

Chapter 4

J. R. Jones: ‘How Do I Know Who I Am?’: The Passage from Objects to Grammar

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I

J. R. Jones, at the age of forty, became Professor of Philosophy at Swansea in 1952. At the age of eighteen he had enrolled as a student at the University College of Wales Aberystwyth (as it was then known) and three years later he graduated with a brilliant first-class honors degree in Philosophy. This was followed by an equally fine Master’s thesis in two years. The next three years Jones spent at Oxford reading for his D.Phil. and from there he returned to Aberystwyth as a junior lecturer. From Aberystwyth he was appointed to the chair in Swansea. Eighteen years later, he died at the age of fifty-eight.

These brief biographical details are important insofar as they provide a background that illuminates the radical character of the philosophical metamorphosis that Jones gradually underwent after his arrival at Swansea. For most of his academic life, particularly during the formative period of his philosophical development, Jones was under the strong influence of one of the leading British empiricists of the time, the John Locke scholar and celebrated author of a definitive exposition of Locke’s *Essay*,¹ Professor R. I. Aaron, who occupied the Philosophy chair at Aberystwyth for over thirty years. Hence, Jones from the very beginning of his academic studies was steeped in the British empiricist tradition. By the time he arrived at Swansea he had developed a deep respect even for Logical Positivism. His inaugural lecture at Swansea is clear proof of this.² Consequently, the early period at Swansea must have been nothing less than traumatic for Jones. Could he, at his age and with his philosophical presuppositions, unlearn his empiricism? Could he absorb the new Wittgensteinianism that was so central to all things philosophical at Swansea? Certainly, any change of direction for Jones would require courage and humility as well as intellectual ability and honesty – virtues that Jones, fortunately, possessed in abun-

dance. But did a thoroughgoing and radical revision in his thinking occur? This paper will essay to show what Jones actually achieved. The measure of his success may best be assessed by contrasting his earlier views on two of his principal philosophical preoccupations (the nature of the self and personal identity) with his final statements on these matters. And in order to reveal the widest possible contrast between the two standpoints, greater – although not exclusive – attention will be paid to Jones’s first and last papers on these subjects. As it happened, both of these papers were written and published by Jones in his mother tongue of Welsh – although his ideas in these Welsh versions were given almost identical expression in papers published in English philosophy journals.

II

As an empiricist, Jones developed an interest in three related philosophical problems. The first of these was the issue of the relationship between particulars and universals. It was a concern that grew naturally from his Aberystwyth Master’s thesis, entitled, *Spinoza’s ‘Scientia intuitiva’ and the Concrete Universal*.³ This is not the appropriate place to expound Jones’s thesis, but it is worth mentioning that it is a first-rate piece of work that clearly shows how outstanding Jones was as a young research student. In this thesis, the youthful, unrestrained Jones displayed considerable independence of thought, and he maintained that Spinoza, in terms of internal consistency, successfully reconciled the Unity of the One (or God or *Substantia*) with the differences of the Many. Jones’s chief target of criticism was none other than H. H. Joachim, who in his celebrated work, *A Study of Spinoza’s Ethics*⁴, had, according to Jones, inappropriately dismissed and wholly neglected Spinoza’s notion of *scientia intuitiva* on the grounds that it was a concept steeped in religious mysticism and was, as such, philosophically irrelevant. In contrast, Jones thought the concept to be of central importance in Spinoza’s system, and should be understood in conjunction with another of Spinoza’s notions, that of ‘concrete universality’. Interestingly, Jones’s study of Spinoza led him to make the remarkable claim that the notion of the ‘concrete universal’ points to a form of knowledge which is more fundamental than science: ‘For it insists that the true value of “law” does not lie in the number of instances in which it can be verified, but in the insight which it gives us into the individual and systematic nature of experience.’⁵ This insight is a very special perception indeed for, in es-

sence, it is a penetrating criticism of the common empiricist account of the nature of scientific laws in vogue at the time – that they are generalizations from observed instances of particular phenomena. Jones's view seems to anticipate the later Wittgensteinian perspective, which insists that individual empirical observations have sense only within an already existing conceptual framework. Sadly, Jones was not to develop this criticism further, nor is there any evidence that he took up the issue again when he became part of the Swansea school.

Jones's second philosophical preoccupation was with the nature of perception and this again, it may be assumed, arose directly from his Oxford doctoral thesis entitled, *A re-examination of some questions at issue between idealists and realists with regard to the subject-object relation and the nature of mind.*⁶ Indeed, certain aspects of his D.Phil. thesis became life-long preoccupations, and a great deal of this thesis is incorporated in some of Jones's writings, particularly in his early publications. This thesis was partly motivated by Jones's interest in psychological behaviorism – or 'the new objective psychology' as Jones used to refer to it. Jones reported that this psychology refused 'to concern itself with the inaccessible "inside" of other creatures' minds.' Jones, nourished on empiricism, showed considerable sympathy with the new psychology, but he could not approve of 'the denial of consciousness' that was implied by it. But neither could he assent fully to the realism of some contemporary empiricists, including G. E. Moore, who accounted for perception in a distinctly dichotomous way by 'speaking of the mind being "here" and the field of perception "there".' In contrast, Jones was attracted by the more intimate connection between subject and object that he found in the thinking of some earlier British Hegelians (including Sir Henry Jones, a late 19th/early 20th century Welsh-speaking philosopher) who advocated 'not so much the mind confronting its objective field but rather comprehending it in such a way that it included it.' Needless to say, this is highly ambiguous language used by J. R. Jones, but whatever he meant by it, he held on to the view that he expressed in these terms until well into his Swansea years.

As the title of the thesis suggests, a large part of it was directly concerned with the nature of mind itself – and, in time, this issue became the main concern of Jones together, of course, with the related problem of our knowledge of other minds. They are the only issues that dominated Jones's thinking during his empiricist period that continued as preoccupations after

he came under the influence of the later Wittgenstein. What is the nature of ‘mind’ or ‘self’? And, inextricably connected with this issue, were the further questions: ‘How does the mind become aware of its own identity?’ and ‘How is my mind related to other minds?’ Jones wrestled with these matters throughout his professional life and it is in relation to these, particularly the issue of personal identity, that the contrast between his earlier empiricist views and his later Wittgensteinian interpretation of them is most evident.

III

Jones’s initial publication on this subject of the self was entitled, ‘*Sylwadau ar Broblem Natur Hunan*’ (‘Comments on the Problem of the Nature of Self’) and it appeared in the very first issue of the Welsh-Language Philosophy journal, *Efrydiau Athronyddol*, (*Philosophical Studies*) in 1938.⁷ This paper must have been written in 1937, just as Jones was completing his postgraduate work at Oxford and immediately before he took up his appointment at Aberystwyth. Much of what Jones had to say in this paper is a distillation of what he wrote about the nature of mind in his D.Phil. thesis. It is, however, a very long and complex article in which Jones meticulously defines his analysis of the self *vis-à-vis* the analyses of eminent, mostly contemporary, philosophers who had or were writing on this subject – including Samuel Alexander, C. A. Strong, C. D. Broad, William James, G. E. Moore, and others – and even Aaron’s own interpretation of the Lockian position in his newly published definitive work on Locke. Evidently, in this essay, it will not be possible to define Jones’s position in relation to all these thinkers. Yet, through the numerous references made to them in Jones’s rich paper, we have a glimpse of that wide spectrum of the kind of empirical analyses of mind that were in vogue at that particular time in Britain, despite the constant attacks that had been made on ‘psychologism’ by Continental philosophers, such as Frege and Husserl, since the latter part of the 19th century.

Although nowhere in the article is Descartes mentioned, it is transparent that Cartesian dualism lies at the root of the problems with which Jones was concerned. And, in this article, dualism was introduced by Jones in the initial passage by claiming that ‘the man in the street’ is sure that ‘he himself is “real”.’ But what is this ‘he himself’? Jones provided what he

thought was an ordinary person's reply. Jones's imagined that any person would be able to list six characteristics of this 'self' and the first of these is that the self is 'something vague' which is connected with an object that is referred to as 'my body'. So Descartes' presupposition is immediately taken on board. The 'self' is different from 'my body'. The plain man is equally able to perceive, in addition, that the self remains 'the same' from experience to experience, may grow or develop, is the subject of all the conditions we endure, is responsible (in general) for all decisions and choices and, finally, that the self is uniquely that which is referred to as 'I'. Jones's man in the street is, indeed, an extraordinary thinker!

