～ PART TWO

Naive Action Theory

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Introductory

1. Naive and Sophisticated Explanation of Action

It doesn't really befit a philosopher to make such a statement, I don't suppose, but nevertheless I will hazard the following bold empirical hypothesis: the explanation of action as it appears most frequently in human thought and speech is *the explanation of one action in terms of another:*

"Why are you pulling that cord?" says one
—"I'm starting the engine," says the other;

"Why are you cutting those wires?" says one
—"I'm repairing a short-circuit," says the other;

"Why are you crossing Fifth Avenue?" says one
—"I'm walking to school," says the other;

"Why are you breaking those eggs?" says one
—"I'm making an omelet," says the other.[1]

The question "Why?" that is deployed in these exchanges evidently bears the "special sense" Elizabeth Anscombe has linked to the con-

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1. The immediately following paragraphs elucidate some of the terms and concepts central to Part Two; its central claims are outlined in the following section.

cepts of intention and of a reason for action; it is the sort of question "Why?" that asks for what Donald Davidson later called a "rationalization".[2] The special character of what is given, in each response, as formulating a reason—a description, namely, of the agent as actually *doing* something, and, moreover, as doing something of which the act queried might be said to be a part, phase or "moment"—marks each of our exchanges as an instance of what I will call *naive action explanation* or, more generally, *naive rationalization.*[3]

Naive explanation of action is opposed to a distinct, *sophisticated*

2. G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), especially pp. 9–11; Donald Davidson, "Actions, Reasons and Causes," *Journal of Philosophy* 60 (1963): 685–699, reprinted in *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 3–20.

3. It should perhaps be emphasized that throughout this essay we will have to do only with what are typically called "explanatory" reasons, and never directly with reasons in the sense of "justifying" reasons—or (I suppose equivalently), that we treat the notion of *a reason why a person did something*, not that of *a reason why he or she ought to have done it.* This is not to suggest that a complete account of the former sort of reason could fail to involve discussion of the latter, but only to allow that we will not here reach a complete account of the former, our topic.

In the Davidsonian usage adopted here, a "rationalization" is of course understood to formulate an "explanatory" reason; the point of this rather artificial usage is to avoid complicated circumlocution involving reference, for example, to "a certain sense of the question 'Why?'" The phrase "explanation of action" must also be understood in this sense, as covering only explanations 'by reasons' or 'in the order of reasons'—so that, for example, overtly neurological accounts of action are ruled out. "Rationalization", as I use it, is wider than "explanation of action", for it covers reasons-explanations of other things—for example, explanations of intention, of wanting in a certain sense, and of attempt.

I should perhaps also remark that in company with the whole action-theoretical tradition, I presuppose a more or less realistic, or anti-pragmatic, theory of specifically *practical* explanation, that is, of rationalization considered as a phenomenon of speech and thought. The ultimate aim of action theory is a philosophical understanding of a particular etiological nexus, or relation of dependence, that joins certain "things in the world"—together, of course, with an understanding of these things themselves, for example, actions and wantings. The assumption is that such a nexus or order is revealed in certain forms of speech and thought, even if often incompletely or in somewhat confusing ways. In brief defense of this 'realism' we may note, first, the peculiar fatuity that appears to threaten any attempt to explain away practical explanation *pragmatically*, and, second, that the capacity to represent these phenomena seems to enter into the constitution of the order that is represented—here, that is, the 'order and connection of ideas' is in a sense a *part* of the order and connection of things.

Whether the intended nexus is *causal* in any particular pre-conceived sense is of course a separate question; I will not enter into the matter explicitly. Certainly, I think, the so-called 'belief component' of such explanation should be viewed as a cause, and it contains what is most properly called her reason, i.e., the consideration on which she acts. But our interest here is in the other 'component', the wanting, and the other things that can take its position. I employ the word "etiological"—thinking of Aristotle's four *aitia*—where I might have said "causal", in order to express my agnosticism in respect to this formerly much vexed question.

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form—a form that, if it is less common in life, is all the same much more common in the pages of philosophy. This is the explanation of action in terms of desire, or, as we might rather call it, the explanation of action in terms of wanting, or of what the agent wants. Here are a few examples, lifted at random from Professor Davidson's essay "Actions, Reasons and Causes"[4]:

> "Why are you flipping that switch?"
>   —"I *want* to turn on the light";
>
> "Why are you biting your thumb at me?"
>   —"I *want* to insult you";
>
> "Why are you turning left?"
>   —"I *want* to get to Katmandu."

The philosophers' emphasis on the question "Why?" lends a certain colloquial realism to the discussion of reasons for action, of course, but it imports into the discussion all the further complexities that attend the interrogative form. The self-same etiological content, whether it be naive or sophisticated, can always be expressed apart from any such interrogative context. The agent can simply volunteer such a "sophisticated" rationalization as this one:

> "I am gathering kindling because I *want* to build a fire,"

or (perhaps a little later) this one:

> "I am building a fire because I *want* to burn the evidence of my crime."

Similarly, an agent might volunteer such "naive" rationalizations as these (here perhaps more or less simultaneously):

> "I am mixing mortar because I am laying bricks," and

> "I am laying bricks because I am building a monument to the great works of Frege."

4. Donald Davidson, *Essays on Action and Events* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 4–6.

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Where naive and sophisticated articulations of peoples' reasons are uniformly assertoric in this sort of way, they are alike in employing the all-purpose explanatory connective "because". But the content of either form of account can be reformulated in terms of a so-called final or purpose clause (with, of course, the loss of whatever information distinguishes them). Our sophisticated and naive pairs transpose, respectively, into these finalized formulae:

"I am gathering these sticks in order to build a fire," and

"I am building a fire in order to burn the evidence,"

and these:

"I am mixing concrete in order to lay bricks," and

"I am laying bricks in order to build a monument."

A final or purposive rendering of a rationalization permits us to attach an undeclined verb of action directly to the explanatory connective "in order to", omitting even the second reference to the agent. With a non-final rendering, things are different: whether it is employed in meteorology, medicine or financial reporting, or in the rational explanation of action, the word "because" must be flanked by complete propositions, to each of which the writer commits herself. However we understand it, that is, *P because Q* will entail both *P* and *Q*. In adopting a non-final form of expression of an action explanation we are thus forced to decide how to fit the second verb of action into a complete sentence, a truth. Are we going to join subject and verb directly and without varnish—saying of our egg-breaker, for example, that he *is* mak*ing* an omelet; or indirectly, by the interpolation of a new verb, saying merely that he *wants* to make an omelet?[5] This is the choice of naiveté or sophistication.

To sum up, then, we are faced with three linguistically given forms of rationalization: I'm doing A because I'm doing B; I'm doing A because

5. See the parallel remarks in Anscombe, *Intention*, pp. 39–40.

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I want to do B; and, finally: I'm doing A in order to do B—which last form tends to swallow the other two up.[6]

2. Preliminary Formulation of Central Claims

The notion of rationalization with which I am operating is restricted to such as *can* be given a final-clausal or purposive or "instrumental" or "teleological" formulation; it is the notion, as I will sometimes say, of *straightforward rationalization*.[7] The focus of the present discussion will, however, be on the non-final form of expression of straightforward rationalization—the sort that uses the word "because" or an equivalent. Though a blinkered understanding of this mode of connection of representations arguably lies at the bottom of much received opinion in ethical theory and in the philosophy of practical rationality, the aims of the present essay are in the first instance metaphysical or action-

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6. Since they will appear throughout this essay, I should perhaps remark that the schematic letters "A", "B", "C", etc., do not contain the whole variable element: typical substitution instances of "He wants to do A" would be, for example, "He wants to walk across the street" and "He wants to make an omelet," which dispense with the verb "to do". As the function of the copula "to be" is to receive distinctions of tense, the point of introducing a "pro-verb" like "to do", in the present context, is to have something that will receive distinctions of both tense *and aspect*.

7. Thus, in the sense in which the term is used in this essay, "I killed him because he killed my brother" and "I turned onto Negley Avenue because Highland Park Avenue was closed" do not express rationalizations directly. Corresponding genuinely straightforward rationalizations might be, for example, "I killed him because I wanted to avenge the death of my brother" and "I turned onto Negley Avenue because I was going to the dentist"; these transpose into the purposive forms ". . . in order to avenge the death of my brother" and ". . . in order to go to the dentist", respectively.

What is posited as an "end" in what I am calling a straightforward rationalization is always something that can be thought of as completely realized or effected or "done" at some point. Given such completion, if later actions are subordinate to pursuit of an end formulated in the same terms, then it is a new end—*another* act of omelet making, for example, or another trip to Katmandu. Rationalizations that associate action with what might be called generic ends are thus not straightforward in this sense, and fall outside our present enquiry. Such rationalizations are frequently formulated in English by the use of "for the sake of"—for example, "he did it for the sake of health" (or science, or our freedom, or his own happiness, etc.). The radical distinction between such "ends" and those represented by, say, ". . . in order to get the good guys in" or ". . . in order to make an omelet" is emphasized by Anscombe in *Intention*, p. 63; in "Authority in Morals," in *Ethics, Religion and Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), pp. 43–50, especially pp. 48–49; and in "Practical Inference," in *Virtues and Reasons*, ed. R. Hursthouse, G. Lawrence and W. Quinn (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), pp. 1–34, especially pp. 28–34.

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theoretical. Our enquiry is into the nexus of things that is made articulate in rationalization, and also into the nature of intentional action. Anscombe, as everyone knows, taught that these enquiries are the same: intentional action, as she put it, is "that to which a certain sense of the question 'Why?' has application."[8] And Davidson, as everyone also knows, taught that *any analysis of the rationalization-connection must account for its non-final form of expression.*[9] My aim is to trace out the consequences of taking seriously the idea, implicit in the ubiquitous practice of naive rationalization, that intentional action can figure in the order of things equally as grounded and as ground, as rationalized and as (non-finally) rationalizing. If naive rationalization *is* taken seriously, our conceptions of intentional action and of rationalization alike must, I will argue, be appreciably altered.

But is naive action explanation to be taken seriously? It may be ubiquitous, but is it anything more than a dispensable manner of speaking? Arguments crowd in, after all, to the effect that the explanatory content of naive action explanation, its underlying etiological basis, must be something that is more directly or more appropriately expressed in some sophisticated form. Our agent is building a house, indeed, but *that's* not why he's laying these bricks, not *really;* the ground, in nature, of the brick-laying, must be rather something like this, that she *wants* to build a house. Such thoughts are the mark of what I will call a sophisticated philosophy of action, which finds in every genuine straightforward rationalization a movement from inner to outer, from mind to world, from spirit to nature, from "desire" to "action". One of my principal theses will thus have to be this, that a sophisticated position cannot be defended, that the linguistic appearances ought to be saved, and that the role played by wanting, in the one sort of case, really is taken up, in the other, by what we might call the progress of the deed itself.

That such a position seems strange, in spite of the ubiquity and

8. Anscombe, *Intention*, p. 9.

9. "Central to the relation between a reason and an action it explains is the idea that the agent performed the action *because* he had the reason" (Davidson, "Actions, Reasons and Causes," p. 9). This does not entail that finality or purposiveness are somehow expelled from Davidson's doctrine as it is expounded, amid revisions, in the first six papers in *Essays on Actions and Events.* The selection of apt belief-desire pairs is evidently controlled by the intelligibility of a purposive rendering of the rationalization; and we are surely supposed to advert to this form in characterizing a causal relation as non-deviant or rationalization-supporting. His doctrine is not a rejection of practical teleology, but a theory of it.

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seeming transparency of naive rationalization, is in part a consequence of received conceptions of intentional action itself, above all, of the tendency of students of practical philosophy to view individual human actions as discrete or atomic or pointlike or eye-blink-like units that might as well be instantaneous for all that it matters to the theory. Part of the present effort, then, is to break up such conceptions. A person might, after all, spend a few years building a house, a few months raising an acre of cantaloupe, a few hours baking a loaf of bread, a few minutes playing a hand of poker—or a few seconds assassinating a political opponent. Any of these will make an apt illustration of the concept of intentional action, none more apt than any other.[10] If we reach for the last and shortest of these as our preferred illustration, as the one that makes everything especially clear—and proceed to dwell, for example, on its supposed identity with an apparently unanalyzable *moving of a finger*, rather than its equally attractive and likely resolution into *reaching for*, *raising*, *aiming* and *firing* a gun, to say nothing of *checking to see if the victim is done for* and *repeating as necessary*—it is, I will suggest, because we are moved by considerations alien to the philosophy of action, however legitimate they may be from the point of view of, say, a physiologist investigating "voluntary" as opposed to "reflex" movement. The nature of intentional action, or of the kind of being-subject-of-an-event that characterizes a rational agent and a person, resides in the peculiar "synthesis" that unites the various parts and phases of something like house building, for example, mixing mortar, laying bricks, hammering nails, etc. This synthesis is rendered explicit in naive rationalization, which brings them successively to the one formula "I'm building a house." But the synthesis can be exhibited, I will suggest, even in the moving of a finger.

The recognition of naive rationalization is impeded not just by a narrow conception of intentional action, but also, I think, by a wrong conception of the sorts of practical-psychical state that can be given as straightforwardly rationalizing—for example, *wanting* and *intention*. An attempt will be made in the later sections of this essay to unite naive

10. Notice also that the periods mentioned might be superimposed in a description of the activity of a single person. Having set a few more bricks this morning, and irrigated the melons this afternoon, I might pick off a passing peasant organizer as I sit on the veranda, waiting for the bread to rise and for my friend to place his bet. Such phenomena will take on increasing significance as our argument develops.

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and sophisticated rationalization as co-equal forms of expression of a single etiological nexus. This will turn on a re-conceptualization of these practical-psychological phenomena and, in particular, on the isolation of a *genus* under which *intending to do A*, *wanting to do A* fall together with *doing A intentionally* (in one of its modes of appearance). To grasp this genus, it will be necessary to intrude into the general metaphysics of events, processes or happenings—or rather, into the part of this metaphysics that belongs to the analysis of what Wilfrid Sellars called the "Manifest Image."[11] The general form of straightforward rationalization, I will suggest, can only be understood properly if it is brought into connection with certain frequently suppressed features of natural or pre-scientific temporal awareness and conception.[12] The resulting theory involves a considerable alteration in the categorical standing of wanting and intending and other such "acts of will"— among other things, a complete break with the apparently uncontroversial idea that they are properly called *states*.

The argument will conclude with a speculative reversal of the idea of a sophisticated philosophy of action. I will attempt to defend the conjecture that naive action explanation is no mere co-equal of sophisticated action explanation, but is in an important sense *prior* to it. It is, I want to suggest, only because we are to start with the kind of thing of which you can say something like "She's doing A because she's doing B" that we can be or become the sort of which you might say "She's doing A because she wants to do B." It is possible to imagine a form of life and thought in which the latter, sophisticated form is simply unknown. Among such agents, all of the work of straightforward rationalization is effected by means of the rationalization connective combined only with the categories of ordinary event consciousness. The more "sophisticated" forms of straightforward rationalization can then be depicted as arising from this rustic state of things in a series of stages akin to that described in, say, Sellars's "Myth of Jones."[13] If barter is the

11. "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man," in *Science, Perception and Reality* (New York: Humanities Press, 1963), pp. 1–40. Sellars calls this sort of philosophy "philosophia perennis"; I suppose that ethics and the philosophy of rationality, as well as their servant, the philosophy of action, all necessarily fall under it.

12. Chief among the features I mean are those that, when they manage to find independent expression in the forms of human speech, are ranged by linguists under a heading of "aspect", and distinguished by them from "tense".

13. *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 90–117.

naive and unsophisticated form of exchange, then naive action explanation is the barter form of rationalization.

