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12. – 18. August 2001

Beiträge  
Papers (1)

Wittgenstein und die Zukunft der Philosophie  
Eine Neubewertung nach 50 Jahren

Wittgenstein and the Future of Philosophy  
A Reassessment after 50 Years

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**Beiträge der Österreichischen  
Ludwig Wittgenstein Gesellschaft  
Contributions of the Austrian  
Ludwig Wittgenstein Society**

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Rudolf Haller  
Klaus Puhl

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## Beiträge / Papers



# Thoughts of the Tractatus: Mentalism vs. Non-Mentalism

Maija Aalto

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## 1. Introduction

The concept of *Gedanke* in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* is a controversial one. The few elucidations he gives of it seem to give rise to two opposing interpretations. On the one hand, a thought is said to be a logical picture of facts (TLP§3) and a proposition with a sense (TLP§4). This suggests a non-mentalist reading of the concept, i.e. one according to which a thought is, in its essence, no different from a written or spoken sentence: both depict states of affairs in virtue of being combinations of signs that reflect the logical form of reality. A non-mentalist interpretation of thoughts has been advocated, e.g. by Mounce (1981), Winch (1987) and Carruthers (1989). On the other hand, Wittgenstein makes a distinction between a proposition and a propositional sign, and says of the latter that it needs to be projected onto reality before it is a genuine picture (TLP§3.12). The method of projection is "to think of the sense of the proposition" (TLP§3.11), which gives the impression that a mental process of thinking is needed to give life to signs; in other words, that thoughts (being the 'units' of thinking) are prior to, and necessary preconditions of, the possibility of linguistic representation. Such a mentalist or psychological interpretation has been advanced, among others, by Kannisto (1986), Summerfield (1992), Malcolm (1993) and Hacker (1996).

In this paper I attempt to defend the non-mentalist interpretation of *Gedanke*. My aim in doing this is, besides trying to contribute to a correct understanding of the *Tractatus*, to cut off certain connections that have been claimed to exist between the book and modern philosophy of mind. In particular, I try to refute Malcolm's and Summerfield's suggestion that, like Chomsky or Fodor, Wittgenstein needs to assume an underlying mental mechanism or a language of thought to account for the possibility of determinate representation. Therefore the paper is organized around a presentation and a critical discussion of (some of) Malcolm's and Summerfield's views. The main argument put forward against their views is that, whether such mental processes occur during language-using or not, speculation about them simply isn't *relevant* to Wittgenstein's picture theory of language. Far from taking psychological considerations to be essential to philosophical theories of linguistic meaning, the reading sketched here sees the

*Tractatus* as criticizing all such theories and thus resembling, in this respect, his own later philosophy rather than contemporary philosophy of mind.

## 2. Malcolm's interpretation

The most straightforward example of a mentalist view of Tractarian thoughts is undoubtedly Norman Malcolm's. His interpretation relies heavily on Wittgenstein's reply to Russell's inquiry as to whether thoughts consist of words. Wittgenstein answered (with apparent impatience) "No! But of psychical constituents that have the same sort of relation to reality as words" (NB, p. 131). Malcolm draws from this the conclusion that "all thoughts are composed of mental elements" and "no thought consists of words, spoken or written." (Malcolm 1993, 32.). The relationship between thought and language is, accordingly, described thus:

"A thought is a structure with a sense. A meaningful sentence is also a structure with a sense. The view of the *Tractatus* would seem to be that when a thought is expressed in a sentence, what happens is that the sense of the thought is *thought into* the sentence. The physical sentence is given the same sense that the thought already has. Thus, there are two structures with the same sense. One structure is composed of mental elements, the other of words." (ibid., 32)

It follows that when a particular proposition is true, there are, according to Malcolm, three parallel structures: a state of affairs that consists of simple objects, a thought that is composed of mental elements, and a sentence that is a combination of perceptible signs. What these three separate structures have in common (by means of which the latter two can be pictures of the first) is the same logical form. Since the mental structure and the sign-structure represent the same state of affairs, they can be regarded as one and the same 'proposition' (and thus Wittgenstein's seemingly non-mentalist definition "Thought is a proposition with a sense" (TLP §4) is explained away) (Malcolm 1993, 33-4).

The second aspect in Malcolm's mentalist view of thoughts is that they are necessary so that our statements can have determinate meaning. Referring to TLP §4.002, he says that

"[t]he apparently vague statements of ordinary language are given their actually precise sense by processes of logical analysis that are largely unconscious. [ . . . ] processes of exact thinking take place at a subterranean, unconscious level - as the *Tractatus* hints when it says that it is impossible to gather immediately from everyday language 'what the logic of language is' " (Malcolm 1993, 53-4).

It is this (assumed) feature of the *Tractatus* that Malcolm connects to Noam Chomsky's philosophy of mind - namely, to Chomsky's idea that behind language there

are some underlying abstract representations which are related by swift mental processes to spoken or written words (although we can view neither the abstract forms nor the mental processes by introspection) (see *ibid.*, 54).

Malcolm's three-layered model seems to involve redundancy: there is no need, in my view, to regard thought (mental elements) and language (physical signs) as constituting two separate and yet co-existent structures. A thought can, of course, remain unexpressed, in which case it consists of mental elements (whose nature is unknown); and in this sense a thought is, as Winch notes, a more general concept than a proposition (see Winch 1987, 12- 15). But when the thought is expressed, no identically structured psychical fact is needed behind the spoken or written words: the thought is then nothing over and above its expression - it is just the applied propositional sign (TLP §3,5), that is, a proposition with a sense (TLP §4).<sup>1</sup> And most importantly, a thought can always be expressed: it has the same limits as language, it cannot do anything that couldn't be done with words, as is implied in many places in the *Tractatus*:

" 'A state of affairs is thinkable': what this means is that we can picture it to ourselves." (3.001)

"Everything that can thought at all can be thought clearly. Everything that can be put into words can be put clearly." (4.116)

"*The limits of my language* mean the limits of my world." (5.6)

"We cannot think what we cannot think; so what we cannot think we cannot SAY either." (5.61)

There is a clear identification of the powers of thought and language in Wittgenstein's letter to Russell, where he tries to explain the main point of the book:

"The main point is the theory of what can be expressed (*gesagt*) by props. - i.e. by language - (and, which comes to the same, what can be *thought*) and what can not be expressed by props, but only shown (*gezeigt*)" (Russell 1975, 350)

What can be expressed comes to the same as what can be thought - there is no need to make a fundamental distinction between them (such as their being on entirely different 'levels'). In short, the middle layer of Malcolm's model does not *explain* anything - after all, as Malcolm himself points out, the constituents of thoughts (whatever they are) stand in the *same* relation to reality as words. In the case where we have words, adding an identically structured level beneath them would be like buying several copies of today's paper in order to make sure that what it writes is true, to use a simile from Wittgenstein's later philosophy (PI §265). Multiplication of identical structures is of no avail, whether the problem is to find the essence of picturing or to test the reliability of the newspaper. I do not think Wittgenstein committed this kind of fallacy in the *Tractatus*.



What does seem to run counter to a non-mentalist view of thoughts is Wittgenstein's remark that "language disguises thought. So much so, that from the outward form of the clothing it is impossible to infer the form of the thought beneath it" (TLP §4.002). And yet he also says that "all of the propositions of our ordinary language are actually in perfect logical order, just as they are." (TLP §5.5563). These apparently contradictory remarks can be reconciled in the light of Wittgenstein's idea of analysis - i.e. his conviction that all propositions can be dissected into their ultimate constituents (elementary propositions, which are immediate combinations of names). In this form, all (possible) ambiguities in meaning are resolved and the exact sense of the sentence is clearly visible (see e.g. TLP §§3.25, 4.221). Now Malcolm, as we saw, takes this to mean that this analysis is something that actually occurs while we mean or understand something - that it is a mental process underlying the utterance (or interpretation) of propositions (Malcolm 1993, 54). Since Wittgenstein says that it is not humanly possible to grasp immediately what the logic of everyday language is (TLP §4.002) and since, in spite of this, we know exactly what we mean by our propositions, they must, thinks Malcolm, get their determinate sense at an unconscious level, in virtue of some rapid mental processes.

This postulation of a Chomskyan type of mental mechanism to account for determinate sense seems to me unnecessary in the context of the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein only says that it is impossible to gather the logic of language *immediately* from our ordinary expressions, but this does not mean that their real logical structure could not even in principle be revealed through analysis. On the contrary, Wittgenstein explicitly says that "[w]hat a proposition expresses it expresses in a determinate manner *which can be set out clearly*" (TLP §3.251, e.a.). Thus the two-fold nature of our ordinary propositions (i.e. their being 'vague' and 'in perfect logical order' at the same time) means, rather than there being mental processes of meaning behind the words, that it is *possible* to reformulate the proposition so that its determinate sense can be clearly seen - to put the same thing in such a manner that all chances of confusion are excluded. That we do not actually need to perform this analysis in everyday conversation is explained by the fact that *use* reveals the exact, intended meaning: "what signs fail to express, their application shows. What signs slur over, their application shows clearly." (TLP §3.262). Ordinary language might contain such flaws as having only one name for two different things (like the word 'bank' in English), but the context in which the word is used makes it quite clear which meaning is intended. The understanding of everyday language requires familiarity with (often quite complicated) conventions.

Moreover, it should be remembered that Wittgenstein, unlike most modern cognitive scientists, made a sharp distinction between philosophy and psychology; and as he says in his letter to Russell from 1919, it is the matter of psychology, not philosophy, to find

out what the relation between the constituents of thoughts is to the pictured fact (and also what the constituents of thoughts are) (NB, 130). For Wittgenstein's purposes, psychological investigations, although tempting, are just "unnecessary entanglements"; in TLP §4.1121 he explicitly warns us of getting mixed up with them. This, if nothing else, should speak against the connections that Malcolm (among others) has drawn between the *Tractatus* and modern scientifically-oriented philosophy of mind.

### 3. Summerfield's interpretation

Another commentator who sees Wittgenstein as offering a two-level theory of representation is Donna M. Summerfield. She thinks it is necessary to assume, in the context of the *Tractatus*, the existence of an underlying mental language - a language of thought - in order to avoid the infinite regress of interpretations, which ordinary signs lead us into:

"Ordinary linguistic signs can be interpreted in various ways. [. . .] If that to which we appeal in the attempt to determine the interpretation of one sign is itself a sign that can be interpreted in various possible ways, we risk launching an infinite regress of interpretations. [. . .] I argue [. . .] that the *Tractatus* assumes that, in order to stop the infinite regress of interpretations, there must be some representations, in some way within our grasp, that need no interpretation. I believe that the *Tractatus* assumes there are such ideal representations underlying written and spoken signs, that there is, in effect, a "language of thought." [. . .] it is by translating perceptible signs into a language of thought that we are able to interpret the ambiguous signs of natural languages." (Summerfield 1992, 224)

This is naturally linked to Jerry Fodor's language of thought -hypothesis - to the view that linguistic representation should be explained by appeal to mental representation; thus, like Malcolm, Summerfield sees the *Tractatus* as having "important parallels with contemporary work in the philosophy of mind and cognitive psychology" (ibid., 226).

Unlike the other commentators who stress the importance of thoughts in Wittgenstein's account of linguistic meaning, Summerfield makes a distinction between *intrinsic* and *original* intentionality, and ascribes to Tractarian thoughts only the latter. The difference between these two kinds of intentionality is this:

"If a state or event has original intentionality, its capacity to represent something other than itself cannot be explained by appeal to the *intentionality* of any other states or events (its "aboutness" is "first" or "original"), but its capacity to represent may nevertheless require explanation. If a state or event has *intrinsic*

intentionality, its capacity to represent something other than itself cannot and need not be explained by appeal to anything other than itself." (ibid., 225)

That is, although Summerfield thinks that the regress of interpretations of natural language expressions stops at the level of thoughts, she still sees Wittgenstein as offering an explanation of *how* thoughts represent - namely, by being logical pictures of possible situations. More specifically, the intentionality of thoughts is explained by appealing to the *linguistic* features of thoughts, although it is not *derivative* from the intentionality of natural language expressions. (Summerfield 1993, 225.)

The question that immediately arises after this explanation is: what, then, makes thoughts so special, if it is only their logico-linguistic features that count? Why can't ordinary linguistic signs do the job? All the commentators who ascribe outstanding semantic powers to Tractarian thoughts should be able to show that thoughts are in some crucial respect *different* from ordinary language expressions. Now the first difference that naturally comes to mind (and to which e.g. Malcolm appeals) is that thoughts consist of psychological elements, sentences of physical elements, as Wittgenstein said in his letter to Russell. But Summerfield notes (correctly, I think) that it is *not* the mental features of thoughts that explain their intentionality: "it is only the logical features of psychological facts that are relevant [ . . . ] if thoughts have any other features, they are not features in virtue of which thoughts represent" (Summerfield 1992, 233). What else could the difference be, then? As far as I can see, Summerfield doesn't really answer this question. Her solution as to what makes thoughts of the *Tractatus* have superpowers is that they are, unlike our everyday expressions, logically perspicuous, obedient to the rules of logical syntax. Thus a sentence in a language of thought shows its sense immediately, so that no further interpretation is required (Summerfield 1992, 227-9). In other words, Summerfield's 'language of thought' corresponds to what Wittgenstein called 'elementary propositions'.

But can the logically transparent elementary propositions be said to constitute a *language* of their own (as Summerfield obviously means, since she talks, as we saw, of translation processes between the language of thought and natural languages)? I do not think so. After all, according to Wittgenstein, *all* our thinking and language-using must obey *the same logical laws*; it is not possible to think or speak illogically (TLP §§3.03, 3.032). This logic is not always immediately displayed in an ordinary language expression (if taken out of its context), but when it is rendered into a logically perspicuous form, i.e. analyzed into elementary propositions, it cannot be a matter of translating it into a different language, since "[a] proposition about a complex stands in an internal relation to a proposition about a constituent of a complex" (TLP §3.24) and "[t]he totality of propositions is language" (TLP §4.001). Both the analyzed and the

unanalyzed form belong to the same *logical space* and are internally connected with each other; they must therefore belong to the same language - the only language which I understand ("der Sprache, die allein ich verstehe" (TLP §5.62)). The language of which Wittgenstein talks is not, of course, English or German or any other natural language, but rather what all languages must have in common in order to be able to represent states of affairs; and this common feature is not, for him, some underlying mental symbolism of the speakers of natural languages, but the common *logic* of all our pictorial modes of expression (cf. TLP §4.015: "[t]he possibility of all imagery [. . .] is contained in the logic of depiction"). An ordinary language expression and the elementary propositions that are its ultimate constituents are just two different ways of saying the same thing, but nevertheless using the same logic of depiction; and insofar as all meaningful propositions reflect it, they belong to the same language.

How should the problem of intentionality be solved, then? As can be remembered from previous discussion, Wittgenstein held already in the *Tractatus* the view that when linguistic signs are taken together with their application, with their logico-syntactical employment, their exact meaning reveals itself and no infinite regress of interpretations threatens. Thus, linguistic signs themselves have original intentionality - it need not be explained by appealing to the intentionality of some other state or event, such as an underlying mental sentence, but it does require reference to the use of signs according to linguistic conventions.

## Summary

The aim of this paper has been to show that Wittgenstein makes no fundamental difference between thought and language in the *Tractatus*, because (1) a thought can always be expressed in words (its limits coincide with the limits of language) and (2) a thought represents states of affairs in virtue of precisely the same features as a proposition does - the constituents of (unexpressed) thoughts are similar to the words of language and stand in the same kind of relation to reality as spoken or written words. From the viewpoint of depicting, it is irrelevant whether the signs are mental or physical entities. I do not, however, mean to suggest that Wittgenstein denies the relevance of mental processes to language-using altogether. The point of the offered non-mentalist interpretation is simply that neither in Wittgenstein's early nor late philosophy do mental considerations help to answer the *philosophical* question of how representation through language is possible. Even if there do occur some rapid subconscious mental processes during meaning and understanding, they did not interest Wittgenstein and, insofar as they cannot even in principle be put into words, are not what he called 'thoughts'. Therefore his views in the *Tractatus* shouldn't be seen as bearing a resemblance to any

theories - past or present - which involve speculations about the mental mechanisms of language-users. Nor does the emphasis of this interpretation on the logical features of thought and language mean that the whole book should be seen as being only about the logical preconditions of representation. The "fundamental idea" of Wittgenstein picture theory was, of course, that the shared logical form with reality (essential for any picture) can no longer be depicted - that "there can be no representatives of the *logic* of facts." (TLP §4.0312). That is, although whatever can be said or thought can be said or thought clearly, there are things which cannot be said (or thought) but only shown. It has not been my intention to undermine this distinction and the importance of the realm of the only showable (wherein perhaps the sole purpose of the book lies). I have only tried to show that, as far as thoughts and their role in the picture theory of language are concerned, it is only their logical or structural features that count.

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## Endnote

- 1 Originally TLP §3.5 says "Das angewandte, gedachte, satzzeichen ist der Gedanke". As Carruthers observes (1989, 82), in the English translation (by Pears and McGuinness) the thought is said to be the propositional sign, applied and thought out; but the German version, with commas between 'angewandte' and 'gedachte', can be taken to mean that 'thinking out' just means applying the propositional sign. (Hence the method of projection of TLP §3.11 would be just using the sign according to linguistic conventions.) So, when TLP §3.5. and §4 are taken together, one gets the reading according to which a thought is a proposition with a sense, that is, a propositional sign put into use.

# Post-Classical Logic?

Andrew Aberdein

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"[G]ood scientific theories, like good maps, can present the same 'domain' in a great variety of very different forms. But this theoretical pluralism is very disconcerting for the Legend of a unique scientific world picture. ... [T]he Legend insists that ... the diverse theories of today are merely provisional: in due course, so it is argued, they will be seen as different approximations to the 'theory of everything' that will eventually be completed. But any such 'theory of everything' ... is not merely hypothetical: it is not a meaningful concept." (Ziman 2000, 131).

The project of formalizing natural argumentation is an old one, and has long been dominated by classical logic (henceforth *K*). However, non-classical logics, which are non-conservatively revisionary of *K*, have increasingly come to threaten this hegemony. Non-conservative revisions of logic may proceed by several strategies. The least revisionary is simple restriction: adoption of a new logic which lacks previously valid inferences and theorems. However, circumstances which motivate restriction characteristically result in more wholesale revision: features of the logic beyond its formal calculus are exposed to criticism, and reformulated in response. Thus judicious restriction can initiate clarification and disambiguation of confused metalogical concepts, including the nature of consequence, and what it should preserve (the inferential goal). For example, relevant logic exposes the contrast between intensional and extensional constants, obscured in *K*, and permits a restatement of the consequence relation.

The most radical strategy is a non-conservative revision of the background theories behind the logic, precipitating a change of its inferential goal. This alters the motivation of the whole logical enterprise, moves the problem into a different area, and changes the subject matter of logic (*cf.* Haack 1978, 155; Beall and Restall 2000, 490). Thereafter, the question of which logic should be employed can no longer be addressed directly. It is superseded by the question of which background theories obtain, and thereby of which goal is being pursued. Such disputes can only be settled at the level at which the background theories conflict. Divergence amongst the different calculi is understandable but derivative: they have been designed to meet different specifications. Therefore the dispute is no longer in the discipline of logic, but rather in whatever discipline threw up the conflicting background theories. Amongst proposals of this character are accounts of logic as the science of information flow;<sup>1</sup> systematic

approaches to informal logic;<sup>2</sup> and perhaps some attempts at a 'feminist' logic.<sup>3</sup> Note that the non-conservative revision of background theories behind a change of subject matter need not entail the loss of key components of the formal system.<sup>4</sup>

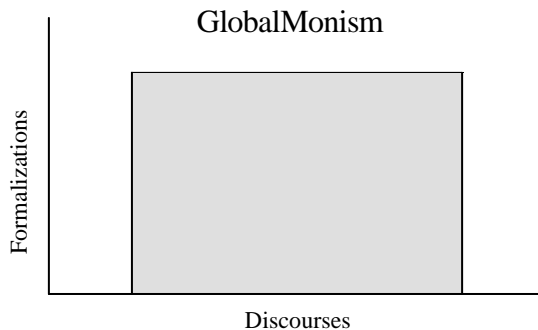
The most important role that such a transition can play is to shift a programme onto new foundations offering higher standards of rigour and improved generality. Klein's *Erlanger Programm* may be understood as a move of this sort within geometry (Klein 1893). Klein's achievement was to found geometries not in more or less arbitrary lists of axioms, but in the invariants under groups of transformations, each group corresponding to a different geometry. Thus '\_geometry' was reified from a subdiscipline of mathematics to an object of mathematical study, reconstructing an ancient subject on the modern foundations of group theory and linear algebra.

