THE SHORT BOOK OF 'WITHNESS'-THINKING

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"Every new object, well contemplated, opens up a new organ of perception in us" — Goethe

'Withness'-thinking is the kind of thinking we require in dealing with the unique people and problems we meet in our everyday lives. It is not a new and special kind of thinking that requires special training to learn. We in fact already do it. It is the kind of thinking we employ everyday when someone says to us – from in the middle of our doing something with them – "Well, I don't see how you can do *that*!"And we reply to them, "Simple, like *this*," and show them how by our own example, or say to them, "Well, look at it *this* way," and go on to give them a verbal image or picture of some kind – and they then say, "Oh, I now see," and go on to act *with* either the example of our own action in mind, or *with* the image we've given them in mind, using one or the other to guide them in their acting. Even when we have to work in more abstract terms, doing calculations, say, even here we work-with, think-with, certain basic, taken-for-granted forms, certain 'felt shapes' or 'styles of action' to guide us.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: 'withness'-thinking and the dialogical

"A mathematician is bound to be horrified by my mathematical comments, since he has not always been trained to avoid indulging in thoughts and doubts of the kind I develop. He has learned to regard them as something contemptible and, to use an analogy from psycho-analysis (this paragraph is reminiscent of Freud), he has acquired a revulsion from them as infantile. That is to say, I trot out all the problems that a child learning arithmetic, etc., finds difficult, the problems that education represses without solving, I say to those repressed doubts: you are quite correct, go on asking, demand clarification..." (Wittgenstein, 1974, no.25, p.382).

This first chapter is from a little book that I am writing for practitioners, for people who have to think 'on the run', in the moment, from within the midst of complexity and a special kind of (dialogical) uncertainty occasioned by always having always to act in relation to others acting. It is for people, like Wittgenstein above, who all along have had misgivings about the applicability of current academic modes of thought to the kinds of difficulties they face. It is to do with a kind of thinking that can only be conducted within fleeting moments, in the course of trying to work out how best to respond to unique and crucial events occurring around one *NOW*, at *this* moment in time. I have called it 'withness'-thinking to contrast it with the kind of 'aboutness'-thinking that we are much more used to talking about in our reflective discussions with each other. However, it is very different from the kind of thinking we go in for when we are withdrawn from action, and have time for contemplation. Hence, it is a kind of thinking that we are very unused to thinking and talking about. We don't often pay attention to it. But, as we shall see, everything looks very different when one is 'in motion', involved in

everyday life practicalities, from how it looks when one is uninvolved and standing still (or sitting down at a desk on one's own!).

This little book is not yet finished. However, I am using this chapter here to introduce some notes that I hope will be useful, and will help toward introducing the idea of 'withness'-thinking.

Central to withness-thinking is the crucial role that other people's *situated* speech can play in shaping, not only our actions, but also who we take ourselves to be (our identity). Where by people's "situated speech," I mean speech that is responsive in its voicing, in the unfolding contours of its uttering, to the unfolding contours of the events occurring out in the situation both we and they share. Bakhtin (1984) calls this phenomenon, "hidden dialogicality," and explains it thus: "The second speaker is present invisibly, his words are not there, but deep traces left by these words have a determining effect on the present and visible worlds of the first speaker... for each each present uttered word responds and reacts with its every fiber to the invisible speaker, points to something outside itself, beyond its own limits, to the unspoken words of another person" (p.197). It is because another's voice can enter into us and influence our own inner dialogues in this way, that I called this short book "withness-thinking and the dialogical."

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Some three months after an original meeting, Arlene Katz (1991) explored with clients, mostly couples, their experience of a therapeutic *reflecting team* consultation[1]. Below is a transcript of a segment from one of her interviews. She was interested in how the experience had affected their subsequent lives. As she puts it: "I wondered, what was the effect on this couple of listening to two, three, or more perspectives? Did it have an impact on how they now talked to each other?" (p.126). The husband, Daniel, had come away from the reflecting team experience with ideas which had begun to

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[1] Instead of using footnotes and the like, comments expanding special terms used in the text will appear very shortly afterwards in the text itself, marked by the use of italics.

generate other ideas about how he might reflect differently on and within himself:

"D: ... the ways in which we reflect on ourselves... That has been interesting to me, it's like having a Jiminy Cricket or a way in which you have another part of yourself looking at a particular way you're doing things, and be able to say, 'wait a minute, before I act in this particular way, maybe I can have other options here...' Through some kind of very simple interjection of another perspective, maybe you can come up with another reaction in a particular situation dealing with another person.

AK: So those would be two instances where it was almost generative, where the idea generated other ideas?

D: That's correct; it produced a kind of line of thought or action, or thought that could lead to action.

AK: So it wasn't only generative in terms of other ideas, it was generative of ideas leading to actions.

D: Yes. I've used both of those two approaches in the intervening time... I'm aware of being able to do that now. What it gave me was a kind of new vocabulary or *language to be able to talk to myself,* to say 'wait a minute', or 'what about...?' Or 'it doesn't have to be perfect, let's take a look at what isn't perfect'... It was really a vocabulary that was being developed. The interesting thing was, it was a vocabulary about two specific individuals, that is, Karen and myself. And, therefore, the images had a lot more personal relevance... So, I felt it was the process in which you did have this focused attention.

AK: So, it was something about their following very closely to what you were talking about?

K: Yes. For me it was the delicacy and the close attention and caring" (pp.126-127).

And Katz goes on to remark about Karen's experience, that she "had to overriding impression of a particular kind of atmosphere that allowed issues to be opened up, 'a quality of the people involved that I would define by delicacy, gentleness, compassion'. She felt that the initial process of conversation between the interviewer and their

therapist had been very effective; it was a "point of entry" and a way of setting the stage for what followed.

K: You or I could stand back and listen and say, 'oh that's true' or 'that's not true' from my experience. Rather than ... doing all the talking oneself..., you could say, 'oh, that's not the way it is from my perspective?'

A: So that gave you a point of comparison.

K: Yes. Which isn't to deny your experience... it's like all these different facets of a jewel, and my facet is this and you're seeing this facet" (pp.126-128).

While Daniel went on to make the following remark, in reply to Katz's question: "So, in a way it had an effect on the way you talk to yourself?"

"D: It had an effect on the outcome which was a process, and my willingness, my internal willingness. [I think] by presenting an interactive process in which the two people are incorporated on an equal basis, everybody has an opportunity to reflect, everybody has an opportunity to say something. And it doesn't appear to be hierarchical" (p.128).

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In a reflecting team session in family therapy (Andersen, 1990, 1991) – Tom Anderson now prefers the term "reflecting process" for, as we shall see, a special stance and style, i.e., "genre" (Bakhtin (1986), of talk is entailed – therapists who used to 'observe' behind a one-way screen, come out from behind it, give up their 'professional voices', and hold a much more expressive-responsive kind of conversation amongst themselves about the clients in therapy, a conversation that the clients are at liberty to listen into, and later themselves to respond to with their therapist. This move created a wholly different social dynamic in such therapy sessions. As Katz (1990) remarks: "The reflecting team is one way to have a particular kind of conversation on purpose, a dialogue that invites comparison of differing viewpoints... It is designed to give everybody concerned the opportunity to shift position on purpose, e.g., from listening to participating, from talking to listening, and back again... The

comparison of these dual perspectives can promote a genuine double description*" (p.109, my emphases). Where"the method of double or multiple comparisons," as Bateson (1980) describes it, is a process in which the dynamic interaction of information from two or more different sources can create between them a uniquely new relational dimension. Thus, in discussing the external relationship of two creatures or between two living processes, he notes: "Relationship is always a product of 'double description'; think of the two parties to the interaction as two eyes, each giving a monocular view of what goes on, and – together – giving a binocular view in depth. This double view IS the relationship" (p.146). We will explore the strange structure of such participatory situations, and their relation to both Bateson's (19080) accounts of* double description, *Merleau-Ponty's (1968) account of these special phenomena as* chiasmic, *i.e., involving a special kind of 'intertwining', and Bakhtin's (1981, 1984, 1986) notion of* the dialogical, *in much greater detail later.*

But let me begin to indicate here the radical novelty of the kind of processes of change we need to consider, as two similar, but slightly different phenomena begin to intertwine with each other. Consider first, simply, two sets of concentric circles: as one is moved horizontally to the left or right of the other, the pattern of rays (as below) emerges – and dynamically, as the circles more further and further apart, more and more rays emerge and coalesce while rotating up from the horizontal toward the vertical.
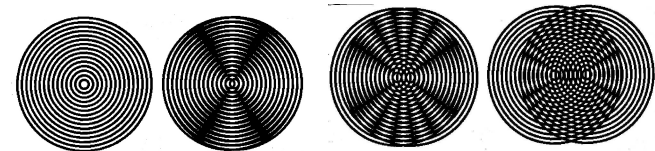

Fig.1 Interference patterns

But consider also our stereophonic music systems. In a true stereo recording of an orchestra playing in a hall, it is not just that the violins sound as if they are coming from where they were originally located, i.e., on the left, and violas, cellos, and double basses as if from the right, these days, with "surround sound," one hears much

more. Rather than simply coming just from the left loud speaker, the sound of the violins comes from both speakers, but in a subtly correlated way so that the sound waves meeting between the left and right speakers display complex interference patterns simulating, not just the violins coming from the left, but coming from the left in a concert hall (I owe this image to Peat (1990, pp.114-115). This is because when the orchestra was playing in a concert hall, the sounds bounced off the walls and ceiling to create such interference patterns in the first place – and it is their reproduction which creates for us that same sense of space as existing around the instruments. A similar interweaving of recorded wave fronts in the realm of light waves occurs, of course, in the making of a hologram.

But to go further in the realm of hearing, as Bakhtin (1986) comments, "one of the means of expressing the speaker's emotionally evaluative attitude toward the subject of his speech is expressive intonation" (p.85). Bateson (1972) also talks of intonation as carrying, "metacommunicative messages of [say] friendship or hostility" (p.151). And furthermore, as we all know from our experiences in listening to papers badly read at conferences, that unless the speaker's talk is appropriately intoned, we find their talk inaccessible. While, in the opposite direction, if we can, so to speak, 'tune in' to a writer's or speaker's 'tone', it is a great help in arriving at a sure sense of their 'point', of their way of relating themselves to the topic of their talk. I will explore this issue of 'interference', 'double description', or 'chiasmic' interweaving effects, in greater detail later.

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I begin with this episode from Katz's account of client's experience of the reflecting process, as it exemplifies a central aspect of what I want to discuss in this short book: the influence that other people voices, their embodied expressions, can have in changing and enriching our own inner lives. Indeed, as Daniel's remarks suggest, they can work to help us develop, refine, and elaborate our own inner abilities to think reflectively and effectively about practical issues arising in the course of our everyday lives together – not just instrumentally, but as Karen's remarks indicate, *relationally*. For the way in which we approach, or go up to 'a something' that we must deal with, what we might call our style or mode of address, 'sets the scene' for the kind of actions that can follow.

In subsequent chapters in this little book, in discussing these and related issues, I want centrally to discuss (among many others) the work of Wittgenstein, Bakhtin and Voloshinov, and Vygotsky. For it is these writers in particular, it seems to me, that have been crucial in orienting us toward paying close attention to the role of language, to the role of people's embodied utterances, in our jointly conducting between us our everyday affairs. We are used to thinking of 'putting our thoughts into words', or thinking of 'words as standing for things', but all the writers mentioned above emphasize also, the direct effect that people's words can have in spontaneously 'calling out' certain responses (of one kind or another) from the others to whom they are addressed. In other words, rather than a focus on *patterns of already spoken words*, they have focussed our attention on people's *words in their speaking*, on the dynamic ways in which people *use* of words in the course of their other actions, and on the subtle details of how, as their use of words unfolds in responsive relation to those to whom they are addressed, people adjust their expressions accordingly. Their writings can help us to 'get inside' the dynamics of these moment by moment unfolding processes in which we, as living beings, i.e., as spontaneously responsive and expressive beings, directly and immediately influence each other in our daily activities.

Indeed, we can begin to illuminate Daniel's comments above – about having "a kind of new vocabulary or language to be able to talk to myself" – with some remarks of Vygotsky's on the role of others words, as children "grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (1978, p.88). For instance, he notes that slowly, as the child develops, he or she "begins to practice with respect to himself [or herself] the same forms of behavior that others formerly practiced with respect to him [or her]" (Vygotsky, 1966, pp.39-40). In other words, while children begin first to respond to the (gestural force) in the utterances of those around them – to stop their activities when their parents say "Stop!," to look where their parents are looking when they say "Look! (and point at something)," and so on – they later begin themselves to use these forms of talk to influence their parent's behaviour – and then, finally, to gain some self-control of their own behaviour by the use of such *directive* and *instructive* forms of talk. As I mentioned above, we are used to thinking of 'words as standing for things', and so on, but this use of words to directly and spontaneously 'call out' a response from another (or

from ourselves), has mostly been ignored in past work on language.

But for Vygotsky (and, as we shall see, for all the other writers I will refer to below), this *functional use* of words to directly influence people's bodily behaviour, is central. With regard to his studies of concept formation he says: "Our experimental study proved that it was the functional use of the word, or any other sign, as means of focusing one's attention, selecting distinctive features and analyzing and synthesizing them, that plays a central role in concept formation... Words and other signs are those means that direct our mental operations, control their course, and channel them toward the solution of the problem confronting us" (1986, pp.106-107). Thus, as children grow into the intellectual lives of those around them, "the greatest change in children's capacity to use language as a problem-solving tool takes place... when socialized speech (which has previously been used to address an adult) *is turned inward.* Instead of appealing to the adult, children appeal to themselves, language thus takes on an *intrapersonal function* in addition to its *interpersonal use*" (1978, p.27). In particular, in the special context of school classrooms, if we ask why children seem able to correctly solve problems involving scientific concepts more often than similar problems involving everyday concepts, we find Vygotsky (1986) replies: "Because the teacher, working with the pupil, has explained, supplied information, questioned, corrected, and made the pupil explain. The child's concepts have been formed in the process of instruction, in collaboration with an adult. In finishing the sentence, he makes use of the fruits of that collaboration, this time independently. The adult's help, invisibly present, enables the child to solve such problems earlier than everyday problems" (p.191).

Indeed, in many spheres of their lives, children can develop ways of using instructive talk for guiding themselves that were, at first, used both by others to influence them, and later by them to influence those others. As a result, they can begin to organize their own activities according to social forms of behaviour which, inevitably, will make sense to all around them. Children can be affected even in what, and how, they pay attention to events occurring around them. For, as children come to guide their own actions by use of their own speech to themselves: "The child begins to perceive the world not only through his [or her] eyes but also

through his [or her] speech," says Vygotsky (1978, p.32).

But let me turn now to Karen's comments – on how the delicacy and the close attention and caring of other people's words seemed open up a 'point of entry' and to set the stage for what followed – and note some of Bakhtin's comments here on how a speaker's *relations* to others, i.e., the whole multidimensional complex of interwoven influences at work in those relations, influence how that speaker voices their utterances, how they 'shape' the unfolding contours of their talk. So that within it, they can directly express the delicacy and caring of which Karen speaks, or equally directly, they can so easily express a lack of care and inattention to subtlety. "From the very beginning," says Bakhtin (1986) a person's "utterance is constructed while taking into account possible responsive reactions, for whose sake, in essence, it is actually created. As we know, the role of the *others* for whom the utterance is constructed is extremely great... From the very beginning, the speaker expects a response from them, an active responsive understanding. The entire utterance is constructed, as it were, *in anticipation of encountering this response*" (p.94, my emphasis). In other words, as Bakhtin (1986) puts it, "an essential (constitutive) marker of the utterance is its quality of being directed to someone, its *addressivity*... Each speech genre in each area of speech communication has its own typical conception of the addressee, and this defines it as a genre" (p.95), i.e., as talk with a certain *style* or overall *grammar* to it.

Again, used to thinking about words as standing for things, or as 'picturing' our already existing thoughts, we are unused to thinking of them always as working towards a *future*, as being influenced by something which does not as yet exist! This is where *others* are at work even in those of our activities in which we think of ourselves as being wholly in control of, wholly the authors of, our own actions. "All real and integral understanding is actively responsive... And the speaker himself is oriented precisely toward such an actively responsive understanding. He does not expect passive understanding that, so to speak, only duplicates his or her own idea in someone else's mind. Rather, he expects response, agreement, sympathy, objection, execution, and so forth..." (Bakhtin, 1986, p.69). Thus, among the other features of such responsive talk, is its orientation toward the future: "The word in living conversation

is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word; it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction. Forming itself in an atmosphere of the already spoken, the word is at the same time determined by *that which has not yet been said but which is needed and in fact anticipated by the answering word*. Such is the situation of any living dialogue" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.280, my emphasis). Thus, among the many other features of our spontaneously responsive talk in our everyday lives together, is its orientation toward the future, expressed in the anticipatory openings we provide for those to whom we address our talk – or don't provide, as the case may be – to reply. "Thus, addressivity, the quality of turning to someone, is a constitutive feature of the utterance; without it the utterance does not and cannot exist" (Bakhtin, 1986, p.99).