3. Remark on the Intellectual Aspect of Our Material

I should perhaps remark, before continuing, on something that may already have been noticed: in my preliminary characterization of the concepts of naive and sophisticated explanation of action I said nothing about what might be called the intellectual aspect of rationalization. This is the aspect that is registered, in the received jargon, in terms of the 'belief component' of a rationalizing 'belief-desire pair'. Where naive explanation of action is possible, we could, I think, speak with equal justice of the 'belief component' of a belief-*action* pair. No one can be said to break an egg "because he's making an omelet", after all, if he is unaware of any possible connection between these things. It is just for this reason, though, that most of this discussion will proscind from the matters of belief, practical thought, practical calculation and so forth. My principal topic is the *distinction* between naive and sophisticated rationalization; if a link with the powers exercised in belief is something they have in common, then we can reasonably divide through by it.

From the point of view of this work as a whole, however, the so-called belief component is all-important. For it contains the consideration upon which the agent acts in doing A, that is, the thing that is most properly or narrowly called the 'reason' or *ratio* or *logos* upon which her doing of A is founded. In a proper and canonical representation, this reason or consideration will always be a thought precisely *about doing A.* The action is founded on something the agent sees in it; there's something about it, as she thinks, that moves her to act. (Not all explanation of action that fits with Anscombe's sense of the question "Why?" will be like this; if I say that someone is eating because he is hungry, I do not thereby put the *eating* down to something the agent sees in it, or to an idea he has about it.)

Thus, for example, the bearer of fidelity and justice—our topic in Part Three of this work—will often do something, A, on the basis of the consideration that *she promised Y that she would do A.* In the 'straightforward' sort of case that is the topic of this part, the relevant 'thought about doing A' is *instrumental*, to use the familiar jargon. In particular, it will link the idea of doing A up with the idea of doing B, where doing B is the larger objective that is mentioned in the various

sub-types of straightforward rationalization we have been considering. The thought in question might take a number of forms: for example, the agent may think that by *doing A she will thereby do B*, or *might thereby do B*; or she might think that *doing A is the first stage of doing B* or the *second* or *third*; or she might think that *doing A will make things apt for doing B*, or *might make them apt*, or *might help make them apt*; and so on. In any event her thought must have the form . . . *to do A . . . to do B. . . .*

The dependence of an action on a consideration, or on a reason, narrowly construed, is presumably always a sort of causal dependence; but the contrast between the thought-dependence found in our present sort of case and in something like genuine fidelity to promises suggests that the thought-dependence of human action can take radically different forms. As Aristotle would say, it is not just any chance thought that can operate as the consideration upon which just any chance action is founded: if it is an action of doing A, it must be a thought about doing A, as we said above; but not just any *such* thought will do either. What sort of thought about doing A it might be will depend on what operates in the background and makes the dependence of action on thought to be of the 'right kind' to be called a dependence of action on a reason or consideration. In the case we are considering here in Part Two, it is the fact that the agent *wants* to do B—or even, as I think, the fact that the agent *is doing* B—that joins *the thought that . . . to do A . . . to do B . . .* and *the agent's doing A* together as cause and effect of the right kind.

It is not like this in the case of the hero of fidelity, whose action, under the description contained in the promise, also exhibits a dependence on thought-about-action. Her consideration is not instrumental, it is of the form . . . *to do A* . . . simply, or in the case at hand, more specifically *I promised X that I would do A*. The dependence of faithful action on thought is again made to be 'of the right kind' by the presence of something else, which we will later identify with the virtue of fidelity, or of justice simply. Its category is very remote from that now under consideration.

One gets a sense of the categorial transposition or slippage when one reflects on the obvious point that the same thought might operate in a straightforward explanation of action. It might be that some other agent, not the hero of fidelity, wants simply *to do something he promised Y he'd do*—for example, in order to fake out Y for later bilking, or to impress a girl here present who is an admirer of Y and also of justice. The consideration on which such a character's doing A is founded might be the

same as we find in our hero's case, *but it will enter into the account in accordance with different analysis*, in Frege's sense. In representing the consideration or reason upon which his action is founded, we would do better to write something like "My doing A is a case of my doing something I promised Y I'd do" rather than "I promised Y I'd do A," though these are the same thought presented in different shapes. The long-winded formulation merely brings out the instrumental form, *. . . to do A . . . to do B . . .* , which is the crucial one in his case—it puts "to do something I promised Y I'd do" in the "to do B" position, and "is a case of" in place of the ellipses.

Similarly, in the parallel 'theoretical' case, someone who knows (or believes) that *Cato killed Cato* may come to know (or believe) that *either Cato killed Cato or Caesar killed Cato*, by or-introduction; or he may come to know that *someone killed Cato*, by existential generalization; or he may come to know that *someone killed himself*, again by existential generalization. In all three cases the premise is the same, but the inference, or the dependence of cognition on cognition, turns on a different analysis of it. In the first inference, the proposition is treated as an unanalyzed whole, *Cato killed Cato;* in the second, it might better be expressed as *it holds of Cato, that he killed Cato;* and in the third as *it holds of Cato, that he killed himself.* But, again, these are just different ways of formulating the same thought.

In sum, then: any thought that might engender another thought after the fashion of existential generalization might also engender another after the fashion of or-introduction, but in accordance with another analysis; and so also any thought about doing A that might engender a doing of A non-instrumentally might also engender a doing of A instrumentally, but, again, in accordance with another analysis. For the thought *F(to do A)* can always be reformulated as *to do A is to do something F.* Moreover, any thought of the form *. . . to do A . . . to do B . . .* is also of the form *F(to do A)*, and might enter into a non-straightforward account of action, though the cases will tend to be a bit recherché.

If this is right, then the distinction between instrumental and noninstrumental considerations pertains neither to their content nor their form, but to the specific form of dependence of the action on the consideration, which turns on the presence of something else.[14] Here we consider one such form, and in Part Three another. If Aristotle or Kant

14. In "Actions, Reasons and Causes," Davidson famously argues that 'reasons are causes' starting from the fact that the wanting to do B and the thought that *. . . to do A . . . to do B*

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is right, there must be still others. What is distinctive of the form of thought-dependence under discussion here, as will I think be seen, is that it is internally related to the idea of action in ways the other things are not. Action is typically a process that runs through phases, and the case where the resolution into phases turns on the agent's thought must be typical or possible. The sort of dependence on thought that is characteristic of those phases, which are themselves actions in that sort of case, is the type at issue here.[15]

. . . , and, on the other hand, the wanting to do B* and the thought that . . . to do A . . . to do B* . . . , can all co-exist with the action of doing A. It might be that only the second thought, the thought that . . . to do A . . . to do B* . . . , states the agent's reason for doing A. How then to distinguish this consideration from the other thought, except by its causal relation to the action? This seems reasonable enough, but it should be noticed that the argument has here been stated, and the conclusion drawn—reasons, that is considerations, are causes—without declaring that the wantings are causes. No doubt in some sense they are, but in fact Davidson gets this result only by summing consideration and wanting under the title of the 'primary reason' earlier in the paper, then proving that this primary reason contains the cause. This doesn't tell us what in this aggregate does contain the cause in question.

    If the agent in question is a bearer of fidelity and, on the one hand, wants to do B and thinks that . . . to do A . . . to do B . . . , but, on the other hand, thinks that she promised Y that she'd do A, then it might be that she does A 'because she promised', and not in hope of doing B. That is, only the second thought contains her reason or operates as the cause in the way that thoughts can in practice. If Davidson's argument is taken in this way, as affirming the doctrine that reasons in the strict sense, that is considerations, are causes, then there will be no cause to assimilate the wanting to do B and fidelity as two cases of an imaginary super-category 'desire'. These things are very remote from each other logically speaking, and the senses in which they are causes must be separately explained. To put them together is like putting *Begriff* and *Gegenstand* together as, say, 'entities'.

    I should note further that there is no evidence that Anscombe would reject the doctrine I have outlined in this note. It has been thought by those unfamiliar with the evidence that she is among the targets of Davidson's paper, which mentions Ryle, Melden, Winch and Kenny as offenders. Some of her jargon—for example, the concept "mental cause", which is more or less explicitly introduced as an unanalyzable unit, and the associated opposition between *thoughts as reasons* and *thoughts as (mere) 'causes'* (such as we find in some cases of the badly so-called 'mental [mere] causality')—has aided and abetted in this. Though she claims early on (p. 10) that "the topic of causality is in a state of too great confusion" to be employed by her in any crucial elucidatory way, still the whole purpose of the book is clearly to argue for the proposition that at last appears on p. 87, viz. "practical knowledge is the cause of what it understands," that is, that the agent's self-knowledge in respect of action is productive, not reflective, of what is known. This is not the particular 'causalist' doctrine Davidson was propounding, since for one thing the element of self-consciousness or self-knowledge—which is I think Anscombe's ultimate interest—is undeveloped by him; but it is very far from any horror of finding causality in the sphere of the mind.

    15. This is I think a better formulation of the purpose of Anscombe's *Intention*, secs. 20 and 21, which might be put by saying that the capacity to act for reasons must inter alia be the capacity to act for instrumental reasons, or, as she puts it, 'some chains must begin' (24).

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Types of Practical Explanation

1. The Table of Forms of Rationalization

My principal end, as I have said, is to argue that naive action explanation is an independent and legitimate type, as much revealing of the true "causes" of action, in its place, as is the philosophers' preferred form, the one I have called sophisticated. But even if it is true that any strict and philosophical formulation of someone's reason for action must be sophisticated, still it is clear that what is supposed to explain *action* in such a case—namely, the agent's wanting something—might equally well be given in explanation of an agent's *wanting* something. Where desire or wanting is thus explained by another wanting it is thereby shown to be what Thomas Nagel called a "motivated desire"—as indeed the want or desire that explains it might already have been. I might want to do A *because I want to do B*, but want to do B *because I want to do C*—in which case, of course, I want to do A because I want to do C—and so forth.[1] Such psychical rationalizations of the psychical are of course straightforward: they admit purposive reformulation in such exchanges as "Why do you want to do A?"—"In order to do C."

But notice that, just as, at least in vulgar speech, the unvarnished formula of an *action* can be used—naively—to explain another action, so also can an unvarnished formula of action be used, in that same vulgar

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1. See G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp, 26–27.

speech, to explain someone's *wanting* to do something. That is, I might want to do A because I *am doing* B. Such rationalizations also, of course, admit purposive reformulation.

Consider, for example, the following bit of banal domestic patter, a serial deployment of non-purposive forms:

"Why are you stepping up onto that stool?"
    —"Because I want to get the flour down."

"And why do you want to get the flour down?"
    —"Because I'm preparing chicken and dumplings."

"And why, I ask, are you preparing chicken and dumplings?"
    —"Because I want to make something nice for Aunt Clara: she's coming down from Altoona to see us, you know."

Here, if we cleave to appearances, an *action* (of stepping) is explained by a *want* (for getting flour), which is then explained by an *action* (of preparing chicken and dumplings), which is in turn explained by a *want* (for making something nice). Thus, whether mediately or immediately, all four types of rationalizing connection are exhibited: want by action, action by want, action by action, and want by want.

Moreover, just as, in vulgar speech, the formula of a want can rationalize either a want or an action, so also can it rationalize an *intention*. I might, that is, intend or plan or mean to do A because I want to do B.

But, once again, it is the same with an unvarnished action description. Indeed, we find a nice illustration of the fact in an example of Davidson's, an example calculated to show that there can be what he calls "pure intending"—intending detached in a certain way from action. "I am not writing it now," I might say, "but I intend to write the letter 'c'; in fact I plan on writing it as soon as I finish writing the letter 'a'"—"And why is that?" you might ask—"Because I'm writing the word 'action,'" I could reply.[2]

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2. We might draw a distinction between *independent* and *dependent* intention, parallel to that which Davidson draws between *pure* and *impure* intention. The distinctions pertain to the relation of the intention to actions in progress. My intention to do B is impure, in Davidson's sense, so long as there is some truth of the form "I'm doing A with the intention of doing B" or ". . . because I intend to do B"; otherwise it is, at the moment, pure. My intention to do B is in our sense *dependent*, on the other hand, if there is some truth of the form "I in-

Indeed, in suitable circumstances, propositions of any of the following forms—*I want to do B*, *I intend (or mean or plan) to do B*, *I'm trying to do B*, *I'm doing B*—can be given in straightforward rationalization of what is expressed by any of the four sorts of proposition, *I want to do A*, *I intend to do A*, *I'm trying to do A*, *I'm doing A*. Altogether, then, we have sixteen possibilities, as in the following table:

	I'm doing B	*I'm trying to do B*	*I intend to do B*	*I want to do B*
I'm doing A	I'm doing A because I'm doing B	I'm doing A because I'm trying to do B	I'm doing A because I intend to do B	I'm doing A because I want to do B
I'm trying to do A	I'm trying to do A because I'm doing B	I'm trying to do A because I'm trying to do B	I'm trying to do A because I intend to do B	I'm trying to do A because I want to do B
I intend to do A	I intend to do A because I'm doing B	I intend to do A because I'm trying to do B	I intend to do A because I intend to do B	I intend to do A because I want to do B
I want to do A	I want to do A because I'm doing B	I want to do A because I'm trying to do B	I want to do A because I intend to do B	I want to do A because I want to do B

The table suggests a clarification of terminology: all of the proposition-types exhibited are forms of (straightforward) *rationalization;* those exhibited in the top row are forms of *action explanation;* those found in the leftmost column are forms of *naive* rationalization; the others (but especially those exhibited in the rightmost column) are forms of *sophisticated* rationalization. Our starting point, *naive action explanation*, appears in the upper left.[3]

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tend to do B because I'm doing C"; otherwise it is independent. When I am writing the letter "a" in "action", my intention to write the letter "c" is pure but dependent, for I am already doing that for the sake of which I intend to write the letter "c". When I buy eggs because I intend to make an omelet, my intention is impure but my action is independent, for I am intuitively not yet making an omelet.

We can speak of pure and impure, dependent and independent wanting as well. Note that *even actions can be so classified:* as we saw above, it may be true to say that I am baking bread though it is in the oven and, at the moment (as we say), I am playing cards or napping; such bread-baking is, for the moment, Davidsonian "pure" *action.* Any act that naively rationalizes another is impure, and any act it rationalizes is dependent.

3. I am thinking of these "propositions" indifferently as forms of speech and of thought. My principal conjecture, of course, is that to the sixteen of them there correspond sixteen distinct forms of (rational) etiological connection among elements of an agent's life.

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The attention of Davidson, like that of the rather different type of philosopher who finds it in himself happily to employ the expressions "folk psychology" and "belief-desire psychology", is almost entirely absorbed in the contents of the upper right-hand corner—a single species in our expanding botanical garden, a single point in what we have so far developed into a space of sixteen. By a "psychology", in this literature, one after all understands a theory that issues in explanations of action, or else explanations of 'behavior', if that is something different. But it is clear that any psychology or other sort of teaching that admits the sophisticated action explanations schematized in the upper right can have no quarrel with any of the other forms registered in the rightmost column. Where 'wants' can explain action, such wants must exist; and where 'wants' exist, why shouldn't they sometimes be explained or rationalized—even if only by other *wants?* And if wants are potentially rationalized, why shouldn't intentions and attempts also be? There is nevertheless something sound in the fixation of the philosopher's attention on the want—*action* form, the head of the right-hand column; it expresses the converse intuition that, where wants can explain *wants*, in our present rationalizing sort of way, and where wants can explain our intentions and attempts, they must also potentially explain *action* in the same sort of way. All forms of rationalization must tend toward the rationalization of action, even if, in many particular cases, nothing ends up getting done.

The question before us is whether some such reasoning can move us not only upward and downward but also to the left, that is, to a serious acceptance of naive rationalization.

2. The Elements Joined in Our Table

To the sixteen points of our space, there correspond four final or purposive forms of rationalization, one for each row:

I'm doing A *in order to do B*,

I'm trying to do A *in order to do B*,

I intend to do A *in order to do B*, and

I want to do A *in order to do B*.