We may now discern two contrasting prognoses for the near future of research into the logic of natural argumentation. This is often portrayed as a continuing dispute amongst a proliferation of largely unrelated, competing non-classical programmes, each seeking the status of sole successor to K (Haack 1974; Sarkar 1990). However, within the context sketched above, this proliferation of logics may be understood to represent a refinement of logical method. The original quarry, the best logic for natural argumentation, has given way to something of higher generality: a structure which integrates the best features of a plurality of logics-an *Erlanger Programm* for logic. The articulation of such a structure as applied to natural argumentation is still in its earliest stages, but much recent work towards the provision of a general account of logical systems may lend itself to the advancement of this programme.<sup>5</sup>

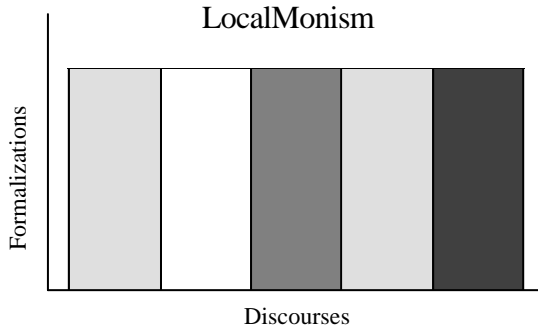
In the remainder of this paper I shall seek to offer a glimpse of how such a structure may develop. First I must clarify some philosophically important distinctions, beginning with that between realist and anti-realist accounts of the nature of logic. Realists attribute irreducible factuality to judgements of logicity; anti-realists either seek to reduce facts about logic to facts about something else, such as the methodology of some formal system(s), linguistic conventions or cognitive characteristics, or they develop a non-factualist account of logic.<sup>6</sup> However, the questions with which I am most concerned-questions of how and why logics differ and change-are independent of this distinction. Both realists and anti-realists must concede that some systems of logic are better than others, on pain of retreat to the unreason of regarding all systems as equally tenable, including the trivial logic, in which all inferences are valid, and therefore that nothing can be said. Moreover, since neither realist nor anti-realist has access to any means of appraisal and comparison unavailable to the other, both must justify their preferences by appeal to the same features: simplicity, adequacy to data, non-*ad-hocness*, and so forth (Priest 199+, 24-25).



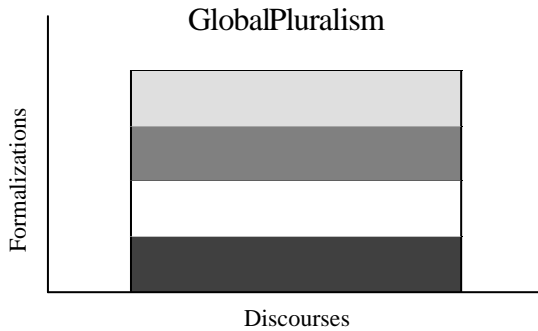
Two more pertinent distinctions with which the realism/anti-realism distinction is sometimes linked are that between monism and pluralism and that between localism and globalism. Monists believe that there can be at most one acceptable logic; pluralists believe that there can be several. Localists believe that the discourse of natural argumentation can be subdivided, and each subdivision formalized by a different logic; globalists insist that logic is topic-neutral. I shall argue that all three of these distinctions are mutually independent.<sup>7</sup> To see this, observe that the local/global distinction may be understood as a difference over how many natural argumentation discourses may receive distinct formalizations, and the monist/pluralist distinction may be understood as a difference over how many acceptable formalizations a given discourse may receive. Several different positions may be represented diagrammatically as bar charts, where the number of discourses is counted along the horizontal axis and the number of acceptable formalizations each may receive is counted up the vertical axis. I have assumed that division of natural argumentation into discourses precedes the formalization of these discourses; without this assumption a slightly more complicated picture would be required. The first position is global monism:



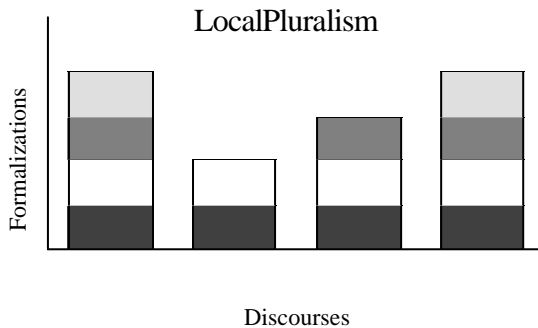
Global monists believe in the topic neutrality of logic and the uniqueness of an acceptable formalization. For realists this is the "one true logic", for anti-realists the one system that conforms to their standards. However, it is possible to reject topic neutrality, while retaining a commitment to the unique formalization of each discourse:<sup>8</sup>



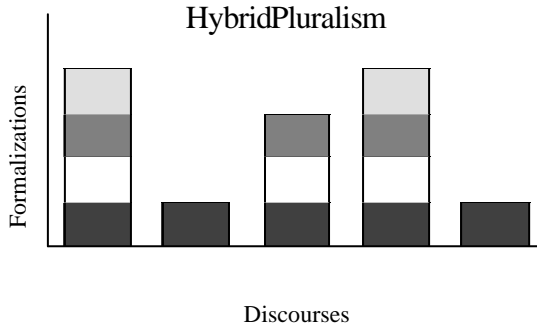
I call this position local monism.<sup>9</sup> The same realist and anti-realist attitudes are expressible here, relativized to each discourse. Alternatively, it is possible to retain topic neutrality while rejecting the uniqueness of formalization:



This position, global pluralism, is most familiar as a relativist, and therefore anti-realist, view of logic. However, it would also be tenable by a realist who supposed that reality underdetermined the choice of logic (Resnik 1996, 501). Finally, the local pluralist rejects both topic neutrality and uniqueness of formalization:



Here there are many different discourses, and no undisputed formalization of any of them. As a slight variation, one might admit that some discourses have a unique formalization, but that others do not::



I shall call this position hybrid pluralism. The local and hybrid pluralist positions are both arrived at by steps which I have shown to be available to realist and anti-realist alike. So not only are the local/global and monist/pluralist distinctions independent of each other, both are independent of the realist/anti-realist distinction.

Which of these five pictures best describes the logic of natural argumentation? Before asking how non-classical logics may be integrated into such a structure, I shall look at propositional K and its conservative extensions. The simplest picture is the first: global monism, with the single formal system understood to be first-order K. When classicists say that K is the one true logic, that is the natural understanding of their remark. However, although some classicists defend a restriction of logicity to first-order K (Quine 1953, Hazen 1999), most recognize a variety of quantified or modal extensions as equally logical. Taking this intuition seriously, while retaining global monism, would require the single formal system to somehow combine all the extensions of K which might be deployed in formalization of natural argumentation. Yet despite some naïvely misplaced optimism, the construction of such a compound system is a task of formidable technical difficulty if more than a small range of familiar extensions are to be used (Gabbay 1996). Furthermore, most conceivable applications would employ extensions containing only some of the extra constants rather than the unwieldy compound system containing them all. So local monism seems a closer approximation to the actual commitments of the classical programme (*cf.* Haack 1974, 44). The presence of the common fragment, K, in all of the systems used ensures the continuity of their application. As a further refinement, observe that most classicists acknowledge that some discourses lack an unambiguous choice of formalization. This suggests

monism about first-order K, and some of its extensions, and pluralism about some other extensions, such as modal systems, a perspective captured by hybrid pluralism.

If classicists are hybrid pluralists, might not a similar localism serve to integrate rival systems? Most important non-classical systems have a substantial common subsystem, K itself, which may serve as an analogue for the common fragment which motivated a sense of continuity between the various extended systems within the classical programme. A refinement of this picture may serve to provide philosophical motivation for the formal attempts at an Erlanger Programm for logic adumbrated above. K would be subsumed within such an approach as a key component, so it might best be regarded as a treatment not of non-classical logic but of post-classical logic.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Typically by application of situation theory, as in Devlin 1991: particularly programmatic passages may be found at 10-11 and 295-298. But cf. Mares 1996, who assimilates situation theory to the less comprehensively revisionist relevant logic programme.
- 2 See Johnson & Blair (1997, 161), who 'distinguish informal logic from formal logic, not only by methodology but also by its focal point ... the cogency of the support that reasons provide for the conclusions they are supposed to back up.'
- 3 Nye (1990, 175) concludes her indictment of 'masculine' logic with the claim that 'there can be no feminist logic', but her alternative could be seen as a change of subject matter-in which the word 'logic' itself would be jettisoned, despite the retention of some of its methods. Plumwood's (1993) feminist defence of relevant logic might appear to be a more conservative revision. However, her revision of classical background theories is substantial and her programme not necessarily continuous with that of more orthodox advocates of relevant logic.
- 4 For example, Devlin (1991, 10) is clear that he regards K as a special case, and Plumwood's preferred formal system, R, also recaptures K.
- 5 Promising leads include Belnap's display logic (Anderson et al. 1992 §62), Gabbay's labelled deductive systems (Gabbay 1994), Beall & Restall's logical pluralism (Beall and Restall 2000) and Sambin's basic logic (Sambin et al. 2000).
- 6 Haack (1974, 3; cf. 1978, 224) characterizes this distinction as one between realists and pragmatists, whereas Resnik (1996, 499-502) separates realism and six different varieties of anti-realism, without claiming to be exhaustive.
- 7 Contra Haack (1978, 225) for whom monism and pluralism are subdivisions of realism, and localism and globalism are subdivisions of pluralism.
- 8 The number of bars in this diagram is arbitrary, as is the number of bars and columns in all the subsequent diagrams, unless equal to one.
- 9 Misleadingly called local pluralism by Haack (1978, 223) and Resnik (1996, 499), who adopts her definition. This infelicity results from Haack's classification of localism and globalism as special cases of pluralism. Neither she nor Resnik considers the position which I call local pluralism.

# Wittgenstein's Lecture on Ethics and French Anthropological Tradition

Luiz Abreu

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## I

A teacup contains only a limited amount of water. It does not matter if I pour in a gallon. No one can get more water inside than the quantity it is able to hold. Similarly, language can only hold a limited amount of meaning. The main point of Wittgenstein's statement is that language is only able to contain natural meaning, relative values - descriptions of facts. These are the boundaries of our language that settle what we can meaningfully say about the world. But ethics and religion, Wittgenstein sustains, do not fit inside of these limits. Religion as well as ethics seeks to stand for absolute values. Therefore, Wittgenstein concludes that someone who speaks or writes about them pointlessly tries to break through language's boundaries, to go beyond the world, beyond meaningful language; further, the attempt of crossing language's borders which makes religion and ethics senseless is precisely their essence.

If we accept Haller's suggestion that Wittgenstein's philosophy is critical of language, that his conclusions do not change through all his work, and that the so-called second Wittgenstein is anthropologically grounded (Haller 1990, 78-79), we may conclude, with Abreu e Silva (2000, 105), that once Wittgenstein's writings delineate the boundaries of what we can meaningfully say, they demonstrate his ethics.

The former statement reminds me of a passage in *Culture and Value*, where Wittgenstein writes "What is good is also divine. Queer as it sounds, that sums up my ethics. Only something supernatural can express the Supernatural" (1988, 3e), and his comment that "I am not a religious man, but I can't help seeing everything from a religious point of view" (see Abreu e Silva 2001, 67). Maurice Drury develops this aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophy in *The Danger of Words* - which is, in the words of Abreu e Silva, "an exposition of a Wittgensteinian who saw every problem he dealt with from a religious point of view" (68).

## II

Since the early XX century, anthropology has described religious beliefs and practices from primitive societies all around the world. Wittgenstein, I believe, would not disagree

with the possibility of such a research program, although he could strongly hold out against the way it had been carried out, as he actually did against Frazer's description of religious practices in *The Golden Bough*.

Wittgenstein's reasoning is that the scientific way of looking at an extraordinary event, such as someone's head becoming a lion's, is not the same thing as looking at it as a miracle. The first one sees the event as a fact to be explained making use of other facts. The second one gives it an absolute value that we cannot explain by any facts. It is something that can only be experienced, and nothing one says about this kind of experience can precisely describe it. To sum up, for Wittgenstein, anthropologists can picture religion and ethics from other cultures as facts. As absolute values, other cultural beliefs elude them completely.

On the French side of this paper, I want to restrict my reasoning to the anthropological tradition springing from Durkheim. I mean mostly anthropologists such as Hertz, Marcel Mauss, Lévi-Strauss and Dumont. My point is that Wittgenstein's lecture on ethics can help us to re-interpret their ideas about religion, exchange and values.

### III

At first sight, Durkheim's *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, a study of Australian totemism, proposes a very different approach to religious phenomena. If one thinks on its functionalist assumptions, its emphasis on treating sociological phenomena as sui generis facts, and its refusal of any explanation which employs psychological or categories belonging to individuals, one may conclude, as Winch (1958, 23), that both approaches are completely incompatible. But, Winch did not consider Durkheim's formulations about human nature. In "Le dualisme de la nature humaine et ses conditions sociales" (Durkheim 1968), it becomes clear that Durkheim stresses the social nature of the concepts individuals use, and the interpretative preeminence on society's side- language as a human institution. A point, I think, Wittgenstein would agree with.

Although no one would defend Durkheim's theory of religion nowadays, it expresses interpretative insights and methodological principles largely employed by his followers, the above-mentioned French anthropologists. To him, the essence of religion is to classify everything into two absolutely different, sacred-or-profane categories. Despite their very distinct methodological assumptions, Durkheim bases both categories on a somewhat similar ground to that which Wittgenstein uses- the anthropological, living-in-a-group experience. The sacred one results from the experience of collective, ritual

moments when the whole, jointed group celebrates its union. The profane stems from the lonely moments of daily life when an individual's main goal is his own biological, economical and social survival. From Durkheim's point of view, the sacred-and-profane categories manifest the origin of all basic human categories.

The main methodological principle of Durkheim's sociology is that the whole is not equal to the sum of its parts. Although the principle appears in all Durkheim texts, in *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* it is both a methodological principle and the individual experience of perceiving oneself as belonging to, being part of something. Religion is, therefore, the paradigm of collective life in society. Moreover, for him, quite all-social institutions are born from the religious phenomena - economic activities excepted. Hertz (1970), for instance, interprets a series of not-directly-related-with-religion phenomena from a religious perspective - such as the socially built left-and-right hand difference. To him, the categories used by individuals are related in a sacred-and-profane fashion, meaning that they are organized in hierarchical oppositions, and correspond to human activities analogously connected.

All Durkheim's students died in the First World War - Hertz included and Mauss, Durkheim's nephew, excluded. As the only survivor, Mauss takes to himself the responsibility of carrying on the French Sociological School. In his most important text, "Essay sur le don" (1968), he employs a somewhat distinct approach from the theoretical construct Durkheim uses to define totality. Mauss realizes that there are local phenomena that play this role instead - usually a ritual in which all or almost-all social institutions participate. He called this kind of phenomenon total social fact (*phénomènes sociaux "totaux"* or merely *fait social total*).

Mauss grounds his essay chiefly on the ethnographies of Boas' *Potlach* and Malinowski's *Kula*. The ethnographical data shows him that a gift, apparently freely given, actually embodies three moral obligations - to give, to accept and to repay. Once social conditions only explain the first and the second obligations, his essay's main issue is to elucidate the last one. It does not mean Mauss forgets religious phenomena. Not only his solution employs a Maori's sacred category, called *hau* - the spirit of gift -, but also he understands that a religious sacrifice is a sacred-profane exchange. From a native's perspective, the world's real owners are gods, the first and foremost group humans have to exchange with. Mauss seems to be right about this. In "primitive societies" all around the world, ethnographers have noticed that, human's technology, society, moral rules, customs, institutions and so on are perceived as gods' gifts.

In his "Introduction to Marcel Mauss' work", a theoretical manifesto and a methodological criticism, Lévi-Strauss (1968) sustains that Mauss' solution to the last obligation contradicts the methodological principle he inherits from Durkheim, and, of



course, that Lévi-Strauss' structuralism is the proper answer. Lévi-Strauss also suggests that the main discovery of "Essay sur le don" is not the reciprocity - the three always-there obligations - but to show that quite unlike phenomena were seen by locals as - and therefore could be reduced to - exchange kind of relationships. So Lévi-Strauss concludes that society is based on exchange, and that exchange is a form of communication.

Lévi-Strauss' structuralism, however, downgrades the pivotal role played by Durkheim's theory of religion - its explanatory centrality in French Anthropological Tradition. For Lévi-Strauss, ideas are connected to each other in such a way that their relationship can be reduced to pairs of oppositions - although not in a sacred-profane fashion. Lévi-Strauss employs only distinctive, binary oppositions, which are not grounded on the anthropological, living-in-a-group experience. Rather they come from unconscious rules of a universal human mind. Thus, classifying nature in discrete categories with distinct features, opposing them into pairs, and, from those, *making a system* are built-in properties of each person's mind.

Dumont, a Mauss' student whose ethnographical field of expertise is India, introduces methodological features that take structuralism back to Durkheim and Mauss' inspirations. Dumont notices that the Indian system of ideas, its ideology, is chiefly based on an opposition between "pure" and "impure". The opposition, however, does not go with a universal human mind, but comes of a great variety of human activities: food regulations, marriage alliances, inter-casts relationships, traditional employment, and so on (1995). The most important point in his never-very -open controversy with Lévi-Strauss is that the pure and impure do not have the same dignity. Not only is the pure more important, but also the impure arises from the pure, results from its degradation, and, therefore, is embedded in it<sup>1</sup>. Dumont calls this kind of relationship a value.

In Wittgenstein's terms, a value is a rule that crosses all those language games, and makes them likewise - almost as "family of resemblance". An anthropologist would add that following a value not only teaches an individual the proper way of behaving in his social environment, but also is the experience of being part of a group, spotted as the relationship between the whole group, viewed as sacred, and its part, the individual, viewed as profane.

Before closing the French side of this paper and coming back to Wittgenstein, I would like to underline the methodological consequence of this later development. From a certain point of view, a value in Dumont's sense takes the methodological whole-is-not-equivalent-to-the-sum-of-its-parts principle Durkheim use to the farthest formulation I believe possible. Pure contains impure, in this sense pure is equivalent to the totality. The main issue is that Dumont's conception of value turns Durkheim's principle from the

acknowledgement that the totality is qualitatively different into the interpretative rule that relationship takes precedence over related elements.

#### IV

This paper's main concern is not to contribute to philosophical interpretation of Wittgenstein's ideas. I would like to propose an exchange instead, which could be summed up by three questions. What are anthropologists able to suggest to a philosophy based on Wittgenstein? What can we expect as counter-obligation? How can anthropologists and philosophers communicate?

