

DREAMING

IAN HILTON DEARDEN



ProQuest Number: 10097313

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10097313

Published by ProQuest LLC(2016). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

### Abstract

The counter-intuitive features of Malcolm's analysis are reviewed. An attempt is made to avoid these difficulties by allowing the admission of criteria for dreaming other than Malcolm's. This leads to a consideration of Malcolm's use of the term "criterion" and reference is made to Malcolm's interpretation of Wittgenstein on the subject. It is concluded that language is not criterion-governed in the way that Malcolm (but not Wittgenstein) thinks. An analysis of dreaming is then attempted on the basis of all the types of evidence we use for the occurrence of a dream, the approach being to determine what dreaming must be like if these can all be evidence for dreaming. It is argued that our concept of dreaming is of a datable occurrence, but it is admitted that experimental evidence could arise which would incline us away from this view. This approach tends to represent dreaming as an unobservable, and to progress further, one needs to take account of our concept of dreaming as an ~~occurrence~~<sup>experience</sup> during sleep. Malcolm's arguments against this are rejected. The implications of treating dreaming as an experience are reviewed, and it is shown how this view avoids the difficulties which beset Malcolm's analysis. It is argued that Malcolm's treatment of dreaming as a basis for scepticism, dependent on his view that one cannot make judgements in sleep, fails as there is reason to reject this view. However one of his arguments against the coherence principle is found pertinent, and an attempt is made to refurbish the coherence principle in the light of this. This leads us to a further consideration of scepticism, in which it is maintained that the problem of dream-scepticism, if pushed to its limits, loses its specific reference to dreaming.

Malcolm, in his book 'Dreaming' raises the question: how do we acquire the concept of dreaming? (p54 et.seq.) He maintains that we tend to see dreaming as an inward process, and do assume that we acquire the concept by observing this process in ourselves. To this he opposes two objections - (a) "How could it be determined that the inner states of different people were the same, that they meant the same by the word 'dreaming'?" (b) "How could one know that the inner state one calls 'dreaming' is the same in oneself each time?" Malcolm rejects memory impressions as a court of appeal, there being no possibility of checking them. One can avoid these difficulties by taking the descriptions people give of their private states as a means of telling what these states are, and whether they are the same. "But one cannot then allow the question whether these descriptions are in error or not - for this would be to fall back into the original difficulty." One must take the descriptions as the criterion of the inner occurrences. "[T]he concept of dreaming is derived, not from dreaming, but from descriptions of dreams, i.e. from the familiar phenomenon we call 'telling a dream'." Malcolm maintains that if someone were to raise the question whether ~~they~~ really had dreamed or whether it merely seemed so on waking, then if he knew what would settle the question, he must be using something other than the report as the criterion of the dream, i.e. misusing the word "dream". Malcolm continues "We speak of 'remembering' dreams, and if we consider this expression it can appear to us to be a misuse of language." So "remembering dreams" is unlike remembering waking experiences: there is no external criterion by which we can check our memory. We might amend our account on second telling, but only slightly, otherwise we "would no longer be said to be 'telling a dream'." (The psychoanalytic view that, during analysis, a person



may radically alter his account of a dream, enshrines a revised concept of dreaming.) We cannot check dream-reports by reference to empirical laws because we can literally dream anything.

Nevertheless, says Malcolm, it is correct to speak of "remembering" a dream, though this use diverges radically from that regarding waking experience. Neglect of this latter fact leads to the following kind of reasoning. (Yost and Kalish PQ 55 pp109-124)

"Dreaming is a real experience. And since dreams can be remembered they must be conscious experiences. Just as it is correct to say that a dreamer really dreams and does not merely dream that he dreams, so is it correct to say that a dreamer is really aware of the contents of his dream, and does not merely dream that he is aware of them."

To this Malcolm replies that the only sense he can give to "Dreaming is a real experience" is that of the truism that people do dream, and that the argument depends on the assimilation of remembering a dream to remembering waking experiences. Its conclusion is unverifiable, there being no criterion for saying a sleeper is aware of his dream, other than his telling a dream, in which case the sense of "People are aware of their dreams" collapses into that of "People dream".

Malcolm denies he is claiming a dream is the waking impression, this being self-contradictory. But what we take as finally deciding that a man dreamed is that he sincerely tells a dream. The dream and the waking conviction are not logically independent; each could not exist regardless of whether the other existed. It is incoherent to suppose that "mankind might have told dreams without ever having dreams, or might have had dreams without ever having told dreams," for what would then establish the existence of a dream? However, to fix the criterion for something is not to define it. "The criterion

for someone's having a sore foot is what he says and does in certain circumstances and that is not a sore foot." Once we abandon the assumption that the criterion and that of which it is a criterion are identical, there is no difficulty in the fact that the sentence for which we want a criterion is in the past tense. ("He was dreaming.") The reluctance we may feel to admitting this is due to a "haziness" on the borderline of our concept of dreaming: if a young man murmurs his sweetheart's name in his sleep, we might say he is dreaming about his sweetheart. For Malcolm, this is to say that if he were awakened, he would be able to tell a dream about his sweetheart. But when we say of a dog whining and twitching in its sleep, that it is dreaming, we are not predicting what it will tell us when it awakes; thus the usage is "not quite serious". One draws no practical consequences from the dreaming of the dog, but may do so from that of the young man. Should the young man awaken unable to recall a dream, to say "You have forgotten it" would have no content beyond that of "So, you have no dream to tell." If we say of someone sighing and muttering in his sleep, "He is dreaming", our words have no clear sense, unless we are using his behaviour as evidence that he will be able to tell a dream. Malcolm is not, however, prepared to accept this as an adequate account of nightmares. "When a man cries out, struggles, appears to be afraid, is difficult to arouse, and continues to exhibit traces of fear as he awakens, we call it a nightmare, regardless of whether he can tell a dream." But "it is at least problematic whether we should say he was asleep while those struggles were going on."

Malcolm adopts the view that statements of the form "I dreamed so-and-so" are always inferential, not necessarily reached by conscious inference, but depending upon evidence that some event never occurred.

But "What can have no justification and requires none is your statement that you have the impression that so-and-so occurred." Once someone has decided that certain events which he remembers on awakening did not occur, there is no further question of whether a dream really took place during sleep. This view that "I dreamed that p" implies "not-p" is illustrated in his discussion of Pharaoh's dream. Not only could Pharaoh not have claimed to have dreamed if he really had believed that during the night he stood on the banks of the Nile etc., but also he could not have claimed to have dreamed if he really had believed that during the night it seemed to him that he did so. Malcolm places a restriction on this view. Someone in California might dream that Westminster Abbey was burned down, and learn the next day that this had actually occurred. But if his narrative contained statements like "I saw it burning", those statements would be false. It is not contingent that the perceptual contents of a dream are unveridical.

Such are the arguments presented in Chapter 12 of 'Dreaming'; it will frequently be necessary to refer to other sections of the book, but the core of Malcolm's thesis seems concentrated here. Malcolm admits that his views conflict with earlier approaches to the problem. He quotes philosophers (Descartes, Aristotle, Kant, Russell) and psychologists (Freud, Hadfield) to show they "believed a dream is both a form of mental activity and a conscious experience." (pp1-4) To these proponents of the received opinion, we might add the Oxford Dictionary, which defines "dream" as "a train of thoughts, images or fancies passing through the mind during sleep, a vision during sleep." And indeed, Malcolm's views have ~~often~~ been assailed by Ayer, Pears and others as giving a highly counter-intuitive reductive analysis of dreaming. It will be useful to review the kind of objections which

might be raised - to his conclusions, rather than his way of arriving at them.

It is an avowed consequence of Malcolm's views (Chapter 13) that it is senseless to speak of a dream as occurring at a certain time during sleep. Pears asks: might we not wish to say that, had someone slept for a shorter period of time than he did on a particular occasion, he might not have had a particular dream? Many people report that if they were awakened for a short interval, and then fall asleep again, they continue to dream the same dream starting where they left off. Would we not allow the possibility, that if the person had not been awakened, he would, on waking eventually, have told a dream consisting of the two parts together? It is commonly believed that external stimuli can modify the content of a dream, and that we sometimes tell from a sleeper's bodily movements that he is having a violent dream. One of Malcolm's defences (p76) against the claim "that the dream occurred at the same time (or after) the physical event that causally influenced the content of the dream" is that this could only be a convention, for it is possible only to observe causal or temporal relations between physical events and dream-reports, not between physical events and dreams. For the moment, let us be content with asking whether, since there is a strong presumption that the sleeper is, at least, physiologically, influenced by the stimulus at the time of its occurrence, might there not be some psychological concomitance of the physical event.

We normally allow that a psychical event might have no outward manifestations, but perhaps we always require that it be logically possible that it should (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* §580)



This brings us back to the claim that we can sometimes tell from a sleeper's bodily movements that he is having a dream. Consider a few cases - (a) Some sleep walk<sup>er</sup>, carrying out apparently purposeful actions such as might be part of a conscious activity. He wakes and tells a dream involving such activity. (b) Someone talks in his sleep. His later dream-telling involves the words he spoke. (c) Someone in his sleep cries out as if in terror, and exhibits the bodily symptoms of fear. He wakes in a state of alarm, then exclaims with relief, "It's only a dream!" Malcolm would say either that these are not cases of sound sleep, or that all we have is a correlation between dream-reports and movements during sleep, giving no evidence of events during sleep. But the dreamer's report is based on what seems to be a memory-impression. Malcolm would reply that this could not be a hypothesis, being incapable of verification, but only a definition.

A further difficulty involves his view that dream-memories are identified by their falsehood, their failure to cohere with publicly agreed events. But, as Pears says<sup>1</sup>, we allow that a dream might recapitulate a real event. Malcolm, by his insistence, that dreams do not occur in time, has debarred himself from the defence that the dream would differ from the event it recapitulated, in temporal location. (This defence might fail on other counts - to say that a dream occurs at time  $t$  is not to say that the dream is of something occurring at time  $t$ . This latter point would tell against him, were he to try to avail himself of the above defence, by saying his claim is not that a dream cannot be assigned to a particular period of sleep, but that it cannot be assigned to a sub-stretch of that period) A related point is the difficulty for Malcolm in providing a principle of individuation for dreams; we recognize the phenomenon of recurring

Footnotes.

1. 'Mind' 1961



dreams. If there are always slight differences between instances of a recurring dream, is this not contingent? Furthermore, suppose someone has two dreams on successive nights, differing only in one feature. How are we to know that the second dream had any content other than the feature in which it differs from the first?

Other difficulties for Malcolm spring from his insistence on something reiniscent of the verification principle. (p83 "the senselessness, in the sense of the impossibility of verification of the notion of a dream as an occurrence.") For Malcolm, there is no question of correlated phenomenon (dream-reports, external stimuli, bodily movements) being unified by the postulation of other entities, a procedure associated with science, but not absent from ordinary conceptualisation. This demand for the direct checkability of claims about dreams generates many idiosyncracies - (a) The concept of dreaming in animals, and children who have not learnt to talk, is either incoherent, or diverges radically from that of dreaming in human adults. Is our concept of dreaming as closely connected with language-possession, that the former <sup>cannot</sup> exist (as distinct from "become manifest") without the latter? Malcolm ought, in consistency, to maintain babies cannot have waking imagery. (b) It becomes impossible to speak of dreams, or parts of dreams, or details of dreams, which one never remembers. Malcolm would deny that one can deduce that there must be some answer to questions about a detail of a dream, from generalisations about the real world. One cannot say "The man in my dream had a hat, which must have had some shape or other, since a hat must necessarily have some shape or other." Malcolm seems right in maintaining that one cannot deduce that the car in one's dream must have had a driver, from one's knowledge of the real world.

But suppose one is convinced that there was something striking about the paintwork of the car in one's dream, though one cannot remember what. Malcolm would have to say that "He dreamed there was something striking about the paintwork" does not imply that there is a true sentence of the form "He dreamed the paintwork was X" (where X is a property other than "being striking") To Malcolm, the crucial thing about a dream-narrative, and the features he has to ascribe to dreams are close to those of narratives. Just as one can refer to a hat, without mentioning its shape, one can dream of a hat, without dreaming of its shape. (c) Pears points out that a person telling a dream might take time to achieve a narrative he accepts. If he corrects an earlier version, the question arises: which account are we to accept? It is hard to see that the answer could be more than a stipulation for Malcolm. (d) Malcolm's verificationist approach makes it difficult to distinguish dreams, seeming memories of events that did not occur and inaccurate memories of events that did occur. "It is unrealistic to suggest that whenever a sleeper makes a sincere memory claim that does not correspond with anything in his waking life, it should be treated as a criterion that he dreamed it." (Pears)

One's first reaction to Malcolm's analysis might be to suggest that he stresses the primary criterion of dreaming to the exclusion of others. It might even seem ironic that he should pose as an interpreter of Wittgenstein - his attempt to pin down the language of dreaming by a single criterion seems at variance with a recognition of the complexity of a language of "family resemblance", which Wittgenstein emphasised. It is important to see that we have not achieved a refutation of Malcolm yet; we have enumerated several discrepancies between Malcolm's account and our notion of dreaming.

But it is inadequate simply to treat his conclusions as a reductio ad absurdum of his method, because of the possibility of our ordinary ways of thought being confused and because, even if they are not and cannot be reconciled with Malcolm's views, of the need to identify the steps in his argument responsible for his counter-intuitive conclusions. A first step should be to examine his use of "criterion", apparently the key concept in his argument. I can find no explicit definition in his book, but various remarks throw light on it. He writes (p25) of the criterion for a man's being awake as the facts which make it "certain beyond question" that he is awake. He speaks (p56) of the criterion for the occurrence of a dream as something that settles the question whether a dream occurred. He says (p55) speaking of the procedure of treating the descriptions people give of their private states as a determination of what these states are: "one cannot then permit a question to be raised as to whether these descriptions are in error or not...We must treat them as the criterion of what the inner occurrences are." Here and elsewhere, he quotes Wittgenstein: "An 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria."

Clearly he believes he is using the term in the same way as Wittgenstein. It would help, therefore, to know how he thinks Wittgenstein uses the term. In his review of the "Investigations" (PRI954), he discusses this point. Let us examine this, bearing in mind that it is the exegesis itself and not its adequacy that interests us.

(a) He remarks "That the natural pain-behaviour and the utterance "It hurts" are each incorrigible, is what makes it possible for each of them to be a criterion of pain" (p83<sup>1</sup>) Here again, we have the idea of criteria as settling questions.

