

I Living

1. An entry in Kierkegaard's *Journal* for the year 1843 opens with these words:

It is perfectly true, as philosophers say, that life must be understood backwards. But they forget the other proposition, that it must be lived forwards.

Kierkegaard goes on:

And if one thinks over that proposition it becomes more and more evident that life can never really be understood in time simply because at no particular moment can I find the necessary resting-place from which to understand it—backwards.

2. What is this thing, this phenomenon, of which Kierkegaard speaks in this passage?

'Life' is his word, and life is what I want to talk about in these lectures.

But Kierkegaard in this *Journal* entry was not talking about, and I shall not be concerned with, just any form of life. Lots of things which aren't even living have lives, such as α -particles, or refrigerators, or the great city of Venice, and of those things which have lives and are living, many don't lead their lives, such as oak trees, or the saints in heaven, or domesticated animals. In these lectures my interest will be confined to lives that are led, and, more specifically, to the lives that we lead, or the lives of persons. I leave it an open question whether any lives except those of persons are led. So there are lives, lives that are led, and lives led by persons, and I shall be concerned only with the last.

Nor is what I have said quite accurate. For I shall not be concerned with the lives themselves, with the things that are led. I shall be concerned, rather, with the leading of them or in the way in which they are led. A life is that which someone in his youth



may—at any rate, if he is that kind of person—want to plan, and which then, on his deathbed, he may look back over as all but closed, and my concern is not with that but with how such a thing comes about.

The simplest way of putting the matter, which is not to be taken as a metaphysical claim, is this: There are persons, they exist; persons lead lives, they live; and as a result, in consequence—in consequence, that is, of the way they do it—there are lives, of which those who lead them may, for instance, be proud, or feel ashamed. So there is a thing, and there is a process, and there is a product. The thing, which is a person, is extended in space, and it persists through time. Being spatial, it has spatial parts, but it does not have temporal parts. The product, which is a person's life, is extended in time, and it can be traced through space. Being temporal, it has temporal parts, but it does not have spatial parts. The process, which is the leading of a life, occurs in, though not necessarily inside, the person, and it issues in his life. The life is his life, uniquely his, but others are not excluded from it. Others, leading their lives, lives that are uniquely theirs, may nevertheless participate in his, just as he, unless he is an unsung autochthonous stiltite, will participate in theirs. There are innumerable ways in which this can happen. They can think about each other, act upon each other, and make each other's lives better or worse, as well as cause them to be or not to be.

3. The central claim of these lectures is the fundamental status of the process. In order to understand the thing that is the person, or in order to understand the product that is the person's life, we need to understand the process that is the person's leading his life. I shall however illustrate this claim rather than try to establish it, and the content of the claim, or precisely how we are to demarcate the process and to determine just what is and just what isn't the leading of a life, is something upon which I shall not attempt a frontal assault. My hope is that in the course of these lectures the content of the claim will clarify itself.

I shall begin with familiar attempts to answer the questions, What is a person? and What is a person's life? and I shall try to show how in each case difficulties that they run into compel us to take up the issue of what it is to lead the life of a person.

4. Let us start with the question, What is a person?

We are persons, and we know persons. We have friends, lovers, enemies, acquaintances, who are persons. All of us, all of them, have something in common, which is membership of a particular biological species, and, since we also know no human beings who are incontestably not persons, it is easy to conclude that to be a person is to be a human being. They are one and the same thing.

Nowadays this view is under attack: and the attack comes in two forms, one more extreme, the other more moderate. If it is true that, as things stand, all and only human beings are persons, there is, the argument claims, no necessity to this, and then the two forms of the argument diverge in the way they construe the alternative.

In its more extreme form the argument holds that there is no need for a person to be, to be identical with, some one member of any biological species. Arguably, at any given moment there must be some member of a biological species, some creature, with which a person coincides — this is the requirement that a person must be embodied — but at different moments he can coincide with different creatures, which can be different members of the same species or members of different species. In other words, though a person must be embodied, it is not required that he should have the same body throughout his life. In at least certain versions the more extreme form of the argument amounts to the denial that there is, within the conception of a person, any place for what I have called a thing: a person is not a thing, though a person's life will be threaded through things. Such a view is found in certain traditional metaphysical doctrines, like the transmigration of souls, and it reappears in contemporary philosophical fictions of brain fission and brain fusion. I doubt its coherence.

In its more moderate form the argument holds that, for each person, there must be some one single creature or just one member of some biological species with which it is identical, but there is no necessity that this creature should be a member of the human species. The view that persons must be human is branded as one form of speciesism, and it is claimed that there are many thought-experiments whose findings strongly suggest that in our ordinary thinking we totally reject speciesism. (That is to say, not merely do we ordinarily reject the automatic denial of rights to members of

4 The Thread of Life

species that are clearly non-person species, but we also reject the automatic denial of personhood to members of species that are clearly non-human species.) Certainly there are few suppositions that come more naturally to the human mind than that there could be members of non-human species—‘animals’ I shall call them from now onwards, imprecisely, but following popular usage—which talk and think and feel and behave, which in effect live, as we do. To the contemporary mind it has come to seem natural to extend such suppositions beyond the biological species to extra-terrestrial creatures. We tell such stories to ourselves, and we delight in having them told to us. In time we outgrow their appeal, but we are not led to think of them as offending against necessity.

5. A compendium of such stories in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, and I shall ask what sort of antidote this most appealing of poems provides to speciesism about personhood. Do not the stories that Ovid tells show us that to imagine animals, non-human animals, who are persons flouts no necessary truth about persons?

At first sight it may seem strange that I should appeal to the *Metamorphoses* solely for support for the argument in its weaker form, for, insofar as it does lend support to the argument in this form, does it not presuppose the argument in its stronger form? For if Ovid makes credible that there should be members of non-human species who are persons, he does so by telling us stories of persons who were human and are now apparently non-human. If we are to take Ovid’s word for it, and to find something credible just because he asks us to imagine it, then we have to recognize that what he asks us to imagine, or the characters of his poems, are persons only if the argument in its strong form is true. For they are not identical with members of any one species, though at different moments they coincide with, or their lives are threaded through, different members of different species.

This may be so. It may be that, if we are concerned with the intelligibility of Ovid’s stories as they unfold from beginning to end, this is how we have to think of the characters of these stories, and then it becomes problematic whether we can. But this is irrelevant to my purposes. I am not interested in what Ovid tries to show us about the imaginability of persons’ becoming animals

having started off as humans: I am interested only in what he actually shows us about animals’ being persons, however they became so. My concern is not at all with the first part but exclusively with the second part of each story that Ovid recounts, or with what happens after the metamorphosis. So I ask, Does Ovid in describing the metamorphosed human being describe something that is at once a person and an animal?

