JOHN WISDOM ON THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY

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A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

May 1977

MASTER OF ARTS
(Philosophy)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: John Wisdom on the Nature of Philosophy

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SUPERVISOR: Professor E. Simpson

NUMBER OF PAGES: iii, 74

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INTRODUCTION

The general aim of this essay is to clarify, and to some extent assess, the theory of John Wisdom. That part of the theory which is examined here is the claim that the aim of philosophy is to gain a grasp of the relations between categories of sentences (or categories of objects); the traditional method of philosophy is the extension and restriction of the application of existing words. We shall not concern ourselves with Wisdom's treatment of particular philosophical problems (except by way of illustration), his views on religion, his interest in the similarity between philosophy and psychoanalysis, or his earlier philosophical writings on Logical Atomism. The views we are concerned with here are contained in his later articles published in the two books Philosophy and Psychoanalysis (1953) and Paradox and Discovery (1965).

This examination proceeds in three stages. In Chapter one we begin with a brief statement of Wisdom's theory. After this are presented Wisdom's arguments against two views of philosophy; (1) that philosophical statements are statements of fact and (2) philosophical statements are reports of actual linguistic usage. Certain of Wisdom's views on language, particularly on general terms, are formulated as a means to stating more clearly certain methods of philosophy.

The method of traditional philosophy and Wisdom's method (a slight modification of the traditional method) are compared with two other possible methods of philosophy. This section concludes with an assessment

of the arguments for Wisdom's theory.

Chapter two contains two parts. The aim of this section is to provide a spectrum of conceptions of 'category' and 'necessity' in order to state more clearly Wisdom's views and distinguish them from other positions. In the early sections various notions of category and some general theories of categories are defined. These notions are developed within the context of the dichotomy of conceptual realism and conceptual instrumentalism. The final section distinguishes various notions of necessity which are relevant to the issue of whether these are necessary categories.

In Chapter three, the aim is to see whether, and if so in what sense, Wisdom maintains that there are categories. Wisdom is placed on the map of theories of categories provided in chapter two. Similarly, the notions of necessity provided by that chapter are used to clarify in what sense categories, according to Wisdom, are necessary. It is seen that, on Wisdom's theory, there are two types of categories which concern philosophers, underlying categories and resting categories, and that these differ in nature and "degrees" of necessity.

Before proceeding with this examination, we note a certain difficulty, in fact, impossibility, in providing an account of Wisdom's theory. As B.A. Farrell points out in his article, if Wisdom's theory is correct, then there is no correct philosophical account of the nature of philosophy. This is so, since any philosophical account of philosophy would bring out certain features of philosophy and ignore others. This being the case, if Wisdom is to be consistent he can give no account of his theory. Unfortunately, he is fairly consistent. He provides no coherent explicit

account of his theory, only elusive remarks and presuppositions hinted at. For an account of this theory, we are left to search for these elusive remarks, presuppositions hinted at and interpretations of Wisdom's books.

We are assisted to some extent by the fact that Wisdom is often regarded as a restatement of Wittgenstein. In a footnote to his article "Philosophical Perplexity", Wisdom credits Wittgenstein to a considerable extent;

> Wittgenstein has not read this over-compressed paper and I warn people against supposing it a closer imitation of Wittgenstein than it is. On the other hand I can hardly exaggerate the debt I owe to him and how much of the good in this work is his - not only in the treatment of this philosophical difficulty and that but in the matter of how to do philosophy.[1]

Wisdom's interpreters are in fairly general agreement on how his theory is to be understood. Unfortunately, for our purposes here, these interpretations, in an attempt to be faithful to Wisdom's philosophy, are also rather imprecise and inexplicit. In this essay clarity and explicitness are insisted on, even if not achieved. In an attempt, therefore, to give explicit formulations of his positions, we run the risk of distorting the theory. It is hoped that this is kept to a minimum.

A Note on Terminology

In the quotations from Wisdom's writings which appear here, he refers at one time to 'metaphysics' and at another to 'philosophy'. He does not make any distinction between the two and it is not clear that he means to. His theory is meant to apply to all of philosophy, traditional and contemporary, and he applies his own analysis to issues in

traditional metaphysics, epistemology, informal logic, ethics, political philosophy and others. It will, therefore, do the reader no harm to read the terms 'philosophy' and 'metaphysics' synonymously.

Furthermore, in the essay that follows the terms 'proposition', 'sentence', 'statement' and 'utterance' are used interchangeably. 'Utterance' is perhaps the best term, as Wisdom uses it more than the others and as with most "ordinary language philosophers" it is used, it seems, to stress the fact that of primary interest is the spoken utterance. In particular, 'proposition' is not used here as the meaning of a 'sentence'. These words are used interchangeably.

Finally, the words 'class', type', 'set', 'category', 'sort' and 'kind' are used interchangeably. They are to be taken in the broadest sense possible; similar to 'set' as used in naive set theory. On this usage, the elements of a set are <u>not necessarily</u> taken to be related in any way except in the trivial sense that they belong to the same set.

CHAPTER 1: Wisdom's Theory

1.1 Preliminary Statement of Theory

The aim of this section of the essay is to provide a brief account of John Wisdom's thesis that philosophical propositions are linguistic proposals.

There are in Wisdom's writings both a theory of the nature of philosophical claims and a technique for solving or dissolving philosophical problems. The latter does not concern us so much here, but will be briefly mentioned later. Our concern here is the theory underlying the technique.

John Wisdom provides a theory of the nature of philosophy. It may be very simply stated in two parts as follows:

(1) The philosopher's purpose is to gain a grasp of the relations between different categories of being, between expressions used in different manners[2]

or as he states earlier,

> ... the point of philosophical statements ... is the illumination of the ultimate structure of facts, i.e. the relations between different categories of being or (we must be in the mode) the relations between different sublanguages with in language[3]

While this is the point (or purpose) of philosophy (or philosophical statements), the method of achieving this aim is quite different:

(2) A philosophical answer is really a verbal recommendation in response to a request which is really a request with regard to a sentence which lacks a conventional use whether there occur situations which could conventionally be described by it[4]

Before clarifying this position, let us look at Wisdom's supporting arguments. The central argument has a form similar to A.J. Ayer's rejection of metaphysics in Language, Truth and Logic. Ayer argues there that (i) metaphysical statements are not empirical statements since empirical data is irrelevant to their truth or falsity (ii) they are not statements of logic (or mathematics) since they do not follow from an examination of the meanings of the words. Since there are only two types of meaningful statements, empirical and logical, metaphysical statements are meaningless.

Wisdom's argument proceeds as follows; (i) philosophical statements are not empirical statements of fact (for reasons similar but not identical to the reasons given by Ayer) (ii) they are not reports of actual linguistic usage, since if regarded as such they are false. Since they are neither empirical nor linguistic, (iii) they must be proposals to use language in new ways, which thereby give grasp of the relations between different sublanguages (categories of Being).

1.2 Philosophy is not Empirical

Wisdom first argues that philosophical sentences (questions) are not statements (questions) of fact. He remarks that questions of the sort 'What is Mathematics?' and 'What is Philosophy?' when asked philosophically really mean 'What are mathematicians?' and 'What are philosophers?' He proceeds:

> One who asks philosophically 'What are mathematicians?' points to two people talking mathematically with one another, and asks 'What are they doing?' He doesn't ask this like one who, seeing two men creeping on their hands on wet ground, asks 'What are they doing?' when the proper answer is 'wait and see' or 'stalking deer'. For it isn't that

> the philosopher doesn't know what the mathematician is going to do next. That he knows just as well as he knows what people are going to do when they set out the chess pieces.[5]

The point here is that the philosopher who asks this question is not asking for more information, more facts about the mathematical behaviour of mathematicians. One may ask this question and be requesting further information about mathematics, but this is not to ask the question philosophically. To put it in Wisdom's language, requesting information is not the style of functioning of the utterance 'What is mathematics?' when this utterance is employed philosophically.

Wisdom has two arguments in support of this position. First, if the philosopher's question were a request for information, he would be satisfied with factual answers. A thorough description of what mathematicians do, examples of the sorts of claims they make, the procedures they use to support these claims etc. would satisfy the philosopher. But it does not satisfy the philosopher. It is not simply that the information is incomplete and therefore unsatisfactory because it is not a full answer. The philosopher regards this sort of reply as not at all to the point; the information is irrelevant.

As an illustration of this point let us consider the following example. A medical researcher, after conducting several tests, is hesitant about admitting the success of a new drug. He considers that there may have been other factors affecting the recovery of his subjects. They may all have changed their diets or it may have been coincidence. But after repeated tests of a great many subjects under a variety of conditions the researcher will admit the value of the drug. But at this point the philosopher may say 'But it may still be coincidence.' It

might appear that the only difference between the medical researcher and the philosopher is the degree of caution they exhibit. But the sentences 'it may be coincidence' or 'but we don't really know that' are used differently by the scientist and the philosopher. As uttered by the scientist, the sentences function to express doubt; since it can be removed through further testing. But the philosopher will not retract his claim in light of further evidence. These words, then, as uttered by the philosopher, do not function to express doubt.

To reformulate this, if the style of functioning of the sentence 'we don't really know that' is to express doubt about what is the case, then the philosopher would consider empirical data relevant to his doubt. But he does nothing of the sort. Therefore, Wisdom concludes, the style of functioning of the sentence is not the expression of doubt.

Consider the following rendering of the argument. It is not possible to express doubt and have all the empirical facts. Therefore, if one does have all the empirical facts, it is not possible to express doubt. It is possible for the philosopher to have all the empirical facts (e.g., in the case of the sceptic and the medical researcher), and make doubt-sounding utterances. Therefore, the philosopher's doubt-sounding utterances do not function to express doubt.

There are two objections one can raise against this argument. First, the argument has no relevance or application, since the philosopher is never in the situation of having all the empirical facts.

But, more important is the first premiss. In so far as the conclusion rests on this premiss, the position presupposes a form of empiricism. While an empiricist might accept this first premiss a

rationalist or mystic would not. If there is another realm, a non-empirical realm, of "facts" then one might still express doubt about what is the case even in the face of all the empirical facts.

Related to this claim about the style of functioning of the philosopher's sentences, is a claim about the philosopher's aim or purpose. It was stated that the aim of the philosopher is to gain a grasp of the relations between categories of sentences or categories of being. But the function of the philosopher's sentences is not to express doubt or, to take the other side, to state facts. Wisdom also argues that the aim or purpose of the philosopher is not to gain knowledge.

If the philosopher's aim is knowledge, then he would consider empirical data in arriving at his philosophical conclusions. But he does not and therefore his aim is not knowledge. But this presupposes that the philosopher in question is an empiricist. If instead he is a rationalist or a mystic, we would not expect him to take into consideration any empirical data. That is to say, if he maintains that there is another way of knowing things then he would not necessarily consider the results of the sciences as relevant to his purposes. We should note a problem with this second argument. As we have seen, Wisdom maintains that the aim of philosophers is to gain a grasp of the relations between categories of sentences, while their method is that of making linguistic proposals. The aim could be interpreted as factual. We could interpret these relations between categories of sentences as facts. If we do this, Wisdom is contradicting himself. There are two ways out of this contradiction. (1) We may

maintain that the aim of philosophy is empirical while the sentences of philosophers are not statements of fact of linguistic proposals. (2) He may maintain that neither the aim nor the sentences of philosophers are empirical and that the relations between kinds of sentences are not facts.

