Wholeness in Wittgenstein and Aquinas : A Contrast in Styles

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The title of my paper is intended to represent a glimpse and a project rather than the profession of an achievement. I must, therefore, make explicit at least a certain disclaimer and mark a certain delimitation. I write primarily as a simple pupil of Aquinas, as one, however, who, perhaps precisely as such, has learned a sympathy with certain later and apparently dissimilar thinkers, and in particular with Wittgenstein. Further, the Wittgenstein whom I want to consider here is the later Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations.*

My intention, therefore, is to suggest certain analogies between the thought of one whom I consider to be my principal tutor and that of another with whom, I think, Aquinas would have recognised an elective affinity. And since my argument will at least at times be somewhat intricate, I want to begin by providing an Ariadne-thread to facilitate the passage through the possible labyrinth. My contention will be that the conceptions of language held by both Wittgenstein and Aquinas can best be understood as expressions of their conception of what it is to be a man, that their respective conceptions of man turn out to be fascinatingly convergent, but that nevertheless their conceptions of language present a striking, albeit complementary, contrast. Or, put in slightly different form, the idea I want to suggest is that whereas the conceptions of language held by both thinkers should be seen as aspects and consequences of a markedly similar conception of man, these conceptions of language nevertheless present contrasting characteristics.

I shall begin, then, by trying to state my understanding of the main features of Wittgenstein's conception of language as expressed in the *Philosophical Investigations.* And I shall do so by seeking to present this conception in the way I have already adumbrated, as an aspect or derivative of his conception of man. Now to those who are familiar with the *Philosophical Investigations* this co-ordinating way of seeing Wittgenstein's thought as a whole may—or should—come as something of a paradox, let alone as a shock. For does not Wittgenstein himself, in the Preface of his book, somewhat bleakly disclaim having succeeded in an ambition 'to weld my results together into such a whole' (p. ix), with a note almost of defeat and disappointment that he should never have got beyond writing 'more than philosophical remarks' *(ibid.)?* Am I not, therefore, going against the very grain of his work in purporting to see the work as some sort of whole? Am I

not being presumptuous, to say the least, in discerning more coherence than the author himself could discern? I may indeed be offending in these respects, and yet, whether in virtue of the privilege of the critic vis-a-vis the author, or on account of a Gallic *esprit de synthèse,* I want at least to suggest that a patient pondering of the *Investigations* slowly yields the conclusion that there is an unfinished, an exploratory yet deep coherence in the work as a whole, and that the inner secret or explanation of this coherence is a certain conception of man.

How do I arrive at this conclusion? Well, can we not initially agree that the *Investigations* reads, over many stretches at least, like a prolonged running polemic against certain notions of language (whether these notions of what language is were held by other philosophers or by the earlier Wittgenstein himself is not here to the point)? And if this be agreed, can we not further agree that the three main notions against which Wittgenstein particularly set his face are (i) that uttering and meaning and understanding sentences is a matter of operating a calculus according to definite rules; (ii) that there is some essence of language or general form of proposition and of language; and (iii) that language is the translation of inner processes.

Let me recall some of the things he said under these three headings.

A propos of the first notion:

'81. F. P. Ramsey once emphasised in conversation with me that logic was a "normative science". I do not know exactly what he had in mind, but it was doubtless closely related to what only dawned on me later: namely, that in philosophy we often *compare* the use of words with games and calculi which have fixed rules, but cannot say that someone who is using language *must* be playing such a game. . . .'
'199. Is what we call "obeying a rule" something that it would be possible for only *one* man to do, and to do *once* in his life?—This is of course a note on the grammar of the expression "to obey a rule".'
(And cf. e.g. 67; 143-147; 197-241; 292; 449.)

A propos of the second notion:

'65. Here we come up against the great question that lies behind all these considerations.—For someone might object against me: "You take the easy way out! You talk about all sorts of language-games, but have nowhere said what the essence of a language-game, and hence of language, is: what is common to all these activities, and what makes them into language or parts of language. So you let yourself off the very part of the investigation that once gave you yourself most headache, the part about the *general form of propositions* and of language".

And this is true.—Instead of producing something common to all that we call language, I am saying that these phenomena have not one thing in common which makes us use the same word for all,—but that they are *related* to one another in many different ways. And it is be-

cause of this relationship, or these relationships, that we call them all "language". I will try to explain this'.
(And cf. e.g. 24; 92; 108; 114; 134-136.)