Thus, as we begin to 'get inside' the dynamics of the unfolding process occurring in words in their speaking, as we word our expressions, we can begin to see how it was that Karen felt that the very *style of talk* adopted by the reflecting team – irrespective of its content – opened a "point of entry" and set the stage for the new, much more multifaceted ways of talking, and thinking, they both came to adopt between and within themselves toward the difficulties they faced in their lives together. In other words, it was not just in its responsivity (its attentiveness to the Daniel and Karen's expressions), but in its addressivity (in its implied anticipations), that the reflecting team's talk *invited* or '*called out*' a whole special set of responses from Karen and Daniel – spontaneous responses that created the beginnings of their new ways of relating themselves to each other and to their circumstances. And as we have already seen, what is crucial in the reflecting team's style of talk, if it is to do this, is "how the speaker (or writer) sense and imagines his [or her] addressee, and the force of their effect on the utterance... When constructing my utterance, I try actively to determine [his or her] response. Moreover, I try to act in accordance with the response I anticipate, so this anticipated response, in turn, exerts an active influence on my utterance (I parry objections that I foresee, I make all kinds of provisos, and so forth)" (p.95). Indeed, we reflect our addressee's social position, rank, and importance in the tone of voice and vocabulary of terms we adopt, and in the moment by moment responsive-expressive contours of our expressions as they unfold. Thus, if we are to adopt an "intimate" style of talk, in which we perceive our addressees as more or less outside current frameworks

of social hierarchy, as "without rank," as Bakhtin (1986, p.97) puts it, then a part of establishing exchanges within which this is possible, is sensing and imagining one's addressee is a particular way: "Intimate speech is imbued with a deep confidence in the addressee, in his sympathy, in his sensitivity and goodwill of his responsive understanding. In this atmosphere of profound trust, the speaker reveals his internal depths" (Bakhtin, 1986, p.97). It takes two, at least two – at least in the beginning – for us to be fully ourselves to ourselves, we cannot be so alone.

But how did Karen sense that this style of talk, this genre of intimate talk "without rank," was a *point of entry*? In what way did it set the stage for what followed? Here, I think, we can turn to some of Wittgenstein's *remarks* – utterances that work to provide us with what he calls "reminders" (Wittgenstein, 1953, no.127), i.e., remarks that call to our attention things that in some sense we already know.

Wittgenstein's (1953) is well known to us for his claim that: "For a *large* class of cases-though not for all-in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language" (no.43). He is also well known for calling the whole activity within which we use language, "the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, the 'language-game'" (no.7), and for going on to claim, like Bakhtin, that our *use* of our words, our utterances, only make within inside the context of a language-game. This is a tremendously important point, and serves to focus our attention on the fact for all of us, our words only have their meanings out in the contexts of their use – even Samuel Johnson worked backwards from the uses of words (in literature) in the previous 200 years (Hitchings, 2005). But if this was all he had said about the meaning of our words – that they had no meaning outside a language game – this would leave us puzzled as to how we could ever say anything new. How we could ever interweave our old and familiar words into activities in new ways, how we could ever come to grasp the unique meaning of a unique individual?

What he is, perhaps, less well known for, is his remarks on the beginnings of new language-games. Here, again like Vygotsky and like Bakhtin, he notes people's living susceptibility to respond

spontaneously to events occurring around them. Thus, as he sees it: "The origin and primitive form of the language-game is," says Wittgenstein (1980a), "a reaction; only from this can more complicated forms develop. Language – I want to say – is a refinement, 'in the beginning was the deed' [quoting Goethe]" (p.31). "The primitive reaction may have been a glance or a gesture, but it may also have been a word," he notes (Wittgenstein, 1953, p.218). "But what is the word 'primitive' meant to say here?" he asks, "Presumably that this sort of behavior is *pre-linguistic*: that a language-game is based *on it*, that it is the prototype of a way of thinking and not the result of thought" (Wittgenstein, 1981, no.541). This is the key: the point of entry, the start of new ways of thinking, acting, seeing, judging, and communicating, in short, the start of new ways of relating ourselves to our surroundings, can be found in such 'striking, moving, or arresting moments' (Shotter and Katz, 1998).

Indeed, once we begin to recognize the existence of the vast realm of ceaseless, continuously ongoing activity spontaneously occurring between us and all the others and othernesses around us – the realm "not of what we do or what we ought to do, but [of] what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing" (Gadamer, 1989, p.xxviii) – then we realize that we have been like the proverbial fish who were the last to discover water. We have not given our conversationally intertwined activities the attention they deserve. For conversation is not just *one* of our many activities in *the* world. On the contrary, we constitute both ourselves and our worlds in our conversational activities. For us, they are foundational. The unceasing flow of speech intertwined activity between us, this *background* realm of living activity within which we are all inextricably immersed and from out of which and back into which all individual actions emerge and rely on if they are to make sense, is a surprisingly immense *terra incognita* still awaiting study and articulation. Wittgenstein (1980a) describes the state of affairs thus: "Perhaps what is inexpressible (what I find mysterious and am not able to express) is the background against which whatever I could express has its meaning" (p.16). Just as with our binocular vision – where we are centrally aware of an object over there, but remain quite unaware of the amazing relational dynamics taking place in the background as the views from our two separate eyes are combined in the optic chiasma, moment by moment, to array a whole landscape before us, in changing aspects and varying depths as we move within

it – so we easily remain unaware of the similar relational dynamics at work in the background to many of our other everyday activities as we progress through them. This does not mean to say, however, that because our speech intertwined activities constitutes the usually ignored background within which our lives are rooted, they need remain so. For, it is from within our conversational activities themselves that we can draw attention to certain of their crucially important features that would otherwise escape our notice. Thus we can come to a grasp aspects of their nature *through* talk itself, even when a vision of it as a whole, in theory, is denied us. This is the power of Wittgenstein's methods of inquiry into the "logical grammars" inherent in our talk.

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Wittgenstein's methods are responsive, descriptive and creative. They work in terms of continually offering concrete, detailed, and sometimes extraordinary examples. Thus, what he offers us are not assertions, prescriptions, or aphorisms; he is not giving hints for possible explanations, offering hypotheses, or describing actualities..., etc... but making "remarks." *In other words, he is voicing utterances that draw our attention to what usually goes unnoticed; and it is crucial that we are in a responsive relation to him and his writings for his remarks to 'call out' appropriate responses within us.*

> **Remark / / v. & n** *(from the Concise Oxford English Dictionary):*
> *v.*
> *1 tr. (often foll. by that + clause) a say by way of comment. b take notice of; regard with attention.*
> *2 intr. (usu. foll. by on, upon) make a comment.*
> *n.*
> *1 a written or spoken comment; anything said.*
> *2 a the act of noticing or observing (worthy of remark). b the act of commenting (let it pass without remark). [French remarque, remarquer (as re-, mark1)]*

Thus our 'hearing' his 'voicing' of his remarks is important too: For, to repeat, he is not giving us patterns of already spoken words, patterns that are important to us because of their form or content.

The 'point' of what he has to say is there, in his words, in his speaking of them, and, in our responses to them as he speaks them!!!

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In recent years, there has been an upheaval in our thought about ourselves and our ways of relating ourselves to the world around us – a shift from thinking of ourselves as static, outside observers of an objective world, able to take a 'point of view' in regarding it as 'out there', to thinking of ourselves as active agents, continually on the move, immersed in the world along with many others similar to ourselves, needing to 'get into' situations and to 'see them from all sides', while being just as much acted on by events in our surroundings as able to act back upon them. It is a move away from the study of an immaterial *mind* hidden in the heads of individuals to the study of embodied *social practices* visibly to those involved in them (Schatzki, Knorr Cetina, and von Savigny, 2001). It is also a move away from systematically ordered simplicities and certainties to complexities – "there is complexity if things relate but don't add up," as Mol and Law (2002, p.1) very nicely put it. I will say more about these changes later. But let me say here, that in my view, for those of us interested in studying and coming to an understanding of human affairs from within their own everyday participation within them, not only are things now in flux, still on the move, but that is how from now, I will claim, on they *should stay*. We must not return once again to the charm and attraction, and easy formulation, of fixed and static views. We must learn how to shift our attention away from supposed, eternally constant forms hidden away "behind appearances" (the old Greek dream), to shift away from the urge to discover stable rules laws, or principles in terms of which each new event can be understood as repeating in some sense essential features of past events, and turn toward a focus on first-time, unique events occurring out in the world between us and the others and othernesses around us. It is a shift to what occurs in our unfolding relations, in our meetings, with these others and othernesses – an overall shift from a focus on static Being, on what can be thought of as eternally existing, to a focus on *ongoing Being* or Becoming, on what at each moment in time are unique, only "once-occurrent events of Being," as Bakhtin (1993, p.1) put it.

In other words, we must begin to teach ourselves how to think and to talk, and to characterize our understandings of our circumstances, while in motion. We are well versed in thinking and talking about understandings gained from static standpoints. We talk of seeing things from a place, position, or point of view, from within a perspective or framework, in terms of static shapes, forms, or pictures. We are very unused to talking of things from within our ongoing, unfolding relations with them. Indeed, the shift from thoughtful understandings gained in contemplation to practical understandings gained while in action is, we shall find, quite revolutionary. Everything we thought we understood and had the vocabulary to describe, changes. For instance, while many may still see philosophy as primarily oriented toward gaining a kind of knowledge (or wisdom) that ultimately is recorded in a book, Wittgenstein (1953) suggests a much more practical definition. As he sees it, "a philosophical problem has the form," he says, "[of] 'I don't know my way about'" (no.123). And it is solved, he suggest, when we can say to someone (and to ourselves), "'Now I can go on!'" (no.151). I mention Wittgenstein's more practical less intellectual, more poetic reformulation of our disquiets here, as these two metaphorical expressions – the one of a kind of difficulty, the other of having overcome it – are central to what I want to offer in this short book.

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If instead of theoretical talk in classrooms and committee rooms, we begin to focus on actual practices in a context and begin to attend to the details of our activities together, i.e., to our actual ways of relating ourselves to our particular surroundings, we realize that the world of practice is not very familiar to us. This is because in most of our reflective talk, we withdraw ourselves from our ongoing actions and contemplate them as, so to speak, as uninvolved outsiders, viewing them in them in terms describable to others, i.e., as mostly in objective terms, in terms of features readily visible to others. Occasionally, of course, we resort to subjective talk – 'it seems to me', 'I think that X is the case', or 'I feel so and so' – but then we feel we are not talking of something actually existing out in the world between us; we are talking of something inside only our self as an individual.

As we make the shift from static, uninvolved thinking, however, to dynamic, involved thinking, as we shift from thinking in terms of our surroundings as consisting in separately identifiable parts to thinking of them in living, relational terms living, our whole relation to them changes. Instead of being an external observer, standing over against or apart from what we are inquiring into, we become involved participants on the great stage of life (to paraphrase Niels Bohr's famous comment). However, if we are to resituate ourselves in our lives in this way, as interested participants rather than as disinterested observers, we need to acknowledge that our focussing on the idea of "participation," not only changes our whole way of seeing the world around us, but also changes both what we take it to be, as well as our whole way of being in it.

Just by way of introduction, I will list some of the changes entailed in how we think about a range of crucial notions currently very familiar to us:

- things – *will be known by their 'place' or 'position' in a dynamic complex of unfolding interrelations (a 'landscape' or 'ecology'), instead of their 'natures' being known 'in themselves', in terms of their 'properties'.*
- time – *in participatory time-space, everything remains 'present' in the moment and it all, irretrievably 'laters' together (see Whorf, 1956), instead of time passing on, and events passing us by, as if 'moments of time' are 'spatialized' for us like beads on a string.*
- space – *in participatory time-space, everything is related to everything else, our expressions (thoughts) produce responses, instead of separate, discrete, and unrelated events, spaces, and objects.*
- thinking – *is thinking always with another, as if in an inner dialogue with them, instead of it being thought of as inner calculation ('figuring things out').*
- knowledge – *comes to be a practical matter of 'knowing one's way about' (where to go, what to do next), instead of being able both to 'picture' a future state of affairs and to argue convincingly in favour of acting to bring it into existence.*
- perceiving (our ways of seeing) – *come to be expressed in our immediate bodily responses to our circumstances,*

instead of being deliberately thought out as cognitive interpretations.
- learning – *becomes something that happens incidentally and effortlessly in participatory contexts (Lave and Wenger, 1991), instead of requiring self-conscious, effortful attention to a teacher's instructions in a classroom.*
- teaching (practices) – *becomes (as in Wittgenstein's 'teachings') a matter of pointing out previously unnoticed details in concrete contexts, and of providing concrete exemplars of right practice, instead of the enunciation of abstract general principles.*
- communication – *becomes a relationally-responsive matter to with unique individual making unique points in unique circumstances, instead of giving general, decontextualized, information.*
- valuing (judging) – *comes to be manifested both in one's responsivity, and the addressivity one adopts, towards the Others and othernesses around one, instead of a cognitive judgment, calculated in terms of a fixed set of dimensions.*
- context – *is the 'here and now', 'the present moment', the ongoing context in which we live, work, think, talk, etc., that we constitute this way and that as convenient in our communications with others: instead of what we see as the context later, when we retrospectively 'apply' our 'knowledge' in our intellectual 'analyses' of our activities.*

And, to single out a number of central notions:

- theory – *will come to be expressed in the form of an (often, narrative) account (Shotter, 1984), working in a practical, relationally-responsive manner to influence how persons responsive to it will orient or relate to events in their surroundings, instead of being presented in terms of a single, systematic order of connectness, working in a cognitive representational-referential manner to determine a specific course of action.*
- anticipating the future – *will come to be seen as undertaking certain preparations (training, building sensitivities, adopting certain stances, etc.), instead of requiring planning (of setting out pictured goals and*

frameworks in talk and writing in round-table meetings).
- changing how we live and work – *becomes a matter of putting into our lives and work a new kind of dialogically reflective practice, instead of 'putting theory into practice'.*
- chiasmic change (Shotter, 200x, 200x) – *indeed, the whole idea of change, perhaps, changes more than any of our other basic, background ideas, for all dialogical changes occur as the result of new articulations, new refinements and elaborations being chiasmically interwoven into our already existing practices and activities (more on this topic later).*

All these changes, then, in the taken for granted meanings of all these basic terms (and more) will be necessary in making the switch from 'aboutness'-thinking to 'withness'-thinking in our discussions as to what to do for the best with respect to the difficulties we face in our everyday lives together. What we have taken for granted, consequently, becomes rather unfamiliar to us.
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My reasons for choosing to call the kind of thinking required if we are to think while 'on the run', while 'in motion', withness-thinking, are not immediately obvious, so I will try to explain them.

First, I was impressed by Wittgenstein's (1980a) comment, that the beginning of a new language-game is to be found in our spontaneous reactions to events occurring around us. Indeed, for many years now I have also been influenced by Vygotsky's (1962) claim that a basic law of development is that "consciousness and control appear only at a late stage in the development of a function, after it has been used and practiced unconsciously and spontaneously. In order to subject a function to intellectual and volitional control, we must first possess it" (p.90). In other words, it is a unique *other* or *otherness*, something other than ourselves, that spontaneously calls out new responses from us – and it is responses to otherness that are responsible for our psychological development, not anything intrinsically within us. This also gives us a clue as to how it is possible for us to come to unique, first-time, only once-occurrent understandings – clearly a problem for those of us who must deal with the passing moments of everyday life.