#### Footnotes

1. reference is to the reprint of the article in "Wittgenstein" ed. Pitcher

(b) He elucidates the concept by focusing on its connection with teaching the use of words. Because we do not learn the use of the words "to say such-and-such to oneself" by someone's pointing to a process in the larynx, this cannot be our "criterion" that someone says such-and-such to himself.

(c) He writes that if we have brought to mind "what it is that would show that he grasped your teaching, that he understood the use of the words, then you have elicited the criterion for their use."

(d) Wittgenstein, says Malcolm, contrasts "criterion" with "symptom". He quotes the "Investigations" (§354) that so-and-so is the criterion of x is a matter, not of experience, but of "definition".

(e) But, as we have seen, Malcolm denies that to state the criterion for something is to define it.

(f) The propositions which describe the criterion of someone's being in pain do not logically imply the proposition "He is in pain", for a criterion is satisfied only under certain circumstances. One cannot produce an exhaustive list of the circumstances, which count against the claim that a person exhibiting pain-behaviour is in pain, ("the list is not infinite, but indefinite" - p86)

Malcolm seems right in regarding the conflict between (d) and (e) as merely apparent. The positive statements as to what a criterion is are (a), (b), (c) and (d). Does Malcolm take each of these as sufficient conditions for something's being a criterion? Or as necessary conditions? Or do some of them imply the others? We can assume that Malcolm is not thinking in terms of the second possibility; his exposition consists in successive attempts at elucidation. Furthermore, there is no suggestion that he is speaking of different types of criterion. So, we are left with the view that (a), (b), (c), and (d)



are logically related. Now, on p85, of the review Malcolm says that a symptom of  $x$  might also establish the existence of  $x$  beyond question - but in a different way, for it could not be contradictory to suppose the symptom of  $x$  occurred without  $x$ . If we interpret (a) in this way, it seems to imply (d). Again, (b) follows somewhat trivially from (a), if we assume that one cannot be said to have learnt a concept unless one knows what would settle the question of its applicability. (I interpret "do not" in (b) as meaning "cannot"; for if it means "need not" the implication is valid provided there is only one criterion for the use of the expression). Similarly, if we adopt this concept of learning, (a) might seem to imply (c), if we assume that to elicit what would show that someone knows what would settle a question, is to elicit what would settle the question, a reasonable assumption in the case of teaching the meaning of a word. But we must also assume that the only way that the question whether  $p$  could be settled is by the criterion being satisfied. (As we have seen, Malcolm means by (a) that if the criterion is accepted as satisfied, then it will make no sense to suppose that  $p$  is false.) Thus to specify any circumstances incompatible with not- $p$  is to specify a criterion for  $p$ . We have replaced a conditional by a biconditional (a requirement of any adequate definition).

Are we now ready to formulate a definition covering Malcolm's exegesis of Wittgenstein's use of "criterion"? There remains the difficulty that propositions (a) to (f) speak of the criterion, yet Malcolm repeatedly speaks of a plurality of criteria for things. It would seem then that Malcolm's understanding of the term criterion must be expressed as follows: A criterion for  $p$  is satisfied if and



only if the question whether  $p$  is settled in the affirmative; that is, if one accepts that the criterion is satisfied, it is contradictory to suppose that not- $p$ . As we have seen, the claim that a criterion is satisfied is, on Malcolm's view, defeasible.

With this definition in mind, let us return to our suggestion that Malcolm stresses one criterion of dreaming to the exclusion of others. The phenomena which fit Malcolm's account with difficulty suggest other criteria such as troubled sleep, talking in sleep, and, generally, behaviour paradigmatically associated with waking life, if encountered in a sleeper. Malcolm maintains that such occurrences function as criteria of wakefulness. Perhaps so, under certain circumstances. But the claim that a man is awake because he is walking is defeasible - if he is unaware of his surroundings, if he suddenly starts, looks around and exclaims, "Where am I?", the claim might be rejected. This brings to a head the problem of a conflict of criteria. Malcolm recognizes that criteria might conflict ("Dreaming" p23). How is this to be reconciled with the claim that the satisfaction of the criterion of  $p$  is incompatible with not- $p$ ? On p23, he distinguishes the criterion of behaviour for someone's being asleep from that of testimony. ("Whether an adult person is asleep may be determined by his being or not being able to report, later on, various present happenings in his vicinity") Malcolm's solution is to say that both criteria are applicable but they do not have equal weight (p25). For "the criterion of testimony has no application to animals and human infants". And someone might be unable to report what went on at a previous time through failure of memory. Malcolm concludes that the criterion of testimony is merely supplementary to that of behaviour. The definition offered above fits this supplementary criterion only

if we assume that in cases where the supplementary criterion is overruled, we are dealing with cases where it is not in fact satisfied ("a criterion is satisfied only in certain circumstances").

What are the consequences of this for the view that there are criteria for dreaming other than Malcolm allows? The suggestion is that X, Y, Z...during sleep might be criteria of dreaming, not that the absence of any of them is a criterion of not-dreaming. But, as far as I can see, Malcolm regards non-satisfaction of his criterion as a criterion of not-dreaming. (Consider his remarks on dreams and dream-reports not being logically independent.) If we attempt to introduce extra criteria alongside Malcolm's criterion and this assumption, we will have the possibility of a conflict of criteria. We will have to say that these extra criteria are satisfied only in certain circumstances i.e. when Malcolm's criterion is satisfied. They would thus be redundant. To make room for new criteria we must reject this assumption. Malcolm is probably led to this assumption by a natural unwillingness to leave it open whether there are an indefinite number of dreams we never know about. We have a vicious circle in which his initial step of suggesting only one criterion commits him to an analysis which will not accommodate any more. And the barrier is reinforced by his tendency to regard the phenomena that might be taken as further criteria of sleep, as proof of wakefulness.

This attempt to avoid Malcolm's counter-intuitive conclusions still has affinities with Malcolm's approach. There are, however, more radical solutions which might be proposed, involving a rejection of Malcolm's notion of "criterion". I shall discuss two possible

approaches - (a) Malcolm's treatment of the criteria for X as demarcating the concept of X, it is suggested, does not take account of language and concepts as entities which develop. (Putnam in "Dreaming and Depth Grammar" in "Analytical Philosophy" (1st series) ed. Butler) (b) The concept of "criterion" is rejected as not representing a genuine feature of language. As regards (a), it is helpful to examine the features of Malcolm's analysis which provoke it. Malcolm tries to proscribe such claims as that we can tell from a sleeper's bodily movements that he is having a violent dream, by the thesis that dreams can be said to have occurred only when the sleeper has been sound asleep (Ch.15). He writes (p28) "To say that a sleep-walker, a person in a hypnotic trance and someone having a violent nightmare are 'asleep' is to make a natural extension of the use of that word beyond its primary use;" and "Nor would a man who was tossing about, crying out and groaning in the throes of a nightmare be a good example of a person asleep." This seems wrong; the man would be a good example of a certain type of sleep, and would find a place in a representative selection of examples of sleep. One could not adequately characterize the notion of sleep by one example. He would also be a good example of someone having a nightmare, and therefore of someone having a certain kind of dream. The stipulative nature of Malcolm's thesis is remarkable in view of the accusations he levels against empirical psychologists, who, he says, ~~in~~ using such phenomena as rapid eye-movements as criteria of dreaming are merely making stipulations, and failing to refer to our concept of dreaming. Whereas Dement and Kleitman are, according to Malcolm, altering our concept of dreaming by extending it, Malcolm seems to be unduly restricting it. An analysis which imposes an excessive limitation on the range of phenomena which can be called dreams seems to do more violence to

our concept of dreaming than does the introduction of new criteria. Why is this? Does the concept permit the sett~~ing~~ing up of new criteria in certain cases, without one having to say we are "transforming the concept in such a way that our subsequent discoveries do not pertain to dreaming"? (p82) Malcolm would reject this possibility on the grounds that the new "criteria" would not satisfy conditions (b) and (c) which we noted in discussing his use of "criterion". But to maintain (b) and (c), Malcolm has to show that one cannot be said to have learnt a concept, until one knows what would settle the question of its applicability; furthermore, in the case of a plurality of criteria, he must allow that one cannot be said to have learnt a concept, until one knows all the criteria, all the things that settle the question whether the concept is applicable. Both these premises are questionable, and neither is demonstrated by Malcolm. Rather than argue specifically against them, I shall turn to the second objection that might be argued against Malcolm, a denial that language is criterion-governed in his sense; this should render further discussion of the first objection unnecessary.

Let it be admitted that we know a dog when we see one; but how many of us could state what would settle (in Malcolm's sense) the question whether something is a dog? The task seems of the same order of difficulty as defining a dog. A child repeatedly has dogs pointed out to him, and perhaps other things designated as not dogs; eventually he learns to use the word to the satisfaction of his teachers. One might say that some aspect of the object pointed to is a criterion of dog-hood. (Wittgenstein is similarly vague in "Philosophical Investigations" §354: "there is rain when we have certain sensations of wet and cold, or such-and-such visual impressions"). But if one



is to describe the object, so as to elicit what would settle the question whether it is a dog, one must eliminate this vagueness (cf. "Investigations" §§101-107). Malcolm is right to suppose that we normally tell whether someone possesses the concept "dog", by seeing whether he applies it to and only to dogs. But this gets us no further in the search for what would settle the question whether something is a dog. To say that people agree in the use of the word "dog", is not to say <sup>that</sup> use or could produce criteria of dog-hood.

Malcolm might claim that some concepts are criterion-governed in his sense and among these is the concept of dreaming. Do we know what would settle the question whether someone was dreaming? It is neither necessary nor sufficient that he should awaken with a delusive memory-impression. So, if Malcolm is to support his view, he must either produce another satisfactory criterion, or some argument to show that dreaming must be criterion-governed. The first he does not do; but he does suggest the argument (p60) that if there is no way of settling whether a concept is applicable, then there can be no sense in the idea of its being correctly used. But this, though plausible, as regards the ordinary sense of "settle", is not so as regards Malcolm's sense. One sees something one takes to be a dog; others agree; one is certain it is a dog. This is not to say that one cannot imagine evidence that could come to light to refute this view (eg. if the supposed dog were taken apart and found to be an ingenious arrangement of clock-work. Cf. Wittgenstein §84). Malcolm, as we have seen, admits a related point, that the propositions describing the criterion for p, do not logically imply p, as a criterion is satisfied only under certain circumstances, the list of countervailing circumstances being indefinite. Malcolm's view would



seem to be this: though there may be criteria for p, there need not be criteria for the satisfaction of the criteria for p - an admission that much of our language is not criterion-governed. If we require that questions as to the correct use of a concept can be answered only if the applicability of a concept in a particular case can be settled (in Malcolm's sense) we must conclude that we could never know that someone was using a concept correctly. Malcolm can only consistently demand the existence of first-order criteria, if he is prepared to do the same for second-order criteria. (This will lead to a regress.) Wittgenstein rejects the idea of a private ostensive definition on the grounds that there could then be no distinction between using a word correctly and thinking one was doing so. If one had a rule to determine the correct application of a word, one would need another to determine the correct application of the rule, and so on. But in the case of a public language, the correct use of a word is shown in the practice of following it in particular cases. Wittgenstein's idea can be applied here: one must not think that every identification of an object requires the application of the criteria, for then the identification of the correct application of the criteria would demand further criteria. The regress is vicious owing to one's insistence on the need for criteria. See "Investigations" §201-202, §208, §292, §380. Many other doctrines of Wittgenstein, the account of family resemblance (§65 et. seq.), the attack on the idea of the crystalline structure of language (§89 et. seq) and the idea of agreement in judgement (§242) emphasise the primacy of people agreeing in practice, as against the logical prejudice that language is governed by verbal definitions or formulable rules.

It might be objected: does not my interpretation of Wittgenstein minimise the centrality of the notion of "criterion" in his philosophy? Consider, for example, various passages in which Wittgenstein speaks of criteria:-

- (a) Blue Book pp24-25. "If medical science...defining criteria of angina."
- (b) "Investigations" pp222-223. "Assuming that dreams...are distinct from 'truthfulness' here".
- (c) "Investigations" §353

These, and indeed other passages, might all be taken as talking about the criterion we use in handling a particular concept, as reportive statements about criteria. (a) refers to a particular rule laid down by certain people. (b) works out the consequences of accepting a certain state of affairs as the criterion of dreaming, and there is a suggestion (in my view, questionable) that this is the only one relevant as regards eliciting important information about the dreamer. In (c) it is claimed ~~that~~ "the fact that the false appearance is precisely one of ~~rain~~ is founded on a definition", and clearly this definition is seen as reportive. Now (a) presents no difficulty: a rule is laid down for convenience by people working in a field where ordinary language might not provide adequate terminology. A stipulation for the sake of uniformity gains general acceptance, and assumes the status of a reportive definition. (b) is a matter of delimiting the concept of dreaming, presumably to focus attention on what is deemed important. The way is not barred to the use of other criteria of dreaming, or of the report's agreeing with the dream, if this is thought necessary. As regards (c), I think Wittgenstein would agree with the following: "that certain sensations..."

are taken as criteria of rain" is founded upon definition, but upon ostensive definition, and, therefore, upon agreement in a practice. If a new phenomenon were discovered eg. something that looked like rain but could not be felt, we would be faced with the problem: which of the sensations, if either, do we take as establishing the occurrence of rain? A previous indeterminacy, which had produced no inconvenience before, would have to be rectified. Our answer, given on knowledge of science, might be obvious, but it would still be a decision; our language is not already so definite. Wittgenstein's arguments about rules, tell not against the possibility of criteria, but against this view that there is always a need for them. I think Wittgenstein would reject any attempt to say that (as regards ordinary usage) it is raining if and only if such-and-such conditions are satisfied. But we can always specify criteria for greater precision, to introduce our own usage (§353) or to begin teaching someone a concept. And we can fix on different things as criteria for something at different times (§79). And here, provided we remember the above restrictions, the definitions we have ascribed to Malcolm might well be adequate to Wittgenstein's usage.

Another objection might be: does the notion of a practice suffice, for how do we know agreement in usage will continue, and how could we settle any dispute, if the applicability of a word is not governed by definition? It is sufficient to refer the reader to Wittgenstein's treatment of the problem. In §183 he admits a dispute might arise, but we do generally agree in the use of words (§242); the logical possibility of a breakdown in agreement should not distract us (cf. §466 where a connection is made with the problem

of induction); we do not choose our interpretation of rules (§386), any more than we choose to think (§467) or reason that as fire has burnt us before, it will burn us again (§325). "What has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - forms of life."

