

AUSTIN AND AYER ON APPEARANCE AND REALITY

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ABSTRACT

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My thesis is that in the debate between John Langshaw Austin and Alfred Jules Ayer relating to appearance and reality, Ayer's arguments are almost entirely untouched by Austin's attack. In the body of the thesis are successive chapters on Austin's criticisms of Ayer's exposition of the argument from illusion, and Austin's criteria for the use of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' on Austin's remarks on the evaluation of the argument from illusion, on Austin's positive analysis of 'real,' on Austin's attack on Ayer's analysis of the ordinary criteria for distinguishing appearance and reality, and finally, on Austin's method of debate. Except for the last chapter, I use a largely standard pattern of discussion, first summarizing the particular argument of Ayer that comes under attack, then stating Austin's criticisms, next giving Ayer's reply, and then considering what the critics have to say. Finally, I give my own views. In the last chapter, I make the case that there are methodological weaknesses that greatly weaken Austin's arguments.

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CHAPTER ONE
PLAN OF THE DISCUSSION

In what follows, I wish to discuss the debate between John Langshaw Austin and Alfred Jules Ayer relating to the traditional questions about appearance and reality.¹

These questions come up in Ayer's exposition of the argument from illusion, in his evaluation of the argument from illusion, and in his explanation of the ordinary distinction between appearance and reality, that particular distinction which has so long troubled philosophers.

Ayer's exposition of the argument from illusion is a catalogue of those cases which have led people to draw the ordinary distinction between appearance and reality; for example, the coin which looks round from one point of view but elliptical from another, or the stick which normally appears straight but looks bent in water, even though the qualities of the coin and stick are constant despite the differences in appearance. Evidently not all our perceptions can be veridical, because an object cannot be both circular and elliptical or both crooked and straight. Where what we see is not the real quality of the object, however, it is still argued that we are seeing something, something that

¹ A. J. Ayer, The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge (1940; rpt. London: MacMillan, 1964); J. L. Austin, Sense and Sensibilia (1962; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); and A. J. Ayer, "Has Austin Refuted Sense-Data?" Synthese, 17 (1967), rpt. in K. T. Fann, ed., Symposium on J. L. Austin (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 284-308.

may be called a sense-datum. This is the argument from illusion, that is to say, the argument that we do not directly perceive material objects.

Ayer does not entirely accept the argument that he has expounded. In his evaluation, he shows that some of the assumptions of the argument from illusion are not necessary, that the distinction between appearance and reality involved in calling some of our perceptions veridical and others delusive need not be made. In his explanation of the distinction between appearance and reality, Ayer shows how we ordinarily decide which of our perceptions to call veridical and which delusive and shows why that decision, although it is unnecessary, is not arbitrary.

Austin criticizes Ayer on each of these three aspects of his discussion of appearance and reality. He accuses him of misusing 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' in his exposition of the argument from illusion. Against Ayer's evaluation of the argument from illusion, Austin argues that, among other things, Ayer misconstrues how 'real' is to be used. Austin further declares that Ayer's account of how we ordinarily distinguish appearance and reality is unsatisfactory, in that it considers only a few of the ways in which we can distinguish appearance and reality.

My purpose is to review this controversy and to analyse its merits. My thesis is that Austin's arguments are, at best, irrelevant, and in general, unsound, and that Ayer's analysis,

although perhaps incomplete, is undamaged by Austin's attack.

My argument will be organized according to theme. I shall have brief chapters on each of the major criticisms Austin makes of Ayer, including chapters on Austin's analyses of words he alleges Ayer has misused. More specifically, in Chapter Two, I shall discuss Austin's criticism of Ayer's exposition of the argument from illusion and Austin's criteria for the use of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears.' In Chapter Three, I shall deal with Austin's remarks on the evaluation of the argument from illusion. In Chapter Four, I shall criticize Austin's positive analysis of 'real,' and in Chapter Five, Austin's attack on Ayer's analysis of the ordinary criteria for distinguishing appearance and reality. Finally, in Chapter Six, I shall review and evaluate Austin's method of criticism as it is revealed throughout the debate.

In each of these chapters, except the last, I shall use a more or less standard sequence of discussion. To begin with, I shall paraphrase in a summary way the particular argument of Ayer that comes under attack, then state Austin's criticisms of the argument, next give Ayer's reply, then go on to consider what critics have to say, and finally, give my own views as to the merits of the debate. In the last chapter, I shall simply review Austin's arguments against Ayer to make the case that there are methodological errors common to these arguments that greatly weaken their force.

CHAPTER TWO

AYER'S USE OF 'LOOKS,' 'SEEMS,' AND 'APPEARS'

In The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge, Ayer set out the argument from illusion, an argument which had often been used to support the sense-datum theory, but not an argument which Ayer himself could entirely accept. Austin, in Sense and Sensibilia, tried to show that Ayer's exposition of the argument suffered from a misuse of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears.' In this chapter, I shall take up these issues, according to the formula I sketched in the introduction; that is, I shall first summarize the Ayer-Austin exchange, then review the contribution of the critics, in this case, D. D. Todd and Sam Coval, and then give my own analysis of the matter.

Ayer points out, before expounding the argument from illusion, that it is not an argument with which he is in complete agreement. The purpose of the argument, he says, is to prove that what we directly perceive is not always a material object. The proof rests on the fact that the qualities objects appear to us to have are not always the qualities that they really do have. A round coin, for example, may appear to us from certain points of view to be elliptical. It has been claimed by those who accept the argument from illusion that when we see the round coin as elliptical, we are not directly perceiving the coin but instead something that really is elliptical--a sense-datum. Now Ayer himself does not accept that the argument from illusion proves the existence of sense-data, so a criticism of that argument is not a criticism of him. Ayer does accept, however, the description of the facts upon

which the argument is based--the statement that a round coin can sometimes look elliptical, for example--and therefore, it is a criticism of him to show that his description of those facts is not satisfactory.

Austin argues that Ayer's description is not satisfactory because of the misuse of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears.' These words have quite different uses and are not interchangeable in every context. Ayer, according to Austin, has neglected these different uses and thus has used the three words misleadingly.

Austin begins his demonstration that 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears' have many shades of meaning by showing these words in their various constructions and pointing out that each word cannot occur in every construction. After presenting this lengthy list of constructions, Austin goes on to illustrate more subtle differences between 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears.' He points out that, in the construction, "He (looks, appears, seems) guilty," for example, the words 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' play quite different roles. We could say "He looks guilty" simply to comment on the man's looks, while if we were to use the same expression with 'appears,' we would most probably be intending to refer to certain special circumstances; for example, to his behaviour under questioning. The phrase, "He seems guilty" would probably be used with reference to certain evidence, evidence which is not conclusive. These facts, Austin concludes, should show that the root ideas behind 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' are not the same. He goes on to emphasize the difference between

the terms by showing circumstances where we could use one word but not the other. He mentions, for example, that a man who "seems to be guilty may quite well not look guilty."²

After describing the various uses of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' Austin deals with "the question of how 'looks' or 'looks like' is related to 'is.'" He claims that there is no general answer to the question, since what the relationship is "depends on the full circumstances of particular cases" (S, 39). If one says that something looks like something else, one may or may not mean that one is tempted to identify the two. Austin does say something more specific, however, about how 'being like' is related to 'being.' He comments in a footnote, "Note that, contrary to what some philosophical theories seem to imply, the notion of being a so-and-so must be prior to that of being like a so-and-so" (S, 41).

Austin also argues that statements about looks are neither "incorrigible" nor "subjective". One can be mistaken even about the statement "This looks heliotrope to me now." And, in general, a judgment about how things look is not subjective but public. It is a fact about the world and not about myself, "that petrol looks like water" (S, 43).

Austin concludes the chapter with the remark that, although we have expressions of the form "To judge from its looks" or

²J. L. Austin, Sense and Sensibilia (1962; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 38. All references to this book will be to this edition and will follow quotations, in brackets. The title will be abbreviated to S.

"Going by appearances," we do not have any expression of the form, "To judge by the seemings." He infers from this fact that while "looks and appearances provide us with facts on which a judgement may be based, to speak of how things seem is already to express a judgement" (S, 43).

Ayer does not accept Austin's criticism of his exposition of the argument from illusion. He agrees that he used 'looks,' 'appears,' and 'seems,' more or less interchangeably but denies that this affected his argument. Austin's description of the many shades of meaning of these terms may be interesting but is not relevant to Ayer's arguments. As long as Austin agrees that there is a purely phenomenal sense of words like 'looks', a sense which can be used in the description of one's experiences without implying judgments about anything else, then he has permitted the sense-datatist all that he requires. People, Ayer notes, have tried to argue that there is no purely phenomenal sense of 'looks' and similar words, but their attempts are failures. It is not true that, in saying that something looks round, we must also be saying that we would be inclined to judge that it is round. For why, Ayer asks, would we be inclined to make such a judgement? "Surely," he says, "in most cases, it is because of the way it looks, in just the phenomenal sense that is in question."³

Ayer next considers Austin's claim that in saying, for example,

³A. J. Ayer, "Has Austin Refuted Sense-Data?", Synthèse, 17 (1967), rpt. in K. T. Fann, ed., Symposium on J. L. Austin (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 297. All references to this article will be to this edition and will follow quotations, in brackets. The title will be abbreviated to H.

that petrol looks like water, "I am not disclosing a fact about myself, but about petrol" (S, 43). Ayer accepts the claim but notes that we determine how petrol 'looks' in Austin's sense, "on the basis of the way things of that kind do look to particular persons on particular occasions. So, once again, inevitably," Ayer concludes, "the phenomenal sense is fundamental" (H, 298).