One final remark about these two arguments. They each proceed from the assumption that philosophers regard empirical evidence as irrelevant. But while it may be true that some philosophers take this position, some don't. In discussing the basic "stuff" of which the world is made, some philosophers, e.g., Whitehead, have made use of results of quantum theory, psychology and biology. On the issue of the mind/body problem, some have considered results from neurophysiology for its confirmation or refutation. As a final example, data from psychology and physiology have been considered relevant in discussions on the problem of perception.

We have seen that, according to Wisdom, the philosopher's question 'What is Mathematics?' is not a request for information about the activity of mathematicians, but, in particular, it is not a request for the mathematician's purposes. For example:

> One who asks 'What is a semaphorist?' may be asking for the translation of an unfamiliar word. Or he may be asking 'What is one who so moves his arms doing?' and be asking a question of fact about the purposes of such a person, which question of fact about the purposes of such a person, which question is answered by explaining the understanding that exists between the semaphorist and the man on the opposite hill who then speaks on a telephone. It isn't a question like that which the philosopher is making when he asks 'What is a mathematician?'

Yet one may use just this form of words to ask for the purposes of mathematicians, though it would be better to ask 'What are mathematicians trying to do?' Wisdom's reply to this goes as follows: Since mathematicians, being adept at the use of mathematical language, do in fact do what they really want to do, it is clear what mathematicians are trying to do.

> For there is a quite different anxiety in philosophers as comes out in the fact that they ask, "What is a mathematician?" "What is one who asserts something about a material thing? Where no question of what it is that these speakers <u>really</u> want to do comes in, because mathematicians and train announcers are very successful with language so that what they do when they talk is what they really want to do.[7]

In particular, it is clear to philosophers what mathematicians are trying to do. Therefore, the question, What are mathematicians? asked philosophically cannot be a request for the purposes of mathematicians.

Now, Wisdom admits that the situation is not so clear for the case of What are philosophers?:

> But he doesn't know it so well for philosophers nor for proposers of scientific theories. Here it is more a matter of knowing very well what they do but not being able to extract very well from this what they really wish to do.[8]

So clearly the question 'What are philosophers trying to do?' is a legitimate open question. But it is not what philosophers are asking when they ask 'What are philosophers?' Since 'What are mathematicians?' asked philosophically is not a request for purposes, neither is 'What are philosophers?' when asked philosophically.

By way of criticism, we should note that it is not at all clear what the mathematician's purposes are. As such, it does not follow that, asked philosophically, the question 'What are mathematicians?' is a

request for purposes. And so it does not follow that, 'What are philosophers?', asked philosophically, is not a request for the philosopher's purposes.

Second, the philosopher could not ask his question unless he knew all the facts about, e.g., mathematics. That is to say, unless he could specify the subject-matter he could not ask of it 'What is it?'

> When, then, a philosopher asks, 'What are mathematicians and train announcers?' he must, in a sense, answer his questions in asking it. For he must carefully describe what the class of talkers he wants described actually do it he is to ask his question, 'How are they to be described?'[9]

That is to say; if the philosopher is to ask 'What is X?' he must be able to specify X, and in order to do this he must know all the facts about X, he must be able to give a complete description of X or of X's. Since he knows all the facts about X, he could not possibly be asking for more information about X. But it is not true that one needs to know all the facts about something in order to specify just what it is one is asking about. So long as one can specify enough about X to distinguish it from not-X, one can specify what it is one is asking about. In fact, scientists are at least sometimes able to specify what it is they are investigating and they are requesting further information about the object of investigation.

1.3 Philosophy Is Not A Report Of Linguistic Use

Having argued that philosophical propositions are not empirical, Wisdom next argues that they are not reports of actual linguistic use. Put another way, the function of philosophical questions (answers) is not to request reports of (report on) actual linguistic use.

Let us begin with an example. Consider the question 'What is

Goodness?' Two sorts of answers have been given to this question (1) answer like 'goodness is approval by the majority' and 'that is good which is conducive to pleasure' and (2) 'the good is the good'. Wisdom notes that answers of type (2) are not accepted by philosophers. It is not that philosophers regard them as false, but simply as not what they are looking for, not the right sort of answer. Wisdom notes further that while some philosophers agree with some propositions of type 1 and disagree with others and other philosophers may agree and disagree with different propositions of this sort; all philosophers regard them as the right sort of answer.

Finally, Wisdom points out that as a report of actual linguistic use 'good is good' is correct while 'goodness is approval by the majority' and 'that is good which is conducive to pleasure' are false. This is the case since 'the majority sometimes approve what is bad' and 'x is conducive to pleasure, but it is wrong' are permissible, not absurd sentences.

Wisdom's argument is summed up in the following quotation:

> If the metaphysician really wants analysis it is a curious thing that nearly any formula for giving definitions which is submitted to him he rejects, either on the ground that the definitions it yields are not sufficiently profound to be called metaphysical, or on the ground that the definitions it yields are not definitions because they are incorrect.[10]

In general, in answer to the question What is X? one may answer (1) 'X is P'; when 'P' ≠ 'X' or (2) 'X is X' Suppose we regard the philosophical propositions 'X is P' and 'X is X' as reports of actual linguistic use. Since 'X is X' is not regarded by philosophers as the right sort of proposition, while 'X is P' is, it follows that only statements of the form 'X

is P' are philosophical. Yet as reports of actual linguistic use, statements of the form 'X is P' are always false. And since determining actual linguistic use is no difficult matter, we must conclude that philosophical statements are not reports of actual linguistic use.

We may summarize this argument as follows:

All statements are either of the form 'X is X' or 'X is P'.

Therefore, all philosophical statements are either of the form 'X is X' or 'X is P'.

No philosophical statements are of the form 'X is X'.
(since philosophers do not accept statements of the form 'X is X' as illuminating)

Therefore, philosophical statements are of the form 'X is P'. If 'X is P' meant 'X can be used when and only when 'P' can', then 'X is P' would be true.
(since giving a report of actual usage is no difficult matter)

If 'X' ≠ 'P', then it is not the case that 'X' can be used when and only when 'P' can

Therefore, 'X is P' is not a report of actual usage.

Hence, philosophical statements are not reports of actual linguistic usage.

There are several objections that might be brought against this argument; several premisses may be questioned. As none of these objections are crucial, they shed little light on Wisdom's theory and since our main concern is clarification of his theory and not assessment, we shall not pursue these objections here. We shall, therefore, take the argument as valid and go on to clarify the theory.

1.4 Preliminary Clarification of Wisdom's Theory

Having argued unsuccessfully, as we have seen the function of philosophical sentences is neither (1) to assert facts, nor (2) to report on actual linguistic use, Wisdom proceeds to expound his theory on the nature of philosophy. As was briefly mentioned before, his theory consists of two parts: the aim of philosophy and the technique or method of philosophy.

(1) The aim of philosophy is to "gain a grasp of the relations between different categories of being, between expressions used in different manners."

(2) The method of philosophy is to make verbal recommendations, linguistic proposals.

Let us now elaborate on this. Wisdom maintains that the function of the philosopher's sentence 'Goodness is approval by the majority' is to propose that we use 'good' in those and only those cases where we use 'approval by the majority'. The function of the sceptic's sentence 'We don't really know that there is cheese on the table' is to propose that we restrict the use of 'know' to logical and mathematical sentences and sensation statements like 'I am in pain'.

One "argument" which Wisdom gives for this view is the following. He earlier pointed out that if the above statements were interpreted as 'We use 'good' in those and only those cases where we would use 'approval by the majority' and 'We do not use 'know' in such a manner that 'I know there is cheese on the table' is proper usage', the philosopher's statements would always be false. But if we did use these words in this way, then, as reports of actual linguistic use, these propositions would be true. In particular, if the philosopher used

these words in these ways, the philosophical propositions would be true reports of the philosopher's language. This suggests that the philosopher is proposing for his and the hearer's acceptance that certain words be used in certain new ways. Yet the philosopher is not making a serious proposal for genuine acceptance, but merely for momentary consideration. Why this is so will become clearer.

So, the method of philosophy is to make proposals to use certain words in new ways for momentary consideration. But how does this achieve the philosopher's aim? Let us return to the example of the sceptic. We ordinarily refer to such statements as (a) '2 + 2 = 4', (b) 'I see a pinkish patch', (c) 'There is cheese on the table' as certain, knowledge or real knowledge. We speak of statements like (d) Joan was wearing a red sweater' and 'The moons of Mars are probable, probable knowledge, belief or mere belief. Wisdom maintains that:

> (L3) The use of one word or sentence to refer to more than one object or situation often, (or always) marks (has corresponding to it) a similarity between the objects or situations to which the word or sentence applied.
>
> (L4) The use of one word or sentence to refer to more than one object or situation often or always, <u>suggests</u> a similarity between the objects referred to by that word or sentence.

Presumably, Wisdom would maintain that 'certain' and 'knowledge' mark similarities between these sentences so denoted, yet he does not state such a similarity. A reasonable candidate would be the following: doubt about claims so marked would be pointless in everyday life. Wisdom further maintains:

(L5) The use of one word or sentence to refer to certain objects or situations and not others often (or always) marks a difference between those to which the word or sentence is applied and those to which it is not.

(L6) The use of one word or sentence, to refer to certain objects or situations and not others often, or always, suggests a difference between those which are and those which are not referred to by this word or sentence.

In particular, the use of 'certain' to refer to the sentences (a) (b) and (c) and not (d) might mark the difference that while doubt about the first three would be pointless, in everyday life, doubt about the last would not be.

However, while doubt about (a) (b) and (c) would be pointless in everyday life, there is a difference between (c) and (b). (Let us exclude (a) from this discussion as it complicates the issue and is irrelevant to the point Wisdom wishes to make.) One who states (c) could be mistaken, but one who states (b) could not. To put it another way 'There is cheese on the table, but I may be mistaken' is not absurd, while 'I see a pinkish patch, but I may be mistaken' is. Furthermore, while there is a difference between statements we call 'certain' and those we don't, there is a similarity between some statements we call 'certain' and those we don't. One who asserts (c) or (d) might be mistaken, or to put it linguistically, it would not be absurd to add to each of these utterances, 'but I may be mistaken'. So that the use of 'certain' to refer to (c) and (b) conceals a difference between them, and the use of different words to mark on the one hand (c) and (d) on the other, conceals a similarity between these; i.e., that in each case the speaker may be in error. More generally Wisdom

maintains:

(L7) Where one word or sentence is used to refer to more than one object or situation, there are often (or always) differences between these objects.

(L8) The use of one word or sentence to refer to more than one object often, or always, suggests that there are no differences between these objects.

(L9) Where one word or sentence is used to refer to certain objects or situations and not others, there are often (or always) similarities between those so denoted and those not.

(L10) The use of one word or sentence to refer to certain objects or situations and not others often, or always, suggests that there are no similarities between those so denoted and those not.

