

The Conceptual Problem of Other Bodies

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1. It is a condition of a plausible account of concepts of mental states that they can be applied in both first- and third-person cases. That is, the thought about another person, 'They are Ψ ', must employ the very same concept, Ψ , as the thought about oneself, 'I am Ψ '. However, it has often been suggested that there is a problem with showing how this condition could be satisfied. This is the, so called, conceptual problem of other minds. But it is not immediately obvious why the demand that the very same mental concept be employed in both first- and third-person thoughts should be considered problematic. Indeed, 'the' problem is often articulated in quite different ways. In §2 and §3 I sketch two ways of understanding the problem, drawing from this discussion some further conditions on a plausible account of what it is to grasp concepts of mental states. In §4 and §5 I outline two accounts, the Behavioural Demonstrative view held by Brewer and the Perceptual view held by Pickard and Cassam. I argue that each is incomplete as it presupposes, but offers no account of, concepts of bodily behaviour. That is, to the extent that there is a conceptual problem of other minds, there is also a 'conceptual problem of other bodies'. In §6 I outline Peacocke's Interlocking Account, arguing that whilst it is not subject to precisely the same concern as are the Behavioural Demonstrative and Perceptual views, a closely related objection can be raised in relation to its account of the epistemology of other-ascriptions of mental concepts. Due to limitations of space I do not offer a solution to the conceptual problem of other bodies. My aim is the modest one of arguing that a number of purported solutions to the conceptual problem of other minds are incomplete without a solution to the conceptual problem of other bodies.

2. The conceptual problem of other minds is sometimes presented as a problem regarding the unity of concepts of mental states. Consider the following remark of Davidson's, "If two concepts regularly depend for their application on different criteria or ranges of support, they must be different concepts." (Davidson, 1987, p.16). Taken at face value, this principle would appear committed to a view according to which the meaning of a concept is determined by what counts as good evidence for its application. However, such a view is, to say the least, highly controversial and is not suitable to serve as a premise for what is intended to be an *intuitive* problem for an account of concepts of mental states. But we might consider Davidson's remark as a challenge: Given that mental concepts are applied on two apparently distinct ranges of evidence, we require an account of concepts of mental states that rules out the possibility that, despite appearances, there really are two sets of concepts of

mental states, some first-personal and some third-personal.¹

One might respond that this Davidsonian challenge is not particularly troublesome. For why should we suppose that the fact that their being applicable on two distinct ranges of evidence provides even a *prima facie* reason to suppose that we are not dealing with unified concepts? Surely such a phenomenon is common in science. There are, for instance, a number of different ranges of evidence that ground judgements concerning length. However, we do not suppose that there is a corresponding conceptual problem of length. There are all sorts of reasons, including for example considerations of simplicity, that speak in favour of the view that the concept *length* as occurring in thoughts grounded in evidence from rulers is the very same concept *length* that occurs in thoughts grounded in evidence from sonar. Surely the same is true of concepts of mental states. This latter point is correct, but not to the point. I *assume* that concepts of mental states are unified, and so I am not looking for reasons to believe that they are. The task is to give an account of concepts of mental states that has as a consequence that the very same concepts are employed in first- and third-person thoughts. The Davidsonian challenge imposes a condition on this: that the account be consistent with the fact that first- and third-person attributions are grounded on distinct ranges of evidence. Analogously, I take it that an account of what it is to grasp the concept of length precisely *should* be consistent with the fact that thoughts about length can be based on a range of different sorts of evidence.

3. The conceptual problem of other minds is sometimes presented in rather a different way. Suppose that one can be in a position to grasp a mental concept Ψ simply by reflecting upon one's own inner experience. From this first-person perspective, one's conscious mental states are given to one *as one's own*.² It might then seem that 'being given to me' should be a part of the meaning of Ψ . But this makes it problematic to see how the very same concept, $\Psi_{\text{given to me}}$, could be attributed to another.