The point of this passage was not only to introduce the Cartesian dichotomy and to establish it as if it were the common sense view, but also to expose how unpalatable was the view of the new 'radicals' in philosophy, the Logical Positivists, who denied the reality of this self. A. J. Ayer, for instance, had claimed that the mind is a 'figment' of sensory experience. Jones disagreed – but only because the Positivists thought of the mind as *merely* a figment. Jones believed that the Positivist's account omitted a crucially important factor – that of *the unity* of the self. He accepted the Positivists' view that sensory experience provides the contents or 'objects' of consciousness, but the self cannot be reduced to a mere 'bundle of impressions', as Hume had once maintained. For, according to Jones, this bundle *has an identity in time*. It is *the same* consciousness, the same 'I', even though the 'objects' of consciousness change with, for instance, changes in our sensory perceptions. It is this conception of the unity of the 'bundle', the unity of 'experience' – as opposed to 'this or that experience' – that makes the mind more than merely a figment.

So just what is this that is more than a figment? Jones proceeded to give a broad analysis of the mind. But it is not a logical analysis of the meaning or grammar of the concept 'mind', but of what readily appears to be something akin to what may be termed 'the anatomy and physiology of mind'. For the paradox is that, although it is denied that the mind is a 'thing', it nevertheless has an anatomy – its 'elements' – and the inter-activity of these elements may be termed their 'physiology'. The choice of the term 'elements' is most unfortunate, for it merely increases the impression that the mind is 'a thing', which is constituted of these elements. These elements are said to be 'consciousness', 'responsiveness', 'the "tendency" to hold on to its past', and the 'propensity' to create 'patterns of behavior'.

The first two of these elements, it is claimed, are known directly through sensory experience, but the last two are ‘powers’ that are attributed to the mind and account for, in the first instance, memory, and, in the second instance, the self’s characteristic behavior. Jones claims that the ‘existence’ of all four elements is ‘conditioned by the constitution of the central nervous system and its workings’. Unfortunately, he does not elucidate further what he meant by ‘conditioned’ but the strong suggestion is that ‘mind’ is a function or an activity of the brain and nothing more. He is certainly insistent that introspection, for instance, will not show that the mind is some ‘objective psychic operator which is independent of the body’. Such ‘a thing’ does not exist. But Jones does not identify the mind with the brain, for, evidently, the brain is a physical entity and remains so even when it is inactive or dead.

Much of the article is taken up with the description of the four elements and their inter-relation, with Jones creating his own ‘space’ by comparing and contrasting his own views with those of the more eminent scholars. The first of these is Samuel Alexander⁸ from whom, it is evident, Jones adopted a great deal, particularly in connection with his understanding of those elements called ‘consciousness’ and ‘responsiveness’. Jones, following Alexander, argued that there are different types of ‘content’ of consciousness – although Alexander preferred to refer, not so much to the ‘content of consciousness’, but to ‘mental objects’ or ‘objects’ and ‘mind’. Alexander maintained that the mind was a complex of activities which included not only consciousness of mental objects themselves, but an additional awareness of being conscious of objects, together with a responsiveness to objects – or acts of ‘contemplation’ – and also an awareness of ‘living through’ or enjoying this contemplation. However, Jones, although he had considerable admiration for this analysis, argued that Alexander had taken too much for granted. Alexander had not ‘proved’ that there is an awareness of consciousness itself. Jones maintained that the whole content of consciousness is adequately accounted for in terms of the simple disjunction between that content which is extra-spected through sensory experience, and that content which is ‘enjoyed’ through mental responses to sensory experience. Consciousness itself is nothing without content – for consciousness is, simply, an awareness of experience, and without experience, an awareness *of some content or other*, there is nothing at all. As Jones expressed it, consciousness is ‘experiencing experience’. Or, as he had put it forcefully in his thesis, ‘Consciousness draws its own filling

from objects. The mind owes its “substance” to objects.’ Jones was aware of the temptation, in this context, of going too far in the direction of Berkeley, and he explicitly did not want to say that the objects *are* their *being* in the mind. But neither did he want to say that they are ‘duplications’ of external objects – for that would invite the whole question of the correctness or exactness of the duplications and, indeed, lead to Hume’s sceptical, solipsistic possibility that if we are merely conscious of this mental content, how is it that we know that there is anything other than the mental in existence at all? Nevertheless, Jones was close to the Hegelians when he used the expression that the mind, not so much ‘confronted’ its objective field, but rather, ‘comprehended it in such a way that it included it’. ‘The mind “includes” its objects by virtue of its awareness of them.’

Jones illustrated his point that there isn’t such a thing as ‘consciousness without content’ by analyzing the notion of sensation. Sensation, he maintained, is twofold. We see, for instance, a particular color, and we are also conscious of the fact that we are seeing it. But take the color away and there is nothing left. There is no awareness of *not* seeing the color, or of *not* seeing anything – an awareness which is empty of content. You cannot introspect simply on consciousness itself, but only on the objects of consciousness. And the belief that it is possible to be conscious of consciousness, simply as a kind of internal mental space was, according to Jones, Alexander’s worst transgression. Alexander’s claim meant that it is possible to contemplate this space as totally internal and without objects at all, and thus, wholly apart and independently from them. It is precisely this kind of view, according to Jones, that the behaviorists rightly attacked. Indeed, William James first made the same kind of attack in his famous article, ‘Does Consciousness Exist?’⁹ There James had maintained that the mind is not some ‘aboriginal stuff or quality of being, contrasted with that of which material objects are made, out of which our thoughts of them are made’, or something ‘which is believed to stand out and to be felt as a kind of impalpable inner flowing’. On the contrary, James argued, the only ‘materials’ of mind are ‘thoughts in the concrete’. And Jones interpreted this remark in the light of his own thinking, that apart from concrete thoughts there is no mind at all. There is no such thing as an empty mind! Jones further attempted to consolidate his view by showing that to believe in consciousness *simpliciter*, without content, is a consequence of hypostatizing or abstracting its existence from various individual sensory experiences. Jones argued that if we think of the consciousness, say, of ‘blue’ and the

consciousness, say, of ‘red’, we are tempted to think that consciousness is a common factor in both experiences, and that while ‘blueness’ and ‘redness’ may be differentiated, consciousness remains the unchanging element in both of the experiences. But, to repeat, apart from the consciousness of either ‘blueness’ or ‘redness’ there is, simply, no consciousness at all.

One cannot help but think that when Jones constantly referred to these ‘contents’ of mind or ‘objects of consciousness’ he principally had in mind what are often called ‘mental images’ – particularly so when referring to ‘objects of consciousness’ which are supposedly derived from sensory experience. Jones, however, never named such ‘objects’ as ‘images’ for, again, I suspect, he was aware that such a term invited the question, ‘What are they images of?’ What he explicitly maintained was that when he used the term ‘object’ in this context, despite his awareness of the term’s unfortunate connotations, he meant merely ‘objects of thought’ and that it was quite irrelevant to enquire as to the genesis of such objects for the purposes of the analysis of mind. We are simply certain, he maintained, that such objects are in our consciousness. What is interesting is that not at any point was Jones, or any of the other empiricists that he frequently alluded to, aware of the logical issue involved – that of the intelligibility of such objects. Even if the highly dubious claim that there is ‘mental content’ or ‘mental images’ is not contested at this juncture, the issue of how this content is *meaningful* is nowhere entertained. Are we to believe that these supposed mental images are capable of informing us of what they are? Does my consciousness of, say, the color red, itself tell me that it is red? The point is that there is no awareness in this analysis at all of the vital role of language in our understanding. As with Locke, language is given the secondary role of being merely a vehicle of communication, for he, together with the empiricists who followed him, wrongly presupposed that ‘ideas’ or ‘objects of the mind’ *themselves* declare to us what they are. In an empiricist analysis, the connection between language and understanding is an external one. Wittgenstein showed this to be a radical error. Without language there is no *understanding* of whatever is seen, whether that be thought of as mental or physical.