The upshot of this excursus into the theory of criteria is that we do not operate with criteria in the way Malcolm envisages. We may find it necessary to stipulate criteria for a particular purpose but this is not to offer an analysis of dreaming. In a very broad sense, Malcolm is right to accuse Dement and Kleitman of altering our concept of dreaming, but because they are fixing criteria, not because they are using the wrong ones. There is no sting in this accusation, as every science changes some of our ordinary concepts to make them precise enough for scientific use. (Compare our notion of water with that of the chemist.) It would be less tendentious to describe Dement and Kleitman as developing or modifying, rather than altering, our concept. The significance of our earlier attempt to improve upon Malcolm's analysis by allowing for the admission of more criteria was that it foreshadowed our conclusion that criteria are essentially stipulative, used on a particular occasion for a particular end.<sup>1</sup> But it is better to avoid explicitly any suggestion that we are dealing with the criteria of dreaming.

Our analysis of dreaming may look a good deal less like the philosopher's ideal of what a conceptual analysis should be. But we need not reject the distinction between evidence being empirically discovered, and its being evidence by definition, provided we remember that it is because the world is as it is, that we have our concept

#### Footnotes

1. Moreover, our position is strengthened if it is not too heavily dependent upon a particular theory about meaning.



of dreaming and "that what today counts as an observed concomitant of a phenomenon will tomorrow be used to define it". (§79) So far, we have given a number of arguments against Malcolm having the form "Our concept of dreaming allows sense to such-and-such a notion; Malcolm's analysis does not ". Let us assemble the main difficulties our analysis must avoid. It must:-

- (a) Allow the possibility of a dream recapitulating a waking experience.
- (b) Make sense of the notion of a recurring dream.
- (c) Elucidate the connection between dreaming and sleeping.
- (d) Show how a dream is ascribed to a particular period of sleep.
- (e) Distinguish between remembering a dream, and having an apparent memory which is not veridical.
- (f) Attach sense to the notion of a dream occurring during some stretch of time. It should not seem that the fact that a person who tells a dream is described as "having dreamed" is a mere accident, nor should the use of the continuous tense.
- (g) Answer the question whether one can have dreams one never remembers.
- (h) Evaluate the status of details of a dream we have forgotten, though we remember the dream as a whole.
- (i) Allow a sleeper's bodily movements to afford evidence that he is dreaming.
- (j) Allow that external stimuli can modify the content of a dream and give some account of the relation between the two.
- (k) Show what kind of memory-impressions are candidates for being memories of dreams.



There is a pitfall which is likely to be encountered here: we allow that a dream might never be remembered, but do we wish to allow that there might be a race of people who dream but never remember their dreams? Similar questions can be raised concerning (a), (b) and (j). Thus we might say that a paradigm of a dream would have the following features - (i) the report of events that never occurred. (ii) it is remembered on waking. (iii) it does not recur. (iv) its content is not influenced by events in the real world at the time of dreaming. If one wants to teach a child the word "dream" by waiting until he spontaneously tells a dream, the example chosen will have to satisfy conditions (i) and (ii). It would help if the example satisfied (iv) as one wants to distinguish dreaming from the confused perception which often accompanies drowsiness. (This is not to say that the two do not overlap, but that there are examples of the one quite different from examples of the other.)

It will be objected that much of what I say assumes what I have not shown, namely that dreaming is a datable experience. The main obstacle to this view was Malcolm's criteriological approach. But to remove an objection to a thesis is not to establish that thesis. Nor is it satisfactory to say, "Our concept of dreaming is of a datable experience; an analysis which does not treat it as such is wrong." It is possible that our ordinary notion is confused. What we must do is, given the phenomena we take as evidence for dreaming, enquire what dreaming must be like, if these phenomena are all evidence of the same thing, dreaming. Malcolm attaches great importance to the question: which of the evidence for dreaming is non-inductive evidence? Certainly, the evidence Malcolm takes as criteria is of

this sort. But what of bodily movements in sleep? A sleeper's bodily movements, and his later telling a dream are two separate things, and it is logically possible that there should be a correlation between them. This does not mean the correlation between a sleeper's bodily movements and his dreaming is contingent, unless we assume that the concept of telling a dream contains the whole of the concept of dreaming. If the correlation between dreaming and bodily movements during sleep is not contingent, then our concept of dreaming, in this respect, is founded on there being a correlation between bodily movements in sleep and the later telling of a dream; were this not so, we would not have the concept of dreaming we do have. But we can use both the telling of a dream, and a sleeper's bodily movements as evidence for dreaming, without any views on what we would do if the correlation broke down.<sup>1</sup> We would have to weigh the fact that we speak of animals dreaming, against the fact that dreaming is object-directed, about something.

Ought we then to avoid talk of inductive and non-inductive evidence? The question can, perhaps, best be answered by reference to Malcolm's discussion of rapid-eye-movements (REM). There was a time when these phenomena were unknown, and in no way part of the concept of dreaming. When it was found that some periods of sleep were marked by these movements of the eye, experiments were devised to see if they were related to dreams. Subjects were awakened during periods of REM, and also when REM were absent. The incidence of dream-recall was high after the former, and low after the latter. To use REM to predict that the sleeper could tell a dream on waking, would be to use REM as inductive for telling a dream, and hence

#### Footnotes.

1. I am speaking here of a general breakdown in the correlation. We already recognize that not everyone who walks, talks, writhes or groans in his sleep later tells a dream.

for dreaming. Thus at the time of these experiments there were no logical ties between dreaming and REM. Has the concept of dreaming changed since? Not for those who have never heard of these experiments. But, as Malcolm complains, psychologists have used REM as evidence for dreaming, in a manner not corrigible by the absence of a dream-report. One can say they have modified the concept of dreaming. But this modification is founded upon observed correlations. As we saw, Wittgenstein recognized this dynamic aspect of language in the "Investigations" (§79). It is clearly possible to treat evidence as contingent and inductive, just as it is possible to treat something as a criterion. But it is the fact that there are correlations that is contingent; it is dangerous to dogmatize about the contingency or otherwise of the relation between these correlates and that for which they are each considered evidence (in this case, "dreaming").

If bodily movements during sleep count as evidence that the sleeper is dreaming, and if his waking avowal counts as evidence that he has dreamed, this can only mean that dreaming is conceived as something <sup>oc</sup>recurring during sleep, before waking. That is if our ordinary tense system can be trusted here: to say that x is y-ing is to say x is y-ing now, and to say x has y-ed is to say x has y-ed in the past. At one point, Malcolm seems <sup>prepared</sup> to accept this. "Our puzzlement over the criterion of dreaming is partly due to the fact that the sentence for which we want a criterion is in the past tense. How can a present occurrence, a person's telling<sup>a</sup> dream, be a criterion for something that happened previously, the dream? Well, why not? If we abandon the assumption that the criterion and the something of

which it is a criterion must be identical, then why cannot a present occurrence be the criterion of a past occurrence?" (p61) But in the next chapter he writes, "The locution that dreams <sup>oc</sup> occur "in" sleep is used in this way: people declare on awakening that various incidents took place (past tense) which did not take place. We then say that these incidents were dreamed (past tense). This is merely how we label the above facts, which implies nothing about the occurrence of dreams in physical time." (p77) He describes the view that dreams occur "in" sleep as due to one's "being carried away by spatial imagery". (I am unclear why he says "spatial", unless he feels the use of "in" is primarily spatial eg. "fish in the sea", and only metaphorically temporal eg. "in the afternoon".) Elsewhere, (p25), he describes this view as an example "of what Wittgenstein calls a 'prejudice' produced by 'grammatical illusions'".

Now we employ the full gamut of tensed usages of the verb "dream". The verb "dream" is not defective. Moreover the variously tensed expressions mean different things. Malcolm is unable to account for the continuous present, except by making it some kind of analogy "with no clear sense" (animals) or a prediction (men). If Malcolm's account is correct it is strange that we do not use a single word meaning "tell a dream" or at least the verb "tell a dream" alone, instead of an idiom which suggests another occurrence distinct from the telling of the dream. It would be interesting, though inconclusive, to investigate the idioms used to describe dreaming in a variety of languages to see how universal is the practice of distinguishing "dreaming" and "telling a dream", and ascribing different tenses to each. But it is possible we use an idiom based



on a false view of dreaming. We need concede no more than this; for it is our ordinary view that dreaming is an occurrence during sleep. To see this we have only to reflect, that if we concluded that someone was dreaming on the basis of his bodily movements during sleep, we would not feel bound to retract this assertion if it were found that he had no dream to tell on waking, and indeed never remembered a dream which he ascribed to that period of sleep.

Concerning dreaming as an experience, we shall have more to say later. What concerns us here is dreaming conceived as a process distinct from bodily movements and the telling of a dream, that is as a process in time, with a beginning and an end - and involving change (not a state or condition). Consider the following argument: bodily movements are logically distinct from dreams; one can always occur without the other. Hence any correlation between the two must be contingent. But this requires that they be observed independently. But we have, in setting up the premise, ensured that dreams cannot be directly observed. The argument seems to show that there can be no evidence for dreaming. (The argument requires that we treat dreaming as independent of waking testimony and prior to it, and here it seems even more conclusive as we have a temporal separation). If it was too facile to speak of dreaming as logically distinct from bodily movements in sleep and waking testimony, how are we then to avoid identifying dreams with bodily movements or waking testimony? I do not see how Malcolm distinguishes dreams from the false memory-impressions we have on waking. He asserts that by stating the criterion for something, we do not state what that something is. But his analogy with a sore foot does not hold, as here we can state what

a sore foot is, whereas Malcolm not only does not say what a dream is, but dismisses the question as senseless. Moreover, the behavioural criteria Malcolm mentions are of someone's having a sore foot, not of something's being a sore foot. It is not obvious that a person's behaviour and condition is not to be identified with his having a sore foot; nor that a foot in a certain physical condition that causes such-and-such behaviour in its owner/<sup>is</sup>not a sore foot.

If dreaming were a specialist concept of the sciences, we might meet the following account: dreaming is an unobservable occurrence contemporaneous with certain bodily movements during sleep and prior to the telling of the dream. Such an approach has its merits, but it is intuitively odd. We are not aware of having made such an inference but have simply learnt the use of the word "dream". Furthermore, "the plain man" would take exception to the phrase "unobservable occurrence". - Does he not dream every night, the might say, yet this argument purports to treat dreaming as something of which we have no direct experience? This remark, involving the idea of dreaming as something experienced and recalled on waking, encapsulates the oddness of treating dreaming as a scientific construct; it would be well to avoid such a radical solution, though it is important in drawing attention to the fact that it is because the world is as it is (there are certain correlations) that we have the concept of dreaming we do.

The argument purporting to show that there is no evidence for dreams may seem familiar; it recalls the arguments that objects cannot exist unperceived, that one cannot know the mind of another, that there

is no justification for claims about the past. We seem to make dreaming unobservable by definition and then learn<sup>t</sup> that it cannot be observed. Unfortunately, if we regard a dream as an experience, it seems that usually at least, it is not recognized as such whilst one is having it. This seems to make dreams, in one sense, unobserved - the status of a dream is ascribed to an experience ex post facto. We have decided that it is necessary that there occur both certain types of bodily movement during sleep, and the phenomenon of telling a dream, and correlations between them, if our concept of dreaming and not something similar is to be applicable. But is it sufficient? If dreaming is conceived, as the working of the imagination during sleep, it seems insufficient. Trivially, if dreaming is something other than a sleeper's bodily movements, or his telling a dream, then its occurrence cannot be logically inferred from them. But this conclusion itself is not trivial. We must enquire whether it could conceivably turn out that dreaming, in our sense, does not occur.

Suppose a drug were discovered that produced a phenomenon resembling telling a dream: when injected with this drug, a person finds he had<sup>s</sup> a memory-impression of events that never occurred. This can be done <sup>either</sup> ~~either~~ when he is awake, or when he is asleep; in the latter case, he immediately awakes and "tells a dream", and is quite satisfied with the view that he dreamed the events he recalls. It is later learnt that this chemical is produced in the body immediately before a sleeper awakes in all and only those cases in which he has a dream to tell on waking. Furthermore, if a substance <sup>which selectively</sup> ~~destroys~~ this chemical is injected into the sleeper, he invariably has no dream to tell. It would be concluded that the drug was closely connected with the phenomenon of dreaming. It would also look as if

the drug caused the sleeper to wake with non-veridical memories. Would we abandon the idea that the sleeper had certain mental experiences, which he recalled on waking? Or would we say that such experience occurred, but that the release of the chemical was necessary to their being remembered? On the latter view, if it were shown that the chemical had no effect on one's ability to remember real events, we would have to assume that it acted only on dream-memory traces. This seems somewhat ad hoc, particularly in view of the fact that the point of regarding dreams as experiences recalled on waking, is to assimilate the remembering to our remembering of events in waking life, and to regard the experience itself as the factor wherein the difference from waking experience lies. We might, therefore, abandon the belief that anything fundamental in dreaming occurs until immediately prior to waking. The sleeper's bodily movements, and external events which modify the content of the later dream-report could be dealt with by allowing them to have some causal influence on the release of the chemical later, and on the subsequent dream telling. It seems possible, therefore, to conceive of experimental results which would suggest a theory of dreaming in which the telling of the dream was causally determined by events immediately prior to waking, and in which reference to events earlier in sleep, played only a minor role (and references to experiences in sleep no role at all).

The realisation of the above possibility would be a vindication of Malcolm in the following sense only: it is because we have loosened the ties between "telling a dream" and dreaming, he would say, that the existence of dreams seems problematic - he is not denying the



existence of dreams. Our use of a disjunction of states of affairs counting as evidence for an experience during sleep leads us to treat the existence of dreaming as a hypothesis corrigible by further scientific advance. To progress beyond this point we need to take account of our conviction that when we tell a dream we are recalling experiences we had in sleep. Here I ought to warn the reader that I do not think it is possible to prove that the above situation could not arise, that much of our concept of dreaming could not be called in question by experimental results. A sympathetic account of Malcolm might take the form of treating his results as an analysis of what would remain of our concept of dreaming after such a discovery, of the invulnerable element in our concept of dreaming.<sup>1</sup>

On p51 of "Dreaming", Malcolm writes that many philosophers "have thought that when one dreams, one reasons, judges, imagines, has sense-impressions, and so on, while asleep...in the same sense that people do or have them when awake<sup>2</sup>...If it is theoretically impossible to verify that someone had images, say, in his sleep, but possible to verify that he dreamed, then a dream cannot be identical with, nor composed of, images experienced during sleep." One of his reasons for asserting this to be a theoretical impossibility is that (p51), "to learn...that a certain event occurred in a dream is not to learn that the event took place while one slept; but just the reverse, namely that the event did not take place at all." But if someone had a dream in which he saw a man felling a tree, even if this implies he did not see a man felling a tree, it does not imply that he did not have the experience of seeing a man felling a tree. Malcolm might say that "He dreamed he saw a man felling a

#### Footnotes

1. This is, of course, to do much less than to give an account of our concept of dreaming as it is now.
2. He does not specify any criterion of sameness of sense, presumably as he intends to show that there is no sense in which one has these experiences in sleep.

tree" implies "He dreamed he had the experience of seeing a man felling a tree". To rebut this, we need to show that there is no ground for supposing that "He dreamed he had the experience of p" implies "He did not have the experience of p". This I hope to show later. Malcolm has other arguments that one cannot have experiences (eg. of images, sense-impressions etc.) while asleep, but I shall not consider these yet; my reason for quoting Malcolm here is to bring into focus the problem about the meaning of the claim that dreaming is an experience. Satisfied he has shown that a dream cannot be composed of thoughts, images etc., he continues, "I was inclined at one time to think of this result as amounting to a proof that dreaming is not a mental activity or a mental phenomenon or a conscious experience. But now I reject that inclination. For one thing, the phrases 'mental activity', 'conscious experience', 'mental phenomenon', are so vague that I should not have known what I was asserting... For another thing, a good many philosophers tend to use these phrases more or less as technical expressions, and they would be inclined to stipulate that dreams are mental phenomena or conscious expressions."