Most commentators agree that Ayer's use of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' in the argument from illusion is acceptable and does not violate Austin's requirements. There is more doubt, however, about whether the use of those terms required for the general sense-datist argument is legitimate. Austin, according to some critics, causes difficulty for the sense-datist like Ayer by denying that there is a purely phenomenal, non-judgmental use of 'looks.' Ayer needs a use of 'looks' that does not imply judgments about the way things are, because he wants to analyse judgments about the way things are in terms of 'looks' statements.

D. D. Todd⁴, in his thesis, "Austin and Sense-Data," explains why he takes Austin to be denying that there is a purely phenomenal, non-judgmental use of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears.' In Todd's opinion, Austin's catalogue of expressions with these words contains only dependent expressions, that is, expressions with implications about the way things are. When we say, as in Austin's example, that petrol looks like water, our ability to make this

⁴D. D. Todd, "Austin and Sense-Data," Diss. University of British Columbia 1967, pp. 127-151. All references will follow quotations in brackets. The title will be abbreviated to A.

comparison depends on the "prior (logically prior, not just temporally prior) knowledge of, so to speak, the being of water, i.e. the real, genuine or proper qualities of water" (A, 132). Or again, in another of Austin's examples, if we say, "This looks like water," we may be using 'looks' in a sense that is not purely phenomenal, since we may mean to imply that we were inclined to judge that the thing in question was water. The expressions, 'looks like,' 'looks as if,' and 'looks as though,' can all be used in making judgments and it is likely that Austin thought that simply 'looks' was used in making judgments. Austin did say that the way things look is just as much a fact about the world as the way things are. Todd also supports his position that Austin took expressions like 'looks' to be logically posterior to 'being' by citing Austin's comment, "Note that, contrary to what some philosophical theories seem to imply, the notion of being a so-and-so must be prior to that of being like a so-and-so" (S, 41). Todd examines Austin's views on 'appears' and 'seems' and concludes that Austin takes expressions with these words also to be judgmental.

Todd concedes that 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' are frequently used to make judgments or imply judgments about the way things are. He denies, however, that they are always judgmental. Suppose, he says, someone remarks that "this looks blue" with the intention of comparing "this" with things which are standardly blue. His judgment implies that there is a purely phenomenal, non-judgmental use of 'looks.' For it is clear that, in making this judgment, he is "comparing how this looks with how

standard blue looks in a purely phenomenal use of 'looks'" (A, 144). Or, if one says, "This looks round," in the "inclination-to-judge" use of 'looks,' the reason why one is inclined to judge that the thing is round is that it looks the way round things look, in a sense of 'looks' which "is more fundamental than the 'inclination-to-judge' use of 'looks.'" This defense of the phenomenalist use of 'looks' is also given by Ayer (H, 297).

Todd uses the fact that there is a purely phenomenal use of 'looks' to show that the notion of being a so-and-so is not logically prior to the notion of looking so-and-so. If to be logically posterior to another word means to be more complex than that word and definable in terms of it, then 'being an x' is actually posterior to 'looking an x.' 'Being red,' for example, is more complex than 'looking red.' If an object is red, says Todd, "it must not merely look red, it must look red to normal observers under standard conditions of illumination . . . " (A, 147)

Todd wrote an article with Sam Coval⁵, his thesis-advisor, in which the problem of the logical priority of 'being' over 'looking' was interpreted and solved in a way very different from that in his thesis. In this article, it is accepted that 'looks' and 'seems' are dependent upon 'is.' Todd and Coval talk mostly of 'seems,' but at the beginning of the paper, they include 'looks' and 'appears' among the words that are dependent upon 'is.'

⁵Sam Coval and D. D. Todd, "Adjusters and Sense-Data," American Philosophical Quarterly, 9, No. 1 (Jan. 1972), 107-112

What they mean by the dependency of 'seems' is that, if one says that something 'seems x,' one implies doubt or denial that it 'is x.' Their defense of Ayer and other sense-datatists consists in arguing that, while 'seems' is dependent upon 'is,' it is not dependent in a way that is inimical to the sense-datist.

They argue that we only say, for example, that something 'seems blue' when we have reason to suspect that it may not be blue because it is viewed in non-standard conditions. We say that it 'is blue' when it is viewed in standard conditions; that is to say, in good illumination, with normal eyes, etc. We take normal conditions as standard, and abnormal conditions as their deviations because to standardize abnormal conditions would be impractical for a language to be used by everybody. But the conditions in which it is appropriate to say 'seems x' or 'is x' could change. If our environment were to change so that a different type of illumination were common, we might begin to treat that type of illumination as standard and treat the former standard illumination as deviant. It is a contingent matter that we standardize the cases that we do. So, while it is true that 'is' is prior to 'seems,' it is not true that the situations in which we say 'is' are prior to the situations in which we say 'seems.' If it had been more convenient for us, we could have treated the present deviant situations as standard and said 'is' where we now say 'seems.' The situations referred to when we say 'is x' or 'seems x' are separable from their roles as standard and deviant.

For that reason, the sense-datist need not be troubled by the priority of 'is' over 'seems,' since it does not prevent his comparing the situation where we say 'seems x' with the situation where we say 'is x.' It is not as if the 'seems x' situation has to be explained as a deviant of the 'is x' situation; they can both be treated on the same level and compared in terms of some third thing. And this allows the sense-datist to ask, "Don't we need sense-data to provide the third term in the comparison?" He is then free to analyse 'being' statements, as well as 'seeming' statements, in terms of sense-data.

What is wrong with the arguments concerning the priority of 'being' that occur in Todd's thesis and his article with Coval is that there is really no reason for them to be directed at Austin. Austin accepts that there is a purely phenomenal, non-judgmental use of 'looks' and 'appears.' He was careful to emphasize, for example, that there was a use of 'appears' that did not imply an inclination to judge. Although Ayer in his answer to Austin takes pains to show that there is this use, it was actually Austin who first insisted that people like Ayer recognize the use. Austin cautions Ayer to remember that when I say, in looking at my reflection, that my body appears to be behind the glass, I do not mean that it 'appears to be' there "in a way which might tempt me (though it might tempt a baby or a savage) to go round the back and look for it . . ." (S, 31) Austin states even more firmly his belief that 'looks' is not always judgmental, and, in particular, is not always connected with the non-standard situations which Todd

and Coval describe. He points out (S, 38) that 'looks' can occur in many situations; in situations where we have some evidence, "wholly conclusive" evidence, "wholly inadequate evidence," as well as in situations where the question of how things are just does not arise. It is only the word 'seems' that Austin treats as being connected with judgments and, in particular, with judgments in doubtful situations. But it is only if the sense-datist is deprived of any word like 'looks' or 'seems' that can be used non-judgmentally, that his philosophical position is in trouble. The fact that some of the words he uses non-judgmentally cannot be so used only shows that he has made a mistake about a word; whereas if there were no non-judgmental perceptual verbs, then his whole theory would be mistaken. The sense-datist, although he may not be able to use 'seems' in a purely phenomenal sense, is not prevented (at least, not by Austin) from using 'appears' and 'looks' purely phenomenally. Todd and Coval were wrong to put so much emphasis on a footnote of Austin's, the footnote where he says that 'being' is prior to 'being like', as well as being wrong for interpreting it so broadly. After all, it is 'being like' that Austin says is dependent on 'being,' not 'appearing' or 'looking' or even 'seeming.'

Even if the arguments in Todd and Coval's article are considered as independent of Austin, they are still open to criticism. Todd and Coval's lengthy treatment of how the sense-datist may avoid the difficulty of the dependence of 'looks' upon 'is' is unnecessary. Both Todd in his thesis (A, 144) and Ayer (H, 297)

gave a valid proof that there is a purely phenomenal use of 'looks.' If someone says that 'looks' is always connected with an inclination to judge, to doubt, or to deny, then all we need ask is, "Why is there this connection?" The explanation, that it is because of the way the object looks, involves a purely phenomenal sense of 'looks.'

Now that I have shown that Austin did not criticize Ayer's usage for the reasons just discussed, I want to go on to examine Austin's actual criticisms. As I mentioned earlier, it is generally accepted that Ayer's usage in the exposition of the argument from illusion is acceptable, but it has not been shown why. I will, therefore, deal with this aspect of the debate between Austin and Ayer in considerable detail.

My criticism of Austin is that, although he spends a great deal of time distinguishing the several meanings of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' he never actually shows where these distinctions are overlooked by Ayer or in what way these distinctions are relevant to Ayer's argument. And if one does Austin's work for him and examines Ayer's use of the terms, one finds that Ayer has, in every instance, used the term in accordance with Austin's requirements.