The short answer is, No. For my purposes, Ovid’s stories fall into two broad categories, but within neither do we find descriptions of what are both persons and animals. But why this is so is instructive.

In one kind of story the metamorphosed human being is an animal, certainly, but isn’t—isn’t any longer, we should say if we found the metamorphosis intelligible—a person: he or she is a regular animal. Cadmus is a regular serpent, Galanthis is a regular weasel, Arachne is a regular spider. At best these characters retain some trait that once was theirs before the metamorphosis, or that they enjoyed when they were persons, and this trait is woven into the physiognomy of the species to which they belong, but in no case is it sufficient to make its possessor a person. But note that in saying that the metamorphosed human being isn’t a person I am not relying on finding the metamorphosis itself unintelligible. My reason is solely to do with how Ovid describes the creature as it is: it has nothing to do with how he claims that it came to be as it is. If Cadmus, Galanthis, Arachne aren’t persons, this is so because the same holds true for every serpent, every weasel, every spider. Or so the ages have found.

In the other kind of story, which is more arresting, the metamorphosed human being certainly isn’t an animal, and is, but (if I may put it like this) barely is, a person: he or she is a person in the disguise of an animal. This disguise sometimes saves the creature’s life, though it can also be its ruin, or its death, and is all but invariably its sorrow. One such case is the gentle Io, turned into a heifer by Jove to conceal her from the cruel fury of Juno, at last making herself known by using her hoof to stamp the two letters of her name in the dust. Or we read of Actaeon the hunter, who is changed into a stag by Diana and has his own hounds set upon him: as they surround him and are about to tear him to pieces, he

struggles to cry out his name, at which, he knows, they would fall back, but not a word comes out: *verba animo desunt*. Both Io and Actaeon assume the appearance of an animal, but not the property of being one.

This second kind of story no more settles the imaginability or otherwise of animals who are persons than the first kind, but it throws some light, if obliquely, on just what it is that this asks us to imagine. Io and Actaeon have something to tell us, which Cadmus and Galanthis and Arachne do not, about what it would be for an animal, a non-human animal, to be a person. To extract the moral from the fable we must look again at their predicament.

To begin with, their status as persons is under pressure: they are, as I found myself putting it, barely persons. One place where this shows itself is in the various things which they cannot do but which we would expect of persons. For instance, they cannot say who they are. And that they cannot do these things is because of the disguise they are forced to wear, because of the heavy fashion in which the appearance of an animal sits on them. But, it might be argued, the expectations they disappoint are not expectations that we have necessarily of persons. They are merely expectations that we have of human beings: so that in clinging to these expectations, we betray the very speciesism that appeal to the *Metamorphoses* is intended to test. In order to see whether it is true that Io and Actaeon are barely persons, let us turn from things which they cannot do to various things which they still can do, but only just. For these things bring out more clearly just what it is that their disguise does to them. What they can bring about is a mere simulation of what persons do, and this we register in the trouble we have in understanding it. So, for instance, when we read of Io stamping her name in the dust so that she might be recognized, or of Actaeon defiantly standing at bay against his pack of hounds, we have no difficulty in visualising the hoof furrowing the earth or the great antlered stag stretched to its full height, we have no difficulty in imagining the loneliness of the young tormented girl or the terror that overcomes the huntsman as he faces certain and painful death: but what in each case we cannot grasp is how the outer and the inner fit together. The disguise interposes itself to the detriment of our understanding. What Ovid presents as though it were a single

coherent action has become decomposed into, on the one hand, not so much a desire as a wish, and, on the other hand, not so much a piece of behaviour as a mere innervation of limbs. How does one animate the other? And this dislocation spreads outwards across the creature, so that whole areas that we can make sense of only when they are the province of spontaneity become, we have now to believe, regulated by trial and error: facial and bodily expression, the acquisition of perceptual beliefs, the formation and execution of intention. If Io and Actaeon can still do some things that persons can do, they certainly can no longer do them in the way persons do them. Barely doing them, they are barely persons.

Now a consideration of these gross hindrances which Io and Actaeon have to endure uncovers an important fact. For it is not simply that their status as persons is under pressure for reasons connected with the disguise imposed on them, but why we think of these creatures as in disguise, why for us they are not animals but only disguised as animals, is because of what we know that their animal appearance does to them: how little it does for them, and how close it comes to preventing their being persons. Animalhood is for them a disability which strikes them at their core. The matter can be put counterfactually: If it were the case that Io and Actaeon were at once persons (which they barely are) and animals (which they aren't at all), then they would be persons *despite* being animals, and that is impossible. Animalhood—and this is true of non-human animalhood and of human animalhood—cannot run counter, nor can it be indifferent, to personhood.

The central moral to be drawn from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is that, if it is imaginable that there are animals, non-human animals, that are persons, then they have to be—that is, they have to be imagined to be—persons through, or in virtue of being, animals. The rest of what the *Metamorphoses* has to teach us is by way of amplification of this one lesson.

How are we to take the phrase 'through being an animal'? There are three ways to take it. A creature could be a person just because it is an animal; or because it is the sort of animal it is; or because it is the particular animal that it is.

The first and third interpretations seem wrong, and on two related counts. Both counts concern how the interpretations grant

entry into the extension of the concept person. First, there is the scale of the entry, which neither interpretation gets right. The first interpretation offers entry on a scale that is clearly too generous, in that it accepts the whole animal kingdom. The third interpretation offers entry on a scale that is certainly too restrictive, in that it admits animals one by one. But in each case the scale of entry is what it is because of, secondly, the criterion of entry, which again both these interpretations get wrong. For merely being an animal is manifestly an insufficient qualification for being a person. But equally it is hard to see how personhood could depend upon whatever is distinctive of a particular animal.

That the first interpretation is unacceptable is obvious, but the third interpretation may be worth a little more attention. The objection to thinking that animals could be recruited to personhood one by one lies in the fact that only small differences would separate successful candidates from closely related animals: differences that were minor and local. However it doesn't look as though what separates an animal that is a person from an animal that isn't a person could be a difference or differences of this nature. Perhaps the difference could be minor in itself, but its repercussions would have to be felt throughout the animal: the upshot would have to be structural rather than just local.

If at this point we turn to the second interpretation, or that animals that are persons are so through being the sort of animal they are, this seems acceptable on the two counts on which the others prove deficient. For the scale on which it offers entry into the extension of the concept person promises to be reasonable, and the criterion that it invokes for granting entry has just the right character. The interpretation recruits animals to personhood species by species on account of the structure shared by all members of the same species.

