of wood, this is somewhat akin to the way in which a referring term has a meaning which it is supposed to be used to refer to. I might well use a saw to saw a plank of wood, so I use it as it is supposed to be used, but it may turn out that I'm sawing an oak plank when I intended to saw an ebony one. In this example, I may use the saw correctly i.e. as it is supposed to be used, but still fail to execute the intention with which I used it. Using the saw correctly, like using 'I' correctly, is irrelevant to whether or not an agent executes the intention with which they act.

We can see the same thing with an example of someone using 'this dog' to make a reference. A person might point at a dog in a line-up of found dogs and assert 'This dog is mine'. Now, as long as the speaker uses 'this dog' to latch onto an instance of the kind dog, then they have latched onto an instance of what 'this dog' is supposed to be used to latch onto i.e. something which satisfies the meaning of 'this dog'. There is no meaning failure in this scenario. There could, however, be reference failure, given how reference failure has been defined in this thesis as a failure to execute the intention with which one refers. If the person uses 'this dog' to refer to a dog in order to truthfully claim ownership of the animal, then they must conceive of the thing they refer to as their pet dog rather than as simply 'a dog'. In this scenario, using 'this dog' to refer to a dog which belongs to someone else fails to execute the intention with which the speaker refers. Hence there is reference failure without meaning failure.

Overall, if I am correct in thinking that the above analysis follows from my interpretation of Anscombe's account of intentional action as entailing complex-means conceptions, then the second premise of the argument from illusory success is shown to not follow from the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. This result exposes the argument of 'The First Person' (1975), at least as interpreted by me, to be quietly inconsistent with the theory of intentional action which it draws upon.[100] The worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts can allow that we use 'I' to intentionally refer to ourselves, because it can allow for reference failure involving 'I'.[101] One corollary of this is that the need to explain 'I' as having purely semantic reference disappears.[102] In terms of Anscombe's philosophy of language, I think this

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[100] Or, at least, which I interpret it as drawing upon.

[101] I mean, of course, reference failure as defined in this thesis and derived from Anscombe's work - see Chapter One and Chapter Three where this has been discussed and developed in detail.

[102] At least given the reasons for explaining 'I' as having purely semantic reference which Anscombe's texts provide.

is an interesting result. I will not comment here, however, on what this might entail for Anscombe's metaphysics.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to provide an interpretation and analysis of what I take to be the central argument of 'The First Person' (1975). I began by providing an overview of various alternative interpretations of 'The First Person' (1975) as containing a central argument. I then detailed my interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975) as suggesting the argument from intentional action supported by the argument from illusory success. This argument claims that we can't use 'I' to make intentional self-reference because an intentional action has to be compatible with illusory success and our use of 'I' to make self reference wouldn't be compatible with illusory success. Finally, I argued that if we interpret Anscombe's texts as entailing our having complex-means conceptions in addition to sortal conceptions and alter our understanding of intentional action failure accordingly, then it can be explained how reference failure is possible when it comes to our use of the first-person pronoun. Consequently, the worldview suggested by Anscombe's text can explain our use of the first-person pronoun as an act of intentional self-reference.

Chapter 5: From an Account of 'I' to an Account of Self-Consciousness

Abstract

'The First Person' (1975) does not simply contain an analysis of the first-person pronoun; it also contains a brief and somewhat enigmatic account of self-consciousness. The reader is directed to understand these two topics as related because 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25). In this chapter, I investigate this strand of 'The First Person' (1975); offering, in turn, an interpretation and an analysis of the notion that self-consciousness is 'subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). Providing an interpretation of this strand of 'The First Person' (1975) has proved daunting, because both that paper and Anscombe's other texts give us so little to go on. As such, I have used the work of other philosophers to aid in filling what I take to be lacuna in Anscombe's texts.[103] It should come as no surprise to the reader that, due to the conclusions of the internal critique I have offered so far, I ultimately do not think that an account of self-consciousness as subjectless is compatible with other aspects of the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. I will not, however, be arguing from the previous conclusions of my internal critique to this new conclusion. Rather, I will base my critique of subjectless self-consciousness in appeal to various other concerns found in Anscombe's texts.

Introduction

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[103] Despite doing this, I do not think that I have departed from the project of providing an internal critique of Anscombe's texts as set out in the introduction to this thesis.

As was noted in the introduction to this thesis, there are a huge number of ideas at play in 'The First Person' (1975). And this is possibly one of the reasons why it is such a difficult paper to unravel. Thus far, we have only considered the account of the first-person pronoun which 'The First Person' (1975) provides. Now we shall turn to another concern of that paper which is the nature of self-consciousness. It is claimed in 'The First Person' (1975) that 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25). And the account of 'I' it contains is related to an account of self-consciousness as 'subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). In order to investigate these ideas, I have divided the following chapter into two halves: Part One is an interpretation of 'The First Person' (1975)'s account of self-consciousness and its relation to its account of 'I'. Part Two constitutes an analysis of this account of self-consciousness.

I have divided both parts into subsections. Part One has four subsections: **Why Would an Account of Our Use of the First-Person Pronoun Tell us Anything About the Nature of Self-Consciousness?**; **What Sort of Consciousness is Expressed by the Use of Referring Terms Generally?**; **What is As-Structureless Self-Consciousness Like?**; and **How Can Self-Consciousness Fail to be As-Structured?**. Whilst Part Two has two subsections: **Unintentional Actions: Objection to the Idea that Our Use of the First-Person Pronoun Consistently Expresses Subjectless Experience** and **Substance Involving Properties: Objection to the Idea that Self-Consciousness is Subjectless**; As this is a long chapter, I have decided to give each part its own introduction, so will not elaborate on any of the aforementioned subsections here.

Part One: Interpretation

Introduction

As was just mentioned, this first part of the chapter constitutes an interpretation of the notion of subjectless self-consciousness found in 'The First Person' (1975) and is divided into four sections. The title of each subsection is a question which I think an interpreter needs to ask of Anscombe's text and to which the subsection seeks an answer. The first section - **Why Would an Account of our Use of the First-Person Pronoun Tell us Anything About the Nature of Self-Consciousness?** - seeks to understand why we should think that 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25). It also notes that Anscombe's text suggests there to be a distinction between self-consciousness and consciousness, and that consciousness is, presumably, manifested by the referential use of subject terms which are not the first-person pronoun e.g. 'this plate', 'that glass'.

The second section - **What Sort of Consciousness is Expressed by the Use of Referring Terms Generally?** - seeks to understand the account of self-consciousness in 'The First Person' (1975), through seeking an explanation of what self-consciousness is not supposed to amount to. This might seem like a roundabout way of doing things, but I believe it ultimately allows us to get a better grip on what is meant by the claim that self-consciousness is 'subjectless [and does] not involve the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject.' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). The explanation I offer, concerning the sort of consciousness expressed by the use of referring terms generally, begins from clues in 'The First Person' (1975) and draws from Martin Heidegger's notion that we apprehend the world as as-structured and that our use of language manifests this. I conclude that

'subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36) self-consciousness can be well interpreted as as-structureless self-consciousness.