So the sceptic proposes that we use the words 'know' and 'certain' in this new restricted way and use 'belief' and 'probable' for the remaining cases. His aim in so doing is the following: we use the word 'know' in referring to sentences of type (c) and type (b) to mark the fact that with both kinds of statements doubt would be pointless in everyday life. [Wisdom refers to statements of type (c) as favorable material-object statements and statements of type (b) as sensation statements. He refers to statements like (d) as unfavorable material-object statements.] The fact that we use 'probable' and 'belief' to refer to statements like (d), marks the fact there is a similarity between the statements so denoted, i.e., that with each of them doubt would not be unreasonable in everyday life. So the fact that we use different words to refer to these two classes of statements marks the fact that there is a difference between them. Now the above facts about language are already marked by our existing language. But this distinction between 'knowledge' and 'belief' or 'certain' and 'probable',

might suggest that there are no differences within these classes and no similarities between these classes of statements. But there are differences within these classes and a similarity between them and it is the sceptic's aim to make us aware of these facts, facts which are, in a manner of speaking, right before our eyes yet often overlooked. The facts the sceptic wishes to bring to light are the following: within the class of statements called 'knowledge' and 'certain' some, (b), are of the sort that the speaker could not be mistaken, others, (c), are not. And there is a similarity between statements called 'probable' and some statements called 'certain'; with statements like (c) and (d) it would not be absurd for the speaker to add 'but I may be mistaken'.

The aim of the sceptic is to bring to light certain similarities and differences between classes of statements which are not marked by our language and are therefore often overlooked.

His method of achieving this aim is to use certain old words in new ways to suggest (to the hearer) these similarities and differences. By restricting the use of 'certain' he suggests differences within the class of sentences once called 'certain' and by extending the use of 'probable', he suggests a similarity between those newly-denoted as 'probable' and those previously so denoted. The effectiveness of this method is explained by the eight principles of language enumerated earlier.

In general, the aim of any philosopher is to gain a grasp of the similarities and dissimilarities between classes of sentences.

His method is the restriction and extension of certain words to reveal these similarities and dissimilarities. This, according to Wisdom, is the general aim and technique of philosophers. But if this is the aim, it would seem that there are other methods of achieving it. Before examining these methods, we need one additional fact about Wisdom's method.

It was noted before that those proposals are not serious proposals. They are not intended to be accepted and used in everyday life. From facts (L8) and (10) it follows that the adoption of the new classification would result in a situation as bad as the original situation. For in the new system, similarities and differences which were recorded in the old system would be concealed as well as other features not recorded in either language (by facts (L7) and (L9)). This would be acceptable to the philosopher if his aim were to emphasize one set of similarities and differences which were of paramount significance to the exclusion of others and there were no need to be aware of those other features. But the aim of the philosopher is to bring to our attention all the relations between all the classes of sentences, and this he would fail to do if his proposed modifications were accepted as a general rule.

Before moving on to examine other possible methods of philosophy and Wisdom's arguments against them, let us first lay bare the general features of Wisdom's theory.

Unfortunately, most of the principles are nowhere explicitly stated in the writings of John Wisdom. Some are stated or mentioned in a rather vague fashion, some are never mentioned but must be presupposed

in order to make sense of his writings and some we assume he maintains as they fit with his general approach and were either stated or presupposed by Wittgenstein. As we mentioned earlier, Wisdom's works may be largely regarded as a restatement of Wittgenstein's views.

(L1) Language consists of, among other things, words, sentences and properties (e.g., functions) of sentences. (Whether there are types of sentences, we shall see later.)

(L2) Among the words and sentences in language, some apply to more than one thing or situation; some apply to some objects or situations and not others.

(L3 - L10) (As stated earlier).

Now, (L4, 6, 8, 10) are stated in Wisdom's terms. For example, speaking of the sceptic's new use of 'know' and 'probable', he says; "Without the explanation it suggests that there is a difference in degree of certainty between statements about material things and statements about sense-data."[11] In (L4) and (L6), this means that one is led to look for similarities and differences which may not exist. In L8 and L10, it does not mean that one is led to believe that there are no similarities and differences, for this is very rarely the case, but rather that one is more inclined to overlook, not notice, such similarities and differences which do exist.

Principle (L4) combined with (L3) and (L7) explains, according to Wisdom, the essentialist quest in philosophy. It is features (L7) and L8 which create so much confusion and unclarity in thought, and lead to fallacious reasoning based on equivocation and similar unclarities. It is just this sort of confusion which at least some of the methods we shall be considering might remove and prevent.

Wisdom maintains that overcoming (L10) and recognizing previously unnoticed similarities, (L9), is at the root of important insights in science, poetry and psychoanalysis. Arthur Koestler and J. Bronowski also make use of similar ideas to explain creativity in all fields.

(L11) In order to grasp complex and unmanageable patterns, it is necessary that language be structured categorially.

(L12) No one categorial framework best reflects (models) the structure (of similarity and dissimilarity relations) of language; each framework models some aspect of that structure and not others.

(L13) We are, in fact, now free to use old words and sentences in new ways, with different application.

(L14) But, because of (L3-L10), our reformation of language, the restriction and extension of old words, is not inconsequential but may (a) draw attention to new facts (about language or the world) and (b) lead to a change of attitude.

(L11) basically states that L2 is a necessary fact. That is, because of the complexity of the real world, we must use linguistic entities to apply to more than one thing or situation.

(L12) needs some clarification. By (L1) language consists of linguistic particulars (words, phrases, and sentences) and (ubiquitous) properties of those particulars (functions). For each property, there is the set of linguistic entities with that property. If we wish to model this categorial structure in some language, a language which contained a name for each property of sentences would do. If there were categories of sentences in some sense other than sets of sentences determined by properties, then a language containing a name for each category would model this structure. So, strictly speaking, there could be a set of words (categorial framework) which

model the categorial structure of language. Yet, if the number of properties or categories were sufficiently high, the modeling language would be too cumbersome to work with. In this case, the only workable language would be one in which some categories were marked and others not, where some properties were marked and others not. And so, any practical language would fail to model perfectly the categorial structure of language. It is this practical aspect which (L12) speaks of.

It is (L13) and (L14a), and to some extent (L14b), which explain Wisdom's frequent reply to such questions as 'Is this a K or not?', 'Say what you like, but be careful...', For example:

> The philosopher is apt to say 'A monarchy is a set of people under a king' rather than '"monarchy" means the same as "a set of people under a king"'.. By using the former sentence he illuminates his point. Now shall we say 'A monarchy is a set of people under a king' means the same as '"monarchy" means "a set of people under a king"' or not? My answer is 'Say which you like. But if you say "Yes" be careful, etc., and if you say "No" be careful, etc.' [12]

We are free to change the use of words (L13); 'Say what you like'. But this action is not inconsequential, 'be careful etc....'. If one does so one must be careful (L14a) since this will reveal previously unnoticed features and hide others which were marked by our old way of speaking. And by (L14b) this could also have the consequence of altering our attitudes; how this occurs shall be seen later.

(L15) The categorial structure of a human language, ordinary or special, is determined by our purposes.

(a) The purposes of everyday living determine the categorial structure of ordinary language.

(b) The purpose of revealing certain linguistic functional relations not ordinarily noticed determines the categorial structure of the

language of a traditional philosopher.

(c) The purpose of bringing out certain relations important to science determines the categorial structure of scientific language. (Similarly, for poetry).

We noted before that philosophy, science and poetry have a certain similarity in the nature of creativity in these fields. But (L15) tells us that there is another similarity among these and ordinary language. The categorial structure of all these languages is determined by their user's purposes.

(L1, 2, 11, 15) form the basis for a form of conceptual instrumentalism . To expand on L14b we refer to the following quote from Wisdom's essay "Gods":

> The line between using a name because of how we feel and because of what we notice isn't sharp. [13]

A notion similar to this is expressed by C.L. Stevenson in his article "Persuasive Definitions":

> A 'persuasive definition' is one which gives a new conceptual meaning to a familiar word without substantially changing its emotive meaning, and which is used with the conscious or unconscious purpose of changing, by this means, the direction of people's interests. [14]

These two quotations express the expressive and prescriptive aspects of a more specific form of conceptual instrumentalism (which one cannot safely attribute to John Wisdom) achieved by providing analogues of (L3 - L10) as follows:

(L16) (analogue of L3) To the use of one word or sentence to refer to more than one object or situation, often corresponds one attitude towards all those objects.

(L17) (analogue of L4) The use of one word or sentence to refer to more than one object or situation often inclines one to take the same attitude towards all those objects.

Similar analogues (L16 - L23) of (L5-L15) can easily be formulated. Given these principles, we can formulate (L14b) as follows;

> (L14b') Where one word or sentence refers to a set of objects or situations, and related with this is some attitude, an extension of the application of this word or sentence often inclines one to extend the attitude to the newly covered objects or situations.

By amending (L1 - L13) by (L16 - L23) and (L14b') and its analogues we arrive at a theory much like the instrumentalism of John Dewey. Dewey maintained that the structure of our conceptual framework reflects the structure of our system of values. In particular, the conceptual structure of a philosophical theory reflects a certain set of values. This expanded theory (L1-L23) perhaps gives content to this claim about the evaluative content of philosophical theories.

1.5 Four Methods

What then are some other methods for achieving the aim Wisdom attributes to philosophers? We shall consider two others, (1) The point-by-point description method and (2) the method of stipulative definition by introduction of new terms. After examining these methods we shall see, by contrast, other features of Wisdom's method.

The method of point-by-point description proceeds as follows: We simply list all sentences, or at least a reasonable sampling of them, and all the similarities and dissimilarities between them. Or to put it non-linguistically, we list all the items that exist and all the similarities and differences between them. Now, Wisdom has several objections to this technique. (1) It is boring; presumably the

philosopher will not achieve his aim if he bores his readers or listeners. Wisdom's method, and the method of traditional philosophers is, presumably, anything but boring since paradoxical claims are constantly being made. (2) It fails to give grasp. Wisdom never clarifies this term. My understanding of the term is that grasp consists in a picture or a pattern as opposed to a confused myriad of unpatterned particular items. Wisdom's and the traditional method give us a nice "map" of the location of a term (or object) in the "logical geography" (to use a term of Gilbert Ryle's). Perhaps a better metaphor is that of a taxonomic chart. This method gives us a taxomony of linguistic functions (or of the world); and like any taxonomic chart, it fails to record certain similarities and differences between families. But also like any taxonomic chart it gives us a better grasp of the relations which exist than would a list of particular items and the similarities and dissimilarities between them. (3) The philosophers, in order to bring to our attention ordinarily overlooked facts, must shock us, jar us out of our existing habits. This Wisdom does by the use of paradox; and this, the point-by-point description method fails to do. (4) One advantage of this method might be the following; Even though the linguistic proposals are only entertained momentarily, they might still mislead us into thinking that the previously marked similarities and dissimilarities are not real. But the point-by-point method prevents this from happening since all similarities and differences are recorded. (5) A final advantage might be that there is no temptation to adopt a new form of language and all the problems that go with that.