Given the truth of any one of these propositions, the question how many of the four associated *non-final* forms of rationalization are appropriate or felicitous or true will depend on a variety of circumstances. On certain crude but natural assumptions, though, entailments will run rightward from one column of our table to the next, and also downward from row to row. These are the same natural assumptions as also suggest that the simple unconjoined proposition "She wants to do A" is entailed by "She intends to do A," that "She intends to do A" is entailed by "She is trying to do A," and further, as Brian O'Shaughnessy and Jennifer Hornsby have argued, that "She is trying to do A" (like "She intends to do A") is entailed by "She is doing A *intentionally*."[4] That "She is trying to do A" isn't entailed by "She is doing A" *simpliciter* is obvious; but it is clear that where they instance forms on our table, "She's doing A because P" and "P because she's doing A" both entail the detached proposition "She's doing A intentionally." On our assumption about trying, then, "She's doing A because P" and its converse would also both entail "She's trying to do A." It is a short step to the thought that "She's doing A because P" and its converse, respectively, entail "She's trying to do A because P" and *its* converse. This would complete our sequence of entailments.

This view of the entailment relations among our simple unconjoined propositions follows the teaching of Davidson's "Intending", once it is expanded to take account of trying or attempt, which he does not discuss.[5] If the view of the entailments just propounded is defensible, each simple proposition must be interpreted as saying a bit more than its immediate successor. If, for example, I say that I intend to do A, I don't suggest that I am actually *doing* anything that might bear on doing A— as I seem to do when I say that I am trying to do A. And if I say that I want to do A, I don't suggest, as I seem to do if I say I'm doing A intentionally, or am trying to do it, or intend to do it, that I have hit upon any determinate scheme for potentially realizing the doing of A, cer-

4. See especially Brian O'Shaughnessy, *The Will: A Dual Aspect Theory*, vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 39–55, 75–126; and Jennifer Hornsby, *Actions* (London: Routledge, 1980), ch. 3.

5. Certainly any genuine *attempt* to do A would involve a Davidsonian "all-out judgment" in favor of doing A, and thus an intention to do it; I don't, however, mean to commit myself to any detail of Davidson's theory, but only to attach the same pre-analytic sense to my expressions.

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tain or uncertain—apart from the ever-ready "scheme" of reflecting practically on the matter.

Of course, each of the proposed entailments among our simple unconjoined propositions has been rejected, implicitly or explicitly, somewhere in the literature. There is clearly limitless scope for intuition about particular cases, and thus for controversy about entailments among the simple propositions—and thus also for controversy about the entailments among the complex etiological combinations of them that are exhibited on our table. On the other hand, though, there is also limitless scope for the introduction of novel practical-psychological verbs. Some of these might exhibit more complex entailment relations with the others. My claim is that where rejection of the entailments I have mentioned does not spring from a familiar sort of misreading of conversational implicatures, it springs from the association of a different content with some of our practical-psychical verbs—that is, from an unobjectionable attempt to extend the table.

Let us briefly review some of the literature. It will help if we adopt abbreviations for the four simple unconjoined forms of proposition I have mentioned—"I'm doing A intentionally," "I'm trying to do A," "I intend to do A" and "I want to do A"—as AI, T, I and W, respectively. Ludwig Wittgenstein notoriously rejected AI→T and perhaps also AI→W; it is natural to accuse him of overreading conversational implicatures as entailments, and I will ignore his view.[6] Michael Bratman has familiarly rejected AI→I, which he calls "The Simple View," and perhaps also T→I (if his "endeavoring" can be read, when applied to *present* activity, as "trying"). My "intending" appears to be equivalent to Bratman's "endeavoring" (taken in its complete scope); his "intending" is equivalent to mine combined with some sort of inner "commitment" to perform.[7] David Velleman, developing remarks of H. P. Grice and Gilbert Harman, argues, against Davidson, that agents intend only what they believe they will successfully perform.[8] This doc-

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6. *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1958), para. 116 and 621.

7. See *Intentions, Plans and Practical Reason* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), chs. 8 and 9, pp. 111–138.

8. See Velleman, *Practical Reflections* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 109–143; Grice, "Intention and Uncertainty," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 57 (1971): 263–279; and Harman, "Practical Reasoning," *Review of Metaphysics* 29 (1976): 431–463.

trine, which might also be found in Anscombe,[9] certainly involves a rejection of T→I. My "intending" (and Davidson's) might perhaps be represented in the systems of Grice, Harman and Velleman as "intending to try"; the *pre-analytic* notion of intending that they share might be represented in my language as intending combined with confidence in success.

It seems, then, that the concepts that figure in my table are, or can be, represented in all of these systems, and that, once constituted, they would exhibit the entailment relations I have propounded. Moreover, the concepts those writers introduce, in different ways, under the heading of "intention" can be *added* to mine. The expanded hundred flowers table, with its twenty-five or thirty-six points, would of course exhibit a less lovely structure of consequences.[10]

But however the question of these entailments is to be managed, the suggestion of our table and any improved supertable appears to be this, *that all such matters are details.* It seems, that is, that the construction of a symmetrical table of this sort ought to draw our attention from the particular psychical states mentioned in it, taken in isolation, toward the general form of combination that is exhibited throughout the table. The nature of all of the states under discussion evidently resides partly in their fitness to enter into this peculiar sort of articulation; if it is not understood, then none of the particular states is understood; but once it is understood, we have every reason to think that the disputes of the learned about the distinctions among the particular states that might thus be joined will seem tiresome and scholastic.

3. The Kind of Wanting or Orexis That Enters into Our Table

Though the point has frequently been made, it is worth emphasizing our claim that *wanting to do A* is entailed by *intending to do A.* The claim

9. See Anscombe, *Intention*, pp. 90–94.

10. Any theory that attempts to encode some notion of futurity into the possible contents of intention and wanting will of course have to reject AI→I and AI→W, unless it also holds that whatever is done intentionally was *antecedently* intended or wanted. John Searle suggests that the word "intend" covers two profoundly diverse mental states: one, "future intention", does encode futurity and invalidates AI→I; the other, "intention in action", validates it. Thus, though he attacks authors who reject AI→I, his doctrine seems to provide all that is needed for a sympathetic exposition of their views. See his *Intentionality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 79–111.

is often rejected, even if only implicitly, but it is in fact the most certain of these entailments, if the words are taken in their most typical conventional senses. Consider that if someone says that he or she is doing A with the intention of doing B, it is always legitimate to ask "And why do you want to do B?" Of course, the question might get no answer beyond "I just thought I would" or "No particular reason," but these do not amount to a rejection of the question. The intuition that intending to do something does not presuppose wanting to do it is fueled by the same peculiarities of the word "want" as make it possible to say, for example: "But I don't want to do what I *want* to do—I want to do what I *ought* to do." This sentence brings out fairly clearly that the English word "want" bears what can unfortunately only be called two different senses.[11] The phenomenon most paradigmatically covered by the emphasized use is of course *appetite*, though it covers other things as well; such a use is, I think, comparatively rare, unless perhaps in the mouths of children, and it generally appears, as it does here, with a special emphasis. The concept expressed by the two unemphasized uses would formerly have been expressed, in philosophy, by the verb "to will"; but certain empiricist and psychological excesses seem, now, to have put that expression on the Index. The unemphasized wanting is the wanting that is presupposed in intention, the wanting that can rationalize and be rationalized alike, the wanting that is most typically discussed in ordinary life—and, I think, the only wanting that interests us in the philosophy of action.[12]

11. It is a quotation from really existing pre-philosophical life—a student's response to the advice "Do whatever you want"; I take it that what is essentially the same thought, or a thought categorially very close to it, could be expressed by the words "I don't intend to do what I *want* to do, I intend (plan, mean) to do what I ought to do"—on condition that the agent supposed he knew what he ought and *wanted* to do, or supposed he could readily find this out. Similarly, once he has got down to business, he could say, "I'm not trying to do what I *want* to do, I'm trying to do what I ought to do."

12. As Anscombe writes in *Intention:* "The wanting that interests us, however, is neither wishing nor hoping nor the feeling of desire, and cannot be said to exist in a man who does nothing toward getting what he wants," and a little later: "The other senses of wanting we have noticed have no place in a study of action and intention" (pp. 67–68 and 70). Sec. 36 of *Intention* would have been unnecessary if Anscombe had had use of a word that possessed unambiguously the force of Aquinas's *velle*; the distinctions of *Summa Theologia*, Ia, IIae, 8–17 are certainly operating in the background of the passage. (Nevertheless, again, I do not mean to accept the whole of her teaching on the matter.)

I take it that much of the interest that has attached to the concept of intention springs precisely from the fact that the English verb "intend", unlike the verb "want", unambiguously represents what would formerly have been called an "act" of the power of "will". No one could confuse an intention to do something with a passion or an operation of sense-appetite. But, on any view of it, the notion of intention is too narrow to capture all that one wants thus to distinguish from passion, appetite and so forth. An ambiguity in our language thus cramps the philosophy that is pursued by means of it. I take this to be the point of Grice's lecture, mentioned above. He is not interested in the analysis of intention for its own sake, but rather aims to dispose of it as an object unworthy of a philosopher's attention.

Though he rightly detaches wanting in our present sense from the "prick of desire", I do not understand Thomas Nagel's claim that such wanting is somehow a mere "consequence" of intentional pursuit of a goal, and its attribution "trivial". See *The Possibility of Altruism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), ch. 5, pp. 29–30. I agree of course that it is a consequence: "I'm doing A in order to do B" entails "I'm doing A because I want to do B," which entails "I want to do B." But surely this wanting can exist, as intention also can, though the agent is, for example, shot down before the moment to act has arrived; and, again like intention, it can continue to exist, one and the same, through an alteration in envisaged subordinate means. Similar objections can be raised against Anscombe's remark, just quoted, that such wanting "cannot be said to exist in a man who does nothing toward getting what he wants," if it is interpreted straightforwardly. Nagel's remarks seem to me to come perilously close, as Anscombe's do not, to claiming that this wanting cannot provide a genuine explanation or account of action or intention or attempt. If it is a triviality, an epiphenomenon, a projection or a fiction, then, I suspect, intentional action must also be so.

Wanting in the present sense might perhaps be explained, rather indirectly, as the weakest unitary concept that can generate both a row and a column in a table of forms of rationalization. Methodological scruples aside, I would prefer a sort of conceptual ostension or, if you like, of eidetic intuition: consider someone who wants to do A because she wants, or is trying, to do B (she wants to buy another ton of concrete because she is trying to build a dam across the Ohio), where the "because" is that of straightforward rationalization; fix on the connection you yourself thereby pose between the agent and the would-be doing of A—the thing that you are laying at the door of her wanting, or trying, to do B. *That* is wanting in the present sense. It can of course exist whether or not anything else in the way of wanting or acting is (yet) to be put down to it, and whether or not it is to be put down to any *other* wanting of the same sort. (Thus we ought not speak of "motivated desire", as Nagel does, but at best of "wanting of the type that can be rationalized"; that every case of such wanting is "motivated" or rationalized by something else is a contentious further claim *about* such wanting—as contentious as the corresponding claim about intentional action—and would preclude "No particular reason" and "I just thought I would" as responses to the question "Why?")

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Naive Explanation of Action

1. How Much Scope Is There for Naive Explanation of Action?

Every verb phrase with which Anscombe and Davidson illustrate the concept "description of action" expresses a kind of thing, a kind of *event*, as they teach, that is intuitively continuous and divisible, that takes time, and that can be interrupted; the phrases themselves thus typically admit the "continuous tenses" or the progressive. Their illustrations may be said to express the intuition that, where instantaneous 'actions' can be said to exist, it is as secondary or dependent phenomena that can with justice be left aside until the primary categories are elucidated; in this, I propose to follow them.[1] Now, some of the temporally extended intentional actions that interest us are, as we see in our examples of naive action explanation, intuitively resoluble into a heterogeneous collection of sub-actions that are themselves clearly intentional—organs, as it were, of the whole. Such is the relation of egg-breaking and egg-mixing to omelet-making, of brick-laying and door-framing to house-building, and of writing the letters "a" and "c" to

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1. Examples of non-durative action might be found in certain so-called acts of mind, in 'in-gressions' or beginnings-to-act and in certain so-called "achievements" in Ryle's sense, such as winning and finding. See Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1949), ch. 5.

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writing the word "action". Here the notion, obscurely expressed in naive rationalization, that the part or 'organ' is to be explained in terms of the whole, and understood through it, will exercise an irresistible attraction on the undisciplined philosophical imagination.[2]

But, of course, the resolution of a deed into heterogeneous organlike parts, and of these parts into further such parts, will come to a limit, no matter how the intended notion of articulation of heterogeneous parts is rightly to be explained. The suspicion I want to raise, in the present section, is that such resolution is not necessary, and that *wherever* a completed individual action is intentional under a description of the sort Anscombe and Davidson have contemplated it will be possible to find a true naive rationalization in which that description appears *in the explanans.* Even actions that, like arm-raising, do not divide in this way need not, after all, be viewed as pointlike. To show this properly, one would need a clear view of the intended class of descriptions, an apt division of cases and perhaps a true theory of vagueness. I will illustrate the claim with a provisional discussion of continuous acts of *moving* or of *moving something*—giving a turn to a crank, say, or pulling a curtain open, or drawing a bow, or pushing a stone, or raising a hand.

Let it be, then, that I have pushed a stone along a certain path from α to ω, and that this is a completed intentional action of mine. It must also, of course, be that I have pushed the stone from α to β, if β is a place about halfway along the path from α to ω. And as I began to push off from α it would have been as much *true* for me to say, "I am pushing it to β" as "I am pushing it to ω." How, though, can we deny the further claim that I was pushing the stone to β, the midpoint, *intentionally*—just as, by hypothesis, I was pushing it to ω intentionally, and along that path? A proof that I must have done it intentionally will perhaps require the further premises that the whole trajectory is given to me in sensory intuition as I begin to push, and that the expression "β" as it appears in the formula "I'm pushing it to β" makes what is called "direct

2. Though the typical case of naive action explanation is indeed one in which the act mentioned in the *explanandum* will intuitively be a 'part' of the act mentioned in the *explanans,* or of its completion, the point needs to be handled with some care. The motion of a molecule that is trapped in someone's rising limb is not, in our present sense, a *part* of the agent's intentional raising of her hand. Though it could hardly be more familiar, it is clear that the relevant notion of part is a special one and is not independent of the connection expressed in rationalizations generally.

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reference".[3] But given all that, it is hard to see why we shouldn't say not *just* that I was pushing the stone to β *intentionally*, but also that I was pushing, and pushed, the stone to β *because* I was pushing it to ω. Why not? The push from α to β might not be "salient", of course, so it might be a bit odd, conversationally, to point it out. But if it were as much of my operation as you could see, the rest having been occluded by a curtain, you might legitimately attach the question "Why?" to that description, and I, in turn, might legitimately offer a naive rationalization using the other. But, now, every bodily movement that is intentional under what might be called a "bodily movement description" takes a limb from one kinesthetically given position to another: why, then, shouldn't we isolate some such initial segment in every such case?

The line of thought most likely to be opposed to this one rests on the notion that if an action is intentional under a given description, then this very description, or the concept that is expressed by it, must have been deployed by the agent in some occurrent thought—that is, in some prior act of reflection or calculation. But this seems to be a prejudice. After all, as Aristotle (for example) teaches, skill or craft or *technē* often drives out deliberation.[4] What is done in accordance with skill in doing B, or in exercise of a practical capacity to do B, is not, as such, determined by deliberation or reflection—unless by a peculiarity of the skill itself (which might involve measurement and calculation, say, as laying carpeting does). But the absence of reflection does not make the action thus skillfully performed, making a pot of coffee, as it might be, or raising a hand, into a sort of unanalyzable whole; egg-breaking certainly does not lose its character as an intentional action after the agent's thirty-fourth omelet. Why should we suppose that acquisition of the type of skill that interests us, skill in moving a limb or object along this or that type of path, must deprive movement along sub-paths of their status as intentional? A more serious objection to my conjecture—that acts of moving and of

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3. Not every trajectory that is intentionally traversed can be said thus to have been directly given: if I am walking from Kingman to Barstow along Rt. 66, then the intended trajectory is evidently apprehended only in thought. In thinking of this whole, which extends for some miles, I need not think of any of its parts, nor need they be objects of my cognition in any other way. Yet, I will suppose, the actual intentional movement along any such trajectory will involve intentional movement along any number of potentially overlapping trajectories that *are* in some sense directly given, and thus given together with their parts. Since the movement along the larger trajectory can be viewed as a naive ground of the movement along the shorter, intuitively apprehended trajectory, our problem reduces to the contemplation of the latter.