The second interpretation certainly fits in with our ordinary thought and speech, and it also serves to explain a certain awkwardness of phrase into which I have been forced. For not only do we in our considered thought think that an animal can be a person only if it belongs to a species that is a person-species, but in our speech we say that it is a person if it belongs to a person-species, however abnormal or degraded it might be. It is a person, even

though, if normal or characteristic members of the species were like it, we would not think of that species as a person-species. Just as we do not recruit animals to personhood one by one, so we do not ignominiously discharge them one by one, and it is this fact, which is basically a fact of discourse, though it may also attest to the real character of species, that has led me into the awkwardness of saying that Io disguised as a heifer or Actaeon disguised as a stag are barely persons. They are persons because they are human beings, but, if human beings were characteristically like metamorphosed Io or metamorphosed Actaeon, then the human species would not be a person-species. Since that is not how things are, the human species, in claiming them for itself, continues to claim them for personhood, even *in extremis*; just as, when the time comes, it will claim us, even if senility has by then overtaken us.

Amplified thus far, the moral of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* runs: If a non-human animal is, or is to be, a person, then it must be so through, or in virtue of, being a member of that species to which it belongs. Its species provides it with its credentials, and much of the poignancy that attaches to the stories that Ovid tells arises because of the way in which their characters are required or encouraged to breach this principle.

However the question that remains is how a certain species comes to be selected as a person-species. A species is selected on the basis of its normal and characteristic members and what they are like—but what they are like in what respect? In some respect, we know, that depends on structural features of the creature: in some respect in which Io and Actaeon fall short of what might be expected of them, or in which no such expectations could ever have been formed of, say, the flies that tormented Io or the hounds that tore Actaeon apart.

The answer that it seems hard to postpone any longer is that species are selected as person-species, either in reality or in fiction, on the basis of how their members live, or how they lead their lives: of how they live in virtue of being members of that species.

It is at this point that we are taken back from the question, What is a person? to the question, What is it to lead the life of a person? Whether personhood attaches to a certain species, or to members of that species, depends on whether characteristic members of the

species are thereby enabled to live in some appropriate way. What this appropriate way is is something still to be seen—it is the topic of these lectures—but arguments and thought-experiments alike that do not invoke how creatures live under the aegis of their species have, in consequence, nothing to tell us about how personhood is distributed, and that is the most important single lesson that we can learn from Ovid's great poem.

6. I turn from the question, *What is a person?* to the question, *What is a person's life?* in the conviction that, if we do so, the course of our inquiry will be the same. Again, we shall be led back to the question, *What is it to lead the life of a person?* We can no more establish the nature of the product than we can the nature of the thing without invoking the nature of the process.

One, perhaps the prevailing, way of answering the question, *What is a person's life?* observes a common form. It proceeds in two stages. First, we deconstruct a person's life into parts. These parts will be, as we have seen, temporal parts, and, conversely, anything that decomposes into temporal rather than spatial parts must be, rather than a person, a person's life. The temporal parts into which a person's life decomposes are appropriately thought of as events: they are events of the kind that make up a person's life. Then the second thing is to try to find a relation that holds between any two such events just in case they are parts of the same life. Thus the question, *What is a person's life?* is attempted by looking for a unity-relation for a life. A unity-relation is not the relation that any one life has to itself, it is not the relation of identity, but it is the relation that holds between any two parts of the same life. And from the start it must be conceded that any such relation is likely to be highly complex. It will be disjunctive in form, and it will include a number of strange relations that are the ancestrals of more familiar but non-transitive relations. In other words, it will state that the different events in a person's life will be related by this relation *or* by that relation *or* by the other relation: and in stating what these relations are it will replace such intransitive relations as '*is*, or contains, a memory of' with the transitive '*is* the last member of a sequence of events each of which is connected

with its immediate predecessor in the sequence by being, or containing, a memory of it and of which the first member is'.

Distinctively, then, prevailing theories of a person's life are relational theories. If we ask why this is so, the answer is that, in adopting this form, the inquiry into a person's life reflects the aim with which it is currently conducted or the specific interest that it sets out to satisfy. Philosophical curiosity about a person's life tends to confine itself to a single issue—the identity of a person's life—and the guiding thought is that the identity-conditions for a life are to be sought not in some enduring property that the life has but in the way or ways in which its parts interrelate. So the identity-conditions get expressed as a unity-relation. It is because of the identity concern that prevailing theories of a person's life are invariably relational theories.

But if we now ask, Why have contemporary theorists of a person's life concentrated on the identity concern? the answer is that the view has prevailed that it is through the identity of a person's life that the identity of a person—a pressing concern—can be explained. Indeed, many philosophers have been so preoccupied that they haven't always noticed whether they were talking about a person and his identity or about a person's life and its identity. They reveal this when they take what they have convinced themselves is a perfectly satisfactory unity-relation for a person's life and re-employ it, without adjustment, as the criterion of identity for a person, and thus finish up with a view of a person as a collection of events spread over time, which cannot be right.

But I mention this so as to put what I have to say in perspective. For I want to consider the different theories of a person's life as though they set out to tell us what we might reasonably expect of them: that is, something, broadly, about the nature of a person's life, what it is. I take them to be metaphysical in inspiration. In consequence I take it that, if a relational theory is true, a person's life is essentially relational, or its nature lies in the way in which its parts are interrelated. Furthermore, since each relational theory is identified by the unity-relation it proposes, once we know which theory is true, we know which relation gives the essence of a person's life or where its nature lies. Unity-relations, it must be

emphasised, can be advanced both inside and outside relational theories, but inside relational theories they propose the essence or nature of a person's life.

There is a bewildering variety of such theories, each with its own candidate unity-relation, but some order can be brought to the matter by subsuming the various theories under two very broad and not particularly well-defined cross-classifications. There are psychological theories as against corporeal theories, and there are constructionist theories as against non-constructionist theories.

First, then, psychological versus corporeal theories.

This is generally treated as the fundamental distinction, but we should be prepared to find that, once we stop looking at these theories solely in the light of the identity concern, and see what they can tell us broadly about a life, this way of classifying them may well turn out to be neither so significant nor, for that matter, so straightforward. I explain.

The natural way of taking the classification is this: A psychological theory is a theory that claims that the events of a single life are interrelated by a psychological relation, and then goes on to say what the specific relation is. A corporeal theory is a theory that claims that the events of a single life are interrelated by a corporeal relation, and then goes on to say what the specific relation is. Psychological and corporeal relations are not distinguished by the nature of the terms they relate: for instance, if materialism is right, psychological relations relate corporeal terms. Psychological and corporeal relations are then distinguished by certain properties of the terms they relate. They are distinguished by the properties that their terms must have to be related by them. An example of a psychological relation would be 'is, or contains, a memory of': and an example of a corporeal relation would be 'is spatio-temporally continuous with'. So an example of a psychological theory would be one that held that two events are events in the same person's life if and only if they belong to a sequence of events of which any pair of neighbouring events is such that the later one is or contains a memory of the earlier one. And an example of a corporeal theory would be one that held that two events are events in the same person's life if and only if they belong to a sequence of events of which any pair of neighbouring events are spatio-temporally con-

tinuous. However most candidate unity-relations, and in consequence, most candidate theories of a life, will far exceed these examples in complexity.