The first statement in Ayer's exposition⁶, "It is remarked

⁶All quotations from the exposition of the argument from illusion are from The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge, p. 3. Other references to this book will follow quotations, in brackets. The title will be abbreviated to F.

that a coin which looks circular from one point of view may look elliptical from another," follows exactly the pattern of Austin's first example, "It looks blue (round, angular, etc.)" (S, 34). The word 'looks' is used in the "general sphere of vision" (S, 36) as Austin demands. Does Austin think 'appears' or 'seems' would have been more exact? Well, I think he would agree that 'appears' would have meant much the same thing in this context and would not have been in any way preferable to 'looks.' The word 'seems,' of course, would have been entirely out of the question. To say that the coin 'seems elliptical' is to imply that we would be inclined to judge that it was elliptical, as Austin says, and this is not what Ayer wants to imply. The second statement in Ayer's exposition, "that a stick which normally appears straight looks bent when seen in water," is again perfectly acceptable. The expressions, 'appears straight' and 'looks bent,' are similar to examples given by Austin (S, ex. 1, 34; ex.1, 35). Austin says that 'appears' ought to be used with reference to "particular circumstances" (S, 38). Well, Ayer does specify the circumstances, "normally" as opposed to "in water." There is nothing to be quarreled with in the third example either: ". . . to people who take drugs such as mescal things appear to change their colours." The word 'looks' could not have been used; it is ruled out by Austin on p. 35. 'Seems' might have been used except that it would imply, as Austin says, that the person under the influence of drugs judges that the things actually are changing colours. But the drug-user may be perfectly well aware that the change is in him and not in

the things. The fourth example: "the taste a thing appears to have may vary with the condition of the palate," resembles closely Austin's example 5a on p. 35. Ayer could not have used 'looks,' of course, because he is not talking about vision. He could not have used the word 'tastes' (the equivalent of 'looks' in the domain of taste) since it would have been ungrammatical. He could perhaps have expressed his meaning in some other sentence containing 'tastes'-- "A things may taste different according to different conditions of the palate"--but this would be an awkward way of speaking and is in no way preferable. The word 'seems' could have been used in this context, although it would have implied that the person doing the tasting trusted his sense of taste in each condition. The word 'appears' is really the best word to have used since it leaves open the question how the taster judges. The fifth and sixth examples, "a liquid will seem to have a different temperature according as the hand that is feeling it is itself hot or cold" and "a coin seems larger when it is placed on the tongue than when it is held in the palm of the hand," are both acceptable. The word 'seems' is appropriate because a person may very well judge that a bowl of water is hot when he places a cold hand in it and revoke his judgment when he touches it with his warmer hand. And a person who has a dime placed on his tongue will usually judge it to be a quarter, although when he is allowed to feel it in his hand, he will immediately realize his mistake.

Ayer's usage of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' then, is in perfect agreement with Austin's. In fact, it is somewhat surprising

to find that Ayer has followed so closely Austin's extremely strict standards of usage. Ordinary people do not distinguish these terms as carefully as Austin does. Ayer could have been much less precise and still have been perfectly understandable. Why Austin thought his detailed study of these terms was relevant to Ayer, it is hard to tell. His lengthy list of constructions, some of which are not even used by Ayer, seems to have been a total waste of time. It is rather as if one approached discussion of Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity by wondering whether Einstein had overlooked some of the meanings of 'relative.' One might consider various uses of the term, "A brother is a relative," "A sixth cousin is a relative," ("It is doubtful, though, whether this" use of 'relative' "is really defensible") to see if Einstein had not been a trifle careless. One could then mention a usage of 'relative,' say, "When you walk, you change position relative to the earth," which would show Einstein's usage to have been perfectly correct. To make one's analysis complete, one would then neglect to quote Einstein or to show how one's discussion was related to his work at all. This, in effect, is the method Austin has used in his criticism of Ayer.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EVALUATION OF THE ARGUMENT FROM ILLUSION

Ayer, as was mentioned before, rejects the argument from illusion because it fails to establish its conclusion that we do not always directly perceive material objects. The conclusion depends on the assumption that some of our perceptions are delusive and, in Ayer's opinion, there is no need to make this assumption. Ayer's claim that this assumption is unnecessary and the arguments he uses to support his claim are severely attacked by Austin. Here I find the merits of the discussion divided. Let me begin as usual with a paraphrase of Ayer.

It is possible to deny, says Ayer, the argument from illusion's assumption that some of our perceptions are delusive because this denial does not involve our attributing to material objects "such mutually incompatible properties as being at the same time both green and yellow, or both elliptical and round" (F, 14). If I see a coin from one point of view as round and from another as elliptical, I may in both cases be seeing it as it really is, provided that it changed shape as I changed my point of view. It is only if the coin is assumed to have remained the same, that I need call one of my perceptions delusive. And Ayer argues that there is no need to assume that the coin, or any other object, remains the same when it is observed from different points of view. The reason we say that a coin retains its shape when observed from different angles is that when we return to observe it from the original angle, "it looks the same shape as it did before" (F, 16). But Ayer points

out that someone could accept this fact about the varying appearances of the coin and still deny the assumption that its shape had remained the same. He might say that the coin changed when we left our original standpoint and changed back again when the original standpoint was regained. And with all the other cases where objects appear to have different qualities from different points of view, he could deal in a similar manner. Ayer claims that it is impossible to refute such a person because there is no real dispute between him and someone who accepts ordinary views. Both appeal to the same facts to support their positions; it is just that they describe the facts in different ways. They both accept that a coin presents one appearance from one angle, and a different appearance from another but each takes this fact as evidence for a different theory: the theory that the coin changes and the theory that it remains the same. Since there are no other facts about which they disagree, it must be concluded that their theories are actually the same but are merely expressed in a different language. And as long as the two languages are self-consistent, there is no reason to prefer one to the other, except insofar as one might be more convenient or involve a smaller departure from ordinary language.

Austin finds absurd Ayer's claim that the issues raised by the argument from illusion are not factual but linguistic. It is impossible to deny, he says, "that the 'real shape' of a penny remains the same when I change the point of view from which I look at it" (S, 58). He parodies Ayer's view that, if we wish,

we can speak as if the penny or any other object changes. If we are allowed to speak as freely as that, why should we not go even further and say, "that, for instance, when I offer you (what we usually call) a cigarette, there are really two material things (two cigarettes?), one that I see and offer and one that you see and accept, if you do?" (S, 58)

Austin notes, however, Ayer's reason for claiming that someone could deny our ordinary assumptions. His reason is that, as long as our opponent agrees about what can be observed, his difference with ordinary views is only linguistic and not factual and thus he cannot be refuted by the facts. But Austin will not accept that the opponent of ordinary views cannot be refuted or that his difference with us is merely linguistic. Ayer, he charges, talks as if 'real,' 'real shape,' etc. were words that the opponent can use in any way he wishes. Secondly, Austin argues, there is good reason to suspect that Ayer did not regard the dispute as merely linguistic himself. In fact, the argument he uses to show that the issue is merely verbal makes use of the assumption that the issue is not really verbal at all. Ayer does think that one of the so-called "languages" he discusses is more than just a language. Ayer, that is, feels that the person who talks as if there are sense-data is right on a question of fact. We may speak if we like, for verbal convenience, as if there were other entities, but, thinks Ayer, "the hard fact is that there are sense-data" (S, 60). Austin's reason for saying that Ayer regards the sense-datum language as more than a language is that Ayer identifies the

empirical facts with the "sensible appearances" and the "phenomena," terms which Austin takes to mean "sense-data." In Austin's view, Ayer calls debates about where, for example, a penny changes or remains the same from different points of view, linguistic debates, because he regards only questions about sense-data as factual questions. Ayer actually accepts the argument from illusion which he pretends to evaluate with so much detachment because he has all along accepted "the old Berkeleian, Kantian ontology of the 'sensible manifold'" (S, 61).

Ayer replies to Austin's criticisms with the statement that Austin has missed the point. Austin overlooked the fact that Ayer "was not operating within our ordinary conceptual scheme but considering a revision of it" (H, 300). He did not claim that one could maintain that pennies changed shape when seen from different angles and still be consistent with our present criteria for determining 'real' shapes. Ayer does not, however, blame Austin for misunderstanding him since Ayer admits that he was not entirely clear on the question and did not express himself as well as he might.

Ayer accepts Austin's charge that he took for granted that we are "presented with a 'sensible manifold'" which we can "organize in accordance with different conceptual schemes" (H, 301). In Ayer's opinion, however, it was not a mistake to take this for granted. It may be that there are limits to this organization and that some objects of perception must be taken as public. But it

must be shown that there are such limits and that a phenomenalist language is impossible. To argue, as Austin does, that we do not ordinarily speak the way the phenomenalist does, is, says Ayer, "nothing to the purpose" (H, 301).

D. D. Todd, in his thesis, supports Austin's claim that Ayer's use of language in the alternative-language argument is entirely unacceptable. He also agrees with Austin that the two parties in the dispute Ayer describes do disagree about certain questions of fact because it is a question of fact whether a penny's shape changes or remains the same. Nevertheless, Todd believes, the two parties for the most part are in verbal disagreement and thus there is no reason to assume that Ayer must be pretending when he calls the disagreement verbal. What Todd finds wrong with Ayer, however, is that he did not recognize that it was not a legitimate verbal disagreement. The opponent of ordinary views uses words like 'real,' 'shape,' 'penny,' without completely following the conventions for their use. He is muddled because he attempts to operate within and at the same time independently of our common sense conceptual scheme and our ordinary language" (A, 156).

Todd does not devote much time to showing that Ayer regarded the dispute as verbal rather than factual. All he says is that Ayer could not have called sense-data the only facts since he regarded material-object statements as being based entirely on sense-datum statements and thus, must have allowed that material object statements were factual. But this defense does not really protect Ayer from

Austin's criticism. For one thing, it seems to accept that in the alternative-language argument, Ayer is already depending on the sense-datum theory and is regarding the facts as connected with sense-data in some way. But I think that one can show that Ayer's alternative-language argument does not depend at all on previous acceptance of the sense-datum theory and that what he calls 'fact' can be described without reference to sense-data. Ayer himself describes the facts in the debate in the same sort of language Austin uses, without referring to sense-data.