While Wisdom does discuss the method of point-by-point description

he does not even mention the method of stipulative definition by introduction of new words. We may illustrate the method by recalling the problem of scepticism. Where Wisdom would have to restrict the application of 'know' and 'certain' and extend the application of 'probable', the first method would have us spell out all the similarities and differences between sentences of types (b), (c) and (d). The method of introduction of new words would have us not list all the similarities and differences, retain our ordinary use of 'certain' and 'probable' and introduce a new term to cover those sentences for which it would be absurd to add 'but I may be mistaken' and those for which it would not. In fact, such a pair of terms was introduced: 'incorrigible' and 'corrigible'. Ideally one would want to introduce totally new terms to prevent connotations from the existing use of the terms being carried over to their new use. We would retain the existing use of 'certain' and 'probable' (applying 'certain' to (b) and (c), 'probable' to (d)) and introduce 'incorrigible' for (b) and 'corrigible' for (c), (a) and (d).

How then does this method compare with the other methods? (1) Its obvious advantage is that while linguistic proposals suggest an absence of similarities and dissimilarities, this method continues to record these features as well as the new one. (2) The method does, it would seem, give greater grasp than the descriptive method; whether it gives as great a grasp as the linguistic proposals method I don't know. One might claim that the latter gives greater grasp since the "taxonomy" is simpler. (3) If the new words were to be adopted as a general practice, existing language would be too cumbersome to operate

with. But if the words were introduced momentarily for the purposes at hand, this problem would not result. (4) Finally, like the descriptive method, this method does not have the shock value of the linguistic proposals method, which, according to Wisdom, is so necessary.

We are now in a position to mention certain other features of John Wisdom's method. Wisdom's method has two features which traditional philosophy lacks. One could describe this method as a sequence of provocations and pacification. By 'provocation' Wisdom means the shock value of the paradoxical statements that philosophers make. By 'paradoxical', he refers to the fact that, as reports of actual linguistic usage, the statements are false. Examples of such paradoxes are 'we can never really know the causes of our sensations', 'goodness is approval by the majority', and 'inductive conclusions are never really justified'. But these remarks, while they do serve to draw our attention to features ordinarily unnoticed they also mislead in two ways.

(1) They seem to be statements of fact

> Philosophers who say 'We never know the real causes of our sensations', 'Only my sensations are real', often bring out these 'theories' with an air of triumph (with a misleading air of empirical discovery indeed).[15]

(2) They conceal certain similarities and differences which were marked by the ordinary form of speech.

To overcome (1), Wisdom provides an analysis of the actual content of the paradoxical statement: that it is a proposal to restrict or extend the application of certain words. This Wisdom calls 'pacification'.

To overcome (2) Wisdom counters paradoxical remarks with further

paradoxical remarks. Since the first paradoxical remark brings to our attention and hides from our attention certain similarities and differences, a second paradoxical remark is made to bring to light some of those features hidden by the first. But certain features still have not been brought to our attention; and so the series of paradoxes continues until all features have been brought to light. Hence 'goodness is approval by the majority' is pacified then countered with 'goodness is that which is conducive to pleasure' and so on until all the similarities and differences between 'good' and other words have been brought to our attention.

Wisdom's most complete characterization of his method is found in the following quotation:

> As we all know but won't remember, any classificatory system is a net spread on the blessed manifold of the individual and blinding us not to all but to too many of its varieties and continuities. A new system will do the same but not in just the same ways. So that in accepting all the systems their blinding power is broken, their revealing power becomes acceptable; the individual is restored to us, not isolated as before we used language, not in a box as when language mastered us, but in 'creation's chorus'. [16]

We have so far described three different proposed methods of attaining the philosopher's aim. What, according to Wisdom, is the method of traditional philosophy? Traditional philosophy consists entirely of provocation. Not fully aware of what he really wanted, the traditional philosopher could not provide the pacification. And driven by a desire for a unitary simplistic answer, he would not provide the counter-provocations. The consequence of this activity was a one-sided picture of the subject-matter under consideration; at least as

practiced by any individual philosopher or school. Yet collectively, the history of philosophy provides us with the series of paradoxes needed to gain the necessary grasp.

In what sense, then, has Wisdom tried to provide an answer to the question 'What is Philosophy?' There is no reason to assume that philosophers do what they aim, want, or really try to do. Wisdom maintains that:

> (1) The aim of philosophers is and has always been to gain a grasp of the relations between categories of being, between expression used in different manners.

In this sense, Wisdom is trying to do what philosophers have always been trying to do. But his method is somewhat different.

> (2) The traditional method of philosophy has been to make a linguistic proposal disguised as a paradoxical statement of "fact".

This method, according to Wisdom has not been effective and his own method would be:

> (3) The proper (effective) method of philosophy is to provide a series of provocations and pacifications.

If the question 'What is philosophy?' were asked normatively, Wisdom would no doubt answer that they should be pursuing the aim they have been pursuing and with the method he employs. He gives several reasons why philosophy is worthwhile.

> (1) A grasp of these relations between categories frees us from a kind of idle bewilderment.
>
> There are people who though they have from their childhood employed with success such expressions as 'It is still in the future' or 'It is now in the past' suddenly turn upon themselves and ask 'But how can it be in the future since it doesn't yet exist?', 'How can it now be in the past since it no longer exists?' Such idle

> bewilderment does not arise from any lack of practice with the expressions about which they now suddenly choose to make a fuss and no further practice with these expressions is likely to remove it. [17]

(2) He suggests further that in particular such grasp of these relations between scientific statements and statements of common sense would remove the bewilderment caused by such statements as 'The table in front of me is not really solid but mostly empty space'.

(3) Finally, Wisdom finds intrinsic interest in gaining such grasp.

> If now someone asks 'Is this metaphysical enquiry, this enquiry about enquiry worthwhile?' we may reply 'It is worthwhile to those to whom it is worthwhile, it is worthwhile to those who seek to see things clearer in this remote sphere. [18]

1.6 Testing the Methods

If we assume that the aim of philosophy is to gain a grasp of the categories of being or language, the criteria for determining which of the four methods is appropriate to philosophy would be their success at achieving this goal. If we further assume that one of the effects of gaining this grasp is the elimination of the idle bewilderment, the first mentioned of the values of philosophy, then we should be able to test the success of these various methods by testing their success at eliminating such bewilderment. But what evidence is there for this? As B.A. Farrell says:

> The sole evidence apparently in support of it is to be found in their own experience. This is not satisfactory, as it is apparently unrecorded and very difficult to check. No such things, for example, as case histories are produced for inspection by the scientific observer. [19]

Farrell here refers to Wisdom's technique. While there is no good public evidence, there is Wisdom who presumably no longer feels

bewildered. But there is also the Spinozan who no longer feels bewildered. These subjective reports are, of course, notoriously not trustworthy or if trustworthy, not adequate.

But another test might be possible. If one has greater grasp of the relations between categories of being and sentences, one should expect a reduction in equivocation and fallacious reasoning based on equivocation on words and mixing categories (category-mistakes, in Ryle's terms).

This follows from (L7) and (L8). One might, for example, try to test the effectiveness of those methods for reducing equivocations and similar fallacious reasoning in discourse on knowledge. We could subject each of four groups to intensive study of philosophy of one of these types. (We should, of course, have a control group.) Afterwards, we could engage each of these groups in discussions where epistemological words occurred. We would then record the number of equivocations and fallacious arguments arising from equivocations. Other similar tests can be imagined. But the point here is simply that, at least on the question of the effectiveness of these methods relative to the mentioned aim; it does not seem inconceivable to test Wisdom's claim that his method is superior.

1.7 The Philosophical Nature of Wisdom's Theory

In concluding this section a few words are in order about the nature of Wisdom's claim about philosophical claims. Wisdom's claim is not to be taken too literally. While his result presumably is arrived at through an analysis of the actual usage of philosophical

sentences, his claim 'philosophical propositions are linguistic proposals' is not a report of actual linguistic usage. As he says in "Philosophy, Anxiety and Novelty":

> Take now what Moore says in his reply about Lazerowitz's paper. Lazerowitz with great clarity and compactness explains that though taking a hurried glance at philosophers you might think that they are engaged on a scientific inquiry and that the very good ones could tell you what happens when you remember your breakfast, like a doctor can tell you what happens when you digest it, they are not; and that though you might then think that they were engaged in a logical inquiry as to, e.g., whether the admitted features of philosophical discussion entail that it is or it is not logical discussion, they are not. In the course of doing this he explains something of how what they are doing differs from these two things which you might think it is. Then, searching for a mnemonic description, summing up the things he has said, he tries 'Philosophers aren't making statements, factual or not, but are making notational recommendations'.
>
> What does Moore do? He thinks of the most typical case of recommending a notation. It is, as we must all agree, that of a man who (1) points out that though we in ordinary language would not call a so and so a such and such, e.g., a tiger a cat, yet the differences are unimportant or just such as in other cases we don't count; (2) says in so many words 'We ought to call tigers cats' and (3) means by this that we ought to do this as a regular thing. Moore then says that philosophers don't do all that. Undoubtedly he is right.[20]

The philosopher does not, strictly speaking, make recommendations. It would be false to say, as a report of actual linguistic usage, that philosophical statements are linguistic proposals. If in asking "What

are philosophical propositions?' we were asking for a report of linguistic usage, the only strictly correct answer would be 'philosophical propositions'. Rather than give us a report of actual use, Wisdom is giving us a philosophical answer. He is giving us an answer which is strictly false (as a report of linguistic usage) but which gives us a grasp of the relations between philosophical propositions and other types of propositions, namely, propositions which propose policy. Like an individual making a linguistic proposal, the philosopher, at least at times, uses the word(s) under consideration in the proposed manner. Yet unlike the person who seriously proposes a change in language, the philosopher does not do this as a regular thing. So,

we could say 'Philosophical propositions are not linguistic proposals' in order to bring to our attention the differences between the functions of philosophical sentences and linguistic proposals in the strict sense which Moore refers to. Both claims would be illuminating, according to Wisdom, yet both would be misleading. To be consistent, Wisdom would have to argue both views, as well as others, perhaps. This is the root of the problem of interpreting Wisdom's views, as was mentioned in the introduction. No philosophical account, according to Wisdom, of his theory would be completely accurate.

1.8 Language or Things

We have seen that according to Wisdom the purpose of philosophical activity is gain a grasp of the relations between different categories of being, between expressions used in different manners. He speaks several times in this manner of philosophical statements

illuminating (1) facts about language and (2) facts about non-linguistic entities. Yet he usually confines himself to language. He speaks of "gaining a clearer view of the procedure proper to the proof or refutation of them [statements]",[21] and of how we "come to notice some real idiosyncrasy in the way in which all statements of the sort in question are established or refuted"[22] and finally "metaphysicians draw attention, though often in a confused way, to some imperfectly recognized features of the procedure characteristic of a class of statements or questions".[23]

Statements of the above sort are more frequent in Wisdom's writings than the two statements of the aim of philosophy given earlier which mention <u>both</u> 'classes of statements' and 'categories of being'. Further, while most of his treatments of philosophical claims involve statements about linguistic entities, e.g., 'know', 'mind', he sometimes speaks non-linguistically about knowledge and mind. In "Paradox and Discovery" he mentions, in regard to philosophical enquiry, "that power to place on the manifold of nature those phenomena which seemed anomalous, which a changing conception may bring."[24] There is, to my knowledge, only one other remark which suggests that philosophy gives us a taxonomy of nature as well as of language-functions. In an essay on metaphysics which appears at the end of <u>Other Minds</u>, the concluding sentence is:

> 12. Metaphysical questions are paradoxical questions with the peculiarity that they are concerned with the character of questions, of discussions, of reasons, of knowledge. But this peculiarity does not make it impossible to carry through the reflection they call for so as to reveal the character of that with which they are concerned and thus, indirectly, the character of that with which that with which they are concerned is concerned - time and space, good and evil, things and persons.[25]

This is the final sentence and this sort of claim is not elaborated anywhere. Throughout his writings he shifts back and forth between the material mode and formal mode. Throughout this essay, we have shifted back forth as well. Later we shall restrict our attention to the view that philosophy reveals the relations between categories of sentences. Whether philosophy, on this theory, indirectly tells us anything about the non-linguistic world we shall not consider.

