

DESCARTES AND WITTGENSTEIN : TWO PHILOSOPHICAL MODELS OF MIND

R. C. PRADHAN

Descartes *Meditations*¹ and Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*² have a common theme: the understanding of the human mind. While Descartes understands mind as a substance which is independent of language and the world, Wittgenstein takes mind in continuation with language and the world. For the former, mind is a world by itself whereas for the latter mind is part of the world. Besides, for Descartes mind is a mirror of the world which Wittgenstein rejects because, for him, mind is a way of thinking and acting in language and the world.

This paper addresses itself to the problem of understanding the nature of mind in relation to language and the world from both Descartes' and Wittgenstein's points of view. It seeks to examine how, in spite of their different philosophical frameworks, both Descartes and Wittgenstein share a common philosophical faith in the autonomy of human beings as *minded* beings. For both, mind and its functions constitute the most fascinating aspect of the universe.

1. Mind and the Mirror of the World

Descartes' philosophy of mind establishes the metaphysics of the thinking self, i.e., the thinking substance³ that exists by itself and is conceived in itself. The idea of a thinking substance pervades the Cartesian world-view in that it is the foundation of Descartes' philosophy of man and the universe. It is in the idea of a thinking substance that Descartes finds the key to the understanding of the natural world and the possibility of the scientific knowledge of the latter. It is precisely because mind is held to be the mirror⁴ of Nature. The rational mind is the mirror-image of the rational universe. Therefore it is assumed that the understanding of the functions of the mind reveals all that is structured into the furniture of the universe.

As Rorty⁵ has emphasized, the Cartesian conception of the mind seeks to project the view that the mental representations constitute

the representations of the world so that by knowing the essential representations of the mind we can discover the essential structure of the world. The mind in this perspective is supposed to be the store-house of ideas that represent things in the world. Among the ideas the clearest and the most distinct⁶ represent the things and their essential attributes. Thus the world is made to be revealed in the network of the ideas or the mental representations. Mind as the unextended substance is capable of projecting the extended world in that there is a built-in mechanism in the mind to connect ideas to things and also to connect the ideas into judgments or thoughts. The functions of the mind include not only ideas but also judgments which are directly validated by things in the world. Mind has pure thoughts which constitute the bulk of the groundwork of the mathematical sciences which represent the mathematical structure of the world. On the contrary, the so called impure thoughts which consist in the perceptual reports of the world constitute the probable sciences that represent the changing world of the contingent things. Thus Descartes lays down the foundations of his project of the pure mental representations of the world modelled on mathematical sciences.

Thus it is the mind or the thinking substance that is at the foundation of the new mathematized science of the world because it alone reveals the true nature of the universe. The metaphysics of the mind is in this way the foundation of the metaphysics of the universe. There are two important principles that the Cartesian metaphysics of the mind offers, namely,

(M1) Mind is the domain of the representational thoughts and is the medium of the ideational representations of the world.

(M2) Mind is self-conscious of its representations in that it can represent its representations of the world on a higher level.

The first principle M1 tells us that mind and the universe are attuned to each other so that the mind reveals the necessary and universal structures of the universe. The mental representations of the world stand for their objective correlates in the world. For example, the ideas of matter, extension and motion are the representations of the mechanistic structure of the world. They constitute the mechanistic picture of the world which Descartes so painstakingly defends.

The second principle M2 brings out the subjective dimension of

the Cartesian mind or the *Cogito* that not only thinks about the world but also is aware of the fact that it has representations of the world. That makes the *Cogito* self-conscious of its own existence : *Cogito ergo sum*⁷. The existence of the self or the thinking substance is revealed to itself in its self-conscious awareness. This makes *Cogito ergo sum* the first principle of the Cartesian metaphysics of the mind. Thus consciousness of its own existence is the essential property of the Cartesian "I".

It is the centrality of self or the "I" that matters most when we consider the connection of the mind to the world. Descartes positioned the self at the centre of the universe because he felt that it is the self alone that can provide the Archimedean point from which the world could be mapped. This faith in the centrality of the thinking self led him to make the mind a substantial reality. The thinking mind is taken as the mirror of the world as we have said earlier. That is because the thinking mind makes the world appear as the most rational and law-governed. The thoughts or the mental representations are themselves law-governed and therefore in them alone we can discover the laws of the Nature. Thus Descartes derives his conception of the metaphysics of the Nature from that of the metaphysics of the mind such that from the laws of the mind there is a definite derivation of the mechanistic picture of the world. The thinking self therefore occupies the pivotal position in the Cartesian conception of the world. Descartes of course does not say that mind makes the world in the way Kant would say later but he does show that mind alone holds the key to the understanding of the world as in it alone the world reveals itself in the most transparent way. This metaphysical centrality of the self makes the world dependent on the self insofar as our understanding of the latter is concerned. Of course its existence is a matter independent of the existence of the mind. Thus Descartes opts for a dualism between mind and the world such that they exist independently of each other. This leads to the further commitment that mind and the world are both dependent on God who creates both. In a certain relative sense the mind and the world are self-existing though it is the mind that takes cognitive precedence over the world by virtue of its being the thinking self. As we have already seen, the existence of the mind is intimately and self-validatingly revealed to itself whereas the existence of the world is a matter of moral

assurance rather than of hard demonstrative inference. The difference between the existence of the mind and the existence of the world is a matter of epistemic priority and not of metaphysical substantiality since both mind and the world are metaphysical substances. The presence of the mind makes an epistemic difference to the world as the latter receives its cognitive significance from the former.