Next, in discussing the special kind of looking we employ when looking at a painting (by Cezanne, say), Merleau-Ponty (1964a) notes: "I would be at great pains to say *where* is the painting I am looking at. For I do not look at it as I look at a thing; I do not fix its place. My gaze wanders in it as in the halos of Being. It is more accurate to say that I see according to it, or with it, than that I *see it*" (p.164). In other words, instead of factual, aboutness-seeing, in which we gaze at something with the aim of 'fitting it into' a schematism of some kind already in mind, we can begin here to make sense of what we might call a *withness-seeing*. For, after having seen one Cezanne, we can begin to look over other paintings *with* the image of a Cezanne picture in mind that shapes and instructs our looking – the Cezanne painted has 'taught' us, or we have 'learnt' from it, a certain 'way or style or genre of looking' that we can now apply to other Cezanne's, to other paintings. Similarly, with a piece of reading in mind, as Steiner (1989) suggests, "the streets of our cities *are* different after Balzac and Dickens. Summer nights, notably to the south, have changed with Van Gogh (p.164)... It is no indulgent fantasy to say that cypresses are on fire since Van Gogh or that aqueducts wear walking-shoes after Paul Klee" (p.188) – it is not that after reading Wittgenstein we see language *as* a game, or *as* a city, and that's the end of it, but *with* a city in mind (which city: Paris (wheel and spoke), New York (grid), London (mess)?), we look to see if language has different 'regions', so to speak, like business, entertainment, university, sports, etc. districts, and whether it has a centre, suburbs, a countryside, archeological layers, etc., etc. It is a looking and a seeing that is already 'primed', so to speak, to notice the occurrence of possible connections and relations between momentary features of our surroundings that might otherwise be missed. Indeed, as Bakhtin (1986) puts it with regard to our listening to another's speech, to repeat, our listening must be an "actively responsive" listening which "constitutes nothing more than the initial preparatory stage of a response (in what ever form it may be actualized)" (p.69).

These are the initial reasons for my calling this style of thinking, withness-thinking. But there is another reason, to do with the influence that another's voice can have upon us. As Vygotsky (1986) noted above, when discussing the influence of an adult's instructive talk on a child's behaviour, to repeat: "the adult's help, invisibly present, enables the child to solve such problems earlier

than everyday problems" (p.191). Indeed, the work of all the people I have mentioned so far – Vygotsky, Bakhtin, Wittgenstein, and Merleau-Ponty, and many more – illuminates how another's voice, "invisibly present," can exert its influence in shaping our conduct in our own everyday affairs. And it is especially the crucial role that other people's *situated* speech, their utterances that are immediately responsive to our utterances, that I want to discuss below.

Very generally, as I hope is already clear, the switch from past ways of thinking about thinking – as taking place in terms of inner calculations or information processing – to thinking about it as entailing inner, multi-voiced dialogues, requires a considerable number of changes in how we *orient or relate* ourselves to the new, once-off events occurring in our surroundings that we must cope with. Indeed, as I mentioned above, a major change *is* in the ways we orient towards events occurring in our surroundings: Instead of, in the face of difficulties, seeking more information, more facts, we must (as in Merleau-Ponty's example, of letting Cezanne's paintings 'teach' us a uniquely new way of looking at paintings) let certain concrete, exemplary events teach us the new orientations, the new forms of approach and the new background expectations and anticipations, we need if we are to 'see', i.e, to responsively understand, the unique meanings in the once-off events occurring around us.

But there is one important step more in all of this: Although I must mentioned above that Wittgenstein (1953, no.123) talked of our "not knowing our way about" inside the landscape of whole set of interconnected problems, the field of problems he concern himself with, was mainly the field of philosophical problems – the problem of knowledge, of language, of mind, of meaning, of logic, etc., etc.. Whereas, for those of us with a more practical horizon, who have to think in the moment, from within the midst of a special kind of dialogical uncertainty due always to having to act in relation to others acting, we need to know our way about *inside ourselves*, i.e, inside our own inner mental activities – we need to know how best to compose ourselves to approach *that* particular confused and confusing circumstance, *this* particular distraught person, *that* seemingly misleading way of talking, *this* puzzling way of behaving, and so on. As Wittgenstein (1980a) notes about working in his kind of philosophy, that it "is really more a working

on oneself... on one's way of seeing things. (And what one expects of them)" (p.16). Exploring what is entailed in this task of building up within oneself that whole landscape of anticipatory sensitivities required to meet new, unique people and circumstances, and then of being able both to find how one is placed at any one moment within it, and to find one's way about within it, thus to know how next to go, is the task of the rest of this little book.

CHAPTER TWO

The dialogical, joint nature of human activity

"Language lives only in the dialogical interaction of those who make use of it. Dialogic interaction is indeed the authentic sphere where language *lives*... Dialogic relationships are reducible neither to logical relationships nor to relationships oriented semantically toward their referential object, [these are] relationships *in and of themselves* devoid of any dialogical element. They must clothe themselves in discourse, become utterances, become positions of various subjects expressed in discourse, in order that dialogic relations might arise among them...
　　'Life is good'. 'Life is good'. Here are two absolutely identical judgments, or in fact one singular judgment written (or pronounced) by us *twice*... We can, to be sure, speak here of the logical relationship of identity between two judgments. But if this judgment is expressed in two utterances by two different subjects, then dialogic relationships arise between them (agreement, affirmation)" (Bakhtin, 1984, pp.183-184).

"The *given* and the *created* in a speech utterance. An utterance is never just a reflection or an expression of something already existing and outside it that is given and final. It always creates something that never existed before, something absolutely new and unrepeatable, and, moreover, it always has some relation to value (the true, the good, the beautiful, and so forth). But something created is always created out of something given (language, an observed phenomenon of reality, an experienced feeling, the speaking subject himself, something finalized in his world view, and so forth). What is given is completely transformed in what is created" (Bakhtin, 1986, pp.119-120).

Something special happens when one living being acts in the presence of another – for, by its very nature, the second being cannot but help respond to the activities of the first. But the first did not just act out of nowhere either; the first acted in response to events in its surroundings too. Thus at work in the world of living beings, is a continuous flow of spontaneously responsive activity within all such beings are embedded. We can called activity of this kind "joint action" (Shotter, 1980, 1984), or we can call it "dialogically-structured activity" (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986), or later, "chiasmically intertwined acitivity" (Bateson, 1972; Merleau-Ponty, 1968).

– *Joint action, 'our' action*: We cannot not be responsive both to those around us [others] and to other aspects [othernesses] of our surroundings.
– Thus, in such spontaneously responsive sphere of activity as this, instead of one person first acting individually and independently of an other, and then the second replying, by acting individually and independently of the first, we act jointly, as a *collective-we*.
– And we do this bodily, in a 'living' way, spontaneously, without us having first 'to work out' how to respond to each other.
– This means that when someone acts, their activity cannot be accounted as wholly their own activity – for a person's acts are partly 'shaped' by the acts of the others around them – this is where all the strangeness of the dialogical begins.
– Our actions are neither yours nor mine; they are truly 'ours'.

– *Hence, meaning is present in all our inter-activity*: "The mechanism of meaning is present in the social act before the emergence of consciousness or awareness of meaning occurs. The act or adjustive response of the second organism gives to the gesture of the first... the meaning it has"(Mead, 1934, pp.77-8).

– *Wholeness*: "Sawing and dancing are paradigm cases of dialogical actions. But there is frequently a dialogical level to actions that are otherwise merely coordinated. A conversation s a good example. Conversations with some degree of ease and intimacy move beyond mere coordination and have a common rhythm. The interlocutor not only listens but participates with head nodding and 'unh-hunh' and the like, and at a certain point the 'semantic turn' passes over to the other by a common movement. The appropriate moment is felt by both partners together in virtue of the common rhythm" (Taylor, 1991, p.310)... not in virtue merely of a common rhythm, but in virtue of each move in the interplay 'satisfying' at each moment an appropriate *constitutive* expectation, thus to constitute a 'sensed whole or unity'.

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Dialogically-structured activities occur, then, *only* when we enter into mutually responsive, living, embodied relations with the others and othernesses around us – when we cease to set ourselves, unresponsively, over against them, and allow ourselves to enter into an inter-involvement with them.

It is here, in the intricately timed 'orchestration' of the interplay occurring between our own outgoing, (responsive) *expressions* toward those others (or othernesses) and their equally responsive incoming *expressions* toward us, that a very special kind of understanding of this special phenomenon becomes available to us. We can call it a "relationally-responsive" understanding to contrast it with the "representational-referential" understanding we are more used to when we withdraw from action and become contemplative.

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"A 'bit' of information is definable as a difference that makes a difference" (Bateson, 1972, p.286).

The optic chiasma

It takes at least two 'somethings' to create a difference. "The stuff of sensation [is]... a pair of values of some variable, presented over a time to a sense organ whose response depends upon the ratio between the members of the pair" (p.79). A simple and familiar case of "double description" is, as already mentioned, binocular vision. About it, Bateson (1979) comments: "The innervation of the two retinas and the creation at the optic chiasma of pathways for the redistribution of information is such an extraordinary feat of morphogenesis [i.e., the creation of new forms] as must surely denote great evolutionary advantage... The binocular image, which appears to be undivided, is in fact a complex synthesis of information from the left front in the right brain and a corresponding synthesis of material from the right front in the left brain. Later these two synthesized aggregates of information are themselves [end 79] synthesized into a single subjective picture from which all traces of the vertical boundary have disappeared" (pp.79-80).
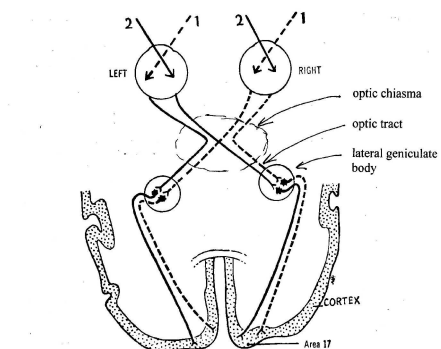

Figure 30. The visual pathways. Above, light rays from an object (1) in the right visual field and (2) in the left visual field enter the two eyeballs, crossing as they pass through the lens. The left part of both retinas then connect with the left visual cortex at the back of the brain ("area 17"), and the right retina with right visual cortex. Thus an object in the right visual field excites the left visual cortical area only. (After Gardner: *Fundamentals of Neurology*, 3rd ed.)

But what is most important is, that in this dynamic, chiasmic intertwining a new and unique "relational dimension" – depth – is created (as Bateson says, morphogenesis occurs). As he notes: "the seer adds an extra *dimension* to seeing" (p.80).

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But for this to occur, dynamically, the differences that make a difference, that give rise to cases of "double description," must be "similar differences.," for the relevant "relational dimensions" created to arise in "interference" effects. Thus, for the utterance of a second person to be in a truly dialogical relation to the utterance of a first, and to be 'creative' in Bakhtin's sense, the second utterance must be in a spontaneously responsive relation to it. Hence the power of the requirement – in Tom Andersen's (1990) "reflecting process" and Jaakko Seikkula's (1995, 2002) "open dialogue" – that every said must be in response to what has already been said in the therapy session. Also, Harry Goolishian's dictum: "Listen to what clients really say, not to what you think they mean."

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Involvement obligations: If we are to sustain the sense of a collective-we between us and the answerability to a common rhythm, we find ourselves with certain <u>obligations</u> to 'our' joint affairs:

– Only if 'you' respond to 'me' in a way sensitive to the <u>relations</u> between your actions and mine can 'we' act together as a 'collective-we'; and if I sense you as not being sensitive in that way, then I feel immediately offended in an ethical way - I feel that you lack respect for 'our' affairs.

– Indeed, "[if] the minute social system that is brought into being with each encounter [becomes] disorganized... the participants will feel unruled, unreal, and anomic" (p.135).

– Thus, as Goffman (1967) puts it: a participant "...cannot act <u>in order</u> to satisfy these obligations, for such an effort would require him to shift his [sic] attention from the topic of the conversation to the problem of being spontaneously involved in it. Here, in a component of non-rational impulsiveness - not only tolerated but actually demanded - we find an important way in which the interactional order differs from other kinds of social order" (p.115).

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– *A complex mixture, chiasmically organized*: What is produced in such dialogical exchanges is a very complex mixture of not wholly reconcilable influences – as Bakhtin (1981) remarks, both 'centripetal' tendencies *inward* toward order and unity at the center, as well as 'centrifugal'

ones *outward* toward diversity and difference on the borders or margins.

– *The 'sui generis' nature of dialogical realities*: Thus, such activity is not simply *action* (for it is not done by individuals; and cannot be explained by giving people's *reasons*), nor is it simply *behavior* (to be explained as a regularity in terms of its causal principles); it constitutes a distinct, third sphere of activity with its own distinctive properties.

– This third sphere of activity involves a special kind of nonrepresentational, sensuous or embodied form of *practical-moral* (Bernstein, 1983) understanding, which, in being constitutive of people's social and personal identities, is prior to and determines all the other ways of knowing available to us.

– Activities in this sphere lack specificity; they are only partially determined.

– They are a complex mixture of many different kinds of influences.

– They are just as much material as mental; they are just as much felt as thought, and thought as felt.

– Their intertwined, complex nature makes it very difficult for us to characterize their nature: they have neither a fully orderly nor a fully disorderly structure, neither a completely stable nor an easily changed organization, neither a fully subjective nor fully objective character.

– While they can exhibit progressive changes, they can also exhibit retrogressive ones too.

– They are also non-locatable - they are 'spread out' among all those participating in them.

– They are neither 'inside' people, but nor are they 'outside' them; they are located in that space where inside and outside are one.

– Nor is there a separate before and after (Bergson), neither an agent nor an effect, but only a meaningful, 'enduring' whole which cannot divide itself into separable parts – a whole that, in enduring, dynamically sustains itself in existence ["duration"].

"How could human behavior be described?

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Surely only by sketching the actions of a variety of humans, as they are all mixed up together. What determines our judgment, our concepts and reactions, is not what <u>one</u> man is doing *now*, an individual action, but the whole hurly-burly of human actions, the background against which we see an action" (Z. no.567)... (cf also 1980, II, no.629).

– Indeed, it is precisely their lack of any pre-determined order, and thus their openness to being specified or determined *by those involved in them*, in practice - while usually remaining quite unaware of having done so - that is their central defining feature. And: *it is precisely this that makes this sphere of activity interesting*... for at least two reasons: 1) to do with *practical investigations* into how people actually do manage to 'work things out', and the part played by the *ways of talking* we interweave into the many different spheres of practical activity occurring between us; but also 2) for how we might refine and elaborate these spheres of activity, and how we might extend them into novel spheres as yet unknown to us.

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– *The situation as agentic*: because the overall outcome of any exchange cannot be traced back to the intentions of any of the individuals involved, the 'dialogical reality or space' constructed between them is experienced as an 'external reality', a 'third agency' (an 'it') with its own (ethical) demands and requirements: "The word is a drama in which three characters participate (it is not a duet, but a trio)" (Bakhtin, 1986, p.122)... a third agency is at work in dialogical realities.

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– *The specificatory function of language*: Thus, "human discourse takes place in and deals with a pluralistic, only fragmentarily known, and only partially shared social world" (Rommetveit, 1985, p.183).
– "...vagueness, ambiguity, and incompleteness - but hence also versatility, flexibility, and negotiability - must for that

reason be dealt with as inherent and theoretically essential characteristics of ordinary language" (p.183).
– 'There is hardly any more efficient way of <u>evading</u> the complexities of ordinary language use than to disassociate it from actual use and explicate its syntactic and semantic rules under stipulated 'ideal' conditions" (p.185).
– Thus, in such circumstances, "even apparently simple objects and events remain in principle enigmatic and undetermined <u>as social realities</u> until they are talked about" (p.193).
– It is only <u>from within</u> a living involvement in such an ongoing flow of dialogical activity, that we can make sense of what is occurring around us.
– These are not understandings <u>of</u> a situation, which allow it to be linked to realities already known to us, but new, first-time understandings which are <u>constitutive</u> for us of what counts as the significant, stable and repeatable forms within that flow.

CHAPTER THREE

Wittgenstein's methods: the role of 'reminders' in withness-thinking

"Nothing is hidden" (1953, no.435).

"What makes a subject hard to understand – if it's something significant and important – is not that before you can understand it you need to be specially trained in abstruse matters, but the contrast between understanding the subject and what most people *want* to see. Because of this the very things which are most obvious may become the hardest of all to understand. What has to be overcome is a difficulty having to do with the will, rather than with the intellect" (1980, p.17).

"If I had to say what is the main mistake by philosophers of the present generation, including Moore, I would say that when language is looked at, what is looked at is a form of words and not the use made of the form of words" (1966, p.2).

Reorienting, re-postioning, re-relating oneself to one's surroundings, and to one's goal within them: becoming a 'participant' agency rather than a 'masterful' agent

The change in attitude we need, if we are to begin to understand Wittgenstein's methods, is to begin to focus, not on what we do consciously and deliberately, but on what just happens to us, spontaneously and unconsciously in our everyday living involvements in which language is *used*, i.e., on our spontaneous reactions to people's *use* of words, including our own reactions as well as those of others.