Having outlined his philosophy of mind, Jones proceeded with his attempts to resolve two further major issues. First, how does the mind obtain its unity and retain its identity as ‘the same mind’? And, secondly, how does the mind become ‘my mind’ – as opposed to the mind of any other?

Jones formulation of the first of these questions was, ‘How is an awareness of a self created from this material?’ – the material being the ‘experiences’ of both perceiving objects and ‘contemplating’ them, the material which is said to constitute consciousness. First, it was maintained that time is of cardinal importance. All mental experiences are said to be experiences in time, but as individual experiences, they are transitory, they come and go. Hence, Jones’s question was, ‘How are these varied, numerous, if not innumerable, instances of experience bound into a unity in time?’ He answered that the mind has the power to connect the present instant of time with the immediate past, to create a ‘synopsis’ of the present and the immediate past, thus generating a sense of continuity of consciousness. And, through memory, the mind has the ability to recreate the past, even the distant past, into a present experience through the re-creation of images from the past. Thus the ‘empirical present’ of consciousness, as opposed to the mathematical present, may be constituted of a whole range of experiences in time. The mind itself, then, contributes towards a feeling of its own unity, of being ‘the same’ consciousness. But this ‘subjective’ factor, Jones argued, merely *contributes* towards this feeling and, on its own, it is insufficient to give consciousness a thorough sense of unity. In order to achieve this, the mind needs the addition of a ‘further element, which Jones called the ‘objective’ element. This element refers to the ‘object’ or ‘content’ of consciousness, which must retain its own identity throughout the numerous and diverse experiences of it. Jones maintained that only a combination of the ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ elements would create a complete sense of unity of consciousness. For although the memory can contribute to a sense of unity, unless *that which is itself remembered* retains its own objective identity, the activity of the memory will be futile. And equally, if there were merely an awareness of the identity of the object, without the synoptic power of the mind, the identity of that object would mean nothing either – for, without memory, the mind would comprehend the same object as a new object from experience to experience.

In Jones’s analysis, a further ‘element’ of consciousness, which has already been alluded to – that of a propensity to react characteristically to those objects presented to the mind – is another contributor to the sense of the unity of consciousness. The constancy and consistency of mental reactions give the impression that this consciousness is one and the same.

Again, how totally inadequate this whole empiricist epistemological enterprise is! However admirable Jones's account may appear to be within the parameters of his empiricism, there is a weakness which is so glaring that it was incredible that it was not seen. For instance, at the heart of these considerations is the notion of identity – that of 'the *same* consciousness' and of 'the *same* object of consciousness'. Yet there is not a single word about the relevant criteria of identity. It is an interesting fact that here there was an attempt to establish the identity of consciousness *before* there was any discussion of what it means to speak of '*this* consciousness' – and that without any reference to '*that* consciousness' or '*other* consciousnesses'. And, similarly, when Jones referred to the identity of the object of consciousness – say, an awareness of 'the same table' – there is no analysis at all of any criterion or criteria of 'sameness' here. Indeed, is it to be assumed that the expression 'the same table' has the same meaning in all contexts? It is never imagined that there are multiple and different criteria of 'the same table', which are applicable in different contexts. And, to apply an earlier criticism again, what does it mean to call an object a 'table' in the first place? Has this not something essentially to do with the role that such an object plays in our lives *together*? Hence, if the *sense* of calling some object a 'table' has to do with public lives and language, how does Jones's constant allusions to what are merely private mental objects contribute to our understanding of what it is to speak of tables, or any other such object?

Or, consider the other aspect of Jones's analysis, the unity and identity of consciousness. Where does the mind get hold of such difficult and abstract concepts such as 'time'? There may be such a phenomenon as animal consciousness of what *we* understand as change – changes in shapes, colors, motion, temperature, and so on. Animals respond causally to such changes. But time, as a function of change, is a complex notion, and is only very gradually grasped by children as they learn a language. Yet, on Jones's analysis, it would appear that the human mind has an innate, intuitive capacity to understand this notion of time and through it bind numerous instances of experiences into a meaningful unity that is called 'the same consciousness'.

But let us persevere with this rather perverse, but typically empiricist analysis. The issue of the unity of the self thus apparently established, Jones turns his attention to the second problem – that of how this con-

consciousness can be labelled ‘*my* consciousness’. But Jones realizes that the sense of ‘self’ in this context depends on it being contradistinguished from either ‘another’ or ‘others’. In this context, Jones had to confront, what was for him, a real difficulty. For, it will be recalled that, at this time, he held to a quasi-Hegelian idea of consciousness and its content, that ‘the mind “includes” its object by virtue of its awareness of it.’ Hence, consciousness included the whole of the environment as well as our reactions to it, so that whoever or whatever is ‘other’ than the self is ‘internal’ to consciousness itself. Strictly speaking, of course, it is meaningless to speak of what is ‘internal’ to consciousness unless it can be contrasted with something ‘external’ to consciousness. Yet, everything is said to be ‘within consciousness’. How did Jones, then, attempt to resolve the difficulty of both my ‘self’ and other ‘selves’ existing within the same consciousness? Jones reiterated the claim that the whole content of consciousness may be divided into two distinct kinds according to how they are generated. One type of content comes directly through sensory experience, which presents the passive mind with objects that appear *as if* they form an external world, thus creating the impression that that world is totally independent of the mind – totally ‘other’. But, in contrast, the rest of the mind’s content is the product of the mind’s own varied activities, thus creating a sense that this content is not ‘other’ but belongs to that active mind itself. The activities which create this latter content include the responses of the mind to ‘external’ objects, as well as activities such as knowing, believing, remembering, desiring, choosing, and so on. It is with this active ‘part’ of consciousness that ‘self-consciousness’ belongs, while ‘the other’ is identified with that passive ‘area’ or ‘part’ of consciousness. Jones had earlier argued, in this same article, that the whole environment contributes to the content of the self. But this was not seen by him as a contradiction of this new disjunction, but only a paradox, which disappears when it is recognized that without the passive aspect of consciousness there cannot be an active aspect either. Without consciousness of ‘objects’ there cannot be self-consciousness.

However, Jones further maintained that there are two other factors which fortify this sense of ‘my consciousness’ and the ‘otherness’ of a part of the environment within it. First, there is the consciousness that this self is physically ‘embodied’ in a particular body, and thus this self must be ‘other than’ other bodies that are also within the same environment. Secondly, the mind is conscious of ‘other minds’ which are also self-conscious just as ‘my mind’ is and, it was claimed, those ‘other minds’ act as mirrors

through which my mind sees itself. Even within Jones's own empiricist framework it appears to me that much more needed to be said about both these factors. What, for instance, determines the sense of 'physical' when everything is 'within consciousness'? And again, if the mind is identified with consciousness, in what sense are there 'other minds' within, say, my consciousness?

Again, Jones underlined his view that this consciousness of 'self' is not a consciousness of some psychic entity to which the name 'self' may be attributed.¹⁰ Introspection demonstrates that such an entity simply does not exist and, if we search for it, we will only be disappointed. Introspection only discloses that there are different kinds of mental contents and that the experiencing of this difference forces the impression that some contents belong to the self more immediately and directly than other contents. Hence 'the self' as an object of self-consciousness is a figment. In this sense, the pronoun 'I' stands for nothing.