2. Mental Representations, Truth and Language

Now we must investigate why Descartes puts so much emphasis on the mental representations which occupy the centre-stage of his metaphysical inquiry. The self-validity of the mental representations being assured, it is imperative that Descartes searches for the metaphysical locus of the representations themselves in the thinking self. The self is the metaphysical reality par excellence and thus brings itself to the very centre of our epistemic activities, namely, thinking, perceiving, etc. This reveals the Cartesian assumption that the epistemic agent, that is, the self must have an autonomous existence so that its epistemic activities can have the validity or truth that cannot be derived from any other source. The self-validating character of the mental representations is the hallmark of the Cartesian mind that assures that the mental perceptions are true insofar as they are the truths of reason⁸. That is, the representations which are given to the mind's eye as the self-validated and self-evident representations are true virtue of reason alone.

The mental representations differ in degree of clarity and distinctness such that those which are the truths of reason are the clearest and the most distinct. Such paradigm representations are concerning God, mind and matter since these realities are the ultimate metaphysical substances. These representations are not contingent on our perceptual ability nor are they the products of our imagination and so they are dependent on the natural "light of reason". That is the reason they are called innate and also *a priori* such that they are revealed to the mind in an intimate and self-evident way. Descartes is aware of the fact that unless the mind is taken as autonomous and as a substantial being there could be no method of deriving the basic principles of existence from the truth of the mental representations. The principles of existence represent the essence of reality and therefore are the foundation of all scientific knowledge of reality. If this has to be

made possible then the autonomy of the mind must be conceded and the centrality of self accepted. It is altogether a different matter that God is the creator of the mind and matter and therewith of the eternal truths⁹ concerning them. But the fact remains that the eternal truths are so called because they are revealed to the mind self-evidently and directly. The exalted status of the eternal truths does not detract from the metaphysical centrality of the mind and its eternal representations.

The problem of truth arises naturally as a metaphysical corollary of the mental representations, especially of those which are true by virtue of their self-evident character. Descartes faces the problem squarely as a matter of metaphysics rather than of epistemology or semantics. The reason is that it is not a matter of our knowledge that we face the problem of truth of our mental representations. It is in fact a problem of why some of the mental representations are eternally true such that they cannot be false under any circumstance. It is not true that all representation in the mind are eternally true. Some of them are contingent on our sense-organs and so are true as a matter of opinion or probable belief. Hence there must be some metaphysical ground on which we can rest our criterion of truth of the representations. Descartes finds this criterion in the "clear and distinct"¹⁰ nature of the ideas. The clear and distinct perceptions of the mind vouchsafe for the truth of the representations. Thus here truth and perspicuity of representations coincide and there is no gap between what the mind clearly perceives and what is absolutely true. The absolute nature of truth is the other side of the absolute character of the mental representations that are due to mind or reason itself. Representations go wrong when they are conditioned by the agencies other than the mind or the intellect and more so when they overstep the limits of reason. This Descartes calls the "Privation of the Will"¹¹ which is the source of error of our representations. The will crosses the limits of the reason or the intellect and thereby falls into the error of misjudging the character of the reality. This happens in all those judgments which are passively allowed by the mind as in imagination and perception. In perception the intellect is at the vagaries of the sense-organs and the outer world such that the judgments issuing from perception may go wrong if what we perceive is not actually the case. Here the intellect is not in the absolute command of the situation and so there is a serious gap between our ideas and the reality. This gap is due to the fact

that intellect fails to comprehend the reality as it is. Descartes therefore rejects perceptual judgments as true *a priori*.

It is now clear that in spite of the fact that mind has access to the eternal truths of reason, it still faces the prospect of error so far as the truth concerning matters of fact is concerned. Here the question arises why mind so naturally endowed with innate capacity to comprehend truth fails to do so in the case of empirical truths. The Cartesian answer is that truths of reason are mind's own possessions and so it does not have to depend on the world for their validation. Thus contingency of truth arises regarding the factual world. The eternal verities are the essential truths regarding the world, mind and God and so there is no reason to fail to apprehend them. Therefore error is ruled out from the domain of the eternal truths since "the light of reason"¹² ensures their truth as they are the clearest and the most distinct representations of the mind.