The third section - **What is As-Structureless Self-Consciousness Like?** - follows directly from the conclusion of subsection two. Nowhere in Anscombe's texts are we clearly provided with an account of what subjectless or as-structureless self-consciousness is like. As I think it in our philosophical interests to understand this, I combine a claim from *Intention* (1957) - 'I *do* what *happens*.' (Anscombe, 1957, §29) - with ideas drawn from texts by others, to conclude that as-structureless self-consciousness might be explained as having the form 'such-and-such is happening'. On the basis of this, I suggest that subjectless self-consciousness involves the knowledge or experience that something is happening, but not that you (or, for that matter, anyone else) are doing that something. For instance, in alighting from a train I supposedly don't experience myself to be alighting from a train, I just experience alighting from a train. I end this section by explaining how everything we have said so far corresponds with the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all' (Anscombe, 1975: 32).

The fourth section - **How Can Self-Consciousness Fail to be As-Structured?** - seeks to understand how subjectless or as-structureless self-consciousness is supposed to arise. I note that the typical channels by which knowledge is taken to arise - linguistic reports and the evidence of the sense-organs - seem to lead us to as-structured knowledge. In 'The First Person' (1975), however, it is suggested that self-consciousness involves knowledge without observation as opposed to knowledge with observation (Anscombe, 1975: 24-25). Using the work of recent interpreters, I attempt to elaborate upon what the distinction between

knowledge with and knowledge without observation actually amounts to. I also chart the history of this notion in Anscombe's work, noting that the distinction between knowledge with and knowledge without observation appears to begin as a distinction between different ways in which knowledge might arise, but by the time of 'The First Person' (1975) is also a distinction involving forms which knowledge can take - either as-structured or as-structureless/subjectless. This leads me to conclude that the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness is the distinction between knowledge with and knowledge without observation. And that self-consciousness fails to be as-structured because it arises via this supposedly as-structureless channel.

Even in this introduction, the reader might sense my hesitation about the explanation just given to the question of 'how can self-consciousness fail to be as-structured?', because it is bewilderingly convenient. I can find no explanation in Anscombe's texts regarding why the non-observational channels to knowledge will produce as-structureless knowledge. As the non-observational channels to knowledge only seem to give rise to self-consciousness, I conclude that one needs the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) in order to explain why non-observational knowledge happens to be as-structureless, so self-consciousness can fail to be as-structured.

i. Why Would an Account of our Use of the First-Person Pronoun Tell us Anything About the Nature of Self-Consciousness?

That there is a relation between an explanation of our use of the first-person pronoun and an explanation of the nature of self-consciousness is noted in works by various philosophers including by G.E.M. Anscombe (1975), Gareth Evans (1982), and Sebastian Rödl (2007). In

'The First Person' (1975) it is stated that 'the expression "self-consciousness" can be respectably explained as 'consciousness that such-and-such holds of oneself'' (Anscombe, 1975: 26). The reader is also informed that 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25). At a later point in the 'The First Person' (1975), Anscombe's text suggests that 'expressed' would be an acceptable synonym for 'manifested' here (Anscombe, 1975: 28). As such, claims in which 'I' is the subject term express or manifest consciousness that such-and-such holds of oneself. And claims in which 'I' does not occupy the subject term do not manifest or express self-consciousness.

But why think that the use of the first-person pronoun in particular expresses self-consciousness? Well, self-consciousness is 'consciousness that such-and-such holds of oneself'' (Anscombe, 1975: 26) where, we might add, the speaker realises that they are speaking about themselves i.e. that they are reporting their actions, attributes etc. This caveat seems consistent with Anscombe's texts. Consider, again, the example of John Horatio Auberon Smith: '"When John Smith spoke of James Robinson he was speaking of his brother, but he did not know this." That's a possible situation. So similarly is "When John Smith spoke of John Horatio Auberon Smith (named in a will perhaps) he was speaking of himself, but he did not know this." (1975: 22). The will-reading case doesn't amount to a case of self-consciousness because the speaker does not realise that the attributes they now list as holding of John Horatio Auberon Smith (e.g. being the sole inheritor of Sir Sidney Smith's fortune) hold of themselves.

Gareth Evans provides us with a similar example: 'We are not interested in all thoughts which a subject may have 'about himself', for presumably a person may think about someone who is in fact himself without realising that he is doing so. Oedipus was thinking about

Oedipus, that is to say, himself, when he thought that the slayer of Laius should be killed; but Oedipus was not thinking about himself 'self-consciously' (this is just a label for the kind of thinking which interests us), because he did not realise that he was the slayer of Laius.' (Evans, 1982: 206).

If self-consciousness is to be explained as consciousness that such-and-such holds of oneself where the speaker realises that they are speaking about themselves, then the particular interest in the first-person pronoun becomes clear. Although there might arise cases in which a speaker knowingly speaks of themselves using a proper name or demonstrative - perhaps in a case involving deception or a wish to maintain secrecy, the use of the first person pronoun as a subject-term will only (at least typically)[104] occur where the speaker realises that the person they are speaking about is themselves or, in perhaps more Anscombian terms, where they realise that what they say is accurate or inaccurate depending on how things are with them.

If it is agreed that the use of the first person pronoun expresses self-consciousness, then we might ask why analysing our use of 'I' will be revealing as to the nature of self-consciousness? The best formulation I can give of the thought which (presumably) must lie behind this idea is that an explanation of how we use a vehicle of expression is revealing of what is being expressed. Let us consider an example:

In the introduction to *Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind: Collected Philosophical Papers Volume II* (1981) it is stated: '[When I was an undergraduate,] I used to sit tearing my gown into little strips because I wanted to argue against so much that he [a lecturer at her

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[104] See Lucy O'Brien's *Self-Knowing Agents* (2007) for non-typical examples, but also the examples from Allyson Mount's 'The Impurity of 'Pure' Indexicals' (2006).

university] said' (Anscombe, 1981: viii). In this case, Anscombe's hands are her vehicle or medium of expression. The way in which she uses her hands - to rip her gown - expresses the frustration she feels. In order to give an explanation of what is being expressed, we can analyse how the vehicle of expression is used (i.e. in this case, how Anscombe's hands are used). Perhaps a more frenzied bout of gown ripping would be taken to express heightened frustration.

Language is a vehicle for the expression of thought. 'Thought' is quite a vague term however. I would rather say that language is a vehicle for the expression of how information is presented to and processed by the speaker. If this is correct, then, analogously with our gown ripping example, an analysis of how the vehicle of expression - language - is being used will be revealing of what is being expressed - how information is presented to and processed by the language user. This is, I take it, a crucial idea in psychiatry.[105] The psychiatrist Aaron Beck, for instance, developed what he terms 'the cognitive model' according to which 'people see [and typically report] things the way they do because this is the direction that their cognitive processing takes them [...] If they have some type of mental disorder, the cognitive apparatus is skewed in one direction or another. In the manic patient, for example, it is skewed in an exaggerated positive direction. In the depressive patient, it is skewed the other way.' (Beck, 1997: 279). Generally, the way in which patients use language - to say whatever they say (at least to the therapist) - is typically revealing of the way in which information is presented to and processed by them.

The investigations in Anscombe's texts are a little different to Beck's, but the general premise is presumably the same: An analysis of how we use the first-person pronoun will be

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[105] It is also crucial in everyday life when trying to survive in society.

revealing of the nature of self-consciousness/first-person thought which our use of 'I' expresses. That is, of how information is presented to and processed by the speaker in cases where they realise that that information is information about themselves.[106] Or, to borrow some terminology from Beck, of how the cognitive apparatus works when it comes to self-consciousness.