This might be taken to be the reasoning behind Wittgenstein's well known remark that, "If one has to imagine someone else's pain on the model of one's own, this is none too easy a thing to do: for I have to imagine pain which I *do not feel* on the model of pain which I *do feel*." (Wittgenstein, 1958, §302). It is also the way that Brewer presents the problem, "a person's own subjective experience of being ψ ...is the most basic source of her conception of what being

¹ Cf. McGinn, "we have an apparently unambiguous word being applied in very different ways; the assertibility conditions of the two sorts of use of a given predicate seem radically disjoint. This raises a question about univocity that makes extrapolation from one sort of use to the other seem highly problematic." (McGinn, 1984, 136). Also, Avramides, "Why, then, given the apparent difference in the way I apply the word 'is in pain' to myself and others, do I not similarly conclude that this predicate is ambiguous? I shall refer to this as the 'problem of unity'" (Avramides, 2001, p.224). Note that both McGinn and Avramides state this problem at the level of linguistic meaning, whilst I am assuming that the fundamental issue concerns the nature of *concepts*.

² Although, depending on how we interpret the phenomenon of 'thought insertion', this may not be a necessary truth. See (Stephens & Graham, 2000).

ψ consists in...So how could what it is to be ψ ...possibly be detached entirely from her subjective experience?" (Brewer, 2002, p.24).³

But exactly why should the fact that my own conscious states are given as *mine* make the first-personally derived concept of them that of *states that are given to me*? Why not suppose that it would simply be that of *states that are given*? This latter formulation, tying the meaning of Ψ to a general notion of subjective experience, doesn't make it problematic that the very same concept should be applied to others than oneself. Sure that is precisely what we want?

The problem is that this response is circular. We are interested in giving an account of what it is to grasp mental concepts that are generally applicable. That is, it must follow from the account that the thought about another person, 'They are Ψ ', must employ the very same concept, Ψ , as the thought about oneself, 'I am Ψ '. The current response credits the subject with grasp of the concept of *states that are given*. This is to attribute to the subject a generally applicable concept of subjective experience. Thus the response presupposes rather than provides an answer to the question of how a subject can possess such concepts.⁴ This provides us with a further condition on a plausible account of concepts of mental states: it must not, on pain of circularity, presuppose a grasp of generally applicable grasp of concepts of mental states.

We require, then, a non-circular account of what it is to possess generally applicable concepts of mental states, an account that respects the disparity between the evidential bases of first- and third-person thoughts about mental states. Such an account will constitute a solution to the conceptual problem of other minds. The account required is constitutive, but it is notable that the conceptual problem of other minds is often stated, either explicitly or implicitly, in developmental terms. It is asked, for example, "how we come to have our concept of mind in the first place" (Avramides, 2001, p.220). This is a mistake. For it might be held that concepts of mental states are innate.⁵ But this would hardly qualify as a solution to the problem. The question would remain concerning in what a grasp of these concepts consists. In the present context, we should not ask how we come to grasp a concept, but what it is to grasp a concept. Of course, answers to these two questions will not be unrelated, but we should not prejudge the question of their relation in setting up the problem.

4. There are a number of ways of responding to the conceptual problem of

³ Cf. Pickard, "If you understand what pain is from your own case, then pain is just that wretched experience. But how then can there be pain when there is no such experience?" (Pickard, 2003, p.89).

⁴ See (Peacocke, 1984) for a discussion of circular responses to the conceptual problem of other minds. For a general discussion see (Peacocke, 1992, Ch.1). I assume the legitimacy of the project of accounting for concepts of mental states in a way intelligible to one who does not already possess them. This assumption is related, although not identical, to the doctrine of immodesty, familiar from (Dummett, 1975) and (McDowell, 1987). Also see (Peacocke 1992, Ch.1). In recent work, Peacocke has dropped the demand for non-circular accounts of concept possession. See (Peacocke, 2008, Ch.4). I take it, however, that Brewer's account is intended to be read as immodest.

⁵ See, for example, (Fodor, 1987, p.132).

other minds. The most obvious distinction among them is between accounts that do, and accounts that do not, privilege the first-person. One sort of account that does not privilege the first-person identifies the grasp of a mental concept Ψ with (tacit) knowledge of a psychological theory that incorporates Ψ . Such a view may go on to claim that the grounds for the self-ascription of Ψ are not so different, though not just the same, from those for other-ascription.⁶ Such third-person accounts are not my primary focus here. Rather, I am concerned with views that accord a special status to the first-person attribution of mental states. Amongst such first-personal accounts, one can distinguish between those that are *behaviour* based, and those that are *identity* based. Behaviour based accounts attempt to link behaviour, something that is accessible third-personally, with the first-person perspective itself, thus allowing for the possibility of the ascription to others of concepts that are derivable only first-personally. Identity based accounts argue that thoughts ascribing some mental concept Ψ to others are thoughts to the effect that the other is in the same state that one is in when one instantiates Ψ . In the rest of this section and the next, I discuss behaviour based accounts, returning to identity based accounts in §6.