The judgments are the free operations of the mind insofar as mind organizes the ideas into an ordered whole. The ideas, as Descartes says, are the ideas regarding their objective correlates and so they demand objective assessment in terms of truth and falsity. Because of this objectivity demand, the judgments are either true or false. The judgments that are concerning mind and God are taken to be true as they concern the metaphysical reality itself but our judgments regarding the world are true to the extent they are validated by the mind and God. In that sense some necessary truths are always possible regarding the essence of the world. Even then their certainty depends on God's existence. There is certainly no doubt in our intellectual representation of the structure of the world in terms of the categories of matter, motion and extension¹³. But the certainty thus accruing to these judgments can be called moral certainty¹⁴ as distinct from the metaphysical certainty of the judgments concerning mind and God.

Descartes' interest lies in the absolute metaphysical certainty of the judgments as in them alone there is the guarantee of necessary and *a priori* knowledge about reality. These truths alone can be called the eternal truths. Here, however, lies the importance of Descartes' call for the absolute certainty of our knowledge of the world. Can this call be fully realized given the fact that there is always a gap between what is represented in our mind and what is in reality outside the mind? Descartes's response

is that the metaphysical certainty is the ultimate ground of our mental representations and so there can be a way to arrive at them even if there is no success always initially. In the ultimate analysis there is Reason that guarantees such success and so there must be a transparent representation of the world in the mind. This may be called the Representation Thesis which may be stated as follows :

(RT) All science or knowledge of the universe is representational in character in that in it our thoughts correspond to the world as there is a metaphysical harmony between mind and the world.¹⁵ The metaphysical harmony itself is a matter of certainty because it is a truth discovered by mind or intellect. It is in this metaphysical truth that the mind discovers the certainty of all mental representations of the world. On this metaphysical ground stands the edifice of the Cartesian mechanistic physics¹⁶ that promises to reveal the ultimate structure of the world.

The representations of the world in the mind do demand a lexicon and a formal language to express the scientific thoughts. Descartes therefore takes for granted the fact that there is a faculty of language in the human mind that develops the formal language of science and mathematics. Thus, according to him, to think scientifically is to think in a formal vocabulary that entails language-use according to formal rules¹⁷. Use of language demands the mental representations of rules and their necessary application such that whenever there is a case of use of a concept and the associated symbols there is the inevitable procedure of rule-following. This makes Descartes infer that human mind is rich with innate¹⁸ linguistic abilities because of which man can use language at all. Language-use is a creative process which requires a complicated mental mechanism. This mechanism is already built into the fabric of the human mind.

Now the important question is, did Descartes realize the importance of language as a method of representation? The answer is obviously 'no' as, for Descartes, mind is the only faculty of representation such that thought includes all kinds of representations including the linguistic representations. Therefore thoughts or mental representations are all that there are as the representations of the world. Descartes anticipated the philosophy of language though he himself was least interested in language as such. For him, as for all seventeenth century thinkers, mental representations

constitute the whole of science and there is nothing that language can add to the whole stock of scientific knowledge. Language is after all a form of expression of thought and so it is inevitably there as the lexicon of our thought. But the lexicon is not the science itself and so there is no need in Descartes' system for a philosophy of formal grammar.

The Cartesian formal language is the language of mathematics which speaks in terms of quantitative concepts. The amalgamation of science and mathematics puts the formal language on a higher pedestal as it develops its grammar independently of the actual languages of human beings. This makes Descartes develop a new language of science and mathematics in terms of the mechanistic concepts. From this we can conclude that though Descartes did not develop it he had the idea of a universal language of scientific thought. Descartes is conscious of the fact that without the language of the formal type even the mental representations cannot have the clarity they need.

3. From the Self-existing mind to the Disappearance of the thinking "I"

Language became the main concern of philosophy with the advent of the linguistic revolution in philosophy which was ushered in chiefly by Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*¹⁹ is the turning point of the new revolution that attempted to make a clean break with the Cartesian way of thinking that accorded primacy to thought and the thinking self. Wittgenstein's explicit strategy was to allow the self or the "I" to disappear from the world into a transcendental metaphysical self as the limit of the world (*TLP* 5.631-2). This resulted in the reduction of the Cartesian mind or the *Cogito* into a psychological self (*TLP* 5.641). The psychological self is declared to be part of the world as it is a matter of empirical experience that there is a thinking self for every act of thinking. But the transcendental self that is the 'limit of the world' is not part of the world and thus ceases to be the self that represents the world in the Cartesian sense. The Cartesian mind represents the world in the way we have described earlier. But the Wittgensteinian transcendental self does none of this as it is only the transcendental presupposition of the world. The psychological self itself is incapable of representing anything except in the banal sense that it has empirical experiences of the world. Hence Wittgenstein realizes that in no sense there is a Cartesian self which represents

the world either from outside or inside of the world. That is to say, it is now realized that there are no mental representations of the world which can be assigned to a thinking substance that can be called the self.