Malcolm's doubts about the precision of terms like "mental phenomenon" and "mental activity" may be justified, although the latter does carry the implication of more than a merely passive state. But ought "conscious experience" to be bracketted with them? To say dreaming is a conscious experience does seem to have definite implications:-

- (a) we attach sense to the notion of a dream occurring in physical time.

- (b) we attach sense to the notion of details of a dream which we have forgotten, though we remember the dream as a whole.
- (c) external stimuli can modify the content of the dream at the time of the stimulus.
- (d) the dream is remembered later.
- (e) in dreams one might have images.
- (f) there are certain values of p for which "He dreamed that p" implies not that p is false, but that p is true. Perhaps, if p is "he was in pain" and dreaming is a kind of experience, one is asserting he had ~~an~~ experience of being in pain, which seems to mean he was in pain.
- (g) one might compare a waking experience to a dream, saying it had dream-like quality.
- (h) when dreaming, one judges, reasons and imagines. (Possibly a defect of the experience-terminology is that it makes dreaming too passive.)
- (i) there is a gradation of intermediate cases between dreaming on the one hand and waking images or visual hallucinations on the other - hypnogogic imagery.

These rather diverse claims can be unified by considering the "logic" of statements about dreams. We have seen that Malcolm ascribes similar logical features to dreams as to narratives. One aspect of this is that one can, he thinks, dream what is senseless or contradictory (the waking report might contain a senseless sentence). But if someone says he dreamed that p, but p is senseless, he has failed to specify what he dreamed. An attempt to describe in more detail what was dreamed would either break down or change over to

something coherent. Maybe I understand the story that Moore dreamed he could not distinguish propositions from tables, but what if he claimed to have dreamed that propositions are tables? We cannot explain what it is for propositions to be identical with tables, and then add that the supposition is senseless. ("Investigations" §500) Possibly statements of the form "He dreamed that p" where p is nonsensical can be understood as something else, say, "He dreamed that 'p' made sense to him"<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps "He dreamed he squared the circle" can be explicated by a fuller description of what he dreamed which does not contain contradictory elements. Some such approach is needed to explain cases where we seem to have to say we can understand "He dreamed that p" without understanding "p".

Once one has limited what one can dream to the logically possible (what one can dream is not anything that can be uttered) one is close to limiting dreaming to what would conceivably be experienced. To avoid entanglement in the controversy over the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge, I shall try to make the transition to the latter claim rather differently. If someone were to say that he dreamed p, where p does not describe anything that could be experienced, we should be puzzled as to why, among other things, he claimed to have dreamed it. The problem would not arise if his claim was that he dreamed he speculated about the meaningfulness of truth of "p"; nor if his claim was simply that he speculated about the meaningfulness or truth of "p". From this it is but a short step to saying that one can only dream what could occur in physical time, that one can only dream what one could also judge, believe, imagine etc. This is all consonant with the claim that dreaming is a species of experiencing but does not imply it. If we are ready to make this assimilation,

#### Footnotes

1. Malcolm would have to allow this sort of move, in his own account, if he is to give sense to "He dreamed he was dreaming". (An assertion sometimes heard) for if we apply "He dreamed that p, only if not-p" this becomes a kind of antinomy. Furthermore, in his discussion of someone dreaming that Westminster Abbey was destroyed by fire, and waking to learn that it had been burnt down during the night (p64) Malcolm justifies the use of "Someone dreamed



the theses listed above fit in with ease. If dreaming is itself a mode of experience, we must add to our claim that one can only dream what one could also experience the phrase "without dreaming". (We can experience various things and there are various types of experience but the content of the experience is not itself sufficient to allocate the experience to the realm of learning. This, I think, is part of the truth in the claim that in dreams one is often deluded or deceived.) Malcolm produces various arguments (Chapter 6) against conceiving dreams as experiences, and against the view that one can judge, presuppose, have images in sleep. (1) A criterion we use to establish someone as asleep is that he does not exhibit signs of awareness. Anything that would show he was having images, judging etc. would go to show he was awake. (2) We could never give a sense to the notion of someone's doing these things in a dream as we could never establish that such expressions were being correctly used. (3) To say someone made a judgement in a dream is to say he dreamed he made a judgement, which is not to say he made a judgement, but to deny it. This last objection begs the question: if we recognize that dreaming is an experience we can admit either the possibility of making a judgement whilst dreaming, without the making of the judgement being part of the dream<sup>1</sup>, or the argument that if dreaming is an experience in time, then the experience of which it is compared<sup>05</sup> must actually have occurred, and these experiences might turn out to include judgements. As regards the first objection, even if Malcolm's

#### Footnotes

1. Malcolm ascribes <sup>considerable</sup> mobility to the word "dream" believing, no doubt, that "in a dream" must always mean "as part of a dream", never "whilst dreaming". As I shall later argue, this would be unexceptionable were it not combined with the view that "He dreamed that p" entails "not-p", for it is only then that one would want to appeal to the possibility of the latter sense of "in a dream."

cont. from p33.

that Westminster Abbey was destroyed by fire", by an appeal to a more detailed account of the dream-narrative.

account of our evidence for someone's being asleep is adequate, the possibility still remains that one could judge something in sleep, without there being any external manifestations at the time. To this Malcolm would oppose the second objection ((2) above). One could only use the waking memory as evidence of judgements in sleep, if one could give sense to the notion of judgements in sleep. If one replied that the sense of "judging" etc. was the same as in waking life, Malcolm might counter with "Investigations" §350. To give sense to "judgement in sleep" we need to be able to say what would count in favour of the applicability of the concept in a given case. And Malcolm would maintain that the waking report could only be evidence for one's having dreamed one made a judgement, which would imply that one did not make a judgement.

I shall maintain that Malcolm's claim that one cannot make a judgement when asleep is stipulative. This can be brought out as follows. On Malcolm's view we allocate events to the realm of dreams by noting that they did not occur. Suppose someone wakes and claims he made a judgement during the night, and suppose that this judgement was given no behavioural manifestations at the time. What evidence could we have that this did not occur? On Malcolm's view that thinking and sleeping cannot occur together there are two possibilities: either he made the judgement when he was awake, or he dreamed he made the judgement. Malcolm takes this view which might rest on a confusion of two theses - that a person's being conscious of the outside world is evidence for his being awake, and that a person's being conscious of anything is evidence for his being awake. The first seems plausible (though provisos will be added

later) but does not give Malcolm his conclusion. The second, however, is a stipulation. For suppose we maintain that the man made a judgement in sleep, and offer as evidence his waking report. Malcolm, to deny that any such process occurred, would either have to say that the waking report was not really evidence, or that the judgement could not have occurred because the person was sleeping. The former line attributes to our memory an unreliability which we do not generally ascribe to it in the other cases eg. of one's own thought. The latter involves a claim, that he was asleep, which we might not be able to make: we may not know the putative time of the judgement, and even if we did, the person's bodily state at the time might have been too ill-defined for us to decide whether he was asleep. In this case, we need some independent means of knowing whether he was asleep. Thus the making of a non-avowed judgement cannot be used criterially to establish that someone is awake. And it is because Malcolm thinks that the making of a judgement is proof that someone is <sup>not</sup> asleep, that he maintains that one cannot make a judgement in sleep. Once this prop is removed, he is left with a mere stipulation.

Let us now examine Malcolm's claim that evidence for someone's being conscious of the outside world counts against the assertion that he is asleep. On p22, Malcolm says that if it is required to find out whether someone was asleep, we look for "things of this sort: that he is recumbent, his eyes are closed, his breathing regular, his body mainly inert and that he does not react to various sounds and movements in his vicinity." To the above (the criterion of behaviour) he adds the criterion of testimony - "whether an adult person is asleep now may be determined by his being or not being able to report, later on, various present happenings in his vicinity." He admits that

"between the two poles "awake" and "asleep" there is much room for qualification. What we do in such cases is to make a qualified assertion that a person is asleep eg. It's a restless sort of sleep; he is tossing about". On p25 Malcolm speaks of the degree to which a person is awake: if someone who had earlier seemed to be asleep were asked about thunder that had occurred during that time, and replied that it was loud, "it would have been determined that he was sufficiently awake to hear that sound...It is as if we first asserted that he is asleep and then added a modifying clause like "but he is moaning", the effect of which is to subtract something from the assertion...A man who is shielding his eyes from the light, standing up or answering a question is in those respects not asleep." Malcolm distinguishes one important ascription of sleep, that of being sound asleep, used to make an unqualified assertion that someone is asleep, that the criteria of inertness and unresponsiveness are fully satisfied. He adds that we also use "He is sound asleep" in a narrower sense to mean that it will be difficult to awaken the person. The two senses of "sound asleep" do not entail each other.

Malcolm concentrates on the distinction between sleep and wakefulness. It is also important to distinguish sleep from the other states such as unconsciousness and death. The mention of breathing among Malcolm's behavioural criteria rules out the last possibility. To mark the distinction from unconsciousness, one needs to include a clause about the ease of waking. One normally tries to awaken someone by making a noise in his vicinity or shaking him. If such manoeuvres, vigorously employed, fail, one concludes he is not asleep, but drugged or stunned. But Malcolm seems to



assume that the less one reacts to stimuli or the more intense such stimuli must be to produce a reaction, the deeper is one's sleep. To say of a sleeper, who hears a rumble of thunder in the night, that he is "sufficiently awake" to hear that sound, rather than "sufficiently sensitive to his environment" begs the question in favour of the view that awareness of the world and depth of sleep vary inversely. Malcolm admits that this might be so in the following passage (p32) concerning someone who does not respond to moderate sounds in his vicinity, but is awakened by some specific sound eg. the whispered words "Time to get up!". He writes, "There is an inclination to think that a person can be awakened in this way only if he is already partly awake, since he appears to be discriminating between sounds...But this inclination is in error: the criteria for his having heard the other sounds - namely, his behaviour and testimony - are not satisfied." Here, unless we adopt the view which Malcolm thinks erroneous, that all the sounds are heard, we find that the relationship between the intensity of stimuli to which one reacts and one's depth of sleep, is more complex than Malcolm elsewhere suggests. The above passage is notable for another tacit acknowledgement of a point which tells against Malcolm's view. He speaks of someone being described as asleep because he does not respond to moderate sounds.

Now Malcolm claims that to call someone "sound asleep" is to say "that the criteria of inertness, unresponsiveness and so forth are satisfied as well as can be". But if someone who seems sound asleep can be awoken by shouting in his ear, or beating him, it is possible to imagine someone who cannot, and ought on this account to be described as even more soundly asleep. Malcolm does produce his

distinction between "sound asleep" meaning "difficult to awaken" and meaning "satisfying the criteria of sleep as well as possible." But as the criteria Malcolm gives include unresponsiveness to stimuli (such as might be used to awaken him) the two meanings overlap. Malcolm is able to write (pp31-32) "It is possible that a person who is not sound asleep in the first sense (eg. he is walking in his sleep) should be sound asleep in the second sense", because he is separating the criterion of inertness from that of unresponsiveness, though both are supposed to be criteria of sleep in the first sense. The criteria of inertness and unresponsiveness must not be too well satisfied, otherwise the person in question is judged not asleep but "out cold" - one cannot assume a law of direct proportion between inertness and unresponsiveness on the one hand and soundness of sleep on the other. Although Malcolm acknowledges this, he does not integrate it into the rest of his theory - most notoriously, when he maintains that people who respond to stimuli eg. by weaving them into a dream, are not fully asleep. But if someone who is definitely asleep can react to an external stimulus by awakening, surely he can do so in a milder way, by having a dream which is modified thereby? It might now appear that a person is asleep if inert and unresponsive to a certain degree, but the case of a person, who, although asleep, is sensitive to some specific sound though not to others, shows that even this view must be stated with circumspection. We cannot say he is sufficiently sensitive to react to the one sound but not to the other, unless we can show some gradation in the sounds such that only the one which awakened him lies beyond a certain limit. How do we ascertain how deeply asleep someone is? Malcolm answers that if many of the criteria are satisfied but not all, we say, "He is asleep,

but...". He seems right here (though I am wary of the word "criterion") but this procedure does not lead directly to a scale of soundness of sleep, because of the many ways in which the states of sleepers can differ. It is also misleading to say that someone is sufficiently awake to react to such-and-such, because it suggests that it is due to his being partly awake that he so reacts - but we have seen that some degree of responsiveness is characteristic of sleep. When we say of someone that he is asleep, but certain typical features of sleep are not present, we do not necessarily wish to imply that he is only marginally an example of someone asleep, nor are we making a quantitative assertion analogous to quoting a distance, nor are we saying he is asleep in some respects but not in others. Malcolm sometimes uses the expression "not fully asleep", rather than "not soundly asleep". I am not sure that we ordinarily use this expression, but clearly it is in line with his treatment of cases where someone manifests some kind of awareness during sleep as irrelevant to the analysis of dreaming, which he associates with the state of being fully asleep. Malcolm needs to show that the concept of sleep can be explicated by reference to a paradigm, that one type of sleep is sufficient to exemplify the concept of sleep, and that cases which diverge from the paradigm are irrelevant to the analysis of sleep and of dreaming.

We have seen that Malcolm has not shown that evidence for someone's being conscious counts against the claim that he is asleep, except in the case where "consciousness of the outside world" is referred to, and the preceding discussion has shown that even here, the situation is very much more complicated than Malcolm realises.