The views presented in this article belong to a very different philosophical world from that which has been inherited from Wittgenstein. It would even seem that philosophy itself was a very different discipline at that time and that the accounts given of mind appear to be analogous with say, an account of the anatomy and the physiology of a part of the human body – except, of course, that the mind is not a thing at all! I suppose that there has always been a close connection between empiricism and the logical belief that concepts 'stand for' or refer to some things. So that there is always a danger of thinking of the concept 'mind' as the name of some object. And this impression is deepened by the constant use of such ordinary language expressions as 'in the mind' – as if the logic of this is like speaking of something 'in a box'. Or again, the use of the expression 'the power of the mind' is as if it is logically like, say, 'the power of an engine'. But there is nothing in Jones's article about the logic of the concept 'mind' at all. Indeed, apart from an occasional reference to the use of 'I' there is nothing in this article about concepts as such – except that there is considerable ambiguity when they are used! Even if we were to restrict our considerations to some of those central concepts in the article – 'I', 'self', 'mind', and 'consciousness' – we are left with an uncertainty as to whether or not these concepts are supposed to be synonymous with each other and thus, interchangeable. The paper began with a notion of 'the self' which was 'other than' the body. Then 'the self' was first identified with 'the mind' and then

with 'consciousness'. Some puzzling questions appear to force themselves upon us. For instance, if 'self' and 'mind' are to be identified, what is the meaning of the possessive pronoun in the expression 'my mind'? Or again, if 'self' and 'consciousness' are to be identified, what happens to the 'self' when it is not conscious, that is, when a person is either asleep or unconscious? Evidently, it is not possible to say without contradiction 'I am asleep' or 'I am unconscious'. But we only need to modify the tense of the verb to make such meaningful remarks as 'I was asleep' or 'When I will have surgery, I will not feel pain for I will be unconscious'. Certainly, a person does not cease to exist when she sleeps! Furthermore, is it supposed to be understood that the notion of 'consciousness', as used by Jones, refers specifically and exclusively to human consciousness? Or are we to infer that this notion includes all forms of consciousness, including animal consciousness? Nowhere is it possible to find in Jones's paper (or in Jones's D.Phil. thesis) any attempt to specifically delineate human consciousness in contrast to any other possible forms of consciousness. That animals, for instance, to a greater or lesser degree, are conscious of their surroundings is an indubitable fact, and, the more complex and developed they are, it may be assumed that they are that much closer to human consciousness. And I suspect that had Jones been asked at this stage in his philosophical development about the difference between animal and human consciousness he may have essayed to reply in terms of a distinction between consciousness itself and self-consciousness and he would have maintained that an animal has consciousness but not self-consciousness. It is interesting that Jones did, at one point in his paper, refer to what he termed 'a mature consciousness' and he maintained that self-consciousness is closely connected with this maturity – so that, say, infants are somewhat devoid of it. However, had Jones reflected further on the nature of self-consciousness, and how this is directly connected with our linguistic and conceptual ability, particularly our mastery of personal pronouns, he would have seen that the distinction between animal consciousness and human consciousness is also connected with the fact that human beings are language-users while animals are not. Not only does 'mature' consciousness depend on language, but self-awareness itself, as opposed to animal awareness, is conceptually based. An infant's consciousness of its environment may be akin to that of an animal. But as the child learns a language, all its consciousness becomes conceptually determined: the growing child will see everything through the language that is being learnt. This means that its consciousness ceases to be like that of an animal. It may be said that, say, a

dog can ‘see’ precisely the same objects that I am now looking at. It can see the shapes, colors, sense smells, feel hardness and softness, and so on, and is capable of reacting to them. But if it is a book that I am looking at, the dog does not see a *book* – for to see a book is to understand the concept ‘book’, to know how this word is used in the language. And, *a fortiori*, the animal cannot see that it is a novel that I have in my hand – as opposed to any other form of literature. Even though it is quite simple for a child, as a language-user, to understand such a distinction between forms of literature, the ability to do so is wholly outside what we understand as ‘animal consciousness’. Self-consciousness is a genre of human consciousness and is similarly determined by language.

Space will not permit us to go through the various stages of the changes in Jones’s empiricist position. However, it is worth noting that he published two papers in English on our knowledge of other minds in the early fifties,¹¹ immediately before arriving at Swansea, and two additional papers in the second part of the same decade.¹² But even the two later contributions do not show that Swansea philosophy had yet had an impact on Jones. The only noteworthy point that should be made is that, in these two later papers, Jones used for the first time Wittgenstein’s suggestion that there are two distinct meanings to the personal pronoun ‘I’. This dichotomous meaning of ‘I’ was employed by Jones to confirm his view that there is both a public and a private self, and this remained a permanent feature of Jones’s later writings. An attempt will be made to explore this distinction and to expose the confusion which arose partly as a result of its adoption – a confusion from which Jones never fully extricated himself.

IV

Jones’s final thoughts on these matters published in English, were expressed in his Presidential Address to the Aristotelian Society in 1967 in a paper entitled, ‘How do I know who I am?’¹³ A year later, he wrote and read what was to be his very last paper, and in Welsh. It was entitled, ‘*Yr Hunan a’r Hunan Arall*’ (‘The Self and the Other Self’).¹⁴ The extent to which Jones was influenced by his Swansea colleagues, including Rhees, Holland, Phillips and Dilman (who had replaced Winch), is evidenced by these two papers. The content of his English language paper is well known

and accessible to most. But a summary of it will not be inapt, partly in order to judge how far Jones had moved away from his earlier position.

Jones began his treatment of the notion of personal identity in this address with an account of his disagreement with Strawson's analysis of the concept 'person' in the book, *Individuals*.¹⁵ But, in the initial passage of the paper, Jones made a dual confession. First, that it was his intention in this paper 'to contest the view that consciousness . . . taken to refer to something bodiless, is somehow, inherently self-identifying'¹⁶ and, secondly, in a statement which stands in complete contradistinction with his previous claims, he stated, 'It seems indisputable . . . that what I am directly surrounded by in the human world are *people*.'¹⁷ This second admission appears to be a complete *volte-face* on Jones's part and here we have a clear indication of the influence of Swansea philosophy on Jones's thinking. For a cardinal error of modern philosophy, since Descartes, is to presuppose that 'the given' – the correct point of departure for any philosophical inquiry – is not an isolated 'self' or 'mind' but, as Wittgenstein once put it, 'What has to be accepted, the given, is . . . *forms of life*.'¹⁸ 'Forms of life' are human practices or ways of carrying on, and it is through learning how the language of any practice is used, and (according to Rhees, as opposed to Wittgenstein)¹⁹ how that language is related to other practices and other uses of language, that any particular practice is understood. The implication of this is that even the practice of self-referring is not possible in isolation, or independently from other uses of language, including, most significantly, the language of referring to others. So Jones, instead of beginning his inquiry by looking 'inwards' to discover some elusive 'self', began by looking 'outwards' with the premise that he is surrounded by a human world of persons. Hence, it is possible to conclude that Jones had assimilated a central plank of Swansea philosophy. But whether or not he clearly understood the reasons for this cardinal truth remains doubtful.

We do not have to read much further into the article before we become increasingly perplexed by Jones's insistence on incorporating into his new thinking elements which appear to belong to his empiricism. Strawson had argued that if the Cartesian dichotomy were adopted, then, to use Jones's phrase, 'I am no longer able to know who I am.' For, as Strawson stated, "I have no idea of 'different, distinguishable, identifiable . . . consciousness.'"²⁰ Indeed, Strawson further argued for what he called the 'primitiveness of the concept of a person' which meant, as Jones put it, that 'the con-

cept of a person cannot be resolved into two logically more primitive concepts – the concept of a particular human body and that of a “pure individual consciousness” located in the body.’²¹ In other words, according to Strawson, when we refer to persons we are referring to individuals to which ‘*both* predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics . . . are equally applicable.’²² This is what we mean by a ‘person’ and Jones agreed with Strawson’s analysis – at least provisionally.

Then Jones raised a possible objection to the concept of a person being called ‘primitive’ on the grounds that the supposed intention for doing so was ‘to block the admission of a complication of structure in human beings’.²³ It is this talk of ‘structure’ that is the root of much confusion in Jones, for it appears as if he is concerned again, not with the *concept* of ‘self’, but with its anatomy. He expressed his dissatisfaction with Strawson’s apparent contradictory conclusion that we have to ‘acknowledge that there is a kind of predicate’ (labelled, ‘P-predicates’ by Strawson, and which refer to ‘states of consciousness’) ‘which is unambiguously and adequately ascribable *both* on the basis of observation of the subject *and* not on this basis.’²⁴ That is, we ascribe P-predicates to others on the basis of observation, and the same P-predicates to ourselves ‘not on this basis’ – simply because it is we ourselves who are the subjects of these predicates. We do not say *on the basis of observation* that we ourselves are, say, in pain or that we are happy. Jones maintained that this difference should not be glossed over, and he insisted that the reason for this ‘*radical* asymmetry’ must lie ‘in the structure of persons’. Hence, Jones felt it necessary to embark upon a re-examination of this metaphysical structure.