It is true, as Todd notes, that Ayer's identification of the facts with the 'phenomena' and the 'sensible appearances' is misleading in that those phrases sound like new ways of describing sense-data. Ayer means by 'phenomena' and 'sensible appearances,' however, 'what can be observed.' His reason for saying the two parties are not in factual disagreement is that they accept the same observations. Now if we examine Ayer's description of those observations, we see that he has not mentioned sense-data or used anything but Austinian language. The two parties observe that a stick which "looks crooked at the same time feels straight" (F, 15). They each observe, in looking in mirrors, that their body "appears to be behind the glass" (F, 5). The fact that one can see "what appears to be a round coin and then, subsequently, from another standpoint, see it as elliptical" (F, 14) is accepted by both. All the other observations are described by Ayer in similar language, language that Austin himself uses. Austin says, for example, of the stick which feels straight in water, "We may perhaps be

prepared to agree that the stick looks bent" (S, 26). Austin actually positively gives his assent to one of Ayer's examples when he remarks, "My body, Ayer says, 'appears to be some distance behind the glass' . . . Well, once again, although there is no objection to saying that my body 'appears to be some distance behind the glass,' in saying this we must remember what sort of situation we are dealing with" (S, 31). Austin even provides examples of his own of observations relevant to the debate; he comments that the moon normally looks "somewhat as a sixpence looks if you look at it at about arm's length." (S, 41) Austin clearly accepts the facts Ayer describes as well as the language he uses to describe them. Since Austin refuses to accept 'sense-data' and yet accepts these facts, he must deny that they are facts about sense-data.

Another question on which I am in some disagreement with Todd is whether the dispute between the two opponents Ayer describes is wholly linguistic. Both Todd and Austin claim that the two opponents disagree at least on the factual question of whether an object, like a penny, changes shape or remains the same. I think Todd and Austin are wrong in this claim even though they are right that it is a question of fact whether a penny changes or remains the same. Ayer's argument was that the dispute was linguistic because both parties agreed on all the evidence; they differed only in how they described that evidence. There was no possible observation that could distinguish their theories, therefore, according to the logical positivist criterion of meaning,

their theories were factually the same. Ayer does not mean to argue, however, that the theories "objects change" and "objects remain the same" are not factually different when the terms 'object,' 'change,' and 'remain the same' are used as they are ordinarily used. What his argument is designed to show is that at least one of the disputants is not using those terms as they are ordinarily used and that that is why his disagreement is no more than linguistic. How do we know that one disputant is in disagreement with ordinary usage? We know because he accepts all his opponent's observations without accepting his way of describing them. He must mean by expressions like 'the object changes' or 'the object remains the same' something different from what the ordinary person means. He does not in fact disagree that an object remains the same despite different appearances from different points of view. That is why Ayer can deny that the opponent is factually different from us while refusing to deny that the objects remain the same in different conditions of observation.

But even if one accepts that the dispute is merely verbal, one does not have to accept that the dispute is legitimate. Austin and Todd are right that the opponent of ordinary views misuses words and is muddled about whether he is operating within or without our conceptual scheme. As Ayer presents the dispute, the opponent believes that he is arguing over a question of fact; he is not proposing a new language as Ayer implies, since he is not aware that he is using words unusually. He has simply adopted a new verbal convention without announcing it and thus his argument

is entirely confused. Ayer may be right that new conventions are possible, but he is wrong to assume that one speaker can make his own conventions when he wishes and proceed to use them without informing other speakers of the language.

CHAPTER FOUR
AUSTIN'S ANALYSIS OF 'REAL'

Ayer's use of the word 'real' in his evaluation of the argument from illusion provokes Austin's detailed analysis of the word 'real.' What Austin particularly tries to show is what a complex word 'real' is, a word with too many functions to have been adequately dealt with by Ayer's simple account. Since I have already covered Ayer's use of 'real' in my description of his evaluation of the argument from illusion, I will begin directly by setting out Austin's discussion.

The first point which Austin makes about 'real' is that it is an ordinary word with an established usage in ordinary language. It is not open to philosophers to disregard this usage and to use the word in any way they please. It is not that we must, says Austin, after having found out how a word is used, continue to use it in exactly that way. We may make changes in our usage as long as we bear in mind that the distinctions embodied in our ordinary language are subtle, numerous, and rarely arbitrary, that we need to be completely familiar with a word before tampering with it, and that when we tamper with one word, we may at the same time be affecting other words as well.

Another aspect of 'real' to which Austin draws our attention is that 'real' is, in some respects, an abnormal word in that it does not have "one, single, specifiable, always-the-same meaning" nor does it have "a large number of different meanings--it is not

ambiguous, even 'systematically'" (S, 64). The fact that 'real' is not a word like red--that is, a normally unambiguous name for a quality--has led some philosophers into confusion. They have been unable to find the quality common to "real ducks, real cream, and real progress" and have thus been led to such absurd views as that Reality is "an a priori concept apprehended by reason alone" (S, 64).

Austin goes on to demonstrate that 'real' is a highly complex word by giving illustrations of its many functions. He shows how explanations of 'real,' similar to Ayer's, which assert that a quality is real when it is perceived in standard conditions, do not explain all occurrences of 'real.' If someone says, "That is not the real colour of her hair," he may mean to assert, not that her hair is being viewed in non-standard conditions, but simply that her hair is dyed. Austin also points out the many cases where it is difficult or impossible to decide whether an object or quality is real or not. What is the real colour of the sun, of a pointilliste painting, of an after-image, or of a chameleon? What is the real shape of a cloud or a cat?

Austin proceeds to contrast these cases with cases where "we do know how to proceed" (S, 67). We know, for example, what criteria to use to determine whether something is a real diamond or a real duck. We know, says Austin, that something may fail to be a real duck, through being a dummy, a toy, or a decoy. All these cases are quite different and none of them has anything to do with standard conditions. It is also necessary to point out that if something is not a real

duck, it is not a non-existent duck or a non-existent anything and that something existent can fail to be real--a decoy, for example, is not a real duck.

Having shown some of the complexities of the word 'real,' Austin attempts to explain the word's functions in a more organized way and classifies its more important features under four headings. I will explain his views on each feature and following each explanation I will review the critics and make my own comments. Since Ayer's comments on Austin's positive analysis of 'real' are combined with Ayer's defense of his own analysis, I will review Ayer's reply to Austin in Chapter Five.

The first feature of 'real' that Austin mentions is its substantive-hungriness. One must know what is said to be real, for the statement 'this is real' to have any sense. The reason one must know the substantive is that the same object may be both a real x and not a real y; a real decoy duck, but not a real duck. Austin adds at this point another claim which is that we only ask whether something is real or not when there is reason to suspect that things may not be what they seem. And further, we can only ask this question if there is a way in which things can not be what they seem. It does not make sense to ask, for example, whether something is a real after-image.

It is generally accepted by the critics that Austin is right about 'real's substantive-hungriness. His comment that we only

ask whether something is real or not when we have reason to suspect that things may not be what they seem, however, is not accepted. Both Todd and Bennett⁷ point out that the question can come up even when there is no suspicion involved. Bennett argues, quite rightly I think, that the question "real or not?" can simply be a request for more information. We can ask someone who says he bought a gold ring, for example, whether he means real gold, not because we suspect that the gold was not real, but because we just do not know one way or the other.

The next important fact about 'real' which Austin mentions is that it is its negative use which is basic. The assertion that something is real makes sense "only in the light of a specific way in which it might be, or might have been, not real" (S, 70). To say that something is "a real duck" differs from saying that it is "a duck" only in that 'real' excludes ways that the duck might not have been real, by being "a dummy, a toy, a picture, a decoy, etc." (S, 70) Austin infers from the fact that 'real' is used to exclude, that one cannot understand someone who claims that something is real, unless one knows just what it is he "has it in mind to exclude" (S, 70). Austin develops his doctrine of the exclusive function of 'real,' by saying that 'real' does not "contribute positively to the characterization of anything" but simply excludes "possible ways of being not real" (S, 70). Failure to recognize that 'real' merely excludes has led philosophers on the futile search

⁷Jonathan Bennett, "'Real,'" Mind (1966), rpt. in K. T. Fann, ed., Symposium on J. L. Austin, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 267-283.

for a property common to all real things. The fact that 'real' excludes different ways of 'not being real' on different occasions and when applied to different things and yet has the same function throughout its uses means that 'real,' without having a single meaning, is not ambiguous.

None of the critics is willing to accept Austin's claim that it is the negative use of 'real' which is basic. They reject, for example, the claim that 'real' cannot be used to ascribe properties. Thomas McClintock⁸ believes that Austin may actually have confused the notion of 'not ascribing qualities' with the notion of 'serving to rule something out' and that this is why he failed to see that 'real' can ascribe qualities. McClintock shows, in the same sort of argument Todd, Forrest and Coval⁹, and Bennett present, that 'real' can ascribe properties. If we say that something is real money, he says, we are not merely excluding the possibility that it is counterfeit, we are also assigning it the quality of "having originated from a (the relevant) mint."¹⁰ So Austin cannot support the claim that the positive use of 'real' is not basic with the claim that 'real' does not ascribe qualities.

⁸Thomas McClintock, "'Real' and Excluders," Analysis, 30 (1969), 16-22.

⁹Sam Coval and Terry Forrest, "Which Word Wears the Trousers?," Mind, 76 (1967), 73-82.

¹⁰McClintock, p. 21.

He might still be able to support his position if he could show that, although 'real' could ascribe qualities, it always at the same time served to rule out a specific way of not being real. But there is reason to believe that 'real' does not always exclude a specific way of not being real. As Todd and Bennett point out, in saying that something is real, I am of necessity excluding a variety of ways in which the object might have been not real. If I say, "that is a real duck," because I am afraid someone might take it for a decoy, my statement rules out the possibility that the duck is a dummy, toy, or fake of any kind, as well as the possibility that it is a decoy. I cannot use my words to rule out only what needs to be ruled out in one particular circumstance.

There do seem, however, to be exceptions to this rule. Consider an example similar to Austin's: "Blonde is the real colour of her hair." It would appear true in this case that one would need to know what specific way of not being real the speaker wished to exclude in order to understand his assertion. Does he mean to exclude the possibility that her hair is dyed, or the possibility that it merely looks blonde because of the lighting, or does he recognize that her hair is not blonde, and wish to point out that originally it was blonde?