One might wish to say that a sleeper is sensitive to his environment (eg. he can be awoken), but not conscious of his environment. But there will be many cases in which Malcolm could not use this criterially, as the decision whether someone is merely sensitive to his environment, or conscious of it, (eg. someone responding to a specific stimulus) but not to others) will require a priori identification of his state as either sleeping or waking.

Returning to the assertion that a person is conscious of his dreams, a terminological point (and I do not think it is anything more) arises here. In the case of "He dreamed about this bank-account", do we say that the thought actually occurred but was part of his dream, or that he thought whilst dreaming, the thought not being part of the dream? Now, our reason for calling this part of a dream would presumably be its forming part of a lengthier account, containing events known not to have been experienced by the speaker (at the time and place of dreaming). We could conceive of the dream as consisting of veridical and non-veridical parts, or alternatively, that the dream as contemporaneous or interspersed with non-dreaming experiences. The former seems more in accord with usage: we do speak of people dreaming they thought something, without wishing to deny they thought it but merely wishing to date the thought as a substretch of a dream. (On this view, locutions such as "He dreamed he thought..." and "He dreamed he was in pain", far from entailing "He did not think...", or "He was not in pain", entail their negations). The latter, however, seems to have little to recommend it, only deference to Malcolm's view that "He dreamed that p" entails "not-p", would lead us to adopt it. Hence, to say that in a dream, one might judge, think,



reason, be in pain etc. in the same sense as one might in waking life is to say that the evidence for someone's doing these things in a dream has similarities to that for his doing these things in waking life. Thus, he remembers doing these things, and we accept his testimony. When he dreams he is in pain, he uses no criteria to establish he is in pain at the time. Furthermore, one can use the bodily movements of a sleeper as evidence that he is dreaming he is in pain. But there are differences - firstly there must be a reason to speak of dreaming<sup>1</sup>: and secondly, we place greater weight on the testimony of the dream-teller than on that of one purporting to relate waking experiences. If someone said he dreamed that he thought grass was blue, we would be less likely to suspect him of lying than if he said he used to think that grass was blue.

Many of Malcolm's difficulties arise from his insistence that before we can assert "He dreamed that p" we must first discover that "not-p". It would be well to investigate how we do allocate experiences to the category of dreams. Suppose someone wakes in the morning and seems to remember locking the back-door on the previous night. It transpires that the back-door is not locked. In what circumstances would we say he dreamed he locked the back-door? Firstly, there must be evidence that the door is unlocked because he did not lock it. But given that, we still would not automatically conclude he dreamed he locked the door. There might be circumstantial details which would incline us to the contrary:- (a) On reflection, he might feel he only remembers locking the door on some occasion, not specifically on the previous night. Perhaps he is in the habit of locking the door under broadly similar circumstances every night, and simply

#### Footnotes

1. If someone manifested pain-behaviour in sleep, we would be more likely to say he was dreaming he was in pain if there were no obvious physical cause for pain. If someone claims to have made a judgement in the night one wants to know whether he was asleep at the time before one says he dreamed it.

remembers the usual pattern of events. In the extreme case, all his "memory" might amount to would be a conviction that he must have locked the door as he habitually does. (b) On reflection, he might conclude ~~the~~ only remembers events normally associated with locking the door. Common cases would be his deciding to lock the door, or going in the direction of the door. (c) There may be evidence that he was in no way fit to know what he was doing the night before. Possibly, he attempted to lock the door, but failed without realising it. One might say he really remembers trying to lock the door. But he mistook an unsuccessful attempt for a successful one; so we must mention a false judgement. Clearly, evidence from outside observers would be needed to distinguish this from the following:- (d) His memory of the previous night might be unreliable, say, if he is under the influence of a drug which impairs the memory - if so, one ought to wait until he is not.

What conclusions may we draw from the above? Firstly, we must ascertain exactly what seems to be remembered, together with its alleged time. Secondly, we must distinguish what he thought happened, from what did happen. For if there is evidence that at the time of the alleged event, he thought that what he later seems to remember happening, was happening, then there is prima facie evidence that he did not dream it later. Thirdly, if someone claims to remember something that did not occur, then evidence that his memory is unreliable counts against the claim that he dreamed it. This tells against Malcolm's tendency to assimilate all cases of unveridical memory-impressions to dream-reports. Perhaps Malcolm is thinking of "Investigations" p222, "The question whether...truthfulness here." But Wittgenstein is saying that the reliability of one's memory in

general is not normally called in question to impugn the accuracy of a dream-report, not that it is irrelevant to deciding whether a certain memory-report is a dream-report. Wittgenstein also seems to be suggesting that there is no notion of "forgetting" or "errors of memory" applicable to dreams; this is very dubious as I hope to show later.

Now let us consider what sort of facts might encourage us to say that the person did dream that he locked the door. (a) If his memory of locking the door formed part of a more general memory of doing things both before and after locking the door, which he has definite evidence he did not do, and particularly if this lengthier account ~~was~~ is any way surrealistic. The notion of memory-impression forming part of a series of memory-impressions which together constitute a whole, raises the problem: why regard the memory of locking the door as connected with the rest. It is probably enough for it to be remembered as part of the whole; certainly if the content of the memory-impressions are related. (b) We might say he dreamed he locked the door if his memory of locking it is somehow "off-colour" eg. say, if he remembers locking it with the wrong key. In many cases there might be a difficulty in speaking of his locking the back-door. If the remembered appearance of the door were different from its actual appearance, do we say he did not really lock that door, <sup>or</sup> ~~he~~ dreamed he locked that door, but it seemed different in his dream? I think we normally take the dreamer's account as the last word, and if this is confused as regards criteria of identity this only confirms us in the belief that he dreamed it. All we have attempted to do is to examine the sort of thing we treat as evidence that a person dreamed. They are not criterial in Malcolm's sense, nor do they always provide us with a probabilistic judgement as to whether

someone was dreaming. For if someone awoke with a definite but false impression that he locked the back-door, his mental condition being normal on waking and the night before, and if he had no memories of other events which he connected with locking the door, and there were nothing surrealistic or "off-colour" about his memory-impression, then the above discussion furnishes no guidance as to whether he dreamed. It could only lead us to reserve our judgement, and in such a case, I submit that is just what we would do. An objection that might be used against the above account is that with sophisticated speakers, there is no process of inference - they have learnt the word "dream" and apply it directly on waking. This may usually be the case but one can conceive of situations where one is in doubt as to whether one dreamed something, or whether it actually happened. (There need be nothing unlikely in the events one dreamed in a dream-report.) This is common when the dream is not remembered until well after waking. I am inclined to agree with Malcolm that statements to the effect that one dreamed are basically inferential.

Suppose the example had been that the person awoke, seeming to remember going through the theorem of Pythagoras in his head during the night. Here there are these alternatives:- (a) He was awake and did so. (b) He was asleep and did so in a dream. (c) He falsely remembers having done so. For him to accept (b) he would need the following kind of evidence :- the memory ought to be part of a more extensive memory-impression of a series of events, <sup>which,</sup> taken as a whole, could not have happened, or it should be "off-colour" as regards, say, the mental state in which he remembers doing it. It would help to eliminate (c), if the person were heard talking in



his sleep about the theorem, though we do not call in question a person's memory of private events without good reason. Normally the main candidates would be (a) and (b)<sup>1</sup>. But the sort of evidence inclining us to the dream-hypothesis is evidence not for the event's never having occurred, but evidence associating it with events that did not occur, or evidence that the event did not occur in waking life eg. the man's not being in the habit of rehearsing geometrical theorems. And this does not support the view that a necessary condition of "He dreamed that p" is "not-p".

At this point we might take stock of our position: the way we speak of dreams, and the way we decide when a dream has occurred, presuppose dreams to be experiences in time, and an attempt has been made to bring out the implications of this. As I do not think it possible to prove that there is an event, the dream, prior to the waking report, then a fortiori I do not think it possible to prove that there is an experience, the dream, prior to the waking report. But at least it seems not in conflict with what we know from observation. Earlier, we noted various conditions an acceptable account of dreaming must satisfy. Let us see how far we can meet these conditions.

Firstly, sense should be given to the notion of a dream recapitulating a waking experience. Under what circumstances would we say this had occurred. Suppose someone said, "You remember the time we had that car-crash?". Well, I dreamed about it in perfect detail last night." It might be objected: how do you distinguish your present memory of the supposed dream from that of the event it is supposed to recapitulate? Now, often, an exact recapitulation

#### Footnotes

1. Though the intermediate state of falling asleep complicates matters. This should not worry us as we have argued that thinking and dreaming are thinks are not antithetical.

would not be claimed but only a close resemblance. But even here, some substretch of the dream might be perfectly recapitulatory. If the subject awoke momentarily thinking he had just been in a car-crash, and showing relief on discovering he was lying in bed, then we would accept his claim, however exact he claimed the recapitulation to be. Similarly, if in his dream he had the feeling that it had all happened before. This helps us deal with the next condition, that we must allow the possibility of recurring dreams. For if the subject repeatedly awakens claiming to have had the same dream each time, the memory being especially vivid, and the realisation of where he is producing an emotional shock, we would again accept his claim, even if it was that each dream was an exact recapitulation of the last.

Thirdly our account must show how a particular dream is ascribed to a particular period of sleep. A defect of Malcolm's analysis is his failure to account for the relationship between dreams and sleep. He writes in the following vein (p55). "If after waking from sleep a child tells us...", and (p66), "When (the <sup>s</sup>leeper) says 'I dreamed so-and-so', he implies, first, that it seemed to him on waking, as if...". One is tempted to ask, "How long after sleeping - 5 minutes, 5 hours, 5 days?" The importance of this question resides in two difficulties. Firstly Malcolm makes a reference to sleeping. He does not say, "If after eating a child tells us etc.". Yet every recounting of a dream must follow a meal by some period of time. Malcolm ascribes the dream to the sleeping, but on what grounds? Secondly, we must ascribe dreams to particular periods of sleep, not merely to "sleep" in general. Malcolm does not regard dreaming as distinct from telling a dream as a datable occurrence. This causes

some obscurity about the point of assigning dreaming to sleep, but more specifically rules out the following approach, open to anyone who treats dreaming as datable: in waking life, we can date the occurrence of thoughts by reference to public phenomena, but not so (usually) with parts of dreams. If we "remember" something that never was, we would not regard this as a dream-memory; if we could account for it by some delusive experience during consciousness. Hence it is natural to assign dreams to times when we are not conscious of the outside world.

As regards the question why a particular dream is ascribed to a particular period of sleep, Malcolm could say that at least the telling of the dream is datable, and we could assign the dream to a period of sleep previous to the telling, perhaps the previous one. But is a stipulation what we require here? Might we just as well ascribe the dream to the penultimate period of sleep before recalling the dream? There would, then, be no sense in such questions as, "Did I dream that last night, or was it the night before, and I simply have not remembered it until today?" Malcolm's account could be applied with little change, to people who never slept, but sometimes seemed to remember things that never actually occurred. This makes the connection between sleeping and dreaming too slight. Malcolm might be able to defend himself against the charge of making the relation between sleep and dreaming merely contingent, say a causal link, by saying that the initial teaching situation requires the child to tell his dreams soon after waking - only when he has mastered the concept, could the child proceed to recognize that one might not recall a dream till well after one's last sleep (and the situation cannot

occur too often if our concept of dreaming is to remain unchanged). But this still leaves the connection between sleep and dreams unclear. Nor, on Malcolm's account, does it seem that we could significantly alter the concept, if we abandon the conceptual connection between sleep and dreams.

Our claim that dreaming is an occurrence during sleep makes the connection between dreaming and sleep explicit. But how do we assign a dream to a particular period of sleep? Normally, if one wakes with a vivid impression of having dreamed, or if one takes time to realize it was a dream, we assume it was during the sleep from which one has just awoken that one had the dream. We place great weight on the "feeling of having just dreamed"; this constitutes a family of cases involving beliefs and emotional states, and their dispersion soon after waking, and the vividness of the memory. If one remembers a dream only well after one's last sleep, we tend to assume, *ceteris paribus*, that the dream occurred in that sleep. This is not a stipulation, but a hypothesis based on a certain amount of evidence - it is known that dreams are rapidly forgotten after waking<sup>1</sup>, if they are not recorded immediately, or at least mentally rehearsed on waking. If a dream has not already been recalled, the chances that a dream will be remembered diminish with lapse of time. The possibility that one might dream and not recall it till after one has awoken, slept again, and reawoken cannot be ruled out. If I suddenly remember a certain dream for the first time and tell it to a friend, who tells me that it squares with what I uttered when talking in my sleep, not on the previous night, but on the night

#### Footnotes

1. To avoid begging the question, we might say that incidence of dream recall falls with lapse of time after sleep.



before that, we might consider such a hypothesis reasonable. The allocation of a dream to a period of sleep is a question of fact, remaining after we learn the time when the dream is first remembered.

The requirements that a distinction be drawn between telling a dream and reporting an event which never occurred, through a trick of the memory, and that sense be given to the notion of a dream occurring in physical time have already been considered. There remains the question of the duration of dreams as distinct from their location. Malcolm brings out the difficulties in this notion partly by citing the conflicting views that have been held on the matter (footnote to p79). He feels this supports his view that the hypothesis that dreams have duration is nonsensical. Do we have any reason to choose between hypotheses such as that dreams are instantaneous, that they last as long as the events in the dream would if they occurred in waking life, and that they fill the whole of the relevant period of sleep? Consider this puzzle case. A number of people are together and each notes the time, say three o'clock. One of them, so he thinks, leaves the room and carries out various tasks which seem to take an hour, then returns. Having taken up his previous position he notices the clock stands at one minute past three. Furthermore, his friends do not remember his leaving the room at all, the tasks he claims to have done have not been done, and he was talking convivially up till three o'clock. How would the man explain this experience to himself? Perhaps he had dozed off and dreamed: if during the crucial sixty seconds, his friends noticed his eyes closed and his exhibiting the usual signs of sleep, it would be assumed he had a dream - which,

if we ascribe a duration to it, could not have lasted more than sixty seconds. Suppose this is not the case. Perhaps, he would consider the possibility of his memory having suddenly played him false; or of his having had a delusive experience, in a period of time much less than the experience itself seemed to last: or of his having dreamed, though the usual evidence for his being asleep was not present. The difference between the last two possibilities might be merely terminological, but the first is distinct. It is not a concession to Malcolm to admit there might be cases where we have no way of choosing between a dream and a trick of memory. The above case is intended to demonstrate that a distinction can be drawn between the time in which a dream occurs, and the time which what is experienced therein, is experienced as taking, and furthermore, that the possibility of the actual and subjective durations not corresponding, is not bound up with the ~~no~~<sup>no</sup>tion of sleep.