So, one way of responding to the conceptual problem of other minds is by incorporating the notion of perceptually presented behavioural manifestations of Ψ into the concept of Ψ that one nevertheless claims is graspable purely via a reflection upon one's own inner experience. For not only are behavioural manifestations of Ψ presented to the outer senses, they are also presented via the awareness that each of us has of our own bodily behaviour *from the inside*. The concept Ψ that one is in a position to grasp from reflection upon one's own inner experience makes reference to objectively, third-personally, available behaviour. This is the approach that Brewer takes in his account of concepts of emotional states. He argues that to grasp the concept of fear is to understand that:

- (F1) to be frightening is to be *thus*; and
- (F2) experiences of being afraid are precisely those which present something in a certain light, as frightening, that is, as being thus,

where the referent of the behavioural demonstrative figuring in (F1) is the property, roughly speaking, of eliciting certain behaviour in the subject: precisely the kind of behaviour which provides the accompanying demonstration. (Brewer, 2002, p.29)

F1 specifies what it is for something to be frightening and F2 specifies what it

⁶ See, for example, (Carruthers, 1996).

is for something to be an experience of fear. In grasping the concept of fear, one grasps F2, which itself presupposes a grasp of F1. F1 contains what Brewer refers to as a 'behavioural demonstrative'. Such a demonstrative refers to the relational property that an object has if and only if it 'elicits' a behavioural response of *this* sort – thought whilst one is aware, from the inside, of that very behaviour as being elicited in just this way. Thus, there are two demonstratives involved: a frightening object is *thus*, and being *thus* involves eliciting *this* sort of behaviour. The latter, embedded, demonstrative, must refer to behaviour as given in inner experience since, "Perceptual demonstrative identification of the relevant type of expressive behaviour in others alone is insufficient for a proper understanding of the crucial notion of *elicitation* as this figures in the characterization of the emotional experience in question." (Brewer, 2002, p.30, fn.9). The idea that an object 'elicits' a certain type of behaviour is the thought that the object calls for, or makes appropriate, a certain active response, not simply that it causes certain bodily changes. As examples, Brewer mentions, "cowering in fear, or shaking a fist or thumping a table in anger" (Brewer, 2002, p.22).

This account privileges the first-person in a grasp of the concept of the experience of fear. For, in order to be in a position to grasp the behavioural demonstrative in F1, one must have, or have had, an awareness of the elicitation of fear-behaviour by a fearful object. Thus, one can only properly grasp the concept of an experience of fear if one has experienced fear.⁷ The account also seems to provide an answer to the conceptual problem of other minds, at least for a range of concepts of mental states. For, as Brewer puts it, "the individuation of a given emotional condition from the subjective experiential perspective makes essential reference to the kind of behaviour on the basis of which that very same condition may reasonably be ascribed to others." (Brewer, 2002, p.29).

There are, however, a number of ways in which one might object to Brewer's account. I shall mention three.

First, it might be objected that the view is unacceptably chauvinistic. If the meaning of the concept of a mental state is given, in part, by its being a response to objects that elicit one to do *this*, where this is a behavioural demonstrative, then a creature that is incapable of doing *this* cannot possess the concept of just that mental state. To use one of Brewer's own examples, creatures that cannot cower in fear, cannot understand what fear is. How serious an objection this is will depend, amongst other things, on how narrowly or otherwise one specifies the form of behaviour referred to by the behavioural demonstratives. Indeed, one might hold that, given a very broad specification of the fear behaviour linked to the concept of fear, this apparent chauvinism is actually a positive feature of the view, ruling as nonsense the attribution of

⁷ Thus, Brewer's demonstrative account of concepts of mental states will conflict with certain views concerning their aetiology.

fear to inanimate objects.⁸ For this reason, I do not wish to lend too much weight to the objection.⁹

Second, there is reason to think that Brewer's account fails as an attempt to provide sufficient conditions for thinking of another person as afraid. Brewer has provided an account of the concept of fear that allows its employment as a response to the perception of another's body as behaving in *this* way. But to do this is not yet to think of *another* person as afraid. One can conceive of the possibility of acting through a distally perceived body. It is thus consistent with one's feeling afraid and actively responding through another body.¹⁰ So, applying the concept *fear* as a response to perceiving a distal body to be behaving in *this* way is not yet to think of *another* as afraid. What is required is that one think of the behaviour in question as being carried out by *another subject*. Brewer's account doesn't tell us how it is that we grasp this notion of a subject other than oneself.