4. See, for example, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1112a34–b12.

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moving things intentionally always have parts of the same character—might spring from consideration of very short trajectories. One might argue that the process of taking initial segments of trajectories moved across, outlined above, must come to an end. If I am doing A because I am doing B, or, more generally, if I am doing A intentionally, then perhaps I needn't have *thought* of doing A, or *proposed* it to myself, or *decided*, or undertaken a *commitment*, to do A; nevertheless, one thinks, *doing A* must figure somehow as a content of my thought or cognition. In particular, if I move along a certain path intentionally, or move something along it, I must somehow apprehend the path itself. Call this weak and under-formulated proposition "the implicit cognition requirement." Now, it is natural to say that there are lower limits to the lengths of paths that I can apprehend by sense or imagination.[5] This will prompt the suggestion that, even if there is no *minimum movibile*, in the sense of a minimum distance I might be said, truly, to have moved or to have moved something, still there must be some *minimum movibile intentionaliter*—a minimum distance I might be said, truly, to have moved something intentionally. As the apprehended trajectories approach this minimum, it will become impossible to find any initial segment that is intentionally traversed. And so we will have actions without naively explicable parts, and my conjecture will be in ruins.

On this skeptical view, actions of moving (or of moving something) across one of these sub-minimal paths will have something like the status of the muscular contractions involved in straightforwardly intentional movements; though I can be said to *do* such things, the actions will be, as Anscombe puts it, "pre-intentional".[6] Suppose that I have moved

5. But see Kant's remarks on the intuition of extensive magnitudes, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N. Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's, 1965), pp. 198–199, A162–3/B203.

6. G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 28. We will have to speak not of "actions" but of "movements" if we follow Davidson in speaking of an action only where we can find a description under which the thing is intentional. But, in any event, Davidson's remarks about *walking across the room* and *tripping* seem implicitly to commit him to the truth of the present conjecture. See "Agency" in *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 47. Mention of this great paper, in the present context, invites the remark that its account of the concept of agency fails to take proper account of actions with parts. Surely it will be "agency" in the sense Davidson means to capture if the agent sinks the *Bismarck*, or ruins her finances, by doing A, B and C, each of them intentionally. But the events falling under the descriptions A, B and C need not fall *severally* under the description "a sinking of the *Bismarck*" or "a ruining of her finances", as the case may be; none by itself, we may suppose, adds up to *that*. And so it might be that nothing done intentionally falls under that description, and thus that something "done", in the emphatic sense Davidson means to elucidate, isn't done intentionally under any description.

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something intentionally from one place to another along a certain path, where this path is definitely above the alleged minimum, so that there is some other, nearer, place along the path to which I have also moved the thing intentionally. Let us fix, now, on the class containing all descriptions of me as moving the thing *from* the starting place *to* any of the particular places along the projected path. Each of these will be a description of a "thing I've done"—in some cases intentionally, and in others, on this view, "pre-intentionally".[7] Notice, then, that the soundness of this skeptical counter-argument hangs on both of the following: first, that a nested class of descriptions of this sort admits this kind of complete division, that is, that the question "Was there a maximum pre-intentionally moved in this case, or rather a minimum intentionally moved?" can have a determinate answer; and second, that the answer is sometimes this: "The latter."

At this point the thought of affecting the manner of Quine and declaring ourselves to be deep among the "don't cares" at the crucial point, the limit—and thereby licensed to adopt the microscopical attunement of the senses of "intentional" and "pre-intentional" that would make our handsome simplifying conjecture true—seems to become irresistible. There is no *minimum sensibile*, we can insist, but rather only a *maximum insensibile;* likewise with any supposed minimum intentionally movable. It is like dividing a line into two segments at a point; I must decide which segment gets the point of division and which is left 'open' in that direction. If such a maneuver is judged too artificial, let us note a few other routes available to a friend of our conjecture, leaving the decision among them to the reader's pleasure: (1) First, of course, there is the quasi-Kantian[8] high road of insisting that the intuitive apprehension of trajectories involved in continuous intentional action always involves an intuitive apprehension of all of the parts of all of them, no matter how small—and thus that even a strong form of our "cognition requirement" can pose no problem for my conjecture. (2) It would,

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7. It should be observed that these are by no means "different descriptions of the same", but attach, in every case, to *distinct* events; an action and a proper part of it, if it has any, are always distinct events. An act and its part might of course fall together under some one description, as someone else's action might also fall under that same description. But generally a description of an act and a description of its part will not be two descriptions of the *same* act. It is interesting that the examples through which Anscombe attempts to illustrate the idea of "many descriptions of the same" do not actually illustrate it: it is the rare act of moving an arm that can be classified as a replenishment of a house water supply.

8. See n. 5 above.

however, be more in keeping with the inspiration of our imagined skeptic, if, while maintaining a strong form of the cognition requirement, we were to argue that the effect of the alleged limits of human cognition is to introduce a certain vagueness into the objects apprehended practically—that is, into the proposed trajectories and the associated descriptions of action. Such an appeal to the idea of vagueness carries with it a number of theoretical difficulties, but supposing them handled, the same vagueness would no doubt then be found to infect the division of our nested classes of descriptions into "pre-intentional" and intentional. In that case, my conjecture—viz., "Acts of moving something somewhere intentionally always have an initial segment that is also an act of moving something somewhere intentionally"—could again be sustained, if only it were given the sort of construction that an adequate theory of vagueness might supply for such sentence as "No one is made bald by the loss of a single hair."[9] (3) But it is most natural, I think, to object that the cognition requirement is still too strong, even when it is shorn of the supposed need for an "occurrent" thought of each and every path intentionally traversed. The relation to our capacities of sense and conception that is necessary to secure the intentionalness of the actions falling under such nested descriptions ought to be realized if only (a) all of the descriptions involve some such conceptual complex as: *moving it from here to ( )*, (b) this conceptual complex is appropriately in play, and (c) the substituends arise from an analysis of the intuitively given path and are not *outré* definite descriptions. The nested descriptions are homogeneous in a certain respect, a respect that *is* apprehended, and the corresponding actions are homoiomerous; if some of them *aren't* alien to the agent's mind in the intentionalness- destroying way that a description in terms of muscular contractions is likely to be, why should any of them be? A free appeal to coarse folk-geometrical facts should not, after all, put us outside the sphere of the intentional, if the human will is the will of an intrinsically spatial sort of being.

Let us move forward, then, and grant provisionally that my conjecture is true, and also that the object of the philosophy of action is legitimately restricted, in the first instance, to a category of intentional ac-

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9. That an adequate theory of vagueness will have to find means to legitimate such statements is emphasized by Crispin Wright, "The Coherence of Vague Predicates," *Synthese* 30 (1975): 325–365, and by Jamie Tappenden, "The Liar and the Sorites Paradox," *Journal of Philosophy* 90 (1993): 551–557.

tion that excludes acts of mind, startings-to-act and other such non-durative actions-by-courtesy—to intentional action proper, as we call it. We might then provisionally attempt to isolate that category with the following formula: X's doing A is an intentional action (proper) under that description just in case the agent can be said, truly, to have done something else *because he or she was doing A.* The intended sense of "because" is, as usual, the one deployed in rationalization.[10] If we may be permitted free appeal to the notion of a *part*, then our thought might also be expressed, a bit more metaphysically, as follows: an event, the building of a house, for example, is an intentional action just in case it is the "cause" of its own parts—where, again, the intended notion of "cause" is not pre-conceived, but is that captured by the "because" of rationalization, whatever it may be. Given that anything that has parts is constituted by them, we might go on to infer, with a special metaphysical abandon, that it is among the marks of intentional action that such a thing is "cause of itself" in a certain sort of way—and thus also "cause and effect of itself, though in different senses".[11]

If my conjecture is right, and if naive rationalization is to be taken at face value, then it is not so much by its being caught up in a rationalizing order, or in a "space of reasons", that behavior becomes intentional action; rather, the rationalizing order, that peculiar etiological structure, is inscribed *within* every intentional action proper. In any given case, of course, this order might extend beyond the deed—to another deed, to an intention, or to any other sort of act of will. Any intentional action (proper) figures in a space of reasons as a region, not as a point; or, equivalently, each of them, whether hand-raising or house-building, is itself such a space.[12]

10. The proposed definition is a sort of reverse of the one formulated in Anscombe's *Intention:* "Intentional actions are ones to which a certain sense of the question 'Why?' has application" (p. 11), that is, actions admitting a certain sort of account or explanation or ground. We say rather that an intentional action is *itself* a certain sort of account or ground—an *explanans*, not an *explanandum* (though perhaps it is that too). Such an account as I have proposed would evade some of the difficulties Anscombe must resolve: for example, those involving "backward-looking motive" and "motive in general", and also the possibility of such null accounts as "No particular reason" and "I just thought I would" (see ibid., pp. 11–23).

11. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. W. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), pp. 248–255 (*Ak.* 369–377).

12. Though I have put the questions of practical thought and so-called justifying reasons outside the scope of the present essay, it should be noticed that, *prima facie*, intentional action can as much govern practical calculation and the affirmation of practical modalities as wanting or intending can. I can say, for example, that I have to do A because I'm doing B, or that I

2. Excursus: Hume's Argument for Final Ends Queried

Notice that, if a suitable elaboration of the argument of the last section is sound, it will hold generally that if I am intentionally pushing a stone from α to some place ω, then I am intentionally pushing it to any other place β that you might care to name, so long as β falls somewhere short of ω and along my intended trajectory. And it will also hold that I am pushing it to β *because* I'm pushing it to ω. These claims, joined with a few folk-geometrical truisms, have some further interesting consequences.

For example, why shouldn't I be able to isolate a position γ, a place about halfway from β to ω; and a position δ about halfway between γ and ω; and so forth?

α-----------------------------β-------------γ--------δ---ε--ζ...ω

As I push off from α, it will be true to say that I am pushing the stone to *each* of these places. That's clear. But, again, it seems that we must also allow that I am doing each of these things *intentionally*, and moreover that I am doing *each* "because" I'm doing the next one. And so, even though the imagined series of isolated positions has an obvious geometrical limit in ω, it seems that an interlocutor and I might together forge a potentially infinite sequence of perfectly legitimate questions and answers, "Why?"

Of course, I might put an end to this torture at any one of the interpolated points, saying, "Well, I'm pushing it to ϕ, you know, because I'm pushing it to ω." But this doesn't show that any of the intervening "because"-statements that I have thus left unframed would not have been perfectly legitimate and true. And anyway I never said *why* I was pushing the stone to ω; it might be that I was pushing it to some place a bit further on—$\omega + 1$, as it were.

Notice that we can as well say that I *wanted* to push the stone as far

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can't do A because I'm doing B (or, more colloquially: "I can't do A; I'm doing B"). Intentional action is thus a sort of zone of practical modality. Similarly, I can say, for example, that I'm trying to figure out how to do A because I'm doing B. Much practical thought will inevitably figure in the building of a house, and this 'syllogizing', like the subordinate deeds with which it 'concludes', can itself be viewed as naively explicable in terms of it, though perhaps not exactly as a part of it. Notice further that it is possible to reflect practically on the question how to do something, even as, and because, one is doing precisely it. Having broken a few eggs, for example, I am making an omelet, even if, in sudden self-doubt, I now reach for a cookbook.

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as γ, δ, etc., as that I was intentionally pushing it to any of them. Dialogue of the following sort can always be inserted into such a case:

"Do you want to push it as far as ε?"
  —"Yes."

—"Well, then, I'd better bring down the drawbridge at δ."

If this is right, then Hume's famous argument that a sequence of "instrumental" wantings can't "go on forever" is defective.[13] The proximate conclusion implicitly drawn by Hume, that everything rationalized by anything is rationalized by something that isn't rationalized by anything else, *might* nevertheless be right; the propositions "Every sequence not contained in any greater sequence has a last member" and "Some (or all) sequences not contained in any greater sequence have sub-sequences that have no last member" are of course simply independent.

I do not doubt that we need some such notions as "final end", "ungrounded desire" and "desirability characterization"; but arguments like Hume's give us no insight into the matter. Insofar as it is possible to mark off action theory as an independent fraction of philosophy, distinct, for example, from ethics, it is, I think, by this formula: the status of a rationalizing element as "ultimate" is of no interest to it. It is like criminal law in this respect, and like Wolf's "universal practical philosophy", as Kant professes to understand it.[14] Any network of relations that can figure in it (e.g., of action with wanting, of wanting with attempt, of wanting with intention and in turn with action, and so forth) might be subordinate to a larger network of the same type. Similarly, any configuration of circles and lines in a diagram in Euclid might appear later on in a more complex diagram. Reflection on the present material could not lead us to infer the existence of any such thing as, say, appetite or pleasure (hunger, for example, or pleasure in consum-

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13. *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, app. I, sec. V. The similar argument on the first page of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (1094a16–20) should, I suspect, be distinguished from Hume's. Aristotle seems to be thinking of the stages in practical calculation moving down from a given end, rather than of stages in explanation moving outward from a given deed; hence the thought that if the series is without limit, then "desire" is "in vain".

14. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. M. Gregor, in *Practical Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 46 (*Ak.* 430–431).

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ing chocolate); nor could we, on the strength of it, pose or resolve the question, how such a thing as pleasure or appetite might explain or ground or give reason for an *action* (or an attempt, an intention or a wanting, or indeed any "state of mind" that might figure in symmetrical tables like ours). It is the same, I think, with the concept of emotion; and it is the same with the concepts of a principle, a value, a virtue, a "moral reason" or any concept peculiar to ethical theory. The questions, how *any* of these things might figure in the determination of action; whether every action (and thus every intention, attempt and wanting) exhibits such a determination, mediately or immediately; whether these determinants can reasonably be viewed as constituting any one genus, so that conclusions can be drawn about them by any but a piecemeal treatment—they all transcend the action-theoretical material. One might as well try reaching transfinite numbers by counting or, I suppose, a Prime Mover by a cosmological argument.[15]

3. Sophisticated Philosophies of Action

Let us return, though, to main course of our argument, and to the question of the credentials of our naive explanations of action. In the spirit of ever more ruthless simplification, let us restrict our attention to the following subspace of our original table:

	NAIVE *I'm doing B*	SOPHISTICATED *I want to do B*
I'm doing A	I'm doing A because I'm doing B	I'm doing A because I want to do B
I want to do A	I want to do A because I'm doing B	I want to do A because I want to do B

15. Michael Smith, "The Humean Theory of Motivation," *Mind* 96 (1987): 36–61, argues that every straightforwardly rationalized action springs from, or is genuinely 'motivated' by, a state with a mind-to-world 'direction of fit', that is, a fit opposite that exhibited in, for example, belief. In our sub-Thomistical language, the conclusion of his main argument is that every straightforwardly rationalized act of will arises from a prior act of will, in other words, that "I did A in order to do B" entails "I did A because I wanted to do B," where the latter expresses a genuine etiological connection. The trouble, if this transcription is right, is that the claim has nothing to do with the Humean theory of motivation. Hume's teaching, expressed

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It is the mark of a *sophisticated philosophy of action*, as I will call it, that its proponent is happy to recognize the propositions registered in the right-hand column as legitimate and distinct, but supposes that each of the rationalizations on the *left* finds its real explanatory or etiological content expressed in its nearest neighbor in that right-hand column. To this, the genuine account, these left-hand pieces of linguistic artifice simply add the non-explanatory, purely "descriptive" information that the agent is actually getting what he or she wants.[16] That it so often pleases us, in speech, to omit the verb "to want" is to be explained away, in accordance, presumably, with pragmatic principles.