A person's responsive reactions to events in their surroundings are always expressive in some way to those around them of the person's attitudes, evaluations, or feelings regarding the events in question – we can *see* that the man over there was 'taken by surprise', that that woman was 'upset', that the child in the shopping mall 'wanted to be picked up', etc.

Hence, in focusing on word *use* in Wittgenstein's sense, we cannot just focus on words as separable, countable entities in our investigations, we must focus on those events or moments in our lives in which we are in an expressive-responsive, living relation with the others and othernesses around us, moments or events when the words we use are merely an aspect in or of a larger whole – a surrounding situation into which they are complexly interwoven or (chiasmically) intertwined.

In other words, we must focus centrally on our *words in their speaking*, rather than on the *patterns* to be found in our *already spoken words*. The task is to work *from within the still ongoing moment of speaking*, not to look back on completed, past speech acts.

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The everydayness of his methods in his "grammatical investigations:" 'instructive', 'attention directing', 'new expectation creating' talk:

> "Grammar is not accountable to any reality. It is grammatical rules that determine meaning (constitute it) and so they are not answerable to any meaning and to that extent are arbitrary" (**PG**, 1974/1978, no.133, p.184).

> "*Essence* is expressed by grammar" (!953, no.371).

> "Grammar tells us what kind of object anything is" (1953, no.373).

What, then, is the kind of understanding are we seeking here? What does "grammatical" mean for Wittgenstein?

It will be useful to remind ourselves that he wants "to bring words back from their metaphysical use to their everyday use" (1953,

no.116).

But what holds our everyday use of words together, so to speak? When I say: "Pass the salt, please," and you do (and also feel I have been polite to you too), what makes such an exchange possible? Clearly, when as children we grow 'into' the communal life of those around us, we come, literally, to *embody* a whole background of shared *expectations* and *anticipations*, shared "*feelings* of *tendency*, often so vague that we are unable to name them at all" (James, 1890, p.254).

So, as I see it, what Wittgenstein means by his "grammatical investigations," are investigations which bring to light the shared 'valencies' or 'structurizing tendencies' always already at work in all those situations into which we *all*, spontaneously, interweave our use of language, and which lead us into interlinking our use of words at one moment with how we might use of them in the next moment – but not in terms of their *forms*, but in terms of their *uses*, their *meanings*, what we are *doing* in our uses of them.

His "grammatical" investigations can, thus, be seen as part of a "living tradition" – *our* tradition – as a special "reflective" insertion into the very tradition by which, and within which, we all in fact live our daily lives. Where this living tradition cannot be found either in "official ideological rhetorics," nor in the store of facts we can learn in schools and libraries, but only out in all the different practical activities in terms of which we actually conduct our daily lives together.

As MacIntyre (1981) puts it: "A living tradition ... is an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition" (p.207). "Traditions, when vital, embody continuities of conflict" (p.206). In a living tradition, various images speak for themselves, they 'itch at our ears', we hear their voices. As Gadamer (1975) puts it, "... a tradition is not simply a process we learn to know and be in command of through experience, it is language, i.e., it expresses itself like a 'Thou'. A 'Thou' is not an object, but stands in a relationship with us" (p.321) – but we are "bewitched" by some of these images: "A picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it

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to us inexorably" (1953, no.115).

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In other words, he seeks to teach us methods for use in our investigations of our own immediate everyday circumstances, so that we may come, so to speak, to feel more 'at home' in them... so that we may come to feel so at home in the 'landscape' of all our uses of our language, that we can find our 'way about' inside them all without needing to consult a map, i.e., so that we can 'go on' without needing to refer to any 'theories' or 'inner mental representations' or 'pictures' ... and feeling no longer feel bewildered or disoriented, we can "awake to wonder" (CV, p.5), to the amazingness of the ordinary.

Thus, the methods of "grammatical investigation" he is trying to teach us, orient us towards how we understand our use of words in this, that, or some other unique and particular context... they are methods for confronting 'once-off', 'first-time', unique events in all their detailed uniqueness... and for drawing our attention to the fact that in coming to an understanding of how to 'go on', we make use of many of these details without usually noticing that fact... his methods work to draw our attention to what we normally 'expect' and/or 'anticipate' in such ongoing, everyday circumstances, and need to anticipate, if we are to act correctly – but such anticipations occur (happen) to us only when we are 'in motion', in the course of 'going on'. If we stop or are stuck, they disappear, and we become disoriented.

The task is, to get back in motion!!!

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His methods, then, are responsive, descriptive and creative... and they work in terms of continually offering concrete, detailed, and sometimes extraordinary examples...

Thus, what he offers us are not assertions, prescriptions, or aphorisms; he is not giving hints for possible explanations, offering hypotheses, or describing actualities..., etc... but making "*remarks*." In other words, he is *voicing utterances* that draw our attention to

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what usually goes unnoticed; and it is crucial that we are in a responsive relation to him and his writings for his remarks to 'call out' appropriate responses within us (see *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* defn of "remark" in Chap one). Thus our 'hearing' his 'voicing' of his remarks is important too: For, to repeat, he is not giving us *patterns of already spoken words*, patterns that are important to us because of their form or content. The 'point' of what he has to say is there, in his words, *in his speaking of them*, and, *in our responses to them*!!!

But crucial to our being able to respond to them, is our sharing of a 'background' set of anticipations and expectations to other people's use of words – in, as I remarked above, our sharing of a 'living tradition' with him. Hence is remark that: "The investigation is to draw your attention to facts you know quite as well as I, but which you have forgotten, or at least which are not immediately in your field of vision. They will all be quite trivial facts. I won't say anything which anyone can dispute. Or if anyone does dispute it, I will let that point drop and pass on to say something else." (Wittgenstein, 1976, p.22).

This is why he calls his remarks "reminders," for, "something that we know when no one asks us, but no longer know when we are supposed to give an account of it [cf. Augustine], is something we need to *remind* ourselves of" (1953, no.89).
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In other words, what Wittgenstein wants to draw to our attention in his remarks, in his "grammatical investigations," is that, if we are to gain the kind of practical *understanding he seeks, we can in fact make use of some of the very same methods we used in gaining that practical kind of understanding in the first place. Thus, in his remarks, in wanting to draw our attention to how people in fact draw each other's attention to things, he can use the self-same methods as they themselves use!... as can we in our own investigations!!!*

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This, then, gives us a first clue to Wittgenstein's methods. For, although they are as many and as various as those we use in life itself, they are all related in that they work in just the same way as

our 'instructive', 'directive', and 'organizational' forms of talk in everyday life work. For example, we continually ask questions ("What are you doing?", "What are you thinking?", "What's your idea?", and so on); we 'point things out' to people ("Look at this!"); 'remind' them ("Think what happened last time"); 'change their perspective' ("Look at it like this"); 'place' or 'give order' to their experience ("You were very cool... or: you acted like a madman); we 'give commands' ("Do this," "Don't do that"); 'organize' their behavior ("First, take a right, then... ask again..."); and so on.

These are all *instructive* forms of talk that 'move' us, in practice, to do something we would not otherwise do: in 'gesturing' or 'pointing' toward something in our circumstances, they cause us to relate ourselves to our circumstances in a different way – as if we are continually being 'educated' into new ways of relating.

Indeed, in one of his very first remarks (questions), he asks how we were first taught our words. For, among other things, such a consideration brings to our attention the original circumstances of the teaching, where "one thing that is immensely important in teaching is exaggerated gestures and facial expressions" (1966, p.2), that emphasize the "characteristic part [they play in].. a large group of activities... the occasions on which they are said..." (1966, p.2).

It is the gestural function of these instructive forms of talk – they are both 'indicative' (i.e., pointing) or 'mimetic' (i.e, expressive gestures) – that is their key feature, that gives them their life: for they 'point beyond' themselves to features in the momentary context of their utterance... in the context of our doing something in the actual everyday living of our lives (see the comments on them working within a 'living tradition' above).

The 'everydayness' of his concerns cannot be emphasized enough. Having been taught in our school learning that 'proper', 'rational' forms of thought must be *general, objective, and disinterested*, and work within or being 'framed' within, *logical systems*, we feel somehow awkward in talking in everyday concrete terms... as if somehow jejune, as if we were not properly competent thinkers.

But he cannot be *there* with us in our actual everyday circumstances, helping us deal with our actual concrete muddles. So how can his

writing in a book, many years ago help us? Wittgenstein uses his 'instructive' or 'educative' forms of talk to draw our attention to what is there *for us*, in *our* circumstances, what there before our eyes, that we fail to see, in the circumstances of *our own* talk... his remarks are not aimed at drawing our attention to *his* circumstances, to *his* version of things... they work to draw our attention to what is, in fact, already known to us.

Hence, whatever event we may talk of, *we* must put it in its 'home' surroundings. "One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to *look* at its use and learn from that. But the difficulty is to remove the prejudice that stands in the way of doing that. It is not a *stupid* prejudice..." (no.340).

Bewitched by the images that 'itch at our ears' into thinking that various other events *must* be at work if we are to *explain* the event that troubles us, we look in the wrong place for an understanding of how next to act. Wittgenstein's methods are aimed at releasing us from our bewitchment, at showing us that – at particular detailed moments in our actions – other possibilities *were* or *are* available to us: "Our investigation is not directed toward phenomena, but, as one might say, towards the '*possibilities* of phenomena" (1953, no.90).

Further methods:

This then gives us some further clues to some of his other methods. Below, I list a set of five methods, and the goal they seem at which they are aimed, which we can see as working in sequence:

- *1) Deconstruction:* First, his remarks can work to <u>arrest</u> or <u>interrupt</u> (or 'deconstruct') the spontaneous, unself-conscious flow of our ongoing activity, and to give "prominence to distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily make us overlook" (1953, no.132).
- Thus his talk is full of such expressions as "Think of...," "Imagine...," "It is like...," "So one might say...," "Suppose...," and so on, in which he confronts us with a concrete scene or vignette featuring a particular aspect of human conduct. Where these are all designed "to draw someone's attention to the fact that he [or she] is capable of imagining [something]... and his <u>acceptance</u> of the [new]

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picture consists in his now being inclined to regard a given case differently: that is, to compare it with *this* rather than *that* set of pictures. I have changed his *way of looking at thing*" (1953, no.144).
- Thus, in provoking us to bring new responses to our words and actions into play, he shows us further possibilities in a circumstance that previously we had overlooked. Alone, however, such a move could be more confusing than clarifying.

- *2) Questions:* Wittgenstein uses questions (in response to what he sees as 'philosophical' questions, i.e., decontextualized, general questions) to help us remember, or recall to mind, the 'grammar', or to put it in other words: the detailed inter-relationships between our use of words and concrete features in their surroundings at the moment of their use, in coming to an understanding of each other in particular everyday life settings.
- His questions redirect our inquiries away from the abstract to the concrete, and challenge us to resolve our questions – the vents that trouble us – in the context in which they were first experienced.
- In so doing, he not only directs our attention toward unnoticed details in our surroundings, but he also redirects our expectations regarding the kind of answers we expected from our inquiries.
- Often, he does this simply by showing us that we can *rephrase* the question in other words, thus to arouse other expectations.
- For example, we are less perplexed by the expression 'the explanation of meaning' than by 'the meaning of a word', because the description of the first expression involves both words *and the actions into which they are interwoven*, and is thus less likely to lead us to look for an entity or process which we might call 'meaning'.

- *3) The continued use of 'particular examples':* "Not only rules, but also examples are needed for establishing a practice. Our rules leave loop-holes open, and the practice has to speak for itself" (OC, 1969, no.139).
- Living concrete examples – as a counter to the 'images' in

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a tradition whose voice 'itch at our ears' – can work to 'call out' new, first time responses in us.

- "The origin and primitive form of the language game is a reaction; only from this can more complicated forms develop. Language – I want to say – is a refinement, 'in the beginning was the deed'[Goethe]" (1980, p.31). "But what is the word 'primitive' meant to say here? Presumably that this sort of behavior is *pre-linguistic*: that a language-game is based *on it*, that it is the prototype of a way of thinking and not the result of thought" (Z, no.541).
- Works of art also have something to teach us.
- He connects art and pedagogy. In contrasting the spirit of his writings with the spirit of his times he writes, "people nowadays think that scientists exist to instruct them, poets, musicians, etc., to give them pleasure. The idea that these have something to teach them - that does not occur to them' (CV 36e)... the greatest art offers us images by which to imagine our own lives... within which to see ourselves...
- Thus LW's writings are *inclusive* in the sense that they invite *response* through both their tone and form; the reader is never the recipient of an (artificially) completed philosophical theory or system, but a participant in the investigation, along with LW... a failure to respond appropriately is like a failure to understand a piece of art, rather than understanding facts or theories... one hasn't got wrong, one simply hasn't 'got it'...

- *4) Images, pictures, metaphors:* This suggests to us a fourth method that is often of importance: By the careful use of selected images, similes, analogies, metaphors, or 'pictures', he also suggests new ways of talking that not only orient us toward sensing otherwise unnoticed distinctions and relations for the first time, but which also suggest new connections and relations with the rest of our proceedings.
- Indeed, the idea of language-games falls into this category: "Language-games are the forms of language with which a child first begins to make use of words... If we want to study the problems of truth and falsehood, of the agreement and disagreement of propositions with reality, of

the nature of assertion, assumption, and question, we shall with great advantage look at primitive forms of language in which these forms of thinking appear without the confusing background of highly complicated processes of thought. When we look at such simple forms of language use the mental mist which seems to enshroud our ordinary use of language disappears. We see activities, reactions, which are clear-cut and transparent" (1965, p.17).

- *5) Comparisons:* This brings us to a fifth and perhaps most important of his methods, making comparisons: using various kinds of *objects of comparison*, e.g., other possible ways of talking, other "language games" both actual and invented, etc., he tries "to throw light on the facts of our language by way of not only similarities, but also dissimilarities" (1953, no.130). For, by noticing how what occurs differs in a distinctive way from what we otherwise would expect, such comparisons can work, he notes, to establish "an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order with a particular end in view; one of many possible orders; not *the* order" (1953, no.132).
- The importance of the use of comparisons - often the comparison, or the bringing into living contact, of different *scenes* (see note 15) - cannot be overemphasized.
- Such dialogical juxtapositions work in a living way to create a circumstance in which differences are realized and articulated: <u>here</u>, we use our words like <u>this</u>; <u>there</u>, we use them like <u>that</u>. That is, in providing new occasions for the realizing of new differences, they create a new 'movement' of thought, a new 'gesture'.
- Indeed, if we turn to some remarks of his on how we understand the theme in a piece of music, we find him likening the music's movement to human speech and other gestural movements. "... the theme... is a new part of our language; it becomes incorporated into it; we learn a new gesture" (1980, p.52). But: "Doesn't the theme point outside itself?," he asks. "Yes, it does! But that means: - it makes an impression on me which is connected with things in its surroundings - e.g., with our language and its intonations; and hence with the whole filed of our language-games" (1981, no.175).

- In other words, such dialogical juxtapositions bring to life new gestures, new ways of pointing beyond our immediate circumstances to bring to light new connections and relations between and within them. Indeed, as we cross boundaries and 'move' from functioning within one language game to an other, we can experience the changed commitments, urges, wants, desires, and temptations, as well as the ways of handling, looking, and evaluating, associated with each.

- *6) übersichtliche Darstellung:* Where the point of all these methods, and the slow and painstaking exploration of the landscape of our uses of language they engender, is expressed in his notion of a "perspicuous representation or simply a *clear overview* (Ger: übersichtliche Darstellung):" "A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command a clear view of our use of words. - Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing connections'" (1953, no.122).
- If we are 'to find our way about' inside our own linguistically shaped forms of life, we need to grasp the 'landscape' of their internal relations, or their 'grammatical geographies', so to speak.
- But to achieve such a synoptic sense of its immense complexities, as well as curing ourselves of the many temptations to see it as much more simple than it in fact is, we also have to explore its grammatical geography close up, in detail, without end.

Further remarks of relevance to his methods:

"... it is, rather, of the essence of our investigation that we do not seek to learn anything new by it. We want to understand something that is already in plain view. For this is what we seem in some sense not to understand" (no.89).

"We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place. [For] these are, of course, not empirical problems; they are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language, and

that in such a way as to make us recognize those workings: in spite of an urge to misunderstand them" (1953, no.109).

"When philosophers use a word - 'knowledge', 'being', 'object', 'I', 'proposition', 'name' - and try to grasp the essence of the thing," he comments, "one must ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home? - What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use" (no.116).

"The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known" (1953, no.109). "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is" (1953, no.124).