Jones relied a great deal on Wittgensteinian insights as he undertook this task. But it is significant that they were not primarily those of the later Wittgenstein, but the Wittgenstein of the *Notebooks*, the *Tractatus*, the transitional work known as the *Blue Book*, and the lectures on which Moore reported. In other words, we are taken back to the works of the early Wittgenstein who had been deeply influenced by Schopenhauer and the notion of the world as ‘an idea of mine’ – an idea which, I suggest, would have been wholly unacceptable to the later Wittgenstein. Jones repeated here what he had maintained in the two late 1950’s papers alluded to above, that the ‘I’ is used in two different senses. First, it is used to denote the person who utters the pronoun ‘I’, and, in such a context, it is used

in contrast with other personal pronouns. Hence, this ‘I’ is ‘on a level with other people’. Secondly, the ‘I’ is used in a ‘grammatical position’ that is not on the level with other people – where ‘the “I” does not denote a possessor’ and it is ‘without neighbors’. Here, it is alleged, ‘I’ and ‘consciousness’ are ‘equivalent’. And because the ‘I’ is neighborless, there cannot be self-knowledge – for there is nothing with which the ‘I’ stands in contradistinction. Evidently, if this were the case, trying to say anything more about this ‘I’ would lead to all sorts of difficulties. It would be attempting to say the unsayable – and Jones was plainly aware of this difficulty. Hence, if further clarification were asked for about this ‘I’ – for instance, ‘What is it?’ – we are devoid of language that can give expression to any possible answer. Even if we say ‘consciousness’ we want to ask, “‘Consciousness’ – as opposed to what?” Jones, however, despite his awareness that he is up some conceptual *cul-de-sac* called ‘solipsism’, suggested that the closest expression to the meaning of this ‘I’ would be ‘the world’s being there.’²⁵ But again what does the expression ‘the world’ signify in this context? ‘The world’ – as opposed to what? And, significantly, it is not ‘my world’ but ‘the world’, for, as Jones saw, to call that world ‘my world’ would be to establish an identity between consciousness and myself – and through the use of the possessive pronoun ‘my’, bring this consciousness back to the public level. This leads to the remarks, borrowed from the *Tractatus*, about death – where it is said that ‘at death the world does not alter, but comes to an end’.²⁶ Jones bent over backwards to avoid the use of the plain and normal expression ‘my death’ – that death that will be the end my world – simply because he wanted to keep this self away from the public level. For this is a solipsistic ‘I’ that is not part of the world, but co-extensive with it and, hence, this world and ‘I’ will end together. The public world will, in contrast, go on as it always has.

But do we need to postulate this solipsistic, ‘neighborless self’ at all? Did Jones succeed in his objective in this context of answering Strawson’s paradox? It would be most strange if a recourse to some nebulous metaphysical ‘I’ – which, in this analysis isn’t an ‘I’ at all – could resolve anything! Had Jones been a thoroughgoing Wittgensteinian, he would not have been thinking of ‘persons’ in terms of two definitive kinds of predicates at all, as Strawson did. There are confusions here, which arose from Jones’s failure to grasp a central aspect of the later Wittgensteinian perspective. He did not realize that the kind of account which Strawson was offering was logically essentialist in character. A principal and constant theme of the *In-*

vestigations is its criticisms of the logical essentialist account of language – the kind of account given in the *Tractatus*. In the *Investigations* it is insisted that the method of seeking all-embracing definitions of concepts is, in general, misleading and confused – for it is wrongly presupposed that the nature of language is formal. The notion of a ‘game’ is taken to demonstrate the fluid, informal character of language – for no single definition will cover the multifarious uses of this notion. And so it is with the concept of a ‘person’. Strawson attempted to provide us with a fixed definition of what is a ‘person’ and Jones took the bait and attempted to raise objections and modify this essentialist definition. This was already to stray from Wittgenstein’s later way of thinking.

Strawson had maintained that the concept of a person refers to an entity to which two kinds of predicates are equally attributable. Not only are we within the boundary of essentialism, but also within a dichotomous grammatical realm – that of two kinds of predicates. But why only two and *these* two in particular? By simply thinking in such terms we see that the restrictive metaphysical vision and philosophical methodology that they had inherited blinkered both Strawson and Jones. They were preoccupied with a metaphysical conception of personhood and were attempting to resolve and escape from Cartesian dualism. So in Jones’s paper, we are back to an analysis of the ‘self’, the individual person. What has suddenly happened to the significance of his initial remark that what he is surrounded by are people? This appeared to convey that this was now his point of departure, something clearly understood and accepted, that ‘the given’ is a world in which we are surrounded by people. But there is a sudden reversal: we must ask the question, and formulate a fixed definition, of what these things that surround us really are!

It is a question which is asked *in vacuo*. It was not a matter of perplexity when it was claimed that we belong to a world in which we are surrounded by people. There is no room for any perplexity here, for we live our daily lives with our families, amongst our neighbors, and we work with our colleagues, and so on. And in contexts such as these we should not be and never are perplexed when we see human beings. From childhood we have learnt how to use this concept, and whenever we see a human being it is not possible for us, who understand the concept, not to see that human being as a person. This does not mean, however, that we are never perplexed by the question of what it means to be a person. But we need spe-

cial contexts, other than pseudo-philosophical ones, to make this perplexity genuine.

‘But surely your recognition of a human being depends on, or will readily conform with, the kind of definition that Strawson provided!’ Of course, our recognition of a human being is certainly connected with the fact that she has a body. We, I suggest, would not know what it would mean to speak of myself, or any other human being, if I, or any other human being, did not have a body. This is a grammatical assertion. The concept of ‘person’ and ‘body’ are logically inseparable. If there is no life in the body, this means that the person is dead. Superficial grammar, however, can be misleading, and the use of the expression ‘my body’ suggests that the possessive pronoun denotes a possessor, which is other than the body. But ‘my car’ and even ‘my leg’ have a different depth grammar from ‘my body’. I can sell my car and lose my leg. But I cannot, logically, lose my body. A philosophical confusion arises in this context when the ‘my’ is said to denote something invisible, within the body, which is ‘other than’ – although connected with – the body, and is represented in language by the ‘I’. ‘I am in pain.’ ‘I am happy.’ ‘I made the decision.’ ‘I remember.’ And so on – and here this ‘I’, it is alleged, is not the body but, ‘the real self’. It is true, of course, that such predications are central to the character of what it is to be a human being, that human beings can think, feel grief, have hopes and disappointments, and so on. But it is the metaphysical construct of the ‘self’ based on these predications that is problematic. It seems to me that such a construction is an idle wheel and wholly dispensable. For in order to understand human activities and behavior we have only to have recourse to the fact that we are language-users. And, as the intelligibility of language is grounded in our social lives and practices, whatever alleged inward, mental activities, or mental imaging, or even physiological activities that may go on within the body when we act, or think, or are happy, are of no philosophical relevance whatsoever. Everything that belongs to the category of the logical, or that of intelligibility, is public. When we see a human being, with some exceptions or in some exceptional circumstances, we know that that being is capable of conversation. We can talk with her, discuss issues, ask her all sorts of questions, and so on. A human being has such capacities – and the recognition of these capacities is all that is necessary to illuminate the whole of the human world. It is not any inward, solipsistic self, or any supposed mental activity that is ‘my world’ and co-extensive with it, but rather it is a shared public language that makes the world intelligible to

each individual. It appears to me that one of the few acceptable assertions in the *Tractatus* is ‘*The limits of my language mean the limits of my world*’,²⁷ and indeed, the limits of my world mean the limits of my language. Everything that is part of my world is intelligible through language – which is shared with other persons.

But let us examine more closely the nature of the disagreement between Strawson and Jones in their equally essentialist accounts of what it is to be a person. Both agree that we attribute two, and only two, different kinds of predicates to persons – physical and mental. What does this expression ‘different kinds of predicates’ mean? Both Strawson and Jones simply meant by this that some predicates refer to what is observable and public while others refer to what is not observable and ‘private’. But the question arises: Does the recognition of the different ‘depth-grammar’ of the predicates themselves provide legitimate grounds for inferring that a ‘person’ is ‘structured’ in some definitive way? It appears that both Strawson and Jones believe that that is the case.

