CHAPTER - 7

Some Reflections on the Concept of Mind and Knowledge

We have seen in earlier chapters that Ryle attacked the Cartesian theory of mind and wanted to correct the logical errors. His aim was to replace the category confusions by category discipline. For this he adopted a logico-linguistic method. He wants to say that mind is not a substance like the body located somewhere in its secret chamber. On the other hand, mind is a set of dispositions, actual behaviours or tendencies to behave. All mental concepts are to be understood in this way. The individual human being is not a combination of two substances, one visible and the other invisible. It is one organism and all its activities constitute the total field of our experiences and behaviour. In this respect, Ryle is taking a particular idea of the body which seems to be like the scientific concept of object. Understood in this way, body is completely objective and its activities are nothing but responses to a series of stimuli. But, perhaps, this is not the correct conception of the body. Body is not something inert, material and an abstract entity in which the human being
participates to perform its worldly role. Body is what is to be understood as bodiliness which means the body as lived. In that sense, body is not the abstract, but it is as concrete as our existence. It becomes the body in our day to day existence. We can say the bodiliness is also the mindliness or the body as lived is the mind as is found in the expressions of our existence. Body as such cannot perform its activities unless it is envisaged in a particular way. There seems to be a way in which the human being projects the body and carries it forward in the world. The intentionality which is to be realised in the world is the lived body leading towards the outer area. There is an orientation of the body. This orientation cannot come from the inert material object. It has to be drawn from the human being acting itself in the different expressions which give rise to a meaning. Man lives in the meaningful world. But the meaning has to come from the different ways in which the human being in its lived body makes projections in the real world. Thus the question of dualism does not arise, because there are not two things - body and mind, but the lived body and its expressions with reference to an orientation, an intentionality and meaning. These aspects are expressions of the lived body and they constitute what we call the mental aspects of the existence. As these things have no separate reality apart from the body they are the

body expressing itself in significant ways. The lived body and its significance form a unity. They constitute the human being. We can try to re-assess Ryle's assertions about mind in the light of this perspective. For this, we shall first give a critical statement of Ryle's view and then show how other philosophers are also supposed to be inclined to the view proposed here.

Ryle thinks that the idea of a mind-substance behind the body is against human experience. Consciousness would then be shut up inside us like a permanent observer of an interior scene. It becomes something like a mysterious light playing upon all human functions and activities. Ryle gives illustration of what he understands by mind with reference to a clown's intelligent franties. His gestures demonstrate his skill. His clumsiness is an act and it shows that he is a man of uncommon intelligence. This mental aspect of the performance is something which no camera can photograph. So it is not simply the physical. To the audience, it is the bodily presence. The mental is thus intermingled with what is done.

The mental can be discussed in different sciences in different ways. But the datum which is referred to is one and the same. A flock of birds migrating and the flight towards the south is one and the same datum from the standpoint of physics. But a biologist will not interpret in the

2. Ryle, The Concept of Mind, p. 34.
3. Ibid., p. 184.
same way, though to him there are not two things. This shows that the mind has to be understood as present and with the line of orientation of our every day life. Ryle's interpretation of mental conducts as behaviour may go well in some areas, but taken as a whole, we have to go further. This means that the mind is the intentional aspect of the total human being. This shows that the mind is more than the sum total of just so many activities of the body. A flight of birds is more than a physical event. It is a part and parcel of nature. Bird-migration is something essentially different from 'flying towards the south'. In the case of human beings two series of behaviours may be identical yet what they signify may be completely different. This is the difference of orientation which depends on the accompanying presence of 'I'. The orientation actually unfolds from the 'I'. But to many thinker the 'I' is nothing but an index word indicating a series of activities. Ryle's thought also is in the same direction when he says that it is a series of operations on which I give a commentary and then offer a commentary on that commentary. But in each commentary there is a silence about itself.

There is one commendable thing in Ryle's analysis. The 'I' is located in the concrete every day experience. But there is another mystery of 'I', an attempt to eliminate which has been made. Ryle compares the word 'I' with the word 'now' which can be applied to any point. But actually it is an invariable relation between certain events and
myself. So the word 'I' cannot be illustrated by the word 'now'. Rather, one can detect in it the presence of 'I'.