Before we haul out this artillery, we must first address the question of motive. Our tables, after all, suggest that a system is at work in our practices of rationalization, and this, it seems, must place a certain burden of proof on any sophisticated theory of action. It is, after all, a bold reductive hypothesis. So what is to be said for sophistication? Here is an argument: often an agent is herself tempted to give a naive account of her action, but in a legitimate third-person account of the facts of her case, a corresponding sophisticated rationalization will nevertheless have to take its place. The agent may be wrong, the world may secretly be uncooperative, it may be that the agent isn't actually doing B—replenishing the house water supply, as it might be—but only thinks that she is. The *general* rules governing all uses of the word "because", we said, require the truth of the propositions linked by it; *P because Q*, that is, entails both P and Q. And we may grant, for the pur-

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in the same language, is plainly this, that every act of will (i.e., every intentional action, attempt, intention and wanting) is founded, mediately or immediately, on a *passion*, understood as including appetite. It is clearly impossible to defend this doctrine without an analysis of concepts like passion, appetite and pleasure.

16. The reduction cannot be *quite* so simple as this. Though I have allowed that "She's doing A because she's doing B" entails "She's doing A because she wants to do B," as it of course entails "She's doing B," nevertheless it is clear that the mere conjunction of the latter propositions does not entail the former as it is actually employed. We can show this by constructing a naive equivalent of a so-called deviant causal chain. It might after all be that though our agent wants or wills or intends to do B, she is only actually *doing* it by some sort of accident. She is replenishing the house water supply, indeed, but not by moving the pump handle—the fractured old pipes are delivering *that* water to the rhododendrons; it is rather that she is leaning on the switch for the new, electrical system. In such a case, "I'm replenishing the house water supply," though true, seems to fail as a response to, say, "Why are you moving the pump handle?" A naive rationalization must thus add to its alleged sophisticated core some information more than that the agent is getting what he or she wants.

poses of this argument, that the special rules governing the employment of this connective in *rationalization* in particular include something in the way of a "cognition requirement": a requirement, namely, that the agent has some grasp of the rationalizing connection, even if only inarticulately, and thus also of its terms.[17] If, then, the *explanans,* or the reason, must be something the agent grasps, and if there is nothing to distinguish the cognition of the average successful agent from that of a possible parallel unsuccessful agent, then it might seem that the truth that gives the ground of the action must express something that is present and grasped in either case, the successful one and the unsuccessful one. And what can this be but the agents' *wanting* to do the thing? So the *wanting* must be the true account, the real reason, and so forth.

The first thing to notice about such an argument is the structure it evidently shares with the epistemologists' "argument from illusion". The formation of the perceptual judgment that, say, *this is a dagger* doesn't strike us as so different in the case where I am victimized by a dagger-hallucination, and in the case where a dagger is there and we would ordinarily say that I see it. And once again we have the apparent truism that I, as judger, must apprehend the connection between my judgment and whatever appearance I take to be its ground. So (one wants to argue) the real ground of judgment must reside in what is common to the two cases—the 'highest common factor', if you like— namely, the *as-of-a-dagger* sensum (or whatever it is) that I get in either case. The judgment that this is a dagger, then, can never really be founded on the fact that I see one, for this would entail a dagger's actual presence.

I mention the epistemological analogy only with a view to raising suspicion. The "argument from illusion" seems suspicious to me; but perhaps the reader knows better. Fortunately we can steer clear of these deep waters: the particulars of our own *practical* case provide destructive materials of their own. Our case is different because of the complete symmetry, in rationalization, between possible *explanantia* and possible *explananda,* or between possible grounds and possible groundeds, a symmetry exhibited in the appealing squareness of our tables. For suppose that I *must* indeed grasp the rationalizing connection,

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17. Notice that here the "cognition requirement" is directed to the *form* of the elements linked in rationalization, as *doing* or *wanting* to do something, and not to their contents, as doing (or wanting to do) A or B or C, as it was in the last section.

but *may* be in a state of illusion about my doing B. And suppose that this shows that it must be *the wanting to do B* that properly speaking does the rationalizing—since it's the thing that I can't be wrong about, the thing that must be there. If it shows this, then it also shows that all that ever really gets *explained* is itself wanting. For the same possibility of error and failure also afflicts my would-be doing of A.

The epistemological analogy evades this sort of difficulty for the simple reason that if I think I am judging that *this is a dagger,* then I must really be judging that; there is no scope for illusion in respect of the existence of the thing potentially grounded, as there is in the practical case.

This sort of reason for thinking that only wants rationalize anything is thus equally a reason for thinking that only wants are rationalized by anything. But if there are only reasons for wanting, then there are no reasons for acting; and if there are no reasons for acting, then, arguably, there is no such thing as acting at all; and if there is no such thing as *doing* something in the emphatic sense that we call acting, then, in the end, there is no such thing as wanting to do anything either.

4. Sophistication and Simplicity

These absurd results did not follow from sophistication itself, of course, but from a certain basically skeptical rationale for affirming it. But other arguments for sophistication are possible. Mightn't something be made of the idea of simplicity, for example? If what we understand by a "rationalization connection" is merely a form of linguistic transaction, then there is no problem; the more forms the merrier, one might think. But if instead we understand by a "rationalization connection" a nexus of things that is captured and expressed by such forms of human speech—and such a thing is of course our real quarry—then, on the face of it, to admit naive etiologies as genuine and independent is to multiply causes without necessity. For all sides will agree that wherever naive action explanation is legitimate, a sophisticated action explanation is also available, though the reverse is not the case.

Some ways of developing this line of thought will lead, I think, to absurd results of the sort we found above; but in place of an attempt to canvas all of them, I propose to accept its main premise—and employ it instead in the interpretation of the phenomena. The idea that we win

any significant theoretical or metaphysical simplification with the elimination of our naive etiologies presupposes that what is given as rationalizing in such a case, for example, *that I'm making an omelet*, is something profoundly different from what is given as rationalizing in the other columns, for example, *that I want to get to Katmandu*. This seems, on the face of it, obvious: after all, to put the matter crudely, the sophisticated sorts of *explanans* would traditionally have been classified as states of the soul; naive *explanantia* seem by contrast to be events "in the world". They are absolutely unlike. This is what we find so hard to fit with the other, equally forceful appearance, that a single generic explanatory relation, or nexus of things, is at issue in every entry on our tables—a suggestion invited by the symmetry of the tables and of their uniform transposition, row by row, into final or purposive forms. The program of the next several sections is to disarm any such appeal to simplicity by breaking up the appearance of deep metaphysical diversity among the elements linked in rationalization—that is, among trying, intending and wanting, on the one hand, and doing, or acting intentionally, on the other.

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Action and Time

1. The Primitive Objects of Attempt, Intention and Wanting

Let us consider, for the moment, just the former trio—the specifically psychical, or psychological, sorts of *explanans*. Here we must be struck, first, by the fact that the objects of attempt, intention and wanting are typically not formulated with a complete proposition; these states are not, at first sight anyway, what are called "propositional attitudes". If you ask what I want, then, in the most primitive sort of case, the answer will be: *to get the vanilla down*, or *to turn on the light*; if you ask what I intend, the answer will be: *to write the letter "c"*, or *to kill his brother*. It is still more obvious that in the standard sort of case, what I try is again: *to do something*. Such facts have often been noticed; they have even been emphasized, especially by Annette Baier.[1]

Of course, once an apparatus of representation has come to sup-

1. Professor Baier's remarks are restricted to intention. See "Act and Intent," *Journal of Philosophy* 67 (1970): 648–658; and "The Intentionality of Intention," *Review of Metaphysics* 30 (1977): 389–414. The point is also made in Anselm Mueller, "Radical Subjectivity," *Ratio* 19 (1979): 115–132. H. N. Casteneda repeatedly attacked the notion that the object of intention is given by a proposition, but he also rejects the thought that it is completely expressed by the like of "to wash the clothes". Casteneda insists that a correlate of the first person must somehow appear in his "practions". ("Practions", the contents of intentions in his system, may roughly be characterized as the correlates, in the realm of sense, of self-addressed imperatives.) Baier's remarks against Roderick Chisholm in "Act and Intent" thus also apply to Casteneda's doctrine (see p. 658: "I think Chisholm's ever-present agent has over-advertised," and the following remarks). Casteneda's criticism of Baier in *Thinking and Doing* (Dordrecht:

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ply general means for expressing these psychical states—that is to say, once it has come to contain *verbs* fitted to receive these special non-propositional complements—these same general expressions might then be refitted to receive propositional complements, or their like, as well. But then, they might also be refitted to take plain common nouns as complements—"a horse", for example, or "a saucer of mud"; or else mass nouns like "milk" and "turpentine"; or even singular terms like "the Mayor" and "Mary-Beth Ellen". This is how things stand in English, for example, which allows that we can try the Mayor, or try turpentine, and that we can intend Mary-Beth Ellen (as a spouse), or intend for the children to go to college, and, finally, that we can want milk, or a saucer of mud, or for everyone to stop shouting.[2]

   Given the gross categorial diversity of the "objects" superficially given as possible, Fregean scruples will force a choice on us: we must say either that none of these apparently category-indifferent psychological verbs is really univocal across the several cases, or else that

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Reidel, 1975), pp. 151–154, thus seems to miss her point. George Wilson discusses Baier's teaching in *The Intentionality of Human Action*, rev. ed. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1989), pp. 111–117.

   The thought that the objects of intention and wanting are uniformly propositional pervades the literature on the philosophy of content, but difficulties about the first person have occasionally threatened orthodoxy. See, for example, Gareth Evans's subtle attempt, in *The Varieties of Reference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 258–261, to dismantle Anscombe's puzzles about the first person, which was later clarified and extended by Ian Rumfitt, "Frege's Theory of Predication," *Philosophical Review* 103 (1995): 599–637. Evans and Rumfitt presuppose that "She intends to engage-in-an-act-of-self-reference"—i.e., "She intends $\lambda x(x$ refers to x)," as Evans puts it—is not to be explained as "She intends that *she herself* engage-in-an-act-of-self-reference"—i.e., as "She intends that *she herself* fall under $\lambda x(x$ refers to x)." This last plainly *is* to be explained as equivalent to "She intends that *she herself* refer to *herself*." If the object of intention were always a proposition, then it would evidently contain a first–person component (the indirect reflexive, "she herself") in all of these cases; this is what the authors are attempting to avoid. So, in conclusion, they too presuppose that the object of intention is something less than a complete proposition. (See further below, n. 10.) A much broader anti-propositional doctrine is found in David Lewis, "Attitudes *De Dicto* and *De Se*," *Philosophical Review* 88 (1979): 513–543, and a similar but somewhat less radical view is taken in Anscombe's essay "The First Person," in *Metaphysics and Philosophy of Mind* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981). pp. 21–36. Where Lewis holds that all belief takes a property as object, and self-attributes it, Anscombe holds that some cases of *believing*, *knowing* and *telling someone* do take a complete proposition; the first-person or self-attributive forms of them take something less than a complete proposition as object. These matters are independent of the question of the object of intention and wanting, and in any case the 'sub-propositional' object I will propose is subtly different from that taken by 'beliefs about oneself' in Lewis and Anscombe (see n. 10 below).

   2. The really difficult feat is to manage an ostensibly propositional object of attempt.

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some of the complements are systematically under-expressed in actually existing speech. In a proper *Begriffsschrift*, as we know, *every* verb that takes an object will be "standardized", as David Lewis puts it, to receive complements expressing items that occupy some one logical category.[3] Our Baierian common sense may thus be put as follows: a "standardized", *begriffsschriftliche* expression of the sense primitively attached to any of these particular psychological verbs—"tries", "intends" and "wants"—will be fitted to take as complement just the sort of verb phrase exhibited above: "walk to school", "make an omelet", etc. Where propositions employing these verbs cannot be forced into such a form—as "She intends for X to be F" might perhaps be turned into "She intends *to make X F*" or "She intends *to arrange for X to be F*"—then they simply must express some other "psychological state". The Baierian thought is not that there is no propositional sense of intending or wanting, but that there is a prior and irreducibly non-propositional one.

2. Aspect and Event-Form

But, now, cleaving to this intuition, in the hope of justifying it by its consequences, let us ask what sort of category *is* occupied by the items captured by the verb phrases that make for apt bottom-level complements of the words "want", "intend" and "try". The next thing to notice, I think, is that such items are not to be compared with those expressed by such phrases as "is taller than Henry" or "is red" or "believes in God". The apt complements do not, that is, designate states or properties, as we put it in philosophy (much less Fregean "concepts").[4] Of course, we must again allow that psychological verbs with the senses primitively attached to "try", "intend" and "want" can be refitted in one way or another to receive such state- or property-expressing complements; and English again supplies us with an illustration. The bits of speech that formulate the basic objects of attempt, intention and want-

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3. Lewis, "Attitudes *De Dicto* and *De Se*," pp. 513–515.

4. The distinction between a state and a Fregean 'concept' can be provisionally expressed as follows: "N.N. believes in God" and "M.M. believes in God" refer to different people but to the same Fregean *Begriff*; "N.N. *believed* in God" and "N.N. *believes* in God" refer to the same person and to the same *state*, but they share no reference any single Fregean 'concept' or *Begriff*. See, for example, "Function and Concept," in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. P. Geach and M. Black, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), pp. 26–41.

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ing rather designate what Ryle, Kenny and Vendler—in a tradition that seems now to survive only among the linguists—have variously called accomplishments and performances. I will call the intended items simply "event- or process-forms", and their linguistic and conceptual expressions "event- or process-descriptions".[5]

The question of the difference between a state-expressing predicate and what I am calling an event- or process-description may be approached as follows. There is only one way to join a stative expression immediately to a singular term in order to form a proposition of the sort that can then be subjected to tense and to logical operations. With "Louise" and "to be taller than Henry" as raw materials, all I can say is that Louise *is* or *isn't* or *was* or *wasn't* taller than Henry, and the like. The *logoi* that figure as standard complements of verbs like "intend", "try" and "want" can, by contrast, generally be joined to subject expressions in two *different* ways, even in advance of any subjection to tense and logical operations. The instruments contrived by human languages to effect the relevant distinction are classified by linguists as markers of "perfective" and "imperfective" *aspect*, and distinguished by them from markers of *tense*.[6]

The so-called aspectual distinction among modes of predication is

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5. The Ryle-Kenny-Vendler tradition was somewhat distorted by an emphasis on phenomena peculiar to rational life. The result was that the notion of an accomplishment or performance could not be said to capture anything on the order of a logical category—no more than does the parallel notion of 'what is done' on one or more occasions. The genuine *category* occupied by *walk to school* and *make an omelet*—things many of us have done—is also occupied by *dissolve*, *fall to pieces* and *burst into bloom*. So I speak more colorlessly of a process- or event-form.

The present criticism is one of many made by A. Mourelatos in "Events, States and Processes," *Linguistics and Philosophy* 2 (1978): 415–434. This paper contains the best exposition of the Ryle-Kenny-Vendler line of thought, along with copious references, and links their distinctions explicitly, as linguists have, and as I will, with the idea of 'aspect'. It should be read in conjunction with a later essay, "Aristotle's *'Kinesis/Energeia'* Distinction," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 23 (1993): 385–398, which rectifies some features of the earlier.

6. What follows is a crude account of the idea of aspect, or rather of some of what is traditionally put under that heading. I include it for the obvious reason that my argument presupposes a certain angle on the material, but also because the material has failed somehow to enter into the received armature of philosophy, even of the philosophy of action, in spite of a number of attempts to draw attention to it.