"It is the business of philosophy, not to resolve a contradiction by means of a mathematical or logico-mathematical discovery, but to make it possible for us to get a clear view of the state of mathematics that troubles us: the state of affairs before the contradiction is resolved... The fundamental fact here is that we lay down rules, a technique, for a game, and then when we follow the rules, things do not turn out as we had assumed. That we are therefore as it were entangled in our own rules.
    This entanglement in our own rules is what we what to understand (i.e.. Get a clear view of).
    It throws light on our concept of meaning something. For in those cases things turn out otherwise than we had meant, foreseen. That is just what we say when, for example, a contradiction appears: "I didn't mean it like that."
    The civil status of a contradiction, or its status in civil life: there is the philosophical problem" (no.125).

 "The great difficulty here is not to represent the matter as if there is something one couldn't do. As if there really were an object [*a mental state or process, a social structure or set of rules or norms, an oppressive State apparatus*], from which I derive its description, but I were unable to show it to anyone. – And the best that I can propose is that we should yield to the temptation to use this picture, but then investigate how the application of the picture goes" (Z, no.374, my additions).

"Disquiet in philosophy might be said to arise from looking at philosophy wrongly, seeing it wrong, namely as if it were divided into (infinite) longitudinal strips instead of into (finite) cross strips. This inversion of our conception produces the <u>greatest</u> difficulty. So we try as it were to grasp the unlimited strips and complain that it cannot be done piecemeal. To be sure it cannot, if by a piece one means an infinite longitudinal strip. But it may well be done, if one means a cross-strip. - But in that case we never get to the end of our work! - Of course not, for it has no end. (We want to replace wild conjectures and explanations by the quiet weighing of linguistic facts) (1981, no.447).

CHAPTER FOUR

Living beings, meetings, entanglement, and chiasmic relations

Notes on 'living beings':

1. Style, identity, developmental continuity

– Living bodies, organic forms are enduring, self-maintaining, self-reproducing, self-*structurizing structures*.
– They change *internally* by growth and differentiation into more internally complex forms, while retaining their identity as the identifiable individuals they are.
– In other words, there is always a kind of *developmental continuity* involved in the unfolding of all living activities.
– Thus, the earlier phases of the activity are indicative of at least the *style* of what is to come later – thus we can respond to their activities in an *anticipatory* fashion.
– In other words, all living activities give rise to what we might call *identity preserving* changes or deformations – as T.S. Eliot puts it: "In my beginning is my end."

– The Cartesian world, you realize, is a dead world, a world of mechanical movement, a world of forces and impacts in which movement is thought of as a change in the spatial configuration of a set of separately existing parts – which, in their changes, they can 'wear out'!

– Living movement, living change taking place in time, confronts us, we shall find, with some quite new phenomena, needing some quite different concepts, if we are not simply to assimilate it to Cartesian forms of change – our sense of the 'style' of what is to come!

2. Internal relations:

– Even the most complex of 'man-made' systems, machines for instance, are constructed piece by piece from objective parts; that is, from parts which retain their character

unchanged irrespective of whether they are parts of the system or not.

- But whole people as natural systems are certainly not constructed piece by piece; on the contrary, they <u>grow</u>.
- They develop from simple individuals into richly structured ones in such a way that their 'parts' at any one moment in time owe not just their character but their very existence both to one another <u>and</u> to their relations with the 'parts' of the system at some earlier point in time – their history is just as important as their logic in their growth
- Because of this it is impossible to picture natural systems in spatial diagrams. As Capek (1965, p.162) remarks, "any spatial symbol contemplated at a given moment is <u>complete</u>, i.e., all its parts are given <u>at once</u>, simultaneously, in contrast with the temporal reality which by its very nature is <u>incomplete</u> and whose 'parts' – if we are justified in using such a thoroughly inadequate term – are by definition successive, i.e., nonsimultaneous" (in Shotter, 1984, pp.42-43).
- All changes 'gesture' or 'point' beyond themselves (Brentano – intentionality).

Meetings (events occurring within dialogically-structured, joint actions):

- In turning away from abstract theories, and toward a direct focus on the unique concrete details of our living, bodily involvements – or *participations* – in the world around us, we have become concerned with what goes on within the different 'inner worlds of meaning' we *create* in our different *meetings* with the others and othernesses around us, *and with* noticing the ever present *background* flow of spontaneously unfolding, reciprocally responsive inter-activity between us and our surroundings.
- It is as 'participant parts' within this flow, considered as a dynamically developing complex whole, that we all have our being as members of a common culture, as members of a social group with a shared history of development between us.
- It the recent discovery of this previous unnoticed background of spontaneously responsive, living bodily

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activity that is one of the most important features of our new approach.

- This approach has much in common with Reason and Goodwin's (1999) "science of qualities."
- They also emphasize our embedding in a ceaseless, unfolding flow of becoming, and the need to focus on "complex emergent wholes" (p.281).
- They too suggest that "our feelings in response to natural processes are not arbitrary but can be used as reliable indicators of the nature of the real processes in which we participate" (p.293).
- They also focus on the importance of the contrast between *participatory understandings occurring in meetings,* and objective forms of understanding in which we place ourselves *at a distance* from, or *over against* those we presume to study.

"Participation now enters as a fundamental ingredient in the human experience of any phenomena, which arises out of the encounter between two real processes that are distinct but not separable. The human process of becoming and that of the 'other', whatever this may be to which the human is attending. In this encounter wherein the phenomenon is generated, feelings and intuitions are not arbitrary, idiosyncratic accompaniments but direct indicators of the nature of the mutual process that occurs in the encounter. By paying attention to these, we gain insight into the emergent reality in which we participate" (Reason and Goodwin, 1999, p.293).

- What we must emphasize is the joint, dialogical, or chaismic (i.e., complexly intertwined) nature of the activities occurring in such meetings.
- But, in having introduced this emphasize on the importance of such *meetings*, I want to emphasize even more the nature of their *initial approaches* to such meetings.
- For these 'set the scene', so to speak, for how participants will react to everything occurring within *the event of their meeting*.

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- It clearly makes an enormous difference if we approach another person on meeting them with a clenched fist ready to strike, or with an open hand ready to shake their's.
- To do this, we must learn how to see what is around us 'in depth', as offering us a 'space of possibilities' for our actions.
- Such a sense only emerges for us from within our dialogically or chiasmically-structured *meetings* with the others around us.

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We have already (in Chapter one) seen how two very similar orderly processes can 'interfere' with each other to produce a third form of order to which both contribute. Entanglement is the term used in quantum physics to denote phenomena which two entities, no matter how far away from each other they may be, are in some strnage manner, inexorably linked (Aczel, 2001).

> Entanglement*: "When two systems, of which we know the states by their respective representation, enter into a temporary physical interaction due to known forces between them and when after a time of mutual influence the systems separate again, then they can no longer be described as before, viz., by endowing each of them with a representative of its own. I would not call that one but rather the characteristic trait of quantum mechanics" (Erwin Schroedinger, "Discussion of probability relations between separated systems," Proc. Camb. Phil. Soc, 31, p.555, 1935).*

In other words, after having interacted with each other, and move away from the interaction, they are now each, so to speak, 'infected' with each other.

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Merleau-Ponty (1968) and the Chiasmic:

In chapter one, we have already noted Bateson's (1980) use of binocular vision (along with Moiré interference patterns) as examples of strange kind of phenomena that can occur when two or more slightly different forms of order actively interact with one another (when what he calls "double description" occurs): in formation of a different *logical type* is created.

Merleau-Ponty (1968) has also noted this phenomenon: "The binocular perception is not made up of two monocular perceptions surmounted; it is of another order. The monocular images *are* not in the same sense that the things perceived with both eyes *is*... they are pre-things and it is the thing" (p.7).

What Merleau-Ponty means by "pre-things" here, can be understood by turning to the account of dialogical realities given in Chapter Two. There, we noted that everything, every *thing*, was, so to speak, in a *precursor* state, neither object nor subjective, neither wholly orderly nor wholly disorderly, and so on. As we put it there, the *open* nature of a dialogical reality is such that it is up to *those involved in it, in practice*, to provide whatever they take to be the best linguistic formulation of the things it – bearing in mind that each such formulation carries with it implications for how we should anticipate future steps. For it is very easy, as Wittgenstein shows, to *mislead* ourselves.

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In his last unfinished book, written just before he died, Merleau-Ponty (1968) tried to explore what it would be like to try to install ourselves, and conduct our thinking, from within such still open, yet to be fully specified circumstances:

"If it is true that as soon as philosophy declares itself to be reflection or coincidence it prejudges what it will find, then once again it must recommence everything, reject the instruments reflection and intuition had provided themselves, and install itself in a locus where they have not yet been distinguished, in experiences that have not yet been "worked over," that offer us all at once, pell-mell, both "subject" and "object," both existence and essence, and hence give philosophy resources to redefine them" (From Merleau-Ponty, Ch.4 The Intertwining - the Chiasm, 1968, p.130).

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Abduction and withness-thinking: By talking of the *chiasmic* relations that can occur in the meetings between two or more events that differ from each other, but are still close enough to 'interfere' or 'resonate' with each other, like Bateson (1980), Merleau-Ponty (1968) wished to open up a whole new realm of previously unthought of activity – a strange realm of activity in which "withness-thinking" works. Bateson (1980) called it "abduction," and characterized it thus:

"We are so accustomed to the universe in which we live and to our puny methods of thinking about it that we can hardly see that it is, for example, surprising that abduction is possible, that it is possible to describe some event or thing (e.g., a man shaving in a mirror) and then to look around the world for the other cases to fit the same rules that we devised for our description. We can look at the anatomy of a frog and then look

around to find other instances of the same abstract relations recurring in other creatures, including, in this case, ourselves" (p.157).

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CHAPTER FIVE

Two kinds of responses to an 'experienced difficulty':

"Aboutness"-talk versus "withness"-talk

"... the difficulty – I might say – is not that of finding the solution but rather that of recognizing as the solution something that looks as if it were only a preliminary to it. "We have already said everything. – Not anything that follows from this, no, *this* itself is the solution!" This is connected, I believe, with our wrongly expecting an explanation, whereas the solution to the difficulty is a description, if we give it the right place in our considerations. If we dwell upon it, and do not try to get beyond it. The difficulty here is: to stop" (1981, no.314).

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Scene setting:

There is a tendency to treat circumstances we find bewildering or disorienting, ones which are strange and new to us, as posing a problem for us. Thus we often respond to such events by seeking a solution to them, by trying to explain them.

There is, however, an altogether different way of responding: we can 'enter into' a dialogically-structured relationship to them, and, as we 'dwell on, with, or within' them for a while, gradually gain an orientation toward them as their 'inner nature' becomes familiar to us - much, say, as we get to know our 'way around' inside a city which is at first unfamiliar to us by exploring its highways and byways according to the different projects we try to pursue within it.

In becoming familiar with something in our surroundings in this way, we come to know not just their inert, objective nature, but to know them in terms of a whole realm of possible responsive, living relations that we might have to them. We orient toward them in terms of their yet-to-be-achieved values, the (grammatical) 'calls' they might exert on us to 'go on' with them in one way rather than another.

The development of a sensitivity to such calls is not a part of the problem-solving process. Below I set out some notes relevant to these two stances, these two very different ways of responsively relating ourselves to our surrounding circumstances:

1). Problem-solving: the continual monological rediscovery of sameness – "aboutness'-talk *about* an other:

Sequence of steps:
–   treat the newness or strangeness as a problem to be solved
–   analyze it into already known elements
–   find a pattern or order amongst them
–   hypothesize an agency responsible for the order (call it, say, SYNERGY or some other such 'stuff')
–   find further evidence for it
–   enshrine it in a theory or theoretical system
–   theories, way of thinking, become central in giving shape to our actions
–   manipulate the strangeness (now known in terms of the theory) to produce an advantageous outcome
–   call this 'the solution' to the problem
–   turn 'to apply' the theory elsewhere

Properties of the process:
–   it is a search for regularities
–   it establishes a single order of connectedness among certain perceived aspects of one's circumstances
–   occasionally, 'the solution' can occur to one 'in a flash of insight'
–   it works wholly within the realm of the already known to elaborate it internally

Effects on the self of the investigator:
– the SELF remains unchanged in the process
– we remain outside the other or otherness, we are 'set over against' it
– we are not engaged or involved with it
– we acquire extra *knowledge* about it in the form of facts or information
– we gain *mastery* over it

2). Entering into a dialogical relationship with an other: "withness"-talk *with* an other — beginnings and beginnings and beginnings, but no endings

Sequence of steps:
– treat the other or otherness as still radically unknown to us
– 'enter into' dialogically-structured relations with it, become involved or engaged with it
– we must 'open' ourselves to being spontaneously 'moved by it
– relate to it responsively and responsibly - this is crucial: we always know when a person is 'with' us or not, whether at a party they are responsively 'following' us, or whether they are looking over our shoulder to find others they want to be with
– this sense of contiguity, of contingency, of the other's responses to us being contingent on our own, is very basic - present even in new-born children
– to 'enter into' dialogically-structured relations with another requires 'tact', 'courtesy'
– we must not only 'follow' the other, but also provide opportunities for them to 'follow' us
– the other 'calls on' us - comes both to be 'with' us, as well as to 'call out' responses from us
– the other can affect us, move us - their meaning for us in the responsive movements they 'call out' from us
– we are 'answerable (partially) to' their calls as they are (partially) to ours - we do not reply to every aspect of their influence upon us
– an 'it' appears between us: produced neither solely by 'me' or by 'you'
– the 'it' is *our* it: there is *poiesis* at work between us - the

sensed creation of form
– the form has a shaped and vectored sense to it
– central to giving shape to our actions is our *sensitivity* or *sensibility* to the particular details of the other's responsive activities
– as we 'dwell on, with, or within' the other, there is a gradually growth of familiarity with its 'inner shape'
– we have a sense of the *value* of its yet-to-be-achieved aspects - the prospects it offers us for 'going on' with it
– we gain orientation, a sense of 'at homeness', we come to find our 'footing', to know our 'way about' in relation to it

Properties of the process:
– "once-occurrent events of Being" are crucial - single, unique events that make a difference: we talk in terms of what we are 'struck by'
– we establish multiple, complexly ordered *sense of connectedness* among the perceived aspects of the other or otherness: a synopsis of trivialities
– our familiarity with it grows only gradually and is never finished
– it works at the boundaries between the radically unknown and the realm of the known to expand its boundaries

Effects on the self of the investigator:
– the SELF is changed in such encounters
– we become involved with, immersed in, the 'inner life' of the other or otherness
– everything we do is partly shaped by the other in being a response to what it might do
– at first wholly 'bewitched' by its 'voice', as our familiarity with it grows, its voice becomes one voice among the many other voices with us
– rather than *knowledge* of its nature, we gain *orientation* toward it, i.e., we grasp how to 'go on' with it
– we never gain mastery over it - others can always surprise us, no matter how familiar to us they have become.

CHAPTER SIX

'Withness-thinking' and 'aboutness-thinking'

> "Thus Hienroth observes properly: that my [i.e., Goethe's] faculty of thinking is "objectively active [*gegenständliches Denken*]", whereby he means to say that my thinking does not separate itself from its objects; that the elements of the objects, the concrete intuitions (*Anschauungen*) enter into that thinking and are most inwardly permeated by it in form; that my way of seeing (*anschauen*) is itself a thinking, my thinking a way of seeing – a procedure said friend does not wish to deny his approbation" (Goethe, HA, 13: 37, quoted in Brady, p.97).

As I see it, abstract and general theories are of little help to each of us in the unique living of our unique lives together, either as ordinary people or as professional practitioners. While the specific words of another person, uttered as a 'reminder' at a timely moment as to the character of our next step within an ongoing practical activity, can be a crucial influence in its development and refinement. Thus, following Goethe's comments above, while resonating also with Wittgenstein and Bakhtin, we can outline a distinction between 'withness-thinking' and 'aboutness-thinking' as follows:

– *Withness (dialogic)-thinking* is a form of reflective interaction that involves coming into living contact with an other's living being, with their utterances, their bodily expressions, their words, their 'works'.
– It is a meeting of outsides, of surfaces, of two kinds of 'flesh' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968), such that they come into 'touch' with each other.
– They both touch and are touched, and in the relations

between their outgoing touching and resultant incoming, responsive touches of the other, the sense of a 'touching' or 'moving' difference emerges.
– In the interplay of living movements intertwining with each other, new possibilities of relation are engendered, new interconnections are made, new 'shapes' of experience can emerge.
– It gives rise, not to a 'seeing', for what is 'sensed' is invisible; nor to an interpretation (a representation), for our responses occur spontaneously and directly in our living encounters with an other's expressions.
– Neither is it merely a feeling, for carries with it as it unfolds a bodily sense of the possibilities for responsive action in relation to one's momentary placement, position, or orientation in the present interaction.
– For it gives rise to a *'shaped'* and *'vectored'* sense of our moment-by-moment changing placement in our current surroundings – engendering in us both unique anticipations as to what-next might happen along with, so to speak, 'action-guiding advisories' as to what-next we might do.
– In short, we are spontaneously 'moved' toward specific possibilities for action in such thinking.