This implies that 'I' indicates more than pure and simple registration. It is true that Ryle is right in declining to posit an inner world against a public outer one. The 'I' of a person is manifested in all that he does. It is not something behind these doings. Neither the feeling of the person nor those of the other person are known as pure objects. But the discerning of 'pain' presupposes not only the logical grammar but also the inter-subjective relation. It is the asymmetry of 'I' in the field of social relationships. My commentary on myself is qualified from somebody else's on me, as there is the observation made from another viewpoint. Between 'I' and the other, there is a direct connection. They go together, but at the same time they are distinct. Even the bodies are not interchangeable. Another person can see my body as an object, except only from the angle of his 'lived' bodiliness. So the difference between 'I' and other person cannot be removed on the basis of logical grammar. The social difference has to be taken into account. 4

There are interesting accounts on the relation between mind and body in the writings of the Existentialist thinkers. We are going to refer to the views of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty to see if the mind-body problem can be understood in

a better way. Sartre thinks that mind and body cannot be properly understood on the objective plane. The body had been regraded as an object of physiological research. In relation to the body which is an objective datum, subjectivity has to be treated as something secondary. Sartre thinks that any knowledge we have of the body depends on our experience of subjectivity. The body functions within subjectivity and can be realised as bodiliness. I see an object, but this is the outcome of something which cannot be objectivised, namely, seeing. All talk about the body occurs from the angle of the other person's vision. The eye in seeing, the hand in its touching, presupposes bodiliness in its subjectivity. The peculiar quality of the subjective, the body as a lived experience becomes discernible in our indirect experience. The lived bodiliness comes to light in other things, in objects in the world. The orientation mirrors the bodiliness. The actual body is never simply an object. I can only experience it through the consciousness of being my centre, the consciousness of being experienced. The consciousness of the world, this experiencing of myself is the point of departure. This is the 'I' or the For-itself against which we have the existent world, the In-itself. Human being is a weaving together of both schemata. It is this consciousness of the 'I' without which the bodily itself cannot be characterised. Thus mind is body, but not the body object as it is in the materialist systems. It is the body as lived, as experienced. In this
way dualism is avoided. But we must remember that though Sartre speaks of unity between mind and body there remains an inner duality and dialectic of the two in his philosophy. But in this bodily existence, the two are intertwined. ⁵

Marlean-Ponty tries to understands the bodiliness without the complicated ontological frame work of Sartre. According to him, the bodiliness that is lived out experientially is the unity of man's existence with the world, out of which the concrete orientation of man as a conscious 'I' unfolds. He points out that any approach to treat the body simply as an object turns out to be unsatisfactory. Whatever is bound up with human apperception can never be apprehended in such a 'pure' state. It is pre-objective and ambiguous. The body has, therefore, to be seen in the first person. This idea is corroborated from examples of every day life. Lines which are equal are found to be unequal from the angle of subjective experience within the surrounding context. There are phenomena which are comprehensible from the standpoint of 'lived' experience. Damage to the visual nerve centres does not produce an inability to see colours. Only colours are distinguished gradually less and less. Then there is the phantom limb. The individual continues to feel in the leg which he knows has been amputated. It is not something which can be evaluated on a totally objective plane.

We have to approach it in terms of what the body experiences in the first person. We thus find that the objective body is grounded on the body as lived orientated space with its before and behind, in its left and right and belongs to the pre-objective world with individual subjective bodiliness.

Analytic thinking of science tries to understand the relation between body and the world representing both as self-subsistent entities which are linked together. So it is to import a synthetic unitive act. This procedure, the Existentialist Philosophers think, is wrong. What is primarily given is not the dividedness, but the more or less general inter-fusion of subject and object. This blind attachment is bodiliness. Bodiliness stands, therefore, for the cohesion attested by our perceptivity. There is an element of the impersonal, of anonymity, about the pre-objective existence. It is this expanded bodiliness which is the law of cohesion between 'I' and 'world'. The scientific view of the world points to a broader context of relationship in which the bodily human being has to be taken in the first person, from the standpoint of his 'lived' experience. Thus the 'bodiliness' is the unity of the psychical and the physical. 6

We have seen how the Existentialist view considers mind not as a separate substantial entity, but understands it as the bodiliness expressing itself in different activities in its lived structure. We can refer to some analytic thinkers, who may not agree with the Existentialist thinkers but they

will not also agree to the dispositional or semi-behaviouristic account of mind as presented by Ryle. These thinkers are Wittgenstein in his later stage, Strawson and Hampshire.