What does it mean to speak of ‘the depth-grammar’ of concepts? Well, partly, that understanding such a grammar will mean that we become more aware of what it makes sense to say or ask, and not say or ask, in conjunction with these predicates. Color predicates, for instance, are observable and consequently, they may be defined ostensively. But Strawson’s P-predicates are not of this kind. I may see that a person is in pain. But I cannot see the pain. The concept ‘pain’ does not have that kind of depth-grammar. Now why should the recognition of the different depth-grammar of concepts lead to a concept of ‘a person’ as something that is ‘structured’ in a particular way? After all, most human beings have a clear notion of what a person is – they know how to use this concept – although, in all probability, they have never heard of the *philosophical* notion of ‘depth-grammar’. An awareness of depth-grammar will assist us to avoid and/or clear some conceptual confusions. But we do not learn what is meant by ‘person’ by learning the depth-grammar of certain predicates – no more than we learn our mother tongue (as opposed to a second or third language) by learning rules of grammar! Rather, it is by learning our mother tongue that we come to an understanding of our world, including what it means to be a person. A child soon learns to recognize clear differences between objects – between the animate and the inanimate, between all sorts of creatures and persons. It is only much later, if at all, that the child learns any

grammar. But are we to infer that a person who has no knowledge of depth-grammar has no clear conception of what it is to be a person? Are we to infer that because of our understanding of the depth-grammar of certain predicates that any other creature, say, a dog that is in pain, is ‘structured’ in some ‘mental’ way? How does the move from the recognition that, say, ‘pain’ does not ‘stand for’ anything visible, lead to a belief in a certain ‘structure’ that belongs to persons, and, presumably, only to persons?

Yet it seems that Jones made such inferences. Not only do predicates of different depth-grammar affect the concept person, but also these predicates are themselves indicative of ‘the structure’ of a person. I have little or no notion whatsoever of what Jones meant by ‘structure’ here or what role such a structure is supposed to have. ‘She is a delightful child.’ What ‘structure’ corresponds to ‘delightful’? ‘She is a wonderful person, always joyful, always generous.’ All I understand by the use of such predicates is that a certain bearer of a name, that person, behaves, acts and reacts in certain spiritually and morally uplifting ways. What has the notion of ‘structure’ to do with the logic of these predications? Of course, I understand that I need ‘structures’ like legs to walk on, and a ‘structure’ like an ear to hear. But what are the ‘structures’ that belong to a delightful person? ‘But her delightful personality is something mental!’ Mental? Her warmth was in her embrace, the smile was on her face and the twinkle was in her eye! Whose engine is it that’s idling!

What does it mean to say that I am an individual person? Well, any answer must be logically connected with the context in which the question is asked. But we can imagine claims being made about having one’s own life, responsibilities, thoughts, decisions, aims, hopes, griefs, pains, and so on. Yes, I have my own thoughts and I *may* keep them to myself. But they are not logically private. For the intelligibility of my thoughts depends on a shared language. I could not have meaningful thoughts that I, logically, could not share with others. For I have no medium of thought other than the language that I have and this is a shared public commodity. ‘This may be the case with thoughts but, logically, no one can have my pain!’ But what does this claim amount to? If it simply means that because the pain is in my leg you cannot have it, for my leg is my leg and not yours – there is no problem. For part of what it normally means to be myself as a person is that I have a body of which legs are a part. But, of course, we both can

have the same pain. You cannot have my toothache and I cannot have your toothache, but we both can have toothache. The way we speak and understand our pains is shared, is public. Our understanding of pain depends on language in the same way as do our thoughts.

In the immediate context of Jones's criticism of Strawson, we may ask what is meant exactly by 'observation' in the expression used by both Jones and Strawson that we ascribe P-predicates to others 'on the basis of observation'. Is this observation to be understood in the way that empiricists normally employ this term – that is, in the sense that every observation is *per se* intelligible without reference to any conceptual apparatus? Or is the seeing here conceptually determined, as a Wittgensteinian would argue? I suspect that in Jones's case it is the former. And this is why he states that 'I *know* that I am in pain.' This knowledge is supposed to be 'direct' as it is *my* pain. But is human knowledge of the experience of pain like that of an animal? A dog may be said to be in pain. The dog is in pain. The dog feels the pain. But it does not know that it is *pain*. 'Pain' is a concept in our language. And when we say that Smith is in pain our observation is conceptually determined. To say that we know that Smith is in pain is to say that we understand that he is in pain. And we apply the same public criteria for the use of these concepts when we apply them to Smith as we do to ourselves. When we tell others, when it is not already evident to them, that 'I have pain', this expression is intelligible to them because these words are as much part of their language as they are of the language of whosoever utters them. It seems to me that if Jones had fully appreciated this he would not have taken a metaphysical road. If he were to have examined our uses of such concepts as 'know' and 'pain' it would have become evident to him that we do not use the word 'know' in conjunction with 'pain' when we refer to ourselves. Under what circumstances would it make sense to say that 'I do not know that I am in pain?' And if that is not intelligible, neither is the statement 'I know that I am in pain.' All we say is, 'I have a pain.' Or 'I am in pain.'

However, it is intelligible to say something like 'I do not know if I have toothache.' This is not because I am unaware of a pain, but of whether or not I am using the right concept in this context. The pain might not be a toothache but a pain caused by, say, an abscess or a gumboil.

The fact that some experiences are personal or private is no justification for embracing dualism. The fact that the pain is mine is no grounds for saying that the 'I' is to be defined as the subject of two different kinds of predicates. What the concept of 'person' means will largely be determined by a context in which it makes sense to question what it means to be a person. And, similarly, the significance of the question of who I am will depend on the context in which it is asked. In most instances, the answer that will be given will be the respondent's name. 'I' can almost *always* be substituted by my name – 'W. L. G.'. I am, in almost all instances, a bearer of a name. And it is an interesting observation that, without exception, all children learn and know their names before they master the personal or possessive pronouns. Learning their names is one of the first tasks given to children when they begin to learn a language. The child is given a name. The child will come to know herself by that name. There is nothing private about this. Our identity as individuals is determined in a social context – and not through any essentially private introspective procedure, as Jones contended.

Jones's final word on these matters was published in his Welsh-language article in *Efrydiau Athronyddol*.²⁸ In my view, there is no further advance in a Wittgensteinian direction made in this paper. There were certain fundamental philosophical perceptions that Jones still had not grasped sufficiently thoroughly to rid himself wholly of his particular empiricist traits. This special volume of *Efrydiau Athronyddol* was in honour of R. I. Aaron who was about to retire from the Chair of Philosophy at Aberystwyth after thirty-seven years and also from his work as editor of this same Welsh-language journal after thirty years. Hence, it was inevitable that Jones should have introduced his subject in relation to what Aaron himself has published on the same topic. And in 1944, Aaron published in the journal *Philosophy*, a paper entitled, 'Our Knowledge of One Another'.²⁹ This paper was a classical defence of Mill's doctrine of analogy. Although Aaron claimed that solipsism is a nonsense and that, in relation to our knowledge of others, 'we do in fact feel quite certain about such knowledge and cannot bring ourselves to doubt it',³⁰ he nevertheless maintained that our knowledge of others is 'indirect' and, hence, different from the 'direct' knowledge that we have of ourselves. 'That which is generally taken to be the direct element in the process of knowing one's own self does not appear to be the direct element in one's knowledge of another. One does not introspect another's mind. There is no extra-spection.'³¹

Jones's criticisms of Aaron's remark could not be improved upon. He clearly demonstrated that the whole doctrine of analogy presupposes the 'absurdity' of solipsism – from which an inference must be made to establish the reality of other minds. But in a solipsistic state nothing is known – not even a knowledge of who or what I am myself. Hence, the doctrine of analogy is said to be a confused piece of reasoning which attempts to resolve a problem that is created by the confused and meaningless solipsistic assumption that, as a conscious being, I know myself directly, and that from this knowledge I need to build an inferential bridge to a knowledge of others. Mill's reference to other human beings as 'walking and speaking figures' is not false but meaningless. If there is a problem with our knowledge of one another then we must either solve or dissolve the problem by looking in an entirely different direction. And this is what Jones did. He underlined the fact that I come to know who I am through being part of a human community – a community of beings like myself and not a community of automata as Mill had thought. Here Jones thoroughly reflected the standpoint of the Swansea school.