Hopefully we now have some rationale for why the previous chapters of this thesis, which constituted an investigation into our use of the first-person pronoun, can be used to explore the question of the nature of self-consciousness. It is difficult to know how best to proceed at this point. I have interpreted the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) as a denial that 'I' is used by us to make intentional speaker's reference, so this will entail a particular account of self-consciousness. In addition, I have argued that this thesis is inconsistent with other aspects of the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts, so this entails that I think the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts can also be interpreted as suggesting an alternative account of self-consciousness. Before we examine either of these, however, I think it best to begin by asking what does our use of language to make references reveal about human consciousness? In trying to answer this question I have been greatly aided by the work of Martin Heidegger, in particular his lectures on Aristotle, and I draw heavily from those in what follows.

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[106] Compare Evans: 'We clearly do have ways of gaining knowledge of ourselves, and `I'-thoughts are thoughts which are controlled, or are disposed to be controlled, by information gained in these ways' (Evans, 1982: 207).

ii. What sort of consciousness is expressed by the use of referring terms generally?

If self-consciousness is manifested or expressed by our use of the first-person pronoun, then it seems to follow that consciousness is expressed by our use of language generally. That is, by the use of language to talk about the world - in particular the use of language to talk about what I observe - where the first-person pronoun is not the subject term in the sentences so used. But what is the nature of the consciousness manifested in such talk? If we have a grip on this, then we can hopefully come to appreciate 'The First Person' (1975)'s account of self-consciousness better - through appreciating what she thinks self-consciousness does not amount to.

Now, 'The First Person' (1975) might seem to give us a lead, for it tells us that self-consciousness does 'not involve the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). This, however, is a very odd claim. That is because not involving the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject is meant to give us what is distinct about self-consciousness. Yet, consciousness generally does not seem to involve the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. I do not, for instance, encounter whiteness or is-whiteness and then attach that predicate to a distinctly conceived subject - a plate. I encounter a white plate. Nor do I encounter is-walking-down-the-streetness and then try to find someone to attach this predicate to. I encounter someone walking down the street.[107]

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[107] In 'Referring to Oneself' (1998) John McDowell would seem to support this type of interpretation of connecting of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject as involving one looking for a subject to attribute what is understood by a predicate to (McDowell, 1998: 191).

The phrasing of Anscombe's text does little to help here. It seems to say that consciousness of happenings - of someone walking down the street for instance - involve our 'look[ing] for a subject' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). As such, it seems to me fruitful to look elsewhere in order to provide an interpretation of what it might mean to claim that consciousness, unlike self-consciousness, involves the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. The philosopher I have found most helpful in devising an interpretation here is Martin Heidegger. In particular his collected lectures on Aristotle complied as *Logic: The Question of Truth* (1976). Let us now turn to these.

In his lectures on Aristotle, Heidegger would seem to agree with my suggestion that we encounter white plates and people walking down streets i.e. that we don't encounter what is understood by a predicate and then go looking for a subject to attribute this to. Rather, we drink everything in in one go.[108] I claim that Heidegger would seem to agree with this, because Heidegger thinks that the world is given to us in such a way that it has a 'basic, unified structure' (Heidegger, 1976: 127) which is 'pre-predicative' (Heidegger, 1976: 122). Heidegger suggests that we might understand the pre-predicative given as having, what he terms, an 'as-structure' (Heidegger, 1976: 121). Indeed, Heidegger claims that 'the "as" is the basic structure whereby we understand and have access to anything' (Heidegger, 1976: 129). What is meant here has, as far as I am aware, nothing to do with Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of seeing-as. Rather, Heidegger means to describe the way in which we apprehend the world when we interact with it. Namely, that the world and its contents are presented to us as being a certain way. For instance, a blackboard is given to us as black, a broken pencil is given to us as useless for writing, a tiger is given to us as crouching.

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[108] Many thanks to Adrian Haddock for this helpful turn of phrase.

Now, I tend to take Heidegger's claims to be correct simply on the basis that they accord with my experience. I suspect that they also accord with the reader's experience. If any reader still requires some convincing, however, then I believe that our discussion of intentional action might prove informative. Recall, it was claimed that if someone uses something as a means to an end, then they must conceive of that thing as suitable for achieving the end which they have in view. And various examples were provided of this e.g. if someone picks up a bottle in order to pour themselves a glass of champagne, then they must conceive of the bottle as containing champagne or if a Nazi sets up a mortar in order to kill off advancing American troops, then he must conceive of the mortar as functioning. These complex-means conceptions of objects are as structured . Given that humans operate at the level of satisfying desires through executing intentions, i.e. at the level of intentional action, we surely operate at the level of having complex as-structured conceptions of things e.g. of bottles as containing champagne and of mortars as functioning.[109]

The introduction of the notion of as-structure is important, but does not yet help us to explain the notion that our typical use of subject-predicate structured claims to describe the world will manifest consciousness as involving the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. To make progress on this, we need to interrogate the link

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[109] I think that one could also look to Heidegger's notion of equipment - 'We shall call those entities which we encounter in concern "equipment".1 In our dealings we come across equipment for writing, sewing, working, transportation, measurement. The kind of Being which equipment possesses must be exhibited. The clue for doing this lies in our first defining what makes an item of equipment-namely, its equipmentality.
 Taken strictly, there 'is' no such thing as an equipment. To the Being of any equipment there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is. Equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to •.. ' ["etwas um-zu ... "].A totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to', such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability' (Heidegger, 1926: 97). To encounter entities as equipment is, presumably, to have an as-structured appreciation of the encountered.

between the as-structured given and subject-predicate descriptions of that given. Heidegger cannot really help us here - all he tells us is that the pre-predicative as-structured given 'makes possible the very structure of predication at all' (Heidegger, 1976: 122). At this juncture, some guidance is, I think, provided by Anscombe's account of Aristotle's metaphysics.

In *Three Philosophers* (1961), we find an account of Aristotle's notion of substance as follows: 'First substance is introduced, and explained in the first place as what neither is asserted of nor exists in a subject: the examples offered are 'such-and-such a man,' 'such-and-such a horse '. A ' first substance ' then is what is designated by a proper name such as the name of a man or of a horse, or again, if one cared to give it a proper name, of a cabbage. A proper name is never, qua proper name, a predicate. Thus what a proper name stands for is not asserted of a subject' (Anscombe, 1961: 7). We are also later informed that 'the most characteristic thing about substances [for Aristotle] is that they are capable of contrary qualifications. That is to say, a man can change from being good to being bad, or from being pale to being tanned, without ceasing to be that man whereas this white cannot become black - this white would no longer exist if the paper became black (Anscombe, 1961: 9).