– *Aboutness (monologic)-thinking*, however, is unresponsive to another's expressions; it works simply in terms of a thinker's 'theoretical pictures' – but, even when we 'get the picture', we still have to interpret it, and to decide, intellectually, on a right course of action.
– Thus, in aboutness-thinking, "(in its extreme pure form) another person remains wholly and merely an object of consciousness, and not another consciousness... Monologue is finalized and deaf to the other's response, does not expect it and does not acknowledge in it any *decisive* force" (Bakhtin, 1984, p.293).
– In other words, it works simply in terms of 'pictures', thus, even when we 'get the picture', we still have to decide, intellectually, on a right course of action – "The cat sat on the mat, the mat was red, the cats was black – get the picture?" "Yes, so what?"

Thinking 'with' an other's voice, with their utterances, in mind:
Here, then, we can begin to see another way in which what we call 'theory' can be an influence in, literally, 'instructing' us in our practical actions out in the world of our everyday, practical affairs. Instead of turning away from them, and burying ourselves in thought in an attempt to fit them into an appropriate theoretical scheme in order to respond to them later, in *its* terms, we can turn ourselves responsively toward them immediately. Indeed, we can begin an intensive, i.e., in detail, and extensive, exploratory interaction with them, approaching them *this* way and *that* way... 'moved' to act in *this* way and *that* in accord with the beneficial 'reminders' (Wittgenstein, 1953, no.127) issued by others to us, as a result of their explorations. In other words, seeing *with another's words in mind* can itself be a thoughtful, feelingful, way of seeing, while thinking *with another's words in mind* can also be a feelingful, seeingful, way of thinking – a way of seeing and thinking that brings one into a close and personal, living contact with one's surroundings, with their subtle but mattering details. This is a style of seeingful and feelingful thought that can be of help to us in our practical daily affairs, and in further explorations of our own human lives together – in ordinary interpersonal communication, psychotherapy, intercultural communication, management, administration, government, etc., and, in fact, in science, in understanding how 'aboutness (monolgical)-thinking' actually works.

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"The exact sciences constitute a monologic form of knowledge," says Bakhtin (1986): "the intellect contemplates *a thing* and expounds upon it. There is only one subject here-cognizing (contemplating) and speaking (expounding). In opposition to the subject there is only *a voiceless thing.* Any object of knowledge (including man) can be perceived and cognized as a thing. But a subject as such cannot be perceived and studied as a thing, for as a subject it cannot, while remaining a subject, become voiceless, and, consequently, cognition of it can only be *dialogic.* Dilthey and the problem of understandings Various ways of *being active* in cognitive activity. The activity of the one who acknowledges a voiceless thing and the activity of one who acknowledges another subject, that is, the *dialogic* activity of the acknowledger. The dialogic activity of the acknowledged subject, and the degrees of this activity. The thing and the personality

(subject) as *limits* of cognition. Degrees of thing-ness and personality-ness. The event-potential of dialogic cognition. Meeting. Evaluation as a necessary aspect of dialogic cognition" (p.161).

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The distinction between 'action' and 'behavior' in scientific Psychology: "... It is only because people themselves know whether they intended their activity or not, and whether they achieved what they meant to achieve, that they are able to answer such questions; beings unable to distinguish between what they intended and what just happened would find such questions quite senseless.

Besides being crucial in everyday life, though, such a distinction is crucial in the conduct of science, absolutely crucial: it is only because we can sense, when acting in accord with theories of what the world might be like, whether the results of our actions accord with or depart from the expectations engendered by the theories, that we can ever put such theories to empirical test — this is the only way of establishing the nature of a theory's purchase on reality. If people were unable to distinguish between what happened as a result of their intentional activity and what just happened, by itself, there would be no basis for scientific inquiries at all. Thus, no other more fundamental basis for deciding the truth of empirical matters exists; nor will one ever be found — not as some have proposed, in the organizational complexity of matter — for how could it ever be established as a true basis?" (Shotter, 1975, p.86).

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The kind of learning involved here begins by being "struck," with our noticing of, as Bateson (1979) puts it, the "differences that make a difference" (p.453). With more space, I would have liked to have explored the method of "social poetics" (Katz and Shotter, 1996a; Shotter and Katz, 1996; Katz and Shotter, 1996b; Shotter, 1998; Cunliffe, 2002), for use in developing within a collaborating group, not only a sensitivity to subtle and fleeting events of importance in their shared practice, but also a vocabulary for creating and sustaining the appropriate 'ways of looking', i.e., of paying attention. But to sum up, in such self-reflecting and self-developing practices:

–   Practitioners become co-researchers, and researchers

become co-practitioners, as each articulates what they have been 'struck by' in the unfolding process.

- Both researchers and practitioners alike are engaged in creating sense about lived experience. This sense emerges in the collaborative dialogical activity between them. As a result, practice, teaching and research are all enfolded with each other, as one in-forms and creates the other in a evolving, generative fashion.

- Both inquiry and learning in this process becomes a matter of "practical authorship" (Shotter, 1993) in which teachers and students, managers and workers, researchers and practitioners, all co-construct what is they create and learn together.

- And in such creative/learning conversations, participants may develop "practical theory" together - Goethe: "Let us not seek for something beyond the phenomena - they themselves are the theory".

- "Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us" (Wittgenstein, 1953, no.126).

As Brulin (1998) has pointed out, while the high Humboldtian ideal of the university as the home of the highest and best form of scholarship and science has motivated the opening of universities everywhere, it is just this dream which has also led to their "noble seclusion," to the sobriquet of them as being "ivory towers." Thus, while "the established research society interprets the third task as an obligation to propagate popular science information, thereby hoping to save the High Science dream and the position of noble seclusion. More and more researchers, lecturers and students in Sweden have started to discuss how universities can generate knowledge in interactive cooperation with practitioners, without reducing the quality of their two traditional tasks. In other words, how can the universities carry out the three different tasks to the best of their abilities?" (p.125). This too, is the question I have tried to pursue in the notes making up this short book on "Withness-thinking and the Dialogical."

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Appendix:

THE MUSICALITY OF LANGUAGE: KNOWING HOW TO 'GO ON'

"Understanding is like knowing how to go on, and so it is an ability: but 'I understand', like 'I can go on', is an *utterance*, a *signal*" (Wittgenstein, 1980b, I, no.875).

"I become involved in things with my body, ... The act by which I lend myself to the spectacle must be recognized as irreducible to anything else. I join it in a kind of blind recognition which precedes the intellectual working out and clarification of the meaning" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.185).

"Knowledge in the end is based on acknowledgment" (Wittgenstein, 1969, no.378).

Summary: "Understanding a sentence is much more akin to understanding a theme in music than one might think," says Wittgenstein (1953, no.527). For if you 'understand' it, i.e, a person's utterance, although you may not be able to say what it is 'about', you can (in practice) 'go on' from it, you can both 'follow' it and 'reply' to it with an appropriately 'expressed' and timed next step. Indeed, there is something very special that occurs in the unfolding of our utterances, in the unfolding temporal contours of our *words in their speaking*, that is lost in the presentation of *patterns of already spoken words*, something that it is impossible to capture in any codifications taken as representing such patterns. In the past, we have thought of language as merely for the deliberate, self-conscious, one-way transmission of information from speakers to listeners. Thus, what was said was thought of as being more important that the saying of it. This is a mistake. It is

crucial that we communication with each other in living, spontaneously expressive-responsive, embodied, face-to-face contact. For, what is lost in our deliberate representational codifications, is the "blind recognition," mentioned by Merleau-Ponty above, that arises in our spontaneous bodily involvements with events occurring around us in our surroundings – a blind recognition (or "acknowledgement" – see LW above) that precedes our "intellectual working out" of things and provides a part of the "background" that makes our more intellectual accomplishments possible. Below, I will explore how this occurs, and why Wittgenstein likens it to our (non-intellectual) 'understanding' of a theme in music. What is new and unusual in all of this is the attention paid to our spontaneously occurring bodily activities.

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In our meetings with others and othernesses around us, if we cease to set ourselves, unresponsively, over against them, and allow ourselves to enter into an inter-involvement with them – due to the expressive, responsiveness of all the living bodies involved in such meetings – a very different form of understanding becomes available to us in our relationships with living things, a relationship unavailable to us with dead things.

This ongoing, practical understanding of how to 'go on' in the interaction, arises in the intricate 'orchestration' of *the interplay* occurring between our own outgoing, responsive *expressions* toward those others (or othernesses) and their equally responsive incoming *expressions* toward us.

In that interplay at each moment, as in a dance, or a hand-shake, or an orchestral symphony, distinctive, dynamically changing forms emerge, in which all involved are, so to speak, 'participant parts'. The uniquely distinctive forms emerge in an unfolding sequence of changes (or differencings'), each differencing giving rise to a uniquely 'shaped' circumstance which, although invisible, is *felt* by all who are involved as participants within it in the same way.

But what is the nature of the interplays involved here? They are dialogically-structured or chiasmically-structured; they are a complex and intricate intertwining of not wholly reconcilable, mutually influencing movements – with, as Bakhtin (1981) remarks, both 'centripetal' tendencies inward toward order and unity at the center, as well as 'centrifugal' ones outward toward diversity and difference on the borders or margins. This makes it very difficult for us to characterize their nature: they have neither a fully orderly nor a fully disorderly structure, neither a completely stable nor an easily changed organization, neither a fully subjective nor fully objective character. Indeed, to the extent that the temporal unfolding of intertwined activity in this realm is shared in by all, it is non-locatable; it is neither 'inside' people, but nor is it simply 'outside' of them; it is 'spread out' or distributed amongst all those participating in it. Indeed, to the extent that it is undifferentiated as to whose it is, we could say that they all have their being 'within' it. And to the extent that it is has a temporally unfolding pattern to it — ***/ ***\ ***/ ***?? — it gives rise to a 'grammar', to a structure of feeling to do with 'ways of going on'.

In other words, most importantly, the *invisible forms* created in the interplay of living activity between us are neither wholly alive (as self-maintaining organisms) not wholly dead (as self-contained, inert objects). Taking my lead from George Steiner (1989), I will call these invisible forms "Real Presences," and following Bakhtin (1986), I have called the kind of understandings to which they give rise, *relationally-responsive* understandings, to contrast them with the *representational-referential* understandings more familiar to us in our traditional intellectual dealings. And what is of crucial importance about a "real presence" and our "relationally-responsive" understanding of it, is not that you 'get the picture', so to speak, but that it 'calls' you to respond in a certain way to it: we respond with a greeting to a greeting; with an answer to a question; by compliance to a request, and so on... or at least, that is how we are *expected* to respond, and if we don't, the we must *account* for why we don't (Mills, 1940; Scott and Lyman, 1968). In short, real presences, although invisible, have agency, and they can exert a force similar to they agency of another person upon us.

But there is something else at work in the 'orchestrated' unfolding of the interplays occurring between people in their meetings. Arlene Katz (1991) interviewed clients some three months after listening to the voices of

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those responding in a "reflecting process" (Andersen, 1991) to the conversation they had heard so far between the therapist and client in the psychotherapy session. Karen commented on her experience as follows:

> A: So, it was something about their following very closely to what you were talking about?
> K: Yes. For me it was the delicacy and the close attention and caring.

Another woman in a similar circumstance, after the comments of the reflecting team, the wife in a couple offered:

> "It's the tenderness...that's something that is real easy to lose sight of...It gives me the ability to take a deeper breath and go back into the world... It's like hearing English again in a foreign country..." (quoted in Shotter & Katz, 1999).

Clearly, there is something at work here simply in people's tone of voice, in the unfolding tempo of their utterances. Bakhtin (1986) remarks on the role of "tone," and of "intonation," in our utterances (and also, in our writing) thus:

- "There can be no such thing as an absolutely neutral utterance. The speaker's evaluative attitude toward the subject of his speech (regardless of what his subject may be) also determines the choice of lexical, grammatical, and compositional means of the utterance" (1986, p.84).
- "One of the means of expressing the speaker's emotionally evaluative attitude toward the subject of his speech is expressive intonation, which resounds clearly in oral speech... It does not exist in the system of language as such, that is, outside the utterance" (1986, p.85).
- "Here the meaning of the word pertains to a particular actual reality and particular real conditions of speech communication. Therefore here we do not understand the meaning of a given word simply as a word of a language; rather, we assume an active responsive position with respect to it (sympathy, agreement or disagreement, stimulus to action). Thus, expressive intonation belongs to the utterance and not to the word" (1986, p.86).

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- "We repeat, only the contact between the language meaning and the concrete reality that takes place in the utterance can create the spark of expression. It exists neither in the system of language nor in the object reality surrounding us. Thus, emotion, evaluation, and expression are foreign to the word of language and are born in the process of its live usage in concrete utterance " (1986, pp.86-87).

And to these remarks I will add a couple of Voloshinov's comments:

- "The organizing center of any utterance, of any experience, is not within but outside – in the social milieu surrounding the individual being" (1986, p.93).
- "*Intonation always lies on the border of the verbal and the nonverbal, the said and the unsaid*. In intonation, discourse comes directly into contact with life. And it is in intonation above all that the speaker comes into contact with listener or listeners – intonation is social par excellence. It is especially sensitive to all the vibrations in the social atmosphere surrounding the speaker" (Voloshinov, 1976/1987, p.102).

In other words, what Bakhtin and Voloshinov are getting at here is, that as living, spontaneously responsive beings, we cannot but help being responsive as we talk to events occasioned by the others and othernesses around us (unless, that is, we have developed on purpose the self-control required to 'hide' these otherwise spontaneously expressed responses). And the way these events affect us, the way they matter to us, is uniquely and unavoidably expressed by us in the unfolding intonational contours of our utterances.

There are, then, a number of different things going on here, within what we might call *the musicality* of our unfolding, embodied utterances as they occur in our meetings with the others and othernesses around us. I will list them:

- First, within the dynamic of the interplay as it unfolds, is the creation of a "grammatical agency" – not a grammatical structure of a fixed and systematic kind, but a social milieu of an agentic kind which "expectantly calls" us in each changing to act next in a

certain way, to act in accord with a certain expected style or genre (Bakhtin) of action, to act *into* a context which, to an extent, is already shaped but which is still open to further shaping.
- But secondly, although it is as if this grammatical agency has a "voice" and can exert an influence on us, its voice is silent; its influence on us is a "felt influence."
- Sometimes these influences can be felt as "calls," as "summonses" that we *must* answer; sometimes they can be felt as "judgements" that we must heed and modify our conduct accordingly; sometimes they can be felt as "caring" and as "accepting" so that we feel *at home* in our surroundings; and so on.
- Wittgenstein (1953) has, in particular, concerned himself with those influences we feel as compulsions, as urges, as inclinations, or even as temptations, as things as say we "must" do – for we must act as our circumstances *require* us to act – the circumstances in which we can fall victim to compulsions of our own making.
- But, as the example of Karen above shows, these influences can also be felt as caring, as tenderness, as a kind of trustingness of the others and othernesses around us.
- In short, the felt influences at work on us in unfolding dynamic of the interplay occurring between our own outgoing, responsive *expressions* toward these others (or othernesses) and their equally responsive incoming *expressions* toward us, are an aspect of the quality of our relations with them – whether our relations are close or distant, intimate or official, friendly or hostile, and so on.
- And finally we must note, a kind of 'truth' is being expressed in the unfolding cadences of our utterances, a 'truth' of a very direct and immediate kind: to do with how closely the unfolding cadences of our utterances appropriately express the 'shape' of our relational experiences in our meetings, the ways in which we are related, or are relating, to circumstances in our surroundings.

In being responsive we are making/creating relations

- "Each rejoinder, regardless of how brief and abrupt, has a specific quality of completion that expresses a particular position of the speaker, to which one may respond or assume, with respect to it, a responsive position..." (Bakhtin, 1986, p.72).

- As an other's word, or as my word, "the word is expressive, but... this expression does not inhere in the word itself. It originates *at the point of contact between the word and actual reality*, under the conditions of that real situation articulated by the individual utterance. In this case the word appears as an expression of some evaluative position of an individual person (authority, writer, scientist, father, mother, friend, teacher, and so forth)..." (Bakhtin, 1986, p.88, my emphasis).