And a propos of the third notion of language:
'305. "But you surely cannot deny that, for example, in remembering, an inner process takes place".—What gives the impression that we want to deny anything? When one says "still, an inner process does take place here"—one wants to go one: "After all, you *see* it". And it is this inner process that one means by the word "remembering".— The impression that we wanted to deny something arises from our setting our faces against the picture of the "inner process". What we deny is that the picture of the inner process gives us the correct idea of the use of the word "to remember". We say that this picture with its ramifications stands in the way of our seeing the use of the word as it is'.
'597. . . .—so we often think as if our thinking were founded on a thought-schema: as if we were translating from a more primitive mode of thought into ours'.
(And cf. 36; 153; 154; 180; 306; 308; 329; 332; 335; 435; 673; p. 177; 217; 218; p. 220.)

Over against such notions of language, the later Wittgenstein of the *Investigations* recalls us, with imaginative versatility, to the way we actually talk ('Let the use of words teach you their meaning' (p. 220) et cf. e.g. 116), when we are working ordinarily with our language and not making holiday with them (38; et cf. 132). He brings us back to the proto-phenomenon *(Urphaenomen)* (654) of our daily conversation and form of life (cf. p. 226). And he reminds us (cf. 127) in particular, how, though we do have and must have rules, paradigms, calculi, models of language, we do also extend, depart from, vary such rules, make exceptions, even 'Make up the rules as we go along' (83). He shows us how language is, we might say, a matter not merely of point (cf. 142; 564) but also of counter-point, or, to change the analogy, how we develop language in much the way that English lawyers develop the common law, from precedent to precedent—'in consimili casu' (cf. 31; 66; 67; 69; 75), as the old books had it. And this is one aspect of the leading image of the language-game: here is language under the aspect of being both rule-bound and rule-free: ' "But then the use of the word is unregulated, the 'game' we play with it is unregulated".—It is not everywhere circumscribed by rules'; (68; et cf. 84; 130; 142; 345; 494; p. 224).

If this is so, however, then language can have no one essence, propositions can have no general form, they can only be as diverse, developing, creatively organic as life itself—which is surely another aspect of the image of language as a game: 'the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life' (23); '. . . to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life' (19).

It is, however, when and if we follow through yet another series of scattered 'remarks' which are of a piece with this last idea of language as a form of life, and then relate them to yet another associated 're-marks' not so much about language now but about the language-user, the person, man himself, that we arrive at the heart of what I should submit to be Wittgenstein's thought. For if language is indeed part of whole activity, a form of life, and so much so that we should not see it as doing something *'while* one "directs one's attention to this or that" ' (33), as the translation of some 'inner process' 'which accompanies the giving and hearing of the definition' (34), as 'a description of a process occurring behind or beside that of saying the formula' (154), but —this is critical—as an expression of 'both' behaviour *and* state of mind, 'both; not side-by-side, however, but about the one *via* the other' (p. 179), because 'the language is itself the vehicle of thought' (329; et cf. 318; p. 217), this is surely only what we should expect if we also accept that man is a being whose soul appears in his activity, a whole and distinctive being, as Wittgenstein would have us accept. For look again at what he says: for instance:

'415. What we are supplying are really remarks on the natural history of human beings, we are not contributing curiosities however, but observations which no one has doubted, but which have escaped remark only because they are always before our eyes'.

'573. To have an opinion is a state.—A state of what? Of the soul? Of the mind? Well, of what object does one say that it has an opinion? Of Mr N. N. for example. And that is the correct answer. . . .'

'537. It is possible to say "I read timidity in this face" but at all events the timidity does not seem to be merely associated, outwardly connected, with the face; but fear is there, alive in the features. . . .'

'583. . . . The surroundings give it its importance. And the word "hope" refers to a phenomenon of human life. (A smiling mouth *smiles* only in a human face.)'

'580. An "inner process" stands in need of outward criteria'.

'581. An expectation is embedded in a situation, from which it arises. . . .'

p. 188. 'What is fear? What does "being afraid" mean? If I wanted to define it at a single shewing—I should *play-act* fear'.