An interesting thing about this example is that the use of 'real' that occurs in the third interpretation contradicts some of Austin's remarks about 'real' as an excluder. Austin said that to say of something that it was a real x was only to say more than that it was an x in that 'real' served to exclude a

way of not being an x. But if "Blonde is the real colour of her hair" is taken to mean that her hair was originally blonde, then this analysis does not apply. "Blonde is the real colour of her hair" does not break down into "Blonde is the colour of her hair" and "her hair is not dyed." For one thing, the statement "Blonde is the colour of her hair" is simply false. What it could be said to break down to is "Blonde was the colour of her hair" and "her hair was not then dyed."

It must be noticed, however, that Austin, in forming his doctrine of 'real' as an excluder, had in mind expressions of the form 'a real x'; that is the type of expression he mentions at the beginning of his discussion of 'real' as an excluder. He says, "a definite sense attaches to the assertion that something is real, a real such-and-such, only in the light of a specific way in which it might be, or might have been, not real" (S, 70). He does not mention anything about "the real such-and-such." He may not have meant the excluder analysis to apply to expressions like "the real colour of her hair" or he may not have noticed that it did not apply.

It is true, however, that certain of Austin's remarks do apply to "Blonde is the real colour of her hair" in the other two interpretations. That is, we can tell which of these two interpretations is right, if we know what the speaker has in mind to exclude. If we know that he means to exclude that the colour of the woman's hair is not natural, then we know which of

the two ways to take him. But this fact does not support Austin's claim that 'not real' is basic. It does not support it because if we know what way of being real the speaker has in mind to affirm, we also know which way to take him. If we know that he is using 'real' to mean 'natural,' then we do not get confused with the alternative interpretation.

So we see that Austin has no reason to say that 'not real' is basic. With expressions of the form 'a real x' there is no problem of ambiguity even when we do not know what the speaker has in mind to exclude. With expressions of the form 'the real x,' we occasionally have ambiguity, but where it can be resolved by knowing what way of 'not being real' is excluded, it can also be resolved by knowing what way of 'being real' is affirmed.

The third feature of 'real' which Austin notes is that it is what he calls a dimension-word; that is, it is "the most general and comprehensive term in a whole group of terms of the same kind" (S, 71). The list of words that 'real' heads up is, according to Austin--'proper,' 'genuine,' 'live,' 'true,' 'authentic,' 'natural'; the list 'not real' heads up is--'artificial,' 'fake,' 'false,' 'bogus,' 'makeshift,' 'dummy,' 'synthetic,' 'toy,' 'dream,' 'illusion,' 'mirage,' and 'hallucination.' He notes that the more specific terms on the affirmative and negative sides tend to pair up--for example, 'genuine/false,' 'natural/artificial'--and that we can usually tell, from the substantive to which 'real' is applied, what specific way of not being real is meant to be excluded.

Austin's claim that 'real' is a dimension-word is criticized by Bennett. He feels that Austin has obscured the nature of the word 'real' by throwing it into a group, as the group's heading, of words like 'proper,' 'genuine,' 'live,' 'natural.' Austin neglected to say what the common function of these word was, and therefore, did not realize what a "rag-bag" collection they formed. 'A real x' marks off x's from things which are not x's at all, except when 'real' is used for praise or emphasis in an expression like "Now that's what I call real coffee!" But many of the words Austin puts in the same category as 'real' do not have this function. Both synthetic and natural fibres, for example, are fibres. 'Natural' does not necessarily contrast what is an x with what is not an x at all.

Another criticism that can be made of Austin is that what he says about 'real' as a dimension-word, just as what he said about 'real' as an excluder, does not apply to expressions of the form, 'the real colour of x.' As Bennett notes, Austin's remarks are often false when applied to 'a real x,' but they are unintelligible when applied to 'the real x.' Austin's doctrine of dimension-words does not apply to 'the real colour of x' or similar expressions because almost none of the words he lists as being in the same dimension as 'real' can be applied in those expressions. One cannot, for example, talk of the artificial, fake, false, bogus, makeshift, dummy, synthetic, or toy shape of an object. In fact, the only negative word that could be said to apply is 'illusory.' It is hard to see how these words can all have

the same function as 'real' in an expression like 'the real shape of x' when only one of them can occur in expressions of that form. Austin seems to have concentrated solely on expressions like 'a real x' when forming his doctrine of dimension-words.

The fourth feature of 'real' which Austin mentions is that it is what he calls an 'adjuster-word,' a word which adjusts other words to meet new situations. Adjuster-words make our language flexible despite its limited vocabulary. Austin illustrates how an adjuster-word, like 'real,' operates in a new and unforeseen situation, by describing a case where we come across a new kind of animal, very much but not quite like a pig. We may not want to say right away of this animal either that it is or is not a pig. What we could say right away, however, would be "It is like a pig." The word 'like,' says Austin, is the great adjuster-word. And having made this first remark, we could add, "But it isn't a real pig," using 'real' as an adjuster. Austin explains in more detail, after giving this example, just what an adjuster-word is. He says, "If we think of words as being shot like arrows at the world, the function of these adjuster-words is to free us from the disability of being able to shoot only straight ahead; by their use on occasion, such words as 'pig' can be, so to speak, brought into connexion with targets lying slightly off the simple, straightforward line on which they are ordinarily aimed" (S, 74).

It is interesting that Austin's doctrine of adjuster-words is received so differently by different critics. Bennett rejects

entirely the doctrine, while Todd regards it as the best part of Austin's analysis of 'real' and he and Coval make great use of it in their article together. Later on, I will attempt to show that Todd and Coval do not usually mean by adjuster-word what Austin means by it and thus that their praise of the adjuster-word doctrine is not entirely directed at Austin. But first, I would like to deal with Bennett's criticisms.

Bennett quite rightly points out that in Austin's example of 'real' functioning as an adjuster-word, "It is not a real pig, but is like a pig," the word 'real' does not do any adjusting; it is only 'like' which adjusts. Austin makes 'real' appear to do work by saying: we do not want to decide whether the new animal is or is not a pig straight off, so we say simply, "It is like a pig" and after that proceed with the remark "but it is not a real pig." But what Austin does not realize is that to say "not a real pig" is to make the decision that the animal in question is not a pig; it is not to avoid decision as Austin thinks. So, Austin's one example of 'real' functioning as an adjuster-word is false and Bennett suspects that any attempted example would be false. He says, "To present 'real' as an adjuster-word one needs a case in which we should deny that the animal is a real pig while refusing to deny that it is a pig. I doubt whether such a case could be found."¹¹

What Bennett's commentary does not make completely clear,

¹¹Bennett, p. 280.

however, is that the 'real' in "It is not a real pig, but is like a pig" is not merely unnecessary but actually inappropriate.

Bennett points out that we cannot say of a goose, no matter how much it resembles a duck, that it is not a 'real duck,' because it is not similarity as such that brings 'real' into play. We say that something is not a real x, when it has commonly but elliptically or mistakenly been called an x. If one were to see, therefore, a new kind of animal, extremely like a pig, but not a pig, one could not correctly remark that "It is not a real pig." It is not as if, as Austin presents the case, these animals are already referred to as pigs by some people. As Austin presents the case, it is of someone finding a new animal that has never been classified or given a name at all. In that case, the expression 'not a real pig' cannot correctly be used.

The fact that 'real' is not an adjuster-word, however, does not necessarily mean that Todd and others who make use of the notion are entirely wrong. The problem is that Todd does not use 'adjuster-word' the way Austin uses it. Todd claims that 'real' is used most commonly as an adjuster not in new and unforeseen situations but in situations that are "deviant or aberrant in commonly known, standard ways" (A, 180). Now as we have seen, Todd is wrong that 'real' functions as an adjuster-word in new and unforeseen situations. He is also wrong, however, that 'real' functions as an adjuster-word in familiar, deviant situations, when 'adjuster-word' is taken in Austin's sense. If we say "that is not a real duck" about a decoy, we are not using 'real'

as an adjuster because we are not bringing 'duck' "into connexion with targets lying slightly off the simple, straightforward line on which they are ordinarily aimed" (S, 74). What we are doing, on the contrary, is to deny that any such connexion can be made. So in neither the new and unforeseen situation nor in the familiar, deviant situation is 'real' or 'not real' used to adjust.

As was mentioned earlier, Todd and Coval's own analysis of how 'real' functions in familiar, deviant situations is not entirely wrong, since it is mostly independent of Austin's adjuster theory. Their explanation of 'real' in what they call the 'standard-adjuster mechanism' is close to Bennett's discussion of 'real' in its stressed classification and ellipsis-excluding uses. It is these uses of 'real' which occur in situations that are "deviant or aberrant in commonly known, standard ways" (A, 180). It is interesting that it is just the fact that 'real' occurs in this sort of situation which shows Austin's example of 'real' as an adjuster to be wrong. 'Real' could not be used in the new and unforeseen situation which Austin described simply because the new animal was not a commonly known deviation from a pig. It was not like 'a toy pig,' for example, something that could be referred to elliptically as 'a pig' because it was a familiar deviation from a pig. The new animal could not in any sense be referred to as a pig and thus there would never be any point in saying "It is not a real pig." So, although Todd and Coval are unaware of it, their comments on 'real' are not additions to Austin's doctrine of adjuster-words, but instead can be used to prove

that doctrine wrong.