In addition to first substances or individuals, Aristotle recognises there to be what are termed 'particular[s]' (Anscombe, 1961: 9). Particulars, we are told, are found in a subject (Anscombe, 1961: 7-8). And it is suggested that 'the white of this paper,' or 'the surface of this paper' are good examples of such particulars (Anscombe, 1961: 9). In the *Categories* (?), however, Aristotle provides us with a list of ten categories which '[attempt to be] a complete list of fairly simple kinds of things, with significant logical differences between them, that might be said about a subject' (Anscombe, 1961: 15). These ten are given by

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Anscombe as follows: (1) He is a human being, or he is an animal (substance); (2) He is six foot tall (quantity); (3) He is a bad man; or, He is a cultivated man (quality); (4) He is twice as tall as (relation); (5) He is in London (place); (6) (He existed?) yesterday (time); (7) He is crouching (posture); (8) with boots on (having); (9) is pushing (action); (10) is being pushed (*passio*, suffering, i.e. being acted on) (Anscombe, 1961: 14-15). As we can see, nine of these categories concern, what we might term, non-substantial properties. I suggest that 'what is understood by a predicate' (Anscombe, 1975: 36) will always fall into one of these categories where the claim is truly one involving predication rather than identity.[110]

 Now, in *Three Philosophers* (1961) we find an explicit link between language and metaphysics - a proper name, or perhaps more generally a subject term, is typically used to designate a substance. Whilst I have suggested that what is understood by a predicate will always fall into one of the categories concerning non-substantial properties. (And I take this suggestion to be totally in accordance with Anscombe's text.) With this link between language and metaphysics unearthed, we can return to our discussion of as-structure in order to hypothesise a model of how the mind works which will allow us to explain the prima facie perplexing notion of consciousness as involving the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject.

 The basic notion of as-structure might be summarised as follows: when we apprehend or interact with something, we do not apprehend the properties apart from the substance - I do not apprehend 'the white of this paper' apart from 'this paper'. As such, this organisation of

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[110] I make the distinction between predication and identity here in an attempt to capture Anscombe's interpretation of Aristotle as not thinking that e.g. being a horse is a particular which is predicated of a substance. This idea crops up in Anscombe's work again when she identifies being a horse as a 'substantial' predicate in her ranking of predicates (Anscombe, 1964: 40).

what we apprehend into individual substances and their particulars seems to occur at, what Adrian Haddock has suggested to me we might term, a higher level of conceptualisation. This would seem to be the level of language. When we come to represent something linguistically in subject-predicate form; when, for instance, I say 'this piece of paper is white' or 'this pump is broken', I organise or conceptualise the as-structured given into substances and non-substantial properties.[111] Hence, Heidegger tells us that a statement which indicates or determines, such as 'This chalk is white.', 'hovers over, as it were, the objects that are given firsthand in one's lived world and that are primarily oriented to use' (Heidegger, 1976: 133-4). It hovers over, because, although the linguistic claim uncovers or shows what it determines, a linguistic determination lacks the 'original ontological character' (Heidegger, 1976: 134) of what it determines or represents.

It is, I suggest, at this higher level of conceptualisation - of representing the world linguistically - that we have the connection of what is understood by a predicate (i.e. a non-substantial property) with a distinctly conceived subject (i.e. a substance). This leads us to an answer to our question 'what sort of consciousness is expressed or made manifest by the use of referring terms generally?'. The use of a term to make a reference manifests the conceptualisation of what is being referred to as a substance. Given that referring is largely done in order to predicate, the use of a referring term in a sentence will often manifest the conceptualisation of the as-structured world into substances and non-substantial properties.

That the aforegoing constitutes a good interpretation of what 'The First Person' (1975) takes to be the consciousness manifested by the use of referring terms in general is, I think, borne

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[111] We might instead say that this is a result of that organising rather than the organising itself.

out by an example which it provides us with. This example is meant to demonstrate the consciousness/self-consciousness distinction: 'consider the following story from William James. James, who insisted (rightly, if I am right) that consciousness is quite distinct from self-consciousness, reproduces an instructive letter from a friend: "We were driving . . . in a wagonette; the door flew open and X, alias 'Baldy', fell out on the road. We pulled up at once, and then he said 'Did anyone fall out?' or 'Who fell out?'- I don't exactly remember the words. When told that Baldy fell out he said 'Did Baldy fall out? Poor Baldy!"'' (Anscombe, 1975: 36).

The reason why this example illustrates the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness is explained as being because 'his [Baldy's] thought of the happening, falling out of the carriage, was one for which he looked for a subject, his grasp of it one which required a subject' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). This is, in many ways, a very peculiar example. Why not an example like seeing someone walking down the street? Surely a far more common instance of being conscious of an action as opposed to being self-conscious of one. There is certainly no looking for a subject in such a case. In the example of the wagonette, Baldy grasps the happening - the falling out of the carriage - as one which requires a subject because he learns of it through a verbal report. The informant has already conceptualised the as-structured happening into a substance - Baldy - and a non-substantial property - fallen out of the carriage.

We now have some account of the consciousness expressed or manifested when we use referring terms generally. And if we are to take it that the use of referring terms generally expresses consciousness, whilst only the use of 'I' expresses self-consciousness, then we can say that we have some account of consciousness. This should, I think, allow us to suggest an

account of self-consciousness which develops somewhat the brief note that it is 'subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). If self-consciousness is 'subjectless' it is because it doesn't involve the conceptualisation of an as-structured given into substance (subject) and non-substantial property (predicate). This leads me to interpret 'The First Person' (1975) as involving a conception of self-consciousness as as-structureless. This interpretive advance in our appreciation of Anscombe's text leaves us with at least two questions - what is as-structureless self-consciousness like? And how can self-consciousness fail to be as-structured?

iii. What is As-Structureless Self-Consciousness Like?

Unfortunately, Anscombe's texts do not obviously provide us with any examples of as-structerless self-knowledge. All we are really told about as-structureless self-consciousness is that it is 'subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). Fortunately, however, texts by some of Anscombe's contemporaries do provide us with examples of subjectless self-knowledge and Gareth Evans records examples of these in *The Varieties of Reference* (1982). Evans writes as follows:

'It is worth clearing away, at this early stage, a curious idea, expressed in different ways by Geach and by Strawson, to the effect that the interest of 'I' is exclusively the interest of a communicative device— that is, in effect, that there are no Ideas corresponding to the pronoun and available to be exercised in thinking. According to Geach, Descartes in his solitary meditations had no need of 'I' in such judgements as 'I'm getting into an awful muddle'; he could have judged 'This is really a dreadful muddle!' Similarly, Strawson suggests that it is right to speak of self-ascription, for instance of pain, only because one tells

others that one is in pain; otherwise one's judgement can simply be 'There is a pain'. Both these philosophers are preoccupied with the fact that there is no need for me to tell myself who it is who is getting into a muddle, or who is in pain.' (Evans, 1982: 208).

P.F. Strawson in particular, I suggest, might aid us in understanding Anscombe's notion of self-consciousness. For the claim 'there is pain' seems equivalent to 'pain is happening'. This provides a potential link with *Intention* (1957). In particular with §29 where it is claimed that 'I *do* what *happens*. That is to say, when the description of what happens is the very thing which I should say I was doing, then there is no distinction between the doing and the thing's happening' (Anscombe, 1957: §29).

In 'What Am I And What Am I Doing?' (2017) Rachael Wiseman links the slogan 'I do what happens' with the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975). Wiseman claims: 'It should not be especially controversial to suggest that there is a deep connection between the conclusion of "The First Person" and *Intention*'s account of how it is possible to know without observation what one is doing and to "do what happens." "The First Person" uses an examination of just those first-person thoughts that are the subject of *Intention* to investigate the grammar of the first-person pronoun. The "I-thoughts" Anscombe considers in that essay are, she points out, "those relating to actions, postures, movements and intentions." That is, she considers just those first-person thoughts that belong to the class of things that a man knows without observation.' (Wiseman, 2017: 542).

Off the back of this, I suggest that self-consciousness, at least in Anscombe's texts, might be understood as having the following form: 'such-and-such is happening'. If this is the form self-consciousness takes, then it surely manages to lack as-structure, so to be 'subjectless'

(Anscombe, 1975: 36). We might return to the wagonette example at this juncture. Had Baldy not suffered amnesia and been fully aware of his ejection from the wagonette, then he wouldn't have experienced himself as falling. Rather, he would have experienced falling or that falling was happening.