Wittgenstein's later thinking shows that 'I' is more than just an index word. His arguments are many with fine distinctions. But these could be brought down to three points: (1) Language denoting words like 'mind', 'soul', 'I' becomes intelligible and meaningful when it is seen in its proper context. One gives some account of one's own psychic life as an inner experience with the help of grammar, the rules which are applicable to public life. (2) Such a grammar is not uniform and ultimately, it is a question of total human attitudes. These are 'forms of life', which when 'pain' is talked about do not point to the hand but to the sufferer who looks into his face. (3) The third point springs from the 'forms of life', insight. Here the practical dimensions of the use of language point to the 'I' as a subject. The structure of objectivity requires a point from which it occurs. We can call it the transcendental function of subjectivity. What we have here is not two sorts of objects, but two differing orientations. This holds good for the total human 'I' which can serve as both subject and object. As Wittgenstein says: "There are two different cases involving the use of the word 'I' (or 'my') which I might call the 'use as object' and the 'use as subject'." The former is illustrated in 'my arm is broken', 'I have grown six inches', and the latter is illustrated in 'I see so and so',

'I have toothache'. Ryle does not make a sufficient distinction on these lines.

Strawson contends that an expression such as 'N is depressed' holds both dimensions together. It signifies therefore not only N's depression is experienced, not noticed by N, but also: N's depression is noticed, but not experienced, by others. This insight is attained if and when words like 'here', 'now', 'I' are employed not only as private points of reference but as public one also. 8 We ourselves provide a point of reference which individuates the network. The 'I' discloses itself as the meaning of the action, the behaviour of everything that 'being man' involves and manifests. It is the inalienable source of man, by virtue of which man is man. It is best to speak of 'I' as the total manifestation of the human being. Stuart Hampshire advances many arguments in support of this view of 'I'. The physical motions of the body and the 'I's do not consist of two separate and distinct series, even though in retrospect some features exhibit noticeable differences. 9 Each I distinguishes something as other by pointing away to it. I can do it as a subject. It is identical with my bodily laws. In order to indicate a situation in relation to the situation of the observer, the observer must be thought of as a persisting body among others. The observer as an extensionless point, an unsituated consciousness, is an impossibility.

The discussion so far tries to make it clear that it is the body lived or bodiliness which is also the mind. That is due to its orientation, project and the signification created by it. The unity of mind and body has also been called the unity of these aspects. We shall try to elaborate on this unity in the concluding part of this discussion. But meanwhile, it will not be unimportant if we try to understand the nature of knowledge in this context. We think that the lived body or bodiliness which expresses itself in consciousness has the characteristic of intentionality. It is the characteristic of being directed towards something. Now, knowing is included in being conscious of, because we cannot say that we know something unless we know what we are conscious of. Ryle has rightly pointed out that we are not conscious of any internal states and processes. It is also held by one Existentialist thinker that consciousness has no inside. Consciousness is like a wind which blows outward and throws the objects of consciousness outside. In that sense consciousness is thrown outside of itself, it is plunged into the world. In that stage consciousness does not know itself as being conscious. It is the pre-reflective stage of consciousness. The example Sartre gives is that of when I am crossing the street. I am not conscious of myself, but conscious of the street car which is to be avoided. But there is still an implicit awareness of self in the form of consciousness (of) self. But if some one asks me, what I

have been doing, I reflect on my activity and become conscious that I was crossing the street. But this consciousness of the self is not an awareness of any non-physical internal soul substance. It is the awareness of the empirical self acting and manifesting itself in the different situations. Thus, consciousness is the point of departure from which all the activities begin. It is said to be not the body, but that is the body investigated by the sciences. It is the bodiliness, the lived body which is conscious of itself.

Now, knowing in the case of such a lived body may in many cases be 'knowing how', but in every case of 'knowing how' the activity which is to be performed has to be watched and observed. An activity has different stages and if what is performed in each stage is not observed, the activity will not be complete. Again, in every stage, not only the 'how' of the activity is observed, but also the 'what' or 'that' is to be observed. When I am doing an arithmetical sum, I am not only busy in doing it correctly, but I have also to watch the numbers, their relations to one another. The sum may have to proceed through several stages and these stages constitute the 'how' of the knowing but the different items of various stages are to be put down correctly. This can be done, only when they are known or observed properly. This shows that 'knowing how' is a broken aspect of the knowing process. Every case of knowing has both the aspects of 'how' and 'that'. Ryle has given emphasis only on the
'how' aspect, but the 'that' aspect cannot be neglected, as has been pointed out above. It may be that the 'how' aspect is prior, but man is concerned with knowing not only when he is in some need. He is a curious being and his curiosity may lead him to unravel the mystery of the world. where he practises 'knowing' for the sake of knowing just in a contemplative manner. In short, 'knowing' has multifarious aspects. The whole connotation of it cannot be understood in Rylean terminology. His joint attribution of dispositions and achievements to knowing is self-contradictory. Moreover, Ryle's distinction between episodic-words and disposition-words, between process-verbs and achievement-verbs, etc. has no determinate use in the vocabulary of our common speech.