Now this, the natural, way of understanding the classification is all right, but only if it is understood with this reservation: that it classifies theories of a life according to the primary relation that they assert to hold between the events in a single life, where the primary relation is that which is supposed to give the criterion of identity for a life.

But theories of a person's life don't have to confine themselves to the assertion of a primary relation: they might also assert a secondary relation. They might say something about other ways in which events in a person's life must be related: other ways, interesting ways. Let us first take psychological theories. *Ex hypothesi* any such theory will put forward a psychological relation which — is its claim — pairs events of the sort that make up a life just in case they are events in one and the same life. But such a theory might well go on to specify a corporeal relation which will also hold between any pair of events that belong to the same life. This corporeal relation will, of course, be required to coincide with the relation that the theory asserts as primary. I call this relation the 'secondary relation' of the theory, and I call this development of the theory 'secondary elaboration.' And a precisely similar development can be envisaged for a corporeal theory. In each case, additional metaphysical principles may be required in order to move from the primary relation of the theory to the secondary relation.

Let me illustrate secondary elaboration by recycling the same crude theories of a life with which I illustrated the psychological/corporeal distinction.

So: We have a psychological theory which puts forward as primary the psychological relation 'is, or contains, a memory of'. Now such a theory might then go on to put forward as secondary the corporeal relation 'contains a memory-trace of'. This relation is corporeal, for, if it holds, it holds in virtue of some bodily facts about the terms it relates, and the theory would put it forward in the belief that any pair of events that satisfies the psychological relation must also be such that a memory-trace links the two of

them. Or take a corporeal theory which puts forward as primary the corporeal relation ‘is spatio-temporally continuous with’. Now such a theory might then go on to put forward as secondary the psychological relation ‘is a matter of profound concern to or is profoundly concerned over’. This relation is psychological, for, if it holds, it holds in virtue of some psychological facts about the terms it relates, and the theory would put it forward in the belief that any pair of events that satisfies the corporeal relation must also be such that they will be linked, in a forward-looking or in a backward-looking way, by a special kind of concern.

Secondary elaboration might seem a strange thing, and that would be because it is highly unusual. It is not the way in which, within the philosophy of mind, theories of a life are formulated. They are not formulated in this way because of the narrow concern that such theories are constructed to satisfy: that is, a concern with identity-conditions. For identity-conditions are already given when the primary relation is given: secondary elaboration would be supererogatory. But if theories of a life are animated by a more generous interest in a person’s life—for instance, an interest in what kind of thing it is—then secondary elaboration will come to seem appropriate. Just because the psychological interrelations or just because the corporeal interrelations (as the case may be) contain the identity-conditions for a life could not be a good reason to suppose that the complementary set of interrelations have nothing to tell us about the nature of a person’s life. How could one possibly think that?—at least so long as one continued to think that the interrelations between the parts of a life hold the key to the nature of a life.

If it by now seems arbitrary to divide a theory of a person’s life into two distinct parts, one of which is held to be the core and to contain the identity-conditions, the other of which is thought of as elaboration, this is to overlook such methodological commitments as the theory might have. The theory might insist on isolating as identity-conditions conditions that can be expressed in physical terms, or conditions that are self-evident, or conditions that can be appealed to in resolving practical disputes about the sameness or difference of objects: it might give pride of place to conditions that possess bare sufficiency for identity. The theory, then, might re-

tain a preference for one kind of unity-relation over another: but it should not allow preference to turn to exclusiveness.

There is a natural cunning to the way in which relational theories of a life, psychological or corporeal, deny themselves secondary elaboration. For in the case of most theories that come to mind, the secondary relations they are likely to propose could only expose them to embarrassment: at that point, at any rate, they would lose the support they had found. But then that in turn, I would maintain, is the consequence of their having been developed in the way they have: with a myopic concentration upon the identity concern, reinforced by the conviction that this is to be satisfied by a unity-relation, and with too little thought given to the overall picture they offer of what kind of thing a person’s life is.

But it is no aim of mine to pursue the varied difficulties into which relational theories of a life, psychological and corporeal, are likely to run or the parallel tactics that they can employ to get themselves out of these difficulties. I have introduced secondary elaboration and distinguished between the primary and the secondary relations that such a theory of a life might advance just so as to be able to make this claim: that any such theory, any relational theory of a life, must at some point put forward a psychological relation that holds just between the events of a single life, but it does not have, for this reason, to be a psychological theory. For it could be a corporeal theory, putting forward the psychological relation as secondary. But it must put forward a psychological relation because it is only by doing so that it allows itself to be tested against such intuitions as we have of what a person’s life is. Told that a certain event, related to me here and now in a certain way, would therefore be part of my life, I could judge this assertion in a number of ways: but the only possible way in which I could judge such an assertion against my intuition is by trying to work out how I would stand psychologically to that event and the person to whom it would belong, and conversely how that person might be expected to stand psychologically to me here and now—though we shall later see that further assurance is needed before even that appeal returns any kind of answer. It is indeed to be noted that most persuasive presentations of a corporeal theory recognize

this, in that they implicitly invoke the concern that a person must feel for future states of his present body: it is only when they do this that they have any chance of getting us to agree to their claim that a person goes where his body goes. Psychological relations, then, are crucial, but this doesn't mean that they are primary.

Now I pass to the other classification of theories of a life: constructionist versus non-constructionist theories.

By a constructionist theory I mean a theory—it can be a psychological theory or a corporeal theory—that holds that everything that needs to be said about the events that make up the life of a person—about, that is, such events taken singly—can be said without introducing a person who has them. On a constructionist theory a person arrives on the scene only when there is a set of suitably interrelated events, and then the person is or is identical with that set. The person appears *deus ex machina*, and the *machina* is the unity-relation. On such a theory to say of a single event that it is an event in some person's life is just to say that it is a member of an appropriately interrelated set of events of the kind that make up a life.

By contrast, a non-constructionist theory is a theory that maintains that no event in a person's life, even taken singly, can be adequately described without introducing the person who has it. There is always some person who integrally enters into any event that is of the kind that makes up the life of a person.

It seems to me beyond doubt that only a non-constructionist theory could possibly do justice to the facts of the case. Let me give two considerations that weigh with me, and mention a third.