In the face of this objection, I think that Brewer can reasonably respond that it was never his intention to present sufficient conditions for thinking of another person as afraid. He is not offering an account of what it is to grasp the concept of a subject of experience distinct from myself. Brewer's concern with judgements such as 'X is afraid' is to offer a conception of the predicate such that it can be ascribed both first- and third-personally. He is not offering an account of the first- third-person distinction itself, even though this would of course be required for a full picture.¹¹

Third, it can be questioned whether it is really the case that the kind of behaviour to which F1 makes reference can be unproblematically attributed to others. The first-person attributions of behaviour mentioned in F1 are grounded in bodily-awareness.¹² It is via the awareness that I have of my body from the inside that I am aware of a certain form of behaviour as being elicited by a certain object and on the basis of which I can attribute it to myself. However, it is via external perception, paradigmatically vision, that I am aware of the behaviour of others and on the basis of which I am able to attribute it to them.

⁸ For example, see (Avramides, 2001, pp.264-5).

⁹ A related objection is that behaviour based accounts such as Brewer's implausibly require that possessors of mental concepts have some (tacit) knowledge of the behavioural manifestations of the properties denoted by them. Peacocke goes so far as to make the denial of this requirement an explanandum of a theory of concepts of mental states (Peacocke, 2008, p.2).

¹⁰ Here I am applying to Brewer's view the objection that Peacocke uses to motivate the Interlocking Account, see (Peacocke, 2008, §5.3).

¹¹ Pickard, on the other hand, suggests that this difficulty rules out some responses to the conceptual problem. She writes, "what it is for another to be in pain is for there to be pain for her, but for there not to be pain for you. But to understand this, you must have the concept of a subject of experience, applicable to yourself and to others. And there seems little prospect of possessing the concept of such a subject without also possessing the concept of a mind or experience, applicable not only to yourself but to others. But that is what is now in question." (Pickard, 2003, p.89). Given this, one might expect Pickard's account to provide resources for resolving the present difficulty. However, it is hard to see how it does. On the relationship between generally applicable concepts of mental states and a generally applicable concept of a subject of experience, see (Kripke, 1982, Appendix) and (Peacocke, 2008, §5.3).

¹² Actually, there is some reason to think that this is not strictly accurate. See (Marcel, 2003). However, this is unimportant for present purposes. The important point is that whatever form of awareness it is that grounds the first-person attributions of behaviour mentioned in F1, it is an awareness 'from the inside'. The same is true of the bodily states and actions mentioned by Pickard and Peacocke respectively (see §§5&6)

Given that attributions of behaviour are based on these distinct ranges of evidence, we can raise a 'conceptual problem of other bodies'. Since bodily concepts are applied on two apparently distinct ranges of evidence, we require an account of concepts of bodily states, including bodily actions, that rules out the possibility that, despite appearances, there really are two sets of concepts of such states, some first-personal and some third-personal. Further, suppose that one can be in a position to grasp a behavioural concept Φ simply by reflecting upon one's own inner experience. From this first-person perspective, one's own bodily behaviour is given to one as *one's own*.¹³ It might then seem that *being given to me* should be a part of the meaning of Φ . But this makes it problematic to see how the very same concept, $\Phi_{\text{given to me}}$, could be attributed to another.

This conceptual problem of other bodies is, in a number of ways, analogous to the conceptual problem of other minds. Driving both is the fact that we appear to possess a unified concept that is appropriately attributed on the basis of two distinct ranges of evidence, one first- another third-personal. Given this, Brewer's strategy of incorporating the notion of perceptually presented behavioural manifestations of Ψ into the concept of Ψ that nevertheless is graspable purely via a reflection upon one's own inner experience cannot, by itself, qualify as a solution to the conceptual problem of other minds. Rather, its status as such is dependent upon there being an answer to the conceptual problem of other bodies. Thus, Brewer's account is incomplete.