For someone trained to use the concepts of the above French Anthropological Tradition, three passages in Wittgenstein's Lecture on Ethics calls up a quite unusual, if somewhat vivid, interest. First, the good is good because God commands it (comments to Friedrich Waismann). Second, the existence of language itself express the miracle of the existing world. Third, God is a simile to an immense and complex allegory represented as an almighty human being. They recall Dukheim's formulation of sacred. It is not difficult to translate the first and the second ones into anthropological language games. Something like that: "a moral obligation is a moral obligation because society demands it"; and "sacred expresses the miracle of existing society". To me, at least, they seem to contain similar meanings to the original ones. But the third one turns into a fairly different idea: "sacred is an immense and complex allegory to the immense and complex reality of existing society, represented differently in distinct societies, in our society as an almighty human being".

The translation's problem is, by no means, marginal. To an anthropologist, God is a simile to something that *can be described*. The main point is the role played by the sacred. It is, as we have seen, the being-part-of-something experience. So, from a certain point of view, it relates one to the others, his group partners - establishing, maintaining and representing the intra-group relationships. A point that the later developments of French Anthropological Tradition make clear. I propose here that anthropologists and philosophers have a common ground to establish an exchange.

From his ethnographical data, an anthropologist would indicate to a philosopher that language games are related with other language games because they are embedded in human activities, customs, and institutions that are analogously related. Their rules may be related as well. It means that perhaps, without a perspicuous representation of their relationship, we cannot have a clear view of the particular language games' rules. Moreover, if an anthropologist accepts that religion attempts to cross language's borders, then he would notice that, by the same token, an exchange and a value in

Dumont's sense also try to do it. The reason may be the same. Only because religions, exchanges and values attempt to cross language borders, they can have a role in the organization of society - relating individuals, institutions, practices, ideas and things which would have no relationship otherwise.

On the other side, Wittgenstein can be a powerful methodological tool to ethnography. I think that his diagnostics of philosophy as a illness could be applied to anthropological conceptualization as well. It is true that our ethnographical experience is larger than the written text we produce from it. However for describing other peoples lives we are bounded by our own language. The problem is that the ethnographical enterprise gives our own concepts a larger, if rather universal, proportions - sometimes making anthropologists forget the original language games their words arise from. Later on, the newly-universal concepts are used to explain our own society. Are we anthropologists creating a modern interpretative illness? Obviously, the answer depends on further research - a program which, I believe, Wittgenstein's anthropological grounded philosophy can help us with.

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## Endnote

- 1 This conclusion arises from the India ethnographic data. It is not a logical or universal necessity. Although not yet described, it is theoretically possible to find a society whose ideology inverts the pure-impure relationship Dumont described.

# Wittgenstein's Philosophy Throughout the Corners of Brazi

Norberto Abreu-e-Silva Neto

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## I

The complete version of this work, to be published by *Wittgenstein Studien*, consists in a description of a data survey with some comments on fundamental points that could suggest future studies on the reception of Wittgenstein philosophy in Brazil. In this work I tried to establish a continuous tread and a framework in Brazilian history of science, philosophy and culture in which Wittgenstein ideas have been inserted. The research made showed me that happened something like three historical introductions of Wittgenstein's philosophy in Brazil, and that they were preceded by the work of Brazilian neopositivists, that paved the way for the reception in the very beginning of the last century. So, at first, some precise roots of Neopositivismus in Brazil are traced down in that work. After, the focus is directed to the three historical presentations: the first happened by the end of the forties in the context of Brazilian Society of Philosophy, national association founded in 1949 for the development of philosophy and that operates as a center in the movement of Brazilian philosophy since then; the second one on the occasion of the appearance of *Tractatus* translation by José Arthur Giannotti, 1968, in the context of the French philosophical tradition, orientation kept by University of São Paulo-Department of Philosophy; and the third one in the nineties connected to the translation of Rudolf Haller's book, *Questions on Wittgenstein*, 1990, and his two Brazilian visits, in 1990 and 1991.

## II

The forerunners of Neopositivismus in Brazil made the work of rupture with the philosophy of Auguste Comte, the dominant orientation in the mathematical sciences since the beginning of XIXth. Century. The first reference of this movement is the work of Otto de Alencar (1874-1912), engineer from the Polytechnics School of Rio de Janeiro, the very fountain of Positivism in Brazil. By mathematical reasons (the errors of

mathematics he found in Comte's *Subjective Synthesis*) and because he accepted integrally the contemporary science, gradually Alencar abandoned the positivist doctrine and began the criticism of the old positivism. After the rupture, Alencar did not adhere or disseminate any other philosophy and kept an attitude of acting in accordance with the development of science itself. This attitude created a favourable ground for the acceptance of the new physics and non-Euclidian geometries (Paim, 1971, 43). In the next two decades, a reduced group of his students continued the fight.

The first most prominent student of Alencar to continue the movement for the new science was Manuel de Amoroso Costa (1885-1928). He made the movement to advance beyond the limits of scientific demonstrations and entered into the realm of philosophy of sciences (Paim, 1971). His philosophical work was considered a dividing mark between two stages of Brazilian philosophy. A previous age in which science and philosophy were separated and the new epoch in which philosophy asserts itself as theory of knowledge and acquires its own meaning (Reale, 1971). In 1924, Albert Einstein visited Brazil and gave two lectures, one at Brazilian Academy of Sciences and another at Polytechnics of Rio de Janeiro. Amoroso Costa and Teodoro Ramos (1895-1935), another disciple of Alencar, were the organizers of the visit, and it represented the consolidation of the new conception of science based on theory of relativity and the ideas of Russell and Whitehead. In his book, *As idéias fundamentais da matemática*, Amoroso Costa (1929/1971, 216) considers that in *Principia Mathematica* we can find the "quintessence of mathematical knowledge" and that this work can be considered as "a demonstration that science can be built as a rational whole."

According to Marcondes Cesar (1988, 55-56), the new perspective symbolized by Einstein's visit includes also as a consequence the Phenomenological Movement and it is responsible for the basic philosophical orientations in philosophy of science in Brazil: (1) "Neopositivismo" exemplified by the work of Amoroso Costa, and divided in two branches: one that approaches Humanism and science and another of Analytic Philosophy, and (2) the orientation of many towards the restoration of Metaphysics, represented by interpreters of "Heideggerian phenomenology". Since the 30s., Existential Philosophy and Phenomenological Movement have exerted a strong influence upon Brazilian philosophy and psychology, not only Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenologies but also those of Jaspers, Sartre, G. Marcel and Merleau-Ponty. It is remarkable that the two main authors that dedicated themselves to the study of Wittgenstein's philosophy, Euríalo Cannabrava e José Arthur Giannotti, firstly were known as Husserlian phenomenologists.

### III

In 1923, the Polish psychologist, Wacław Radecki (1887-1953), arrived in Brazil. From 1924 to 1932 he directed the Laboratory of Psychology of *Engenho de Dentro*, Rio de Janeiro. Radecki described himself a follower of Brentano's psychology (1929/1934), founded a school of psychology and no one can dispute his influence on Brazilian psychology. The School of Radecki produced some of the best researchers we have in Brazil until now. One of them was Euríalo Cannabrava (1908-1978), who began his career in 1930 working at this laboratory, and who has developed his work in close relation of continuity to that of Amoroso Costa, author he praised because of his discussion about philosophical aspects of the problem of changing equations (pure mathematics) into physical laws (applied mathematics). He conducted his investigations during the 30s. and part of the 40s. working with "Husserlian phenomenology and German existentialism" but trying to keep himself "in a certain way independent of the two speculative movements" (Cannabrava, 1957, 22).

After the war, Cannabrava spent a period in the United States as Visiting Professor at Columbia University. During this time he received the influence of the Neopositivist Group of Chicago and defines his philosophy as a "way of language criticism", that was given to him by Carnap and Morris. At the end of the forties he had the opportunity of handle manuscripts of Wittgenstein on the problem of induction, and in Columbia he bought one of the "Wittgenstein's Dictations", "paying for its weight in gold" (Cannabrava, 1952, 592). Very impressed by Wittgenstein's philosophy he writes a series of texts about the "mechanism of inductive prediction", that composed his thesis for obtaining the Professor's chair of Philosophy at *Colégio Pedro II*, Rio de Janeiro, in 1951. The concept that gives unity to his work and the one he will defend along his life is that of "scientific philosophy" (Cannabrava, 1957).

Cannabrava's most stimulating book is *Ensaíos Filosóficos*, published in 1957 but containing, in fact, philosophical essays from the end the 30s. till the beginning of the 50s., and written with the aim of showing how possible is to give a scientific basis for philosophy. He presents it as a sort of intellectual autobiography in which he criticizes his Existential phenomenological stage and introduces his scientific philosophy. Existential philosophy is analysed from the declared point of view of logic and the concept of scientific philosophy of the Vienna Circle, and it is presented as the best example of anti-philosophic and anti-scientific literature. The other essays are on the ideas of Russell, Ayer, Whitehead (whom he visited in Cambridge), on Logic and Dialectics; the whole discussion having in mind the elaboration os his own "scientific

philosophy". During the sixties he publishes two books on Aesthetics and in 1977 the work *Teoria da decisão filosófica*. This was his last book, and in it he exposes a synthesis of his whole work through the presentation of his concrete scientific philosophy, his "Logos-Psiquê System". This work has a sub?title which expresses clearly that at this moment of his life the scientific psychologist and not the philosopher took the leading role. The setting up of psychological basis of Mathematics, Linguistics and Theory of Knowledge through the theory of philosophical decision is the aim of the book.

Cannabrava did not live short as the mathematicians Amoroso Costa and Teodoro Ramos but like these two, apparently, he also did not leave disciples. Except by the acknowledgement of his contribution to Brazilian philosophy made by our historians (Heggenberg, 1978; Nunes, 1978; and Vaz, 1990), I could not find researchers continuing his work. To many his name sounds unknown. It his hard to locate his works and there is no available information about his personal life. He is an author to be rescued. From the 40s. to the 70s., Cannabrava kept the tradition of Neopositivism, the connection with Analytical Philosophy and with the works of the Vienna Circle. For some time he lectured in London invited by Alfred Ayer, that also visited Brazil many times.

#### IV

The University of São Paulo was founded and installed in 1934. Teodoro Ramos participated of its foundation having among others the task of choosing the foreign professors for the composition of the first staff teaching. He was also the first Director of *Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras*, and to the Professorship of Philosophy and Psychology he had chosen Jean Maugüé (1908-?), who lived in São Paulo for ten years (1935-1944). Maugüé was a colleague and friend of Sartre in the *École Normale*, and developed his intellectual work searching for a "concrete philosophy" in dialogue with him and Politzer. He did not leave much written work and there are almost no references about him, except for the book of Paulo Arantes, *Um departamento francês de ultramar*, 1994, that tells the history of the French Department of Philosophy solidly implanted by Maugüé in Brazil.

According to Arantes (1994, 197), during the decades 20 and 30, Sartre and the French phenomenological philosophy inaugurated a tradition that widens "the usual spectrum of the so called philosophical matters". Maugüé is representative of this tradition in São Paulo. After him the importation continues in the fifties with Martial Guéroult, that mainly taught the philosophy of Leibniz, and after him with Giles-Gaston Granger. In 1960 arrived Gérard Lebrun, a former student of Michel Foucault, who



stayed long and came again many times until recently. In 1965, invited by Lebrun, for the first time Foucault visited Brazil and also like him came again many other times.

A new presentation of Wittgenstein's philosophy will be made by Granger, who taught Logic and Philosophy of Science focusing the epistemology of human sciences. Through his classes, says Arantes (1994, 246), the students could learn that necessary to epistemology was not a "philosophy of consciousness" but a "philosophy of the concept", and as a consequence, they learnt "to doubt about the lived meanings and to refuse, on principle, the supposed continuity between perception and scientific knowledge". After Granger left Brazil, in 1959, the course was taken in charge by José Arthur Giannotti (1930-), who gradually introduced changes that turned it into "a more ambitious meditation of philosophical stamp about the origins of contemporary logic", in particular, the works of Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein, having as counterpoint Aristotle, Leibniz and Husserl, and the emphasis put on "the semantic problem of denotation". In 1968, Giannotti publishes his translation of the *Tractatus* with an introduction where he makes a report about the program of logic he developed in his classes.

The essential topic of Granger's epistemology, explain Arantes (1994, 254-256), the problem of the gap between perception and science or the rupture between the "experienced" and the "objective" is not explored by Giannotti in the transcendental framework of the question. Giannotti worked out the problem of the immediate meaning of social phenomena without trying the elevation from lived meanings to objective meanings and not using operatory models but the marxist categories, because he saw then clearly not as models or a typology but as "meaning schemes", "meaning systems". Under this perspective he developed his own philosophy and not published very much about Wittgenstein until 1993, when he offered us his classic born, *Apresentação do mundo*. Giannotti had (and has) various students that orientated by him developed their own work on Wittgenstein's philosophy. The most prominent are: Arley Moreno, José Carlos Bruni, Luiz Henrique Lopes dos Santos and João Virgílio Cutler.

During the 70s., the generation that has today the leadership in Wittgenstein studies in Brazil studied in Europe. So, Arley Moreno, after obtaining his Master degree under the direction of Giannotti, 1971, lived many years in France studying under Granger's orientation at the University of Provence, Aix-en-Provence, where he also worked as *assistant associé* at *Faculté des Lettres*. He works at State of São Paulo University of Campinas - Department of Philosophy and published articles and three books on Wittgenstein. His *Wittgenstein: através das imagens*, 1993, was reviewed by Granger (1995, 443), who considered it "one of the best examples of remarkable Wittgensteinian studies recently developed by Brazilian philosophers". Of the same generation studied also in Europe: Werner Spaniol (Rome), Bathazar Barbosa Filho and Raul Landim Filho (Louvain), Danilo Marcondes Filho (St. Andrews University, GB), and Nelson Gonçalves

Gomes, who works at the University of Brasília, and defended his Ph. D. thesis, 1975, at the University of Munich under Wolfgang Röd's orientation, on the development of the ideas of Moritz Schlick on ethic and epistemology.

Two books of Wittgenstein were translated into portuguese in the 70s.: *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religion*, 1972, and the *Philosophical Investigations*, 1975. As a whole there are only a few Brazilian editions of Wittgenstein's work. Two translations of *Tractatus* 1968 and 1994, two of the *Investigations*, 1975 and 1993, the Lectures above mentioned, the essay "Philosophy" from the *Big Typescript*, 1995, the article *Some Remarks on Logical Form*, 1995, and the *Lecture on Ethics*, 1995. And, a complete collection of *Wittgenstein Papers*, photocopies made of the existing one in Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., is available to researchers in the library of *Centro de Lógica, Epistemologia e História da Ciência* - State of São Paulo University of Campinas. This Center publishes since 1978 an international journal of philosophy, *Manuscrito*, edited by Marcelo Dascal (University of Jerusalem) and Michael Wrigley (University of Campinas). This journal plays an important role in the diffusion of Wittgenstein's philosophy. Two special issues were dedicated to Wittgenstein, 1985 (268 pages) and 1995 (470 pages).

## V

In 1990, Brazilian philosophers saw the appearance of Rudolf Haller's book, *Questions on Wittgenstein*, translated into portuguese by myself. During this year, Haller stayed in São Paulo as Visiting Professor of University of São Paulo-Institute for Advanced Studies, and came again the following year for a series of lectures all over Brazil, organized by Austrian Embassy. Haller has three articles published in Brazil and his book *Neopositivismus* was reviewed recently by Nelson Gomes in the journal *Disputatio*, 9. The impact of the new image Haller brought us: Wittgenstein in the context of Austrian philosophical tradition, is something yet to be assessed but one thing is clear from the very beginning: since its appearance his book was acknowledged and became an obligatory and constant reference for Wittgensteinian studies in Brazil. I myself try to develop my own work in the perspective he gave us.

And, finally, the publication of articles and books almost inexistent during the 70s increases in numbers along the last twenty years. Their quality is variable. In the nineties were translated: *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, of Janik & Toulmin, 1991; Monk's *Wittgenstein: The duty of genius*, 1995, *Investigating Wittgenstein*, of Hintikka & Hintikka, 1994; Christine Chauviré's *Wittgenstein*, 1991; and Glock's *Dictionary*, 1998.

## VI

To conclude. There is a large "breeding" of books and other works to be known and analysed, and this work I intend to be seen only as a general map to enter the situation of Wittgenstein studies in Brazil. I expect the basic informations provided here could suggest future research on the genealogies of our philosophers that try to practice their philosophy having anchorage in Wittgenstein's ideas.

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# Aktenvermerk: Betriebsunfall "Wittgenstein, Ludwig"

Ulrich Arnswald

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*Steige immer von den kahlen Höhen der Gescheitheit in die grünenden Täler der  
Dummheit.*

Vermischte Bemerkungen, 1948

*In den Tälern der Dummheit wächst für den Philosophen noch immer mehr Gras, als  
auf den kahlen Höhen der Gescheitheit.*

Vermischte Bemerkungen, 1949

Wittgensteins Verständnis als akademischer Lehrer scheint gewesen zu sein, Studenten als "Persönlichkeiten" auszubilden. Dazu bedurfte es einer umfassenden Ausbildung und vor allem Neugierde im Sinne der *universitas* mit Kenntnissen über Musik, Naturwissenschaften, bildende Kunst aber auch der Ökonomie. Die Bewältigung des Wittgensteinschen Bildungsideals galt eher einem Lebenswerk als einem Studiumsziel. Er unterrichtete in seinen Cambridger Tutorials ausschließlich kleine Gruppen. Statt Massenvorlesungen führte er Seminare durch, an denen mitunter nur ein paar Studenten teilnahmen.<sup>1</sup> Wittgenstein bemühte sich insbesondere auch um die kulturelle Seite der Philosophie. Die heute häufig fehlende kulturelle Dimension führt zunehmend dazu, daß die formalisierte Schulphilosophie steril ist und gegenüber mancher Anforderung der modernen Gesellschaft hilflos reagiert. Der vorliegende Beitrag will Überlegungen anstellen, inwieweit ein Philosoph wie Wittgenstein heute überhaupt noch denkbar, ja in der modernen Universitätslandschaft toleriert würde.

Philosophische Debatten entstehen, da in Seminarräumen unterschiedliche Standpunkte gelehrt werden. Der Konflikt der so Vorgebildeten führt daher oft zu einer Verabsolutierung ihrer Positionen, die Polemiker auf den Plan ruft. Das Polemische gilt unter Hinweis auf moralische Aspekte in der geistigen Welt weitestgehend als unerwünscht. Manche sehen in ihr die Chance zur Verdeutlichung dessen, was geistige Tätigkeit ausmacht. Für sie erlaubt die Polemik das Herausarbeiten von Gedanken, sowohl der Gedanken des Gegenüber als auch der eigenen. Die Polemik hält somit den Streit der Philosophen in Gang und ist Teil der Streitkultur. Ihr Ziel ist es, der Philosophie neues Blut hinzuzuführen, sie zu verjüngen. Neue Probleme entstehen so, und alte Positionen verlieren an Attraktivität.<sup>2</sup>

In welchem Kontext stehen diese Überlegungen zu Wittgenstein? Norman Malcolm weist in seinen Erinnerungen an Wittgenstein darauf hin, daß dieser streng genommen kein Universitätsgelehrter war. Sein Temperament was sehr verschieden von den typischen Wissenschaftlern.<sup>3</sup> Wittgenstein dürfte diese Beschreibung seiner Person kaum stören, denn in den *Vermischten Bemerkungen* stellt er in bezug zu den Universitätsgelehrten lakonisch fest: "Es ist beschämend, sich als leerer Schlauch zeigen zu müssen, der nur vom Geist aufgeblasen wird."<sup>4</sup>

Malcolm beschreibt das Zusammensein mit Wittgenstein als eine ständige Belastung. Nicht nur seien seine intellektuellen Anforderungen an eine Konversation sehr hoch gewesen, sondern auch seine Strenge, seine schonungslosen Urteile, seine Tendenz zur Zensur und seine Depression hätten dazu beigetragen.<sup>5</sup> Insofern ist es auch nicht verwunderlich, wenn Malcolm aus einem Brief zitiert, in dem Wittgenstein schreibt, daß er es vorziehe, bei ihrem nächsten Treffen lieber eine Auseinandersetzung zu haben als nur ein oberflächliches Gespräch. Auch wenn er Auseinandersetzungen mit Leuten, die er schätze, nicht möge, so Wittgenstein weiter, könne man nicht vernünftig denken, ohne sich dabei nicht selbst zu verletzen.<sup>6</sup>

Polemik war Wittgenstein offensichtlich nicht fremd; Ironie und Sarkasmus ebenso wenig. Zwei ehemalige Studenten berichten folgende Anekdote: Über einen "Don", der einmal Blake kritisierte, stellte Wittgenstein vor seinen Studenten fest, daß dieser nichts von Philosophie verstehe, und fragte anschließend, ob man dann erwarten dürfe, daß er so etwas wie Dichtung verstehen könne.<sup>7</sup> Allan Janik und Stephen Toulmin berichten in *Wittgensteins Wien* von einer kalkulierten Provokation Wittgensteins gegenüber den Philosophen des Wiener Kreises. Wittgenstein hätte bei seinem ersten Zusammentreffen darauf bestanden, ihnen die Dichtung von Tagore vorzulesen. Laut Janik und Toulmin war dies ein ernstgemeinter polemischer Hinweis Wittgensteins, daß philosophische Fachterminologie und Methoden im besten Falle ein Mittel zum Zweck sein können, um den menschlichen Geist zu befreien, damit er sich mit tiefsinnigen und wesentlichen Fragen beschäftigen könne, wie den Fragen mit denen sich Tolstoi und Tagore auseinandersetzen. Wittgenstein distanzierte sich von jeder Form einer "technischen" oder "professionellen" Konzeption von Philosophie. Für viele war sein *Tractatus* fälschlicherweise als die Basis für eine selbständige und selbstbewußte akademische Disziplin angesehen worden.<sup>8</sup> Provokationen dieser Art werfen fundamentale Probleme auf, die unser Selbstverständnis als Philosophen betreffen und uns auf eine weitere reflexive Ebene der Beurteilung unseres Urteils heben.