'337. . . . An intention is embedded in its situation, in human customs and institutions. . . .'

'36. And we do here what we do in a host of similar cases: because we cannot specify any *one* bodily action which we call pointing to the shape (as opposed, for example, to the colour), we say that a *spiritual* [mental, intellectual] activity corresponds to these words.

Where our language suggests a body and there is none: there, we should like to say, is a *spirit*.

p. 174. '. . . Can only those hope who can talk? Only those who have mastered the use of a language. That is to say, the phenomena of hope are modes of this complicated form of life. . . .'

p. 177. '. . . The same question applies to the expression "I see him now vividly before me" as to the image. What makes this utterance into an utterance about *him?* Nothing in it or simultaneous with it ("behind it"). If you want to know whom he meant, ask him. . . .'

p. 217. 'The intention *with which* one acts does not "accompany" the action any more than the thought "accompanies" speech. . . .'

p. 225. '. . . Ask, not: "What goes on in us when we are certain that? . . ."—but: How is "the certainty that this is the case" manifested in human action?'

'283. . . . Only of what behaves like a human being can one say that it *has* pains.

For one has to say it of a body, or, if you like of a soul which some body *has*. And how can a body *have* a soul'?

'357. We do not say that *possibly* a dog talks to itself. Is that because we are so minutely acquainted with its soul? Well, one might say this: If one sees the behaviour of a living thing, one sees its soul. . . .'

p. 178. '. . . My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul. I am not of the *opinion* that he has a soul. . . .

The human body is the best picture of the human soul. . . .'

What I am arguing, then, is not merely that Wittgenstein does have an implicit conception of man which he began to make partially explicit, but that it is a holistic conception of man, and that it is this holistic conception which provides the inner heart and explanation of his holistic conception of language. And in order to make this connexion clearer, I had better at this point suggest a summary—and therefore almost inevitably distorting—formulation of this conception of man and indicate its relevance to his conception of language. The image of man that seems to me, then, to emerge from the *Investigations* is that of an *embodied, conversational, playsome agent.*

Man is, firstly, an agent and it is as agent that he is active, and active with an activity that includes language. This agent is, however, also embodied, so that language is also necessarily something not merely accompanying, separate from or side by side with thought or its user, but the user's, the *person's*, very self-manifestion, self-shewing, the vehicle of his self-expression: 'When I think in language, there aren't 'meanings' going through my mind in addition to the verbal expressions: the language is itself the vehicle of thought' (329; et cf. 153; p. 217). At the same time, language as part of activity has to be learned, and learned from others doing the same sort of thing, and so it presupposes others and co-operation and training and trust. In a word language is a matter of 'linguistic intercourse' (182), it is inherently what we might call conversational (cf. e.g. 199; 206; 224; 241; 361; 384; 590; 630; p. 200; p. 216). Finally, whilst we begin

this learning-process by learning by rote and by repetition and rule, we also sooner or later discover the possibilities of variation, innovation, inventiveness, improvisation, in a word, of *playing* with and from within our rules and conventions. From the delight of repeating our ring-a ring-a-roses (7), we progress to the even greater delight of ringing changes. As creatures of play, we both need systems and freedom from systems (cf. 83; 141; 345; p. 227; p. 228), all our paradigms are partial and provisional and we proceed by a process of gradual 'gravitation' or 'transition' from one paradigm to another (cf. 385; 534; p. 206; p. 227). It is, however, a tricky business to move with such measured freedom, let alone to give anything like an adequate account of these intricate movements (cf. p. 227), so that it is hardly surprising if we should often get entangled in our own rules (cf. 90; 125), find it difficult to gain a perspicuous representation of our state of play (cf. 122), often be unable to find our way out of the fly-bottle (cf. 309). Yet one of the most important points of the *Investigations* could surely be said to be that we *can* move out of the rut of hackneyed associations, one can break the spell of misleading connexions and analogies (cf. 90; 109), one can free oneself of the almost compulsive inertia of 'letting ready-made phrases come crowding in', as George Orwell put it, one can learn to assume a mastery of and over one's conventions (cf. e.g. 198), to escape from the captivity of pictures that almost force themselves on one (cf. 115) and to 'shift for oneself' (cf. p. 206).