The difficulty here is this: As we shall see Wisdom provides a fairly explicit theory of certain linguistic categories. He argues that there are categories of sentences in a fairly strong sense and further what exactly the philosopher tells us about these categories. While, on this theory, philosophy tells us a good deal about categories of sentences and clearly some sentences are about non-linguistic entities, it does not necessarily follow that from this information about categories of sentences we can infer anything about the non-linguistic objects referred to by categories of non-linguistic sentences. It may be that there is a relationship between the categories of sentences about non-linguistic entities and the categories of non-linguistic activities which these sentences are about. But as Wisdom does not provide anything approaching a theory of non-linguistic categories and the relations between linguistic and non-linguistic categories, we are not, on Wisdom's theory, entitled to conclude from philosophical theories anything about the non-linguistic world.

1.9 Concluding Methodological Remarks

It was stated before that Wisdom provides an account of the nature of philosophy. But Wisdom's arguments in support of this account

proceed from an examination of the style of functioning of philosophical sentences. Two further steps are required to establish that this account is in fact an account of the nature of philosophy: (1) that either meaning and style of functioning are identical or that an examination of the latter is sufficient for establishing the former, and (2) that either the meaning of philosophical statements is identical with the nature of philosophy or that knowledge of the former is sufficient for establishing the latter.

Regarding (2), we saw earlier that, according to Wisdom, the question 'What is philosophy?' means 'What is a philosopher?' So the question of the nature of philosophy is one of the nature (meaning) of philosophical sentences. It would be rather misleading for us to speak of 'meaning' here, for Wisdom avoids using the term. But Wisdom's method for discovering what philosophical statements, or any other sort of statement, are is fairly clear.

> The method is to examine the 'style of functioning' of sentences, the 'purposes they serve' or the 'manner in which these sentences work'.

But just what 'style of functioning' is, is not clear. Wisdom makes no attempt to formulate this notion. He does however give many examples. Samples of 'styles of functioning' are: express doubt, report facts, raise emotions and promote a policy. This sounds like Wittgenstein's list of uses of language given in Philosophical Investigations. There is no reason to regard Wisdom's notion of 'style of functioning' as different in any way from Wittgenstein's notion of 'use'. To say that these notions are identical is not to make 'style of functioning' any clearer; and we shall not make any attempt to clarify it here.

Even if the notion of 'style of functioning' is clear, Wisdom can be criticized at two points here. One may stop Wisdom at either of the two steps mentioned above. One may object that (1) the meaning, or nature, of statements is not their style of functioning and that the latter is not a sufficient criterion for the former, or (2) the nature of a discipline is not the same as the meaning (nature) of the sentences uttered by those in that field and that the latter is not a sufficient criterion for the former.

Unless we allow both these steps, Wisdom is in the predicament of studying only the utterances of philosophers and drawing conclusions about the nature of philosophy. His predicament is similar to that of modern exact science, according to Koestler's characterization. According to Koestler, because of modern science's insistence on quantifiable data, it has succeeded not in giving us an accurate picture of reality, but merely an accurate picture of those parts of reality which are measurable. If all of reality is measurable, exact (measure) science can give us a faithful report of reality. But only if all of reality is measurable or there is a nice linkage between quantifiable data and other facts, can science do this. Wisdom's situation can be stated similarly; only if either (a) philosophy <u>is</u> philosophical language, or (b) some nice linkage exists between the nature of philosophy and philosophical language. (a) is simply not what we mean by 'philosophy'. (1) and (2) at the beginning of 1.9 would provide such a linkage if it were true. Our purpose is simply to note the predicament, since our main concern here is with Wisdom's theories, instead of his method, and the problem of (1) and (2) is not a problem

peculiar to Wisdom but shared by many ordinary language philosophers and has been discussed much in the literature.

To return to the general argument for Wisdom's theory, the structure of Wisdom's argument seems to be (1) Either A, B or C, (2) not A, (3) not B; therefore C. Naturally, if this is treated as a deductive argument, (1) must be true in order for the conclusion to be true. If this were so, the argument still does not work since we saw that Wisdom has not proved (2). Yet, even if he had substantiated this premiss, (1) is obviously false. There are not just three possible theories of philosophy. He has failed to consider the theories that (1) philosophy is a report of super-empirical "facts" about the world by a faculty above perception and ordinary reason. (2) by treating 'analytic' as 'reports of linguistic usage' he has ignored several traditional theories of philosophy as a priori. (3) he has ignored a popular view of philosophy as unearthing presuppositions; (4) also a theory of philosophy as creating and prescribing values and (5) out of our discussion of categories, we will hint at several theories which treat philosophy as proposing "taxonomies" of nature of language but where it held that there is a correct "taxonomy". There are, of course, other traditional and not so traditional theories of philosophy, but these remarks suffice to show the falsity of premiss (1).

One might wish to treat his argument not as a deductive argument, but as evidence for his hypothesis and against the competing hypotheses. Here too he has failed to consider the other alternatives and the evidence presented is too little to support anything. But we shall not pursue this here.

CHAPTER 2: Categories

2.1 The Nature of Categories: Realism and Instrumentalism

Of the basic principles of language which Wisdom presupposes, the most important is (L1); specifically that part left open in our original formulation. Are there, in addition to particular sentences and functions of sentences, also categories of sentences? Wisdom speaks of philosophy as gaining a grasp of the relations between categories of being, sublanguages within language. In what sense according to Wisdom are these categories and are they necessary categories?

It is the aim of this section to distinguish between different notions of category and different notions of necessity. Our aim is to provide a spectrum of theories, a map, upon which to place Wisdom's claims. We begin with various notions of categories, what we shall here call 'realist' (those labelled A) and 'instrumentalist' (those labelled B) notions.

We have to begin with the following two ontological claims

(A) There are types of things in the world.

(B) There are not types of things in the world.

Related to these ontological claims, there are the following two epistemological claims:

(A') We "perceive" (are aware of, are conscious of) types of things because we are aware of what is there.

(B') We "perceive" (are aware of, are conscious of) types of things because we impose on the world our own system of classification. (We manufacture the appearance.)

Both the realist (A') and the instrumentalist (B') presuppose that there are types of things in experience (appearance).

How are these four claims to be understood? One interpretation of (A) is the following:

(A1) There are particulars and properties of particulars. The similarities within a set of particulars are great, the differences between these and all other particulars great and the difference within the set of particulars is small, and similarities between these and other particulars small.

But depending on how we interpret 'great' and 'small' this interpretation gives rise to two interpretations. These terms may be read as value terms:

(A1A) The similarities within a set of particulars is important, the differences between these and other particulars important, the similarities between these and other particulars unimportant and the differences within this set of particulars unimportant.

These terms may also be understood quantitatively:

(A1B) There are more similarities within this set of particulars than there are between this set and other particulars. There are more differences between this set and other particulars than there are within the set.

Now, related to these two ontological claims there are the accompanying epistemological claims.

(A'1A) We are aware of important similarities and differences because we are aware of a feature of the world which is there.

It should be noted here that if we fail to interpret 'important' objectively, then this apparently realist position slips into instrumentalism.

The epistemological analogue of (A1B) is:

(A'1B) We are aware of these types because the numerical ratio is so great as to be striking and therefore we could not help but be aware of these groups of similarities. Again we are aware of what is really there. (Type-words refer to sets of particulars statistically related).

We must now examine the instrumentalist counterpart to these claims. Opposing (A1A), the instrumentalist might claim:

(B1A) There are particulars, properties of particulars and therefore are similarities and differences between particulars. But similarities and differences are neither important nor unimportant (in any objective sense). And so there is no objective criterion, no natural grouping of particulars into types.

Opposing (A1B), the instrumentalist might maintain:

(B1B) There are particulars, properties of particulars and therefore similarities and differences between individuals. But these similarities and differences are not measurable in any nice quantitative fashion. We cannot count the similarities and differences.

Related to these ontological replies, the instrumentalist might make appropriate epistemological replies:

(B'1A) We are aware of types because we manufacture them. That is to say, because of our attitudes and purposes certain similarities and differences are important to us and others unimportant and therefore we group particulars in our experience to serve our ends.

The instrumentalist epistemological claim corresponding to the quantitative sense of types would be no different from the above (B'1A).

While this concept of types as groups of similarities and differences weighted either evaluatively or quantitatively is a more popular, and perhaps more plausible, account to the twentieth century philosopher, another notion of types, also based on similarities and differences between particulars, is traditional.

Let us approach this notion from two sides and see what sense we can make of it. The realist view we are concerned with here is essentialism. Let us imagine all the individuals in existence laid out upon a table. Let us next take all those individuals which have the property P and put them in a basket. Of these in the basket, remove those that do not have the property Q. It is clear that the set of particulars remaining is effectively determined by this procedure. We can, in theory, always do this. We can continue this procedure until the basket is empty. If by a 'type' is merely meant a set of particulars having a cluster of properties which other particulars lack then clearly types exist. But this certainly is not what is meant by most philosopher , except the most nominalistically inclined logicians. The problem, of course, with this notion of type is that there are far too many types in existence; e.g., 4 cm tall green objects of mass between 6 g and 12 g. This is not, by most people's understanding of type a type of thing. We do not feel very comfortable about putting these various particulars into one group and saying that's a kind of thing.

Let us now take some word e.g., 'bachelor'. If we begin listing the properties of things referred to by this word, we come across two properties (which have names) such that these individuals and only these individuals have these two properties - those properties referred to by the words 'unmarried' and 'male'. But let us now consider the word 'radio'. If one surveyed radios, one might conclude that 'receives and reproduces human broadcasts (on a transmitter) in a range 500 kHz to 1600 kHz' was such a property; that radios and only radios had this property. But what about bed-frames and tooth-fillings which receive the CBC? One gets the impression here that one cannot

find a finite list of properties which those and only those individuals called radios possess. Actually the case of radios may not be so difficult; better examples are provided by Wittgenstein in Philosophical Investigations 'game' and by William James, 'religion' and 'government' in The Varieties of Religious Experience. The question at issue here is whether for any word (referring) there is a cluster of properties which completely determines the set of particulars referred to by that word.

There are six different things that we are discussing here:

(1) sets of particulars

(2) sets of particulars determined by clusters of properties

(3) sets of particulars determined by clusters of properties which (the sets of particulars) we would call a type or kind

(4) sets of particulars we would call a type

(5) words (referring) and word-like phrases (again, referring)

(6) type-words and type-phrases

Before stating the essentialist position, we note two things. The use of words instead of concepts in this exposition is a matter of convenience. There is no reason why this discussion could not concern concepts, whether these be ideas, words or something entirely different (e.g., platonic or aristotelian universals), except ease of exposition. Secondly, the underlying assumption in the above discussion, as earlier, is the existence of particulars and properties of particulars.