The works on the topic that I have found most helpful are the recognized classic, *Aspect*, by Bernard Comrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), essentially a work of comparative linguistics, and the great work *The Logic of Aspect*, by Anthony Galton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). The latter, as its title suggests, is a work of pure philosophy untainted by any specifically linguistic motives. Though I depart from Galton's account

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easiest to apprehend if we attend to the possible formulations of what are intuitively *past* states of affairs involving our event- or process-forms. The English past progressive, for example, imports imperfective aspect into a proposition; the English perfect and the simple past alike import perfective aspect, in application to such verb phrases as these. Thus we can say either that I *was walking* to school, or else that I *walked*, or *have walked*, to school. Though contemporary action theory is bent on assimilating these propositions and the states of affairs expressed by them, the thoughts they express are of course quite unlike. That I walked to school presumably entails that I was, at some point, walking to school. But that I was, at some time, walking to school does not entail that I ever walked to school; I might have been gunned down or kidnapped by aliens, or, again, it might be that I am still walking there. The former possibility, that the truth of what is expressed by the progressive and imperfective "I was walking to school" might *never* be followed by the truth of what is expressed by the corresponding perfective "I walked to school," belongs, I think, to the essence of what we might call ordinary, natural or pre-scientific event-consciousness, and will be of paramount importance in what follows. Though the expressions are somewhat dangerous, it helps intuition, a bit, if we say that what is registered as complete or whole or as "perfected" in "I walked to school" or "I have walked to school," is represented as incomplete or partial or as "imperfect" in "I was walking to school."[7]

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in a number of ways, I believe that any reader of his book will be convinced that the topic is essentially a logical and metaphysical one, and only indirectly the object of linguistic or grammatical inquiry.

7. Though the English perfect ("I have walked to school") and the English simple past ("I walked to school") are both employed in simple event reports with perfective content, this is in fact a peculiarity of English, which has what is called an experiential perfect. ("Experience" is here to be understood as it is in a worker's résumé.) Generally, perfects presuppose something in the way of "present relevance," which makes for a complete distraction in the present context. (See Comrie, *Aspect*, pp. 52–53 and 58–59; though his book treats of perfects, yet Comrie insists, apparently paradoxically, that they are linked to perfective aspect only *per accidens*, and would be expelled from a proper treatise of his subject.) Traces of the ancient "relevance" requirement survive in modern English—and not only in the obvious fact that the auxiliary verb "to have" is put into the present tense. For example, the sentence "I have arrived in Rome" is poor material for postcards once I have left for Paris, though it is legitimate in other contexts; and one can only say of someone now living, but not of Caesar, that he or she "has crossed the Rubicon".

The facts that (1) ancient Greek did not exhibit a merely experiential perfect—a "been

Perfective aspect cannot be combined with the present tense. If I insist on knitting together the first person and an event- or process-description like "walk to school", meaning thereby to produce a report on current events, all I can manage is the progressive, and thus imperfective, proposition "I'm walking to school." It is where my thoughts turn to the past that I can manage a different sort of stitch. We may express the point metaphysically as follows: to such a past state of affairs as this: *I was walking to school*, there corresponds such a possible present state of things as this: *I am walking to school;* but to such a past state of affairs as this: *I walked to school*, nothing present corresponds.

Our own language does of course permit a present-tense sentence "I walk to school," distinct from "I'm walking to school"—a sentence that is, on the face of it, linked to the simple past sentence "I walked to school" as "I am hungry" is linked to "I was hungry." But it doesn't have the content that went missing in my metaphysical formula; the English sentence "I walk to school" can only be read habitually.[8] "I walked to school" can be used to express a past habitual thought, but English is blessed with an unambiguous expression of this thought, namely, "I used to walk to school." The topic of habituality (as we might call it) is of great significance for practical philosophy, as we will

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there, done that" perfect, as we might put it—and that (2) English is barely conscious of any other, together make it impossible properly to translate the passages in which Aristotle attempts to explain his concept of *energeia*. (His thought, put crudely, was that an expression, for example, a verb for sight, denotes a kind of *energeia* just in case the admissibility of the Greek present entails the admissibility of the Greek perfect.) The confusion this difficulty has brought into the scholarly discussion—in which it has been suggested, for example, that *walking* is an *energeia*, though *walking to school* is not—is convincingly analyzed by Daniel Graham in "States and Performances: Aristotle's Test," *Philosophical Quarterly* 30 (1980): 117–130; see also the recanting essay by Mourelatos, "Events, States and Processes." The concept Aristotle opposes to this one, namely, *kinēsis*, is, I hope, equivalent to the present "event- or process-form". The contrast properly employed in its elucidation is not, however, that between the present and perfect tenses, as he supposes, but that between perfective and imperfective aspect, and it appears properly only in the past tense.

8. I mean the free-standing sentence. I leave out, as pretty clearly devoid of philosophical significance, the use of sentences of this shape in certain types of narrative ("So, she says to me, 'That's crazy' and I say to her . . ."), in newspaper headlines ("Hitler invades Poland"), in live radio sports announcing and in the titles of paintings and chapters of books. Their appearance as antecedents of conditionals and in "temporal adverbials" and the like (e.g., "If you walk to school, then . . ." or "When Hell freezes over, . . .") is a more serious matter, but these are very dark, and presumably involve some notion of futurity.

see in Part Three, but it falls outside the scope of the present essay, and of theory of action as it is generally understood.[9]

It is clear that the basic aspectual distinctions have nothing specially to do with human action: thinking of the past, we can judge either that *the tree was falling over* or that *the tree fell over*; but, again, thinking of the present, all we can manage is that *the tree is falling over*. Notice again that the first of these is consistent with the negation of either of the others, and also with the conjunction of these negations. "Everything at ground zero was vaporized more or less instantly," we might be told, "and so, in particular, everything that happened to be falling over at ground zero was vaporized more or less instantly; so nothing that was falling over there ever fell over." The use of the progressive in the articulation of ordinary event-consciousness seems somehow to span the present, reaching into the future (as *falling over* typically includes, say, *striking the ground*); but the "reach beyond" the present that characterizes such thought does not expose it to simple disproof on the strength of what happens next.

Of course different human languages express our three-fold distinction among propositions, and the underlying two-fold distinction among modes of predication, in quite different ways; some leave the matter entirely to context. Where the distinctions are explicit, the instruments chosen to express them will inevitably find other uses in connection with verb phrases not of our type, or else instruments forged for another purpose will find a secondary employment in expressing them. These facts tend, as Frege would say, greatly to enrich, or 'fatten', treatments of the present topic undertaken from a specifically linguistic point of view. But it is clear that the central business, the aspectual distinction among modes of predication, is not a matter of linguistic subtlety. We may say that it is apprehended by an act of logical insight; certainly it will figure in the true *Begriffsschrift*, once it is extended to cover, for example, practical thought. A similar insight is evidently involved in a grasp of the distinction our opposition induces among predicable expressions—the distinction, that is, between phrases

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9. Taking habituality into account, as a form of possible states of affairs, we may re-express our "metaphysical formula" as follows: to the possible past state of affairs *I was walking to school*, there corresponds the present *I am walking to school*; to the past state of affairs *I used to walk to school*, there corresponds the present *I walk to school* (or: *these days I walk to school*); but to *I walked to school*, unless it is the same as one of these, nothing present corresponds.

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that generate a triad of sentences of the sort we have noticed, and those that don't. Similarly, that it should admit corresponding modes of combination with a singular representation is part of what makes the *conceptual* complex expressed by the phrase "walk to school" into the sort of conceptual complex it is. And, likewise, that it should admit three corresponding modes of *'inesse'*, or of being-in-a-subject, is part of what makes *walk to school* (which is something many people have done) and *fall over* (which is something many people and many trees have done) into the sort of element of being that each of *them* is—namely, as I put it, an event- or process-form. Something to be called an aspectual distinction of modes of "predication" can, that is, be found in trios of statements, trios of judgments or thoughts, and also in trios of states of affairs (if states of affairs are something other than Fregean thoughts); associated categories can be supposed to subsume the items thus "predicated" at the levels of speech, thought and being.[10]

Once this feature of things has been apprehended reflectively, it becomes a bit easier to make trouble for the mechanical application of the notion of a "propositional attitude" to all of the states of mind that are of interest to us in practical philosophy—to see, that is, why the objects of typical attempts, intentions and wantings should resist formulation in a proposition. Suppose that I am walking to school intentionally. It follows, we have supposed, that I *want* to walk to school—that's why I'm taking this step, for example. What, on a propositional construction, will the object of this wanting be? Presumably this: *that I walk to school*. And when philosophers do manage to fill in the blank in the omnipresent "I want that p," we inevitably find just this sort of substitution. The trouble, of course, is that the requisite proposition doesn't

10. Thus to continue the series begun in n. 4: "The tree fell over" and "The monument fell over" refer in common to a single Fregean "concept" or *Begriff*, and to a single event- or process-form, but to no one object. "The tree is falling over," "The tree was falling over" and "The tree fell over" refer in common to a single object and a single event- or process-form, and to no one Fregean concept. (Nor, I think, do any of these sentences refer to a state, properly speaking.)

This is why I reject the attempt of Evans and Rumfitt to bypass Anscombe's puzzles about the first person (see above, n. 1): their use of apparatuses akin to Church's lambda notation presupposes that the feature of a proposition that expresses an event- or process-form is reached by the simple elimination of one or more appearances of a singular term; they thus assimilate the notion to that of a Fregean concept. The same elementary error besets almost all uses of Church's lambda notation in linguistics, especially in the discussion of generics. It is not noticed that the open sentence that follows "λx" must already have tense and aspect.

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exist; the bit of English we use here, in an attempt to reach the fugitive thought-content, in fact expresses a habitual sense, which is nothing like what we had in mind. In order to make a *proposition* out of these materials ("I" and "walk to school") we have to employ aspectual glue, and tense as well. Experimentation with the other possibilities that suggest themselves will, I suspect, show that every way of doing this yields either the wrong sense, generally a much more sophisticated sense, or else no sense at all.[11]

3. Aspect and Naive Rationalization

We can now see that where we have hitherto spoken of "the explanation of action"—namely, in cases where the *explanandum* is given with an unvarnished description of action, as I have put it—two importantly distinct cases have been assimilated. This distinction did not appear in our tables, though, because the propositions registered in them were all in the present tense, which demands imperfective aspect.

If, now, we attempt to shift a typical action explanation into the past, we immediately find that we can say that I *was doing* A because I want*ed* to do B (or intended to do B, or was doing or trying to do B); but we also find that we can say that I *did* A because I want*ed* to do B (or intended to do B, or was doing or trying to do B). We have, for example, both "I was turning left because I wanted to get to Katmandu" and "I turned left because I wanted to get to Katmandu." The two rationalizations are internally related to each other—the latter, again, entails the former—but they are nonetheless obviously different. Whatever else may happen, it seems that we need to add a new row to our tables, once we throw them into the past tense. The top row splits into two, and we

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11. Thus, for example, "I want that I am walking to school" suggests that I am indifferent to my actually making it there—as I might intend to *be doing* my homework when my parents come in, but not intend to *do* it. "I want that I (have) walked to school," if the content clause is *true*, seems to express satisfaction in a job well done, and, if it is false, an idle wish. "I want that I *will* have walked to school" has a defect opposite that of "I want that I am walking to school," in that it seems to express an indifference to my own agency; this can be seen more clearly if we substitute an event- or process-form that can be realized either intentionally or unintentionally, as in, say, "I want that I will have slid across the ice." Insofar as any of these sentences can be heard as bearing the sense of "I want to walk to school" (or "I want to slide across the ice"), it is, I think, by the hearer's training herself to delete the subject, tense and aspectual "glue".

retain our downward and rightward entailments. Our abbreviated table would come to look like this:

	NAIVE *I was doing B*	SOPHISTCATED *I wanted to do B*
I did A	I did A because I was doing B	I did A because I wanted to do B
I was doing A	I was doing A because I was doing B	I was doing A because I wanted to do B
I wanted to do A	I wanted to do A because I was doing B	I wanted to do A because I wanted to do B

But the more important point is this: in our naive rationalizations—those in which the *explanans* is given with what I have hitherto called an "unvarnished" description of action—the *only* acceptable form, past or present, is the progressive. We can of course say that I wanted to do A because I *was doing* B; but unless we shift to some other kind of account, we cannot say that I wanted to do A because I *did* B (or *had done* B). If we are to find a rationalizing reading of, say, "I wanted to cross the street because I *walked* to school (or *had walked* to school)," we must interpret it as we would "I wanted to skip town because I *killed* my brother," or even "I wanted to kill Henry because *he* killed my brother." Any of these would have to give indirect expression to the underlying straightforward rationalization. None *by itself* entails anything that might be expressed in a purposive or final-clausal form.

Thus we do not need to add a new left column to a purely past-tense version of our table, as we *did* need to add a new top row. To frame a naive rationalization is to associate the thing "grounded" with an intrinsically imperfective state of affairs as "ground"—that is, with a state of affairs that can only be grasped through an imperfective judgment, or expressed in forms of speech that admit an imperfective interpretation.[12]

12. It is of interest, in this connection, that we frequently give a *present* state of things, whether it be my being doing something or my trying or intending or wanting to do it, in rational explanation of a *past* state of things expressible in any of these same forms—and that, by

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Of course, this introduces an asymmetry into the past-tense version of our table; what appears as potentially rationalized in it does not always appear as a potential "reason". Mightn't grounds for rejecting a new left column be turned, once again, into grounds for rejecting our new top row? This was my formula for defusing our practical "argument from illusion". But we have no reason to expect this. Though it needs careful interpretation, the following is clearly a general requirement applying to any form of explanation, or any "interpretation of 'because'", or any category of etiology: *if* it can be deployed in connection with imperfectively expressible states of affairs—events-in-progress, if you like—it can also be deployed in connection with perfectively expressed states of affairs, or completed events; the reverse is also true. Whatever it takes as ground, whether potencies, dispositions, structures, the will of God, fate, or antecedent events, no form of explanation or etiology could be used to account for facts of the form *X was doing A*, or *E was happening*, unless it could also account for facts of the form *Y did B* or *F happened:* no more than a language could capture and express either sort of fact, but be blind to the other.

4. The Red Thread Uniting the Forms of Straightforward Rationalization

We are now in a position to make an impossibly crude first attempt at an account of the unity of the different forms of rationalization.

When I was speaking above of the special psychological verbs that appear in our table of rationalization forms—"want", "intend" and "try"—I declared that, in their primary employment, these verbs can take as complements only such phrases as express event- or process-

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contrast, we generally do *not* straightforwardly rationalize a present state of things in terms of something past. Thus, for example, I can say, in straightforward rationalization, that I *did* A because I *want* to do B, for example, "I turned left a minute ago because I want to get to Katmandu"—but not, without an audible change of key, that I *am doing* A because I *wanted* to do B, for example, "I am now turning left because I wanted, a minute ago, to get to Katmandu." The sign of this, once again, is that the former, but not the latter, admits a straightforward transposition into a purposive or final-clausal form. Past states of affairs admit the same sorts of rational bearing on present *explananda* that perfective states of affairs, or completed events, admit in connection with past and present *explananda* alike; as indirect rationalizations they fall outside our present sphere of concern. Thus, though we must admit a mixed tense table in which past *explananda* are joined with present *explanantia*, we do not need a mixed tense table joining past *explanantia* with present *explananda*.

forms. This is to say that we can only join a subject and a verb phrase by means of one of our practical-psychical verbs if the subject and verb phrase thus joined exhibit the basic aspectual duality in their own "un-varnished" combination. It is, that is, only because the representations "she" and "walk to school" can be joined perfectively, as in "she walked to school," or imperfectively, as in "she was walking to school," that they can be joined by "wants", "intends" or "tries"—as in "she intended to walk to school."