To make this vivid, consider Inny. Inny has an inner awareness of his own bodily actions but lacks outer awareness of the bodily actions either of himself or others. Suppose him to be blind, deaf and prevented from gaining the relevant experience through touch. Supposing the correctness of Brewer's account of the concept of fear, it would seem that Inny is perfectly able to form that concept, for he can satisfy both F1 and F2. But now ask, were Inny's external senses restored to him, would he be able to tell simply by means of the external perception of the appropriate sort of behaviour, that another person was afraid?¹⁴ Perhaps so and perhaps not. The point is that Brewer has provided nothing upon which to ground a positive answer. The reason for this is that he has not shown how there can be a single concept of perceptually presented bodily actions that can be applied in both first- and third-personal cases.

It might be responded that whilst one *can* ground self-attributions of bodily behaviour on bodily awareness, one need not. For one can also perceive one's own behaviour through exactly the same forms of external perception as are involved in the perception of another's behaviour. Thus, the distinction between

¹³ Although, depending on how we interpret the phenomena such as 'anarchic hand' syndrome, this may not be a necessary truth. See (Marcel, 2003).

¹⁴ This question is, of course, reminiscent of Molyneux's Question. Given familiar issues concerning the interplay between empirical and conceptual issues surrounding Molyneux's Question, my question needs to be finessed. However, it suffices for the present illustrative purpose. On Molyneux's Question, see (Evans, 1985).

the two ranges of evidence available for attributions of behaviour does not map neatly onto the attributions to oneself and attributions to another. This is true but it should be immediately obvious that the same can be said of concepts of mental states. One can treat oneself as another person, attributing to oneself mental states on grounds that are characteristic of third-person attributions. This might happen, for example, if one catches oneself in the mirror and, noting one's expression, judges that one is angry. But such a judgement is dependent on a tacit identification of oneself with the person seen. This fact is shown by the possibility of wrongly taking the person that one sees to be oneself and falsely judging, 'I am angry'. The same point applies to attributions of behaviour. One can attribute some form of behaviour to oneself based entirely on, say, visual perception. But, again, that depends upon a tacit identification of oneself with the person seen. For one can see what is in fact another's body behaving in some way and falsely believe it to be one's own body, forming a judgement 'I am Φ '.¹⁵

There is a range of self-attributions, of both mental and bodily, states for which such possibilities of error are not possible, for example 'I have a headache' and 'my legs are crossed'. These are self-attributions of mental states based upon inner experience and of bodily states based upon bodily awareness.¹⁶ It is this range that, on a first-personal view, must form the 'base class' of attributions which alone is required for one to grasp the relevant concepts. For it is only this range that privileges the first-person in the way that Brewer finds attractive, since external perceptual awareness of behaviour is available, precisely, third-personally.¹⁷

To make this vivid, consider Outy. Outy has outer awareness of the bodily actions of both himself and others but lacks an awareness of his own bodily actions from the inside. Outy cannot be aware of his behaviour *as being elicited* by a frightening object, thus he cannot employ the behavioural demonstrative in F1 and so, on Brewer's account, cannot grasp the concept of fear. If the sort of external awareness of his own behaviour that Outy has were sufficient to ground the behavioural demonstrative in F1, Brewer's account would not be a first-personal one, since Outy is in the same position with respect to his own behaviour as he is with respect to that of others.

5. Perhaps we can make further headway with the conceptual problem if we take seriously the idea that one can literally see that another person is in a mental

¹⁵ In short, attributions of both mental states and bodily behaviour are not, when based on external perception, immune to error through misidentification relative to the first-person pronoun. On this phenomenon, see (Shoemaker, 1968).

¹⁶ For a defence of this claim see (Evans, 1982, Ch.7).

¹⁷ Nor, since it does not present behaviour in a way sufficient to ground self-attributions, is it sufficient to ground the sense that the behaviour in question is active, rather than mere passive bodily movement. Indeed, Brewer himself accepts as much, "Perceptual demonstrative identification of the relevant type of expressive behaviour in others alone is insufficient for a proper understanding of the crucial notion of *elicitation* as this figures in the characterization of the emotional experience in question." (Brewer, 2002, p.30, fn.9).

state. This is the strategy of both Pickard and Cassam. Pickard claims that, given a perceptual account of the grounds for ascribing conscious states (in her discussion, emotions) to others, "it is perfectly intelligible how you can understand how another could have a mind. For you observe her states of mind when you observe her, just as you experience your own by having them." (Pickard, 2003, p.93).