One more point I would like to make about 'real' as an adjuster-word is that, again, in this case, Austin's remarks about 'real' are not merely false when applied to expressions of the form 'the real colour of x'; they are unintelligible. Expressions of the form 'the real colour of x' have nothing to do with new and unforeseen situations in which we come across things very similar to, but not quite like, things already known and named. It would be nonsense to imagine there could be a new and unforeseen situation in which we came across something very much like, say, "the colour of her hair," but not exactly like it, so that we were led to remark, "that's not the real colour of her hair."

CHAPTER FIVE

APPEARANCE AND REALITY

Ayer's chapter "Appearance and Reality" was severely attacked by Austin. Austin rejects entirely--he calls it a "fatal enterprise"--Ayer's attempted account of several of the uses of 'real.' Ayer tries in this chapter to explain two "real-apparent" distinctions, distinctions which are involved in the notions of qualitative and existential delusion. An existentially delusive perception is a perception which seems to present an object, when no object is, in fact, there. A qualitatively delusive perception is a perception which seems to present an object as having a quality when it does not really have that quality. Ayer does not mean to imply by the term 'delusive' that we are actually fooled in these cases, since, as he points out, we may know, for example, that an object does not really have the quality it appears to us to have.

Ayer wants to determine our criteria for deciding whether a perception is delusive or not. How do we determine that an object is real or that the quality it appears to have is its real quality? Why do we say that the real colour of a flower, for example, is red, despite the fact that it looks purple?

Now Ayer answers the question of how 'real' is used in cases of existential delusion by referring back to his previous analysis of the constitution of material things. We deny that an object is real when our perception of it is existentially delusive, that

is, when "the form or the context of a sense-datum would lead one to assume that it belonged to a group of sense-data of the kind I have been describing [in previous analysis], whereas, in fact, one's expectation of being able to sense further members of the group would not be capable of being fulfilled" (F, 263-4).

Ayer, after giving this brief explanation, goes on to devote much more time to the use of 'real' which is connected with qualitative delusion. He notices that we cannot decide, simply by considering an individual sense-datum, whether or not it presents a material object as it really is. A flower that looks purple, for example, may or may not have the quality of purpleness. It is the relation in which a sense-datum stands to other sense-data, which determines whether it is the bearer of the real quality of the object and not something in the individual sense-datum itself.

Ayer next considers the view that the relation in question has something to do with context, that the quality an object appears to have is its real quality when the object is observed in preferential conditions. This explanation is the one given when, for example, it is claimed that red is not the real colour of an object because it is observed in an abnormal light. There are, Ayer notes, two objections to this explanation. The first is that preferential conditions are not the same for every object. The second is that the choice of preferential conditions seems rather arbitrary. Ayer takes the second objection as the more difficult. He attempts to deal with it by saying that although

our choice of preferential conditions is just a matter of convention, it is not entirely arbitrary because it serves an empirical purpose. We call the sense-data that occur in certain conditions the real qualities of objects because "they have the greatest value as sources of prediction" (F, 267). If, for example, one were to look at an object in standard conditions, i.e., with normal eyes, in good light, etc. one would be able to predict how it would look in different circumstances and from different points of view. If, however, one were to look at the object through dark glasses, one would have trouble determining what colour it would look when the glasses were removed. Although preferential conditions are not the same for each object there is a general rule for determining what each object's preferential conditions are. Preferential conditions are those conditions which allow us best to predict what qualities an object will appear to have in varying circumstances. And because sense-data in certain conditions are most reliable as bases for prediction, Ayer says, "we come to conceive of these sense-data as the 'standard' members of their groups, from which the others systematically deviate" (F, 268).

Ayer goes on to note several other senses of 'real.' The fact that the sense of touch is the most reliable sense in terms of prediction allows "the introduction of a superior criterion of the reality of certain physical characteristics, the criterion of measurement" (F, 271). The criteria for the use of 'real' in this sense are not the same as for the sense just considered, but

the underlying principle of the two senses is the same, since "the phenomena of measurement have a markedly high predictive value" (F, 272). Another use of 'real' which Ayer considers is the distinction between 'real' and 'illusory' as it is applied to "whole segments of our perceptual histories" (F, 273): for example, as it is applied to dreams rather than merely to individual perceptual judgments. In dreams, we could have a set of experiences which pass the earlier-mentioned tests for reality, at least in the sense that we could have an experience like that of measuring and then wake up to find that the object we supposedly measured did not exist at all. But even this use of 'reality' does not depend on any new principle, since "the ascription of 'reality' depends upon the predictive value of the sense-data on which the perceptions are based" (F, 274). A series of perceptions is considered 'real' if we can use it to predict the future course of our experience; if it is too much at odds with our future perceptions we dismiss it as illusion.

Austin disagrees with most of what Ayer says in "Appearance and Reality." Austin finds fault with the distinction Ayer makes at the beginning of the chapter between "qualitatively delusive" and "existentially delusive" perceptions. It is not that he does not understand what Ayer means by these expressions, but that he thinks that the two categories do not "exhaust" the field. Austin claims he can produce examples that are part of the "field," and yet fit into neither category. If one took a decoy for a real duck, he says, one's error would not fall completely into either

category. One might suppose that this case fell into the category of qualitative delusion, since I make the mistake of thinking that the object I see could quack, but there is equally good reason for supposing that it falls under the category of existential delusion. The case might be classified under existential delusion in that the material thing my perception seems to present does not exist at all: "I think there is a real duck before me but in fact there isn't." Ayer has once again, says Austin, presented us with false alternatives. In this case, the mistake Ayer seems to have made is to have concentrated on the situation where I think I see something where nothing really is and "overlooked the much more common case in which I think I see something where something else really is" (S, 79). The result of Ayer's oversight, according to Austin, is that he leaves out of consideration "a large part and probably the largest part, of the territory within which we draw distinctions between 'appearance and reality'" (S, 80).

But even Ayer's account of the few uses of 'real' he does choose to consider is, in Austin's opinion, unsatisfactory. The predictive analysis does not apply to all the uses of 'real' with which Ayer was concerned. We may deny that the colour a woman's hair looks is the real colour of her hair, not because the colour it looks serves as a poor basis for prediction but because her hair is dyed. Or again, we may deny that the real colour of a flower that has been grown in green fluid is green, not because 'green' has poor predictive power, but simply because the flower's natural colour is white.

Although Austin believes that these examples show Ayer's account of the few uses of 'real' which he examines to be a failure, the citing of these examples is not, in Austin's opinion, his most important criticism of Ayer. The greatest mistake Ayer made was to try to give one general account (or perhaps two, if his remarks about existential delusion are included) of the use of 'real.' But Austin's previous discussion, he claims, ought to have made it clear why no such single, general account of the word is possible. Ayer may have been led to believe that such a general account was possible by his "initial propensity to believe that the terrain can be neatly and exhaustively divided in two" (S, 83).

Ayer does not accept that Austin's remarks about 'real' are relevant to his own account. He mentions that Jonathan Bennett's article "'Real'" has shown certain flaws in Austin's account. Nevertheless, Ayer accepts that there are, as Austin says, many uses of the word 'real.' Among those uses, Ayer is careful to point out, is one which contrasts the real with the apparent, as in the example, "the penny looks elliptical from this angle but it is really round" (H, 302) and another which contrasts what is real with what is illusory, as in the example of "the drunkard's seeing pink rats which are not really there" (H, 302). These are the uses which are of interest to the sense-datist. The fact that he does not deal with uses that are irrelevant to his argument is not, says Ayer, "a reproach to him" (H, 302).

Ayer criticizes also Austin's attempt to provide counter-

examples to his predictive analysis of 'real.' The fact that there are situations where the word 'real' is not applicable, where it is impossible to determine, for example, what an object's real colour is, is not an argument against Ayer's analysis of 'real.' Ayer wanted to show what our criteria for the use of the word 'real' were in situations where we use the word 'real.' Ayer admits that his predictive analysis does not cover cases like "That's not the real colour of her hair," but that is because Ayer was not concerned with 'real' as it is used to distinguish the natural from the artificial. Ayer asks, "Could Austin really (i.e. genuinely) have believed that I was?" (H, 302)

Austin's evaluation of Ayer's "Appearance and Reality" contains many confusions and much misinterpretation of Ayer. There is not much commentary on this section except by Todd, who attempts to defend Ayer against certain of Austin's criticisms. I will discuss Austin's criticisms in the order in which they occur in chapter eight, and will therefore discuss Todd's comments on those criticisms later.

What I want to consider first is Austin's claim that Ayer's distinction between existentially and qualitatively delusive perception is unsatisfactory because it does not "exhaust the field." The problem is that it is difficult to say what Austin means by "exhausting the field." He takes the example of someone mistaking a decoy for a real duck as showing that Ayer left out part of the field. But there are many reasons why this attempted

counter-example cannot be accepted.

For one thing, the example brings in two types of distinction between 'real' and 'not real' when only one is at all relevant. Austin wants to discuss the case where we take one object for another, and the uses of 'real' connected with such a mistake. Why then does he also bring in the distinction between 'real' and 'decoy' which is not involved in every case of taking one object for another? Austin may not have realized that there were two uses of 'real' involved in his example, an oversight which would show him to have been seriously confused. If he did recognize the two uses, he ought to have chosen another counter-example, or at least to have mentioned that there were two uses involved; otherwise his example merely confuses the issue.

Another problem with Austin's counter-example is that it is not specific enough. To decide whether the case falls into qualitative or existential delusion or neither, we need to have more information. Since Austin is not specific enough, we will have to consider the several situations that could be described by his counter-example to determine whether any of them cannot be classified in Ayer's categories.

One way of taking a decoy for a real duck could be described as follows: If one were to look at either a decoy or a real duck from a distance, it would present a brownish duck-like shape with not very clear outlines. Since either object presents the same appearance from a distance, if one had no further information

than what one could observe at the time, one could easily take one for another. One's error would not be misperception in the ordinary sense, since one observed what any normal person would have observed from that distance when looking at either object.