Let us now pose the question why this should be. The formula-tions just reached invite the following hypothesis: the function of such practical-psychical verbs is precisely to express certain forms of imper-fective judgment. In judging that, say, Martha *wanted* or *intended* or *was trying* to walk across the street, we join a representation of Martha and the general conception: *walk across the street.* The thoughts thus formed all stand opposed in a special way to the thought that Martha *walked* across the street, that is, that she made it. In other words, the three practical-psychical thoughts stand opposed to that *perfective* judgment in just the way in which the thought that Martha *was walking* across the street also does. The four potentially rationalizing judgments differ in important ways, but formally their relation to the perfective judgment is in each case the same: what is represented as coiled up or incomplete or partial in them, is represented as unfurled or finished or whole in the other. Twisting Brentano's vocabulary, we can say that "try", "intend" and "want" express modes of "imperfective inexistence" (of an event- or process-form)—but modes of imperfective inexistence that, unlike that expressed by the simple progressive, find application only in con-nection with rational life and its like.

If the distinction between imperfective and perfective modes of "in-existence" of an event- or process-form can be said to be "founded deep in the nature of things," in Frege's sense,[13] then "try", "intend" and want" merely express some of the ways in which a bearer of will or rational agency can be fitted into a particular dimension of this meta-physical structure; "is . . . ing," which figures within and without the ra-tionalization connection, expresses another. Though it acts as a para-

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13. "Function and Concept," p. 41. The phrase is intended to apply to such distinctions as that between function and object and concept and object. It is, by the way, astounding to me how many of our philosophers of intentionality and 'content' understand the "in" in Brentano's "inexistence" to be privative; the word means "being in" and follows the Aristote-lian usage found in, for example, the *Categories.*

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digm, progressive judgment, as we have it, is in the present view only one form of one pole of the corresponding *conceptual* opposition, mastery of which is presupposed in ordinary event-consciousness and the intellectual apprehension of event- or process-forms.[14]

The unity that pervades our table of forms of straightforward *rationalization* resides on the present view in this, that the sort of rationalization registered in it is in general a form of explanation by the imperfective, or by the "incomplete"—though a specifically self-conscious and reason-involving one. In particular, the type of explanation of *action* at stake in action theory, whether naive or sophisticated, is uniformly a matter of locating the action explained in what might be called a developing process; it is just that this progress, development or "imperfection" must be understood to exhibit various types or grades. If I break a few eggs in order to make an omelet, then the event- or process-form *make an omelet* is in the works or under development in the narrowest and most paradigmatic sense; its imperfection can be expressed in the progressive; naive rationalization is available. If, on the other hand, I *buy* a few eggs in order to make an omelet, then the mode of imperfection is likely to be denied progressive expression; a sophisticated rationalization must take its place. As Anscombe says: "I do not think the distinction is quite sharp. Is there anything to choose between 'She's making tea' and 'She's putting on the kettle in order to make tea,' i.e. 'She [wants] to make tea'? Obviously not."[15] We are not willing to call egg-purchase a part of omelet-making, but in the imagined case the unity that joins egg-purchase to omelet-making, thus narrowly construed, is the unity that joins the acts we are willing to call parts of omelet-making to one another, and makes an intentional action out of them. This unity spans, or reaches beyond, any of them; it is captured in an imperfective judgment, paradigmatically a progressive judgment.

Of course, this particular etiological relation of happenings to an

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14. It should be noticed that the verb "to try", a rogue in other respects as well, exhibits, in its own use, both perfective and imperfective possibilities. This is because, as is often remarked, an attempt to do something frequently consists in the *doing* of something else. The notion of completion or "perfection" thus acquires a second significance in connection with attempt: one sort would ordinarily be called "completion", and the other "success".

15. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 40, replacing "She is going to make tea" with "She wants to make tea." On this distinction, see Section 6 below.

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imperfectively present over-arching process—the relation that consti-
tutes the unity of such happenings with one another in an intentional
action, though it can also extend beyond it—cannot be supposed possi-
ble except where the agent's thoughts have come potentially to sub-
serve it. It is plain that our formula "explanation by the imperfective"
can stand only as the isolation of a genus, and that the specific differ-
ence of straightforward rationalization will emerge properly only with
its intellectual aspect. This last, though, is a matter I have put outside
the scope of the present investigation.[16] For our present purposes, then,
the important question is that of the genus itself. It is necessary, above
all, to dispel the air of paradox that might be supposed to attach to the
idea that progressive judgment, as we have it—the sort found in the
thoughts *it's falling over* or *she's raising a crop of cantaloupe*—is in fact, as I
put it above, only a *special* case of one pole of the opposition through
which we come to apprehend events and event- or process-forms, and
that the representation of trying, intending and wanting can thus be
seen as others. I will argue in the next two sections that resistance to
this thought must be founded on an exaggerated view of progressive
judgment and, more generally, on a failure to appreciate *how* different
it is from perfective judgment.

However it is further developed, it is an obvious consequence of this
doctrine that we should beware of searching for illumination in the
thought of intention and wanting as *states*—and thus also, for example,
in the thought of rationalization as involving a sort of causality appro-
priate to states. Intention and wanting are states only in the thinnest
possible sense, the sense in which a thing's falling under any predicate,
or at least any tensible predicate, might be characterized as its "being in
a state". Though the distinction between "The tree is falling over" and
"The tree was falling over" is one of tense, yet we resist thinking of

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16. See Chapter 5, Section 3 above. In further defense of this we may now note that it is
presumably only because its exercises can be supposed somehow to subserve this sort of pro-
cess and its articulation into narrower subordinate processes that a capacity can be character-
ized as a capacity for *thought* at all. If this is right, then the questions (1) how thought figures
in rationalization, and (2) what thought is, can in any case not be handled independently.

Alternate forms of "explanation by the imperfective" might be found in connection with
the operations of sub-rational animals, of course, and even, but in another way, in the opera-
tions of plants and of the parts of plants and animals alike. The philosophers' emphasis on te-
leological explanation, which is really a limiting case of this sort of account, inclines us to
overlook it. These points are made, though perhaps not ideally clearly, in Part One.

these propositions as representations of states in any emphatic sense, for the simple reason that they are internally related to a third, "The tree fell over," in which their content is, as I put it, uncoiled; this places our thoughts in a radically different categorical space, the space of *kinēsis*, if you like, and not of *stasis*. But "He was doing A intentionally," "He is doing A intentionally" and "He did A intentionally" evidently constitute a triad of just that type (though its elements fit it especially to the representation of rational life), and so also, on the present conception, do "He intended to do A," "He intends to do A" and "He did A intentionally".

5. Event-Forms, Event-Types and Individual Events

Whatever sort of being is expressed by the phrase "fall over", it has a sort of real presence, one thinks, if a tree is falling over; and whatever *walk to school* may be, it acquires a corresponding reality if someone is intentionally walking to school; no such presence or reality is required if an agent merely intends, or wants, to walk to school. Our proposed assimilation of these things must thus, one supposes, be groundless, and governed only by a vague intuition of incompleteness. A number of constructions can be placed on the notion that the genuine imperfective aspect expressed by the progressive must involve some further reality, concreteness or determinacy; one sort will be discussed in the present section, another in the next.

First we treat a spare and logical construction of the thought. Let us remember that we have a proper event- or process-description only where we have a real opposition of perfective and imperfective aspect. Given such an expression, it is, I want to argue, only the truth of standard perfective uses—in English, the simple past and the perfect, as they work out in application to these phrases—that can be said generally to *entail* the existence of a corresponding individual event. So, though the truth of, say, "I baked a loaf of bread" or "I have baked a loaf of bread" entails the existence of an act of baking a loaf of bread with myself as agent, yet, I want to say, the truth of "I am baking a loaf of bread" does not. The situation with the supposed event, or act, of bread-baking is just as it is with the would-be loaf itself: if it is true to say that I have baked a loaf, then it is true to say that there is a loaf that I have baked. We might give it, or each of them, if there are several, a

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name. But the truth of "I am baking a loaf" does not entail anything of the sort.

Notice that these remarks about loaves have nothing to do the impossibility of referring to future contingents, whether for lack of knowledge or determinacy or causal contact. Even if we imagine ourselves speaking "tenselessly", or, equivalently, as looking backward from an ideal moment placed after all of the actual moments of history, we might still have both "At some point, he was baking a loaf of bread" and "There was at no point a loaf of bread such that he was at any point baking *it.*" Our problems are thus completely independent of the familiar difficulties about time and the future.

The matter might be clarified if we consider the relation that event- or process-descriptions in our sense—a sort of verb phrase, really— bear to the corresponding noun phrases that are also often called by such a name, for example, descriptions of the forms "an act of doing A" and "an event of Ving," or "X's doing of A" and "Y's Ving". The content of simple action statements, as of other event statements, might uniformly be expressed with indefinite descriptions of the latter "nominal" sort. Indeed, it is often suggested that the English progressive "X is Ving" has such a formulation buried in its history: it abbreviates an older "X is *in a* Ving", comparable to the French "X *est en train de* V." If, however, we are to express everything necessary to the constitution of discourse about events and actions by means of such indefinite descriptions, then the abstract auxiliary verb we use to unite particular subjects with them will have itself to admit the three-fold distinction we have elsewhere found in the employment of our own more concrete verb phrases—the concrete verb phrases that are to be swallowed up in our newly nominalized indefinite descriptions. In this respect, the alleged older English "is in" falls short as an auxiliary: the copula admits only distinctions of tense—this is its peculiar function—and so "is in" can express only an imperfective connection. If we can be permitted to narrow our focus to the sphere of action, we will, however, find appropriate auxiliaries in the verbs "do" and "perform". We can say all of these:

"I performed *an act of baking a loaf of bread*"

"I was performing *an act of baking a loaf of bread*"

"I am performing *an act of baking a loaf of bread*"

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—propositions that bear, respectively, the contents of these:

"I baked *a loaf of bread*"

"I was baking *a loaf of bread*"

"I am baking *a loaf of bread*."

Here the formerly latent symmetry is revealed; if we cleave to the level of discourse at which the concept of an individual action (as of an individual event) is generated, then the italicized phrases in these propositions must move, logically, in parallel. To reformulate our points: just as "I baked a loaf of bread" entails "There is or was a loaf of bread, x, such that I baked x," so also "I performed an act of baking a loaf of bread" must entail something on the order of "There is or was an act of baking a loaf of bread, a, such that I performed a"; and similarly, just as "I was baking a loaf of bread" does *not* entail anything on the order of "There is or was a loaf of bread, x, such that I was baking x," so also "I was performing an act of baking a loaf of bread" should not be supposed to entail anything on the order of "There is or was an act of baking a loaf of bread, a, such that I was performing a"—and likewise for their present-tense versions.[17] Notice that, as usual, the point has nothing to do with action: a tree may have been falling over at some point, or a house collapsing, though no event in either thing's history can be characterized as *its fall*, or *its collapse;* and a tree may have been forming leaves, though, thanks to a great meteor or to an ax, no leaves ever

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17. Here we might advert to the obvious etymological connection between the English words "event" and "act", and the fourth parts of the Latin verbs *"evenire"* and *"agere"*. "X *eventum est*" and "Y *actum est*" can be taken to mean, respectively, "X has happened (or come to pass)" and "Y has been done"; they are the true originals of the propositions "X is an event" and "Y is an act."

The schedule of inferences propounded above appears, at first sight, to put the present doctrine at odds with that of Davidson's paper "The Logical Form of Action-Sentences," in *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 105–149. It is interesting, though, that *every sentence Davidson analyzes there is in the simple past;* the theme of the paper is "He did it," not "He's doing it." Hence, strangely, I have not rejected anything Davidson actually says. I will not comment on the matter, except to remark on the almost eerie contrast we find, in respect of aspect, between the illustrative propositions given in the first six essays of Davidson's work and those provided in Anscombe's *Intention.* Davidson's are typically in the third person and past; Anscombe's are in the first or second person of the present progressive.

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formed. The progressive may thus be said to trap the phrase it governs in an 'intensional context'.[18]

The intuition that in "I am doing A," in particular, we have essentially to do with something real, particular and individual, in the shape of *an act of doing A*, as we don't in, say, "I intend to do A," and that some such idea is involved in the constitution of ordinary action- and event-consciousness, is thus, I think, a mistake—a mistake arising from a failure to perceive the distance between imperfective and perfective employments of event- or process-descriptions.[19] If this is right, we can also dispense with any difficulties arising from the supposition that wanting and intending are in some sense *general*, though actions are particulars.[20] "I am doing A" is no more, or less, "general" that "I intend to do A" is; the transition to a genuine particular arises only with "I did A."[21]

18. Notice, however, that since perfective and imperfective aspect evidently stand or fall together, and enter, as possibilities, into the constitution of the sort of thing that can be joined to a subject in *either* way, it is impossible to adopt toward the present sort of "intensionality" the attitude that Michael Dummett finds in Frege's treatment of belief-contexts. We cannot pretend to carve off the "extensional" part of a system of event-representation, that is, its purely perfective fragment, and subject it to analysis, while reserving the "intensional", here imperfective, part for a later treatment founded on the results of the former. The idea of an indirect, opaque, oblique or intensional context thus seems to make a poor fit with the present material. See, for example, Michael Dummett, *Frege: Philosophy of Language*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 402–404.

19. Terrence Parsons, in "The Progressive in English," *Linguistics and Philosophy* 12 (1989): 213–241, attempts to supply a formally straightforward extension of Davidson's doctrine, mentioned above (n. 17), to imperfective propositions, and brings out a number of peculiarities that must attend any such account. (Parsons does not object to them.) Even if it is intelligible, though, an ontology of, say, individual unformed loaves, of memorials to Rogers Albritton for which even the blueprints could never be finalized, of particular impeded fallings-over of trees, and of individual acts of crossing of the country that ended tragically in Joplin, Missouri, is evidently a rather esoteric attainment; it cannot, I think, be supposed to figure in the fundamental constitution of the forms of judgment that interest us.

20. See, for example, Davidson's "Intending" in *Essays on Actions and Events*, p. 97.

21. The doctrine of the present section is closely parallel to one attributed to Aristotle in G. E. L. Owen's "Particular and General," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 79 (1978): 1–21. Owen means, among other things, to make Aristotle's familiar claims that "Substance is form" and "No substance is a universal" consistent with the equally familiar fact that Aristotle takes whatever is signified by the word "horse" as a paradigm of form. If *horse*, *Equus caballus*, isn't something universal or general, what is? The way out, in Owen's account, is to see that nothing on the order of the Fregean concept *horse* or the universal *horse* (if that is something different) can exhaust the reference of the word. This, he suggests, is shown by the compatibility of "A horse is coming to be" and "There is no particular horse x, such that x is coming

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6. Naive Agency as a Form of Thought and Life: The Primacy of Naive Rationalization

Can we describe a mode of speech, thought and life that constitutes its bearers as rational agents potentially recognizing one another as such, but that dispenses entirely with psychical forms of rationalization? Where do we go wrong if we suppose a use of "is . . . ing" in which it covers all of the cases covered by *our* "is . . . ing", "intends to . . .", "is trying to . . ." *and* "wants to . . ." together—or anyway as much of their field as is necessary to constitute the machinery of rationalization? We may of course allow that the practical thought and agency of such "naive agents" is restricted in ways ours isn't. The question is whether connectives could nevertheless attract, among them, the senses of the rationalizing "because" and "in order to" and whether these senses would figure in the judgments they frame—or whether instead the whole apparatus must fall to pieces for failure to make the obvious distinctions. A brief reflection on this thought experiment will, I think, help clarify the sense of our doctrine that all of the rationalizing terms given to us express forms of imperfective presence, and that the progressive, as it figures in the context of rationalization, is their model.

Our present-tense table of forms of rationalization, with its four or sixteen entries, would reduce, among these naive reasoners, to a single point:

I'm doing B

I'm doing A
I'm doing A because I'm doing B
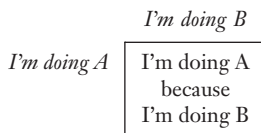
to be." (Owen argues that such an opposition is operating implicitly at a number of points in *Metaphysics* Z.) *Horse* can thus figure where no horse does, or better, *horse* enters into some states of affairs in an irreducibly non-predicative way. So *horse*, as a form, does something more than divide things into what is and isn't a horse, and thus more than a universal or a Fregean *Begriff* or any other "general" item does.