The suggestion is that the conceptual problem is resolved once we allow that the very same state can be experienced as instantiated by both oneself and others. Pickard's account of the emotions supports such a picture, she argues, since according to it, "emotions are whole bodily states consisting of bodily changes which feel, or are experienced as being, a certain way from the inside" (Pickard, 2003, p.97). However, given the discussion of Brewer above, it should be clear why, as it stands, this is implausible. One is aware of one's own emotional states in a way experientially distinct from the way in which one is aware of the emotion states of others. The former is via reflection upon one's own experience and, at least on Pickard's account, bodily awareness. The latter is via external perception, paradigmatically vision. Thus, we face the conceptual problem of other bodies. We owe an account of concepts of 'whole bodily states' according to which we can rule out the possibility that we really have two concepts, one applicable first-personally on the basis of bodily awareness, another applicable third-personally on the basis of external perception. The fact that both bodily awareness and external perception can count as direct observation of an emotional state simply serves to highlight the fact that first- and third-person attributions of emotions are grounded on two distinct ranges of evidence.

It might be said that it is no surprise that Pickard's account runs into the same difficulties as does Brewer's, since they share the broad strategy of importing the notion of perceptually presented behavioural manifestations of Ψ into the concept of Ψ that is nevertheless claimed to be graspable purely via a reflection upon one's own inner experience. Indeed, I take it that Brewer's account is consistent with the sort of perceptual account that Pickard has in mind. But a perceptual view of other-attribution need not form part of a behaviour based account, it might rather be married to a different strategy for solving the conceptual problem. For one might build the sameness of one's own mental state and that of another into the content of perception itself. That is, one might claim that when I am perceptually aware that another is Ψ , I am also aware that they are in the very same state that I am in when I am Ψ . This would be an identity based account.

This is the approach taken by Cassam, "I see that the state he is in is no different from the state I am in...In such cases the identity of mental state is a *presented* or *perceived* identity, and this is what makes it possible for me to think of [another's] state and mine as states of the same type." (Cassam, 2007,

p.181). Putting aside general concerns about explaining how it is that I can apply my concept of Ψ to another by means of my grasping that they are in *the same state as I am when I am Ψ* , there is a special difficulty for Cassam's claim about the content of perception. For Cassam's claim is that *my being Ψ* can enter into the content of *visual* perception. In this way I can be said to see that he is in the same state that I am in *when I am Ψ* . But, if what I have said above is correct, in so far as I can be said to see that I am Ψ this is precisely the sort of awareness that I could have of another person. That is, I see that *that person is Ψ* and tacitly identify that person as myself. The visual awareness that I can have of myself being Ψ is not the sort of first-personal awareness that Cassam's account requires to act as a 'base case' sufficient for the grasp of Ψ .¹⁸ Thus, Cassam's position does not offer a plausible solution to the problem at hand.¹⁹

6. The views of both Brewer and Pickard attempt to tie the grasp of concepts of mental states with a grasp of associated forms of behaviour. They are incomplete as the behaviour plausibly tied to concepts of mental states is behaviour given from the inside, but we attribute mental states to others based on behaviour given from the outside. Thus, they need to answer the conceptual problem of other bodies. Cassam's view points in another direction, one that does not bring in the notion of behaviour in this way. His claim that one can perceive the identity between one's own and another's mental state is implausible, but doubt is not thereby shed upon all explanations by means of identity. For one might deny that one's grasp that another is in the same state as one's own is based solely on perception, yet still think that it has a central role to play in the correct account of what it is to grasp concepts of mental states. This latter claim is one that has recently been put forward by Peacocke.

Peacocke endorses what he calls the Interlocking Account. His intention is to offer an explanation by means of identity that incorporates an answer to the second objection raised to Brewer in §4. The Interlocking Account of thinking that another is in pain is stated by Peacocke as follows,

For x , distinct from me, to be in pain, is both:
for x to be something of the same kind as me (a subject); and is also
for x to be in the same state I'm in when I'm in pain.