We can say now that mind is not a given thing of a special sort inside body. Mind is man as a whole. It cannot be comprehended by any objectivising process. The totality of mind is to be understood as the directional and intentional being of man. Mind is an actuation, a moving. It is present directly in, with and through bodiliness. The bodiliness is not a datum that we can objectivise. The body as an object can form a situation of 'lived' bodiliness. The body is really a marginal notion. Even when it is examined as an object, it is being identified and experienced from the angle of one's 'lived' and experienced body. Mind does not transcend this bodiliness. It is precisely that which always accompanies objectivity in every guise as bodily
presence. It is only when this actuation, this moving which characterises the mind is present that we can say: this is authentically human, this is man.

The unity of mind and body becomes apparent, when we look at both in the context of the concrete man. This gives us the initial point of reference from which no objectivising of man either as body or mind could ever occur. Thus the hand of a man is not an organ definable in purely physiological terms. It is the hand that touches, wills, intends. If it is frozen into something without animation we get a notion of the hand torn out of the context of orientation, of reality. The hand which touches is at once the mental and physical. The hand purely and simply as a bit of the body is essentially an abstraction. It may be useful for a piece of research. But it is quite inadequate, if we want to present a complete and satisfactory picture of man.

It is the need of the philosophical anthropology to set these realms of mind and body back into the context of movement, activation, which is being-as-mind. All the functions of the different parts of the body are exhibited in man as directional and intentional being. The meaningfulness of existence occurs in the correlation of 'I' to these functions. When they are detached from such correlation, the physical and the psychical become separate. If we want a complete picture of man, the body must never be construed as a given object. It is to be regarded as 'lived', experienced body, structured from a source, that is, from the standpoint of
the subject. The body regarded as object is derivative. It is inferred from the body as inalienable center. It is the latter to which we refer 'bodiliness'. It is a token of complete, authentic manhood, consequently it is properly described as being mental in character. It involves the concrete man, who orients himself bodily towards the world in knowledge, emotion and conduct. The mind is also no 'inner room', but is manifested through a man's entering into meaningful, coherent relationships. The mind is no abstraction, but the concrete man, bodily manifesting itself. In short, if the body is understood as the bodiliness and the mind as the manifestation of this bodiliness in different functions as well as intentionality and orientation, we discover the concrete man who is a meaningful co-relationship with the world towards which he moves. In this context, bodiliness and mind are given together, as an identical datum. They may be treated as distinct terms, but we must remember that we must not ascribe to them independent status as self-subsistent entities. In that case, various dilemmas such as how one affects the other, how can body symbolise the immaterial mental processes, how man shut up in his solitary world can know other persons arise. These things become abstracted and divorced from the quality of meaning in human life. But when their setting is the coherence and the solidarity of the total man, words like 'body' and 'mind' acquire their truly comprehensive meaningfulness. Such man is mind as intentional activity and mind is bodily presence.
The body, we can say, is the 'I' itself, not one enclosed in its facticity, but one that manifests itself in the body's differentiated mode of being, as mind. Bodiliness in this sense is mind and mind is bodiliness. Only when we adopt an objectivising approach to things, do we strive to estrange the mind as a thinking being from body. In that case mind ceases to be the humanity of man which is meaningful, as it points beyond itself and becomes an impersonal cognitive system. As an 'I' that realises itself through an orientive activity, mind is bodiliness in its differentiating, discriminating contrasting role. Body and mind acquire their oneness from this mind-as-orientation. It is also a liberation, as it releases man from the grip of facticity and sets him free to lead a purposive life. Our discussion has revealed that the 'I' of man cannot be eliminated. We have also seen that mind and body are not self-subsistent substances. They are aspects of self-objectification on man's part. In deed, they are integral to the manner in which man articulates his 'I'. Man is aware of himself as distanced and distancing. For this very reason the mental cum-bodily conception of 'I' operates above the purely biological level.

We can point out that the Cartesian problems of mind and body and Ryle's proposed solution operated on the level of objectivity. Descartes objectivised both mind and body,
while Ryle wanted to eliminate the mind in giving us a picture of it in thoroughly objective terms. But he forgot the total interrelated human existence in which bodiliness expresses itself as the mind in its manifestation of orientation and intentionality. These are integral to human existence. If this is remembered, the problem raised by Ryle can, perhaps, meet a solution.

[The view presented in this chapter is developed from the ideas of C.A. Van Peurson, discussed in his book *Body, Soul and Spirit.*]