To begin with it is clear that (1) sets of particulars exist and also (4) sets of particulars we would call a type exists. On the preceeding page we demonstrated first that we can construct, in fact or in imagination, sets of particulars determined by clusters of

properties. Now, there are sets of particulars we would call a type, (4), if there are things of sort (1) which we refer to by things of sort (6), but not conversely. It seems equally clear that for everything of sort (6), there is something of sort (1), but that the converse is false.

Now what we basically said, secondly, on the previous page was that the issue between the essentialist and the anti-essentialist is this: Whether for everything of sort (6), or more radically of sort (5), there is a corresponding thing of sort (2). That is to say: For every type-word (or more radically, every word) is there a set of particulars determined by a cluster of properties? We may now state the essentialist's affirmative answer as:

> (A2) (a) Every set of particulars we would call a type is determined by a cluster of properties (b) Further, for every type-word there corresponds a set of particulars determined by a cluster of properties.

A stronger version, which has in fact been advocated, is achieved by replacing 'type-word' by 'word'. While the two sentences in the formulation (A2) may seem to say the same thing they do not. The first sentence allows for the existence of as-yet-unnamed types; it allows for the discovery of types. This is an important distinction, for if one were to maintain that the business of philosophy is to tell us what sorts of things there are and we do not allow (A2a) the philosopher can tell us nothing new, nothing we did not already know at least implicitly. That is to say, our language would reflect all the categories of existence. But if we allow (A2a), the philosopher (the reporter of categories) can tell us things not recorded in our language and therefore things we've probably not noticed.

As we shall see, Wisdom maintains that there are sets of sentences which are determined by properties which we would call a type but are not named by type-words. Further, that it is the business of philosophy to bring to our attention these as-yet-unnamed types of sentences. It will turn out, on Wisdom's theory, that the philosopher does tell us things that we probably did not notice because they were not recorded in language.

Whether this is what the philosopher does is not to our purposes here. But it is worth remarking that something like the "discovery" of as-yet-unnamed types does occur in pure mathematics. It may even be that this activity was the inspiration for the theory of the philosopher as discoverer of as-yet-unnamed types. A mathematician may be studying a variety of structures (vectors in three-space, residue-classes of integers and others) and investigating their various properties. At some point he may notice that all, or some, of these structures obey a certain few properties. He may, therefore, give anything with these properties a name, 'Groups'. Clearly, this is an important type of mathematical "entity".

The essentialist's epistemological version of (A2) might run as follows:

> (A'2) We "perceive" types of things because certain sets of particulars "stand out" because they are determined by a cluster of properties. "Perception" of types is further facilitated by the fact that our language contains words which refer to these sets of particulars (type-words) though not to all such sets of particulars.

But there is a serious problem with this essentialist's account. As formulated (A2) and (A'2) do not really tell us what types are.

According to this version a type is either a set of particulars determined by a cluster of properties or that determining cluster of properties. Further, it is one which is referred to by a type-word or if not it is one which we would call a type were it brought to our attention. This gives us necessary conditions for something being a type. But are these sufficient conditions? Suppose we have before us a set of particulars determined by a cluster of properties. Suppose further that we have a word for it and we call this a type. If the above formulation were a correct understanding of essentialism, the essentialist would be able to maintain that what was a type was a matter of human choice. The above may be a good formulation of essentialism, but there is an important stronger version.

What the realist needs is some criterion, besides human convention, for distinguishing between sets of particulars determined by clusters of properties which are types and those which are not. There seems no way out of this situation besides some theory of forms. That is, to certain sets of particulars determined by clusters of properties there is associated some other entity (call it a 'type-form') and to other such sets of particulars determined by clusters of properties there is not associated such an entity. We shall leave this version now and come to it later after examining the instrumentalist's possible replies to (A2) and (A'2).

The instrumentalist might reply in either of two ways. He may begin by simply denying the ontological claims (A2).

(B2) Not every set of particulars we would call a type (perhaps none) is determined by a cluster of properties. Therefore, not every type-word refers

> to a set of particulars determined by a cluster of properties.

He would maintain this with the accompanying epistèmological claim stated before or some variant of it. In other words, we would roughly maintain that the particulars are grouped together into what we 'perceive' as types because we manufacture these groupings according to our attitudes and purposes. But more important is the fact that this position is also compatible with the essentialist's ontological claim (A2). That is to say, it is possible to maintain that what we 'perceive' as a type is determined by our attitudes and purposes yet a type is always a set of particulars determined by clusters of particulars. If one were to take this position, of course, while attitudes and purposes would be a determining factor, they could not be the sole determining factor.

We move now to what may be called the type-existent interpretations. These involve understanding the existence of types in the most literal sense, taking the type-word to refer to a single object. It should be noted here that while the following interpretations resemble traditional theories of forms or universals, they are in fact different in an important way. We are here assuming (at least in this section that the existence and nature of properties (and for that matter, particulars) is not problematic. We have assumed throughout that properties exist and that more than one particular can have the same

property. But this is precisely the claim which discussion of forms finds problematic. While properties and types both delineate sets of particulars, types are not in general properties. The type homo sapiens is not generally regarded as a property. Only where a type delineates a set of individuals determined by a single property would the theory of types reduce to the theory of forms. Such an interpretation of (A) and (B) is the following.

(A3) There are particulars and properties of particulars. There are special kinds of properties called types.
(a) Every set of particulars we would call a type is determined by a type-property.
(b) For every type-word there corresponds a set of particulars determined by a type-property.

For example, just as 'green', '5 g' 'two feet' etc. refer to properties of certain particulars, so 'human', 'animal' refer to the properties of humanness and animality. (A3), of course, is a special case of (A2), where the cluster of properties is a single property. (A3) has the same problem that (A2) had, that of distinguishing between type-properties and properties which are not types. This can, however, be remedied without introducing a new kind of entity. We simply allow typeness to be a property, a property which certain properties have and others don't. When G.E. Moore, (and in a similar though not identical fashion, John Wisdom) gives 'an X' as the only correct answer to questions of the sort 'What is an X?', he could easily be interpreted as advocating (A3). The realist epistemology to go with (A3) is the following;

(A'3) We "perceive" types because there <u>are</u> types. And just as we perceive properties of things like 'green' and 'human' and we also perceive the property 'type'.

The instrumentalist reply here would be no different from earlier replies. There are basically two alternatives. He may simply deny the existence of type-properties and go on to explain our "awareness" of

them in terms of human purposes. But he may also explain our awareness of types in terms of purposes, yet still assert the existence of type-properties. This would be a peculiar move and one which, to my knowledge, does not exist in the literature. Yet it would seem that one could maintain that while there are naturally occurring kinds, we are still free to classify things as we see fit.

While the analysis of types as type-properties posited the existence of new entities in addition to particulars and the conventional sorts of properties, it does not really posit the existence of radically different sorts of entities. It is true that types properties, like humanness and radioness are not observed properties like redness and three-inchness. But there is a traditional theory which takes the existence of kinds even more seriously. It holds that such type-words refer not to ubiquitous properties of particulars, but to a particular. This is a variant of the traditional theory of forms, applied to categories. We might state it as:

> (A4) There are particulars, properties of particulars and type-forms. Every set of particulars we would call a type is such that every particular in that set participates in the same form. To every type-word there corresponds a set of particulars, and a form such that the particulars all participate in that form and the type-word names that form.

Taken in its literal form, we are here referring to an entity, a form, and a relationship between that object and a particular - participation. The epistemological counterpart to this is not too clear. Since we will not really be concerned with this interpretation, we will simply state it roughly as follows:

> (A'4) We "perceive" types because there are types. That is to say, in addition to "perceiving" particulars and properties of particulars we also "perceive"

type-forms in relation to the particulars which participate in them.

The instrumentalist is left with the two standard alternatives. (1) He may deny the existence of these objects and explain our awareness of types in terms of purposes, or (2) allow the existence of these objects yet maintain that we are "free" to classify according to our purposes and that we do so.

2.2 A Few Remarks on "Awareness" of Categories

'Perception', 'Awareness' and 'Consciousness' of types were deliberately left vague in the preceding section. These words were meant as catch phrases for the following "subjective" as opposed to "objective" sides of types. (1) In talking about things we refer to more than one thing by the same word or phrase, i.e., we classify things by language. (1') In talking about talking, we refer to more than one word or sentence by the same word or phrase. (2) In reflecting on the great variety of living things, (in his field book or his memory) a taxonomist will decide that certain organisms belong together in one order, that these two organisms obviously belong in different subphyla and so on until each organism belongs to some one lowest class, which belongs to some second-level class, and on up until he has a tidy branching hierarchy of classes; we may classify and re-classify things consciously and deliberately upon reflection. (3) After considerable research in various areas of Algebra, a pure mathematician may, upon reflection, notice that certain unrelated mathematical objects (whatever these may be) share a certain set of properties. He may then "define" a new type of algebraic structure - rings. I.e., a mathematician

may define a new class of objects upon reflection. (4) In visual perception, some things simply look more like one thing than another. If we have before us a saucepan, a Rolls-Royce and a frying pan, we would visually recognize (or group together) the saucepan and the frying-pan as one type of thing and the Rolls as another. If we were subjected to the sound of a trumpet, the sound of a jackhammer and the sound of a trombone we would certainly group the trumpet and trombone together as the same kind of sound, the jackhammer as another. In the act (or experience) of perception, we naturally group things. The case of categories in sensory experience is particularly troublesome as we end up dealing with some rather slippery visual phenomena.

Since our primary concern in this essay is with John Wisdom's views on language and philosophy we shall restrict ourselves to 'language about things', and 'language about language about things'.

2.3 Necessity and Categories

It is traditionally a part of categorial realist theories that the categories we use, or at least some of the categories we use, are necessary. The Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines category in the following way.

> Philosophical categories are classes, genera, or types supposed to mark necessary divisions within our conceptual scheme, divisions that we must recognize if we are to make literal sense in our discourse about the world.[26]

The central concern here is to see just what could be meant by 'necessary' and 'must', in this context. As we saw earlier there is no inconsistency, even though it is awkward, to hold (1) there are

'types' (in some sense) and (2) 'types' as we "perceive" them are determined by our purposes (which could vary). We shall see that this further complicates things.

Initially, perhaps, it should be noted that what we mean by the existence of types being necessary is not:

(a) it is necessary that there be types at all; as opposed to there being no types.

but,

(b) it is necessary that there be <u>these</u> types and not some other types.

Now, there is to begin with the question of "objective" existence of types and "subjective" awareness of types. Perhaps the consideration of "subjective" awareness of types needs a bit of justification, since our purpose here is to clarify the notion of necessary <u>existence</u> of types. If there were no types in the objective sense, but if we were nonetheless bound by necessity of some sort to perceive the world categorially, these categories would in another sense be quite objective since they are not, in the sense of concious deliberation of our own making and not under our control.

