

# *Preface*

This volume of essays centers on basic aspects of mind. I discuss the main themes of the volume in the Introduction. Here I want to make a few more personal remarks. Some pertain to general attitudes toward the substance of the early essays in the volume. Some pertain to memories, feelings, and debts regarding the circumstances of their birth.

The birth dates of the essays span a period of more than three decades. In this Preface, I will confine myself to the earlier essays in the volume. The early essays established a direction for the rest, with the exception of the two papers on consciousness. The volume includes the essays (“Belief *De Re*” and “Individualism and the Mental”) in which I learned to sing—communicate with a distinctive philosophical voice. It also includes the papers (those two, together with “Other Bodies”, “Intellectual Norms and Foundations of Mind”, and my early work on perception) that set the direction for what I think of as my primary philosophical work. In returning to these essays for this occasion, I experience a combination of familiarity and distance. I suppose that these feelings are common emotional embellishments of long-term memory. The feelings have particular substantive content as well as typical emotional coloring, however.

The early papers in this volume were written during heady philosophical times. With regard to the work by Donnellan, Kripke, and Putnam on linguistic reference, there was a sense abroad in the philosophical community, which I shared, that something of long-term philosophical importance was occurring. This sense remains palpable and familiar. It has been confirmed with the passage of time.

On the other hand, aspects of these developments now seem philosophically blinkered. The methodology of the time was to separate linguistic matters as sharply as possible from issues in the philosophy of mind and epistemology. There are scientific advantages in this procedure. It constitutes an idealization of the sort that often serves science and understanding well. A phenomenon is simplified, the better to study some of its basic features in as pure a form as possible. This methodology has, I think, yielded dividends, particularly in philosophy’s contribution as midwife to the birth and development of semantics in empirical linguistics.

The methodology was, however, philosophically limiting. The roots of reference lie in mental capacities—in particular, in perception and in various

mechanisms, especially memory and belief formation, that preserve perceptual reference. A serious philosophical limitation of the initial work on linguistic reference is that it was not coupled with comparably sophisticated reflection on mind. Perception, which clearly grounds the sorts of reference that drove the work on language, received little serious philosophical attention at all. Some of these limitations still weaken parts of philosophy of language, in my opinion, although, as noted, some parts of idealized, relatively “pure” approaches to philosophy of language have made steady, valuable contributions to knowledge through association with linguistics.

A similar mix of identification and distance marks my attitude toward my philosophical contributions from the period immediately following the breakthroughs on linguistic reference. Not surprisingly, the element of identification dominates. Seen at this distance, I think that my main contributions were, broadly, threefold. First, I developed philosophical issues about representation, including reference, in the domain in which I think they more fundamentally arise—the domain of mind. Second, I explained and systematically explored ways in which the *natures* of mental states constitutively depend on relations to an environment beyond the individual. Third, I extended (past the paradigms of demonstrative reference, proper names, and natural kind terms that had dominated the thinking about language) the types of representational phenomena that constitutively depend on relations to a broader environment. The sense that I was on to new, foundational directions in philosophy was vivid at the time of writing “Individualism and the Mental”. This sense remains vivid.

On the other hand, there are passages in these early papers that show that I had not always adequately separated phenomena that are relevant to understanding language use from phenomena that are relevant to understanding mind. Some aspects of language serve communication rather than expression of thought. Some are relevant mainly to practical exigencies, and give only the most indirect clues to mental or even linguistic structures. I was aware of these general points, and made use of them. But I did not apply them as well as I might have. My improved understanding of these matters is marked in the postscripts.

I was on sabbatical in Graz, Austria, during the Fall of 1977 and in London during the Winter and Spring of 1978. This was the period in which I conceived the ideas of “Other Bodies” and wrote “Individualism and the Mental”. The time in London was particularly stimulating. During the mornings, I worked. Afternoons, my wife Dorli and I got to know London. In the evenings, we attended concerts or the theater. Although I put fewer hours into philosophy than I sometimes do, I believe that I worked more efficiently than at any other time in my life. Inspiration from Rembrandt, Velasquez, Shakespeare, Mozart, Schubert, Wren, and Newton seemed to buoy my thinking. The joy of discovery was very intense during that period. Those two papers—and another on semantical paradox—developed toward birth in parallel with the pregnancy that led to our first son, Johannes.

After returning to California, I discussed final drafts of “Individualism and the Mental” in two long late-night sessions with Rogers Albritton. Albritton convinced me to make the arthritis example, which had been a secondary case, the lead example—suppressing an example about sofas to secondary status. (A variant of that sofa example eventually took center stage in “Intellectual Norms and Foundations of Mind”.) I remain grateful to Albritton, now deceased, for his searching criticism, for his perspective on the issues, for his charm in discussion, and especially for his encouragement.

Many others helped in the gestation of the papers collected in this volume. I despair at recording my gratitude to most of these people individually, since most of the encounters are lost to memory. Regrettably, in most cases, I have to express my indebtedness in generalized form. Some specific acknowledgments occur in the notes of the individual papers. I will mention just a few individuals. During a semester-long visit to MIT in 1982, Ned Block went to the trouble of trying to get my views exactly right. He cemented a long-term personal and intellectual friendship. He remains a valuable interlocutor, as the notes in some of the newly published material here will attest. During the same visit, I had several formative discussions with Jerry Fodor and Noam Chomsky. Fodor, along with courses that I took at MIT on the psychology of vision, sparked my long-term interest in empirical psychology. The talks with Chomsky established a personal *rapport* that survived and even fructified our philosophical differences.

Among students during the formative years, I am particularly grateful to Joseph Owens, Bernard Kobes, and Martin Hahn. Each wrote dissertations on aspects of anti-individualism. I have continued to learn from them long after they graduated.

My debts to my family remain primary. My wife Dorli gave love, support, inspiration, and encouragement despite my frequent absences of mind. Involvement with the lives of my sons, Johannes and Daniel, especially in sport and music, provided outlets into other types of reality. Their support was often implicit but nonetheless fundamental. Both have grown, in different ways, into intellectual partners. Sadly, my parents are no longer around to receive thanks. I thank them anyway. My mother, Mary, tried bravely and touchingly to read some of my early work, and maintained confidence and support that transcended understanding. This volume is dedicated to the memory of my father, Dan. His intense involvement with music helped develop one of the loves of my life. He also provided for me the single most influential example of intellectual breadth and curiosity. And he too believed in me without being able to assess what I was doing.