We have argued that in some cases it is possible to correlate events in a dream with events in the outside world. So, it is not clear that the cases of dreams differs other than in degree from that of private thoughts - very often we do not time our thoughts, nor note their contemporaneity with events in the outside world. It is not contingent that we are unable to time most dreams (if the majority of dreams were correlated with events in the real world - eg. the ringing of a bell influencing the content of a dream - our concept of a dream would be different, a kind of confused perception of the real world) but it is contingent that we are unable to time a particular dream, which is all we need to make out the case for dreaming as having duration.

The two notions of duration we have ascribed to dreams are still rather vague. Firstly, such phrases as "how long the events which were dreamed would last if they occurred in waking life" and "the time which the events of the dream are experienced as taking" are not self-evidently equivalent. Consider a man who dreams he walks from Oxford Circus to Marble Arch, takes note of his surroundings on the way, and notes the times of departure and arrival. It might be that these would be in no way abnormal if they occurred in waking life. But this need not be the case. He might dream that he completes the journey in a very short time; or there might be a hiatus in his experience - one instant, he is at Bond Street, the next at Marble Arch; or his watch might register a time different from what it seemed. In his dream, he might greet such abnormalities with surprise, or take them as a matter of course. Enough has been said to show that there are various temporal notions concerning the content of the dream, which are to be contrasted with that of the duration of the dream in physical time. What is this latter notion? Developing the suggestion of Pears, we might wish to define it as the time between the last point at which no memory of the dream could be elicited, and the first point at which a full account could be elicited. But, it will be said, one could have no evidence for the relevant subjunctive hypotheticals - one cannot work on the same dream twice and see what would happen if (contrary to the last time) one did or did not awaken someone at a particular time. Now the possibility of correlating the contents of a dream with external events and the sleeper's bodily movements (including talking in sleep) allows us in certain cases to estimate the time at which portions of a dream

are dreamed; this gives us a notion of the beginning and end of a dream. Secondly, the phenomenon of REM (Incidence of dream-recall high or low after REM or non-REM awakenings) is evidence that there are beginnings and ends of dreams in the sense of the definition based on Pears' suggestions. Our assumptions about memory and the relation of inner mental life suggest that these two notions of duration should correspond. I do not think we can go beyond this at present. Malcolm is right to suggest that the assignment of definite durations to dreams plays little part in our ordinary dealings with dreams, which is not to say our concept is not of something with duration, still less that it leaves no room for the idea of the duration of a dream. Scientific evidence will be needed to give further content to the concept of the duration of a dream. The definition implied by Pears seems to demand some way of bringing about the recurrence of a dream, or of predetermining<sup>1</sup> the content of a dream. Possibly, hypnosis will furnish a method.

The ways in which we have tried to characterize the notion of the duration of a dream lead naturally to a question about the ordering of events in a dream: given that we can speak of the time at which one dreams a certain part of the dream, is the order in which we dream the events of a dream in physical time the same as the order in the dream-narrative? Or would it be possible for someone to dream he got out of bed, got dressed, went out and caught a bus, and yet it be discovered that he dreamed he caught a bus, before he went out etc. If we took as our evidence for the order in physical time, his talking in his sleep, it is possible he could utter, "Oh,

#### Footnotes

1. This might mean either bringing it about that someone has a dream at a certain time by some previous operation, or being able to predict from his state a certain time that he will later have a dream with a certain content.



there's the bus", "I must be off", "Where's my tie?", and "The alarm clock's too loud", in that order. Unless we were able to produce an account of the dream which somehow reconciled the two orders (say by eliciting further recollections of the dream), then if we adhered to the view that he had experiences corresponding to his utterances and contemporaneous with them, we would be presented with a case where the experience differed from what was remembered in respect of the order of the constituent events. There would be various possible reactions to this - abandoning the view that that dream was datable in the way we thought, abandoning the evidence of talking in one's sleep or assuming his memory played him false. The first two decisions seem gratuitously severe - unless the phenomenon became common - for many other questions besides the ordering of events in a dream would be affected by their adoption. I think we would say that he had simply misremembered his dream (perhaps he was unconsciously rationalising a confused series of events into a coherent story), Or possibly, that there had been more to the dream than he remembers, such as his thinking over the events in a different order afterwards. This puzzle case is important as it strikingly reveals that the notion of dreams as datable has content; in conjunction with our ordinary reliance upon memory the notion leads us to expect certain phenomena, such as this puzzle-case not to occur.

The above discussion has pointed up some of the other requirements our analysis of dreaming must meet. We have used the notions of misremembering a dream. This leads us to the ideas of totally forgetting a dream, and of revising one's account of a dream. If we assume dreams take a finite time, the possibility of our having an infinite number of dreams which we never remember is ruled out. Moreover, one's

memories of dreams must, in general, be correct; otherwise it would be problematic whether we should speak of memory here. Malcolm would say that one can have no evidence for the content of a dream, other than the waking recollection. (If people's reports of their dreams on a given night usually agreed with those of others, we might be inclined to say that those who gave a different report had inaccurately remembered their dreams. This is not so, and our concept of dreaming would be different if it was.) However, we use "talking in one's sleep" as evidence for the content of a dream, and hence there is a possibility of the two types of evidence conflicting. The above puzzle-case shows that we would not automatically legislate in favour of the waking report. It would be of prime importance to a psychoanalyst if a sleeper were heard to talk in his sleep, uttering words of an erotic nature, but all references to them being suppressed in the waking report. I know of <sup>no</sup> such ~~a~~ case in psychoanalytic literature, but this is probably because psychoanalysts are not in the habit of observing their patients sleeping, not because it would find no interpretation in psychoanalytic theory. (Wittgenstein seems to overlook this possibility - "Investigations" p222)

Pears makes the point that we are not always immediately able to produce a dream-report which seems right, the uncertainty not being due to our being unable to find the right words to describe a fully-fledged memory-impression. Malcolm might say that, once one has arrived at a final account, there is no sense in saying that it may still be wrong. But how is one to identify the final account? If by "final" we mean temporally the last it seems contingent what is the final account (perhaps the person does after making it). If by

"final" we mean "definitive", what way can Malcolm offer, of identifying such an account? Malcolm's assertion that if the dreamer altered his account too often, he would not be telling a dream, is unsupported by any evidence or argument. Possibly, it is a confusion with the plausible thesis that if the dreamer altered his account too often we should cease to place any reliance on his account of that dream. On Malcolm's account, if we prefer the later version to the former, this can be no more than a stipulation. It seems to me that Malcolm ought, in consistency, to say that if someone slightly alters his account of a dream, he is really telling two separate dreams<sup>1</sup> rather than making successive attempts to recount the same dream. But if the person is trying to remember something he experienced, we can say: when he gives his second account he has the benefit of knowing his earlier account and correcting it in the light of further recollections.

I shall have more to say on the idea of "forgetting" as applied to dreams later. The requirements that we must allow the sleeper's bodily movements to afford evidence that he is dreaming, and that external stimuli can modify the content of a dream have already been discussed, and have played a basic role in our analysis. We raised the question: what is the relation between something that modified the content of a dream and what one dreams? If a bell rings when one is asleep, and because of this one dreams of a bell ringing, can one say one has heard the bell? There are difficulties:- (a) the bell is not "heard" against a background of veridical sense-experiences.

#### Footnotes

1. For Malcolm's own account, there is nothing to which the two recollections correspond or fail to correspond, and have nothing which we can regard as the same dream in each case.

(b) it need not be "heard" as it really sounds (an alarm-clock might be heard as church-bells) or perhaps not even as ringing. (c) one cannot rationally resolve to "hear" the bell, and listen more intently next time one dreams. (d) There seems to be a certain arbitrariness as to whether one "hears" the bell in a certain case - one does not seem able to specify conditions about normal observers, "hearing" the bell when dreaming if suitably placed. (e) the ringing of the bell causes one to dream of a bell. Even if it is of the bell in one's room that one dreams, can one set up criteria of identity from the real world to dreams to the extent of saying one "heard" the bell. I do not know whether such considerations are sufficient to make the <sup>above</sup>use of "hear" inappropriate, but it certainly seems safer to rest content with a purely causal idiom.

Finally there is the question of what kind of memory-impressions are relevant in speaking of dreams. We have assumed, and Malcolm seems to assume (p55, p56) that memories of dreams are memory-impressions of events in which the dreamer participated or which he witnessed. Can we rule out the possibility of someone dreaming p, where p involves no reference to the person who dreamed, say that the Battle of Hastings was fought in 1067 simpliciter? If someone awoke with the conviction that the Battle of Hastings was fought in 1067, and this were taken as evidence that he dreamed it, we might seek a justification of the word "awoke". It could be the case that he was known not to have believed this before going to bed, his sleep seeming to coincide with the genesis of his new belief. To what extent words we associate this new belief with his sleeping - we might conceivably postulate a causal connection, but would we say he dreamed? For it is not clear we ought to speak of memory here;



the person believes the Battle was fought in 1067, but there may be nothing he seems to remember as a foundation for his belief. If we say simply that he is attempting to remember a fact, and getting it wrong, this takes it out of the category of dreams. Now dreams are not normally marked by a persisting belief in the contents of the dream after one has awoken. If the person simply claims to have dreamed the Battle was fought in 1067, we would press for a justification of the word "dream" as against "believed during the night". If there were no experience which he seemed to remember such as being present at the Battle or being told it was fought in 1067, the use of the word "dream" would seem to hang in the air. As we have seen, Malcolm assumes this, but it is not clear that he is being consistent. On his analysis it is obscure why we should draw a distinction here: it seems a brute fact that only memory-impressions of experiences are eligible to be dream-memories. But if we claim that to remember a dream is to remember an experience, the impression of arbitrariness is absent.

Our analysis of dreaming seems consonant with our ordinary assumptions about the phenomenon, assumptions having substantive content, but unlikely to be refuted on a further scientific advance. It is worth noting that our earlier analysis avoids Malcolm's private-language arguments (p54). We have nowhere implied that one learns the concept of dreaming from one's <sup>own</sup> case. Our account of how one learns the concept of dreaming would involve teaching by others just as Malcolm's does. This idea of a child waking and seeming to remember events that never happened would play a crucial role, but we would also attach importance to the part played by bodily movements

(including talking in sleep): there would be a concept of teaching the child how to apply the present tense "is dreaming" to another person. Our analysis then takes the form of an enquiry what dreaming must be like, if such phenomena can each constitute evidence of its occurrence. There is a somewhat Kantian flavour to this procedure, though the analogy should not be pressed too far as Kant enquires what experience in general must be like if it is to be intelligible, whereas we are asking what a particular phenomenon is like if it can be given a unitary analysis in terms of the disjoint types of evidence for its occurrence. The concept, on our analysis, has some degree of vulnerability to further experience; this is quite foreign to a truly Kantian argument.

Our claim that we use "talking in sleep" as evidence that a person is dreaming at the time is important; and, at the risk of some repetition, it would be well to get its nature clear in order to forestall another Malcolmian objection to our thesis. We have said that it is a contingent fact that there is some (but not a complete) correlation between talking in sleep, and the later reporting of a dream. As we do not regard our inference that someone is dreaming because he is talking in his sleep as shaken if he awakes with no dream to tell, the connection between talking in sleep and dreaming must be more than merely empirical. It cannot therefore be objected that to use talking in sleep as evidence for dreaming, we need to establish that the sleeper means what he says. We do not need to establish anything further; the inference from a person's talking in his sleep to his dreaming is immediate<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, to use a person's

#### Footnotes

1. For this reason, I make no apology for bracketting "talking in sleep" with "bodily movements in sleep".

talking in his sleep as evidence for the content of his dream, we need only establish that he knows the meaning of the words he uses, which can be done on the basis of his waking behaviour. I do not have to establish that a person is awake, to say that he knows the meaning of a word. Malcolm's arguments that one cannot mean anything in sleep, becomes relevant later when we discuss whether a person can make judgements in sleep, but I would oppose to this, the same argument as to the claim that one cannot make a judgement in sleep: that it collapses into a stipulation as a non-avowed judgement cannot be used criterially to establish that someone is awake.

What we have done so far may be described as extracting the necessary features of dreaming without which it would not be what it is. It is not within our scope to investigate the many purely empirical features of dreaming falling within the province of the empirical psychologist. But there are certain borderline topics hinted at by our reservations about the application of the criterion/symptom distinction, where it is not clear just what is a conceptual truth and what is not. On occasion we have been obliged to say that whereas some dreams might be x, it is a conceptual truth that not all dreams are x. The use of bodily movements in sleep as evidence for dreaming gives a sense to the idea of someone having a dream which he never subsequently remembers. But obviously, if "dream" were never subsequently remembered, the concepts of "dreaming" would be quite different. There are further questions like this, where it is uncertain at what point to leave the matter to the empirical psychologist. My justification for dealing with them, <sup>is</sup> firstly,

completeness, and secondly that a discussion of some of these topics is a necessary preliminary to a discussion of dreaming as a basis for philosophical scepticism. The treatment of dream-scepticism itself needs no apology, as, besides its intrinsic interest, it was historically the source of the philosophers' concern with dreaming. Furthermore, it is claimed by Malcolm that the received view of dreaming furnishes no defence against dream-scepticism, whereas his analysis does.

The questions I shall discuss are of the form, "might a dream be x?" or "might y count as a dream?".

- (a) Must there always be an unveridical element in dreams? Given that someone dreamed he had a certain experience, must it always be true of the experience, under some description, that he did not have it? Might someone asleep at the wheel, dream he is driving along a motorway, when he is doing just that?
- (b) If dreams are characterized by their unveridicality, can this be expressed adequately in terms of their failure to cohere with waking life? And if this is so, might it be possible for them to cohere to each other? And could this force us to recognize a dream-world with as much claim to reality as our waking life?
- (c) Is it possible that dreams could constitute an avenue of knowledge, say, precognitive knowledge, distinct from ordinary sense-perception? To what extent would such a possibility be in conflict with the claim that dreams are characterized by their unveridicality.



- (d) Must dreams always be dream-like or surrealistic, as J.L. Austin seems to think (*Sense and Sensibilia* p133), or might a dream follow on from the events of the previous day, without failing to cohere with them, and without any qualitative difference from waking life?
- (e) How brief and alternated can a dream be? Could someone dream he struck a match, simpliciter?