The formulation and expression of this knowledge in terms of language will almost inevitably involve use of the first-person pronoun e.g. 'Walking is happening' becomes 'I am walking'. This formulation does not involve the conceptualisation of an as-structured given into substance and non-substantial properties. For the knowledge 'such-and-such is happening' is surely just knowledge of a non-substantial particular. The introduction of the first-person pronoun at the linguistic level,[112] the interpreter is led to presume, does not involve the introduction in thought of a substance - a self - for the non-substantial property to inhere in, but is rather placed there for some other reason.

In writing the above, I have already touched upon how everything we have said so far corresponds with the central thesis that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all.' (Anscombe, 1975: 32), but let us now go further in explaining this. The use of subject term to make a reference in a sentence with subject-predicate form has been hypothesised as manifesting the conceptualisation of an as-structured given into substance and non-substantial particular. According to the central thesis, the first-person pronoun is not used to make a reference, so its use does not manifest the aforementioned conceptualisation. Rather, we have suggested, our use of the first-person pronoun manifests an as-structureless appreciation of what holds of oneself with the form

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[112] Or perhaps at the final linguistic level - our model of the mind here seems necessarily sketchy in order to accommodate Anscombe's notions. Presumably it would be equally sketchy to accommodate either Strawson's or Geach's notions.

'such-and-such is happening'. When the first-person pronoun is deployed then, for instance in a claim like 'I'm just doing the dishes.', the only knowledge which is manifested is knowledge of the occurrence of a non-substantial property, namely that 'doing the dishes is happening'. This is the only concept informing and manifested in the 'I'-claim. The speaker has no as-structured concept from which, at the linguistic level of conceptualisation, the concept of a substance can be distilled and expressed by use of the first-person pronoun.

The absence of such a concept relating to the use of 'I' would explain why, if 'I' were used to make a reference, then it couldn't fail to make a reference. In order to see this, recall our discussion of reference failure from Chapter One: 'In another example it might be an optical presentation. Thus I may ask "What's that figure standing in front of the rock, a man or a post?" and there may be no such object at all; but there is an appearance, a stain perhaps, or other marking of the rock face, which my "that" latches on to' (Anscombe, 1975: 28).

The speaker in this example might describe what is done (or, at least, part of what is done) as 'referring to a figure' or 'referring to either a man or a post'. The conception the speaker has of what is done is false. This is because, what they use 'that figure' to latch onto is not a figure i.e. an object, but instead an appearance - a stain or marking on the rock face. As we have seen already, 'The First Person' (1975) can be interpreted as forwarding an account of reference failure where reference failure is the failure to execute an intention in action. This will occur when a speaker refers to/latches onto something whilst having a false conception of what that thing is.

This notion of reference failure was introduced in Chapter One and developed further in Chapter Three where I introduced more fully the notion of complex-means conceptions, but

as of Chapter One we simply followed Anscombe in saying that there was a mismatch between what a speaker took themselves to be referring to and what they actually referred to. If, in the case of the first-person pronoun, there is no conception of a substance accompanying the use of 'I', then it seems quite correct that were it used to make a reference, then it couldn't fail to make one, because there is no conception of a substance accompanying its use which could be either accurate or inaccurate, so allow for the possibility of reference failure.[113] Hopefully, this makes clear the correspondence between the notion of subjectless self-consciousness and the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975).

iv. How Can Self-Consciousness Fail to be As-Structured?

We now have a picture of what as-structureless or subjectless self-consciousness is like. We might well, however, still ask how it is that as-structureless self-consciousness manages to arise. For, Heidegger's claim that 'the "as" is the basic structure whereby we understand and have access to anything' (Heidegger, 1976: 129) is, on the basis of daily experience, highly persuasive. The answer to the above question suggested by Anscombe's texts would seem to be because self-consciousness or self-knowledge does not arise through observation or any other channel such as verbal reports etc. which are known to involve as-structured knowledge. Instead, it is claimed that self-consciousness arises via non-observational processes. Of course, the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) is needed to confirm that these non-observational processes produce as-structerless knowledge; but the very introduction of knowledge obtained via non-observational processes might be seen as allowing room to plausibly claim that that knowledge is as-structureless.

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[113] Anscombe doesn't consider the possibility that there could be an always correct concept accompanying the use of 'I'. I don't know why this is exactly.

In this section, I chart the history of the knowledge-with and knowledge-without distinction in Anscombe's work, noting in particular how it ostensibly begins as a distinction between ways in which knowledge can arise to a distinction both in terms of ways in which knowledge can arise and forms which knowledge can take - as-structured or as-structureless/subjectless. In order to provide the clearest possible account of the distinction between knowledge with and knowledge without observation, I have drawn upon the secondary literature to supplement Anscombe's own. I end by noting that we really need the thesis that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all.' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) to convince that knowledge without observation has a subjectless or as-structureless form.

The notion of knowledge without observation is first introduced in *Intention* (1957). Here, we are told that: 'There is a particular class of things which are true of a man: namely the class of things which he *knows without observation*. E.g. a man usually knows the position of his limbs without observation. It is without observation, because nothing *shews* him the position of his limbs; it is not as if he were going by a tingle in his knee, which is the sign that it is bent and not straight. Where we can speak of separately describable sensations, having which is in some sense our criterion for saying something, then we can speak of observing that thing; but that is not so when we know the position of our limbs. Yet, without prompting, we *can say* it. (Anscombe, 1957, §8).

The topic is addressed again in 'On Sensations of Position' (1962). Here, we are told that knowledge without observation does not arise 'in the ordinary way' (Anscombe, 1962: 71). The ordinary way, we gather, is through 'clues' (Anscombe, 1962: 71). These clues are, it

seems, typically 'separately describable' (Anscombe, 1962: 71) sensations, but presumably could also be verbal reports, or more conventional clues such as muddy footprints - which might be a clue for a somnambulist as to their nocturnal activity. Separately describable sensations are sensations for which the 'description of [their] sense-content' (Anscombe, 1962: 73) is not 'the same description as the fact known' (Anscombe, 1962: 72). Examples of separately describable sensations include '"bitter" [, ...] "blue patch", "pressure", "rustle", "tingle", "pain"' (Anscombe, 1962: 72-73).

There is something slippery about the aforementioned distinction which makes it difficult to capture. And it is described in 'On Sensations of Positon' (1962) as 'this difficult topic' (Anscombe, 1962: 72). The best account of the distinction that I can offer is the following: The distinction between knowledge-with and knowledge-without observation is that knowledge-with observation arises through the knower being presented with a clue or (more likely) with a composition or cocktail of clues. One example of this is the following: In 'The Intentionality of Sensation' (1965) it is recalled, 'I once opened my eyes and saw the black striking surface of a matchbox which was standing on one end; the other sides of the box were not visible. This was a few inches from my eye and I gazed in astonishment wondering what it could be. Asked to describe the impression as I remember it, I say "Something black and rectangular, on end, some feet away, and some feet high." I took it for three or four feet distant, and it looked, if anything, like a thick post, but I knew there could be no such thing in my bedroom.' (Anscombe, 1965: 16).