The thinking "I" ceases to be the centre of the world from the Wittgensteinian point of view. The reason is that the Cartesian *Cogito* as part of the world cannot represent the world in any relevant sense as it has no conceptual resources to do that. Being part of the world it cannot represent the world since in order to represent the world it must stand outside the world. Besides, as part of the world it itself needs to be represented. Thus the *Cogito* is a limited being for the purpose of the representation of the world. Wittgenstein's argument is that since the Cartesian self is at best only psychological it is all the more reasonable to say that the self is not a substance as the substance is something nonchanging and simple (TLP 2.027-1). From this point of view the mind-body distinction itself does not hold good as both body and mind belong to the world and are part of the domain of facts. Thus in the *Tractatus* the Cartesian self loses its place of prominence and its metaphysical centrality.

The transcendental self has, however, only a nominal presence in the sense that it is only a presupposition and therefore does not force itself upon the world. It occupies an extensionless point as Wittgenstein points out (TLP 5.64). Its vestigial presence makes no difference to the world as it is in every sense a mere presence and not a substance. Besides, it is independent of the world (TLP 5.633-1). Thus the transcendental self also is not the centre of the world in the Cartesian sense and so fails to fulfill the task of representing the world as Descartes demanded of it. The Cartesian world-picture loses its relevance with the disappearance of the "I" into a mere transcendental presupposition. Therewith also the realm of the subjectivity as the source of the necessary truths regarding the world is eclipsed. In short, the idea of there being a substantial mind like a divine mind comes to be replaced by something more mundane like language.

Language becomes the centre of the new world-picture and therewith of course the human being who has the language occupies a significant place in the universe. The Cartesian *Cogito* gives way to the language-using human community that has all the grammatical resources to represent

the world. The language embedded in the human community is part of the natural world i.e., part of the human organism (*TLP* 4.002). Yet it is the mirror of the world (*TLP* 5.511) in the sense that it embeds all the thoughts and experiences we have regarding the world. Language pictures the world in the logical sense that it makes all our thoughts of the world transparent in its logical structure. Thus a new theory of representations of the world is shaped out of the logical fact that it is language alone through which the world is presented to us, the cognitive agents. The cognitive agents do not choose to have language as the medium of representation of the world. Rather language as the universal medium²⁰ of thought and experience makes the world transparent because of the logical isomorphism of language and the world. Herein lies the clue to the Wittgensteinian idea that the cognitive thinking "I" becomes a part of the language-using "I" and therefore there ceases to be any philosophical importance of epistemology which can at best be a psychological enterprise (*TLP* 4.1121). The theory of the world philosophically available is the theory of how language represents the world. Hence logic and philosophy become one as the theory of the world is the same thing as the theory of language, that is, logic. Logic or logical grammar of language becomes the central notion in the *Tractatus* thus replacing the thoughts of the Cartesian kind.

The anti-Cartesian thrust of the *Tractatus* is further deepened in Wittgenstein's later writings as it is further realized that there is nothing that the Cartesian mind can do in the linguistic picture of the world. Mind as such ceases to be a substance and merges itself in the language-centred activities called the language-games. In that sense it becomes a name of the mental activities involved in the language-games. Mind and the mental activities become one. This leads to the view that there is no mental representation that is the sole repository of our access to the world. Mental representations merge with the linguistic representations which themselves are nothing but languages-games (*PI*, sect. 50). The question of the world being represented in language is still relevant but now the pictorial representations are grammatically secured at the very place where the language-games lie, that is, in our life and other activities. The forms of life hold the promise of telling what the world is in their being interwoven with the world (*PI* sect.19).

Thus the thrust of the Wittgensteinian world-picture shifts towards

making the forms of life the centre of the universe as in them alone we see the nature of human beings and also of the world. The mind is not the central concept; it is the activities of playing language-games that make the central idea. The Cartesian idea of representation and of the mental mirroring is replaced by the much less awe-inspiring linguistic talk and its logical structure wherein there is the transparent representation of the world. The concern for the transcendental "I" which could still be the limit-self (*PI*, sect. 398) has further waned because language holds the last key for understanding the self itself. Language, life and world are nested together in this framework²¹

4. Thought, Language and the World

The new framework aims at making mind available in the space occupied by language. That is, it makes mind as transparent as the world in language itself. This results in making language the home of mind and the world in the sense that our access to mind and the world necessarily involves the access through language alone. Wittgenstein liberates the concept of mind from the Cartesian conception of the inner world and puts it back in the outer world of the linguistic and other activities. Mind is now part of the world wherein the language-games take place.