There is another way in which one might take one object for another. If one were in a situation in which one could not see well--in the dark, for instance--one might look at an object like a decoy and take it for a real duck because one thought one saw in it a quality that real ducks, but not decoys, have. Someone might think that he could distinguish feathers, for example, when the decoy duck he was in fact perceiving had a smooth outline. In this case, he would be misperceiving in the ordinary sense, since he saw the object as having qualities it does not ordinarily appear to have, even in bad perceptual conditions.

There is a third situation in which one might take one object for another. If one were to look at a very good imitation of a duck--one, say, which was externally or from certain points of view exactly like a duck--one would naturally make the mistake of taking it for a real duck. In this case, one would not have misperceived in any sense at all since the qualities one thought one saw were in fact possessed by the object. One's error would not be an error of perception but rather an error of inference. One assumed that because the object had certain qualities, it had to have certain other qualities as well.

Now, is it true that some of these cases do not fall entirely

into either qualitative or existential delusion? To decide that question, one would have to be completely clear about what qualitative and existential delusions are. Unfortunately, Austin was not entirely clear on this question and seems to have misunderstood Ayer's distinction. It will be worthwhile, therefore, to show where Austin misinterpreted Ayer and to clarify Ayer's distinction before deciding whether the decoy duck example constitutes a counter-example to that distinction.

Austin claims that one might say that my taking a decoy duck for a real duck fell into the category of qualitative delusion because "I mistakenly suppose that the object I see could quack" (S, 79). But to suppose that the object one sees could quack is not to be involved in qualitative delusion. To make such an error is not to be involved in a perceptual error at all. To infer that the decoy one observed could quack is not to have a qualitatively delusive perception--it is to make a mistaken inference. If one had thought one had heard the duck quack, then that would have been to have had a qualitatively delusive perception. Austin had no excuse to make this error since Ayer was perfectly clear about what he meant by "qualitatively delusive perception."

Austin also misinterpreted what Ayer meant by "existential delusion." When Ayer said that, in existentially delusive perceptions, the objects we seem to see do not exist at all, he meant that there is nothing that we really perceive. He says that "the occasions where a perception is held to be existentially delusive

are those on which the form or the context of a sense-datum would lead one to assume that it belonged to a group of sense-data of the kind I have been describing, whereas, in fact, one's expectation of being able to sense further members of the group would not be capable of being fulfilled" (F, 263-4). In other words, an existentially delusive perception is a delusion in the ordinary sense, a case where an object, in Austin's words, is "conjured up" (S, 25). One thinks one sees an object but no object is there. Austin recognizes what sort of case Ayer had in mind when he says, "Ayer has frozen on the truly 'delusive' sort of case, in which I think I see something where nothing really is" (S, 79). What Austin failed to recognize was that Ayer meant to "freeze" on that sort of case. That is to say, Ayer overlooked that "the material object our perception seems to present does not exist at all" could be interpreted in such a way that it covered cases of taking one object for another. But if he had noticed that his first comments on existential delusion could be interpreted in that way he would certainly have wished to make them clearer. His later remarks on existential delusion show that he did not wish to include anything but totally delusive perceptions. So it is not that Ayer overlooked that mistaking one object for another fell partially into the category of existential delusion; it is that he overlooked that his first definition of existential delusion was ambiguous in that it could be interpreted to include taking one object for another. Austin was wrong, then, in his interpretation of "existentially delusive

perceptions," although the fault is partially Ayer's for a careless first definition.

One reason why Ayer might have failed to notice that his first remarks on "existentially delusive perceptions" were ambiguous is that he was thinking of objects in terms of the sense-datum theory. Ayer thinks of objects as logical constructions out of sense-data. In saying that an object one thought one saw did not exist at all, then, he would mean that none of the sense-data belonging to it were sensed. But when one takes a decoy for a real duck, many of the sense-data one senses do belong to the object one thinks one sees. Taking a decoy for a real duck, then, would not involve existential delusion.

Austin's counter-example might still work, however, if it showed that there were types of perceptual "delusion" that not only did not fall under "existential delusion" but also did not fall under the alternative heading of "qualitative delusion." But if we examine the three situations that are included in his counter-example, we see that they do not cause problems for Ayer's distinction. The perceptual "delusion" involved in the first situation is qualitative delusion. Someone takes the decoy duck for a real duck, because at a distance, he cannot perceive the decoy distinctly; it appears, for example, not to have a clear outline. The perception of the decoy, then, is qualitatively delusive, since the decoy appears to have qualities it does not really have. The second situation also involves qualitative delusion. The decoy is taken for a real duck because the observer

thinks he sees in it a quality that only real ducks have. The third situation fits into neither category, but this fact does not support Austin's position. If one takes a decoy for a real duck because in all the respects one observes the object is exactly like a real duck, then one does not misperceive in any sense at all. One has made an error of inference and not a perceptual mistake. Since Ayer's distinction was a distinction between types of perception, it is natural that it should not apply to a type of inference. We see, then, that there is no reason to accept Austin's counter-example. It does not show that the distinction between existential and qualitative delusion is unclear or that there is no overlap between the two notions.

Austin, however, presents other reasons for objecting to Ayer's attempt to deal with 'real' as it occurs in cases of qualitative and existential delusion. These objections are similar to the objections just discussed and it is not entirely clear that Austin saw them as separate. Austin finds fault with Ayer for not dealing with the case where we take one object for another, because in leaving it out, he left out "a large part, and probably the largest part, of the territory within which we draw distinctions between 'appearance and reality'" (S, 80). His discussion leaves out the various cases "in which something is or might be taken to be what it isn't really--as paste diamonds, for instance, may be taken to be real diamonds" (S, 80).

Now there are many confusions involved in Austin's criticism. For one thing, Ayer's distinction did not leave out, as we have

seen, the case where we take one object for another, as when we take paste diamonds for real diamonds, because such a mistake, when it involves perception, falls under "qualitative delusion." But it is hard to tell whether Austin meant taking a paste diamond for a real diamond as a case of taking one object for another, since his example is confused in the way his decoy duck example was confused. Austin has brought into his example the distinction between 'real' and 'paste,' a distinction which is not involved in taking one object for another.

If, however, Austin meant his example to show that Ayer's distinction left out the contrast between 'real' and 'paste,' then still Austin's example fails to affect Ayer. As Austin notes, the contrast 'real-paste' has nothing to do with existentially or qualitatively delusive perceptions. One would expect, therefore, that Ayer's distinction would leave it out. But Austin argues that the fact that Ayer's distinction has nothing to do with the contrast 'real-paste' is what is wrong with the distinction. "It divides up the topic in a way that leaves a lot of it out" (S, 80).

Now why does Austin say that Ayer's distinction leaves out part of the "topic"? Ayer said that his topic was the use of the word 'real' that is involved in cases of qualitative and existential delusion. He states at the beginning of the chapter what problem he is concerned with. After explaining what

qualitatively and existentially delusive perceptions are, he asks how it is that we determine whether a perception is qualitatively or existentially delusive--"By what criteria does one determine whether or not a sense-datum presents a material thing as it really is," (F, 263) Further, when Ayer discusses qualitatively delusive perceptions, the type of perception with which he is principally concerned, he explains in detail what 'appearance-reality' distinction is involved in that type of perception. He points out that if one is fooled by a qualitatively delusive perception, "one will attribute to the thing some character that it does not really have" (F, 264), while if one is not deceived, "one may say that the thing really has the character x, but that it appears to have the character y" (F, 264). And again he states that he is not concerned with all 'appearance-reality' distinctions when he says, "Accordingly the problem is to discover what differences among sense-data underlie this particular distinction between 'appearance' and 'reality'" (F, 264).

There is only one of Ayer's statements of topic that is at all ambiguous. That is his statement that to explain the particular 'appearance-reality' distinction in question, is "to furnish an explanation of the use of the word 'real' as it is applied to the characteristics of material things" (F, 264). But this statement is just poorly formulated and cannot be taken as ambiguous in its context. Ayer, since he has just said that he is concerned with one particular distinction between appearance and reality cannot intend to say that to explain that distinction is to explain

all uses of 'real,' that is, he cannot intend "the use" to mean "all uses." He cannot have that intention after he has just recognized and stated that there are other 'real-apparent' distinctions. Furthermore, Ayer points out, later in the chapter, that there is another use of 'real' as it is applied to characteristics, besides the use he first explains, and that is the use of 'real' connected with measurement. So it is impossible to interpret Ayer as not recognizing that there are several different uses of 'real' applied to characteristics. Ayer does not try to explain all those uses of 'real,' however, because they are not all of interest to him. Ayer, in explaining only the use of 'real' that is connected with qualitative delusion (and earlier, with existential delusion) is not overlooking certain 'appearance-reality' distinctions, he is deliberately leaving them out. So, if Austin means by "topic," "what the author intended to discuss," then Ayer's distinction between existential and qualitative delusion did not leave out any of the topic. On the contrary, it covered it exactly.

But there may have been other reasons why Austin said that Ayer left out part of the topic. Austin may have meant that, although Ayer considered his topic to be only a few of the uses of 'real,' he could not properly deal with those uses independently of all the other uses of 'real.' Austin seems at times to recognize that Ayer was not concerned to explain all uses of 'real.' On p. 82, for example, Austin refers to "the very restricted bit of the use of 'real' which Ayer chooses to discuss." Perhaps,

Austin thought that there is some essential connexion between one use of 'real' and another which makes it impossible to analyse them separately. But the problem is that if that is what Austin thought, why did he not present any arguments to support that point of view? Austin never actually shows that there is some essential connexion between one use of 'real' and another. And this essential connexion certainly cannot just be assumed, since it is not immediately apparent why one cannot discuss only a limited area of the use of 'real.'