In this matchbox example, we see that the knower or perceiver is presented with a composition of clues - sensations or impressions of black, rectangular, on end, some feet away, some feet high - from which she comes to think that there is possibly a thick post in the

room. This way of coming to knowledge (although in this case it is not knowledge, but false belief) is more or less described as a matter of inference: 'the supposition of what thing it [the something black, rectangular etc.] might be was [largely] based on an impression of size' (Anscombe, 1965: 16). It also seems worth noting here, that as the supposition of what is being seen is based upon a composition or cocktail of impressions/sensations these form a part of what it known. If the perceiver had been correct that there was a thick post in the room, then she would not only have known 'there is a thick post in the room' but also that it was black, rectangular, on end etc.

This is not the same for non-observational knowledge. Here there is no presentation of clues, the knowledge arises via some other channel. As such, potential candidates for clues, for instance 'feelings of resistance, weight and pressure' (Anscombe, 1962: 71) in the case of the position of one's limbs, are not part of what is known when one knows that one's legs are crossed. One might be tempted to say that such things are known tacitly, however, as comes out in the above quote from *Intention* (1957), the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts includes an assumption that to know something involves an ability to say something (Anscombe, 1957, §8). Hence, where there is no clear ability to say what sensations constitute a sign that one's limbs are arranged this way rather than that, it seems very unlikely that such sensations constitute part of what we know when we know that our legs are crossed.

Anscombe's text also maintains that one does not arrive at the supposition that ones legs are crossed by basing it on a composition of clues. And a brief defence of this view is provided: 'Without experiment, most people would not know what sensations to expect when their legs are in that position; one might find out by putting one's legs in that position and noting what

sensations one had then. This is enough to prove that those sensations are not clues by which one tells one's position' (Anscombe, 1962: 71).

It is not particularly clear, however, what this other channel is. Wiseman describes it as follows: 'The capacity [...] is one that is unmediated by sensory input—which is to say, the capacity is one the exercise of which is independent of the exercise of sensory capacities. (This is not, of course, to say that the acquisition of the capacity is independent of the possession of sensory capacities, nor that the loss of sensory capacities would not affect the possession and exercise of the capacity to say.)' (Wiseman, 2017: 546). Wiseman goes on to develop this thought by suggesting that practical knowledge arises from the exercise of a capacity to do something. Wiseman attributes to Anscombe the view that concepts are capacities (Wiseman, 2017: 538), so, presumably, to have the capacity to water ski is to have a concept of how to water ski.[114] To say that someone is exercising the capacity to water ski is to say that they are exercising the concept of how to water ski. And it is because someone is exercising their ability to water ski that they know water skiing to be happening, and will make verbal reports to that effect.

Another author who suggests how we might explain the channel which leads to knowledge without observation is Sebastian Rödl. In his monograph *Self-Consciousness* (2007), Rödl claims that 'first-person knowledge of action and belief is not receptive; one does not know an object first-personally by being affected by it. Rather, first-person knowledge of acts of thoughts is *spontaneous*. In contrast to receptive knowledge, which is of an independent object, spontaneous knowledge is identical with its object: my knowing first personally that I

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[114] I assume that Wiseman has some Aristotelian notion of knowledge-how in mind.

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am doing such-and-such is the same reality as my doing it, and my knowing first personally that I believe such-and-such is the same reality as my believing it' (Rödl, 2007: viii-ix).

Prima facie, this makes it sound as if knowledge of our actions were always a surprise. However, Rödl later explains that he takes the performance of an intentional action to be the conclusion of a piece of practical reasoning - 'an action is the acting subject's answer to the question what to do' (Rödl, 2007: 49). When, for instance, I'm wondering whether or not to have one last coffee of an evening, my making the coffee is the resolution of my deliberation. The knowledge that I am making coffee, which is spontaneous with my making coffee, arises from my deliberation about what to do rather than observation of what is happening.

I take no stand on which (if any) of these explanations might be correct, but hope they serve to convince the reader that there are options for explaining how knowledge can arise without observation.

Finally, the notion of knowledge without observation is addressed a third time, very briefly, in 'The First Person' (1975). Here we are simply told that it involves 'unmediated agent-or-patient conceptions of actions, happenings and states' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). Presumably what is meant is that these conceptions are unmediated by clues as per observational knowledge which is mediated by clues. And that these conceptions are 'subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36); and that they 'do not involve the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject' (Anscombe, 1975: 36).

Whether or not there is truly a difference in the account of knowledge-without-observation between *Intention* (1957) and 'The First Person' (1975) I am unsure. There does, however,

seem to be a difference in emphasis - the distinction originally seems to be a distinction in terms of how knowledge comes about or arises. Later, however, the emphasis is on the different content or form which knowledge can have. But why should we be convinced that the non-observational route to knowledge results in subjectless/as-structureless knowledge? After all, when I consciously deliberate about what to do and then do something, I never lose sight of myself as a figure in the world.

The short answer to this is that it is presumably the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) which is to understood as justifying claims about the form of non-observational knowledge i.e. that is subjectless or as-structureless. The product of the non-observational processes is first-person knowledge - knowledge of the knower's own actions, happenings, and states. This knowledge is expressed linguistically using the first-person pronoun. Hence, if it has been shown that our use of the first-person pronoun does not amount to an intentional act of speaker's reference and if such acts of referring typically manifests the conceptualisation of an as-structured given into substance and properties, then our use of the first-person pronoun doesn't manifest this. Thus, it reveals the knowledge it expresses as not involving the conceptualisation of an as-structured given into substance and non-substantial properties. Our non-referential use of the first-person pronoun manifests the subjectless form of first-person knowledge which is knowledge without observation.

Conclusion to the Interpretation Section

This brings us to the end of the interpretation section of this chapter. In this section, I have provided an interpretative account of why 'The First Person' (1975) instructs us that use of the first-person pronoun manifests or expresses self-consciousness or self-knowledge. I have

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tried to give sense to the notion that what is distinct about self-consciousness is that it is subjectless and doesn't involve the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject by using Martin Heidegger's notion of as-structured experience to explain why consciousness generally might be appreciated as involving the the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. Consequently, I have suggested that we might understand subjectless self-consciousness as as-structureless.

I then used an idea found in *Intention* (1957) - that I do what happens - to characterise the form of self-consciousness as knowing that 'such-and-such is happening'. Finally, I suggested that the idea that self-consciousness involves knowledge without observation, as opposed to knowledge with observation which is involved in consciousness, as leaving room for an explanation of how self-consciousness fails to be as-structured - namely because it arises in a different way to consciousness generally. Writing this has not been an easy task - as noted in the introduction to this section, the interpreter is only provided with terse comments concerning the nature of self-conciousness. However, there is hopefully a sufficient interpretive effort to now provide an analysis or internal critique of this account of self-consciousness.

Part Two: Analysis

Introduction

Having interpreted an account of self-consciousness from 'The First Person' (1975), I will now provide a critique of it. As per the other critiques in this dissertation, this is an internal critique. And I will be arguing that the notion of subjectless or as-structureless self-

consciousness is ultimately incompatible with other ideas found in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. I begin by critiquing the idea that our use of the first-person pronoun consistently expresses or manifests subjectless or as-structureless experience. I argue that if we consider examples of people retrospectively reporting certain unintentional actions, such as in the sugar example drawn from the work of John Perry and the wagonette example drawn from 'The First Person' (1975), then it is difficult to explain why their knowledge of these happenings goes from as-structured to as-structureless when they come to retrospectively report these accidents in the first-person.