But then, once more, Jones developed the argument in a strange way, along the lines of his earlier presidential address. It is an account which is again essentialist in character and dualistic in substance. He maintained that we ascribe to persons two different kinds of predicates – physical and psychological. In order to ascribe these predicates properly, we must be able to 'pick out' the appropriate kind of subjects for them – something that, as Jones correctly points out, would be totally impossible from a solipsistic position. He repeated his claim that 'pure consciousness', that is 'consciousness itself turning into itself', is 'intrinsically solipsistic'. Nevertheless Jones still carried on, in the immediate context, to make assertions about such a 'pure consciousness' as if it were real:

It does not know who it is. . . . It will be, to itself, a unique example of its kind. . . . Experiences will be occurring, to be sure, within the consciousness, but these cannot be attributed to it. . . . Hence, the pure consciousness has no neighbors. . . . 'I' am not this 'pure consciousness'. . . . I am 'this' and when saying 'this', I find myself pointing *at my body*. Thus it would be more correct to say that I – 'this' – is within my consciousness than that consciousness, as some figmentary stuff is within me. For consciousness is a scene – the whole panorama that opens before me the whole time that I am awake. In a word, 'that

there is a world' is my consciousness – not, to be sure, the world that was there before me and will be there after me, but 'the world that will end at death'.³²

So Jones clung to this notion of 'pure consciousness'. And then he proceeded to argue, just as he had done in the previous paper, that a prerequisite of knowing myself at all is to know myself as a bodily presence – as my companions are also bodily presences. This is on the level of 'having neighbors' but, on the other level, 'the level of "pure consciousness"', I have no neighbors. Jones adds, 'Within my subjectivity, that is, on the level of "pure consciousness" I have no neighbors. And on this level *solipsism is true*.'³³ How can solipsism be said, by the same author and in the same paper, to be both a nonsense and true? It is quite clear that Jones was simply unable to speak of 'person' without introducing this dichotomy of a private inner self and a public outer self. And, even at this late juncture in his life, Jones admits that 'one good aspect of the analogy argument is that it understands that it is as a bodily presence that my fellow-man first comes into my experience'.³⁴ So Mill's 'walking and speaking figures' are replaced by 'bodily presences'. Jones adds:

This means that one 'requirement' for a neighborhood of companions is that I know *myself* as another example of the same kind of thing my fellow-man is, that is, as a behaving bodily presence. And the other side of the requirement is that I must know *my fellow-man* as another example of the same kind as myself, that is as a bodily presence that is *also the subject of experiences*.³⁵

These are crucial assertions which take us again to the core of the weakness in Jones's position and which confirm the suspicion that strong elements of empiricism remain in his thinking. We simply need to ask the question: How is he able to 'pick out' himself as a 'bodily presence', and hence *know* of himself *as a bodily presence* and recognize others as similar 'bodily presences'? Is not this again an empiricist 'picking out' – for there is no mention of any recourse to the learning and using of language? And again, how is he to know himself and/or others as 'subjects of experiences'? It is strikingly clear that what is missing in this whole analysis is any reference to language and to its fundamental role in our knowing or understanding anything at all. And, on the basis of this omission, it is proper to conclude that the rest of Jones's paper will not do either, for Jones throughout placed the cart before the horse. In his analysis, observation comes first. Through observation we 'pick out' those objects to which it is appropriate to ascribe physical and psychological predicates. But

where do these predicates come from except from language? It is through the understanding gained through language – in this context, by learning the concept of ‘person’ – that we know what it makes sense and doesn’t make sense to say about them. Language determines what we see or what we see is understood through the language that is used. It appears that, right to the very end, Jones failed to grasp the essential internal connection between language and understanding and his constant references to ‘picking out’ reflect a principal error in empiricism – that of severing observation from that which makes any observation meaningful.

It was earlier suggested that sometimes we might be puzzled about the application of the concept of ‘person’. But, normally, it is equally clear why this is the case and the reasons for the perplexity are not philosophical. We may ask if a fetus is a person or whether, tragically, a long-term sufferer from senile dementia is still a person. We are asking these questions because we are morally puzzled about how we should deal with them. And this underlines how central the concept of a person is in moral discourse. But in such contexts as these, instead of asking the question ‘What is a person?’ *in vacuo*, as Jones and other metaphysicians did, it is the context itself which makes our questioning intelligible. We are often examining, not the heart of the concept of a person, but its periphery and whether certain ‘human beings’ or potential human beings are within or outside this boundary. Yet often, particularly in medical ethics, the traditional metaphysical, dichotomous conception of a person, as body and mind, may have a profound effect on moral judgements. For both fetuses and sufferers of permanent loss of memory are evidently bodies – but, in the one case, they are said to have no ‘mind’ as yet, or, in the second instance, they are said to have lost it.

This is different from, but related to, the fact that when human beings are, or have been, most dreadfully mistreated by their fellow human beings – say through the institution of slavery, or as the Jews were treated during the Holocaust – a precondition for such maltreatment was to exclude such persons entirely from the concept of personhood. They are, or were to be thought to be by their malefactors, somehow sub-human. The Greeks, for instance, called slaves ‘*soma*’ (bodies), suggesting that slaves were merely objects, and not persons at all. This is again indicative of the role which the concept of ‘person’ has in the language of morality.

The phenomenological claim that human beings are language-users would appear to rule out certain traditional ways of speaking. ‘Surely’, it could be contested, ‘we are more than language-users. Human beings have souls. They have spirits too.’ But, again, the issue is: what does it mean to speak of human beings as ‘souls’ or as ‘spirits’? Part of the problem arises when we think of concepts such as ‘mind’, ‘soul’, and ‘spirit’ as words which denote some ‘thing’ or other. This is a philosophical temptation, which is to be resisted. Yet some of us are less susceptible to such a temptation. In my mother tongue of Welsh, the word for ‘mind’ (‘meddwl’) hardly has a use as a noun at all, but merely as a verb-noun (‘meddylu’), which, translated, simply means ‘thinking’. And when we think, the words are in our mouths, but we do not utter them. Thinking is the silent use of language. Even when it is said that ‘I worked out the sum in my head’, what is meant is that it was not worked out with pen and paper.

A failure to recognize the depth-grammar of certain concepts has led to enormous confusion particularly when such concepts play a central role in certain forms of understanding and practices – such as the moral and the religious. When we talk of souls, we do not refer to any thing *within* a person. We are speaking of persons. ‘She is a generous old soul.’ This is, again, a moral description. ‘He is a soul-less creature.’ This is, too, a moral judgement, which claims that the person is devoid of such feelings as sympathy and compassion. And, generally speaking, to speak of persons as souls is to speak of their *moral* character. In some other contexts, such as a religious context, ‘soul’ may simply mean ‘life’. ‘Today thy soul will be taken from thee.’ That is, today you are going to die.

And similarly, to speak of ‘spirit’ is to speak of a person’s spirituality, and not necessarily or exclusively in religious terms. Religion is primarily, of course, the main vehicle for the expression of spirituality. But the aesthetic and whatever is good and beautiful – those things in life, which we find most uplifting or are inspirational to the ‘spirit’ – are also spiritual channels. Among these is love, in its various forms, and it is little wonder that this concept is at the heart of some religions. There are, of course, equally secular uses of the concept of spirit. We speak of the depressed person as being ‘low in spirit’. We speak of the ‘*esprit de corps*’ and of ‘the spirit of the age’. We are not tempted in any of these cases to believe that we are referring to some non-material innate entity called ‘spirit’. We are speaking of human responses to circumstances – of joy and happiness, sorrow and

grief. And, in religion specifically, we are speaking of the joy and wonder of being, of a person's response to life itself.