The above questions are loosely formulated, and it will be our task to clarify them further. Turning to question (a), we are faced with the problem: if we assert that someone dreamed that p, and yet p was the case, in order to justify using the word "dream" we must somehow disconnect his experience of p from the state of affairs expressed by "p". If it is asserted that someone actually saw Westminster Abbey on fire, it cannot then be added that the experience was a dream - any such addition would be a correction of his earlier statement. In this sense, dreams must necessarily be unveridical, though they might "cohere" with waking experience. Malcolm uses the example of some one dreaming that he witnesses the burning of Westminster Abbey, and waking to learn that the Abbey had been burnt down in the night. But in Malcolm's example (p68) the dreamer is miles away from the event, and could not possibly have witnessed it. Surely, it might be said, what one can dream at/<sup>one</sup>time and place, one could dream at another. Could one dream that Westminster Abbey was on fire, when on the spot and in a position to observe it, and it actually be on fire at the time? A possible reply is that one could be "on the spot", but not "in a position to observe it" - one would have to be asleep. This would leave us with a residue of unveridicality,

for an experience to be called a dream, one needs reason to believe that it was of something that did not occur, or that could not have been witnessed by the person using his ordinary sensory faculties. It must always be possible to drive a wedge between the experience and the event. There is still a difficulty which may be brought out as follows: we do not close our ears when we are asleep. It is not inconceivable that someone would sleep with his eyes open? If so, then it might be possible for someone to be asleep with his eyes open and dream that Westminster Abbey was burning down, and do this while Westminster Abbey actually was burning down, and while he was so placed that, had he been awake, he would have witnessed it. This possibility seems required by our theory, yet it is not clear what evidence could count for its being the case in a particular instance. Now, of course, to recognize that someone is asleep with his eyes open, we would need reason to think that he is not conscious of the outside world, in particular, that he is not seeing the outside world. (There would be no difficulty in the case of a blind man). But his later apparent memory of seeing the fire would tell heavily against this. To insist that he dreamed it, we would need very strong evidence that he could not see the fire - and, so far as I can see, such evidence would have to be of an empirical, causal nature. There could be empirical evidence that someone in a certain bodily state cannot see, even if his eyes are open (our knowledge of blindness shows this is so) which we would not allow to be overthrown by one apparent counter-example.

The above discussion provides the material for answering (c). For an experience to be called a dream, there must be reason to think

that the experience was of something that could not have been witnessed by the person with his ordinary sensory faculties. It is conceivable that someone could have dreams the content of which had an uncanny correspondence with events in the real world, which he could not possibly have witnessed. It seems possible that this could happen so frequently that he should come to rely on them as giving information. The important points of our analysis are, firstly, that in order to establish the experience as a dream, it must be shown that he could not have had the experience by the normal deliverances of the senses, and secondly, that it is by means of the sensory equipment of human beings that one could check the "veracity" of the dream. The residue of unveridicality would reside in the new avenue of knowledge being only contingently established as such. The dreamer would not be thought of as having had an experience which was <sup>somehow</sup> correlated with them.

Question (b) suggests another way in which dreams might come to be seen as in some way veridical. We have distinguished a "real" element in a dream, namely that the dreamer has a datable experience in sleep and also an "unreal" element, in that the experience is not of the real world. We might refer to these as claims about the reality of the dream and the dream-world respectively. The possibility we are about to consider is that of ascribing a different ontological status to the content of the dream. There are primitive tribes who accord ~~ta~~ reality to dreams in a way quite foreign to Western Culture. A man is held responsible for what he dreams he does, and is rewarded and punished, insofar as he makes the content of his dreams public. Possibly, this is just to attach a greater significance to the dream than does the ordinary Western man, a procedure which finds an echo

in the practice of psychoanalysts. Possibly the question of the reality of the dream-world is a question of the importance attached to it. Yet a case can be developed in which the question of the reality of the dream-world has more substantive content, although in a way involving, in a crucial sense, the notion of importance. Quinton does so in "Philosophy" (1962) p141 et.seq. to which the reader is referred.

The case Quinton describes seems to establish his point adequately and I shall not reproduce it. A way of describing the state of affairs he envisages, which he does not consider but which has some intuitive appeal to describe the lakeside world as a dream, from the point of view of our world, and our world as a dream, from the point of view of the lakeside world. The ontological status of one would be determined by the ontological status we ascribe to the other. This would still accommodate Quinton's point that the seriousness of the consequences of one's actions and so on, determines the reality which we accord to the experiences. For events in the lakeside world would have consequences for later experience in that world, but very much less important consequences for the other. It was impossible to eliminate connections between the two worlds, for it was found that falling asleep in one world resulted in one's awakening in the other. But there would be a whole range of events in one world which would not have serious consequences in the other. The point of using the mode of expression suggested above would be to retain the notion of a dream as unveridical, in a sense weakened to that of being irrelevant (or almost so) to states of affairs in the world we favour with the term "real". It would be a decision to



adopt a terminology minimising the difference between the new type of dreaming and the one with which we are acquainted.

Quinton's fantasy presupposes a considerable measure of coherence in the dream of the lakeside. There is no trace of any dream-like or surrealist quality, (and part of the claim that dreams do not usually cohere with waking life, is that they are often quite unlike waking experience). Anyone who felt this to be a necessary feature of dreams would reject the possibility as a conceivable account of a dream (I can see no grounds for rejecting this possibility in itself). However such a view would be unjustified. We recognize the possibility of the content of a dream constituting a coherent story such as might occur in waking life. People report such things. It is quite conceivable that an account of something which did not occur, or could not have been witnessed by the narrator should be empirically possible. If dreams were to become generally more akin to experiences in waking life, our allocation of memories to the category of memories of dreams might be less automatic, and what Malcolm calls the inferential nature of our judgements that we have dreams more explicit (though, in most cases, there would still be the lack of continuity between dreaming and waking in bed). But we would never attempt to rebut someone's claim that he dreamed by pointing out that the events he claimed to have dreamed were too much like events that might actually occur. This seems to answer question (d) above: if a dream can be, as regards its contents, akin to waking life, there seems no reason why it should not be a natural equal to the events of the previous day. For example, on Sunday night

the dream trying to remember invariable properties of the objects someone might dream of the events of a typical Monday morning, such as might follow the Sunday night in question. Only on waking, does he discover he has been dreaming, and that Monday still lies ahead. Although this possibility is not expressed in terms of Malcolm's analysis, it is a graphic illustration of one of his arguments against the coherence principle as an answer to dream-scepticism. (Here one would be having a dream which does cohere with one's previous life; there is also the possibility of having a dream in which one thinks the events of the dream cohere with one's past - though they do not).

Turning now to question (e) we see that Malcolm's analysis provides an unequivocal answer. There are, on his view, no limits to the brevity of "p" in "he dreamed that p" provided "p" describes some kind of experience. We have seen that Malcolm takes the conditions for a complete description of a dream as somewhat similar to those for a grammatical English sentence. I have argued that part of what we mean by calling dreaming an experience is that to the statement that someone dreamed he struck a match, it is pertinent to press the question as to what the match was like, and even if no answer is forthcoming to assume that it must have had some attributes in the dream. For if one allows that someone might remember a dream of striking a match, and yet claim the match/<sup>to be</sup> of no particular shape of colour, one wants to ask why he describes it as a match, or even as a physical object. (A match belongs to the category of objects with shape and colour.) Unless we conceive of the teller of

#### Footnote

1. Ayer makes these two points (though separately) in his article in the Journal of Philosophy (1960)

the dream trying to remember determinate properties of the objects in his dream, which he may or may not remember correctly, (or which he may or may not remember at all) then the status of those details he does remember is called into question. The telling of the dream begins to look either like an imaginative composition, or like a causally determined distribution to make certain utterances (perhaps through the intermediary of a specious memory-impression<sup>1</sup>). If we are to retain the idea of telling a dream as an attempt to remember something, in which the constraints are normative (one is trying to get it right) rather than purely causal, we must circumvent the verificationist suspicion of the notion of the correctness of the dream-report. This we have already done, but consideration of the following problem will help strengthen our position.

How far must the description of a dream be filled out in order to yield a complete account of dream? With the claim that someone dreamed he struck a match simpliciter, one might feel that there must have been more to the dream than that, that incidents must have been forgotten or omitted. When people recount dreams they tend to produce longer narratives than this, or apologize for being unable to recall the dream in its entirety. In the latter case, are they motivated by the conviction that there must have been more to the dream, or do they dimly remember that something else happened, though they cannot remember what? I can see no conceptual reason to suppose that a complete account of a dream must have a certain minimum length. (I am thinking now of the number of incidents, not of the circumstantial detail). However, the fact remains that our recollections of dreaming

#### Footnotes

1. Ayer makes these two points (though separately) in his article in the *Journal of Philosophy* (1960)



are often accompanied by the conviction that we do not remember the whole of the dream, and it seems necessary to make sense of this feeling, in some ways, problematic - how can one dimly remember that something else happened, though one cannot remember what? Such a feeling is not peculiar to one's recollections of dreams, but as regards waking life, the situation is different. If one cannot recall what one did during a certain interval, one can at least be certain that one did something, even if only lounge around. The publicity of physical time means that it is, in principle, possible to ascertain the whereabouts and actions of a person at a certain time. But there are cases where this is not our ground for our conviction that there was more than we remember - in recalling a conversation, for example. But the recognition of this fact does not clarify the problem, it merely generalizes it beyond the field of dreams.

Suppose someone wakes, and remembers dreaming he struck a match, and yet feels there was more to the dream than this. Owing to the surrealistic character of many dreams, it seems impossible to infer further sections of the dream from what is, in fact, remembered, for example, that the striking of the match seemed done for a reason. Moreover, even if such arguments are valid, they would not cover all the cases we want to consider: someone might simply remember dreaming he struck a match, and feel convinced there was more to the dream, yet offer no reasons for his conviction. A characteristic of dreams is the difficulty one often has in retaining them in one's conscious memory<sup>1</sup>: psychologists who have attempted

#### Footnotes

1. This is ~~not~~<sup>another</sup> reason why we can recognize the possibility of someone's having a dream he never remembers. If he does not recall it upon waking, the chances that he will do so become progressively less with lapse of time. Thus, if we do not retract our statement that someone is dreaming on the basis of his talking in his sleep, when he wakes with no dream to tell, it becomes progressively less plausible to maintain that this is because we think he will <sup>later</sup> tell a dream.



to catalogue their dreams have usually found it necessary to note them down immediately on waking. Let us suppose that someone wakes and realizes that he has been dreaming. He may not attempt to recall the dream in its entirety. If we reject the view that the content of the dream is dependent upon whether the person who has dreamed attempts to recall his dream and the effort he puts into it, it seems reasonable to consider the following possibility: he may on waking feel he could give a complete account of the dream, but later he may not feel it possible. The later conviction that there was more to the dream than he can remember, would then be based on the conviction that, had he tried earlier, he could have given a fuller account. Furthermore, people who seem to remember there was something else very often eventually recall what that something was i.e. the experience of seeming to remember there was something else need not be a mere experience. I am not saying that the conviction that there was more to the dream than one can remember is based on a conviction that one will eventually remember what, but that the fact that one does often remember what, gives point to the conviction that there was something more. It will be seen that these considerations, in a similar way, weaken the verificationist suspicion of the claim that the match in one's dream must have had some colour though one cannot remember what. I have spoken of the conviction that there was more to the dream than one can remember; if this can be thought of as a memory that there was more to the dream than one remembers (that is, as the limiting case, of a series of memories progressively diminishing in detail) then our reliance upon it can be justified. more briefly. For it seems a conceptual truth, that we treat memories

#### Footnotes

1. People might differ in their ability to retain the memory of their dreams. We might easily introduce the idea of someone who, in this respect, "were a man with a quite specially bad memory". ("Investigations" p184)

of our own mental processes as correct, given no evidence to the contrary, for if we did not, the concept of an objective past would be inapplicable to a past mental process not given behavioural expression at the time. (This is not to say that we regard memories of our own mental processes as incorrigible). However, I am not certain that the assimilation of the conviction to memory is valid.

We are ready now to turn to a discussion of dreaming as a basis for philosophical scepticism. Let us begin by considering Malcolm's views on the subject. He begins (p114) by quoting Austin - "There are recognized ways of distinguishing between dreaming and waking. (How otherwise should we know how to use and contrast the words?)" Austin, says Malcolm, maintains this not because he can produce these ways, but because he assumes he can know he is awake, and must have some way of doing it. Malcolm claims that we know how to use the words, "I am awake", but not the words "I am dreaming". However, as it is sometimes correct to say "I am awake", we are led to believe that there must be a way of telling one is awake. But it is not the case that, realizing it would be absurd to declare oneself asleep, one can conclude one knows one is awake, having conclusive evidence that one is awake. For nothing counts for the truth of "I am not awake", and hence for "I am awake". Malcolm admits that one might have a test that one is fully awake. But this just means "fully alert". He also admits that there is a use for expressions like "Am I dreaming?" which is "to express surprise at some appearance, and perhaps to question whether things are as they seem." But this should not lead us to ignore the senselessness of "How can I tell whether I am awake?"

For there are ways of telling one is having an hallucination, but no ways of telling that one is awake. It is not Malcolm's intention to provide an argument by which someone can prove to himself that he is awake (see his disclaimer in response to Warnock on p118). "There are not two things for me to decide between, one that I am awake, the other that I am not awake. There is nothing to decide, no choice to make, nothing to find out." For since the fact that one is awake is contingent then, if one could know it, it would have to be by observation, and then sense would have to be allowed to speaking of knowing one is asleep by observation. The temptation to say that one can know by observation that one is awake comes, according to Malcolm, from the fact that sometimes I can rightly apply the word "awake" to my state, but though one can apply it correctly, one could not apply it incorrectly. This is not noting, distinguishing or picking out a state. When one says, "I am awake" one is showing someone is awake. "I am not awake" might do just as well.

Malcolm's thesis is that if someone says "I am not awake" it is not that he is making a statement that is automatically false, but that he is failing to make a significant statement. The facts that one can parse the expression "I am not awake", and that it can occur in a subordinate clause (eg. "He thinks I am not awake") are, for him, insufficient to give to the expression on its own, unless it is regarded as other than the logical contrary of "I am awake". He would, no doubt, concur in the view that "I am awake" is what Wittgenstein would call a grammatical remark. Malcolm's reason for

adopting the view that "I am not awake" cannot be given a sense as the logical contrary of "I am awake", rather than the view that "I am awake" expresses a proposition which is automatically false seems to be that we could never give a sense to the notion of someone correctly applying the expression to himself. Anything that would pretend to show that the man was conscious of what he said would pretend to show he was awake. One could never teach the use of the expression, nor establish that it was being correctly used. This argument cannot be refuted by saying that many sentences are not taught, the essence of language being that many statements one has never heard before can be made and understood. For Malcolm would retort that such sentences could be taught, whereas this cannot.