Wittgenstein sah Polemik, Ironie und Sarkasmus als eine *conditio sine qua non* für die Entstehung neuer Gedanken an. Dies geht auch aus den folgenden zwei Aphorismen hervor:

"Ist ein falscher Gedanke nur einmal kühn und klar ausgedrückt, so ist damit schon viel gewonnen."<sup>9</sup>

oder

"Man könnte Gedanken Preise anheften. Manche kosten viel, manche wenig. Und womit zahlt man für Gedanken? Ich glaube: mit Mut."<sup>10</sup>

Insofern war für ihn Polemik nichts Negatives, die ja im übrigen begriffsgeschichtlich zuerst einmal nur eine "scharfe Kritik" ist, und erst in ihrer weiteren sprachlichen Verwendung eine negative Konnotation - im Sinne unberechtigter und unsachlicher Kritik - erhalten hat. Diese legerere positive Sichtweise von "Reibung" und "Widerstreit" als Quelle des Neuen kommt noch deutlicher in einem Eintrag des Jahres 1946 zum Ausdruck:

"Wenn die Menschen nicht manchmal Dummheiten machten, geschähe überhaupt nichts Gescheites."<sup>11</sup>

Der Grund, warum Wittgenstein Polemik als Mittel für seine philosophischen Diskurse nutzte, liegt wohl in der Sorge, vor lauter Gedictheit und "Gefuchtel" den eigentlichen Fragen nicht hinreichend nachzukommen. Er beklagt sich öfters, daß man immer vergißt, den Dingen auf den Grund zu gehen<sup>12</sup>, und fügt hinzu: "Man setzt die Fragezeichen nicht tief genug."<sup>13</sup> In diesem Zusammenhang nennt er ein Beispiel aus der Schule: "Unsere Kinder lernen schon in der Schule, Wasser bestehe aus den Gasen Wasserstoff und Sauerstoff ... Wer es nicht versteht ist dumm. Die wichtigsten Fragen werden zugedeckt."<sup>14</sup>

Was sind aber diese "wichtigsten Fragen"? Wittgenstein sah in der Wissenschaft eine "Bereicherung und Verarmung"<sup>15</sup> zugleich, wobei eine Methode alle anderen beiseite dränge und die wahren Quellen nicht mehr ersichtlich würden.<sup>16</sup> Die Methode, die er dabei vor Augen hatte, war die analytische Philosophie, der er vorwarf wie ein Schlafmittel zu wirken und der Philosophie die Möglichkeit des Staunens zu rauben.<sup>17</sup> Auch Janik und Toulmin kommen zu der Schlußfolgerung, daß es "... [ganz falsch] wäre ... zu meinen, daß Wittgenstein die Auffassungen der analytischen Philosophie über philosophische Probleme und Methoden teilte."<sup>18</sup> Sie verweisen dabei auch auf eine Bemerkung die Wittgenstein über seinen Kollegen am Trinity College, C.D. Broad, gemacht habe: "Der arme Broad glaubt, Philosophie sei die Physik des Abstrakten."<sup>19</sup>

Wittgenstein hatte als ausgebildeter Ingenieur nichts gegen mathematische Berechnungen - vorausgesetzt sie waren sinnvoll. Angewandte Mathematik mußte aber eine Funktion haben. Nicht nur mußten die jeweiligen Berechnungen formal korrekt sein, sondern auch über ihre formale Ausarbeitung hinaus etwas leisten. Wittgenstein warf dem Wiener Kreis vor, Formalismen nur um ihrer selbst willen zu entwickeln, ohne

Berücksichtigung der externen Relevanz oder ihrer Anwendung. Was aber konstituiert die analytische Philosophie, die eine Art "Physik des Abstrakten" sein will? Die Analytiker betrachten eine begrenzte Zahl von technischen Fragen und Problemen. Diese verstehen sie als die "Grundphänomene" mit der sich die Philosophie beschäftigen muß und sehen ihre Aufgabe im Erarbeiten von umfassenden Lösungen, neuen Lösungsmethoden oder Theorien. Für Wittgenstein war diese Entwicklung eine Fehlleistung der Philosophie durch "Pseudotechniken", bei der die Mittel der Philosophie mit dem Ziel verwechselt wurden.<sup>20</sup> Janik und Toulmin fassen dies folgendermaßen zusammen:

"Ein leerer Symbolismus und ein pseudotechnischer Jargon wurden zum Vorwand für die Verdrängung der wirklichen philosophischen Probleme, die unsere eigenen Erfahrungen berühren und die wir in unseren Nerven spüren, durch ein System abstrakt-formaler Denkfiguren, die nicht im wirklichen Leben wurzeln."<sup>21</sup>

Wittgenstein fühlte sich befremdet von der Entwicklung der Wissenschaften, deren Fortschrittsgläubigkeit er nicht teilte. Er empfand die Philosophie der Welt der Wissenschaften nicht zugehörig. Wittgensteins "Denkbewegung" ist eine andere als die der "typischen" Wissenschaftler. Wie Anja Weiberg in *"Und die Begründung hat ein Ende"* feststellt, "sucht der typisch westliche Wissenschaftler ein immer komplizierteres Gebilde zu konstruieren", während Wittgenstein die Klarheit sucht.<sup>22</sup> Hierzu bemerkt Wittgenstein selbst:

"Unsere Zivilisation ist durch das Wort ‚Fortschritt‘ charakterisiert. Der Fortschritt ist ihre Form, nicht eine ihrer Eigenschaften, daß sie fortschreitet. Sie ist typisch aufbauend. Ihre Tätigkeit ist es, ein immer komplizierteres Gebilde zu konstruieren. Und auch die Klarheit dient doch nur wieder diesem Zweck und ist nicht Selbstzweck. Mir dagegen ist die Klarheit, die Durchsichtigkeit, Selbstzweck.

Es interessiert mich nicht, ein Gebäude aufzuführen, sondern die Grundlagen der möglichen Gebäude durchsichtig vor mir zu haben.

Mein Ziel ist also ein anderes als das der Wissenschaftler, und meine Denkbewegung von der ihrigen verschieden."<sup>23</sup>

Als Philosoph arbeitete Wittgenstein in fast kompletter Unabhängigkeit von anderen Philosophen. In Vorlesungen nannte er selten Namen, noch zitierte oder diskutierte er die Werke anderer. Er hatte eine starke Abneigung gegen jede Art von Gewieftheit oder einer "tendency towards a shallow cleverness"<sup>24</sup>, also zum Beispiel vor philosophischen Meinungen, zu denen eine Person gekommen ist, ohne sich bemüht zu haben, die Wahrheit für sich selbst herauszufinden. Auch hatte er weder Zeit für diejenigen, deren Meinungen sich an philosophischen Moden orientierten, noch für philosophische Jünger, die nur Meinungen vertraten, weil eminente Philosophen sie postuliert hatten. Auch



diejenigen, die seine Sichtweisen kopierten, verabscheute und ignorierte er, und sprach sich ausdrücklich ebenso gegen jene aus, deren Worte weder vom Herzen noch vom Kopf kamen.<sup>25</sup> Eine Kritik, die unvermittelt noch heute ihre Berechtigung hat.

Wittgenstein besaß ein tiefes Mißtrauen gegenüber den Konventionen und der Routine des akademischen Betriebs.<sup>26</sup> Er glaubte, daß kein normaler Mensch zugleich eine ehrliche, anständige Person und Hochschullehrer sein könne. Dies wird in zwei Schreiben an Malcolm deutlich. Im ersten gratuliert Wittgenstein Malcolm zum Ph.D. und warnt, er möge nicht sich oder seine Studenten betrügen. Dies sei, soweit er sich nicht täusche, das was man von ihm erwarten werde und es würde schwierig werden, dies nicht zu tun; vielleicht sogar unmöglich. In diesem Falle wünsche er ihm die Stärke zu kündigen.<sup>27</sup> Im zweiten Schreiben nennt er die Versuchung (für jeden in einer solchen Position), sich selbst zu betrügen, überwältigend und glaubt, daß nur ein Wunder ermöglichen könne, anständige Arbeit im Unterrichten von Philosophie zu leisten.<sup>28</sup>

Wittgenstein war unger in der Gesellschaft seiner Kollegen. Obwohl er ein Fellow des Trinity College war, nahm er sein Essen nicht in der "Hall" mit den Kollegen ein, da er die Künstlichkeit ihrer Unterhaltungen nicht aushalten konnte. Er haßte jede Art von affektivem und unehrlichem Benehmen.<sup>29</sup> Gleichzeitig beinhaltet seine Kritik eine gewisse Verachtung für die Mittelmäßigkeit vieler universitärer Karrieristen, nicht so sehr, da sie Dinge nicht einsehen und erkennen konnten, sondern vielmehr dafür, daß sie sich als bestechlich, verlogen und unauthentisch entpuppten:

"Es ist merkwürdig, wie schwer es fällt, zu glauben, was wir nicht selbst einsehen. Wenn ich z.B. bewundernde Äußerungen der bedeutenden Männer mehrerer Jahrhunderte über Shakespeare höre, so kann ich mich eines Mißtrauens nie erwehren, es sei eine Konvention gewesen, ihn zu preisen; obwohl ich mir doch sagen muß, daß es so nicht ist. Ich brauche die Autorität Milton, um wirklich überzeugt zu sein. Bei diesem nehme ich an, daß er unbestechlich war. - Damit meine ich aber natürlich nicht, daß nicht eine ungeheure Menge Lobes ohne Verständnis und aus falschen Gründen Shakespeare gesendet worden ist und wird, von tausend Professoren der Literatur."<sup>30</sup>

Für die Philosophie empfand er es als ein Glücksfall, daß jeder Mensch ein ethisch bedeutungsvolles Leben zu leben in der Lage ist und mit sich vereinbaren muß, gesellschaftliche Kompromiße einzugehen und gleichzeitig sein eigenes Leben zu führen. Damit wird auch deutlich, daß im zunehmenden Maße wie wir uns im Wittgensteinschen Sinne aus der Interpretationshoheit der Schulphilosophie befreien, sich unsere Eigenverantwortung erhöht. Dies ging mit seinem Glauben einher, daß philosophische Fragen wesentlich schwieriger seien, als viele Philosophen denken, wobei für ihn keinerlei Antwort zu irgendetwas gut ist, solange die Antwort nicht auf einen Menschen trifft, der sie benötigt.<sup>31</sup>

Philosophische Reflexion beginnt nämlich dort, wo die in der Regel unbedacht verwendeten Begriffe einen schlagartig stützig machen und ihre Selbstevidenz verlieren. Eine gewisse Begriffsstützigkeit ist also notwendig, um Philosophie betreiben zu können. Philosophie ist aber mehr. Sie beinhaltet den Anspruch auf die Freiheit des Weiterfragens und übersteigt somit die anderen universitären Disziplinen sowohl in ihrem Freiheitsdrang als auch in ihrer Radikalität. Es ist nicht die Aufgabe der Philosophie Schulen oder Doktrinen aufzubauen, sondern im Gegenteil. Wie jede kreative Tätigkeit ist auch das Philosophieren eine Sache der Leidenschaft. Dies gilt nicht allein den Sachen, sondern ebenso den Personen, die sie vertreten. Wittgenstein monierte, daß "... die Erziehung der Menschen heute dahingeht, die Leidenschaft zu verringern. ... - Auf die Leidenschaft gibt man nichts, denn Leiden soll es nicht geben, sie sind eigentlich veraltet."<sup>32</sup>

Wittgensteins Strenge ging mit einer leidenschaftlichen Liebe den "Dingen auf den Grund zu gehen" und mit einer Kompromißlosigkeit im Bemühen um vollständiges Verstehen einher. Er kämpfte laufend mit schwerwiegenden philosophischen Problemen und verausgabte sich in seinen Seminaren.<sup>33</sup> Die Leidenschaft, die er von anderen für die Philosophie erwartete, lebte er in drastischer Form vor. Der "existentielle Rigorismus", den er zugrunde legte, manifestierte sich nicht nur in seinen Vorlesungen, sondern auch im Lebensweg und im niedergeschriebenen Werk. Matthias Kroß bringt dies auf den Punkt:

"Wie kaum ein anderer Philosoph hat Wittgenstein versucht, sein Dasein und seine Denkweise in Übereinstimmung zu bringen und die Lösung philosophischer Probleme mit der Erlösung seines Daseins zu verknüpfen."<sup>34</sup>

Die philosophischen Probleme, die ihn fesselten, durch "Reibung" und Widerstreit<sup>35</sup>, durch "Ironie", "Absurdität" oder "Polemik" hervorzurufen, ließ Wittgenstein zu seinem extensiven Gebrauch von Beispielen greifen. Dieses Verfahren diene als Denkbewegung, um jeden normativen Versuch, einen sprachlichen "Normalgebrauch" zu fixieren entgegenzuwirken.<sup>36</sup> Es handelt sich um eine pluralistische Haltung, die nicht systemisch, sondern ausschließlich *praxeologisch* dem Suchenden eine Lösung seiner philosophischen Probleme ermöglicht und im Widerspruch zu jedem Versuch der Verallgemeinerung steht. Diese Vorgehensweise der Verkettung von Beispielen zum Eruiieren eines philosophischen Problems ist nicht nur maßgeblich für Wittgensteins *posthum* erschienenen Werke, sie war vielmehr ein Markenzeichen seiner Philosophie und zeichnete auch seinen Unterrichtsstil aus.

Wittgensteins Seminare galten als "unakademisch". Er dozierte frei in seinem eigenen oder im Raum eines Freundes. Seine Ausführungen resultierten normalerweise aus Fragen, die die Klasse beantworten sollte. Die Antworten wurden wiederum

Ausgangspunkte weiterer Gedanken, die dann zu weiteren Fragen führten.<sup>37</sup> Man kann diese Treffen kaum Vorlesungen nennen, denn Wittgenstein führte dort seine eigenen Forschungen fort. Manchmal versuchte er, einen Gedanken herauszuarbeiten und erlaubte dann keinerlei Bemerkungen. Es gab häufige und lange Perioden des Schweigens, unterbrochen nur von einer gelegentlichen Äußerung Wittgensteins, bei ansonsten stiller Aufmerksamkeit der anderen Anwesenden. In diesen Momenten des Schweigens war Wittgenstein laut Berichten extrem angespannt und aktiv. Man spürte förmlich die Anwesenheit einer extremen Ernsthaftigkeit, Absorption und einer immensen intellektuellen Kraft.<sup>38</sup> Malcolm beobachtete unzählige Male, daß Wittgenstein, wenn er ein Beispiel während eines Seminars erfand, selbst über die Absurdität grinste, die er sich ausgedacht hatte. Die erfundenen Ereignisse und Umstände waren oft so merkwürdig und außerhalb des täglichen Lebens, daß sie ihn amüsierten. Aber die Beispiele waren nichtsdestoweniger durchweg ernst gemeint. Wittgenstein tolerierte keinen spöttischen Ton in seinen Klassen, denn dies war für ihn ein Charakteristikum von Philosophiediskussionen cleverer Leute, die keinen ernstesten Zweck erfüllten.<sup>39</sup> Wenn er sich durch philosophische Probleme kämpfte, ergab dies den Eindruck als ob er litt.<sup>40</sup> In jeder Diskussion versuchte er, etwas Neues zu schaffen. Wissen war offensichtlich bei ihm tief verbunden mit "tun".<sup>41</sup>

Auch Janik und Toulmin betonen diesen Aspekt: "Jeder, der Wittgenstein persönlich gehört hatte, war sich bewußt, den Kampf eines tief philosophischen Denkers gegen die geistigen Hindernisse auf dem Weg zur freien Entfaltung des Denkens zu erleben. In Oxford wurden unterdessen ähnlich aussehende Techniken mit dem größten Geschick angewandt, aber ohne tiefere oder fraglos philosophische Ziele. Es war, als ob man eine richtige Uhr gegen eine Kinderspieluhr austauschte, deren Zifferblätter auf den ersten Blick genauso aussieht, aber die Zeit nicht anzeigt."<sup>42</sup>

Auch die heutige akademische Disziplin der Philosophie muß sich fragen, wie sie es mit der Philosophie hält. Verfolgen wir tiefere, philosophische Ziele oder spielen wir nur mit einer Kinderuhr. Es scheint zweifelhaft, ob in der modernen Universitätslandschaft für ein Universalgenie wie Wittgenstein noch Platz wäre, geschweige denn, ob man sein Genie erkennen würde. Der Betriebsunfall "Wittgenstein, Ludwig" mag ein Glücksfall für die Philosophie gewesen sein. Ob wir aber die richtigen Schlüsse aus diesem Glücksfall gezogen haben, ist mehr als zweifelhaft. Wittgenstein brach seine *Lectures* oft ab und bat um Zeit zum Nachdenken.<sup>43</sup> - Vielleicht wäre es 50 Jahre nach Wittgensteins Tod an der Zeit, den Gruß der Philosophen zu ändern, und in Zukunft wie folgt zu grüßen: "Einen Moment bitte, laßt uns nachdenken!"