V

Jones was a deeply religious person and throughout his professional life he wrestled with those religious beliefs which were taught to him as a child and which now appeared to conflict with his philosophical beliefs. Again, he never satisfactorily resolved this tension. Indeed, he constantly modified his theological position and allowed himself to be unduly influenced by others whose views happened to be in vogue. In an early contribution to a Welsh language volume entitled *Credaf* ('I Believe')³⁶ in which several Welsh scholars gave an account of their religious beliefs, Jones declared his admiration for Marxism. This flirtation with Marxism was, however, short-lived. Logical Positivism's criticisms of metaphysical beliefs applied equally to Marx's metaphysical materialism, and it was the new Positivism that was now fashionable. And, as indicated above, Jones attempted in his inaugural lecture to interpret religious beliefs in Positivistic terms. Soon the influence of Positivism waned and by the early 1960s the name of Paul Tillich was constantly on the lips of many theologians. Jones became an admirer of the so-called 'death of God theology' and he wrote a great deal in the Welsh language on these matters. By this time Phillips was beginning to flourish and he made poignant criticism of Tillich – criticisms which Jones accepted as valid. He was again in some religious wilderness. The religious void was largely filled by some of the ideas of Simone Weil and it is with these that he was preoccupied during the last years of his life. Jones only published one book during the whole of his academic life and that was just before his death. It is entitled *Ac Onide* (*And, If Not*).³⁷ It is a book of sermons (Jones was a celebrated preacher, particularly among the Welsh Presbyterians – although at one time he was the subject of unsuccessful excommunication proceedings against him by his church for his heterodox religious views) and addresses to various groups, particularly *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (The Welsh Language Society – a militant group of protesters formed in an attempt to save the Welsh language from total extinction). *Ac Onide* is still widely acclaimed by Welsh readers and it is in this volume that Jones's religious views are principally found. But in this volume too, the influence of the later Wittgenstein is not at all clear. Phillips published two English-language contributions to the philosophy of

religion by Jones and evidently Phillips thought highly of these.³⁸ One of these contributions is a sermon preached by Jones and it owes more to the *Tractatus* and the distinction between ‘how the world is’ and ‘that it is’³⁹ than to anything that belonged to the later Wittgenstein. Personally, I find this *Tractatus* dichotomy completely irreconcilable with anything that I recognize as orthodox Christian doctrine.

This whole, relatively negative assessment of Jones’s achievements is further enforced through personal knowledge. A most disappointing aspect of Jones’s work is the well-established fact that when teaching the honors philosophy of religion course at Swansea, he did not substantially change the content of his own notes throughout the whole period – despite the considerable criticism made of his approach by his own students in discussions and essays. Phillips himself followed this course as a student in the mid-fifties. It famously began with Jones attempting to give ‘a scientific account on the nature of religious belief’ in which he sympathetically examined various anthropological and psychological explanations for religious belief. Jones was not aware of the reductive character of these theories. It was the same, unmodified course that I followed in the early 1960s – and so did others later in that decade. The whole course was based on empiricist premises with Jones largely concerned with the logical nature of the move from the world to God – whether it was a matter of ‘seeing’ or ‘intuiting’ the ‘necessity of God’s existence’ (as his fellow Welsh-philosopher friend, Prof. H. D. Lewis would have it) or a matter of a ‘disclosure situation’ such as ‘the ice breaking’ or ‘the penny dropping’ as late Prof. I. Ramsey maintained. Jones’s own preferred option was that of the Kierkegaardian ‘leap of faith’ and Unamuno’s belief that it is man’s passionate desire to save the world from possible total meaninglessness that is at the root of religious faith. To give such significance to passion in religion went with his emotivist interpretation of it. However, it is clear that Jones’s attempted solution to what was perceived as the ‘problem of God’s existence’ is to be regarded as a pseudo-solution to a pseudo-problem that was based on empirical presuppositions. In the language of faith, the world is already God’s world, and within faith the world is not in any sense a religiously neutral phenomenon from which one infers ‘the existence of some deity’ – whatever this religiously alien expression is supposed to mean!

Jones also taught the main modern History of Philosophy honors course. He excelled as a teacher. And Locke was a great favorite of his. He ex-

pounded Locke's famous *Essay*, particularly Book II, with gusto. Then he would arrive at Book IV. How could Locke be so inconsistent in his empiricism? How could he be so clear as to the grounds of knowledge in Book II and then speak in such lofty terms of mathematical knowledge in Book IV? Jones argued that Locke was unaware of the deep Rationalist traits of thought in his thinking. Even a central distinction made by Locke between nominal and real essences pointed to rationalist presuppositions. These were the causes of inconsistencies in Locke. Jones, however, was not unsympathetic with Locke. Locke's achievements were remarkable when we realize how revolutionary they were at the time. It is an analogous sympathy that I feel for Jones himself. He came to Swansea as one steeped in empiricism. In time he recognized that empiricism was a mistake. He did his utmost to rescue himself from it and embrace the new perspective. He travelled far on this road but, in my view, he never reached the point where it could be said of him that he actually pushed the frontier further on. Indeed, it can hardly be said that he himself reached that frontier.

NOTES

¹ *John Locke* (Oxford: 1937, first appeared in the 'Leaders of Philosophy Series').

² *Religion as True Myth* (Swansea, 1953).

³ A draft version of this M.A. thesis, from which the quotations are taken, is kept at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

⁴ Oxford, 1901.

⁵ Op. cit.

⁶ A draft version of this D.Phil. thesis from which the quotations are taken, is kept at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

⁷ 'Sylwadau ar Broblem Natur Hunan' ('Observations on the Problem of the Nature of Self'), *Efrydiau Athronyddol*, Vol. 1 (1938), University of Wales Press, pp. 42-71.

⁸ Samuel Alexander, *Space, Time and Deity*, 2 vols. (London, 1920).

⁹ *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (New York, 1912).

¹⁰ 'Sylwadau ar Broblem Natur Hunan', p. 57.

¹¹ 'The Self in Sensory Cognition', *Mind* (January, 1950) and 'Our Knowledge of Other Persons', *Philosophy* (April, 1950).

¹² 'Self-Knowledge', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supp. Vol. xxx (1956) and 'The Two Contexts of Mental Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. lix (1958/9).

¹³ *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supp. Vol. (1967).

- ¹⁴ *Efrydiau Athronyddol*, Vol. xxxii (1969), pp. 43-57.
- ¹⁵ London, 1959.
- ¹⁶ 'Yr Hunan a'r Hunan Arall' ('The Self and the Other Self'), p. 1.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., p. 2.
- ¹⁸ *Philosophical Investigations*, tr. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford, 1958), p. 226.
- ¹⁹ See Rush Rhees, *Wittgenstein and the Possibility of Discourse*, ed. D. Z. Phillips (Cambridge, 1998). One of Rhees's main theses in this volume is that Wittgenstein was mistaken in thinking that any 'language-game' could be understood without reference to other human practices.
- ²⁰ *Individuals*, p. 102.
- ²¹ 'Yr Hunan a'r Hunan Arall' ('The Self and the Other Self'), p. 4.
- ²² Ibid., p. 5.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ *Individuals* (London, 1959), p. 102.
- ²⁵ Op. cit., p. 9.
- ²⁶ L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, tr. D. F. Pears & B. F. McGuinness (London, 1961), 6.4311.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 5.6.
- ²⁸ 'Yr Hunan a'r Hunan Arall'.
- ²⁹ Vol. 19, pp. 63-75.
- ³⁰ 'Yr Hunan a'r Hunan Arall', p. 43.
- ³¹ Ibid., p. 43.
- ³² Ibid., pp. 48-49.
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid., p. 50.
- ³⁶ Edited by J. E. Meredith (Gee Press, 1943). For J. R. Jones's 'confession of faith', see pp. 101-116.
- ³⁷ Dryw Press, 1970. The title of the book is taken from the Old Testament book of Daniel, ch. 3, v. 18.
- ³⁸ J. R. Jones, 'Love as Perception of Meaning', in *Religion and Understanding*, ed. D. Z. Phillips (Oxford, 1967) and 'Belief and Loss of Belief' (with D. Z. Phillips), *Sophia* (April 1970), reprinted in D. Z. Phillips's *Wittgenstein and Religion* (London, 1993).
- ³⁹ *Tractatus*, 6.44.

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