Such, then, I should submit, is that conception of man which provides the inner, if largely implicit, rationale and dynamic of Wittgenstein's conception of language, and if there is any verisimilitude in the account I have tried to give, then its affinities with the conceptions of man held, on the one hand, by such philosophers as Buber, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty on the continent of Europe and, on the other hand, with Professor John Macmurray in this country, are obvious and exciting. It is, however, not with contemporary philosophers that I am concerned to compare Wittgenstein here but with Aquinas.

Now I want to try to present at least some impression of the immensely rich and concentrated thought of Aquinas on the pattern according to which I have so far proceeded with Wittgenstein. For my procedure with Wittgenstein was to start from his conception of language but only so as to move back gradually into his conception of man. So far as Aquinas is concerned, therefore, I want to begin with a text of his that expounds part of his own view of language. The passage I shall quote is taken from the perhaps rather unlikely context of the discussion of God-talk, the question of how and to what extent one can talk about God, but the passage can be isolated from the context. (The translation I use for this passage is that of Herbert McCabe.) Here it is:

'In every true affirmative statement, although the subject and predicate signify what is in fact in some way the same thing, they do so from different points of view. This is true not only of statements in which the predicate means something that only happens to belong to the subject, it is also true of those in which it expresses part of what the subject is. Thus it is clear that in 'a man is white' although 'man' and '(a)white' must refer to the same thing, they do so in different ways, for 'man' and 'white' do not have the same meaning. But it is also true for a statement such as 'man is an animal'. That which is a man is truly animal : in one and the same thing is to be found the sensitive nature which makes us call it an animal and the rational nature which makes us call it a man.

There is even a difference in point of view between subjects and predicate when they have the *same* meaning, for when we put a term in the subject place we think of it as referring to something, whereas in the predicate place we think of is as saying something about the thing, in accordance with the saying 'predicates are taken formally (as meaning a form), subjects are taken materially (as referring to what has the form)' *(praedicata tenentur formaliter, et subjecta materialiter)*.

The difference between subject and predicate represents two ways of looking at a thing, while the fact that they are put together affirmatively indicates that it is one thing that is being looked at *(huic vero diversitati quae est secundum rationem, respondet pluralitas praedicati et subjecti; identitatem vero rei significat intellectus per ipsam compositionem)*. (Ia, 13, 12. English Translation, Vol. 3, p. 95).

Let me repeat what is the critical principle for my present purposes : 'The difference between subject and predicate represents two ways of looking at a thing, while the fact that they are put together affirmatively indicates that it is one thing that is being looked at'.

Now this very compact passage seems to me to be particularly interesting from many points of view. For, in the first place, Aquinas is here showing himself quite happy to speak analytically—or, as he would himself say 'resolutively'—of language in terms of its constituent parts, but only because such analysis presupposes and leads back to a precedent unity. In terms of the maxim that later commentators have made familiar, Aquinas's distinctions are allowed and made in order to re-unite, *distinguer pour unir*. Further it is in virtue of this same principle of analysis within recomposition that Aquinas can also quite happily analyse *man* into his component parts, since here again there is an underlying conviction that man is in fact a whole and that any analytical talk about man can be regathered together to form a judgment about him as being such a whole.

For Aquinas, then, as for Wittgenstein, not only does language have to be seen as a whole but so does man; in fact for Aquinas, as for Wittgenstein, I should say that language has to be seen as a whole *because* man has to be seen as a whole : man's language is in his

image. Nor does the similarity end there. For when we come to look at Aquinas' conception of man, this too turns out to correspond almost point for point to Wittgenstein's emergent conception of man.