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## Endnoten

- 1 Vgl. D.A.T.G. / A.C.J., 73.
- 2 Vgl. Mitterer.
- 3 Vgl. Malcolm, 20.
- 4 VB, 1930, 465.
- 5 Vgl. Malcolm, 62.
- 6 Vgl. Ebd., 40.
- 7 Vgl. D.A.T.G. / A.C.J., 80.
- 8 Vgl. Janik / Toulmin, 293.
- 9 VB, 1948, 557.
- 10 VB, 1946, 524.
- 11 VB, 1946, 521.
- 12 Vgl. VB, 1947, 538.
- 13 VB, 1947, 538.
- 14 VB, 1948, 550.
- 15 Vgl. VB, 1947, 536.
- 16 Vgl. VB, 1947, 536.
- 17 Vgl. VB, 1930, 457.
- 18 Janik / Toulmin, 294.
- 19 Ebd., 294.
- 20 Vgl. Ebd., 293-294.
- 21 Ebd., 296.
- 22 Vgl. Weiberg, 105.
- 23 VB, 1930, 459.
- 24 Vgl. Malcolm, 62.
- 25 Vgl. D.A.T.G. / A.C.J., 78-79.
- 26 Vgl. Malcolm, 17.
- 27 Vgl. Ebd., 36.
- 28 Vgl. Ebd., 37.
- 29 Ebd., 30.
- 30 VB, 1946, 518.
- 31 Vgl. D.A.T.G. / A.C.J., 77.
- 32 VB, 1948, 550-551.
- 33 Vgl. Malcolm, 27.
- 34 Kroß, 34-35.
- 35 PU, 107.
- 36 Vgl. Kroß, 54-55.
- 37 Vgl. Malcolm, 16-17.
- 38 Vgl. Ebd., 26.
- 39 Vgl. Ebd., 29.
- 40 Vgl. Ebd., 55.
- 41 Vgl. Ebd., 20.
- 42 Janik / Toulmin, 295.
- 43 Vgl. S. D.A.T.G. / A.C.J., 76.

# Transforming Transcendental Philosophy: The Later Wittgenstein and Kant on Understanding and Grammar

Roxana Baiasu\*

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The future of philosophy springs from and is nourished by its tradition. The most revolutionary turns in philosophy stand out on the basis of their relation to the past. Wittgenstein, and especially the later Wittgenstein, is generally regarded as the initiator of such a turn in philosophy. In the 1930s Wittgenstein indicates that his philosophising constitutes a "kink" in the history of thought<sup>1</sup>. This evokes the way in which Kant was announcing a revolution in thinking through his transcendental philosophy. In this paper I will refer to some of the philosophical connections between these two moments of turn in the history of Western thought. The aim is to explore central Kantian elements in the later Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and thus to make manifest significant family resemblances between Wittgenstein and Kant. This inquiry is not confined to a comparison oriented towards the past but it also looks towards the future by pointing out new directions which have been opened up by Wittgenstein through a transformation of transcendental philosophy<sup>2</sup>.

In what follows I will argue first that, like Kant, the later Wittgenstein is concerned with the conditions of possibility of experience by showing that Wittgenstein's concept of grammar designates a transcendental structure. However the notion of the 'transcendental' needs to be rethought in the context of Wittgenstein's philosophy. I will then explore the way in which grammar operates as the formation of concepts (*Begriffsbildung*) and thus displaces its predecessor, the Kantian understanding.

## 1. Grammar and 'the Possibilities of Phenomena'

According to Wittgenstein, grammar is neither an underlying basic structure of language (or thought) which is statically articulated, nor is it a perfect, ideal language which needs to be constructed for the sake of a crystal purity of meaning. Since language is always already meaningful, an activity operating with sense, "the *aim* (*Zweck*) of the grammar is nothing but that of the language" (§497), of the deployment of language-games, the unfolding of forms-of-life. The rules of grammar describe the use of language, the constitution of meaning in language-games. Although grammar is nothing hidden, it is

not something that is instantly transparent. Wittgenstein indicates that " In the use of words one might distinguish 'surface grammar' from 'depth grammar'" (§664). The surface grammar merely creates the appearance of sense in the presentation of a sentence construction (*Satzbau*). This gives rise to "grammatical illusions" or "fictions" (§307) and, according to Wittgenstein, philosophy is overwhelmingly populated by such items. They can take the form of a proposition which is neither "a proposition from experience (*Erfahrungssatz*)", nor is it a proper grammatical one; what it gives us is "an allegorical painting taking the place of words...a full pictorial representation (*Darstellung*) of our grammar. Not facts, but as it were illustrated turns of speech" (§295). Often this illusory, surface grammar rules over our understanding and dominates our way of thinking.

Wittgenstein's investigations attend to the depth grammar of language "by clearing misunderstandings away" (§90). Through an examination of the use of language the grammatical investigations attempt to achieve each time a clear view of the grammatical connections between concepts and thus to reveal the "possibilities of phenomena" (§90). These are the aims of Wittgenstein's inquiries which offer neither a scientific nor a naturalistic account of how language works: "we are not doing natural science; nor yet natural history" (p.230). Wittgenstein is not concerned with the explanation of some peculiar facts of nature, nor even with the phenomena themselves; for instance, he says: "We are not analysing a phenomenon (e.g. thought) but a concept (e.g. that of thinking), and therefore the use of a word" (§383), or at a different junction: "Our problem is not a causal but a conceptual one" (p.203). This echoes Kant's definition of philosophical knowledge as "*rational cognition from concepts*" (Kant, 1996, A713, B741). Wittgenstein's grammatical analyses are "conceptual investigations" (pp. 213, 255). They aim, as it were, to the 'knowledge' of grammar which is acquired through the inquiry into the use of concepts (words).

Wittgenstein distinguishes between three types of proposition: grammatical, experiential (*Erfahrungssatz*) and fictional ("grammatical fiction")<sup>3</sup>. The latter is the kind of statement which is produced by the surface grammar I have referred above. Let us look now at what distinguishes the first two types of proposition. An experiential proposition is a statement about phenomena or facts of nature; a grammatical proposition is an a priori sentence concerning the use of a concept. In a paragraph (§251) which Wittgenstein says that is "a remark about the negation of an a priori proposition", he gives another criterion for distinguishing between a priori grammatical judgements and empirical propositions: one can imagine what the opposite would be in the case of an empirical proposition, whereas one cannot understand what the opposite picture of a grammatical proposition would be. For instance, to use Wittgenstein's examples, one can very well imagine the opposite of a proposition like "This table has

the same length as the one over there", but one cannot say what would be the opposite (not necessarily mental) picture of, say, "Every rod has a length". This is not a weakness of the human capacities, it "doesn't mean: my powers of imagination are unequal to the task", for the matter is not an empirical but a grammatical one. Hence, for Wittgenstein grammatical propositions are characterised by a kind of necessity that cannot be assigned to experiential propositions. The latter are rather "probable" (*wahrscheinlich*) whilst if a judgement "is a priori, that means that it is a form of account which is very convincing to us (*einleuchtende Darstellung*)" (§158).

Grammatical judgements are not based on experience, but they describe the a priori use of concepts. The a priori status of a concept is given by its role in the language-game: it is an instrument of language which functions as a "standard" or "paradigm in our language-game; something with which a comparison is made", "not something that is represented (*Dargestelltes*), but is a means of representation (*Mittel der Darstellung*)" (§50)<sup>4</sup>. Thus Wittgenstein does not dismiss the possibility of a priori concepts and judgements; he only resists the Kantian attempt to show that they are atemporal and fixed once for all. For Wittgenstein the status of a priori concepts and judgements is dependent on their use in the language-game, and accordingly is historical and local.

Wittgenstein claims that "our investigation, however, is directed not towards phenomena, but, as one might say, towards the '*possibilities*' of phenomena. We remind ourselves, that is to say, of the *kind of statement* (*Art der Aussagen*) that we make about phenomena. (...) Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one" (§90). Wittgenstein examines the way in which we talk (think) about phenomena, or should talk about them, which is to say the mode in which we (should) understand them as they are given to us; his task is to explore in this manner the '*possibilities*' of phenomena. Wittgenstein's grammatical investigations aim to show how the possibilities of phenomena are constituted by the rules of grammar. In this sense grammar is a transcendental structure but it is not, like in Kant, a structure of subjectivity. Its '*locus*' is language and the forms-of-life.

For Wittgenstein, grammar is that which forms the conceptuality in terms of which understanding operates. For instance, having a new conception (*Auffassung*) (e.g. of the "visual room") may be interpreted as the discovery of a new object, but is in fact "a grammatical movement" (§401), "a new way of speaking, a new comparison" (and in the case of the "visual room", "it might even be called a new sensation") (§400). This grammatical movement is the discovery of new mode of regarding things, it is "As if you have invented a new way of painting; or again, a new metre, or a new kind of song" (§401). Grammar constitutes the way in which something is understood, and it constitutes the phenomena as they present themselves to us. Or to put it in a Kantian



manner (although the comparison can go only for a stretch), the conditions of possibility of language (understanding) are the conditions of possibilities of objects, "Grammar tells us what kind of object anything is (Theology as grammar)"<sup>5</sup> (§373). Even what one can take to be the elements of reality are not beyond language (understanding): "What looks as if it *had* to exist (*geben muss*), is part of the language. It is a paradigm in our language-game; something with which comparison is made" (§50); it is given in the concept formation. When they function grammatically, that is, a priori, concepts are modes of presentation of dynamic essences of phenomena: "Essence is expressed by grammar" (§371)<sup>6</sup>.

## 2. Grammar as Concept Formation

Wittgenstein's interest is directed towards the work of grammar as the formation of conceptuality which is the mode of presentation of phenomena. On Kant's tracks Wittgenstein indicates that the formation of concepts is not grounded in something that we would call an external reality, which the concepts would mirror. Concepts are constituted neither through abstraction from the manifold of external instances or particulars, nor through some acts defining the nature of the mind: "if the formation of concepts (*Begriffsbildung*) can be explained by facts of nature (*Naturtatsachen*), should we not be interested, not in grammar, but rather in that in nature which is the basis of grammar?" (p.230). It would be the task of sciences to demonstrate such hypotheses concerning "these possible causes of the formation of concepts; we are not doing natural science; nor yet natural history" (p.230). Wittgenstein does not deny that there is a "correspondence between concepts and very general facts of nature (Such facts as mostly do not strike us because of their generality.)" (p.230). This 'correspondence' may be relevant to grammatical investigations "in order to explain the significance, I mean the importance of a concept" (p.56). For instance, if we imagine a significant change of some very general facts of nature, we realise that our conceptuality could have been very different. However the conceptual inquiry into the essence of concept formation cannot reduce it to this correspondence between concepts and facts of nature.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant defines the understanding as the "power of concepts" (A126) since "from it arise *concepts*" (A 21, B33). Hence, for Kant, the formation of concepts is a function of the understanding; this means that the understanding forms concepts which are rules of unification of appearances. The understanding is also characterised in a manner which is "more fruitful and comes closer to its nature" as the "power of rules" (A126) since "a concept, in terms of its form, is always something that is universal and that serves as a rule" (A106). My claim is that Wittgenstein' "grammar" dislocates the Kantian "understanding" (*Verstand*) and

becomes the transcendental structure which forms the conceptuality of the understanding (*Verstehen*) and thus the "possibilities of phenomena". For Wittgenstein, although understanding is not a *faculty* of rules (concepts), it is still constituted conceptually by rules to the extent that understanding means following rules and these rules are given in grammar. The rules of grammar which constitute understanding are no longer idealised in the manner of the Kantian formal categories of thinking<sup>7</sup>. For Wittgenstein grammatical rules, although they are transcendental (in the sense of conditions of possibility of phenomena), are imminent to the language-game which is played according to these rules.

How does Wittgenstein rethink the formation of concepts in grammar? How are the grammatical rules of understanding constituted conceptually? Wittgenstein suggests the analogy of grammar with a peculiar notion of space which is defined by a network of relations between its 'parts'. He talks about the "*place (Platz)* in language, in grammar" that can be assigned to a word (§29), a place which is prepared prior to ostensive definitions (§31); he refers to the grammar of certain words (concepts) as being "closely related" (§150; p.220); or he indicates his interest "in the concept [i.e. of seeing aspects] and its place (*Stellung*) among the concepts of experience" (p.193). Hence the grammar of a word (concept) constitutes or 'prepares' the place of the concept in relation to the places of other concepts. The grammatical rules project understanding in language-games by forming its concepts, that is by defining the connections between concepts, their affinities and idiosyncrasies, and thus their use.

A concept is never isolated, it is always related to other concepts; and it is their grammar which describes these connections. There are various types of relationships between concepts: a concept can belong (*gehören*) to another concept, e.g. in the way in which the concepts "true" and "false" are used in the language-game with the word "proposition" (§136), or the way in which "being hidden" (although a misleading expression) "is part of (*liegt im*) the *concept* 'saying inwardly' (p. 220); different concepts can "touch (*berühren sich*)... and coincide over a stretch (*laufen ein Stück Wegs miteinander*)" (p.192); the grammar of a concept may completely diverge from the grammar of another one (e.g. "to mean" and "to imagine", p. 18); and so on.

Grammar constitutes each time the play-space of the language-game<sup>8</sup>, and thus the place of a concept *among* the others. In each case, grammar is the dynamic place of relations between concepts. Concepts and their grammar are embedded in the flow of language-games. As such grammar occupies each time the site of what we can call the empirical-transcendental. Grammar is each time enclosed in the use of language, the rules of grammar are constitutive and directs understanding; although they are changeable, they are a priori since they emerge from the grammatical concept

formation. Grammar is transcendental in the sense that it is a necessary and universal condition of possibility of language and understanding. But grammar is always the grammar of a word or expression in language; at the same time grammar abides the essence of anything. Grammar is in each case the open play-space of the possibilities of phenomena. The grammatical rules indicates, in the manner of sign-posts, this place to understanding. Structured by grammatical rules, understanding projects itself in the place where it already is, the conceptual place described by grammar.

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## Endnotes

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- 1 Hacker (1986, 146-7) says that "Wittgenstein claimed that philosophy as he was now practising it was not merely a stage in the continuous development of the subject, but a new subject... a 'kink' in the evolution of philosophy" - quoted in Glendinning (1998, 158).
  - 2 Thus I am on the site of those commentators of the later Wittgenstein who situate his philosophy in a Kantian transcendental tradition. See for instance Mandel (1978), Stith (1978), Engel (1968), Guignon (1990), Gier (1981).
  - 3 See Wittgenstein (1997), §295. This distinction can be traced back to Kant's distinction between transcendental illusions, transcendental judgements and empirical propositions. For his discussion of transcendental illusion see Kant (1996) A 297-8, B353-4.
  - 4 Here Wittgenstein does not refer explicitly to a priori concepts but this is I think the suggestion he makes through his famous example of the standard meter.
  - 5 "Welche Art von Gegenstand etwas ist, sagt die Grammatik".
  - 6 "Das Wesen ist in der Grammatik ausgesprochen".
  - 7 For Kant, this raises the problem of the application of such idealised formal rules. He deals with this problem in the schematism. However, as Vossenkuhl (1989) points out, in the first Critique Kant does not account for the understanding of individuals as individuals but rather as they are objectively known by subsuming them under the categories.
  - 8 Glendinning (1998) stresses the significance of the "conceptual play" or "give" as structurally essential to the possibility of language.

# Metaphors: Concept-Family in Context

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## Abstract

In this article we offer a new explanation of metaphors based upon Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance and language games. We argue that metaphor does not exist per se but only in a given context. It is a connection between two concept-families established by the most appropriate representatives of each family. The most appropriate representatives are promoted on grounds of associations that limit the event to the standard of the rules in a language game. Context is defined as associations, goals and knowledge about the rules of the language game.

## 1. Introduction

Metaphor is being a perennial enigma for researchers in different fields. It is usually regarded either as a concept building device or as a mere decorative element of speech. We support the first assumption and treat metaphor as a means by which the meaning of a given concept can be changed. In this article we present a view based upon Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance and language games. Members of two concept-families are linked with each other by associations that obtain an equivalent meaning within a certain context and serve as a basis for metaphor. We call these members "most appropriate representatives" from the point of view of participants in a common language game. Our approach differs from the views considered in stressing upon the impact of context in metaphor comprehension. We assume context to be a limited event in the frames of a language game. Thus a football match is an event into the language game "football". Metaphors hinges basically upon cognitive mechanisms of associations<sup>1</sup>. Besides contextually equivalent meaning includes the conditions of a common goal and knowledge about the rules of the game.

Our approach is contrary to analogy-based explanations, since in order to create a metaphor no structural resemblance between the two concepts is necessary. Adopting the mechanism of associations we account for the dynamics of concept fields as well as for the immediate connection between their members. Depending on context, different connections can be established which means that different metaphors can be created. In a static structure, metaphors would be predictable and self-evident, which is not the case.

## 2. Views upon Metaphor

A metaphor consists of two components linked together that usually do not belong to the same lexical field. For example: "My job is a jail". Meaning is transferred from the first concept (ground) to the second (target). Depending on the view they are named *tenor* and *vehicle*; *frame* and *focus*; *primary subject* and *secondary subject* of the metaphor.

*Substitutional view*: Metaphor is regarded as a substitution of a literal expression by another term. The origins of this view can be found in Aristotle's "Poetics". In the above example "jail" substitutes a literal description of the "job". But in many cases a literal expression for a metaphor does not exist:

"The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window panes."  
(T.S: Eliot, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*)

In addition some expressions can be understood metaphorically or literally, depending on the situation in which it has been used: "My son is still a child."

*Comparison view*: This view emphasizes the similarities or analogies, that exist between two different domains. Seen that way a metaphor is an elliptical simile, without the connection element "like" as "My job is like a jail." The main objection against this view is that metaphors can be replaced by a simile in an insignificant number of cases.

*Interactive view*: Black (1962 pp. 44-45) claims that metaphor is to be understood as interaction between primary and secondary subject. A metaphor uses statements about the secondary subject by choosing, underlining or omitting features in order to reorganise the system of the primary subject; this leads to a meaning shift in lexemes. But there is no elementary basis to determine the lexeme meaning shift, i.e. it is still not clear why some metaphors are better than others.

*Class-inclusion functions*: This view is presented by Glucksberg and Keysar 1990. The topic "job" is assigned to a category of punishing unpleasant activities in a limited place by means of the vehicle "jail", which refers to this category as its prototype. This explanation of metaphors is not sufficient, since no prototype for a category exists per se. A category-member becomes the most appropriate representative only within a specific context. The class inclusion can not explain why "John is a tiger!" is sometimes a better metaphor than "John is a lion!". It also fails to account for poetic metaphors.

## 3. Metaphors, Concept-families and Context

We propose a view that denies the existence of a metaphor<sup>2</sup> per se. Let us take the example: "John is a lion on the playground". It is a connection not only between two

concepts rather between two concept-families. In such a metaphor there are potentially many candidates sharing family resemblance with "lion" competing for the role of the secondary subject: "John is a tiger!", "John is a panther!"... However only one of them is appropriate regarding the situation.

Concept families are elements connected in a mental space. In creating metaphor the mental representations of primary and secondary subjects build a relation of equivalence that connects two concept families. This equivalence is not made up arbitrary but is provoked by context and also connects concept-families that are sometimes totally different in their structure and number of elements. In this sense it can be said that metaphors are not analogies. We discuss this topic later on.

Context serves as a utility for choosing the most appropriate representative of a concept-family for the role of the secondary subject. Thus our first claim is that a metaphor is a connection between two concept-families. The second claim is that the connection is between *elements* of the two families, which become the most appropriate representatives in the context of a particular event determined by a language game.

How is context to be defined and used in understanding metaphors? Let us consider the following example. Two persons watch a football match at the stadium. One of them does not know the rules of the football game, neither the players nor the usual reactions of the spectators. We call him "the novice". The other one knows the game well and he is "the expert". Is it possible for the novice to understand the metaphor uttered later on: "John was a lion on the playground"? Most probably he will understand the metaphor only partially - in as far as the overall behaviour of John resembles that of a lion and the novice makes certain associations in his mind. The novice experiences the event but lacks knowledge about the rules. Both spectators are acting not in the same language game. If they meet another expert who has not watched the match then the second expert would as well not understand the metaphor "John was a lion on the playground.". Only after explaining to him what the situation on the playground was, could he grasp what is meant by this expression. The second expert lacks the information about the event, i.e. the context is not known to him, although he knows the rules of the game. The novice however is more likely to understand the metaphor since he has witnessed the game and is capable of making some associations, whereas the second expert is unable to do so. Therefore rules alone are not sufficient neither for establishing nor for understanding metaphors. They have to be connected to certain associations made during the event. On their part the associations have to correspond to the rules of a particular language game in order to result in a relevant metaphor. The rules serve as a standard for restricting the associations made by which the most appropriate representative of the concept-family is projected.