Now Austin does not merely object to Ayer's analysis of 'real' because it is only concerned with a limited area of the use of that word. He feels that it is unsatisfactory as an account of the few uses of 'real' that Ayer does discuss. He presents a group of counter-examples which are intended to show that Ayer's predictive analysis does not apply even to the few uses of 'real' Ayer concerned himself with. But what is wrong about these counter-examples is that some of them do not contain the relevant use of 'real' and those that do contain that use can be accounted for by the predictive analysis.

Austin's first example is of our refusing to call the colour a woman's hair looks its real colour because her hair is dyed rather than because the colour her hair looks serves as a poor basis for prediction. But this counter-example fails because the use of 'real' it exhibits is not the use of 'real' to which Ayer meant his predictive analysis to apply. It is a use of 'real'

totally unrelated to delusive perceptions. If we look at a woman's dyed hair, and see it as blonde our perception is not delusive in any way, but perfectly veridical. The quality the woman's hair appears to have is the quality it really does have. The fact is that the woman's hair looks blonde because it is blonde--in the sense of 'real' that Ayer is interested in, the real colour of the woman's hair is blonde. There is, however, another sense of 'real,' in which the real colour of the woman's hair is not blonde, and that is the sense that occurs in Austin's example. 'Real' in this sense means 'natural' and has nothing to do with qualitatively delusive perceptions. The predictive analysis was not meant to apply to it and therefore it is not a criticism of Ayer to point out that it does not apply. Austin's counter-example of a naturally white flower turned green in green fluid is defective in a similar way.

D. D. Todd, in his thesis, defended Ayer against these counter-examples in a different way. He argues that Ayer's predictive analysis, with a few modifications, does apply to Austin's counter-examples. Now I think it has been shown that Ayer's predictive analysis was not meant to apply to the uses of 'real' in these two counter-examples and thus that there is no need for Todd to try and make this application. It is true, as he says, that with modifications, Ayer's analysis can be made to apply, but the fact that it can be made to apply to the two counter-examples just discussed is irrelevant.

The third counter-example of Austin's--the example of the grey cloth which looks black and white is the only one of the four counter-examples which contains the use of 'real' to which the predictive analysis was meant to apply. If Austin could show that the predictive analysis did not apply in this case, then he would have an argument against Ayer.

But I think that Todd shows that the predictive analysis does apply to this case. For one thing, even if we did not predict that the grey cloth would look black and white close up, this fact would not mean that the situations in which the object looked grey served as poor bases for prediction. For if we predicted that the object would look grey in most situations, we would be right. The fact that we would not predict, says Todd, how the cloth would look in every situation would not mean that the predictive analysis does not apply. Besides, as Todd also points out, we might well predict that the object would look black and white close up on the basis of its greyness, since grey is a blend of black and white.

Todd also rejects Austin's fourth example of a wine-taster refusing to call a dry wine sour. The wine-taster refuses to call the wine sour not because the real taste of the wine is not sour, but because it is a social convention not to call good wine sour. The wine is sour, but we do not say that it is, probably because the word 'sour' suggests a rather unpleasant taste.

It is clear, then, that Austin has not shown that the predictive

analysis does not apply to any of the uses of 'real' to which it was intended to apply. The error which we have seen throughout Austin's chapter is evident in these counter-examples. Austin simply misunderstood with which uses of 'real' Ayer was concerned. Austin's whole attack on Ayer is misdirected, and fails to show that Ayer's account of appearance and reality is defective in any way.

CHAPTER SIX
AUSTIN'S METHOD

In the preceding chapters, I have expressed the view that Austin's analysis of Ayer is usually mistaken. His detailed criticisms are for the most part either wrong or irrelevant. This repeated judgment on the merits of particular issues seems to me the result of systematic faults in Austin's method of argument. I find weaknesses of a methodological kind that appear over and over again and that seem to be responsible for almost all the particular difficulties.

One of these general weaknesses and perhaps the most consequential, is the quite surprising way in which Austin takes the less likely or out-of-the-way interpretation of Ayer rather than the natural and direct interpretation. His reading of 'existential delusion' to include mistaking one object for another is a very good example of taking the improbable interpretation of an ambiguous statement. As we saw before, Ayer was no doubt careless in his definition of 'existentially delusive perception.' He meant the definition to include only cases where we think we see something where nothing really is; but on a literal construction, he could be taken to include cases where we think we see something where something else really is. Nevertheless, it is clear from the context that nobody should actually be misled. All the rest of Ayer's remarks treat existential delusion as if it were hallucination, that is, delusion in the ordinary sense. In the same way, Austin's view that Ayer's chapter "Appearance and

Reality" was concerned with all 'appearance-reality' distinctions is based upon misinterpretation. Ayer stated several times that he was concerned with only a limited part of the area in which we distinguish appearance and reality. True, as I pointed out before, one of his statements of topic could be taken to imply that he was concerned with the whole area. Austin, in choosing to base himself upon a literal view of this one statement, has ignored the context which shows the literal view to be altogether mistaken. He makes at best a debating point.

In extreme cases, Austin's reading of Ayer's argument is so perverse as to amount to unintentional misrepresentation. Austin simply gets what Ayer said wrong and chooses an interpretation which contradicts Ayer's obvious intention. His interpretation of 'qualitatively delusive perception' as including inferences about whether, for example, what one sees "could quack" is an example of this total misunderstanding. It is impossible that a mistaken inference could be a kind of perception and impossible that Ayer could have thought otherwise. In a similar way, the view that Ayer was using 'facts' to mean 'facts about sense-data' was a total misinterpretation. Austin chose to interpret Ayer's statement that the facts of empirical evidence rested in the phenomena to mean that the facts rested in sense-data. But, in fact, Ayer is not using 'phenomena' to mean 'sense-data.' He described in detail what the 'phenomena' were in perfectly Austinian language, with no mention at all of sense-data. So Austin is simply wrong in his interpretation of Ayer.

My other objections are of the same kind. One recurrent flaw in Austin is that his arguments are often completely irrelevant to the person he is supposed to be criticizing. Austin, for example, describes numerous cases where 'real' does not apply with the intention of showing that the analysis of 'real' in terms of standard conditions fails. But the fact that the word 'real' cannot always be applied does not show that an explanation of when it is applied fails. The fact that it cannot always be applied is completely irrelevant. Another example of irrelevance in Austin's work is his detailed account of the many uses of 'looks,' 'seems,' and 'appears,' an account which is unrelated to the philosophical problems at hand. Austin, in fact, does not even try to relate it to those problems; he simply assumes that it is relevant, and that the reader can make the relation himself. But the reader finds, after examining the account, that it has nothing to do with the issues under discussion.

Another fault found throughout Austin's work is that his criticisms do not hit at the heart of his opponent's arguments. Austin often assumes that because he has shown, for example, that an opponent has misused a word, he has made a serious criticism of the opponent's argument. But it is frequently the case that an opponent's argument would be hardly affected at all, even if Austin were right that he had misused a word. Suppose, for example, that Ayer or some other sense-datatist, in formulating his arguments, had treated 'seems' as if it could be used without implying any sort of judgment, as 'looks' and 'appears' can. This misuse would not seriously affect his position since he could simply

restate his argument substituting 'looks' or 'appears' wherever he had used 'seems.' Furthermore, at times, when Austin shows that his opponent is using a word differently from the ordinary, he is not really pointing out a fault at all. Sometimes it is completely clear that someone is deliberately using a word in a new or technical sense, and in that case, it does not matter that his usage is not in agreement with ordinary usage. The fact, for example, that Ayer uses the expression 'delusion' in a new way is not a fault, since he knows he is using it technically and so do his readers.

Finally, I would like to point out an aspect of Austin's method of debate which is quite unfair to his opponents. Austin often implies that his opponents hold positions which they in fact do not. Then he goes on to show the absurdity of these philosophical positions. He says that it ought to be noticed, for example, "that something which is not a real duck is not a non-existent duck, or indeed a non-existent anything" (S, 68). But who ever claimed, we may ask, that what is not a real duck is a non-existent duck? Austin does not say, probably because he knows of no one who has made that claim. When Austin warns us to examine many uses of 'real' if we wish to understand it, because "this may save us from saying, for example, or seeming to say, that what is not real cream must be a fleeting product of our cerebral processes" (S, 64), he is careful to use the expression "seeming to say." He knows that the reader will recognize the expression "fleeting product of our cerebral

processes" because Austin quoted it from another philosopher¹² earlier. He also knows that this philosopher never said that what was not real cream was a "fleeting product of our cerebral processes." By using the expression "seeming to say," Austin is able to insinuate that his opponent made such an absurd mistake, without actually stating that he made that mistake. He could not make such a statement because the statement would be false. But if Austin knows that the statement is false, why does he not make that clear, rather than allowing the reader to conclude that his opponent is guilty of absurdity?

No doubt Ayer has not said the last word about these long-standing and subtle issues concerning the distinction between appearance and reality. My view is that his claims have been limited, and that his intention has been to illuminate particular difficulties with the distinction rather than to provide a complete account of its nature. In this restricted domain, I have found him remarkably successful. Had Austin argued that many questions were still unanswered by Ayer, and much work still to be done, his reader would have had to agree. But Austin claims not that Ayer is incomplete but that Ayer is wrong. I have studied the claim as carefully as I can, and judge it to be thinly defended, based over and over again on misreadings of Ayer's intentions and Ayer's arguments. For the most part, Ayer's analysis is untouched by Austin's attack.

¹²H. H. Price, Perception, (London: Methuen, 1932), p. 31; Quoted S, 45.

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