- We might understand dialogue as a chain of mechanical reactions, but "this point of view, which is relatively valid as is the linguistic point of view..., does not touch upon the essence of the utterance as a semantic whole, a semantic point of view, a semantic position, and so forth. Every utterance makes a claim to justice, sincerity, beauty, and truthfulness (a model utterance) and so forth. And these values of utterances are defined not by their relation to that language (purely as linguistic system), but by various forms of relation to reality, to the speaking subject and to other (alien) utterances (particularly to those that evaluate them as sincere, beautiful, and so forth)" (1986, p.123).

In other words, if we are not 'putting our ideas into words' in our utterances, what are we doing? Among many other things, we are doing at least the three things listed below:

- i) <u>Responding</u> to each other: Feeling attracted or repulsed; agreeing or disagreeing; imaging examples or scenes; being totally confused and anxious; frightened; wanting to voice one's reply; to elaborate; to test, and so on; obeying; being `instructed'.

- ii) <u>Relating</u> to each other: In doing all these things, we are coordinating our activities with each other. Or at least, proposing the possibility of it... but in fact, we are doing very much more.

- iii) <u>Creating dialogical realities</u>: We are creating "dialogical realities" with all their strange characteristics as set out in Chapter Two of the Short Book, "The dialogical, joint nature of human activity."

Here, I will repeat some of these strange characteristics, they are:

- ***A complex mixture, chiasmically organized***: What is

produced in such dialogical exchanges is a very complex mixture of not wholly reconcilable influences – as Bakhtin (1981) remarks, both 'centripetal' tendencies *inward* toward order and unity at the center, as well as 'centrifugal' ones *outward* toward diversity and difference on the borders or margins.

- ***The 'sui generis' nature of dialogical realities***: Thus, such activity is not simply *action* (for it is not done by individuals; and cannot be explained by giving people's *reasons*), nor is it simply *behavior* (to be explained as a regularity in terms of its causal principles); it constitutes a distinct, third sphere of activity with its own distinctive properties.

- This third sphere of activity involves a special kind of nonrepresentational, sensuous or embodied form of *practical-moral* (Bernstein, 1983) understanding, which, in being constitutive of people's social and personal identities, is prior to and determines all the other ways of knowing available to us.

- Activities in this sphere lack specificity; they are only partially determined.

- They are a complex mixture of many different kinds of influences.

- They are just as much material as mental; they are just as much felt as thought, and thought as felt.

- Their intertwined, complex nature makes it very difficult for us to characterize their nature: they have neither a fully orderly nor a fully disorderly structure, neither a completely stable nor an easily changed organization, neither a fully subjective nor fully objective character.

- While they can exhibit progressive changes, they can also exhibit retrogressive ones too.

- They are also non-locatable - they are 'spread out' among all those participating in them.

- They are neither 'inside' people, but nor are they 'outside' them; they are located in that space where inside and outside are one.
- Nor is there a separate before and after (Bergson), neither an agent nor an effect, but only a meaningful, 'enduring' whole which cannot divide itself into separable parts – a whole that, in enduring, dynamically sustains itself in existence ["duration"].

- Indeed, it is precisely their lack of any pre-determined order, and thus their openness to being specified or determined *by those involved in them*, in practice - while usually remaining quite unaware of having done so - that is their central defining feature. And: *it is precisely this that makes this sphere of activity interesting...* for at least two reasons: 1) to do with *practical investigations* into how people actually do manage to 'work things out', and the part played by the *ways of talking* we interweave into the many different spheres of practical activity occurring between us; but also 2) for how we might refine and elaborate these spheres of activity, and how we might extend them into novel spheres as yet unknown to us.

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But how might their moment-by-moment unfolding nature be best described? Early on, I saw the sequential, temporal unfolding of activities as having a very special, 'musical' structure to them. In this, I was very influenced by Milic Capek (1961), *The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics*, and here I will include some quotations from that book that especially struck me :

"Let us consider a piece of music – for instance, a melody or better, a polyphonic musical phrase. It is hardly necessary to underscore its successive character. As long as its movement is going on, it remains incomplete and in its successive unfolding we grasp in the most vivid and

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concrete way the incompleteness of every becoming. At each particular moment a new tone is added to the previous ones; more accurately, each new moment is constituted by the addition of a new musical quality. But here we have to be on guard against the usual arithmetical connotation of the word 'addition', and against the creeping spatial connotations that are associated with it. Arithmetical units remain distinct and homogeneous no matter how they are grouped together; their grouping is purely external and does not affect their nature in any way. A 'new' unit is added ab externo to other units without modifying them and without being modified by them. Although arithmetical addition – which is merely a regrouping of pre-existing units – takes place, like any other mental operation, in time, its result can always be represented by a spatial symbolism, that is as a juxtaposition of simultaneously existing units. The relation of the arithmetical units to their sum total is the same as the relation to the parts to the whole in space.

In the musical experience of melody or polyphony the situation is considerably different. The quality of the new tone, in spite of the irreducible individuality, is tinged by the whole antecedent musical context which, in turn, is retroactively changed by the emergence of a new musical quality. The individual tones are not externally related units of which the melody is additively built; neither is their individuality absorbed or dissolved in the undifferentiated unity of the musical whole. The musical phrase is a successively differentiated whole which remains a whole in spite of its successive character and which remains differentiated in spite of its dynamic wholeness. Like every dynamic whole its exhibits a synthesis of unity and multiplicity, of continuity and discontinuity,; but it is not the unity of an undifferentiated simultaneous whole nor is it the plurality of juxtaposed units; it is neither continuity in the mathematical sense of infinite divisibility nor is it the discontinuity of rigid atomic blocs. For this reason, paradoxical as it may sound, the traditional distinction between succession and duration must be given up" (Capek, 1961, pp.371-372).

"Our language, in particular our written language, is made up of discontinuous and static signs whose discontinuity and immutability is unconsciously conferred upon even the dynamic meanings which they express and which are thus distorted. This discrepancy between the lucidity of our temporal awareness and the difficulty of putting it into words was expressed in St. Augustine's famous saying:

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*"What then is time? If no one asks me, I know: if I wish
to explain it to one who asketh, I know not..."*

*Today we know the cause of this discrepancy. As long as our attention is
shifted from our auditory experience of melody to the visual marks by which
it is symbolized on a sheet of paper – as long as we shift our attention from
any experienced temporal whole to its static symbolism – such discrepancy
is inevitable" (p.372).*

*"Every musical structure is by its own nature unfolding and incomplete..."
(p.372).*

*"'... a note of music is nothing at an instant, but also requires its whole
period to manifest itself'" (Whitehead, p.54, quoted in Capek, p.373).*

*"... in concrete temporal experience the emergence of novelty is possible, so
to speak, only on the contrasting background of its immediate past; in a
similar way a new musical quality of the (provisionally) last tone acquires
its individuality in contrast to, as well as in connection with, its antecedent
musical context. There are no instant like boundaries separating two
successive moments of the experienced duration; only when in our
imagination we stretch a fictitious geometrical line underneath the
qualitative continuum of duration are we tempted to posit such boundaries,
without realizing that they belong not to the temporal process itself, but
only to its symbolical substitute" (p.373).*

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From Kundera (1993, pp.137-138): "February 15 toward
evening. Twilight at 6, near the railroad station. Two young
women are waiting for someone.

"On the sidewalk. the bigger one, her cheeks rosy. in a red
winter coat, shivers.
"She starts speaking brusquely:

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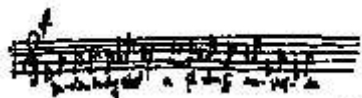
"'We're going to wait here and I know he won't show
up.'

"Her companion, cheeks pale. in a flimsy skirt,
interrupts the last note with a somber. sad., soulful echo:

"'I don't care.'
"And she stayed put, half rebellious, half waiting." [end 137]

So begins one of the texts Janacek regularly published,
together with his musical notations. in a Czech periodical.

Imagine that the sentence "We're going to wait here
and I know he won't show up" is a line in a story an actor is
reading aloud to an audience. We would probably sense a
certain falseness in his tone. He speaks the sentence as one
might imagine it in memory; or, simply. in a way meant to move
his listeners. But how is this sentence spoken in a real situation?
What is the *melodic truth* of this sentence? What is the melodic
truth of a vanished moment?

The search for the vanished present: the search for the
melodic; truth of a moment: the wish to surprise and capture
this fleeting truth, the wish to plumb by that means the mystery
of the immediate reality constantly deserting our lives, which
thereby becomes the thing we know least about: This, I think. is
the ontological import of Janacek's studies of spoken language
and, perhaps, the ontological import of all his music.

Act Two of *Jenufa:* after lying ill for some days with
puerperal fever, Jenufa leaves her bed and learns that her
newborn son is dead. Her reaction is unexpected: "So, he is
dead. So, he has become a little angel." And she sings these
phrases calmly, with a strange astonishment, as if paralyzed,
without cries, without gestures. The melodic curve rises several
times, only to fall back immediately, as if too were stricken with

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paralysis: it is beautiful, it is moving, yet without losing its *accuracy.*

Novas, the most influential Czech composer of the time, ridiculed this scene: "It's as if Jenufa were mourning the death of her parrot." It's all there, in this [end 138] idiotic sarcasm. To be sure, this is not how we imagine a woman who is just learning of her child's death! But an event as we imagine it hasn't much to do with the same event as it *is* when it happens.

<center>&&&&&&&&</center>

Wittgenstein 'reminds' us of the 'musicality' of language in the remarks listed below:

> "The way music speaks. Do not forget that a poem, even though it is composed in the language of information, is not used in the language-game of giving information" (Wittgenstein, 1981, no.160).

> "There is a strongly musical element in verbal language. (A sigh, the intonation of voice in a question, in an announcement, in longing; all the innumerable *gestures* made with the voice.)" (1981, no.161).

> "But isn't understanding shown, e.g., in the expression with which someone reads the poem, sings the tune?" (1981, no.171).

> "Understanding a musical phrase may also be called understanding a *language*" (1981, no.172).

> "Doesn't the [musical] theme point to anything outside itself? Yes, it does! But that means: — it makes an impression on me which is connected with things in its surroundings — e.g., with our language and its intonations; and hence with the whole field of our language-games.
> If I say for example! Here it's as if a

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conclusion were being drawn, here as if something were being confirmed, *this* is like an answer to what was said before, — then my understanding pre-supposes a familiarity with inferences, confirmation, with answers" (Wittgenstein, 1981, no.175).

"Structure and feeling in music. Feelings accompany our apprehension of piece of music in the way they accompany the events of our life" (1980a, p.10).

"One speaks of a feeling of conviction because there is a *tone* of conviction. For the characteristic mark of all 'feelings' is that there is an *expression* of them" (1981, no.513, my emphasis).

"Sometimes a sentence can be understood only if it is read at the *right tempo*. My sentences are all supposed to be read *slowly*" (1980a, p.57).

A work of art: "... conveys 'a feeling'. – You really could call it, not exactly the expression of a feeling, but at least the expression of feeling, or a felt expression. And you could say too that in so far as people understand it, they 'resonate' in harmony with it, respond to it. You might say: the work of art does not aim to convey *something else*, just itself" (1980a, p.58).

"A [musical] theme has a facial expression just as much as a face does..." (1980b, I, no.434).

<center>************</center>

The unfolding of a sequential event can work in us, spontaneously, in terms of the differences that it can make in our lives.

> *"A 'bit' of information is definable as a difference that makes a difference" (Bateson, 1972, p.286).*

> *"Actually I should like to say that... the* words *you*

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utter or what you think as you utter them are not what matters, so much as the difference they make at various points in your life... Practice *gives words their significance"* (Wittgenstein, 1980a, p.85).

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But how should we think about this process of 'difference making'? Does it fall into the already well-known category of cause-and-effect processes? Or, give its 'living' nature, does the fact that it has its 'life', so to speak, in the *relations* between a living being and the others and othernesses in that being's surroundings, mean that we have to think of some other kind of process in which it might take place?

Already, as I set out elsewhere and above, we have seen that the processes involved in "joint action," the "dialogical," or, in Merleau-Ponty's (1968) terms, the "chiasmic," have a strange *entangled* or *intertwined* nature that cannot be captured in linear, cause-and-effect terms. How might we make sense of them?

Well, our usual move is to try to assimilate the unfamiliar to the familiar. Here, we can again draw on our own bodily experience of our relations to events occurring in out surroundings: touching a fragile wine glass and 'just knowing' how it will sound if I drop it, and it smashes on the floor, or if I let drop the floppy feather cushion I am holding.

When two or more of our 'channels' (if that is the right word) of contact with the world come into communicative contact with each other, then they must orient us toward our surroundings 'in concert' with each other, in ways which do not confuse and bewilder us. A heard sound of movement should be sensed as coming from the same place as the seen movement that harmonizes with it (i.e., that 'differences' as the movement 'differences'); a hardness felt in our fingertips should be sensed as the hardness of the object we see our fingertips touching; and so on. Classically we have ignored these complexly interwoven contributions of our bodily capacities to our ways of making a unified sense of our surroundings.

While being "focally aware" of the responsive whole resulting from us 'looking over' what is before us, we have ignored the background structure of anticipations (of which we are only "subsidiarily aware") that

guide us as we actively 'do' the relating of ourselves to our surroundings. As a result, not only has the amazing complexity of our perceptual processes, and their flexible adjustment to the situation of their functioning, been ignored, but also their orchestrated 'inter-workings' - how, for example, in watching a movie, or a ventriloquist's dummy, we 'see' people's voices as issuing from that place in our surroundings that is moving in synchrony with the tempo of the sound we hear.

Those aware of Polanyi's (1958, 1963) work will recognize the source of the notions of "focal awareness" and "subsidiary awareness" being used here, as well as the 'from-to' vocabulary used above. Indeed, Polanyi's (1963) account of our body's part in giving us a certain kind of ordered access to our surroundings is in close agreement with Merleau-Ponty's account: "Our own body is the only thing in the world which we normally never experience as an object, but experience always in terms of the world to which we are attending from our body. It is by making this intelligent use of our body that we feel it to be our body, and not a thing outside" (p.16).

Let me turn now to the way in which both Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1968) and Bateson (1979) make use of binocular vision and what seems to happen in the optic chiasma (in our brains) as a way of 'entering into' the strange world of chiamically-structured processes – Merleau-Ponty (1962) first:

"We pass from double vision to the single object, not through an inspection of the mind, but when the two eyes cease to function each on its own account and are used as a single organ by one single gaze. It is not the epistemological subject who brings about the synthesis, but the body, when it escapes from dispersion, pulls itself together and tends by all means in its power towards one single goal of its activity, and when one single intention is formed in it through the phenomenon of synergy" (p.232).

"On passing from double to normal vision, I am not

aware of seeing with two eyes the *same* object, I am aware of progressing towards the object *itself* and finally enjoying its concrete presence. Monocular images float vaguely *in front of* things, having no real place in the world; then suddenly they fall back towards a certain location in the world and are swallowed up in it, as ghosts, at daybreak, repair to the rift in the earth which let them forth" (p.233).

"My experience at these different stages is bound up with itself in such a way that I do not get different perspective views linked to each other through the conception of an invariant. The perceiving body does not successively occupy different points of view beneath the gaze of some unlocated consciousness which is thinking about them... We can no more construct perception of the thing and of the world from discrete aspects, than we can make up the binocular vision of an object from two monocular images. My experiences of the world are integrated into one single world as the double images merge into the one thing, when my finger stops pressing upon my eyeball. I do not have one perspective, then another, and between them a link is brought about by the understanding, but each perspective *merges into* the other and, in so far as it is possible to speak of a synthesis, we are concerned with a 'transitional synthesis'" (p.329).

And now Merleau-Ponty (1968):

"The binocular perception is not made up of two monocular perceptions surmounted; it is of another order. The monocular images *are* not in the same sense that the things perceived with both eyes *is*... they are pre-things and it is the thing" (1968, p.7).

"The monocular images cannot be *compared* with the synergic perception: one cannot put them side by side; it is necessary to choose between the thing and the

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floating pre-things. We can effect the passage by *looking*, by awakening to the world; we cannot witness it as spectators. It is not a *synthesis;* it is a metamorphosis by which the appearances are instantaneously stripped of a value they owed merely to the absence of a true perception. Thus in perception we witness the miracle of a totality that surpasses what one thinks to be its conditions or its parts,... it is by *looking*, it is still with my eyes that I arrive, at the true thing, with these same eyes that a moment ago gave me monocular images – now they simply function *together* and as though *for good*. Thus the relation between the things and my body is decidedly singular..." (p.8).