On the other hand, in order to be in the same context, the goal of all the participants must be the same. Let us consider another example. In a classroom a teacher asks a girl, to which he is attracted, to prove a mathematical theorem. The goal of the young lady is to prove the theorem. The teacher's goal has been to enjoy her figure in front of the blackboard. The girl writes a too long proof. Another student thinks of a shorter one and makes the remark: "You have written a novel instead of a haiku!" The teacher won't understand this metaphor unless he switches from the context of the girl's figure to the context of the proof. The event restricts the goals and influences the associations of the participants. Associations reflect the state of mind and influences thinking and language comprehension. They are a measurable psychological factor.<sup>3</sup> Finally we state that with respect to metaphor context comprises knowledge of rules, associations and common goals for all participants in the event.

Our approach accounts for poetic metaphors as well. The same elements of context are used. In the example:

"The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window panes."  
(T.S: Eliot, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*)

the notion of back rubbing evokes the association of a cat sneaking behind the window. The presence of the window concept supports the feeling of a cat out there. Although poetry can not be experienced identically, a certain mood that unites most of the readers can be expected.

The event in this case is the reading of poetry - the mood of the reader, her perceptions. All these factors will influence her associations. The goals could be different - analysis of the poem, presenting it to the audience or simply enjoying it. These goals will partially be identical with the goals of the poet. The common associations here are of crucial importance, since if the associations differ too much, the secondary subject may remain hidden for the reader. The rules of the language game in this case are the basic principles of writing and reading poetry. The lack of one of the elements of context would hinder the reader in understanding poetic metaphors.

#### **4. Conclusion**

We show that *differentia specifica* of a metaphor is not to be found in structural similarity, but rather in the more flexible mechanism of associative links, that is to account for the metaphoric effect. This mechanism also explains why people estimate some concept connections as more appropriate than others. We think that Wittgenstein's family resemblance and language games underlie the definition of context, essential for understanding metaphors, both common and poetic.



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## Endnotes

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- 1 The presentation of research on associations is not the subject of this article.
  - 2 when discussing metaphors we use the terms *primary* and *secondary subject*.
  - 3 See the model of language comprehension based upon associations (Slavova, Kujumdjieff 2000).

# "Le style c'est l'homme même?"

## Anmerkungen zu Wittgensteins Reflexionen über den "Stil"

Ulrike Bardt

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### 1. Die Bedeutung von Stil und Ästhetik

Der Stilbegriff nimmt im Denken Wittgensteins eine zentrale Stellung ein. Seine Bemühungen zielen darauf ab, die philosophische Aufgabe in eine ästhetische zu wenden und die Opposition von Kunst und Philosophie aufzuweichen.<sup>1</sup> Er entwirft eine als Kunst verstandene Philosophie, in der die vorherrschende Denkform *Stil statt Wahrheit* lautet. Wittgenstein geht es ebenso wie den postmodernen Philosophen darum, den Menschen von Wahrheitsansprüchen zugunsten einer Aufwertung des Stils als Wahrheitsersatz zu befreien.<sup>2</sup>

Das Thema Ästhetik ist bei Wittgenstein in den *Vorlesungen und Gespräche[n] über Ästhetik, Psychologie und Religion* sowie in den *Tagebüchern* präsent. Im *Tractatus* ist das Schicksal der Ästhetik eng mit dem der Ethik verbunden: Es heißt dort: "Ethik und Aesthetik sind Eins." (TLP, 6.421) Beide sind unaussprechlich, sie *zeigen* sich nur und gehören dem Bereich des Unsagbaren, Mystischen an. Der zweite gemeinsame Aspekt besteht in ihrem Anblick der Welt respektive des Objektes aus der Perspektive der Ewigkeit.

Wittgensteins Ästhetik weist kaum Bezüge zur traditionellen philosophischen Ästhetik auf, da sie keinen Beitrag zur Theorie der Kunstproduktion darstellt. Zu Beginn der *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* heißt es: "Unser Gegenstand (die Ästhetik) ist ein sehr weites Feld und wird [...] ganz und gar mißverstanden." (ÄPR, 19) Die Ästhetik dürfe man sich nicht als eine Theorie des Schönen vorstellen, denn sie täusche sich grundlegend, wenn sie irgendetwas über das Schöne aussagen wollte. Ein Werturteil "x ist schön" stellt für Wittgenstein nicht mehr als einen Scheinsatz dar, weil es keiner Tatsachenaussage entspricht. Bei der Verwendung des Wortes "schön" legt er besonderen Wert darauf, daß man die Vielzahl seiner Verwendungen sowie die Bedeutungsverschiebungen, die es von einem Kontext zum anderen durchläuft, berücksichtigt. Das Schöne *zeigt* sich, wenn es als solches wahrgenommen wird (vgl. TLP, 6.4-6.41). Die ästhetische Wertschätzung rechtfertigt die Bemerkung Wittgensteins, daß einen Satz verstehen heißt, eine Sprache zu verstehen und sich eine

Sprache vorstellen bedeutet, sich eine Lebensform vorzustellen:<sup>3</sup> "Einen Satz ästhetischer Regeln vollständig beschreiben heißt in Wirklichkeit die Kultur der betreffenden Epoche beschreiben." (ÄPR, 28, Anm. 20)

## 2. Ästhetische Lebensform als anthropologisches Moment

Wittgensteins Annäherung an die ästhetische Lebensform beruht auf der Vorstellung vom Stil als ein den Menschen wesentlich bestimmendes Moment. Unter Stil versteht er den künstlerischen Anspruch als ästhetische Verhaltensweise, die nicht auf Begabung beruht, sondern auf Bildern. Wittgenstein erläutert, daß er seinen Bildbegriff "erstens von dem gezeichneten Bild, zweitens von dem Bild des Mathematikers, das schon ein allgemeiner Begriff ist" (WWK, 139) geerbt hat. Dasselbe gilt auch für das Denken, das er als ein Operieren mit Zeichen begreift. Phantasie sei "... ein kompliziertes Gebilde aus heterogenen Bestandteilen: Wörtern und Bildern. Man wird dann das Operieren mit Schrift- und Lautzeichen nicht mehr in Gegensatz stellen zu dem Operieren mit "Vorstellungsbildern" der Ereignisse." (BFGB, 36) Seine ästhetische Position gründet auf der These, daß Bilder - verstanden als bildhafte Vorstellungen, wie Leit-, Sinn-, Lebens- oder Weltbilder - die Grundlage der ästhetischen Lebensform darstellen.<sup>4</sup>

Daß der Stilbegriff als einer der Schlüsselbegriffe Wittgensteins zu verstehen ist, belegt vor allem seine Kommentierung des von dem Naturforscher Buffon im *Discours sur le style* vorgetragenen Diktums: „Le style c'est l'homme“, „Le style c'est l'homme même“. Der erste Ausdruck hat eine billige epigrammatische Kürze. Der zweite, richtige, eröffnet eine ganz andere Perspektive. Er sagt, daß der Stil das Bild des Menschen sei." (VB, 561) Beide Aussagen Wittgensteins deuten darauf hin, daß Stil keine äußerliche menschliche Verhaltensweise darstellt, sondern daß der Stil der eigentliche Mensch ist. Daher verurteilt er die kürzere Formel ohne das "mème" aufgrund ihrer "billigen epigrammatischen Kürze".

Würde der Stil von Wittgenstein als bloßer Ausdruck einer Meinung oder einer Empfindung angesehen, dann wäre es ihm unmöglich zu behaupten, der Stil sei der Mensch selbst. Dann wäre er nur als etwas Sekundäres anzusehen, da er in einem Abhängigkeits- und Verweisverhältnis stehen würde. Der Ästhetizismus Wittgensteins manifestiert sich in einer Umkehrung der traditionellen Sichtweise des Stilphänomens, in der "Sinnggebung alles Inhaltlichen allein durch die Form" (Benn 1965, 217), wie es von Benn formuliert wird. Bei Wittgenstein findet die Umkehrung traditioneller Vorstellungen dadurch statt, daß die Form wichtiger ist als der Inhalt. Die Prioritäten werden somit vertauscht, das vermeintlich Eigentliche erfährt eine Abwertung, indem es durch das Äußerliche ersetzt wird.

Wittgensteins Hinwendung zum Stilbegriff für anthropologische Zwecke ist das Produkt eines Denkens, das versteckte Ideen und Eigenschaften jeglicher Form ablehnt, insbesondere die Identität des Ichs: Sein radikal antiessentialistisches Denken bringt ihn dazu, den Menschen über seine unverborgene Form, über den Stil und damit ästhetisch zu definieren, denn "das denkende, vorstellende, Subjekt gibt es nicht." (TLP, 5.631) In diesem Sinne heißt es: "Das Wort ‚ich‘ gehört zu denjenigen Wörtern, die man aus der Sprache eliminieren kann." (WWK, 49) Wittgenstein schlägt in diesem Zusammenhang vor, anstatt von einem ‚inneren‘ Ich<sup>5</sup> von dem ‚äußeren‘ Stil eines Menschen zu sprechen. Aus diesem *Stil-statt-Wahrheit-Paradigma* ergeben sich Konsequenzen, die das Werk Wittgensteins als roter Faden durchziehen. So beschreibt er auch das Denken als reines Stilphänomen. In diesem Sinne betont ebenfalls der heute als einer der bedeutendsten Skeptiker des 20. Jahrhunderts geltende Dichterphilosoph Emile M. Cioran, daß seit seinem Erstlingswerk *Auf den Gipfeln der Verzweiflung* in späteren Werken keine eigentlichen Progressionen mehr zu verzeichnen seien, sondern lediglich Veränderungen des Stils. Die Frage nach dem Geltungsbereich von Überlegungen wandelt sich für Wittgenstein wie auch für Cioran durch das *Stil-statt-Wahrheit-Paradigma* in eine Form- und Stilfrage. In diesem Sinne schreibt Wittgenstein:

Für den Physiker steht die Kausalität für einen Denkstil. Man vergleiche damit das Postulat eines Schöpfers in der Religion. In einem gewissen Sinne scheint es eine Erklärung zu sein, doch in einem anderen Sinne erklärt es gar nichts. Denken wir zum Vergleich an einen Handwerker, der einem Stück mit einer spindelförmigen Verzierung den letzten Schliff gibt [...]. So steht es auch mit der Schöpfung: Gott, das ist der eine Stil, der Nebelfleck ist der andere. Der Stil verschafft uns Befriedigung, aber der eine Stil ist nicht rationaler als der andere. Was man so über die Wissenschaft sagt, hat mit dem Fortschritt der Wissenschaft nichts zu tun, sondern es bildet einen Stil, und der schafft Befriedigung. (Vor, 123 f.)

Für Wittgenstein unterscheiden sich demnach Fragen hinsichtlich eines ästhetisch gelungenen Spazierstockgriffs nicht von wissenschaftlichen Problemen: Ob man glaubt, die Welt sei aus einem Nebel entstanden oder von Gott geschaffen, sei eine Stilfrage. Auch die Naturwissenschaften werden dieser Radikalität des *Stil-statt-Wahrheit-Paradigmas* unterworfen. In der Mathematik sei die Form und nicht der Inhalt das Wesentliche. Dem mathematischen stellt er einen ästhetischen Formalismus gegenüber. Die Rechenaufgabe "2+2=?" mit "4" zu beantworten, komme einer ästhetischen Entscheidung gleich. Es gebe nur Stilgründe, einen Haken in der Form einer Vier hinter die anderen Schnörkel zu schreiben: "Die Rechnung als Ornament zu betrachten, das ist auch Formalismus, aber einer guten Art." (Z, §709 f.)

### 3. Philosophie und die Grenzen der Sprache: Sagen und Zeigen

Von diesem Ästhetizismus zeugt nicht zuletzt Wittgensteins *Tractatus*. Im Vorwort schreibt er: "Man könnte den ganzen Sinn des Buches etwa in die Worte fassen: was sich überhaupt sagen läßt, läßt sich klar sagen; und wovon man nicht reden kann, darüber muß man schweigen." (TLP, Vorwort) Der Bereich dessen, was sinnvoll sagbar ist, wird vom Bereich des Unsagbaren getrennt. Ähnlich heißt es auch bei Cioran in *Die Lehre vom Zerfall*: "Was ist, widersetzt sich der Einschnürung durch Worte, und sein inneres Erleben enthüllt uns nichts, was über den begnadeten, unsäglichen Augenblick hinausginge." (Cioran 1998, 63) Daher muß es ein alternatives Medium in der Sprache geben, um vom Unausprechlichen zu berichten. Manfred Frank beantwortet diese Frage folgendermaßen: "Allerdings gibt es ein Phänomen genau auf der Grenze zwischen dem Sagbaren und dem Unsagbaren, und dies Dritte ist der Stil."<sup>6</sup> Der Stil stellt insofern ein Medium des Unsagbaren dar, als er seinen Sinn veranschaulicht und zeigt, wie Wittgenstein selbst ausführt: "Es gibt allerdings Unausprechliches. Dies zeigt sich. Es ist das Mystische" (TLP, 6.522) Das Ergebnis dieser Überlegung ist - um mit Manfred Frank zu sprechen -, daß sich die Philosophie an die Dichtung wenden muß, um ihren eigentlichen Auftrag zu realisieren.<sup>7</sup> Der Traktat wird zu einer "ästhetischen Theorie" im Sinne Adornos, zu einer "Logik als Dichtung"; "die Arbeit ist", wie Wittgenstein in einem Brief an Ficker selbst hervorhebt, "streng philosophisch und zugleich literarisch." (LRKM, 92) Der stilistische und der diskursive Teil seines Werkes sind für Wittgenstein jedoch nicht gleich bedeutend. Dem Medium für das Unsagbare kommt für ihn ein weitaus höherer Stellenwert zu. Dies unterstreicht er in selbigem Schreiben:

Ich wollte einmal in das Vorwort einen Satz geben, den ich Ihnen aber jetzt schreibe, weil er Ihnen vielleicht ein Schlüssel sein wird: Ich wollte nämlich schreiben, mein Werk bestehe aus zwei Teilen: aus dem, der hier vorliegt, und aus alledem, was ich nicht geschrieben habe. Und gerade dieser zweite Teil ist der Wichtige. (LRKM, 93)

Der Inhalt des Geschriebenen ist demnach von sekundärem Wert. Wittgenstein schreibt nicht wegen der Aussage des Geschriebenen, sondern um mit dem Gesagten auf etwas zu verweisen, auf etwas zu *zeigen*. Dieser "Zeigecharakter" bleibt auch in vermeintlich unsinnigen Sätzen gewahrt. Die den Traktat prägende Denkform erläutert er folgendermaßen: "Meine Sätze erläutern dadurch, daß sie der, welcher mich versteht, am Ende als unsinnig erkennt, wenn er durch sie - auf ihnen - über sie hinausgestiegen ist." (TLP, 6.54) Dieser Sinn im Unsinn zeigt sich nicht in Form von Inhalt oder Aussage, sondern als Form des Inhalts. So betont Wittgenstein in einem Brief an seinen Freund Engelmann die Selbstgenügsamkeit der Kunst: "Und es ist so: Wenn man sich nicht bemüht das Unausprechliche auszusprechen, so geht *nichts* verloren. Sondern das

„Le style c'est l'homme même?“ Anmerkungen zu Wittgensteins Reflexionen über den "Stil"

Unaussprechliche ist, - unaussprechlich - in dem Ausgesprochenen enthalten!" (LRKM, 78) Ähnlich wie der Musik schreibt Wittgenstein auch der bildenden Kunst eine mystische Mission zu, die das auszudrücken vermag, was die "normale" Sprache nicht ausdrücken kann bzw. dem Schlußverbot des *Tractatus* entsprechend auch gar nicht zu sagen wagen darf, nämlich das Unaussprechliche. Der Stil erweist sich als Stilträger für das Unsagbare, weil er den Sinn zu zeigen vermag. Eine ähnliche Konsequenz zieht auch Cioran in *Die Lehre vom Zerfall*:

Was ein Volk zum Ausdruck zu bringen vermag, hat bloß historischen Wert [...]. Was es jedoch nicht zum Ausdruck bringen kann, sein Scheitern im Ewigen also, ist sein vergebliches Dürsten nach sich selber: da seine Bemühung um einen erschöpfenden Ausdruck für sich selber fehlschlägt, behilft es sich nun mit gewissen Worten, die auf das Unsagbare *anspielen*.<sup>8</sup>

Auch bei Cioran wird der Stil zum Organon, indem allein er eine Anspielung auf das Unsagbare ermöglicht.

#### 4. Philosophie und Dichtung

Das Menschenbild Wittgensteins zeigt sich in seiner als ästhetisches Werk aufgefaßten Philosophie, die zu einer Stilangelegenheit transformiert wird. Dieser Philosophiebegriff scheint eine Relativierung des diskursiven Anspruchs der Philosophie einzuschließen. Es ist die Rede von einer Werbung für einen Stil. In Analogie zum *Stil-statt-Wahrheit-Paradigma* kann man sogar von einem *Propaganda-statt-Argumentation-Paradigma* sprechen:

"In gewissem Sinne mache ich Propaganda *für* einen Denkstil und *gegen* einen anderen. [...] Wieviel dessen, was wir tun, ist ein Verändern des Denkstils, und wieviel dessen, was ich tue, ist ein Verändern des Denkstils, und wieviel dessen, was ich tue, besteht darin, Leute zu überreden, ihren Denkstil zu ändern! (ÄPR, 55 f.)

Die stilistische Leistung erweist sich bei Wittgenstein nicht als wegzudenkende, bloß ergänzende Extraleistung. Dichtung ist die philosophische Aussage selbst, denn das *Stil-statt-Wahrheit-Programm* kommt einer Substitution im Sinne des philosophischen Anliegens gleich. Deshalb zieht er folgende Konsequenz: "Ich glaube, meine Stellung zur Philosophie dadurch zusammengefaßt zu haben, indem ich sagte: Philosophie dürfte man eigentlich nur *dichten*." (VB, 483) Wie eine unabgesprochene Zusammenarbeit erscheint vor diesem Hintergrund Ciorans Werk, wenn es bei ihm heißt:

Weit eher noch als in der Schule der Philosophen erlangen wir in der Schule der Dichter den Mut des Verstandes und der Kühnheit, wir selber zu sein. [...] Allein und ohne Überzeugungen zwischen den Wahrheiten einhergehen, ist nicht Sache eines Menschen, nicht einmal eines Heiligen; zuweilen jedoch Sache eines Dichters ... (Cioran 1998, 126)

## 5. Philosophieren in Fragmenten

Beider Bekenntnisse bleiben auch paradigmatisch für ihre späteren Werke. Das Philosophieren mittels der Dichtung wird bei Wittgenstein zu einem "Philosophieren in Fragmenten"<sup>9</sup>, wie es bei Frank heißt. Auch Cioran hat sich - als logische Konsequenz aus seiner das Gesamtwerk begründenden skeptischen Methode - zunehmend der literarischen Form des Essays, des Fragments und vor allem des Aphorismus bedient. Die genannten Gattungen haben gemeinsam, dass sie das skeptische Moment der Punktualität und der Perspektivität enthalten. Das Erkannte wird nicht abgeschlossen, beansprucht jedoch in seiner subjektiven Zuspitzung, oftmals mittels unerwarteter Übertreibungen und Paradoxien, die gleiche Geltung wie das philosophische Systemdenken. In seinen 1952 erschienenen *Sylogismes de l'amertume (Sylogismen der Bitterkeit)* werden die ersten der in insgesamt zehn Abteilungen gegliederten Aphorismen der "Atropie des Wortes" in poetologisch-autoreflexiver Weise den "Vergöttern des Fragmentarischen" gewidmet, welche die "Scheinwirklichkeit" der Worte durchschauen: "Den Aphorismus kultivieren nur diejenigen, die das Bangen inmitten der Worte kennengelernt haben." (Cioran 1969, 10)

In ähnlicher Weise verbot auch Wittgenstein die Grundhaltung seines Denkens, die Diversität seiner Aperçus in einen durchgängigen Zusammenhang zu bringen, zumal er davon überzeugt war, daß es kein Denken aus einem Prinzip, keine Vernetzung von Fragmenten zu einem System geben könne. Dies entspricht seinem Selbstverständnis, wie ein Tagebucheintrag dokumentiert: "Was auch immer ich schreibe, es sind Fragmente, aber der Verstehende wird daraus ein geschlossenes Weltbild entnehmen."<sup>10</sup> Dieses hier angesprochene geschlossene Weltbild ist in dem *Stil-statt-Wahrheit-Paradigma* zu sehen.