 Arguing for the above only establishes that the general idea that our use of 'I' expresses or manifests self-consciousness is incompatible with agents providing retrospective reports of certain unintentional actions, such as in the wagonette example from 'The First Person' (1975). This seems to show at least some inconsistency in ideas found in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts, but not a total inconsistency - the idea that our use of 'I' expresses or manifests self-consciousness could just be interpreted as only applying to certain cases involving the use of 'I'.

 In the second section, I will argue that this notion is totally inconsistent with other ideas found in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts, because the notion of substance-involving properties found in Anscombe's 'Substance' (1964) supports the position that self-consciousness is never subjectless or as-structureless. This is because a human action's occurrence is a subject involving property. Hence the conception of a human action's occurrence implies a conception of a subject which does the action. If this critique is followed, then the second section shows not only the inconsistency of the claim that self-consciousness is subjectless, but also of trying to explain the distinction between   knowledge

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with and knowledge without observation in terms of form or content rather than in terms of how the knowledge is arrived at.

i. Unintentional Actions: Objection to the Idea that Our Use of the First-Person Pronoun Consistently Expresses Subjectless Experience

Knowledge of one's unintentional actions can be expressed using the first-person pronoun. As such, if it is maintained that 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25), then knowledge of our unintentional actions can count as self-consciousness. Hence, if self-consciousness only involves as-structureless knowledge, then we should expect knowledge of our unintentional actions to be as-structureless - it will not involve the conjoining of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. In this section, I argue that sometimes our knowledge of our unintentional actions really does seem to involve the conjoining of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject including in the wagonette example found in 'The First Person' (1975). And I conclude that the general idea that our use of 'I' expresses or manifests self-consciousness is incompatible with agents providing retrospective reports of certain unintentional actions.

In order to explain the problem I perceive when it comes to our knowledge of certain unintentional actions, let us begin by considering my favourite example of an unintentional action from the philosophical literature. This is found in John Perry's *The Problem of the Essential Indexical* (1979): 'I once followed a trail of sugar on a supermarket floor, pushing my cart down the aisle on one side of a tall counter and back the aisle on the other, seeking the shopper with the torn sack to tell him he was making a mess. With each trip around the

counter, the trail became thicker. But I seemed unable to catch up. Finally it dawned on me. I was the shopper I was trying to catch [...] *I am making [the] mess.*' (Perry, 1979: 3).

Perry's story clearly involves someone coming to know of their unintentional action - that of leaving a trail of sugar. They do not know this without observation - something shows them that they are the person who is leaving the trail - namely the clues that the trail is getting thicker every time they go around the counter, that the supposed other shopper cannot be caught up with, and, as Perry later informs us he discovered, that there is a torn sack of sugar present in the person's trolley.

Whilst seeking the shopper with the torn sack of sugar, Perry seems to have as-structured knowledge of what is occurring - a mess - this trail of sugar - is apprehended as being made by some shopper. This leads to the supposition that there is a shopper who is conceived of as making a mess or as having a torn sack of sugar. Following our hypothesising about how the mind works in the first section of this chapter, we might say that the original drinking in of this scene - of a sugar trail as being made by someone - leads to a higher level conceptualisation of the happening in terms of a substance - a shopper, a human being - and a non-substantial property - making a mess. Recall, it was suggested that this higher level of conceptualisation is the level of language, so this conceptualisation is in linguistic form as subject - substance - and predicate - non-substantial property - e.g. as 'Someone is making a mess.' or 'The shopper with the torn sack is making a mess.'. Here, then, we seem to have the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject.

When Perry finally comes to attribute this action - this making a mess - to himself, he seems to take what is understood by a predicate - making a mess - and attribute it to a subject -

himself. He is the someone, the shopper with the torn sack. This is surely a clear case of substitution - 'Someone' in Perry's thoughts or reports is substituted for 'I'. And was 'Someone' in these thoughts not a distinctly conceived subject - a maker of messes? And is this not the conception through which Perry now grasps himself? The answer is surely in the affirmative. What else can it dawning on one that 'I [am] the shopper I was trying to catch [...] *I am making [the] mess*' (Perry, 1979: 3) amount to?

Now, the Perry example is clearly not amenable to the as-structureless account of self-knowledge which was offered in the case of intentional actions. The man pushing the trolley doesn't plausibly think 'making a mess is happening', so avoids the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. He clearly conceives of what is happening as being done by a subject, hence he goes in search of one. The search ends in the realisation that this subject is himself and this knowledge is expressed using the first-person pronoun. Use of the first-person pronoun then, does not always involve the manifestation of as-structureless or subjectless knowledge.

We can take this discussion of Perry's example and usefully use it in interpreting the wagonette example of as-structured experience in 'The First Person' (1975). Recall, it is claimed that the following case illustrates the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness: 'consider the following story from William James. James, who insisted (rightly, if I am right) that consciousness is quite distinct from self-consciousness, reproduces an instructive letter from a friend: "We were driving . . . in a wagonette; the door flew open and X, alias 'Baldy', fell out on the road. We pulled up at once, and then he said 'Did anyone fall out?' or 'Who fell out?'- I don't exactly remember the words. When told that Baldy fell out he said 'Did Baldy fall out? Poor Baldy!"'' (Anscombe, 1975: 36).

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It is explained that the reason why this example illustrates the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness is because 'his [Baldy's] thought of the happening, falling out of the carriage, was one for which he looked for a subject, his grasp of it one which required a subject' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). This seems entirely analogous to the Perry case. Hence, I interpret the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts as being one compelled to accept the Perry case as a case of as-structured consciousness.

I also presume that it would be very difficult for an interpreter of Anscombe's work to quibble with the idea that once Perry comes to attribute the act of making a mess to himself his knowledge suddenly lacks as-structure. What has always struck me as curious with the wagonette example is that it does not seem to consider the likely later reporting of the incident in terms of 'I fell out of the wagonette last Thursday.'. Why would the speaker's grasp of this happening no longer be as one which required a subject? Surely, like Perry, it will eventually dawn on the man that it is he himself who fell from the wagonette. There seems to be no good consideration which can be offered as to why this dawning on would entail that the happening is now appreciated in a subjectless manner.[115]

I have just argued that it is difficult to interpret the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts as supporting the idea that our use of 'I' expresses subjectless self-consciousness when it is used in making retrospective reports of certain unintentional actions. In particular, when we interpret out the wagnotte example as I have done. Arguing for this only shows there to be some inconsistency in ideas found in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. It does

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[115] And anyone tempted to say something along the lines of 'well he might recover a first-person memory of the happening', has no leg to stand on - the man might well have lifelong amnesia of the incident brought on by shock.

not show a total inconsistency - the idea that our use of 'I' expresses or manifests self-consciousness could just be interpreted as only applying to certain cases involving the use of 'I'. In the second section, I will argue that this notion is totally inconsistent with other ideas found in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts, because the notion of substance-involving properties found in Anscombe's 'Substance' (1964) supports the position that self-consciousness is never subjectless or as-structureless. T

ii. Substance Involving Properties: Objection to the Idea that Self-Consciousness is Subjectless

I am now going to use Anscombe's paper 'Substance' (1964) to argue that knowledge of the occurrence of a human action is never subjectless. In doing so, I take myself to show that the idea that our use of the first-person pronoun manifests subjectless self-consciousness is incompatible with other ideas found in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. No matter how one tries to dress-up self-consciousness as having a subjectless form, I will argue, it is difficult to deny that substance involving properties are its content. That is to say, the knowledge of an occurent action such as digging a grave can be presented as subjectless e.g. as 'digging a grave is happening', but that does not affect that the conception of such an occurrence implies the conception of a subject who is performing the digging. After all, digging a grave is a human action.