In other words, it is in the sequential 'looking over' a visual scene, fixation point by fixation point, that the the 'difference' made available in the two eyes working together, that 'things' are seen as the things they are, and seen to in 'depth', in a space that is known to us in terms of our bodily capacities to reach out to touch things, or to move nearer toward them.

§

Let me now turn to Bateson's (1979) comments on the binocular. He says:

"Let us consider another simple and familiar case of double description. What is gained by comparing the data collected by one eye with the data collected by the other? Typically, both eyes are aimed at the same region of the surrounding universe, and this might seem to be a wasteful use of the sense organs. But the anatomy indicates that very considerable advantage must accrue from this usage. The innervation of the two retinas and the creation at the optic chiasma of pathways for the redistribution of information is such an extraordinary feat of morphogenesis as must surely denote great evolutionary advantage...
        The binocular image, which appears to be undivided, is in fact a complex synthesis of information

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from the left front in the right brain and a corresponding synthesis of material from the right front in the left brain. Later these two synthesized aggregates of information are themselves synthesized into a single subjective picture from which all traces of the vertical boundary have disappeared.

From this elaborate arrangement, two sorts of advantage accrue. The seer is able to improve resolution at edges and contrasts; and better able to read when the print is small or the illumination poor. More important, information about depth is created. In more formal language, the *difference* between the information provided by the one retina and that provided by the other is itself information of a *different logical type.* From this new sort of information, the seer adds an extra *dimension* to seeing...

We now proceed with the search for other cases under this general rubric and shall specifically look in each case for the genesis of information of new logical type out of the juxtaposing of multiple descrip- tions. In principle, extra "depth" in some metaphoric sense is to be expected whenever the information for the two descriptions is differently collected or differently coded" (pp.79-81).

–   There are other 'phase difference' effects... in audition: "surround sound"... In vision: random dot stereograms... etc...

§

The use the word "depth" metaphorically:

–   To gain "Insight"... Probing into 'the depth' of a phenomenon... creatively probing into its 'inner' relational dimensions... entering into a chiasmic relation with it...
–   Gaining that kind of "understanding which consists in 'seeing connections'" (Wittgenstein, 1953, no.112).
–   Spencer Brown... the active making of a distinction (which is also

the making of a relation) within a passing moment... the sense of a moment as having passed: a "felt change of consciousness" (Barfield).

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"As an embodied subject I am exposed to the other person, just as he is to me, and I identify myself with the person speaking before me. Speaking and listening, action and perception, are quite distinct operations for me only when I reflect on them... When I am actually speaking I do not first figure the movements involved.... If I have any tact, my words are both a means of action and feeling; there are eyes at the tips of my fingers. When I am listening, it is not necessary that I have an auditor perception of the articulated sounds but that the conversation pronounces itself in me. It summons me and grips me: it envelops and inhabits me to the point that I cannot tell what comes from me and what from it" (Merleau-Ponty, 1973, pp.18-19, Prose of the World).

(See also – *Primacy of Perception, 1964, pp.118-119, in the child's perception of others*)...

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What Merleau-Ponty is doing above, is raising the question of the puzzle we face when we reflect, intellectually, on our everyday understandings of events occurring around us – as St. Augustine reflects on his understandings of time – and find that they seem to occur within us 'by themselves', so to speak, without us having 'intellectually', to 'work them out'. How can this be? Below is an extract from an earlier book of mine in which – under the influence of Capek's (1961) account of temporally unfolding processes – I suggest how this might occur, i.e., how we might find ourselves spontaneously 'resonating', so to speak, with the unfolding 'temporal contours' of events occurring in our surroundings.

The perception of expression and the perception of objects (from Shotter, J. (1984) *Social Accountability and Selfhood*. Oxford; Blackwell, pp.58-60).

A classical problem of perception is at issue here: (1) do we perceive people's psychological states in some direct way; or (2) do we perceive them indirectly, by, say, a process of 'unconscious inference' (Helmholtz) from data about the objective characteristics of their expression (see discussions in Shotter, 1984, chapters 6, 7 and 11 of 'direct' perception). As the child reacts differentially to human expressions of joy and anger, friendliness and hostility *before* he reacts differentially to colours and other thing- characteristics (Koffka, 1921), it would seem to be the former. But this suggests that ostensively more complex judgements are made at an earlier age than apparently more simple ones – simpler, that is, if one holds to the classical image of people in which cognition is primary .The resolution of this issue involves a matter of (1) access to the relevant data; (2) the determination of its significance; and (3) the determination of its source, so I will discuss each of these in turn.

    (1) Take joy, for instance: anyone can, in principle, report on whether a person is behaving joyfully or not, but only the person herself can say whether she is aware of being joyful. Thus it seems that two distinct kinds of criteria are involved here, one private and the other public. And in the past [end 58] both philosophers and psychologists have supposed that, as the seemingly private criteria are not open to scrutiny, only the public ones can be used as a basis for ascribing psychological predicates to people. But this, Harre and Secord (1972, p. 121) point out, is mistaken; both criteria are necessary and *are* available for scrutiny: 'There are always some situations for any state-of-mind predicate where others have some degree of access to that state of mind, even in another person.' Our feelings, moods, beliefs, intentions, etc., are, due to their intentional nature, shown in our actions, and although they may not involve reference to objective criteria, they do nonetheless involve readily observable criteria which can be made 'logically adequate' (Harre and Secord, 1972, pp. 14-123) as required, i.e. they are negotiable. What has misled philosophers and psychologists, Harre and Secord argue, is their failure to distinguish between access and authority, although a person is often (but not always) the best authority on what she is doing – for she is, after all, her own closest observer -- she is not the only one to have access to the relevant data. One way or another that is made available in her behaviour for all to grasp, and indeed, when it comes to her assessing the nature of her own behaviour, i.e. satisfying Mead's

criterion, she is in no better position than anyone else. Only as her intentions issue in performance is she able to judge whether she is successfully executing them or not -a point we shall take up again when later we discuss talking- and she may, as they occur, realize that they require correction, amplification, etc. While people usually (but not always) know what they intend, they can only judge the adequacy of their own performances as others do, i.e. as they occur. For it is only in their actions that agents' intentions are revealed and completed as the intentions they are. And it is 'in' the ability of agents to specify, in a moment-by- moment fashion, regions of the world beyond their actions, that their 'direction' of their actions is revealed, and thus both their intentions and their personalities made manifest (Shotter, 1980a).

    (2) Now, if the criteria involved in the assessment of psychological states are not private, and people do show their psychological states 'in' the temporal organization of their behaviour, how do we determine these states? Consider for a moment a related situation. We distinguish a joyful person outside us from the feelings (of joy or otherwise) which he occasions within us. If, however, we accept that all our experiences originate from 'outside' us, this distinction can only be a function of the way in which we determine these categories. One aspect of our experience is determined as 'outer' and ascribed or attributed to an object (in space), the other is determined as 'inner' and ascribed as a feeling to ourselves (in time) -- space and time being, respectively, the forms of 'outer' and 'inner' perception (Kant) in this 'manner of speaking' (see chapter 10). Returning [end 59] to our problem, I want to suggest that when confronted by a person it is open to us to determine the aspects of his behaviour similarly.

    Now when attempting to determine the nature of a real object it does not, so speak, answer back; it neither acts nor reacts. Thus, in this case, the categories of 'outer' perception can be made as determinate as an investigator pleases (and his categories of 'inner' perception are idiosyncratic and irrelevant to all except himself). However, a non-object, a source of expression, cannot be determined as one pleases, for it does answer back. So there is an essential indeterminacy associated with categories of perception in this case which can only be resolved by negotiation and agreement with the source being investigated – to approach a point about negotiation made by Harre and Secord (1972, p.161) from another direction.

    So the essential difference between the processes involved in the

perception of expression and the perception of things seems to do more with the way in which these categories are made determinate than anything to do with the perceptual process itself. The criteria of 'inner' perception involve negotiation and agreement with the source (or are otherwise left indeterminate, and people do not know exactly their feelings), while those of 'outer' perception, at least in their objective paradigm form, do not involve such negotiation.

       3) Now if the process of 'inner' perception works on expressions and determines them irrespective of whose they are, the classical theories of our experience of other minds are quite redundant (if not quite wrong – see chapter 10). It is unnecessary, usually, even unconsciously to infer people's beliefs, intentions, etc., from sequences of behavioural events objectively perceived in 'outer' perception. We can perceive or apprehend mental activity directly in what I have called here our 'inner' sense. But, if this is the case, as in our interactions with other people, there must be a continuous flux of activity within us, undifferentiated as to theirs or ours, the problem becomes one, not of appreciating the nature of the mental activity in others, but of distinguishing that which has its source in us from that which has its source in them. And this, I think, is the problem young infants face in their period of 'psychological symbiosis'. They have to discover for which, of all things happening. they are or can be responsible, and which originate in sources beyond themselves.... [end 60]

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

My claim above, then, is that spontaneously at work in us, is kind of 'resonance', in which we find ourselves, will-nilly, moving *in accord with* the unfolding movements of others (and othernesses) around us. Merleau-Ponty (1962) describes the process thus:

> "Thus speech, in the speaker, does not translate ready-made thought, but accomplishes it. *A fortiori* must it be recognized that the listener receives thought from speech itself. At first sight, it might appear that speech heard can bring him nothing: it is he who gives to words and sentences their meaning, and the very combination of words and sentences is not an alien import, since it

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would not be understood if it did not encounter in the listener the ability spontaneously to effect it. Here, as everywhere, it seems at first sight true that consciousness can find in its experience only that which it has itself put there. Thus the experience of communication would appear to be an illusion. A consciousness constructs – for x – that linguistic mechanism will provide another consciousness with the chance of having the same thoughts, but nothing really pass is between them. Yet, the problem being how, to all appearances, consciousness learns something, the solution cannot consist in saying that it knows everything in advance. The fact is that we have the power to understand over and above what we may have spontaneously thought. People can speak to us only a language which we already understand, each word of a difficult text awakenings in us thoughts which were ours beforehand, but these meanings sometimes combine to form new thought which recasts them all, and we are transported to the heart of the matter, we find the source. Here there is nothing comparable to the solution of a problem, where we dis[end 178]cover an unknown quantity through its relationship with known ones. For the problem can be solved only if it is determinate, that is, if the cross-checking of the data provides the unknown quantity with one or more definite values. In understanding others, the problem is always indeterminate because only the solution will bring the data retrospectively to light as convergent, only the central theme of a philosophy, once understood, endows the philosopher's writings with the value of adequate signs. There is, then, a taking up of others' thought through speech, a reflection in others, an ability to think *according to others* which enriches our own thoughts. Here the meaning of words must be finally be induced by the words themselves, or more exactly, their conceptual meaning must be formed by a

<p style="text-align:center">86</p>

kind of deduction from a *gestural meaning*, which is immanent in speech. And as, in a foreign country, I begin to understand the meaning of words through their place in the context of action, and by taking part in a communal life – in the same way an as yet imperfectly understood piece of philosophical writing discloses to me at least a certain 'style' – either a Spinozist, criticist or phenomenological one – which is the first draft of its meaning. I begin to understand a philosophy by feeling my way into its existential manner, by reproducing the tone and accent of the philosopher. In fact, every language conveys its own teaching and carries its meaning into the listener's mind" (p.179).....''There is thus, either in the man who listens or reads, or in the one who speaks or writes, a *thought in speech* the existence of which is unsuspected by intellectualism" (p.179).

Central here, then, is the role of the bodily expressed *gestures* in our speech, to role of tone and accent, of the temporal 'shape' of the unfolding utterance, and the *relational* work done by such gestures in indicating (i.e., in pointing to) a speaker's attitudes and values, their way or style of making judgements.

> "The meaning of a gesture thus 'understood' is not behind it, it is intermingled with the structure of the world outlined by the gesture, and which I take up on my own account. It is arrayed all over the gesture itself – as, in perceptual experience, the significance of the fireplace does not lie beyond the perceptible spectacle, namely the fireplace itself as my eyes and movements discover it in the world" (p.186).

> "The linguistic gesture, like all the rest, delineates its own meaning. This idea seems at first surprising... It seems in the first place impossible to concede to either words or gestures an immanent meaning, because the

gesture is limited to showing a certain relationship between man and the perceptible world, because this world is presented to the spectator by natural perception, and because the way the intentional object is offered to the spectator at the same time as the gesture itself. Verbal 'gesticulation, on the other hand, aims at a mental setting which is not given to everybody, and which it is its task to communicate. But here what nature does not provide, cultural background does. Available meanings, in other words former acts of expression, establish between speaking subjects a common world, to which the words actually being uttered in their novelty refer as does the gesture to the perceptible world. And the meaning of speech is nothing other than the way in which it handles this linguistic world or in which it plays modulations on the keyboard of acquired meanings" (p.186).

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The essence of music can only be grasped by listening to music. We have a certain feel for music, which is also, according to the musicologist and philosopher Victor Zuckerkandl, our sense of time:

> "There is hardly anything that can tell us more about time and temporality than can music ... Music is temporal art in the special sense that in it time reveals itself to direct experience." Thus: "the truth of music, like that of mathematics, consists in this, that it serves us as a key to understanding the world we live in."

So a dialogue between music and science is, in this very profound sense, fruitful and meaningful. An element of dialogue in music itself can be found in the relation between the tune and words of a song:

"Words that are sung are not empty. Something
that remains silent in word merely spoken [in an
unresponsive, 'official' communication – js]
begins to flow, to vibrate; the words open and the
singer opens to them. It is as though the tones
infuse the word with a force that reveals a new
layer of meaning in them, that breathes life into
them..."

Words can express a situation of "standing over against each other,"
whereas tones express togetherness. In the tones, things that are
separated meet, and person and thing – the speaker and the spoken
word – come into direct contact. The tone added to a word does not
cancel out the word, but makes it penetrate to a greater depth, down
to a layer where their separateness becomes togetherness.
Zuckerkandl says that:

"The dimension disclosed by the tones can certain
be called 'inner life', but this is not the inner life
of the subject as opposed the object; it is not the
inner world of the self but of the world, the inner
life things. This is precisely why the singer
experiences inner life as something I shares with
the world, not as something that sets him apart
from it ... Music prevents the world from being
entirely transformed into language, from
becoming nothing but object, and prevents man
from being nothing but subject."

"Words divide, tones unite. Music prevents the world from
being entirely transformed into language, from becoming
nothing but object, and prevents man from being nothing
but subject" (Zuckerkandl, *Man, the Musician*).

I haven't yet had chance to read Zuckerkandl in the original... these
are quotes from another source...

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– Getting into other people's 'inner lives'... resonating with,
moving together with, finding the same inner, unfolding
movements taking place within oneself as in another, while
'engaged' or 'engrossed' with them...
– Bodily expressions... feelings.... "One speaks of a feeling of
conviction because there is a *tone* of conviction. For the
characteristic mark of all 'feelings' is that there is an *expression* of
them" (Wittgenstein, 1981, no.513).
– "'If it passes, the it was not true love'... we test love for its *inner*
character, which the immediate feeling does not discover... Love,
what is important, is not a feeling, but something deeper, which
merely manifests itself in the feeling" (Wittgenstein, 1980b, I,
no.115).
– What matters here is not "the feeling" *in itself*, but what the
feeling *connects with*... see William James (1890) *Chapter IX:The
stream of thought*, in *Principles of Psychology*, on "feelings of
tendency"...
– These "feelings of tendency" arise in the 'chiasmic' intertwining
of *our* outgoing activities *with* the incoming responses from an
other... [see Chap XX for accounts of 'transitions', and 'passing
or moving moments']
– In our involvements with an other, we can gain that kind of
"understanding which consists in 'seeing connections'"
(Wittgenstein, 1953, no.112).
– Gaining "insight"... probing into 'the depth' of a phenomenon...
creatively probing into its 'inner' relational dimensions... entering
into a chiasmic relation with it...
– Withness-thinking again...

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What a lot of things a man must do in order for us to say he
thinks...I, no.563

Instead of the unanalysable, specific, indefinable: the fact that we act

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in such-and-such ways, e.g., *punish* certain actions, *establish* the state of affairs thus and so, *give orders*, render accounts, describe colors, take an interest in other's feelings. What has to be accepted, the given – it might be said – are facts of living" [cf. PI, p.226d] I, no.630

Comparison of bodily processes and states, like digestion, breathing, etc., with mental ones, like thinking, feeling, wanting, etc. What I want to stress is precisely the incomparability. Rather, I should like to say, the comparable bodily states would be *quickness* of breath, *irregularity* of heart-beat, *soundness* of digestion and the like. And of course all these things could be said to characterize the behavior of the body. RPP, I, no.661; cf 284, and LW II, p21b

"... doing is something that one can give an *exhibition* of," RPP, I no.655

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