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## Endnoten

- 1 Vgl. Wiesing 1994, 10.
- 2 Vgl. ebd., 15.
- 3 Bouveresse 1973, 147.
- 4 Vgl. Wiesing 1991, 116.
- 5 Vgl. Haller 1989, 353-373.
- 6 Frank, Soldati 1989, 28.
- 7 Vgl. ebd., 32.
- 8 Cioran 1998, 41.
- 9 Vgl. Frank, Soldati 1989, 56 ff.
- 10 Zitiert nach Frank, Soldati 1989, 45.



# Wittgenstein, Language - Games, and Religion

Archana Barua

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In this article, I have made an attempt at understanding Wittgenstein's religious viewpoint in the light of his use of the game analogy and its relatedness to forms of life. There are some misconceptions regarding proper significance of the game analogy and its relatedness to forms of life which are much discussed by many eminent philosophers, and I am indebted to their scholarly discussions on this controversial aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophy which has special implications in philosophy of religion. I am interested to know how the game analogy should be understood in the right perspective. My second contention is to understand meaning and significance of the religious dimension of life in the light of Wittgenstein's deeper reflections on the meaningfulness of different forms of talks and conversations and to understand how language works in the ordinary discourse as well as in religious discourse. How to understand the significance of the statement that the mystical, the ethical and the religious dimensions of talks refer to things that can not be put into words, though they make themselves manifest. In what sense meaning of religious language is related to human life and behaviour? What sort of logical connections would make them into religious beliefs? I would like to make an attempt at understanding the significance of human language as a form of life or as an activity related to our life and culture which in turn would help me in understanding religion in the light of Wittgenstein's philosophy of language.

I have difficulties in relating languages to games in a very simplistic manner which could give an impression that the way one learns what speaking is and what 'games' are, is to follow a similar strategy: to explain what are the different rules of one particular game or of one particular speech act. But we can not extend the simile beyond that. Just because both games and speech acts are rule bound activities there is a common tendency to treat these as activities cut off from life. This leads to relativity of some sort in matters of morals and religion but one should be cautious while using Wittgenstein's game analogy as Rush Rhees has correctly pointed out: "*When Wittgenstein says that an account of what 'language' means would be something like explaining what 'game' means, he is not thinking of an explanation you would give to anyone in an ordinary way, but of the explanation you might give in philosophy. And then the trouble is to know what that is: what kind of explanation does one look for here? He gives an analogy when he refers to the explanation of 'game', but it is never more than an analogy, and at times we may feel unsure just how to take it. There is the analogy between speaking and playing*

*a game too, of course. But I am thinking of the analogy in the idea of 'explanation'; the analogy which should show what 'explaining what it means' or 'explaining what it may be'".* Rush Rhees brings out the differences between learning what 'game' means and learning what 'speaking' means. The point he raises here is the need for learning something more in the case of speaking than just learning mechanically what speaking is just by describing various cases of speaking. It is possible to tell someone what game is by describing various games to him. When a child learns various language games he learns the technique of using different expressions and also what it is to mean something. To understand the meaning of an expression like 'cursing', 'greeting' etc one learns the use of these expressions as different activities related to forms of life. One can play the game of cricket if one knows its rules or can talk about it. One can also play the game of 'thanks-giving' or of 'greeting' as one knows how to use these expressions and when. But there is a difference between games and speech acts in other areas. We may very well imagine a community with limited vocabulary for whom speech act is just a means of communication, a technique they have learnt as a part of their building activity. But it would not bring out the distinctiveness of human dimension of language, which is not only a part of the building technique. Learning how to speak is much more than learning how to react mechanically to a signal.

The Wittgenstein builders have a form of speech or language with a very limited vocabulary. One of the builders shouts orders and the other reacts to the orders, and they might have no other speech or language except this. Rhees comments: "*But I feel there is something wrong here. The trouble is not to imagine that they spoke the language only to give these special orders on this job and otherwise never spoke at all. I do not think it would be speaking a language.*"<sup>2</sup> But there must be some occasions when these builders would give instructions to their children how to react to shouts etc or they may relax and discuss about their building activity in a leisurely way. But this would require other uses of those expressions which are not related to building technique. Learning the grammar is to know rules which is common to all rules. How will the children understand the language which is not related to the building technique. Understanding a 'slab' is not simply reacting to the order, but for that there must be scope to use those expressions in other ways. If language is just a kind of mechanical activity of reacting to a signal and it is always one kind of response to that particular speech act then language is a kind of game. In games too, the signals are part of the game which have no reference to other activities of life. Unless there is flexibility in the use of expressions with options for signals to be used differently in different occasions, we will not understand the sense a particular expression conveys in this particular occasion. If that is the only use then there will not be occasions to use such expressions as 'mis understanding' the speaker's order by the hearer. "You might ask why this should

make such a difference---the fact that they are used elsewhere. And one reason is that then the expressions are not just part of one particular routine. Their uses elsewhere have to do with the point or bearing of them in what we are saying now. It is the way in which we have come to know them in other connections that decides whether it makes sense to put them together here; for instance, whether one can be substituted for another, whether they are incompatible and so forth. The meaning that they have within this game is not to be seen simply in what we do with them or how we react to them in this game."<sup>3</sup>

The point is, as Rhees has very clearly marked out, in learning to speak, one simply does not learn to make sentences and utter them. When one speaks, one learns to tell something "...he comes to have some sense of how different remarks have something to do with one another. This is why he can answer you and ask you things, and why he begins to follow a conversation or to carry on a conversation himself.... For in beginning to carry on a conversation, in trying to tell you something and trying to understand your answer, he is getting a sense of how different remarks have a bearing on one another."<sup>4</sup> What makes sense to say something is to see what conclusions one can draw from it: what makes sense to ask or what sense one remark may have in connection with another. In conversation one knows what it is to make comments, to ask questions and each one has to contribute to the talk as they have something to say. "In a conversation: one person throws a ball; the other does not know: is he to throw it back, throw it to a third person, or leave it lying, or pick it up & put it in his pocket etc."<sup>4</sup>(Culture, p84e) What makes a talk interesting and lively is its relatedness to a particular background, which is rooted in life and in its various forms. If the builders are not marionettes but real human beings with hopes and aspirations, their building activity must have relations to their life, which includes other activities and other non-technical uses of the words. But when speech becomes a part of the technique of building activity, only the description of builders could be shown as engaged in using speech only in relation to the building technique which is cut off from other activities of their lives. This is an incomplete picture: "...do they have songs and dances and festivals, and do they have legends and stories? Are they horrified by certain sorts of crimes, and do they expose people to public ridicule? The description of them by the building side, if you add 'this may be all' makes them look like marionettes. On the other hand, if they do have a life, then to say that their speaking is part of that life, would be different from saying that their speaking is part of this activity of building."<sup>5</sup>

Interestingly, a superficial understanding of the game analogy has led some philosophers to show forms of life as esoteric and isolated, cut off from life and its other activities. Fergus Kerr observes: "*Oddly enough, Malcolm is largely responsible for the talk about religion as a form of life; it is language embedded in action---what Wittgenstein*

*calls a language-game. Science is another. Neither stands in need of justification, the one no more than the other.*"<sup>6</sup> This clearly counts as a form of fideism: unless one has the faith one can not take part in rational discussion on the Christian religion or on any other religion." Roger Trigg goes on: *'We have only to ask whether religion, Christianity or a particular Christian denomination such as Catholicism should be regarded as a form of life. There is no clear way of answering such questions....'*"<sup>7</sup> This has also led to the idea of an autonomous language game with its own rules intelligible only to players of the game. It would rule out any meaningful talk between believers and non believers, between players of the game and the outsiders in spite of the fact that some of the words used by the believers are also used by non believers with a common meaning attached to them. Wittgenstein observes: "In one sense, I understand all he says -- the English words 'god', 'separate' etc. I understand. I only say: 'I don't believe in this' and this will be true meaning."<sup>8</sup> Not believing in these is like not being guided by these pictures or not being passionately committed to those ideas. This is how inter personal talk and even inter community talks would make sense. Wittgenstein often talked about religious matters not as cut off from ordinary talk but as a continuation and an extension of the familiar notions in a distinctively specific manner. The special use would add its religious dimension but there is continuity of these two talks. Certain words used in a religious talk are also used in an ordinary talk though the implications may be different in each case. The following one is one such illustration: "In 1933, Drury had decided against training for the priesthood. Instead, with Wittgenstein's encouragement and financial help, he undertook medical training. One day in 1933 he told Wittgenstein that he had been asked to be a godfather at the christening of his nephew. Drury went on to say: 'The godparents have to promise in the child's name to renounce the devil and all works, the pomp and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful laws of the flesh.' I feel it would be hypocrisy for me to speak those words. It is something that I have not done myself". Wittgenstein replied: To renounce the pomps and vanity of this wicked world. Just think what that would really involve. Who of us today ever think of such a thing?"<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps one can identify the human dimension in Wittgenstein's philosophy which is very much related to the philosophy of life as opposed to the philosophy of abstract learning, philosophy of man with their passion for objects of love and beauty, of man who is ceremonial by nature and who takes recourse to the mythical and the symbolical way of expressing the strangeness and the depth that is in them as well as in the world around them. With his aversion for anything that is mechanical and rigid, anything that is stereotyped and lifeless, Wittgenstein continued his fight against the current to safeguard this deeper dimension of life. Anything mechanical aroused his aversion. The stupidity of mediocracy, of lifeless routine activities and its rituals could not reveal that deeper part in man which gives meaning and human significance to one's acts and

deeds. This explains why he was against all rituals of meaningless activity: "It may well have been the necessity which lecturers, journalists and suchlike are under to write or talk even when they have nothing to say aroused his aversion."<sup>10</sup> Anything that is passionately done is an intense expression of a serious activity with a sense of commitment and that is how philosophy comes closer to life and its activities. With his passion for life and the living against the dead and the mechanical, Wittgenstein sees the difference between science and religion, between passionlessness and passion, between passionless wisdom and what Keirkegaard once identified as the 'faith of passion.'

There are different ways to relate the two. Nietzsche saw a dichotomy between the Apollonian and the Dionysian trends which made him an explorer of the variety and richness of life and its irrationality against the crave for dispassionate objectivity of reason. But for Wittgenstein it was a search for the deeper, the transcendental dimension of life which could harmonize wisdom with passion, philosophy with religious commitment as he understood philosophy as wisdom with symbols. Bare wisdom conceals life and its secrets: like 'grey ash covering the gloomy embers' when it is a show of cleverness. On the other hand philosophical pursuit becomes an act of offering when all is dedicated to that deeper quest that makes man a humble seeker of a mysterious, everpresent reality called God. With his deeper sensitivity Wittgenstein could easily talk on equal terms with a believer when and in what sense something could be as precious as to be an offering to the Deity and in what sense one could be amazed at the very existence of the world since philosophy for Wittgenstein is a kind of passionate wisdom. His critical search for clarity and meaning retained in his life and personality 'what 20th century Philosophy is like: difficult and profound'<sup>b</sup>, which could not accommodate anything that is not clearly said. With his poetic sensibility he also acknowledged the unseen and the unsayable, the mystical part of life which philosophy is neither in a position to talk about nor to reject outright as nonsense. What is not said can be shown because there are things which can be shown which make themselves manifest. These two traits in his personality give uniqueness to Wittgenstein's philosophical worldview; he is not only a brilliant critic of speculative philosophy, but also of 'art and emotions of the Viennese manner of Hofmannsthal.'<sup>c</sup>

What is the relation between man and his philosophy, between being a good human being and a good philosopher? What is Wittgenstein's religious point of view and how does it differ from his philosophical viewpoint? Is there any way to relate the two? Is there any way to relate life and philosophy, Wittgenstein's life and his philosophy? If there is dichotomy between life and philosophy then religious beliefs are to be accepted as expressions of our attitudes and one will have to rule out an outsider trying to talk meaningfully about such esoteric practices. As an outsider Wittgenstein could

understand what it was 'to feel absolutely safe' at times, what it would mean to be guided by a picture of the Last Judgement, but he was not committed to that picture as the sole framework which could regulate his other mundane activities. With his craving for high spiritual and intellectual creativity, Wittgenstein was committed to performing a task:" he lived as if the philosophical work that wholly absorbed him, was demanded of him. To do his work he held himself in constant tension, always engaged, never allowing the problems to slip from his grasp, from ever trying out new analysis, fresh companions. The search for insight was unremitting."<sup>11</sup> Probably Wittgenstein realized that if he gave himself to prayer with the intensity this would require, an intensity that was characteristic of every work he undertook-then he would 'disintegrate'. That is his philosophical concentration would be disturbed." The 'stiff knees' may be a metaphor for his stern posture of total engagement. Becoming 'soft' would mean losing the tautness, the fighting alertness, that was required for him to persevere his ceaseless battles with the taps of ...."<sup>12</sup> With this serious commitment to the pursuit of philosophy, Wittgenstein identified philosophical problems not in the realm of science but in the realm of life:" We feel that even when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problem of life remains completely untouched."<sup>13</sup>

Wittgenstein's thinking was much inspired by the problems of life which were moral and religious in nature. His fear to become soft and to disintegrate with a believer's commitment to a 'form of life' is an expression of his dedication to the philosophical pursuit which demanded his complete loyalty. Could Wittgenstein serve two masters with equal devotion? His passion for philosophy demanded much from him. Though not committed to believing in the Last Judgement, Wittgenstein could see the believer's point of view. Taking religion as a practice which is not cut off from other activities of life as it is rooted in life and its problems, the search for religion became for him a search for meaning: it is a search for some meaning in life. As an outsider he could have a sympathetic understanding of believer's standpoint without himself being guided by that particular picture. But he could understand under what contexts these pictures could reveal something deep. Wittgenstein often compared language to a mediaeval city and this would rather point to connectedness of language games. This definitely goes against the autonomy of language games. To quote Kerr. "...but if Malcolm's original insight is correct -that comforting a wounded creature is a good example of what Wittgenstein meant by a form of life-it is impossible to apply the expression to any phenomenon on the scale of religion'-which must include innumerable language-laced activities. As a very specific exchange that normally involves talking, comforting someone can not be isolated either empirically or conceptually, from encouraging him, explaining, promising, calling a doctor and many other different but obviously related activities..."<sup>14</sup> As an outsider, Wittgenstein could explore the possibility of a religious

dimension of life. Wittgenstein recognised the fact that language does not reveal a uniformity of use. There are reasons to believe that the words used in religious discourse could also be used in a different context with a non religious use. He wanted to show what can be said in order to respect that what can not be said. He recognized the poetic nature of thought and of philosophical thought which marked him off from his contemporaries at Vienna or at Cambridge.

There was a difference between Wittgenstein and them. For Wittgenstein the sense of a proposition is its agreement and disagreement with possibilities of existence and non existence of a state of affairs. For him there could be as many different uses of a word or of a picture as there are possibilities and all these made sense as actualisations of these possibilities. He thought that the surface grammar of natural languages are misleading for us not because they conceal a hidden logical syntax that shows the logical forms of the fact but because they deceptively suggest a uniformity of use where there is diversity. Wittgenstein detected endless multiplicity manifested in use. As an outsider his was not an ordinary way of looking at things, 'seeing objects from within their midst' but what could be said as an outsider. To understand this is to be open to the possible modes of expressing joy, resentment, suffering by a ceremonial animal. The religious experience reveals something deep : not metaphorically but literally. These refer to actual happenings which make a deep impression on us and one religiously reacts to that mysterious and the deeper dimension of life. Just as philosophy is related to life, meaning is also rooted in forms of life. There should be agreements in forms of life, not agreements in opinion. But emphasis on agreement should not be wrongly emphasised as opting for relativity in matters of morals so that, 'if outside one is clueless'.<sup>15</sup> In the manner of a creative artist Wittgenstein unfolds a pattern or a form in what is there before our eyes: that nothing out of ordinary is involved, that the essence lies open to view. It is seeing the particular concrete case in the right light. Our understanding consists of seeing connections. The spatial temporal character of thought reveals its deeper connections as thought becomes a picture with a sense rooted in a form of life, its being rooted in the stream of life.

To have agreements in forms of life is to accept certain basics as given. The grammar of our use of some such concepts like uniformity of nature, our use of soul talk etc. do not make these concepts problematic. All we can say is: 'that is how we talk'. To understand the sense of the possible situation within that form is to learn the use of the word so as to understand in what language game a sentence is a move. The significance of religious sentence consists in this: to see that it is a move in a particular language game which is rooted in a form of life. It is to be familiar with a distinctive pattern that characterize our use of words, asking whether it would still be usable if certain facts of nature were different (that there is feeling of loss, of living with shame, of nothingness

etc). Taking a theoretical stance is interpreting abstract formal aspects when language is 'like an engine idling.' In religion, concrete cases and diverse life situation provides the background. This theoretical stance can not do justice to the ceremonial nature of man, to the fact that expression of joy is not from knowledge, belief or opinion. The practice and the view are together, both are there in the act. Religious language reveals this deep structure of language which is beyond the reach of the surface grammar; it is the revelation of the poetic and the mythical part in us. It is spontaneous and instinctive reaction to something that is deep and mysterious which stirs something that is deep in me: it is to undertake an imaginary journey exploring the 'strangeness that is in me'. It is expected because there is time to believe it: certain ideas exercise a fascination on our mind and compel us to accept them. It is very interesting that pictures do force themselves on us.' 'Yes that's how it is', you say, 'because that's how it must be.'<sup>16</sup>

Unlike a scientific hypothesis the religious picture is related to one's way of assessing the situation. The force of the picture is evident in the life of the believer whose life has taught him to accommodate all sorts of experiences and their expressions: ugly, vulgar, refined or sublime. Wittgenstein wishes to say that a religious concept can not be given a straight forward cash value and is to that extent non reducible. Religion does not say something metaphorically, nor it is an expression of attitudes only. "*Suppose some one, before going to China, when he might never see me again, said to me; 'we might see one another after death'----would I necessarily say that I don't understand him? I might say [want to say] simply, 'yes I understand him entirely'. 'It says what it says.'*"<sup>17</sup> Religious picture has its force on people; when a believer says to some one 'we will meet after death', he is using a picture which expresses his real hopes and aspirations, 'it says what it says'. A picture, fixed at heaven gives this life its deeper meaning which is to face death and separation with hope and expectation. The relation between experience and practice gives personal touch to theology which is absent in science or in other public pursuits. Religious experience is an expression of sense of wonder, of hopes and aspirations, of fears and celebrations which are experienced deeply. Consciousness of sin, despair, relate something that has happened in man's life. The picture has its captivating force, the message of salvation and beatitude is seized on by men believably (lovingly) as there is genuine expressions of sin and punishment, of loss and nothingness which make life problematic. The conclusions he draws from these pictures are found in believer's reactions: confessions, repentance and despair. Philosophy mirrors practice.