Wittgenstein's strategy is to demystify mind and thought and to make a fresh attempt to make mind as transparent as language itself. In the Cartesian framework mind was the central concept that inherited the task of making thought the inner core of all human activities. This led to two important consequences; first, it perpetuated the myth that thought belongs to the Inner World²² and second, thought is pre-linguistic and so can exist in the autonomous realm of the mind that is independent of language. Wittgenstein struggles against both these ideas as they mystify mind and its activities. The Myth of the Inner is the strongest myth that has come to be entrenched in philosophy. Wittgenstein makes the most serious attempt to overcome it.

The idea of the Inner is the idea of making thought an inner process in the invisible and subjective realm of the mind as distinguished from the body of man. According to this view, the inner mental processes as distinguished from the bodily actions constitute the mind (RPP2, sect. 228). Thus mind is taken as a store-house of ideas or the mental processes. Mind is the seat of these activities and so consciousness

becomes the innate nature of the mind. Besides, it is realized that mind cannot be the seat of conscious acts unless it is of the nature of a spiritual or immaterial substance. It is a substance, as Descartes argued, because it can be conceived independently of the body which is only contingently related to it. Thus there arose the two-world or the two-substance theory to explain how mind is possible. The inevitable result was the myth of the Inner or what Ryle calls the theory of the "ghost in the machine"²³ and also of the mind-body dualism. The duality of the Inner and Outer is the other side of the mind-body dualism that is entrenched in the Cartesian way of thinking.

Wittgenstein's effort is to dissolve the Myth of the Inner as, according to him, it presents a misleading picture of mind. That is, it distorts the conception of mind that we have. Mind is turned into something inner and subjective. Wittgenstein attempts to show that the idea of the inner arises because of a grammatical mistake (*PI*, p.222), that is, because of the misunderstanding of the language in which we talk about the mental activities. The language in which we have such words like 'thinking', 'willing', etc., has a logic of its own which cannot be confused with that of words like 'walking', 'sneezing', etc. The statements expressing mental activities like "I am in pain" are distinct from such statements as "I have a hand". The statements about the mental activities like the above in the first-person present tense are not descriptive statements at all. They are expressions of the mental states and are not descriptive of what is happening in the mind.²⁴ The mind does not contain mental states which can be described in the way we can describe the contents of a room. Therefore Wittgenstein characterizes the first-person present tense statements about mental activities as avowals (*PI*, sect.244) which so cannot be assimilated to the third-person statements about the mental contents (*PI*, sect. 290).

The myth of the Inner distorts the very conception of mind which we universally share. According to Wittgenstein, mind stands for a set of activities rather than for a mental entity. This conception of mind is free of the hypostatization of the mental phenomena as entities of a mysterious sort. But the whole exercise of understanding mind comes down to our conspicuous understanding of the logic of the language in which we express the mental states. Thus Wittgenstein's strategy for dissolving the Cartesian conception of the Inner is twofold; first, he shows that the conception of the Inner is based on a grammatical

mistake and second, he concedes that mind is real though not as a mental entity. The first strategy pays off as the language-use demystifies the nature of our sensation-words and other mental conduct concepts. The grammar of the word 'pain' shows that pain is not the name of an entity in the mind; it demonstrates that it stands for a form of life (*PI*, p. 174). Pain is pain-behaviour in the sense that to use the word 'pain' is to act in a certain way. It is ultimately the language-game that counts. The second strategy equally works as it shows that mind is real in that we cannot talk about it if it were a mere myth. Our language-games are rich with the mental words and statements that we make in course of our daily life. There are innumerable forms of life that are concerning mental life. In all these cases there is no doubt entertained about mind itself.

Wittgenstein's point is that the philosophical understanding of the nature of mind does not require either the denial or affirmation of the existence of mind. Mind is real in the sense we are already playing the language-games involving mind. It is not that the language-game brings the mind into existence. Language and mind are already in a common bond. That is why those who deny mind are as much at fault as those who affirm the existence of mind. So is the case with the world. Both mind and the world go together in that language presupposes both as real.

It is generally believed that denying mind as an entity may commit one to a kind of behaviourism²⁵, since it is thought in the absence of a mental substance all that is left is the outward behaviour. This has led many to believe that Wittgenstein's account of mind leads inevitably to philosophical behaviourism which reduces mental states to behaviour of the type signified by the mental activities. However, the ascription of behaviourism to Wittgenstein is illogical because he does not reduce mental phenomena to behaviour in the sense behaviourists do. He only suggests that the mental processes need outer criteria (*PI* sect. 580) in order to be identified as such. That is, unless there are grammatical criteria of calling something pain, there is no way we can have the language of pain. Pain-states are mental states and they are distinguishable from other states. The criteria are located in the behaviour in the sense that we make various linguistic moves when we have pain. Thus mental states are logically connected with the behaviour of the human agents (*PI*, sect. 281).