Let us then consider the necessary existence of types in the objective sense. In the case of types as statistical distributions of sets of properties, categorial necessity becomes a matter of these distributions being necessary, not contingent. This could be the case in two different manners: (1) that all the particulars which exist must exist, the properties they have they must have and therefore the distribution of properties must be the way it is, or (2) that what particulars exist is contingent, what particulars have which

properties is contingent, but still the distribution of properties is not contingent. This case is the analogue to the case where it is contingent which career a particular individual will follow, but it is certain that 30% will do this type of job, 40% that type, etc.

We need only to tighten things up to formulate the case where a type is a set of particulars determined by a cluster of properties. We shall return to this case later as we examine John Wisdom's position.

For the case of types as type-forms, we need simply demand that the existence of these type-forms be necessary. We can make the membership of a certain particular in a certain type as either necessary or contingent.

The above forms of categorial necessity are found typically in Plato's theory of forms and Aristotle's Categories and his doctrine of natural kinds. We may note that while both these positions are rather static, the notion of objective categorial necessity need not lead to a static world-view. Whether it does depends on how numerous and extensive are the categories and whether necessity extends to membership of particulars.

We begin with two conditions of necessity which any human language must satisfy. First, a point perhaps too obvious to mention is that there is no necessity that we use some particular word to denote a given object or set of objects as opposed to some other word. That is to say, as language was being created we could

have decided to call dogs by the word 'cat'. As Wisdom maintains, we cannot now do this without repercusions, yet we could have done so before, so to speak, language 'got going'.

Secondly, a point also made by Wisdom, is the fact that we are forced to include in our language general terms. Any language, therefore, must have some categorial structure.

As to the necessity of general terms apportioning objects in the way they do andnot some other way, there are several ways in which one might say such apportioning was necessary. That is to say, we are concerned here not with whether objects must be classified as opposed to unclassified but with whether they must be classified one way as opposed to another way.

(1) One might mean that some classification is necessary in the sense that there is some restraint on us which is beyond our control. For example, Chomsky argues that all language must have common grammatical structure - the universal grammar. Stuart Hampshire argues that it is inherent in language that we apportion things into subjects and objects.

(2) One might also mean that such a structure is necessary in an instrumental sense, that in order to do such and such language must have this categorial structure and not that. There are two cases here;

> (a) Suppose there are sets of particulars determined by clusters of properties. If one wishes to reflect this structure in the general terms in one's language, the general terms must describe these sets of particulars determined by clusters of properties with general terms; one's general terms must not refer to those sets of particulars which

are not determined by clusters of properties.

(b) Suppose one has some purpose other than reflecting this structure; e.g., cautioning over-confident people. In such a case a general term which referred to situations of over-confidence (in matters of belief) might be necessary if one wished to caution through the use of language. For example, according to Wisdom this is the ordinary reference of 'probable'. Did we not have some word with this reference we could not caution people by saying to them That's not certain, it's only probable.

It will be seen that the above distinctions will be useful in determing whether, and in what sense, categories are necessary, according to Wisdom.

CHAPTER 3: Categories of Sentences on Wisdom's Theory

3.1 Preliminary Remarks

Let us return now to the first principle of language. It is clear that, according to Wisdom, there are sentences and functions of sentences; these are the relevant particulars and properties in this context. The question then arises, Does Wisdom maintain or presuppose, the existence of *types* of sentences?, and pertaining to this question, If *types*, in what sense? These questions shall be the concern of this section.

Regarding whether Wisdom presupposes the existence of types of sentences, recalling his statements of the aim of philosophy, we note that he speaks as though there *are* categories of sentences to gain a grasp of the relations between. He is even more explicit about this where he distinguishes between 'domestic logic' and 'ultimate logic' and identifies pure metaphysics with the latter.

> The pure logician [who studies domestic logic] is not concerned with whether or how far a religious, moral, physical or psychological statement is true, but with how one would know the truth of one statement of one of these *types* given another of the same type. The pure metaphysician goes further. He is concerned with [ultimate logic] how one could know the truth of a statement of a given *type*, say a moral type, not from other statements of the same *type* but from the sort of thing which in the end is the ground for any statement of the *type* in question.[27]

He seems here to presuppose the existence of several types of sentences: moral, religious, psychological, and physical. Further, he seems to hold that these sets of sentences are determined by properties, their

method of verification .

In his discussion of scepticism, he speaks of sets of sentences referred to as 'certain' and 'probable' in both the old application and the new application. While the sceptic proposes to alter the application of these terms, Wisdom claims that the old use of 'certain' and 'know' exhibit a similarity between sensation statements and favourable material-object statements (that doubt would be unreasonable in daily life) and a dissimilarity between these statements (those called 'certain') and those called 'probable' (that doubt would be in order in daily life). The new application of these terms is to bring to light a dissimilarity between sensation statements and both favourable material-object statements and unfavourable material-object statements, that to the former class we may not add without absurdity 'but I may be mistaken' while to the latter we may. This new use also draws our attention to the latter mentioned similarity between the two types material of material-object statements.

The point here is that in this discussion, while the application of 'certain' and 'probable' change, he seems to presuppose the existence of the three "basic" types of sentences: (1) sensation, (2) favourable object and (3) unfavourable material object.

What sorts of types are these and the above mentioned 'religious', 'moral', etc.? And are these necessary categories? Wisdom's statement of the aim of philosophy speaks not of the relations between particulars. The aim is stated in terms of some "basic" set of categories. If we distinguish between the "basic" set of categories (sensation, favourable material-object, unfavourable material-object) and the other

sets of categories ((1) 'certain$_O$' and 'probable$_O$' and (2) 'certain$_N$' and 'probable$_N$'; where O, N denote old and new respectively); we might ask whether these are types in different senses, and whether one or both is necessary.

Let us restrict ourselves here to the example of scepticism. In the statement of the aim of philosophy, Wisdom speaks of 'relations between expressions used in different manners'. It would seem that the "basic" set of categories must consist of categories determined by a property - the function. Yet, if the three "basic" categories in the scepticism discussion are the categories the relations between which the philosopher wishes to emphasize, we must note that Wisdom gives no determining properties for these classes. Elsewhere Wisdom speaks of these "basic" categories being determined by the method of determining their truth or falsity. But there is no difference in the method of verification, except in degree, of favourable and unfavourable material object statements, as there is between these and sensation statements. Perhaps, then, the "basic" set consists of sensation and material object statements. On this interpretation the sceptic is not revealing relations between the "basic" categories of sentences, but merely marking the underlying categories which are obscured by ordinary language. But if this were the case, the sceptic's claim would have a priviledged status among philosophical theories. But this does not jibe well with Wisdom's notion that the proper method involves accepting all philosophical theories. There is not sufficient textual evidence to conclude anything about the nature of the 'basic" categories.

In the case of the four classes 'certain$_0$', 'certain$_n$', probable$_0$' and 'probable$_n$', it is clear that these are sets of sentences determined by properties. We can make sense of Wisdom's claim without reference to the categories marked by 'sensation statements' 'favourable material object statements' and 'unfavourable material object statements'. By introducing new categories, the sceptic shows us the similarities and dissimilarities between and within the old categories. He shows a difference within the category 'certain$_0$' and a similaritity between the category 'probable$_0$' and a certain subclass of category 'certain$_0$'.

Since Wisdom is not clear on the issue of the nature of the basic sets, we shall deal with the formulation of the aim of philosophy as gaining a grasp of the relations between already marked categories of sentences. We define underlying categories to be the sets of sentences marked by the old use of the terms under consideration, and resting categories to be the sets of sentences marked by the new use of terms.[25] This is not to say marked by ordinary language, for philosophy may also bring to light features about scientific language, poetic language or psychoanalytic language. It may reveal how some specialist language is a modification of ordinary language and that the specialist's modifications reveal similarities and dissimilarities between the categories of ordinary language. In this case, the underlying sets with respect to the specialist's modifications are the categories of ordinary language. The underlying sets with respect to the philosopher's modifications are the categories of the specialist's discourse. In this case then, the underlying sets presupposed in the philosopher's discourse about scientific discourse are the scientific categories.

3.2 The Nature of Categories of Sentences on Wisdom's Theory

Let us now try to clarify the sense in which Wisdom speaks of types of sentences. We have before us three realms to keep separate.

(1) The world of non-linguistic entities.

(2) Sentences about the world of non-linguistic entities.

(3) Linguistic entities which (are about) refer to sentences about the world.

A few remarks to put these realms in perspective; (2) is a subclass of the set of sentences, which is a subclass of the set of linguistic entities. This latter class and (1) constitute the world. (3), of course is a subclass of the linguistic part of the world. When we speak of what a sentence is 'about', we simply refer to the set of objects denoted by the linguistic entities employed in these sentences. For example, 'some houses are brick' is about houses and bricks. The set of fact-stating sentences is a subclass of (2) and (3); since such sentences may state non-linguistic facts or linguistic facts.

3.2.1 Underlying Categories

Wisdom tells us nothing about the existence of categories of non-linguistic entities, persons, dogs, tables, light, etc. As we have seen, he does presuppose, in some sense, types of sentences, the underlying sets the relations between which philosophy reveals by its method of linguistic proposals. We wish to know the sense in which these underlying categories are types where they belong on the map developed in part two.

In the example of scepticism, the underlying sets denoted by '$\text{certain}_{\mathcal{O}}$' and '$\text{probable}_{\mathcal{O}}$' satisfy the following properties: (1) they

are sets of sentences, (2) they are named by some existing word in ordinary language. (3) the sets are determined by properties, and (4) these words are type-words, i.e., they are considered, at least by Wisdom, as types. The set of sentences denoted by 'certain$_0$' are those sentences which it would ordinarily be pointless to doubt. Similarly 'probable$_0$' denotes those and only those sentences which in ordinary life it would be reasonable to doubt. These categories, then, are already categories in a stronger sense than that used in the statistical model (A1). In fact, these underlying categories are categories in a limited essentialist sense (A2).

It is, however, not necessarily the case that Wisdom is an essentialist in the full sense of (A2). Wisdom does not maintain (A2a) 'Every set of particulars we would call a type is determined by a cluster of properties' for the following reason. If we take the scepticism example as typical, he is maintaining that every underlying set which we would call a type is determined by a property or set of properties. But these underlying sets are sets of linguistic entities. What Wisdom says does not necessarily apply to sets of non-linguistic entities.

Furthermore, Wisdom does not exactly maintain (A2b); 'for every type-word there corresponds a set of particulars determined by a cluster of properties'. Wisdom does not state that type-words which refer to non-linguistic sets of particulars refer to sets determined by properties. He maintains (A2b) only for linguistic types. Wisdom, then, maintains a limited version of essentialism in the sense of (A2).

It may seem somewhat surprising that Wisdom holds this limited

essentialism; since, as we said earlier, Wisdom's philosophy may be regarded, to some extent, as a restatement of Wittgenstein. In Wittgenstein, we find an attack on a form of essentialism; he regards categories as family resemblances - a theory similar to (A1). Wisdom may in fact maintain that many categories are family resemblances, but that linguistic categories are property-determined categories. In fact, if Wisdom maintained that non-linguistic categories were family-resemblances while linguistic categories are property-determined categories then a grasp of the categories of language would not necessarily give us a grasp of the categories of non-linguistic entities (of being). It is because he gives us no general theory of categories, of all categories, that in the section 'Language or Things' we were unable to say anything about these non-linguistic categories and that we could not say whether philosophy, on Wisdom's theory, tells us anything about the world.