Now I had sought to sum up Wittgenstein's conception of man as being that for him man is an embodied, conversational, playsome agent, and if we now take the first element of this summary first, then we find Aquinas saying that whereas for Plato the soul was related to the body as its mover—like the helmsman in the ship : surely the proto-type of Professor Gilbert Ryle's arch-enemy, the ghost in the machine—for him, as for Aristotle, the soul is united to the body as its form so that they are one composite unity. More strictly still, he will say that 'the intellect, as the source of intellectual activity, is the form of the human body. . . . And the reason for this is that what a thing actually does depends on what it actually has to give; a thing acts precisely by virtue of its actuancy *(nihil agit nisi secundum quod est actu; unde quo aliquid est actu, eo agit)*. . . . Life manifests its presence through different activities at different levels, but the soul is the ultimate principle by which we conduct every one of life's activities; the soul is the ultimate motive factor behind nutrition, sensation and movement from place to place, and the same holds true of the act of understanding. So that this prime factor in intellectual activity, whether we call it mind or intellectual soul, is the formative principle of the body. . . .' (la, 76, 1; E.T., Vol. 11, pp. 41-43). Or again : '. . . We must assert, then, that the soul in man is one in number, at once sensory, intellectual and nutritive. . . .' so that 'Socrates is not constituted a man by one soul and an animal by another, but both man and animal by the one soul'. *(ibid.* 76, 3; p. 63). And in yet another passage Aquinas uses his principle of analysis within composition to indicate how there can be unity within man even when man's powers are seen acting in their dynamism :
'Aristotle remarks in the *Politics* that *both despotic and politic government can be observed in a living thing; for the soul rules the body like a despot, but the intellect rules the appetite like a constitutional monarch.* . . . Rule is politic or constitutional when anyone governs free men who, while subject to a leader's rulings, nevertheless may in their own right oppose his decisions. . . .

But understanding and reason are said to rule aggressiveness and desirousness in a politic manner, since the sensitive appetite has its own bent, enabling it to oppose a reasoned decision. It is the nature of sensitive appetite to be moved not only by instinct (in the case of other animals) and the cogitative power under the direction of abstract reason (in the case of man), but also by imagination and sensation. We experience conflict between reason on the one hand and aggression and desire on the other when we sense or imagine a pleasure reason forbids or feel sad at something reason commands. Thus the fact that aggressiveness and desire oppose reason in something does

not argue that they do not obey it' (*ibid.,* 81, 3 ad 2um; Vol. 11, pp. 213-215).

This is all I shall say to indicate how for Aquinas man is not a body supplied with a soul, but a being who in some sense is a soul, whose body is the outward manifestation of his soul, an animated body and not a ghost in a machine. I do not think that Aquinas would dissent from Wittgenstein's statement that 'the human body is the best picture of the human soul' (p. 178).

To pass, then, to the second feature of what I submit to be Wittgenstein's conception of man, namely, that he is also a conversational being, it is subjacent to all that Aquinas says, particularly about justice and charity and man's ultimate destiny, that man is essentially a social, or what he might prefer to call a 'consocial' creature (cf. 2a2ae, 26, 4). Here is a small selection of his statements to this effect:

'. . . Now clearly, there is a natural union between things of the same kind of species. Consequently everything naturally loves other members of its own species, as we can see even in things that lack consciousness. . . .' (la, 60, 4; E.T. Vol. 9, p. 195).

'Every man is naturally friend to every man by some sort of love. . . .' (2a2ae, 114, 1 ad 2um).

'. . . We are bound to love others in charity because they are our neighbours both insofar as they too are born in the image of God and insofar as they are capable of attaining the glory of heaven. And it makes no difference whether one speaks of *neighbour* or *brother,* as John does, or of *friend,* as Leviticus does, because the same relationship is meant' (2a2ae, 44, 7).

'. . . man is by nature a social animal. . . .' (1a, 96, 4).

'. . . since man is a social animal, one man naturally owes another anything without which human society cannot survive. But men could not live with each other unless they believed each other and trusted them to speak the truth. . . .' (2a2ae, 109, 3, ad lum).

'. . . But this is clearly false if we consider the natural inclination of things, and if we take—as we may—the innate tendencies of non-rational being as a pointer to the way the intellectual nature itself moves to its ends by appetition and will. For nature shows us that everything which precisely in virtue of its nature, belongs to something else, is primarily and principally inclined towards that to which it belongs rather than towards itself. Consider the way things naturally behave; it is as Aristotle said, *each natural thing is adapted to act for an end by the nature moving it to act*: thus we see the parts of a whole going into action for the sake of the whole, whatever the result to themselves; a hand instinctively moves to ward off a blow that would harm the body as a whole. And since reason follows the model of nature, we find a like tendency, for example in good citizens; they are disposed to face death for the well-being of their city; and if man

were made by nature part of a city, this disposition would be purely instinctive' (1a, 60, 5; E.T. Vol. 9, pp. 199-201).

