

.....“Subjectivity from a Semiotic Point of View,” in *Ecosemiotics: Studies in Environmental Semiosis, Semiotics of the Biocybernetic Bodies, Human / Too Human / Post Human*, Nordic-Baltic Summer Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies, Part IV, edited by Eero Tarasti, Richard Littlefield, Lotta Rossi, Maija Ross (Imatra: International Semiotics Institute, 2001): 149-159, at 153-154.

Anthony Kenny, *The Self. The Aquinas Lecture, 1988* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1988), 4-7.

in a misunderstanding of the reflexive pronoun. To ask what kind of substance my “self” is, is like asking what the characteristic of “ownness” is, an attribute which my own property has in addition to being mine. When, outside philosophical reflections, I talk about myself, I am simply talking about the human being,”and my self is nothing other than myself. In some way it is a philosophical muddle to allow the space which differentiates “my self” from “myself” to generate the illusion of a mysterious metaphysical entity distinct from, but obscurely linked to, the human being who is talking to someone. The grammatical error which is the essence of the theory of the self may seem obvious when it is pointed out. But it is by no means easy to give an accurate account of the logic, or deep grammar, of the words “I” and “myself”. It will not do, for instance, to say simply that “I” is the word each of us uses to refer to himself, a pronoun which, when it occurs in sentences, is synonymous with the name of the utterer of the sentence. This is not difficult to show. Julius Caesar, in his *Commentaries*, regularly described his own actions in the third person, using the name “Caesar”. Let us imagine a language in which there were no first person pronouns, and in which everyone talked about themselves by using their own names. We can ask whether everything we can say in English can also be said in this language. The answer is clearly no. If Caesar wishes to deny that he is Caesar, then in English he can tell the lie, “I am not Caesar”. In the special language no similar option is open to him. “Caesar is not Caesar” doesn’t work, and neither does “the person who is speaking to you is not Caesar”, because in the special language, that sentence if spoken by Caesar is equivalent to the English sentence, “The person who is speaking to you is not I”. The truth is that “I” does not refer to the person who utters it in the same way in which a proper name refers to its bearer, and neither does “myself”. (That does not mean that these words refer to something else, say, myself.) I shall not pursue the grammatical issues further here. Certainly, the belief in a self is in one sense a grammatical error, which has different roots. One of these roots is the notion of the self in Cartesian scepticism. Descartes, in his *Meditationes*, convinces himself that he can doubt whether he has a body. He then goes on to argue, “I can doubt whether I have a body; but I cannot doubt whether I exist; for what is this I which is doubting?” The “I” must refer to something of

in a misunderstanding of the reflexive pronoun. To ask what kind of substance my *self* is is like asking what the characteristic of *ownness* is which my own property has in addition to being mine. When, outside philosophy, I talk about myself, I am simply talking about the human being, Anthony Kenny, and my self is nothing other than myself. It is a philosophical muddle to allow the space which differentiates “my self” from “myself” to generate the illusion of a mysterious metaphysical entity distinct from, but obscurely linked to, the human being who is talking to you. The grammatical error which is the essence of the theory of the self may be in a manner obvious when it is pointed out. But it is an error which is by no means easy to correct; that is to say, it is by no means easy to give an accurate account of the logic, or deep grammar, of the words “I” and “myself.” It will not do, for instance, to say simply that “I” is the word each of us uses to refer to himself, a pronoun which when it occurs in sentences, is synonymous with the name of the utterer of the sentence. This is not difficult to show. Julius Caesar, in his *Commentaries*, regularly described his own actions in the third person, using the name “Caesar” [...]. There might be a language, call it Caesarian, in which there were no first person pronouns, and in which everyone talked about themselves by using their own names. We can ask whether everything we can say in English can also be said in Caesarian. The answer is clearly no. If Caesar wishes to deny that he is Caesar [...], then in English he can tell the lie, “I am not Caesar.” In Caesarian no similar option is open to him. “Caesar is not Caesar” will not do the trick. Nor will “the person who is speaking to you is not Caesar.” For in Caesarian that sentence in Caesar’s mouth is equivalent to the English sentence, “The person who is speaking to you is not I.” The truth is that “I” does not refer to the person who utters it in the way in which a proper name refers to its bearer. Neither does “myself.” This does not mean that these words refer to something else, say, my self [...]. I do not intend to pursue further the grammatical issues explored earlier. For though the belief in a self is in one sense a grammatical error, it is a deep error and one which is not generated by mistaken grammar alone. The error has a number of different roots: [...] root of the notion of the self is Cartesian scepticism. Descartes, in his *Meditationes*, convinces himself that he can doubt whether the world exists, and whether he has a body. He then goes on to argue, “I can doubt whether I have a body; but I cannot doubt whether I exist; for what is this I which is doubting? The “I” must refer to something of

<p>which his body is not part, and hence to something which is not a part of the human being Descartes. The Cartesian ego is a substance whose essence is pure thought; it is the mind, or <i>res cogitans</i>. This is the self in the second of the philosophical senses identified by the <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>, “the ego identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body”.</p>	<p>which his body is no part, and hence to something which is no more than a part of the human being Descartes. The Cartesian ego is a substance whose essence is pure thought, the mind, or <i>res cogitans</i>. This is the self in the second of the philosophical senses identified by the O.E.D. “the ego identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body.”</p>
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<p>the primordial uniqueness of the human being, and thus for the basic irreducibility of the human being to the natural world. This assumption forms the basis of understanding the human being as a person. Traditional Aristotelian anthropology was based on the definition <i>o anthropos zoon noetikon</i> (<i>homo est animal rationale</i>). This definition fulfills Aristotle's requirements for defining the species (human being) through its proximate genus (living being) and the feature that distinguishes the given species in that genus (endowed with reason). At the same time, however, the definition is constructed in such a way that it excludes – at least at first glance – the possibility of accentuating the irreducible in the human being. In this definition the human being is mainly an object, one of the objects in the world to which the human being visibly and physically belongs. In this perspective, objectivity was connected with the general assumption of the reducibility of the human being. The term subjectivity, on the other hand, proclaims that the human being's proper essence cannot be reduced and explained by the proximate genus and specific difference. In other words: Subjectivity is a synonym for the irreducible in the human being.</p>	<p>the primordial uniqueness of the human being, and thus in the basic irreducibility of the human being to the natural world [...]. This belief stands at the basis of understanding the human being as a person [...]. // Traditional Aristotelian anthropology was based, as we know, on the definition <i>o anthropos zoon noetikon</i>, <i>homo est animal rationale</i>. This definition fulfills Aristotle's requirements for defining the species (human being) through its proximate genus (living being) and the feature that distinguishes the given species in that genus (endowed with reason). At the same time, however, the definition is constructed in such a way that it excludes—when taken simply and directly—the possibility of accentuating the irreducible in the human being. // In [...] the definition <i>homo est animal rationale</i>, the human being was mainly an object, one of the objects in the world to which the human being visibly and physically belongs. Objectivity in this sense was connected with the general assumption of the reducibility of the human being. Subjectivity, on the other hand, is, as it were, a term proclaiming that the human being's proper essence cannot be totally reduced to and explained by the proximate genus and specific difference. Subjectivity is, then, a kind of synonym for the irreducible in the human being.</p>	<p>John Paul II / Wojtyla, 211</p> <p>John Paul II / Wojtyla, 210</p> <p>John Paul II / Wojtyla, 211</p>