'Substance' (1964) attempts to go beyond the dichotomy perceived in then contemporary discussions of metaphysics - between either accepting bundles of qualities or accepting bare qualityless substances to which qualities attach - by drawing the reader's attention to what are termed 'substance involving properties' (Anscombe, 1964: 39). Malleability, melting at 44℃,

in powder form, awake, and yielding no sound when rapped are given as examples of such properties (Anscombe, 1964: 39-40). The reader's attention is also drawn to so-called substantial properties such as being alive, being a horse, being gold (Anscombe, 1964: 40), but let us stick with the substance-involving properties. 'Substance' (1964) provides the following brief account of substance involving properties which is, I think, very pertinent to our discussion of self-consciousness:

'[I]f I asked you to see if the rainbow would melt at 44°C, this would imply a conception of a rainbow as composed of stuff, so that a sample of it could be brought away and subjected to tests. "Malleability" means that the stuff can be beaten into a shape which it will then retain if not further interfered with. Thus you could not consider whether something was malleable unless you had the conception of a lump of stuff whose properties could be further investigated - but that is already to have a partial conception of substance.' (Anscombe, 1964, 40).

The most important thing to take away from the above quote (as regards its relevance for our current discussion) is that it proposes to have a conception of the occurrence of a property such as malleability or melts at 44°C implies that an agent already has a conception of a substance i.e. of something as malleable or of something as melting at 44°C. This, I think, tells against the notion in 'The First Person' (1975), that we have 'unmediated agent-or-patient conceptions of actions, happenings and states [which are] subjectless' (Anscombe, 1975: 36).

In our discussion of how first-person experience could fail to be as-structured, we reached the idea that what the person knows has the form 'such-and-such is happening'. That what a

person knows is merely the occurrence of a non-substantial property. I find this picture incredibly difficult to believe, because what is known to be happening is a human action. As *Intention* (1957) states 'The description of something as e.g building a house or writing on the blackboard employs the concept of human action' (Anscombe, 1957: ix). And it is because it is a conception of a human action that it is substance involving. I simply do not see how it is possible to have concepts like 'saluting is happening', 'rolling out pastry is happening', or 'voting is happening' without that distinctly implying the having of a conception of a substance or subject which is doing those things. And I say 'distinctly implying' for these examples, because they clearly involve the movement of something through space. Saluting, rolling out pastry, and voting are all substance involving properties or happenings; as, I take it, are the whole gamut of human actions. For 'The First Person' (1975) to imply that we could have a concept that such-and-such is happening, where such-and-such is a substance involving property, yet that conception be subjectless, seems to me pure philosophical bluff.

I have just used Anscombe's 'Substance' (1964) to provide what I take to be a very general objection to the idea that self-consciousness is subjectless or as-structureless. If it is a good objection, then the idea that our use of the first-person pronoun expresses or manifests subjectless self-knowledge must be seen as incompatible with other commitments in the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. It also entails that, upon one way of interpreting that worldview, the distinction between knowledge with and knowledge without observation cannot be explained as a distinction between as-structured and as-structureless forms of knowledge. This is because we are rejecting the idea that the sort of things known without observation - intentional actions in particular - are known in some as-structureless manner.

Recall, that in our discussion of knowledge with and knowledge without observation, I noted that between 'The First Person' (1975) and Anscombe's earlier work, there seems to be a difference in emphasis; that the knowledge with and knowledge without observation distinction originally seemed to be a distinction in terms of how knowledge comes about or arsies, but that later the emphasis is on the different content or form which knowledge can have. On the basis that human actions are substance involving properties, I suggest that the distinction can only be explained as a distinction in terms of how knowledge comes about or arises consistent with the earlier texts.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to provide an interpretation and analysis of the account of self-consciousness suggested by 'The First Person' (1975). In the interpretation section, I began by providing an interpretation as to why we should think that 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25) as 'The First Person' (1975) recommends. Secondly, I sought to provide an interpretation of what could be meant by claiming that self-consciousness is 'subjectless [and does] not involve the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). This was done in a roundabout fashion, through considering what the nature of consciousness is if, unlike self-consciousness, it involves the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. I used ideas from Anscombe's account of Aristotle's work from *Three Philosophers* (1961) and drew from Heidegger's notion of as-structure to interpret this account of consciousness in terms of as-structure. Consequently, I suggested that we might understand subjectless self-consciousness to be as-structureless. I then turned to the question of what subjectless self-consciousness is meant to be like - 'The First Person'

(1975) only telling us that it involves 'unmediated agent-or-patient conceptions of actions, happenings and states' (Anscombe, 1975: 36). Using insights from Strawson, Geach, and Wiseman, I suggested that we might understand subjectless self-consciousness to have the form 'such-and-such is happening'. Finally, I suggested that Anscombe's texts can explain self-consciousness failing to be as-structured through linking it to the notion of knowledge without observation and claiming that, for some reason as yet unknown, this route to knowledge produces knowledge of a different from (i.e. as-structureless) to knowledge with observation which is as-structured.

 In the analysis section, I provided a critique of the notion of subjectless self consciousness which drew upon aspects of 'The First Person' (1975), in particular the wagonette example, and the notion of substance involving properties taken from another Anscombe paper 'Substance' (1964). This critique constituted an internal critique of Anscombe's texts and sought to establish that the notion of subjectless self-consciousness is inconsistent with other ideas contained in the worldview which those texts collectively suggest. In particular, I argued against the idea our use of 'I' consistently expresses or manifests subjectless or as-structureless self-consciousness by drawing attention to retrospective reports of certain unintentional actions. I then argued against the idea that our use of use of 'I' ever expresses or manifests subjectless or as-structureless self-consciousness by claiming that as per the notion of being malleable and melting at 44°C the notion of an occurrent action, such as drinking a glass of water, is subject involving. And that the conception 'digging a grave is happening' is not subjectless, because, although it does not explicitly include a subject, the property 'digging a grave' is already subject involving.

I want to end this chapter by noting something which I hope will neatly wrap-up the thesis as a whole. Namely, given that 'The First Person' (1975) instructs us that 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25), I could have argued that subjectless self-consciousness must be inconsistent with other elements of the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts because I have already argued that the central thesis of 'The First Person' (1975) - that '"I" is neither a name nor another kind of expression whose logical role is to make a reference, at all.' (Anscombe, 1975: 32) - from which the notion of subjectless self-consciousness is supposed to emerge inconsistent with other elements of the worldview suggested by Anscombe's texts. I decided against this move, however, because it relied too heavily on the critique for thinking that being accepted. Consequently, I sought to provide an independent internal critique of subjectless self-consciousness which appealed to other elements of the worldview which Anscombe's texts suggest. This has the following consequence: As long as it is accepted both that 'self-consciousness is something manifested by the use of 'I' (Anscombe, 1975: 25) and that the central thesis entails subjectless self-consciousness, one can either move to the idea that the central thesis must be inconsistent from the argument for subjectless self-consciousness being inconsistent, or to the idea that subjectless self-consciousness must be inconsistent from the argument for the central thesis being inconsistent. Despite being independent, my two critiques are mutually supporting.

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