There is a difficulty, however, in Malcolm's assumption that for an expression to be seen to be used correctly it must be seen to be used truly. He ~~rejects~~<sup>neglects</sup> the possibility that someone might reveal his understanding of the expression "I am not awake" by exhibiting the knowledge that it is false each time it is uttered. It seems that for an expression to be seen to be used correctly, it need not be used in the presence of the putative fact it expresses. (Malcolm presumably realises that for an expression to be used correctly it need not be used in the presence of the putative fact it expresses). Malcolm needs some independent reason for refusing to assign a truth-value to "I am not awake", but I cannot find that he gives one. So far, we have followed Malcolm in his assumption that "I am not awake" cannot be used to make a true statement, and argued that it does not follow that it cannot have a truth-value and cannot be used to make a statement. But this assumption can be



challenged. It is to say "I am dreaming", but as you might still be unconscious of the wide world, this would seem to be counter-  
 1000  
 According to Malcolm one cannot make a judgement when asleep, and therefore the sentence "I am not awake" cannot be used to make a true judgement. But we have seen reason to reject the view that one cannot make a judgement when asleep. We have argued that to dream one makes a judgement is to make a judgement in sleep. At a certain time it might be true to say that at an earlier time someone dreamed that he made the judgement that p. If there were no reason to suppose that the person was asleep at the time, we should not be inclined to use the locution "He dreamed that he judged that p". Can we say that the difference between the locutions "He judged that p" and "He dreamed that he judged that p" is that we use the former of someone who was awake at the time, and the latter of someone who was asleep? It is not a counter-example to this thesis that we might say that someone dreamed that he judged that p, on the basis of his memory of judging that p being a part of a clear example of a memory of a dream. For to accept this inference, one would have to accept that he was asleep at the time of dreaming the judgement. I suggest that there are no grounds for opposing the assimilation of dreaming one judges to judging in the way suggested<sup>1</sup>. (I am speaking of conceptual grounds; future empirical discoveries might lead us to believe, say that the physiological bases of the two are entirely different) If it is possible that one might make a judgement while asleep, there seems no grounds for ruling out such judgements as "I am asleep", "I am not awake", or "I am dreaming". Someone might say that as soon as one realises one has been dreaming, one has awoken so that it can

#### Footnotes

1. In the case of achievement-words eg. "He dreamed he solved a problem", the assimilation seems to fail. But if we interpret this statement as "He dreamed he thought he solved a problem", even this can be accommodated. It is because "He solved a problem" depends for its truth on more than the person's state of mind that the interpretation is needed.

never be true to say "I am dreaming", but as one might still be unconscious of the outside world, this would seem to be counter-intuitive. If we recognise that "I am asleep" and "I am dreaming" have sense, then the possibility of being in doubt whether one is awake cannot be ruled out. Nor can the possibility that one might have a way of knowing that one is awake.

Traditionally, philosophers have felt that this need was answered by the coherence principle. What is this principle? On p 107, Malcolm interprets Leibniz and Russell as follows: "It would appear to be implied that a person can find out whether he is dreaming or awake by noting the nature of the connections of his present 'perceptions', 'objects of sense' with other past and present ones, although Russell would agree with Leibniz that the conclusion could have probability only and not absolute certainty...it is by taking note of the connection of 'the phenomena' that one can tell whether one is awake or dreaming". To this Malcolm presents the objection: "Making use of the principle consists in noting whether certain 'phenomena' presented to one are connected in the right ways with other phenomena, past, present or future, "but" it is possible that a person should dream that the right connections hold, dream that he connects his present perceptions with the whole course of his life." This argument, Malcolm admits, allows some of the assumptions he is concerned to attack. He, therefore, proceeds to criticize the coherence theorists from an angle more in keeping with his own views. If "I am dreaming" would express a judgement it would imply the judgement "I am asleep", and, if the latter is absurd, as Malcolm claims, so is the former. Consequently, he writes, the question

"How can I tell whether I am awake or dreaming?" turns out to be without sense, since it implies that it is possible to judge that one is dreaming. Furthermore, the question seems to presuppose that one might be able to tell that one is dreaming - which is doubly nonsensical, in that it implies that one could make a nonsensical judgement while asleep. Thus, "the coherence principle has a sensible application to the question "Was I dreaming?", but none at all to the question "Am I dreaming?". We have seen reason to reject this latter argument, as it is to the former that we must turn.

If we look at Malcolm's first argument, we see that it may be generalised as follows; Let  $x$  be some characteristic of experiences, which it is claimed marks them as waking experiences. Then if we suppose it possible to tell we are awake by noting the presence of  $x$ , we will be met by the rejoinder, "Perhaps you are only dreaming that  $x$  is present". This criticism suggests a further question: is it possible that we are only dreaming that  $x$  characterizes waking experiences. If  $x$  is merely a contingent accompaniment of waking experience then this is possible. And if we regard the presence of  $x$  as part of the analysis of being awake, it seems possible that someone should have a dream in which he subscribes to an incorrect analysis of what it is to be awake (after all, in waking life he would subscribe to an incorrect analysis of waking). The question "Might I only be dreaming that I have a correct analysis of being awake?" seems strange, but part of this oddity comes from a confusion with the absurd question, "Might I only be dreaming that I know what being awake is?" But it is clear that to know the meaning of the word is not necessarily to be able to give a correct analysis of it.



Nevertheless, even when the distinction is made, the question "Might I only be dreaming I have a correct analysis of being awake?" is puzzling. We seem completely at the mercy of the concept "dream". We are assumed to have a pre-analytic understanding of what it is to dream, and this understanding raises a question which suggests that any attempt to analyse the concept of being awake, and hence of sleeping, and dreaming is doomed to uncertainty. If we were to allow this kind of argument, it would tell against Malcolm's defence against scepticism, as surely as against those of others. Doubtless, Malcolm is right to attempt analyses of dreaming, waking and sleeping, and then proceed to consider the status of such questions as "Might I now be dreaming that..." But the grounds for this are far from clear. Someone might interject as Malcolm begins (or we begin) an analysis, "You know what dreaming is. Consider then the possibility that you are merely dreaming you are achieving an analysis". Malcolm could hardly reply that it is part of his prephilosophical grasp of the word "dream", that he knows it is senseless to suppose he might now be dreaming, as this is one of the most controversial features of his analysis<sup>1</sup>. The way out of this impasse seems to be this (and it seems available to Malcolm as much as to anyone else): whereas I have a pre-analytic understanding of the word "dream", this does not show that I understand any grammatically respectable sentence in which the word "dream" occurs. If someone suggests that I might only be dreaming that I have achieved a correct analysis of "sleep", "wakefulness" or "dreaming", perhaps I can plead that I do not understand this supposition. And, indeed, it is far from pellucid. It is obviously intended to imply that one's analysis is suspect - hence the phrase "only dreaming". But then, it is not clear that the

#### Footnotes

1. There may be a sense in which the supposition that I might now be dreaming is senseless, in that it is rarely entertained as a serious possibility. I shall have more to say of this later.



supposition differs, in any way important for our purposes, from the suggestion, "Perhaps you are mistaken that you have achieved, or are working towards a correct analysis of these concepts." I may feel I can understand the supposition that I might only be dreaming I have achieved a correct analysis of these concepts, on the basis of my being able to understand the supposition that someone else might dream he has achieved such an analysis and that he might be wrong. But if I do feel this, then what is in question is the truth of my analysis, rather than my own state of consciousness. And faced with this, I can only look again at my analysis.

Let us now return to the question, whether, if there are features typical of dreaming or waking, this affords a defence against scepticism. One might attempt to rebut the Malcolmian argument in this way: perhaps I might be dreaming that x is present, but, all the same, that I seem to observe x is evidence that I am awake. But it would be objected: what assumes us that the apparent presence of x is evidence for being awake. It cannot be a contingent matter, unless we can identify undisputed cases of one's being awake, by some means other than the presence of x. So it must be some kind of conceptual truth. We seem to have what we need in the following proposition: if it is analytically true that x entails p, then an apparent case of x is, at least, evidence for p. Applied to the coherence principle, this gives: if it seems to someone that he connects the present perceptions "with the whole course of his life" then he has prima facie evidence that he is awake. The substitution of "apparent coherence" answers Malcolm's objection, as we are not now

aiming at certainty, but at probability. It was insufficient of Leibniz and Russell simply to say that the principle can have probability only, as this does not make clear on what the probability is based. It is on based on two conceptual truths, the one we have just quoted, and that the majority of dreams fail to cohere with waking life. We already have considerations to support this latter assertion. If an experience cohereddwith previous experience, it might still be a dream, but if it cohered also with all later experience, only causal considerations could lead us to regard it as a dream - and this would require the acceptance of undisputed cases of waking experience. And if one suspects one is having experiences which do not cohere with one's past, though they seem to, one can only look again at one's present experience. It might be suggested that the use of the coherence principle is regressed<sup>ssive</sup>. If it is allowed that if I am dreaming that my present experiences cohere with the rest of my life, then they seem to cohere with the rest of my life, cannot one say: perhaps I only dream thatthey seem to cohere? And if we counter by saying that they must seem to seem to cohere, the argument can be repeated ad infinitum. But what could "They seem to seem to cohere" mean here other than "They seem to cohere"? The regress is only apparent.

We have assumed that it is always a logical possibility that I might later come to regard my present experience as a dream ( a simple proof of which is that I can always imagine what it would be likd to wake up in the next few minutes). The principle of coherence

is intended to provide some certainty that I am not now dreaming. Now, one might raise the question as to why I do not, in ordinary life, take seriously the possibility that I might be dreaming. It is worth considering the reasons, good or bad which, as a matter of fact, operate in this area (in addition to the justification which a philosopher might think is needed), for these lead to some important considerations about philosophical scepticism. These reasons are essentially reasons for an attitude to dream-scepticism; people, in ordinary life, rarely raise the question whether they might be dreaming. Do they believe they are awake? Or does belief, as Wittgenstein says, imply a doubt? And there may be no doubt (which is not to say that there could not be a doubt) I raise this point <sup>not</sup> because I think that any sceptical problem can be dissolved simply by saying that the proposition under attack is not a belief, assumption or presupposition, but a manifestation of a "form of life". But because, if one thinks in terms of a "form of life" including attitudes, activities etc. (a wider group of notions than a class of beliefs) it can be easier to see how these attitudes and activities make sense, as a greater variety of things give point to them. ~~This tendency to drop the notion of probability, and to produce a useless hypothesis, can be illustrated by saying that I have a certain~~

Suppose I try to take seriously the possibility that I might now be dreaming. As it makes no sense to suppose that all my experiences might be dreams, I would be faced with the problem of what sort of experiences merited my suspicions. If I regard certain features as typical of dream-experiences, I can perhaps regard certain experiences as particularly dubious. Once I allow a notion of the



degree to which an experience is suspect, I am well on the way to dismissing speculation as to whether I might now be dreaming as academic. But if I do not do this, I am allowing no experience as a better candidate than any other for being a waking experience. The position is reminiscent of ~~of~~ the situation we encountered in considering Russell's hypothesis, that the world has been created five minutes ago, complete with memory-impressions of events before. Whatever other difficulties there might be here, one wants to ask: why five minutes and not five seconds or five hours? We have a schema for the construction of countless sceptical hypotheses, rather than a single sceptical hypothesis. No wonder we ignore them all. Thus, unless we allow a notion of probability into the question whether I might now be dreaming (which, as I have argued, leads to the conclusion that it is almost certain that I am not) I am presented with a hypothesis I can do nothing with. It is, perhaps, this that underlies the plain man's disregard for sceptical questions concerning dreaming. One might even regard speculation as to whether one is awake as "senseless".

The tendency to drop the notion of probability, and so produce a useless hypothesis, can be illustrated further. I have mentioned on several occasions that dreams are often quite unlike waking experiences in some respect or other. They are often hazy, in black-and-white-, or lacking in continuity. We often fulfil the role of a mere observer, think with more than ordinary irrationality, accept the most bizarre situations or behave in ways quite out of character. Yet Descartes

Footnotes

1. Though I think this unlikely.



and subsequent philosophers have felt justified in saying there are "no certain marks" distinguishing the waking life from the dreaming state. Why is this? Partly because, if in our dreams we accept the abnormal, or think irrationally, we may not treat these features as indicative of dreams. But there is another, more important reason: it is felt that these features are neither necessary nor universal. Now, this assertion of contingency is interesting. It might be that if "lack of continuity" were a universal feature of dreaming, it would be treated as a defining characteristic<sup>1</sup>, and someone who suggested that dreams might be otherwise, would be drawing attention to the logical possibility of a new phenomenon in a paradoxical way. But such a person would still be able to make out a plausible case for scepticism on the basis of this possible phenomenon, for he could ask, "How do I know that I am not now experiencing this new phenomenon?" (In a course of lectures on Descartes, I remember the lecturer say, "In order for there to be a sceptical problem about dreams, it is not necessary that there should actually be known to be such a thing as dreaming, but only that it is possible there should be.")

Let us take another look at Malcolm's handling of dream-scepticism. It will be remembered that Malcolm relies heavily on what he takes to be the empirical characteristics of our concept of dreaming. He says, in effect, "this is what we mean by 'dream' and if we are using the word correctly, it makes no sense to say 'I might be dreaming'." It might be replied, that, even if Malcolm's analysis of our concept of dreaming were correct, one can imagine

#### Footnotes

1. Though I think this unlikely.

a phenomenon which has the characteristics attributed to it by Descartes, Leibniz, Moore and Russell; such a phenomenon might not exist, but it could, and can therefore serve as a basis for scepticism. Malcolm might reply as follows: nothing could show the occurrence of such a phenomenon, for anything that would show that a person was having experiences, would also show that he was not asleep. Even if Malcolm's arguments on this point were valid, it could be counted<sup>ered</sup> by dropping the reference to sleep in one's account of the supposed phenomenon. I can imagine coming to regard my present experiences as totally un~~der~~ridical (that I am now living in a world of fan<sup>t</sup>asy) at some time in the future. Malcolm would surely admit that a mental patient who sits in a corner of the psychiatric ward, might be having experiences which are not of the real world. If this is so, then the whole sceptical problem which is normally discussed in terms of dreams, could be translated into a speculation in terms of insanity.

It might, perhaps, be though unfair to criticize Malcolm in this way. He is after all attemptin' to provide an analysis of dreaming, not of something else. But it is important to realise that even if Malcolm were right in supposing the received view of dreaming to be untenable, ~~a~~<sup>the</sup> kind of sceptical problem originally broached in terms of dreaming, would still arise in a new guise. It is possible to have hallucinations which involve the whole of one's phenomenal experience at a certain time, under the influence of drugs, in insanity and so on. Dreaming, then, raises sceptical problems which can be generalised and in the end make no specific reference to dreaming.