When we come to the third feature with which I sought to characterise Wittgenstein's conception of man, namely, his playsomeness, I should have to go much more deeply into Aquinas' thought than I have time for here in order to justify the claim that for Aquinas too man has about him a sovereign freedom, a capacity for self-transcendence, a creative competence to act that releases him from any finished system and that makes him the explorer and extender rather than the victim of any imaginable paradigms. For Aquinas man's power to dispose of himself freely was constitutive of his deepest being, as one of his favourite texts from the Old Testament insisted: 'God put man in the hands of his own counsel'. An adequate justification of this point would therefore necessitate an account of Aquinas' notion of man's will and freedom, but I shall content myself with two quotations that deal with the lesser but still critical virtue of 'prudence', so-called, since they again carry interesting resonances to an ear attuned to Wittgenstein. For Aquinas prudence is the art of acting well, *recta ratio agibilium,* the directive skill of life, the art of choosing appropriate means in particular circumstances. As such it comprises various parts, including 'docilitas' and 'solertia', docility being concerned with what can be learned, whereas 'solertia' is a creative and inventive flair. Here is what Aquinas says about these two aspects of prudence:

'Prudence is concerned with particular things to be done. But since these are almost infinitely diverse, no one man can take sufficient account of them all, whether in a brief time or over a period. A man is, therefore, particularly in need of being taught what pertains to prudence by another. . . .' (2a2ae, 49, 3).

'Prudence consists in making a right judgment on how to act. Such judgment or estimate is acquired in two ways when action is in question as it is when it is a matter of speculation: by discovering things for oneself, and by learning it from another. . . . Now this flair involves a man developing a skill at making his own appreciation of things. . . .' *(ibid.,* art. 4).

So Aquinas. And do you recall what Wittgenstein says:

'Is there such a thing as "expert judgment" about the genuineness of expressions of feeling?—Even here, there are those whose judgment is "better" and those whose judgment is "worse".

Correcter prognoses will generally issue from the judgments of those with better knowledge of mankind.

Can one learn this knowledge? Yes; some can. Not, however, by taking a course in it, but through *"experience"*. Can someone else be a man's teacher in this? Certainly. From time to time he gives him the right *tip.*—This is what "learning" and "teaching" are like here.— What one acquires here is not a technique; one learns correct judg-

ments. There are also rules, but they do not form a system, and only experienced people can apply them right; unlike calculating-rules.

What is most difficult here is to put this indefiniteness, correctly, and unfalsified, into words (p. 227 et cf. p. 228).

For Aquinas, then, man is an embodied, consocial, creative agent, just as for Wittgenstein man is an embodied, conversational, playsome agent. I have, however, already said that Aquinas feels no embarrassment about taking men to pieces—perhaps precisely because he is so sure of being able to put them together again. And I should like to exemplify both this technique and this conviction once again with another passage which not only recalls the first passage about language with which I began this second part of my paper on Aquinas but which allows me to make one final comparison between the thought of Aquinas and Wittgenstein :

'Concepts or aspects which are logically distinct owing to the nature of our minds, must not be thought to be really diverse things in the physical world; our reason can grasp a single existing thing in a variety of ways. Because (as we have stated) the intellective soul contains within its capacities all that the sense-soul does and more, therefore analysis can look at the sense powers as matter in need of form. And as this characteristic (soul with sense powers) is common to man and other animals, the mind forms the concept of a genus embracing both. Those features of the intellective soul which are beyond the power of sense are seen by the mind as shaping and completing and thus constituting that which makes man different' (1a, 76, 3, and 4 um; E.T. Vol. 11, 65).

This passage again exhibits Aquinas' technique of analysis within composition and as bearing on the subject of man. It is as such interesting enough, but it is the last sentence, with its idea of one element that is shaping and completive of another *(quasi formale et completivum),* that allows us to notice yet another aspect of Aquinas' total view. For not only does Aquinas have a view of language which allows him to see it in terms *at once* of its differentiated parts and its integral wholeness, not only does he have a view of man which allows him to see man in terms *at once* of *his* differentiated parts and his integral wholeness, but he also has a view of the inter-relationship between language and man in their respective differentiation and wholeness. In the last passage I am going to quote from Aquinas, he is speaking in the context of the sacraments, but since the characteristic of the sacraments under this aspect is their combination of language and the activity of handling things, I do not think that it would be unfair to extend what he says specifically about the way in which the language and the activity of the sacraments are related to cover the way in which language and actions are related *in general.* Here then is what he says :