My own thought is structurally the same: *build a house*, *fall over* and *burn down* do something more than classify individual events, I want to say; this shows itself in the way they figure in specifically imperfective states of affairs. This is why I do not say that *fall over* (for example) is an event-type, but rather that it is an event-form; "what was done" by someone is not a universal or a kind, though it might be that many have done it.

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Our past-tense table, with its six or twenty entries, would retain just these two:

	I was doing B
I did A	I did A because I was doing B
I was doing A	I was doing A because I was doing B

Each table would, that is, collapse into its upper left. If it is reckoned too bold to employ the progressive in describing the thoughts of these people—on the ground that it must cover much more, here, than it does among us—suppose it to be replaced by some artificial alternative, so that the reduced present-tense table becomes, say:

	I am IMP to do B
I am IMP to do A	I am IMP to do A because I am IMP to do B

The essential features of the opposition with which our naive agents operate are these: (a) the ostensibly perfective form, "I *did* A," has exactly the same range in their usage as it does in ours; (b) their "is . . . ing" (or "is IMP to . . ."), like our "is . . . ing", applies both within and without the context of rationalization, and is as much used to describe the vicissitudes of leaves and planets as intentional action; and (c) its employment outside of the context of rationalization is, in essentials, the same as ours (a divergence in the representation of intuitively future events is discussed below).

If the construction is intelligible, then, in spite of the obvious divergence from our own forms of thought and speech, we can surely suppose that the opposition of "X was doing A" (or "X was IMP to do A") and "X did A," as *they* have it, is an opposition of imperfective and perfective aspect, and that the capacity exercised in the two forms of judgment thereby expressed is adequate to the apprehension of event- or process-forms and thus for a genuine form of event-consciousness. If,

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then, we can see our own use of the progressive as arising by restriction from such a use of "X is doing A" (or "X is IMP to do A"), as practical-psychical verbs come to take up some of its scope, then we can say that whereas *they* apprehend the imperfective mode of presence of an event- or process-form directly and abstractly, *we* apprehend it in a number of forms or guises.

Consider, then, the objection that our naive agents must wind up with intuitively incompatible self-descriptions. One of *us*, armed with our sophisticated apparatus, might say, for example, that she is writing the word "action", and writing the letter "a", but that she merely intends to write each of "c", "t", "i", "o" and "n", and isn't actually writing any of them. Won't one of our imagined naive agents have to say, in the same situation, that she is writing "a" and "action", as we would, and also, on account of her naiveté, that she "is writing" the letters "c", "t", "i", "o", "n"—but nevertheless also, as we would, that she *isn't* writing any of the latter? This incoherence can only be expelled if we deny that such an agent can exhibit any form of action as complex as writing the word "action", which would surely destroy her claim to rational agency.

But of course our naive agent will not express her position by saying that she isn't writing the letter "n", simply: she will say that she isn't writing it *now*, or isn't writing it *yet*. Where one of us sophisticates might say, for example, that he intends to do A *tomorrow*, she will say, "I'm doing A tomorrow." Notice, though, that this is something that we sophisticates can *also* be heard to say, and even give as rationalizing present actions (as naive agents do) and also present wants, intentions and attempts (as naive agents can't). "I'm sharpening the shovel because I want to turn the soil a bit," I might say, "and I want to turn the soil a bit because I'm planting the tomatoes tomorrow." The use of temporal designators in "I'm doing A tomorrow (or *in a minute*, or *on Tuesday*, or *when Hector arrives*)" is subordinate to the imperfective aspect that is here reckoned as strictly present; it is no different from the use of temporal designators in "I *want* to do A tomorrow," and any contradiction to which it tends is the 'contradiction' present in "I want to do A, but I don't want to do it *now*."

Here we begin to see, I think, that the actually existing employment of the progressive completely outstrips the expectations we are likely to form reflecting on it abstractly, and with a certain philosophical atti-

tude. The peculiarities we might claim to find in the speech of our na-
ive agents are already found in our own speech. The just-mentioned
'anticipatory' use of the progressive (as it might be called) is just one
example, and might easily be discounted. Another, more prevalent sort
of case has already been mentioned: we happily affirm, of someone
who is napping, that she is organizing the peasantry; of someone who
is sitting reading the paper, that she is baking a loaf of bread; and of
someone who is playing a hand of poker, that she is building a house.
If confusion arises, we once again concede that our agents aren't bak-
ing or building or organizing *at the moment* or *right now*, but rather
reading, playing poker or napping. We must grant the same power to
our naive agents. The distinction between what a person is doing sim-
ply and what she is doing 'now' is not absolute:[22] on closer inspection,
our bread-baker might not be reading either, not *just exactly now*, but
rather shooing an irritating fly; and our house-builder might not be en-
gaged in play *at this very instant*, but pouring a cup of coffee, await-
ing the next deal. Nevertheless, the agents are respectively reading and
playing *simpliciter*; as they are baking and building *simpliciter*; the office
of such expressions as "now", "at the moment" and "at this very in-
stant" is very different from that of a marker of present tense. Note
that, as usual, these phenomena have nothing especially to do with
human action: "The sycamore I planted ten years ago, it's growing
well, it's overtaking the house"—this is something I might say in Janu-
ary, when things are pretty much reduced to the sluggish swaying of
molecules.

The above-mentioned 'anticipatory' uses of the progressive are re-
ally no different from these uses 'in hiatus', as we may call them. They
all show that it is a mistake to look, at each moment at which a progres-
sive proposition is true, for something in which the progress might
be supposed to consist; indeed, it is often in the nature of an event- or
process-form that there should be times at which nothing of the sort
can be found, as any piece of music is likely to contain silences.[23]

We find more of this in the thoughts of our naive agents than we do in

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22. Thus I reject Anthony Galton's attempt to define a single "broad" and a single "nar-
row" sense of the progressive. See *The Logic of Aspect*, pp. 129–149.

23. Of course, if anything ever gets *done*, or gets completed, there will be things in which
the doing of it can be said to have consisted at different moments, and these will be its sub-
events or sub-deeds.

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our thoughts about ourselves, of course; and we find more of it in our thoughts about ourselves as agents than in our thoughts about other things and about ourselves as anything other than agents; but if there is nothing incoherent in what we do, then there is nothing incoherent in doing more of it. Why shouldn't it extend so far as to cover the materials necessary for the constitution of reasoned practice and its representation?

Let the thought then stand as a conjecture. Can we imagine the seamless development of a sophisticated, or (partly) overtly psychical, system of practical concepts out of a system like this one? The progression will be clearer if we interpolate another prior stage, one not limited to the practical domain.

Let us suppose an advance in which our naive agents come to enjoy a locution akin to the English "X is going to V" (which is, of course, not to be confused with the progressive of the concrete verb "to go to L", which expresses local motion). Though actual uses of the sign "going to V" often escape the symbol to which an apt *Begriffsschrift* would restrict it, so that it can be said in some cases to express simple futurity, I will argue that it is, in its primary and most interesting use, an instrument for the expression of imperfective aspect— it expresses, as we might put it, the "prospective imperfective", and no tense at all. In evidence of this consider, first, that we can say of someone that *she's doing A because she's going to do B*, but not, in straightforward rationalization, that *she's doing A because she will do B*. Of course, this evidence is not independent of our theory, and might be reckoned a mere subtlety of idiom. A more telling difference from the future tense, properly so called, emerges in the complication of such thoughts with the past tense. That it *was* that it *would be* that p entails that it is, was, or else will be that p; in traditional tense-logical symbols: PFp→Pp v p v Fp (or rather: CPFpAAPppFp). This formula will hold even if we suppose an "indeterminate" future.[24] By contrast, the thought that I

Though I expect that anyone who accepts either will accept the other, the present point should be distinguished from that of the last section. There the question was whether the progress of an event- or process-form B, at a given moment, requires the existence, at that moment, of an individual act of *doing B*. Here the question is whether the progress of such a form requires the progress of any narrower event- or process-form A, in which the progress might be supposed, at the moment, to consist.

24. The formula fails in so-called relativistic tense logics, but in a way that complicates dis-

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was going to walk across the street is perfectly consistent with the thought that I never was, never will be, nor am now walking across it. It is as it was with simple progressivity. Considered as judged atemporally, or from an ideal moment succeeding all of history, the thought that I *was doing* A and that I *was going to do* A are alike consistent with the thought that I never *did* A; but the thought that it *was* that I *would do* A is not so consistent. "Going to" thus appears to be, in the first instance at least, and in application to our sorts of verb phrase, an instrument for the expression of aspect, and in particular a form of *imperfective* aspect. The perfective opposed to "She was going to do A," in this sense, is "She did A" and not, as superficial grammar would suggest, "She went to do A" (which means something like "She went away to do A" or "She left to do A," and involves the idea of local motion).[25]

Now, once a locution akin to our "going to" exists, it is possible to reconfigure the imagined naive uses of sentences like the narrow "He's

cussion without, I think, affecting our point. Consider again the device of posting an ideal moment definitely after all others, and surveying world history from above; PFp→Pp will then hold.

25. The distinction between "X is going to V" and "X will V" is a favorite illustration of Michael Dummett's. He regards each as an interpretation of the future tense, distinguished from the other not by the conditions under which it is itself asserted, but by the contribution it makes to more complex sentences, for example, past-tense sentences. The former he calls the "future as expressing present tendencies", and the latter "the genuine future". This is already, in the present view, an unwarranted assimilation: the one form is a sort of aspect, the other a tense. The only connection between them, I think, is that in suitable circumstances "X is going to V" can itself be a ground for asserting "X will V"—a rather trivial way of procuring identical "assertion conditions". See *Truth and Other Enigmas* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 152–153, 161, 336, 340; and *Frege: Philosophy of Language*, p. 450.

Peter Geach, turning the tables on Dummett, argues that "X is going to V" (understood as admitting "X was going to V but never did") is itself the genuine future "tense", and that anything else is a fiction invented by philosophers. But surely a future tense, distinct from this, can be forged (as Dummett notes in different terms), and is forged when present facts are habitually brought into certain particular connections, realized case by case, with past affirmations of a suitable form; the appropriate connections are most clearly exhibited in the practices associated with betting and promising. They are without parallel in the employment of our "prospective imperfective" (that is, Geach's alleged future tense), which presupposes much looser such connections, as the divergent logical links discussed above show. The cogency of Geach's description might, however, be taken as demonstrating the possibility of dispensing with such practices and with such a form of thought, and it invites the conjecture that "prospective aspect" is the primary phenomenon, and the future tense a secondary development that must be understood in terms of it. See *Providence and Evil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), ch. 3, pp. 40–66.

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doing A now," the anticipatory "He's doing A in a minute" and the abstract "He's doing A," which in their original employment is entailed by either of the others. It becomes possible and attractive to attach the sense formerly associated with "He's doing A now" to "He's doing A" *simpliciter*—and then also, in order to block the inevitable inference from "He's doing A in a minute" to "He's doing A," which has now become invalid, to rewrite the former as "He's going to do A in a minute." This we might call the first stage in the process of sophistication. Note that it brings their use of the progressive, outside the context of rationalization, into line with ours.[26] An ideal of "presence" is imposed on the progressive, but it is a presence of the sort expressed by "now" and "at the moment", not that expressed by the present tense—for even "It's going to . . . in a minute" is in a genuinely present *tense*, for them as for us. Once the step is taken, the underlying metaphysical connection between such fact-structures as that *he's doing A* and *he's going to do A* (as they would *now* be expressed) is rendered occult, and it might take a bit of philosophy to retrieve it, under the name (as I am supposing) of imperfective aspect.[27]

Similarly, if a genuine future tense has formed, or some minimal probabilistic locutions have been introduced, it becomes possible to restrict the sense of "She is going to do A," and to further contract that of "She is doing A." We can, for example, *add* the requirement that the assertion of either commits the speaker to "She will (in the end) have done A" or, in another scenario, to "She is likely (in the end) to have done A". Here the assertion of either imperfective proposition is controlled by the expectation, simple or probabilistic, of future completion or success.[28] Other, similar restrictions can be imagined.

Here, a different kind of reality-constraint is imposed on the legitimate affirmation of the progressive (and, with it, of the prospective imperfective). Unless new locutions are formed, though, expressive capacity will be lost. It is clear, in particular, that the rationalization-

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26. Within this context, they will still say, "He's doing A" in cases where we will insist on "He's trying to do A."

27. Here I omit discussion of uses in hiatus, as I called them. If we suppose that the new use of "She's doing A" is incompatible with these, then information will be lost. We must suppose a new form, say, "She's *in a hiatus in* doing A," which will express the facts about our napping organizer and our frozen sycamore.

28. See Anscombe, *Intention*, pp. 39–40.

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connection, the elements of which were expressed at the previous stage by means of "is . . . ing" and "is going to . . .", and at the earlier stage by "is . . . ing" alone, can be recognized as holding by one who harbors neither of the superadded expectations. The movement that narrows the conditions for the assertion of the progressive and prospective forms of verbs (that is, of event- or process-descriptions) must thus be one that introduces new forms for them, fitted to the enterprise of rationalization. These might take the shape of such practical-psychical auxiliaries as "tries", "intends" and "wants", but could equally appear in the shape of, say, verb endings that 'grammaticalize' these offices (in the linguists' restricted sense). These new modes of employment of process- or event-descriptions, if they are more than one in number, could then attract peculiar constraints of their own, and exhibit among themselves distinctions of the sort made out in the last paragraph between "is . . . ing" and "is going to. . . ."[29] Whatever in the way of first-person authority was formerly attached to "is . . . ing" and "is going to . . ." in the context of rationalization would necessarily be reserved for these overtly psychical constructions, which are fitted especially to that context; such authority, however it is to be understood and limited, cannot, after all, be supposed to extend to the future.

Here the process of sophistication is complete. The imperfective enfolding or compression of an event- or process-form, which was expressed directly at the earliest stage of development, among our naive agents, has now been sorted into a variety of forms, some of them overtly psychical and practical, some not. Their unity has been submerged or rendered occult. The conditions for the possibility of a sophisticated philosophy of action, and a subtle philosophical treatment of the various practical-psychical attitudes, are in place.

Of course, the use of psychical verbs, as *we* have them, as also of the progressive and the prospective imperfective, does not in fact completely realize either of the two stages of the advance of sophistication I have outlined. The obscure criteria of 'presence' and 'reality' that they impose act on us rather as a sort of regulative ideal. The effects of this ideal are, however, quite adequate to provide materials and inspiration for what I have called a sophisticated theory of action.

29. For example, "I intend to do A" could be constrained by the agent's belief that he will successfully complete the act, as Grice, Harman and Velleman suppose that it is (see Chapter 6, note 8).

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I conclude with the following analogical representation of the doctrine I have attempted to propound. Our two forms of rationalization, naive and sophisticated, are to be compared with the different forms of *exchange* distinguished in, say, Aristotle, Marx and von Mises—these are the forms of exchange marked out (in different ways) by the expressions "barter", "money" and "credit". In claiming to find a certain order of priority among these things, this line of thought was not, or was not *just*, advancing a historical hypothesis. In a so-called credit economy, after all—one in which *purchase* and *payment* are distinguished conceptually and practically—the simple act of *buying* something, in which purchase and payment are not distinguished, is still possible and intelligible. In a simple money economy, in which the acts of *selling* and *buying* have been distinguished conceptually and practically, a pair of us might yet engage in a simple act of *barter*; or of immediate exchange—an act in which the roles of *buyer* and *seller* are not distinguished. Credit and money presuppose barter in the sense that they presuppose a structuring of life that makes barter possible and intelligible, while the reverse is not the case. We can, after all, speak of a system of exchange by simple barter, in which such acts provide the only possible illustration of the concept of exchange. A treatment of the concept of exchange that disallows this, or that insists that every act of barter be construed as, say, the simultaneous purchase, payment, extension of credit and cancellation of debts on the part of *each* of two agents, is clearly absurd. My hope is to have shown that the theory of action falls into just this sort of absurdity in neglecting what I have called naive rationalization and the sort of connection of ground and grounded that is expressed in it.

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