First, a constructionist theory, not qualified by further metaphysical assumptions enjoying an independent authority, must allow that there could be events of the kind that normally make up a person's life but that turn out to belong to no one's life. They turn out to belong to no one's life because, though they are adequately formed, they are poorly related. So they float, outside lives. This consequence, which, it must be emphasised, is not merely compatible with constructionism but is, *ceteris paribus*, predicted by it, seems unacceptable. Secondly, a constructionist theory seems unable to account for a distinction that we make between two different ways in which we might imagine someone's standing to a

certain experience. The distinction is this: We might imagine a certain experience to be someone's, or we might imagine that experience to be in someone. Looking down at a sleeping friend, I could imagine her to wake up and, in doing so, to feel a pain: alternatively I could imagine her to wake up and, as she does so, me to feel a pain in her. These are two distinct things that I could imagine, and that the latter is imaginable is not disproved by its probably being metaphysically impossible. Now the point I wish to make against constructionism is that in either case I am able to imagine the relevant eventuality without having to imagine events to flank it and *a fortiori* without having to imagine it related to flanking events. And this is something that the constructionist must deny. I am not sure precisely how the constructionist would account for each of the two imaginative projects, but he would attempt to do so through invoking differentiating ways in which the experience would be related, in the one case, to events in my friend's life and, in the other case, to events in my life. But the distinction I have in mind seems anterior to such relations, and this is fatal to constructionism.

A third consideration against constructionist theories depends on a deeper issue, of which I must postpone discussion until the next lecture. This consideration is the dependence of mental states on underlying mental dispositions and the further fact that these dispositions must be housed somewhere—and where else could they be housed but in a person?

I must, parenthetically, make it clear that my present objections are objections to constructionism about the person. They are not, and are not intended to be, objections to constructionism in general—though I might also have such objections.

If however it is true that a constructionist account of the events that constitute a person's life is unacceptable, so also must be, by extension, any theory of a life that confines itself wholly to the relations between such events. For what makes the description of any one such event incomplete unless it includes some reference to the person who enters into it surely also makes any description of a life incomplete if it refers only to the relations between the events that constitute it and makes no reference to the person who enters into each such event. If there are two events that belong to the

same life and a person necessarily enters into each of these events, a theory of a life cannot confine its attention to the two events: it must also say something about the persons who necessarily enter into the events. It might say something about how one of these persons is related to the other, or it might say something about how what is true of one constrains or determines what is true of the other. Either way round, the original relational theory, defined by the unity-relation that it proposes, is supplemented.

A highly imperfect analogy may help to clarify this last point. Let us suppose there to have been a small alpine village which contained its own school of painters marked by a strong artistic tradition. Each painter painted the same general subject: that is, the life of the local saint broken down into a very large number of consecutive scenes. At the same time, despite the striking stylistic similarities between their work, each painter set great store—as indeed did the village as a whole—on authorship, and he would have thought his work to be traduced if it were confused with another's. Then a landslide destroyed the village and brought the activity of its painters to an end, and it was a few hundred years before scholars started to study the body of work that survived. When they began to do so, they early on appreciated that individual paintings belonged in series, and they set about reconstructing a number of such series by first carefully analysing the different scenes that the paintings represented—the changing costume, the age of the saint, the successive mutilations he underwent—and then ordering the paintings so that each series told a complete story of the saint's life narrated according to some one of the many slightly differing legends. What these early scholars did not allow for was that different painters never worked co-operatively on the same series: each series was the work of just one artist eager for personal fame. Once scholarship recognized this, then the principles by which the paintings were ordered into series radically changed. Scholars still continued to look at the content of each painting to make certain that one took up the story where its predecessor left off, but they now supplemented this method by insisting on first establishing the authorship of each painting, and then seeing that there was common authorship throughout any one series. From now onwards there were two criteria employed

for inclusion in a series: sameness of authorship, and narrative continuity. Those art historians who continued to appeal uniquely to narrative considerations were regarded as primitive.

I hope that this analogy illustrates the point that, once it is recognized that persons necessarily enter into the events that make up the lives of persons, a purely relational theory of a life will not do. For, in addition to the relation that holds between different events in the same life, some supplementary requirement must be laid on who enters into these events. But if the analogy illustrates this point, it does more: it makes a very strong recommendation about what this requirement should be. What should be required is that one and the same person enters into each and every event that belongs to the same life. Interrelatedness of event is supplemented by identity of person.

The proposal is obvious, but it is exposed to an obvious difficulty. But, first, I must make the point that, if a relational theory is supplemented in this way, so that both interrelatedness and identity have to be satisfied for events to be events in one and the same life, the overall theory cannot continue to be thought of as a properly relational theory. It would not, for instance, follow from the theory being true that a person's life is essentially relational. I say this not for the dubious reason that identity is not a relation. My reason is that, within the supplemented theory, the terms between which the identity-relation is required to hold are not parts of a person's life: it is the person himself who provides the terms to the identity-relation. And this is not the right kind of relation for a relational theory: identity is not and could not be a unity-relation.

I turn to the obvious difficulty to which, I said, the new proposal is exposed. A relational theory supplemented—let us call it that—finds the essence of a person's life in two conditions. They are interrelatedness of event and identity of person. How do these two conditions hold together?

A standard way of putting such an objection would be to ask, What guarantee do we have that the two conditions will not come apart? Could we not have one and the same person entering into events that are not themselves appropriately interrelated? Or could we not have events that are appropriately interrelated but into

which different persons enter? And if either of these eventualities came about, what would the theory then rule?

Now such an objection could be raised against any theory of a person's life that required multiple conditions of satisfaction. It could, for instance, be an objection to any strictly relational theory that involved itself in secondary elaboration. My objection, then, is more specific, more substantive. It asks how the two conditions fit together into a theory. And if this raises the question of what happens if the two conditions fall apart, what it also asks is, if they are both satisfied, what separate weight do the two conditions pull, or how they conjointly contribute to the picture of a person's life.

It is at this stage that, I suggest, we are led back from the question, What is a person's life? to the question, What is it to lead the life of a person? A return from the product to the process can afford us a view of the matter which places the two conditions in some unified perspective. In a picture dominated by the living of a life, each condition begins to assume its own distinctive place. The picture realigns itself in two stages.

The first stage is that interrelatedness of event will come to seem derivative. It will come to seem that such interrelatedness as is to be found between the events that make up a single life is something that comes about through the way in which persons lead their lives. This reduces at once the importance of the unity-relation and the importance of discovering the unity-relation. It ceases to seem important whether we can identify a relation that holds between events of the appropriate kind and gives a necessary and a sufficient condition for their being events in the same life, once we think of this relation as only the effect of what is really important.

So if we couldn't find the relation, we might become increasingly willing to ascribe this to a failure of our descriptive powers. The relation we might feel is too difficult to make explicit, and we might cease to worry about our failure so long as we could find something to say about the underlying process which imprints this pattern upon the lives that it produces. Or, again, if we appeared to discover such a relation and then found that it or some rough copy of it got stamped across different lives, this wouldn't worry us if it could be shown that this simulation came about not as a result of the process of living but through, say, a use or misuse of technol-

ogy. If interrelatedness of what promised to be the appropriate kind occurs in some synthesized fashion, which itself transcends our comprehension, it is irrelevant.