'Although words and things are different sorts of thing in their own right, they do come together from the point of view of meaning. And this is more the case in relation to words than in relation to other things. And this is how *words and things somehow become one thing* in the sacraments, like form and matter, insofar as meaning comes to its most perfect expression in the medium of words. . . . And, of course, amongst things we include such physical actions as washing and oiling and so on. . . .' (3a, 60, 6, ad 2 um, italics supplied). Would it be translating the critical clause here too loosely by rendering it as follows : 'I shall also call the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, the 'language-game'' ' *(Philosophical Investigations,* 7).

This last remark brings me back full circle to the comparison with Wittgenstein. For what I have been trying to suggest is that both Wittgenstein and Aquinas are moved by an intuition and a conviction that man is a whole—Wittgenstein perhaps more implicitly and gropingly, Aquinas more explicitly and assuredly—, that it is this same intuition that is the motive power behind their search for methods or strategies of description and expression of man and language that will do justice to man's wholeness, but that whereas Wittgenstein is feeling after a strategy that is something we might call contextual (cf. p. 188), Aquinas deploys a strategy that we might call one of differentiated integration.

I should like to conclude with one last series of observations, since my basic theme is the dream of wholeness, and I should again like to introduce these concluding observations with a quotation—I am afraid that it is again from a theologian, though it is a theologian who is here writing more as a philosopher and poet; besides which, he is alive and a Jesuit, not dead and a Dominican. I refer to Karl Rahner. This is what he says :

'There are words which divide and words which unite; words which explain the whole by breaking it up, and words which at once conjure up that whole and produce it in the listening person (not only in his intellect); . . . There are words which delimit and isolate, and words which make a single thing transparent to the infinity of all reality. . . . words which illuminate something small, because they encircle with their light a part of reality, and words which make us wise, because they allow the manifold to harmonise in the one. The words which by their charm forge a unity, make reality first present to us, make us subject to them, spring from our hearts, come to us as a gift and transport us—these I would like to call *primordial* words (Urworte) . . .' *(Theological Investigations,* Vol. 3, p. 322).

Now the question which I should like to pose by way of conclusion is this : May it not be that wholeness, the desire to see things steadily and see them whole, is a deep and necessary need of us all, so that it is indeed in the nature of a dream of reason, and that it takes the seers

of the different generations to rediscover ways—perhaps many, varied, an overlapping family-pattern of ways—of recalling this wholeness to us?

Objectivity and Human Needs in Marxism
by Adrian Cunningham

'Communism is the solution to the riddle of history, and knows itself to be such'.—Marx, 1844.

Whether marxism poses for itself solutions to the riddles of history, or whether, more narrowly, it is a science of social formations and their transformation, or some combination of the two—these are central issues of contemporary marxist theory. They are focussed in the debate over the work of Althusser, and over the 'neo-hegelianism' of the earlier Lukacs, Goldmann, the Frankfurt School and others (for present purposes I shall collectively describe this latter position as Critical Theory). It is in this context that the old disputes over the relation between the earlier and the later work of Marx remain so important, for they have implications for the orientation, scope and purchase of the tradition as a whole.

Reflexion on these issues is prompted by two recent collections of marxist essays. Whilst Herbert Marcuse's *Studies in Critical Philosophy* (New Left Books, £3.25) provides for the English reader essential material for the assessment of the claims of critical theory, Paul Walton and Andrew Gamble's *From Alienation to Surplus Value* (Sheed & Ward, £5.50) is an attempt to establish the unity of 'the total Marx', *without* falling back on the critical theory tradition. In both texts, however, there are surprisingly similar lacunae and areas of fuzziness, especially over the definition and analysis of human needs. This is a concept basic to the marxist tradition but one which has rarely been satisfactorily investigated, or its crucial and awkward significance grasped (Mascolo, Meszaros, and Kolakowski not withstanding). It is on this question, and the related ones of the objectivity and universality of marxist theory, that I shall concentrate. For it seems to me that, in the final analysis, marxism's claim to objectivity at any significant level is linked to claims about the universality of its