There is one other aspect in which Wisdom's claim differs from traditional thorough essentialism. These categories are not necessary in the sense of being inherent in the specific language. They are, rather, necessary in an instrumental sense. More about this will be said.

We turn now to what in chapter 2 was rather unhappily referred to as "consciousness" of types. In this case the question of "consciousness" of types becomes one of talking about <u>types</u> of sentences as opposed to perception (e.g., visual or auditory) of <u>types</u> of non-linguistic entities . It would make little sense and be of no interest, in this essay, to speak of visual or auditory perception of sentence-types

(though it could be relevant to the psychology of language learning). Since 'types of sentences' are types in the sense that they have names, we have already said something about this issue. We wish then to know more about these words 'certain_0' and 'probable_0'. The question of whether our talk about these categories is real or instrumental, is in part one of whether these words actually refer to types. They do of course refer to real types in the sense that their referent is a class of sentences determined by a property. Whether the types they refer to are necessary or not we shall consider in a moment. Whether our set of sentence-type words must classify the sentences in the way they do is a separate question. If our aim is to reflect in these sentence-type words, 'certain_0', 'probable_0', some existing state of affairs, then they must apportion the range of sentences in this way. Yet there is not in ordinary language a sentence-type word for every type of sentence (in the sense of property-determined sets of sentences regarded as types, 'certain_N' and 'probable_N' denote just such unnamed categories. Further there is not a sentence-type word for every type of sentence in the sense of a set of sentences determined by a cluster of properties which we would call a type; since there are not such words to denote the types, which are types in this sense, now denoted by 'certain_N' and 'probable_N'.

Regarding the necessity of the categories of sentences, there is no reason to assume that there could only be the types that there are, in the sense of sets of sentences determined by properties. While it is clear on this theory that every meaningful sentence must have some function (we take meaning = function here) it is not clear that there

could not be functions of sentences other than those that actually exist. If our world were sufficiently different from what it is language might have other functions than it does have. So that while it may be the case that every sentence is either moral, religious, physical, psychological or some other finite number of types, it is not so that any sentence in human language must be one of these.

Given the sentences in existing language and the functions which actually exist then there could not be other types in our language than there are in the sense of sets of sentences determined by clusters of properties. Whether we must apportion these sentences by type-words according to these properties (functions), we saw that if our aim is to reflect this structure then our words must apportion sentences in this way. Yet there is another factor relevant to the question of necessity. Where the sentence-type words are part of existing ordinary language, they are according to principle (15a) determined by the purposes of everyday life. It is necessary in everyday life that our language contain the type-words 'certain ' and 'probable ' and that they have the refence they have, for we must be able to prescribe caution to those who are over-confident and assure those whose beliefs are warranted. As Wisdom notes, if we accepted the sceptics proposal we would still have to introduce new words to do the job of the old words.

> If I prefix every statement about material objects with 'probably' this doubt-raiser will soon cease to frighten hungry friends, that is cease to function as it now does. Consequently, in order to mark those differences which I now mark by saying in one case 'Probably that is cheese on the table' and in another case 'I know that is cheese on the table', I shall have to introduce a new notation, one to do the work the old one did.[29]

Similarly, if the underlying set were some specialist language, the sentence-type words apportion the sentences according to the specialist's purposes. And he must have these type-words if he is to do his job effectively.

3.2.2 Resting Categories

Having seen something of the nature of the underlying categories, let us now consider the resting categories; 'certain$_N$' and 'probable$_N$'. Like the underlying categories, the resting categories are sets of sentences determined by properties. They are, however, not named by any set of terms in the existing language. Yet as with the case of the underlying categories, they are referred to as types, at least by Wisdom. So, these resting categories are types in a slightly weaker sense. They share with the underlying categories conditions (1), (3) and (4), mentioned earlier; they differ only in that they are not named by existing language. And so, both underlying sets and resting sets are essential - categories but in slightly different senses.

On the problem of our consciousness of these types, our talk about them is real in the sense that they refer to existing sets of sentences determined by some property, the property of 'being able to add, without absurdity 'but may be mistaken'. As with the case of underlying categories, if our aim is to reflect some structure of the distribution of properties, then these words must apportion the sentences in this way. Yet in the sense of necessary 'to certain purposes' (other than reflecting reality) these resting categories are perhaps less necessary. That is to say while it is necessary to the purpose of revealing certain features of language, (if, in fact, this is the only method of the

four mentioned which does the job) the purpose is not necessary in the same way that the purposes of everyday life are. In two respects then, the resting categories are categories in a weaker sense than the underlying categories. (1) They are not named. (2) The purposes for which they exist are not as necessary.

The philosopher, then, reveals certain similarities and dissimilarities between certain underlying categories of sentences. To put it another way, he brings to our attention certain categories of sentences which are not marked by our existing language. In this way he does tell us something we did not know, at least explicitly.

We now rephrase some of these remarks in terms of realism and instrumentalism. It was noted earlier that it is possible to maintain both a version of ontological realism and "epistemological" instrumentalism. We find that Wisdom is in just this position. He maintains on the one hand a limited essentialism - that there <u>are</u> categories of sentences in an essentialist sense (A2). There <u>are</u> underlying categories satisfying (1-4), and there <u>are</u> resting categories satisfying (1, 3, 4) (these conditions are stated at the beginning of 3.2.1). Granted, Wisdom is a realist in the associated sense (A'2) - that we perceive, mark by language, these underlying categories because they are there. Other categories, resting categories, are also there in the sense that they are determined by properties. Yet, we are not always aware of these categories. So our awareness of categories is not determined entirely by the fact they are there. Whether we are aware of some category, as we saw, also depends on our purposes, our interests. As we remarked in 2.1, the valuational-statistical theory (A'1A) that we are aware of important similarities and differences because we are aware of a feature

of the world which is there slips into a form of instrumentalism if we interpret 'important' subjectively. It seems fair to interpret 'gaining a grasp of the relations between types of sentences', 'marking those features relevant to science' and 'cautioning and assuring people' as purposes in a subjective sense; what features of language are important depend on our purposes which may and do change with time and environment. This shows then that Wisdom holds a strange mixture of epistemological realism and instrumentalism combined with an ontological realism (limited essentialism).

To sum up, we have restricted ourselves to Wisdom's positions on categories of sentences only, not categories in general. We have further assumed that the underlying categories which the philosopher studies are sets denoted by words in some existing language, whether it be ordinary language or some specialist language. If we take the scepticism example as representative we can say the following about Wisdom's views on categories. Underlying categories are sets of sentences determined by some property or properties which is named by some word in existing language and is considered a type of sentence. Resting categories satisfy all these conditions except that they are not named by words in existing language. With regard to categories of sentences, then, we may describe John Wisdom as an essentialist of sorts. With regard to categorial necessity, both words which refer to underlying categories and words (new words) which refer to resting categories are necessary to the purpose of reflecting in language certain features of the categorial structure of existing language. But the words in existing language which refer to underlying categories of sentences

in existing language are necessary in a stronger sense - the business of daily life could not be carried, out, or at least not carried out as well, without these category terms with the application that they do have.

Some Concluding Remarks

Regarding the truth or falsity of John Wisdom's theory we, of course, have no definite conclusions. Wisdom's arguments against the view that philosophy is empirical, or even cognitive in some more general sense, failed to refute this position. Not only did Wisdom fail to refute this position, but he failed to consider several other traditional theories of philosophy. Therefore, even if the two theories examined were false, it would not necessarily follow that Wisdom's theory is true. So, Wisdom gives us no reason to believe that the aim and method of philosophy are what he says they are.

We saw several other methods which were also good candidates for means to the goal which Wisdom claims philosophy has. While each had its failings, it was not clear that Wisdom's method would be the most effective; nor that any of them would be effective toward the mentioned aim. We did arrive at a clearer understanding of just what Wisdom is maintaining. We saw that neither the underlying categories nor the resting categories were absolutely fixed by necessity, yet they were not entirely arbitrary. In the case of scepticism, the underlying categories are categories in the sense that they are sets of sentences, determined a property, named by an existing linguistic entity which is called a type-word. By contrast, the resting categories are sets of sentences, determined by a property, unnamed but nonetheless referred to as types. Both our talk about the underlying and resting

categories is "real" as opposed to instrumental in the sense that these words do refer to types in the sense of sets of particulars determined by properties, and further that we would call them types. In general, then, resting categories are types in a slightly weaker sense than are underlying categories.

Regarding categorial necessity, we again find a difference between underlying and resting sets. We saw that in the cases of both underlying and resting categories general terms which denote precisely these classes of sentences were necessary if our aim was to reflect this categorial structure. But this "instrumental" necessity differs in the sense that the apportionment induced by the underlying category terms and the apportionment induced by the resting category terms may be for different human purposes. While the underlying categories named by 'certain_0' and 'probable_0' serve certain purposes of everyday life - cautioning and assuring, the resting categories serve certain philosophical purposes - the illumination of relations between these underlying categories.

FOOTNOTES

1. p. 36, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis (hereafter P.P.)
2. p. 42, P.P.
3. p. 37, P.P.
4. p. 36, P.P.
5. p. 113, P.P.
6. p. 113, P.P.
7. p. 114, P.P.
8. p. 113, P.P.
9. p. 114, P.P.
10. p. 64, P.P.
11. p. 45, P.P.
12. p. 39, P.P.
13. p. 154, P.P.
14. p. 331, "Persuasive Definitions", Stevenson, C.L.
15. p. 42, P.P.
16. p. 119, Paradox and Discovery (P.D.)
17. p. 119, P.D.
18. p. 120, P.D.
19. p. 135, "An Appraisal of Therapeutic Positivism II", Farrell, B.A.
20. p. 115-6, P.P.
21. p. 115, P.D.
22. p. 119, P.D.

23. p. 120 P.D.

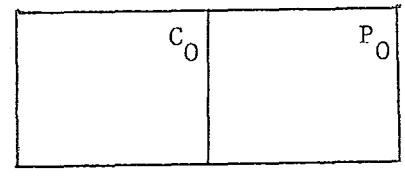
24. p. 126, P.D.

25. p. 265, Other Minds (O.M.)

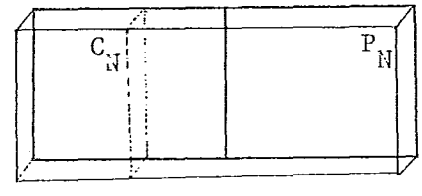
26. p. 46, "Categories", Manly Thompson

27. p. 120, P.D., remarks in [ ] are the author's.

28. The motivation for the underlying/resting category terminology is as follows: On Wisdom's theory, the philosopher begins with a pair of categories, 'certain$_O$' and 'probable$_O$'. These can be pictured on a Venn diagram as:



He then modifies these categories by restricting 'certain$_O$' and extending 'probable$_O$'. One way to imagine the relations between the old and new categories is by means of "superimposed" Venn diagrams.



In this diagram, the categories 'certain$_O$' and 'probable$_O$' lie under the categories 'certain$_N$' and 'probable$_N$' which rest on top of the former.

29. p. 44, P.P.

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