If all this is true, then it looks as though there is a fundamental error in all relational theories of a life, an error which goes beyond mistakes of detail in the construction or formulation of the unity-relation. It is that they take a symptom for an essence. That which a person's life derives from the way in which it comes about they treat as itself constitutive of such a life.

The second stage in the transformation brought about by adopting the perspective of the process is that the identity of the person comes to seem less derivative than interrelatedness of event. For, given that the process must be embodied, questions such as whether the process can, once under way in a given person, be transferred from the body of that person to that of another, whether it can or cannot outlive the original body, whether it can or cannot be outlived by that body, must bear directly on the nature of the process, which interrelatedness does not. But it must be emphasized that what the correct answers to these questions are is a matter of inquiry: an inquiry, though, which cannot be conducted until we have a clear idea of what we are asking them about, or what the process is.

7. I have now returned twice to the question, What is it to lead the life of a person: once from the question, What is a person? once from the question, What is a person's life? In both cases I did so in support of a claim made at the beginning of the lecture that, whether we start with the thing or the product, inquiry returns us to something intermediate between the two, or to the process, which takes place in the thing and results in the product. I hope that by now I have said enough about this claim to make its character, if not its content, clear.

However I am not ready to leave the second part of the claim. For if what prompted the return from the nature of a person's life to what it is to lead the life of a person was the failure of relational theories to give an adequate account of what a life is, I want to consider the complement of this failure, for such theories also fail to give us an adequate account of death.

This second failure reveals itself in the following way: Let us suppose that there is a unity-relation, or a relation that holds between any two events that make up the same life. If this is so, then, when a person dies, there will be no future event that is related to the present and past events in his life as each of them is related to every other one. But it cannot be the case that, of these two facts, the second, or the absence of appropriate interrelatedness between events, explains the first, or death. It must be either that the first fact explains the second, or that there is a common explanation for the two. Yet a relational theorist, who sees in the unity-relation the essence of a person's life, must think that, when a life comes to an end, it does so not only when but because this relation ceases to hold. Relational theory, in other words, commits him to a relational account of death as well as to a relational account of life—and whatever are the implausibilities of the latter, those of the former are glaring.

This commitment is seldom explicitly acknowledged, but it is implicitly invoked in a form of argument that relational theorists tend to favour for settling differences between themselves or testing candidate unity-relations. For one way in which such differences might have been argued over is inductively, or by examining a large number of varied cases of lives and seeing what relation holds, or what relations don't hold, between any two events in the same life. But relational theorists prefer to argue by employing a special type of thought-experiment. One reason is that it is more economical to do so, but another reason is that, whenever such a thought-experiment is run and yields a decisive result, then, even if this result is negative or refutes a particular relational theory, it confirms relational theory as such. Any decisive result confirms relational theory because the way in which the result is reached, or the design of the thought-experiment, presupposes relational theory. And in presupposing relational theory, the design of the experiment assumes the relational account of death as well as the relational account of life: it draws on both.

The thought-experiments have, then, a common design, and each one falls into two parts. In the first part, the subject is asked to imagine a situation of some variable degree of complexity. Central to this situation is a sequence, or more than one sequence, of events

of the kind that make up lives, and one of these sequences, or the one sequence (if there is only one), exemplifies the candidate unity-relation. Probably various bizarre circumstances surround the central situation. Then, in the second part of the thought-experiment, the subject is asked, either directly or obliquely, whether the sequence of events exemplifying the candidate relation is a person's life. He is expected to answer this question solely on the basis of what he has been told about the central situation, and the bizarre circumstances have been introduced, like certain erotic sculpture in Indian temples, to concentrate the mind even more strenuously on the central situation. The question is put to the subject directly when the sequence exemplifying the candidate-relation is singled out, and he is then asked, Does this sequence amount to a person's life? The question is put obliquely when, the sequence with the candidate-relation once again having been singled out, the subject is then asked something like, Should each event in this sequence be a matter of personal concern to whoever it is to whom any earlier event in the sequence belongs? Framed either way, but always by getting the subject to match what he is inclined to say against what he has been asked to imagine, the experiment sets out to tap certain deeply entrenched views that persons are supposed to have about the nature or the essential course of their lives. The subject is not, of course, asked for these views, which, it is conceded, it might not be in his power to give, but the questions he is asked are designed to engage with them.

To make the design of these thought-experiments fully explicit, we may credit them with a set of assumptions and a rule. The assumptions are assumptions that they make about the subject, the rule is a rule that they impose on him, and the imposition of the rule is held justified by the truth of the assumptions. The rule and the assumptions are closely connected, and jointly account for the favour in which these thought-experiments are held by relational theorists.

The assumptions are that we—'we', for each one of us is a potential subject for such a thought-experiment—having imagined what we have been told to, shall respond readily and unambiguously to the questions asked of us: that the responses we give

will prove to be consistent, both over time and with one another: and that we are prepared to attach weight to these responses. And behind these assumptions is another, to the effect that we have intuitions that, brought to bear exclusively on the relations holding between events of the kind that make up lives, will be able to pronounce decisively whether a given sequence of such events belongs to one life, or to more than one life, and, if so, to how many. The rule, which completes the design of the thought-experiments, is that the subject must respond to the questions put to him solely on the basis of these intuitions: he must not seek out or make use of anything other than relational—that is, unity-relational—information.

Now insofar as any thought-experiment conforming to this design yields a decisive result, even if only of a negative kind, it confirms relational theory. It confirms the view that whether a certain sequence of events is a person's life or not is just a matter of how the events are interrelated, and it does so equally when it confirms and when it refutes some specific view about what this interrelation is. That it does so follows from the decisiveness of the result plus the way in which the result was reached. For it was reached by the subject first considering solely how the events in a certain sequence are interrelated, then bringing his intuitions to bear on these relational facts, and then deciding on the basis of them whether the sequence is a person's life. But an answer reached this way could be decisive only if, in turn, relations were essential or relational theory was true. Hence the thought-experiment presupposes relational theory.

But sometimes, because of the bizarre circumstances that these thought-experiments tend to introduce, the subject will find himself having to decide not just whether the experimental situation confronts him with only one life or with two simultaneous lives, but whether it confronts him with two consecutive lives: in other words, he will sometimes have to decide whether death has intervened. And since this is something that he has to decide as part, or in the course, of giving a decisive answer about the candidate relation, the design of the thought-experiment will insist that he decide it in just the same way, on just the same information, as he decides that issue: that is to say, by—solely by—bringing his

intuitions to bear on the relational facts. The rule of the thought-experiment tells him that he must do this, and the assumptions assure him that he can. In other words, the assumptions tell him that the relational account of death is true, and the rule tells him to invoke it. Hence the design of the thought-experiment reveals the generally concealed commitment of relational theory.