Pain-behaviour is a pain-language-game in that to express pain is to use language in a certain way. This involves a total scheme of things including language such that to have pain is to be able to identify it and also to express it. The person having pain is basically a language-user and in that capacity he has the necessary grammatical criteria to identify it. Besides, the person is living in a community of language-users, so he has learnt from others how to express pain. Thus having pain is a kind of form of life such that there are definite ways of embedding it in a certain language-game. Wittgenstein thus has moved from the individual having pain to the community of language-users who also have pain in certain characteristic manner. This shift in defining pain-behaviour from the case of the individual to that of the community underlines the fact that the criteria needed are grammatical and not behavioural. Here behaviour does not mean physical behaviour but the forms of life that are associated with the concerned language-games. So Wittgenstein need not demand behavioural criteria for the mental states. All that he needs is the grammatical criteria which evolve from the language-games themselves. The mental states are logically connected with the linguistic expressions such that whenever a particular mental state is talked about we have to see the language-game that is associated with it. Thus the mental phenomena can always be identified with the forms of life they are presented in. Thus there is no room for behaviourism in Wittgenstein's account of mind. The mental behaviour of course is part and parcel of mental life itself. This itself is not behaviourist thesis.

With behaviourism out there is no reason to fear that Wittgenstein has no way to retrieve the mind from the mass of the so called mental activities. He has kept open the door to mind in the very nature of mental activities themselves. The 'mental' is the name of no fixed entity in the Cartesian sense but it is the name of a reality called the mind that is identical with the totality of mental life. This itself suggests that Wittgenstein is not sceptical about mind except about the idea that mind is the name of a queer entity. The entity called mind is never useful in understanding the nature of human life. Human life is the broad background against which alone we can talk about mind.

Now the question arises, how does Wittgenstein conceive the relation between mind and the world in the absence of a substantial entity

called the mind? Wittgenstein's answer is that a mind-body dualism is not necessary to think of the mind-world relation. In fact if mind and body are different then there can be no relation between the two. So he conceives of a linguistic realm in which both body and mind are conceived as two autonomous realities which are yet inseparably existing together. The mind belongs to the world as much as the body and so the mind is not something which is less related to the world than the body. The body, as Wittgenstein says, is the 'best picture of the human soul' (*PI*, p. 178) in that the body is not alien to the mind but is its spontaneous expression. In this sense the world is not alien to the mind as the mind requires the world and the bodies for its expression.

The world, for Wittgenstein, is not a set of dead material objects but of objects of various sorts such as plants, animals, humans and of course the stones and the stars. All these manifest life in varying degrees. But the question of mind arises only in the case of humans who speak language. It is because of this that mind, thought and other mental states are ascribed to human beings. It is the human beings who have the capacity to relate themselves to the world by virtue of their cognitive and other interests in the world. Language serves as the best medium of relating our mind to the world. Mind does not stand apart as a transcendent entity but directly enters the world as a function of the linguistic activities that are about the world.

Thought and language are themselves intimately connected with the world. Thought is about the world as in this alone we discover the various features of the world as it is thought about. Again language alone expresses these thoughts and for that reason language is very much involved in the representation of the world. The world, according to Wittgenstein, is not the other pole of linguistic representation but is in the very essence of representations such that as soon as we open up a linguistic discourse we open up the world itself. It is in this sense that language and the world are intimately connected with each other.

In this connection the important question is, how can the non-Cartesian mind represent the world when we have conceded that the Wittgensteinian mind does not mirror the world? The answer lies in the fact that even if the mind is not a mirror of the world, it has

the capacity to think about the world. Thinking and representing the world are the same so that in the activity of representing the world we have already thought about the world. Thus the Wittgensteinian mind represents the world without standing apart from the world because ultimately it is language which does the representing activity. Language reflects the world as it is and thus there is a representational relation with the latter, But this is not a Cogito type of relation as the mind is not a substance. It is, on the contrary, by virtue of ceasing to be a substance that the Wittgensteinian mind is assimilated into the linguistic function of representing the world. The linguistic representations are at the same time the mental functions that are logically related to the world. In Wittgenstein there is no representation at a distance as the Cartesian picture of mind and world standing apart does not hold good. Descartes' fault was not to see the relation between mind and the world but to see it in such a way that mind can represent it without participating in it. Wittgenstein makes the justified suggestion that the mind can represent the world without being away from it because it is embedded in language itself. As we have already seen, the mirroring activity is now transferred to language from mind and so there is no more reason to say that in Wittgenstein there is no concept of representation at all²⁶.

Wittgenstein in a sense has accepted the general fact that mind and language are the totality of the representations that we have. These representations are not the piecemeal fragments of a mental medium. They are the constitutive elements of language and so the gap between thought and reality is logically bridged.