(Peacocke, 2008, p.175)

The idea is to give an account of concepts of conscious states, such as pain, at

¹⁸ This is not to say that I cannot see how someone's pain feels. Rather it is to say that seeing that someone is in pain is a state with a phenomenal character distinct from one's feeling a pain, even if the person seen is oneself.

¹⁹ See (Gomes, 2009) for a compelling criticism of Cassam along similar lines.

the same time as giving an account of the concept of a subject distinct from me. This allows us to properly distinguish between another's feeling pain in some part of their body from oneself feeling pain in some part of that very body.²⁰

A central feature of the Interlocking Account is that, for a range of conscious states, thinking of another as being in a mental state Ψ is to think of them as being in the same state that one is in when one is Ψ oneself. There are many questions that one can ask concerning the account. However, I want to look, not at the account itself, but at an epistemological problem that Peacocke raises for his own view. The Interlocking Account does not require, for the possession of the concept of, say, pain, that one have even tacit knowledge of the experiential conditions under which it would be appropriate to ascribe pain to another. This is for the reason that one need not have any grasp of the typical behavioural expressions of pain. However, Peacocke also claims that one can come to know that another is in pain simply by observing their facial expression of pain. He then asks, "If the content of an experience of another person's facial expression as one of pain is relevant to our entitlement to judge that the other is in pain, why is this so?" (Peacocke, 2008, p.196). The transition one makes here is not legitimated by one's grasp of the concept of pain, so what does legitimate it?

Peacocke's answer to this question should sound familiar. He writes,

In having such an experience [of another's face as in pain], one sees the other's action as of a type that one could make oneself. Asked to perform such an action oneself, when all is working properly no inference or further background information is needed before simply making the action oneself...At the level of phenomenology, one also sees the other subject's action as one that would in oneself be an expression of pain. (Peacocke, 2008, p.197)

This is not dissimilar to Cassam's view, discussed in §5. The idea is that one sees a facial expression as one that one could perform and would be an expression of one's pain. However, it is also subject to the same objection as is Cassam's view. The phenomenal character of a visual experience as of someone in pain is not the same as the feel of one's facial expression from the inside, even if that someone is oneself. To solve the epistemological puzzle, Peacocke attributes tacit knowledge of the relation between pain and its behavioural expression in oneself. But this can only plausibly be the expression as presented *from the inside*. It thus cannot form part of the content of one's

²⁰ Peacocke's account flouts the non-circularity constraint. This is clear from his articulation of the tacitly known identity component as involving the concept *same subjective kind* (Peacocke, 2008, p.39), a concept of a mental state, for which no possession condition is given. This is analogous to Peacocke's account of shape concepts, which presupposes a grasp of *same shape* (Peacocke, 2008, p.31). For a defence of the claim that such accounts are not thereby vacuous, see (Peacocke, 2008, pp.144-148).

external perception of the other's behaviour. It seems, then, that to accept Peacocke's claim about visual phenomenology, one would need to attribute tacit knowledge of the relation between pain and its *visually* presented expression. But if one were to be credited with such tacit knowledge, it would surely be this, rather than the claim about visual phenomenology that would be responsible for one's warranted attributions of pain to others.

What is required is an answer to the conceptual problem of other bodies. At this point one might turn to Peacocke's account of the possession conditions for generally applicable concepts of basic actions. As with the epistemological problem discussed above, Peacocke's account bottoms out in a claim concerning visual phenomenology. He writes, "You can perceive the movement of someone else as being of a kind that you yourself can perform." (Peacocke, 2008, p.241). This is implausible for the same reasons as it is for the mental states case. Seeing an action is phenomenally unlike feeling it from the inside. But it is precisely this, the sense one has, from the inside, that one has of acting (what Peacocke calls 'action awareness'), that is written into concepts of bodily action.

7. An account of what it is to grasp concepts of mental states must be non-circular, it must respect the fact of disparity between the evidential bases of first- and third-person thoughts, and it must entail that such thoughts involve the very same mental concepts. In attempting to offer such an account it is tempting to rely on a grasp of concepts of bodily behaviour. However, this immediately raises the conceptual problem of other bodies, for which we still require an answer. That is, we need to be told, in a way consistent with the first-person view currently on the table, how it can be that our concepts of bodily actions can be unified, based as they are on disparate ranges of evidence. Only by answering the conceptual problem of other bodies can we meet all the challenges that arise from considerations concerning what it is to think about other people.

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