My claim is that we do not have intuitions of the kind that these thought-experiments require of us: that is to say, intuitions about death based purely on relational facts. Since I have previously contended that the relational account of death is deeply implausible, this claim will be no surprise. But the two points are different, and to see that they are, to illustrate my present claim and to consider a powerful retort, I want to examine the issue in a concrete situation. For these purposes I select a pair of thought-experiments which, because of their extreme skill and ingenuity, have come to play an important part in disputes between relational theorists, whatever may have been their original aim. We owe these thought-experiments to Bernard Williams. I shall set them out only in as much detail as is necessary for my purposes.

Each thought-experiment requires the subject to imagine a certain situation. The first experiment requires him to imagine a situation that unfolds thus:

A and B, two persons, are told that an operation will be performed on each of them. In the course of the operation each person's memories and such like things will be extracted from him and placed in the body of the other. This means that, the operation over, there will be an A-body person (with B's memories and so on) and a B-body person (with A's memories and so on). Then one of these will be tortured and the other rewarded. Before the operation each person is asked how he would want, on strictly selfish grounds, the torture and the reward to be distributed between the two body-persons. And after the operation and the distribution of torture and reward, each body-person is asked whether he got what he wanted.

So much for the situation. Then, in the second part of the thought-experiment, the subject is asked to settle, in the light of his intuitions, two separate things: first, what distribution of torture and reward each person should ask for before the operation, and secondly, after the operation, under what actual distribution of

torture and reward each body-person should say that he had got what he had previously asked for. The subject is in effect expected to do this by saying what he would say in the different positions.

For the second thought-experiment the situation changes, and it unfolds thus:

There is only A. A is told that he will undergo an operation, in the course of which his memories and such like things will be removed and beliefs about a past other than those beliefs he now has will replace them. 'Then' he is told, 'you will be tortured'.

And in the second part of this thought-experiment the subject is asked to settle, again in the light of his intuitions, just one thing: whether A should be frightened by what he has been told, or whether A should simply feel sorry for the A-body person to whom all this will happen. Again, the subject is in effect expected to do this by saying what he would say in A's position.

I suggest that, if we imagine ourselves as subjects in these thought-experiments, a question that we are likely to ask ourselves is whether, in the first situation, A and B survive their operation, and whether, in the second situation, A survives his operation, or whether in either case, death intervenes. We shall feel that, because of the bizarre circumstances, we need to know this before we can bring to bear on the two central situations such intuitions as we have. In the second situation A, it is true, is told that he will survive his operation: but we aren't told this, we are told only that he is told this, so we want to know whether what he is told is correct.

Now the design of the thought-experiment will reject our request out of hand. The rule will tell us that we may not make use of anything except relational information such as *ex hypothesi* we already have, and the assumptions will assure us that such information suffices. Furthermore, rule and assumptions will combine to tell us that we are misguided in trying to split the task set us into two. We do not need first to have information about the death or survival of the participants before we then go on to bring our intuitions to bear on the relational facts so as to settle such residual questions as where, or in what corporeal guise, the participants are to be found. The two lots of questions are to be answered in one.

But as a potential subject in the thought-experiment, I now

reply that this is unconvincing, and must seem so to anyone unless he has been convinced on general — that is, non-thought-experimental — grounds of the truth of relational theory. (And it might seem unconvincing even then.) I cannot, solely on the basis of relational information, settle issues of survival. I have no sure way of matching what I say to what I imagine. For instance, no matter what rupture of interrelatedness I imagine in a sequence of events, I could always imagine life going on through it: I could always imagine its being survived.

But, it will be countered, there are many persons who, enlisted as subjects in these thought-experiments, have no difficulty in settling, decisively, the issues of death or survival that come up. They have no difficulty in saying whether, in the first situation, A and B survive, or whether, in the second situation, A survives. And they don't ask for special information: they just answer the questions they are asked on the basis of what they have been told. Why should their performance carry less weight than mine?

Now I do not deny that there may be subjects in thought-experiments like these who can answer questions about death or survival without difficulty. My only claim is that they cannot do so by observing the rule of the thought-experiments. They must employ some other way of doing so, and I can think of two possibilities.

One way is that the subject might simply assume an answer to the questions that I claim he has no means of answering out of the materials supplied to him. Not having been told whether death intervenes, he takes it for granted that it has not, and that all the participants in the imagined situations survive. He would, we may assume, concede this if he could recognize that this is what he had done — which he might not be able to do. Thought-experiments like those under consideration do not make good faith easy to practise.

The other way the subject could employ is subtler, and it meets one requirement of the thought-experiment which the first breaches: it does not split what the subject is asked to decide into two. There is, with this way, no question of the subject first determining, on one kind of information, whether, say, A and B survive their operation, and then determining, on another kind of

information, where or in what corporeal guise they do so. Nevertheless the rule of the thought-experiment is not observed.

The way is this: The subject has a firm belief about what the unity-relation is; he surveys how in the two situations the various events that are ascribed to A and B and the A-body person and the B-body person are related; then he works out which of these patterns of interrelatedness exemplify the unity-relation he believes in; and then, on the basis of these calculations, he answers the questions that the thought-experiments require him to decide if they are to yield decisive results. Now it may very well be that the answers such a subject gives will conform to what the assumptions predict: they will be ready, consistent over time and with one another, and confident. They may even be true. Nevertheless in responding in this way the subject has not kept to the rule of the thought-experiment, and it is crucial to see why. That rule requires that the subject should respond to the questions put to him by bringing his intuitions to bear on certain relational facts, such as that an event ascribed to A stands in such-and-such a relation to another event ascribed to the B-body person. And he offends against this rule when he introduces as information not a relational fact but a fact about relations, such as that such-and-such a relation is the unity-relation.

This may seem a very fine point. But it isn't. For if the information that the subject makes use of consists of facts about relations as well as relational facts, the only way in which he can draw upon them conjointly is to construct an argument in which the former constitute the major, and the latter the minor, premise. The subject will then answer the questions put to him syllogistically, not on the basis of intuition.

But why does this matter? Is the subject more than in minor default of a rule? And the answer is that it is only if the thought-experiments yield decisive results, and do so on the basis of the kind of intuition that the rule specifies, that they confirm relational theory. For it is only then that they presuppose relational theory. Then they presuppose relational theory because then they draw upon intuitions that would not be feasible unless relational theory were true. If the thought-experiments yield decisive results by any means other than subjects' intuitions, relational theory is

left, confirmationally, just where it was before such thought-experiments were introduced into the argument.

But if the thought-experiments yield decisive results through a syllogism in which the major premise is the fact that such-and-such a relation is the unity-relation, and the minor premise is that this relation holds or doesn't hold between certain events, doesn't that also, to some degree or other, confirm relational theory? And the answer is that it doesn't. The mere existence of a unity-relation does not confirm relational theory. For the unity-relation might not give the essence of a person's life, which is what relational theory requires. What confirms relational theory is not the existence of a unity-relation, but the register of this relation in our psychology in the form of a capacity for intuitions of a certain kind. And this we seem not to have.