5. The Autonomy of the minded being

Descartes made the gap between thought and reality wide open because, for him, thought belongs to a different realm from that of the reality. It is in this sense that he maintained the mind-world gap. Wittgenstein bridged the gap by making the mind a part of the world along with language. Descartes more than anyone else realized that it is only through the mental being that we can understand the world. Therefore the Cogito was taken to be prior to the world. In a sense the existence of the world is only morally certain whereas the existence of the world is metaphysically certain.²⁷ Thus Descartes is led to the dualism of mind and the world at least so far as their existence

is concerned. Besides, mind and the world are different so far as their essential attributes are concerned.

Wittgenstein finds this mind-world dualism rather unfounded as the Cartesian reasons provided for this are weak. He does not find the Cartesian notion of certainty satisfactory since it posits a difference between moral and metaphysical certainty. The so called moral certainty is rather shaky because no certainty can be taken only on psychological grounds and besides, it cannot be a matter of conviction alone. The only certainty logically available is metaphysical certainty which, according to Wittgenstein, is the certainty about our language-game (*PI*, p. 224). The certainty accruing to our language and forms of life is the certainty needed so far as our beliefs about the world are concerned (*OC*, sect. 204). What Wittgenstein wants to emphasize about the certainty of the existence of the world is that its existence is a part of the framework of our thinking and using language and so there could be no place for the universal doubt about the existence of the world (*OC*, sect. 370). Thus the *Cogito* cannot be metaphysically prior to the world because in the absence of the world we cannot explain what thinking is. The thinker and thought both presuppose ontologically that there is the world out there and that the world includes both. The use of language itself presupposes that the world exists and that the world being as it is it makes language-use possible. Thus Wittgenstein guarantees metaphysical certainty to the existence of the world and also to that of the mind in the sense that both thought and language are part of the world.

Wittgenstein argues for the mind-in-the-world rather than for the mind that is outside the world. the mind being part of the world is most intimately connected with the world since without the world we cannot think of what mind is. Mind is the minded being, i.e., the human being who has mind. In this sense it is not intelligible how there could be a mind beyond the world. Wittgenstein finds that what we call the mental phenomena are all found in the human beings. It is because only human beings or those which are closer to the human beings can be said to have mind (*PI*, sect. 284). We can ascribe to them only the predicates of thinking, feeling, willing, etc. That is to say, only those beings who use language or at least are capable of learning language are said to be minded beings. This is not only biologically true but also true in a deeper logical sense. Hence we cannot say that a dog hopes or a fish thinks (*PI*, sect.283).

The unique fact about man-the minded being-is that he is capable of speaking and learning language. This explains why he alone can be said to have mind. Having a language and having thoughts are one and the same thing because those who speak a language are capable of showing the signs of having thoughts, hopes, expectations, etc. In this sense the non-human agents cannot be said to be thinking or hoping in the human way. (*PI*, p. 174). According to Wittgenstein, there is the natural history of the human species that determines why human beings alone are minded beings. Though this appears to be an anthropo-centric argument, the fact remains that the human beings alone are in a position to raise this question. So the question becomes a metaphysical one and ceases to be a matter of anthropology alone.

The world and the minded beings constitute the reality and so there could not be a gap between the world on the one hand and the human mind and will on the other. Wittgenstein talked of the non-worldly will in the *Tractatus* but this only neglected the phenomenal will²⁸. It is the will in the world that is focused in his later works. The latter phenomenon is the one manifest in the human language and actions. The whole of mental life is now put in the very heart of the world such that the world has a history of the minded beings themselves.

Wittgenstein and Descartes both acknowledge that the minded beings are the central feature of the world because the human language and actions are enormously important so far as our understanding of the world is concerned. While Descartes posits the mind as the metaphysical centre of the world Wittgenstein takes it on the same level as the world. But both grant autonomy to mind or the minded beings. Both resist the reduction of the mind to matter or any other substance. In Descartes of course, mind is completely independent of the world but he also realizes that body is required for the manifestation of the mind. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, makes it clear that mind, though irreducible, is yet the co-partner of the body in the sense that the body is the 'best picture of the human soul' (*PI*, p.178). However, the mind is still autonomous for Wittgenstein because the language in which we talk of mind is itself not reducible to a language of things.

Human mind makes a difference to the world according to both Descartes and Wittgenstein. For Descartes, in the absence of the mind

we cannot have the concept of the world at all. The *Cogito* is the seat of the significance of the world. But he commits the opposite error of making the world dependent on the mind. Wittgenstein corrects this mistake by saying that though mind makes the world significant it is not by representing the world from a distance but by being in and then providing the world with meaning in and through language. In Wittgenstein language is the carrier of all significance and so there is reason to believe that the world is not dependent on language except in the sense that we cannot think of the world except in language. Rather, for Wittgenstein, mind and world jointly make mind and world as Putnam²⁹ has pointed out. That is to say, there are the minded beings and the world. Descartes himself must have anticipated this though he is well known as one who tilted the world towards the mind.