But have I shown this?

For, it might be maintained, the most I have shown is that we do not have intuitions about death. In cases where death can be dismissed as a likelihood, do we not have intuitions, which, brought to bear solely upon relational facts, identify the course of a life?

The crucial question is whether it is possible that there should be intuitions that adjudicate the application of some concept—say, a person's life—but are declarative only under certain conditions—say, when death is not a likelihood. If we do not have intuitions based on relational information that indicate the intervention of death, how can we have corresponding intuitions about the course of life? I conclude that we cannot. We cannot, that is to say, have intuitions whose existence shows us anything about what a person's life essentially is. We may have certain impure or hybrid intuitions, whose character is hard to grasp, and which I had in mind in saying that, of relations holding within a life, psychological relations must be crucial.

Thus far my argument has been that, the evidence of certain thought-experiments seemingly to the contrary, we do not have intuitions that, basing themselves exclusively on relational information, pronounce decisively about the course of a person's life. Accordingly, relational theory is deprived of a form of support that the existence of such intuitions would have given it. But does from the absence of such intuitions the falsity of relational theory fol-

low? Relational theory is a necessary condition of such intuitions, but is it a sufficient condition?

This is what relational theorists themselves assume, or at least those who favour the kind of thought-experiment that I have been discussing. In thinking that we can, at least in principle, find the true relational theory by appeal to such thought-experiments, they must believe that, if one relational theory is true, hence if relational theory is true, then what these thought-experiments presuppose—that is, the existence of the intuitions upon which they rely—must be the case. And I am inclined to think that they are right. I am inclined to think that, if persons' lives were essentially relational, then the recognitional skill that we would have for lives would take the form of intuitions that dispensed with everything except relational information. If that is so, then the foregoing considerations amount to a weighty argument against relational theory.

I started this section with a consideration of death, and how inadequately relational theory is obliged to construe it. I shall return to the topic of death only at the end of these lectures, and then with some further thoughts about our intuitions on the topic, or the absence of them.

8. The time has come when I must say something, however brief or schematic, about what it is to lead the life of a person.

But first a word on my right to say it. It is clear that in talking about the way persons live, I have some authority, and that is connected with the way I live. But what is the connection? There are two versions of what my authority is, and they differ in the order of the explanation they offer. On one version, I live as a person, and my authority derives from this fact. My authority consists in the knowledge that I have of the way I live. On the other version, I live as I live, and the fact that this counts as living as a person itself derives from the authority I have: though from this fact I derive further authority, which consists in knowledge of how I live. The second version can be purged of its worst features. It is not necessary to say that I decide or stipulate that the way I live shall be the way persons live. Nor is it necessary to say that the phrase 'living as a person' is covertly indexical, or always contains a

reference to the way in which the speaker or writer lives. It could simply be that a preoccupation with our own interests and needs, an inescapable commitment to our own perspective, compels us to see the world in such a way that only we and those who live like us can be regarded as persons. But, however purified, the second account seems to me wrong: for it cannot give a coherent account of what this preoccupation, or this commitment, is without falling back into some much cruder, or more overtly relativistic, version of itself. This is not to say that the first version is without its real difficulties.

I move to my preliminary account of what it is to live as a person.

A person leads his life at a crossroads: at the point where a past that has affected him and a future that lies open meet in the present. But this, if true of the person, is true of every other thing, animate creature and inanimate object.

To see why the posture of hanging between the past and the future is so special for a person, we have to introduce another interaction: that between a person's occurrent transient mental states and his underlying persistent mental dispositions. For the influence of the past is carried by mental dispositions that are set up in the person and persist. Examples of such dispositions would be beliefs, desires, emotions, memories, phantasies. However, when the influence of the past, stored in the dispositions, is actually exerted over the person, it is not exercised directly by the dispositions—or, if it is, this is just a marginal case. Standardly the influence passes through present mental states in which the dispositions manifest themselves. This can come about in two ways. One way is this: The past can colour the mental state—of which it can therefore be said that it, the mental state, wouldn't be as it is if it weren't for the past. When this happens the past doesn't obtrude into the mental state, though the mental state may somehow put the person in mind of the past. This happens to varying degrees in perception, emotion, and phantasy. But the other way in which the influence of the past percolates through mental states requires the past to be more obtrusive. The past doesn't merely colour the mental state, but it or its delegate comes to occupy it, and the person is aware that this is so. This happens in recollection—or memory in the narrow sense of the term. And there are ways in

which the past can influence the person which are intermediate between or combinatory of these two ways.

That the past influences the person largely through mental states is responsible for much of how we live. It means that this influence has a peculiar vivacity and a peculiar variability. Vivacity is secured by the mysterious fact that mental states have a phenomenology. Variability is secured by the fact that one and the same mental disposition can manifest itself in mental states with varying degrees of vivacity. And vivacity accentuates variability in that not only do mental dispositions manifest themselves in mental states, but mental states can modify mental dispositions. Outbursts of jealousy can strengthen jealousy: love satisfied can weaken love: hope can reinforce optimism: the exploration of phantasy can shake the hold of phantasy.

But to understand fully, properly, how the interaction between a person's past, present, and future is realized through the interaction between his mental dispositions and his mental states, we have to introduce a third case of interaction: that between the various systems of the mind: between the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious.

II On the Mind

1. In my first lecture I said that the topic of these lectures would be living, or what it is to lead the life of a person. And I distinguished living from, on the one hand, the person who lives and, on the other hand, the life that is led. The person is a thing, the life is a product, and my topic is a process — a process which occurs in the person and from which the life issues. To understand the process we have to take account of three characteristic interactions which influence how we live. They are the interactions between the person's past, present, and future: between his mental dispositions and his mental states: and between the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious systems of his mind. And these interactions occur at once in the mind and in a body. Living is an embodied mental process.

In this lecture I want to produce a schematic description of the mind, a taxonomy of mental phenomena which in later lectures I shall draw upon and elaborate somewhat. My present task is to expound it, not to employ it.

2. Mental phenomena may initially be divided into three broad categories: *mental states*, *mental dispositions*, and *mental activities*.

Mental states are episodic or transient phenomena. They occur at a time. More than one mental state may occur in the same mind at the same time, but there are very real limits of load on the mind, and in the case of certain types of mental state (for instance, thoughts) there cannot ordinarily be more than one such state at the same time in the same mind. The occurrence of a mental state is one example of what in the last lecture I spoke of as an event in a person's life. Examples of mental states other than thoughts are perceptual experiences, attacks of dizziness, dreams, and moments of terror, amusement, lust, or despair. Alongside mental states we should think of partly mental states, which are events in a person's