The idea of autonomy of the human agent or the minded being is the contribution of the Cartesian legacy in Western metaphysics. This is the underlying theme of the history of philosophy of the last four hundred years or so. This has made human civilization realize that the rational man is the ultimate goal of all our endeavour. Wittgenstein has not disowned this basic faith in rationality of man since he also realizes that amid the irrationality of the human nature there is still a place for saner elements. This makes Wittgenstein declare that there is a metaphysical truth about the humans being the minded beings. This makes man and machine so type-different from each other (*RPP2*, sect. 18). Human beings cannot be reproduced in a machine and there cannot be machine simulation of human intelligence as in Artificial Intelligence³⁰. The debate as to whether there is the possibility of a machine-man is meaningless according to Descartes and Wittgenstein because man and man alone is capable of thinking. The idea of a machine thinking like man and also replacing him as a thinking agent is unintelligible because only man can think like man and no machine can do the same. The mental faculty ascribable to man is unique to the human species and this explains why there is no merit in the pseudo-talk that human intelligence is reproducible in a machine. At best man himself can create a machine which can function faster and better under the given condition that the machine is created by man himself.

To conclude : the two metaphysical models of mind discussed

above though divergent in many ways yet converge on the fact that mental reality is a fundamental and autonomous aspect of reality. The convergence point is the idea of the minded being that is a unique phenomenon in the total scheme of things. Descartes made every effort to preserve the human rationality against the onslaught of the sceptics and the materialists. Wittgenstein similarly made effort to make the mental life a unique feature of human form of life. He made language and mind the fundamental ground of our forms of life. He made Descartes look straight at language, mind and the world instead of dividing them and then trying to bring them together.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* trans. John Vietch, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., London 1912.
2. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1953.
3. Descartes, *Meditations* II, pp.88-89.
4. The idea of mind as the Mirror of Nature is Rorty's. Rorty's characterization of mind as the mirror follows from the fact that mind is taken as a medium of representation of the world. See his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1979.
5. *Ibid.*, part II.
6. Descartes, *Meditations* II.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Descartes, *The Principles of Philosophy*, trans. John Veitch, J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., London, 1912, XL.VIII-L.
9. See Emile Brehier, 'The Creation of Eternal Truths in Descartes' System' in *Descartes: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Willis Doney, Macmillan, London, 1968, pp. 192-208.

10. Cf. *Meditations* IV, pp. 111-119.
11. *Ibid.*, See also Alan Gewirth, "Clearness and Distinctness of Ideas in Descartes" in *Descartes: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Willis Doney. Macmillan, London, 1968, pp. 250-277.
12. See Descartes, *The Principles of Philosophy* for the centrality of the faculty of reasoning i.e., the intellect in revealing the nature of eternal and necessary truths.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, Also see Edwin Curley, "Certainty : Psychological, Moral and Metaphysical" in *Essays on the Philosophy and Science of Rene Descartes*, ed. Stephen Voss, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993.
15. Cf. Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy*.
16. See G. Rodis-Lewis, "From Metaphysics to Physics" in *Essays on the Philosophy and Science of Rene Descartes*, ed. Stephen Voss, Oxford University Press, New York. 1993.
17. See Jean-Pierre Seris, "Language and Machine in the Philosophy of Descartes" in *Essays on the Philosophy and Science of Rene Descartes*, ed. Stephen Voss. Oxford University Press, New York, 1993.
18. Wittgenstein. *Tractatus Logic-Philosophicus*, trans. D.F.Pears and B.F. McGuinness, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1961.
20. For a detailed discussion of the idea of language as a universal medium, see Hintikka and Hintikka, *Investigating Wittgenstein*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986.
21. See my "Wittgenstein on Forms of Life : Towards a Transcendental Framework", *Journal of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol.XI (1994), 63-79.
22. See Paul Johnston, *Wittgenstein : Rethinking the Inner*, Routledge, London and New York, 1993.
23. Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, Hutchinson's University Library, London, 1949, Chapter I.
24. For a detailed discussion on this issue, see Malcolm Budd, *Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Mind*, Routledge, London and New York, 1989.
25. *Ibid.*

26. For a critique of representationalism, see Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, 1991, pp. 151-161.
27. See Edwin Curley, "Certainty : Psychological, Moral and Metaphysical" In *Essays on the Philosophy and Science of Rene Descartes*, ed. Stephen Voss, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993.
28. See my "Life, Will and the World : Some Reflections on the *Notebooks 1914-16*" *Journal of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol. X (1993), 31-47.
29. Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, p.xi.
30. For a critical account of Artificial Intelligence, see John Searle, "Minds, and Brains without Programs" in *Mindwaves*, eds. Colin Blakemore and Susan Greenfield, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1987.

Abbreviations :

TLP : *Tractatus- Logico-Philosophicus*

PI : *Philosophical Investigations*

RPP : *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*

OC. : *On Certainty*