Form of life is rooted in human response to deeper connections. Learning how to greet, to grief, to rejoice, all the deeper expression of our nature and their tacit connections, is to be familiar with the dark and the mysterious side of life, which points to something that is mythical in us as well as in the world. It is a matter of degree to what



extent this connection between the prosaic and the poetic is harmonized and in what manner. In his book *The Golden Bough*, Frazer gives a vivid description of a particular rite, the scene of succession to the priesthood for the temple of Diana: "*Guarding an oak tree in the sacred grove of Diana of the Wood, there prowled the grim, sword-carrying figure of a murderous priest king, warily looking about for an expected assailant who would sooner or later murder him and take up the priesthood himself.*"<sup>18</sup> While recognizing the dark sinister side of such murderous rituals, Wittgenstein would rather draw our attention to something like the symbolic interpretation of such rites. These practices are not guided by some theoretical speculations, rather these are the conclusions one draws from something in life which makes an act symbolic, a pointer to the dark mystery of life, the prominence of death and the demand for sacrifice which looms large in the horizon. The practice become the instinctive response: the practice and the view are both to be seen in the act itself. Like us the primitives act differently while building his hut of wood and cutting his arrow with skill in real life. But burning the effigy of his enemy or kissing the picture of the loved one are rituals and symbolic acts for the primitives as well as for the modern and the same man can act both these ways. That explains the differences: "... Frazer appears to think that all human action, all human questioning, is fundamentally the same: when human beings act, they are trying to achieve ends. When they ask 'why'?, they are asking for the causes of events; and so on."<sup>19</sup> Contrary to this, Wittgenstein concentrates on the differences and the variety of uses when asking a question like 'why the world exists' could be an expression of wonder at the very existence of the world. One will be misled to treat it as a question which demands an explanation. Sometimes theories and opinions are revealed only on the practice. Magic is rather an expression of an wish: burning the effigy of the enemy is an act of wish fulfillment: the practice itself fulfills the desire. One does not have to wait for the real death of the enemy, the act satisfies the urge to express hatred or rejection to that extent. Wittgenstein wishes to say that a religious concept can not be given a straight forward cash value and is to that extent non reducible.

Religion does not say something metaphorically, nor it is an expression of attitudes only. If it is not an expression of attitudes, religious language as well as moral statements reveal a kind of objectivity. Could this objectivity be grounded on our nature which is stirred by something that is there in the world around us resulting in an act of interaction. Because of these two traits in our personality man is both a thinker and a rejoicer - man can think both scientifically and ritually. The intense thinker and a great philosopher of his stature, Wittgenstein could sympathetically share a frame of mind which would provide framework to understanding religious beliefs like 'feeling absolutely safe', thinking only of God etc. Instead of rejecting such beliefs as nonsensical, Wittgenstein would rather visualize a situation when such utterances have a significance or when

such statements would impress one deeply. He had the ingredients of becoming a religious believer of a different sort, with his feelings of significance of life which demands commitment and responsibility; his feelings of guilt and imperfections, anxiety and depression at the very baseness and fallenness of life and of his life, he could aspire to make his philosophy a dedication to that divine purpose. But he would not possibly bring himself to believe all the things that the believers are supposed to believe. With a deeper dimension in him Wittgenstein would very well understand the language of wonder, adoration, dedication as well. His understanding of sufferings and tribulations of life made him appreciate the sense of wonder at the very existence of the world. But how to reconcile wisdom with life? How to respect that unsaid part? Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* was confident of encircling the whole of language and to put a limit to the expression of thought. Anything that made sense to say is to be expressed in language. In his later writing he concentrated more on plotting the boundaries of intelligibility which could separate one kind of discussion from another. On the earlier view only one kind of thing could be said. To depart from it is nonsense but in his later thought there are many different kinds of things that can be said, there can be dimensions of life as well as dimensions of thought.

His late philosophy is a recognition of the fact that there are different kinds of talks: talk about love and war, about science and objectivity, about religion and superstition and culture! As the grammar of the use of a word decides the nature of reality, to penetrate reality one has to understand reality by language. About the mystical the *Tractatus* was sure of its stand: what can not be said is unsayable. But there is also the other side of the coin: that there exists mystical things which can not be put into words. If it is a picture what it tells about God? The elements of a picture and what it represents are internally connected. Internally the picture contains the possibility of a situation which it depicts. It expresses a possible situation in logical space. To express a thought is to use a picture with a sense, using it as a picture is expressing its sense. There are internal relations between such propositions which form part of the logical syntax of length or color respectively. "...'*This is red*' excludes '*this is blue*'. *These are internal relations between such propositions which form part of the logical syntax of length or color respectively.*" We need to know in what language game a sentence is a move before it can say anything to us. Is it a story, a dream report, a command, or a funeral scene, which form of life the use of the word is dependent on. In his major works there is absence of any sustained treatment of religious questions, which Brian R. Clack describes as his desire to 'come out the transcendental twaddle' and to remain silent about such matters. But his notebooks and his some lectures broke this silence.

There is a possibility that the same picture will sustain different people, a believer, a

non believer and a rebel differently. It is very interesting that pictures do force themselves on us, believing in the Last Judgement is not believing in a matter of fact. The believer can not contradict the non believer because they are not talking on the same plane. The belief can be both well established and not so well established. They think differently. One does not think in terms of Last Judgement: that is not the dominating picture for the one and it is a dominating one for the other. Part of the substance of that belief is terror: 'not to be dragged to the fire'. D.Z. Phillips brings out the distinctive nature of religious talk and of God talk in the following remark: "*The criterion of what is to be said of God is found within a religious tradition.*"<sup>20</sup> Phillips argues for an internal role of theology, religious belief is determined by the religious tradition and the concept of God is determined by the religious tradition and the picture is taught to children through stories. The idea of God is being found in the actual story telling and related services. Theology decides what makes sense to say meaningfully about God since theology is the grammar of religious discussion. This personal character of theology makes it different from scientific discourse. Theology is personal as it is based on one's personal knowledge of God, loving God is learning to respect a picture that is firmly rooted in one's thought. Once one has embraced a religion one has established 'what can be said' in a particular religion: it is learnt. For the believer, seeing the point of religion is believing it. The rebel sees the point of religion, he knows the story from the inside but it does not captivate him. In loving God we love something that does not exist but a picture is to be there at the root of all our thinking which is to be respected. While superstition is a lower mode of expression of religious practice or something like a false science, it is an expression of fear while religion is an expression of trust. If someone acts out of fear of the Last Judgement that it is in store for him, that is superstition, but if there is a sense of disgust and a sense of undue and intense suffering, then it provides a context which could make the Last Judgement picture acceptable. Unlike a scientific hypothesis religious belief is related to one's way of assessing the situation. The force of the picture is evident in the life of the believer.

The words uttered is not important, how something is said reveals the force of the picture. Religious practice is an expression of a sense of wonder, of religious hopes and fears, which one experiences intensely. The superstitious man could not be transformed to a man of reason and enlightenment so that the primitive and the religious part could be forsaken. Wittgenstein interprets religious belief in our experiential awerness and gestures to our deeper sensitive part. Religion is the expression of something that actually takes place in human life. Concepts of sin, despair etc. relate something that has happened in man's life. The picture captivates because the message is seized on by men believably (lovingly), that is the certainty. The conclusions he draws from these pictures are found in believer's life, in confession, and in repentance. Religious

experience is related to one's way of assessing the situation which can be banal, vulgar keeping room for all sorts of religious expressions, higher or lower, refined or ugly. The force of the picture is seen how he draws conclusions and regulate life accordingly. The pictures and the words used in religious discourse have different uses and different impacts on different people. The Tractatus's confidence to circle the whole language drawing a limit to the 'expression of thought' was softened by recognizing boundaries of intelligibility of separate discourses. On this view there are many different kinds of things that can be said concentrating on the internal subdivisions of languages. His concern is now: what it is for languages to have meaning. Now his stand is on grammar or the use to which language is put which describes what kind of object anything is. It is in reference to a form of life that the word gets its meaning but forms of life are not isolated language games, these are rooted in the human response to deeper connections: how to grief, to greet, to rejoice. When Wittgenstein says that a child learns various language games when he learns to speak, he shows how the child could be taught to use the different expressions with some flexibility.

The meanings of expressions they use can not lie wholly in the use or reactions that it receives in this job. If the signs had no use outside this transformation, the transformation would be without any significance and it would not show anything. The sense of a proposition is not only what it means: but it is learning how to draw conclusions from what is being said in one context: what it leads to if I say something, what questions are relevant to ask, what should be the expectations etc. To tell something mechanically imitating sounds, undergoing rituals etc, is not 'telling' something which is learning what one remark may have in connection with another. One must learn the use of thanks giving, gratefulness to be able to tell something about these. It is a difference between learning how to calculate and learning how to tell things. It is not a parrot like learning, a child learning the correct use of the word 'pain' for example is also learning to use the word in many other occasions, he learns to play with the word when he pretends to be in pain. In order to make out the difference between these two in religious language one can learn the correct use of the word God from Theology as Wittgenstein shows the connection between Theology and grammar. It is only by listening to what we say about God (what has been said for many generations) and how what is said about God ties in with what we say and do in innumerable other connections, that we have any chance of understanding what we mean when we speak of God. Faith, like thought, is visible (also is love). These practices and gestures are not subject to our choice than being a living human being is only possible realization of the human soul. Such gestures are not conventional. The expressive gestures vary across cultures. There is a primitive explanation about the human body. How the practice or the gesture reveals the belief or the picture is evident from the following observation; "We

might say very roughly, of people whose nature it is to kneel down on certain occasions, and fold their hands, that in their language they have a personal God.<sup>121</sup> Faith, like hope, is embedded in human life, in all of the situations and reactions which constitute human life. It is reaction to life situation where the picture varies related to different kinds of wisdom that life bestows on us: 'Someone for instance say, it is a very grave matter that such and such a man shall have died before he could complete a certain piece of work; and yet, in another sense, this is not what matters. At this point one uses the words in a deeper sense.'<sup>122</sup>

Learning to talk about God is not to have the idea of God as an item in the world. The kind of object that a thing comes out in the kinds of things that it is appropriate to say about it. This evidently goes for God as much as for imagination. To explain what the concept God means we have to listen to what is possible to say about the subject. We have no access to the divine independently of our life and language. We talk about God in manifold activities as blessing, cursing, repenting, confessing. Life educates us to believe in God and experiences bring that about (not visions but sufferings of souls.) Experiences, thoughts, life, can force this concept on us. Something in life being terrible, horrible and tragic and insignificant is what brings about the ceremony. People carry out ritualistic actions in reaction to certain situation as there is something in us too that speaks in support of that. In effect, Frazer's theorizing cancel our kinship with his savages by assuming that their customs can be made intelligible to modern civilized man round 'Cambridge college dinner tables only by dispassionate observations---as if there tables were not occupied by beings at least as sinister as any dancing savage'.

Religion addresses this intimate self in us, something that is most passionate, something that is dark and sinister as well. 'We have to rediscover the strangeness in our own nature, that makes stories of religious cultures intelligible.'<sup>123</sup> The dark sinister rites associated with the dark practices are responses to something that touches them deeply, that stirs them into actions are depictions of possible situations which give sense to a particular picture. 'Yes, but that which I see in those stories is something they acquire, after all, from the evidence, including such evidence as does not seem directly connected with them--from the thought of man and his past, from the strangeness of what I see in myself and in others, what I have seen and have heard.'<sup>124</sup> These similar acts make sense to us before we look for explanation in terms of causes and purposes. To deny this is to deny what human beings are like with deep continuity between the sensibility of our ancestors and our own. 'Wittgenstein's watch words in the philosophy of psychology and also contributions of central importance to a theology that starts where we are; a theology for ceremonious animals, so to speak, rather than for cerebrating solipsists; a theology that starts from the deep and sinister thing in human nature, rather than from a hypothesis about a deity; a theology naturalized, so to

speak.<sup>125</sup> To stay within the religious sphere one must struggle to act morally.

We make judgements of value in circumstances in which it makes sense to do this. Religious response is anything but a trivial matter, it stirs one deeply. The moral rebuke has the significance that goes beyond the circumstances, as in religion when one reacts with force that comes from the deeper nature of man, sustained by one's culture, language, priorities, pictures. Reacting from inside is like mechanically responding to a particular situation, responses that come from a deeper and a wider dimension is of another sort: it has the whole world with it. Rule governed activities are learnt studying ways and customs as a rule is neither a command nor it is an empirical statement of how the majority of the people behave. "Language - I want to say-is a refinement, 'in the beginning was the deed'<sup>126</sup> These are like concepts of causation originating in primitive reactions." Calling something 'the cause' is like pointing and saying: 'He is to blame'.<sup>127</sup> Language is not for ratiocination: it is the medium of primitive means of causation. It shows primacy of animality over reason. "We need, then, to examine the role of 'primitive reactions' in religion, before considering why these are to be regarded as un-phenomenal." The sense of what Wittgenstein says here is made with the kind of analogy drawn between the language of pain and the language of religion: 'we have seen how the language of pain is said to develop out of instinctual, non linguistic behaviour. Similarly the language of religion (the articulation of religious beliefs) is an extension of certain primitive reactions, say a natural expression of wonder or of fear. Note, however that the religious belief is not equivalent to that expression of wonder (the expressive view). Rather, just as instinctive pain behaviour opens up a logical space whereby a greater articulation can occur, so the primitive religious reaction opens up a conceptual space, making possible the articulation of thoughts about the meaning and ultimate end of life, making possible new experiences, new ways of relating to the world."<sup>128</sup>

Wittgenstein's interest in all sorts of religious expressions, primitive or modern, crude or refined, superstitious or religious, magical or metaphysical is an attempt on his part to draw out possibilities of life situations in which certain rituals and practices make sense as these become instinctive or causal responses to that imaginary or actual situation. The many possible myths which can be schematised and founded in reality, not with what rituals exist among which tribes and how to defend these practices, but with logical and conceptual possibilities, with what possible rituals might exist or folk tales might exist. We can think out for ourselves the different possibilities and find them in reality about human thought. 'The ceremonial (hot or cold)' as opposed to the haphazard (lukewarm) is a characteristic of pity. To account for the phenomenon of human sacrifice one needs to understand the kind of creatures human beings are. Thus, the enquiry must turn upon 'the thought of man and his past... the strangeness of what I see in myself and in others, what I have seen and have heard.'<sup>129</sup> It is not to make the

full horror of such rites trivial: That man becomes so sinister is disturbing fact itself but it is a possible situation which makes sense to us who can be transformed from friends and homely people to potential assassins:" if I see such a practice, or hear of it, it is like seeing a man speaking sternly to another because of something quite trivial, and noticing in the tone of his voice and in his face that on occasion this man can be frightening. The impression I get from this may be very deep and extremely serious one.<sup>30</sup> Underneath our rational exteriors are strange and passionate creatures with violent propensities which reveals our kinship to those savages.

Both logical form and the mystical are transcendental as both are unsayable but they show themselves. In religious response we bring out the stock of our mythology of our past beliefs: "When we speak of fate, taking a hand, or fearing the wrath of the gods', we bring out of storage the mythology of our ancestors. All of this is entirely consonant with Wittgenstein's overall view of language, which he likened to a city: "...our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, and of houses with addition from various periods; and this surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs with straight regular streets and inform houses".<sup>31</sup> Religions and cultures bring out the hidden potentialities of man in its diverse forms: 'Each culture has its own new possibilities of self expression which arise, ripen, decay, and never return.'<sup>32</sup> Religion, for Wittgenstein declines not because its adherents recognize it to be intellectually unsatisfactory or in any other way erroneous. Rather, it declines because the values to which it gives expression are largely absent in an age of decay. To this extent the religion of a culture, like its architecture, acts a barometer for its values, and as Wittgenstein writes: 'Architecture immortalizes and glorifies something. Hence there can be no architecture where there is nothing to glorify.' Religious language makes sense as there is sense in visualising conceptual possibilities of different language games. In our total response we bring out the store of mythologies, our cultural background and our rich and multifold use of concepts to respond to a situation that stirs one deeply. If our human nature is changed beyond recognition that there is no recognition of a deeper level in life, that it makes no sense to become, to use Charles Tylor's terminology, 'subjects of significance', that matters of shame, pride and guilt no longer stir one deeply, then the picture looses its grip. Not because the picture does not stir one but because there is no one left for whom making confessions, committing sins or becoming ashamed of would make sense. This would reduce religious talks to those language games which are cut off from life and its activity. This would then make speech act a kind of game, a part of the technique which is cut off from other activities of life. Contrary to this Wittgenstein could see the deeper connection between language and life which gives meaning to any kind of discourse, including religious one.

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## Endnotes

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# Wittgenstein and the Kantian Critical Method

Marco Bastianelli

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The ample bibliography on Wittgenstein offers the possibility to put the question of the existence of a relationship between him and Kant; now on the general level of methodological setting out, now on the more specific level of gnoseological contents. The purpose of this paper is to sketch an exam of some questions that arise on the general level of the method, dealing with contents only to the extent that they can be useful to make this clear. The aim is to try to answer the following question: is it still reasonable to speak of a critical-transcendental inquiry in relation to Wittgenstein?

About the supposed methodological proximity between the two philosophers, R. Haller admonishes to remember that

"One cannot simply call every non-dogmatic, non-sceptical attempt at grounding experience a "critical" one in the Kantian sense, because this would render the specifically Kantian point of departure quite empty" (1988, 52).

For this reason I intend to offer a preliminary scheme of the kantian position. The critical method is concerned with transcendental inquiry: the task of the critic of reason is to indicate the limits of *a priori* knowledge. In other words, Kant's purpose is to individuate - in the human mind - the universal functions that are the conditions of our knowledge of reality; and, by means of these, to state its possibilities. The features of critical inquiry are:

*a- to be an inquiry of reason on itself*: namely it is self-referential;

*b- to be completely a priori*. Its aim is to reach universal and necessary conditions of possibility of knowledge;

*c- to start with undiscussible facts*. The standpoint that certifies the possibility of this inquiry is the firmness of sciences. Anyway, the inquiry proceeds on a different level than natural sciences, since it is concerned with their possibility;

*d- to be complete*, namely it should conduct to the individuation of all the conditions of knowledge. This character rests on the idea of a systematic reason;

*e- to determinate the limits and the possibilities of knowledge*, namely to prevent from using the *a priori* functions of mind beyond their limits, and to assure about the possibility of a certain and unquestionable knowledge.

Keeping in mind these items, which indicate also the way the inquiry proceeds, and examining Wittgenstein's position in the *Tractatus*, it is possible to point out that, in relation to a, while the object and the subject of kantian inquiry is the reason, in Wittgenstein it is replaced by language as expression of thought. This shift implies that it could be possible to speak of a wittgensteinian critical-transcendental inquiry, but in the sense of "linguistic transcendentalism", namely of an inquiry on the operating conditions of language. In this sense the conditions of our knowledge of reality are not the functions of thought, but the condition of its expression, i.e. the logical form. On a general level Pears agrees with this point:

"The simplest characterization of his [of Wittgenstein] philosophy is that is critical in the Kantian sense of that word. Kant offered a critique of thought and Wittgenstein offers a critique of the expressions of thought in language" (1997, vol. I, 3);

Nevertheless between the two inquiries there is a deep difference: the fact that the sentence is intended as representation of the world, and its condition is the not-sayable logical form, implies, as Wittgenstein writes in T.6.54, that the self-referentiality of his inquiry has a logical but not factual value. According to N. Garver this means that

"Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* was a failed attempt at reviving Critical Philosophy. It was such an attempt because its criterion of significance was drawn from the account of how sentences are possible, that is to say, from the description of what a sentence (*Satz*) is. It was a failed attempt because it was, by its own lights, nonsense" (1994, 42-43).

Garver's remark can be put in relation to *e*: the *Critique of pure Reason* circumscribes the field of the intellectual knowledge and introduces to practical reason; the closing silence of the *Tractatus*, on the contrary, discredits the very value of the inquiry and it doesn't prelude to anything. Anyway, considering the turning to linguistic inquiry, this silence shows the impossibility of speaking of the ultimate condition of language, the logical form. Consequently, it reveals that, when the operating of language is clear, no problems remain but only what escapes the notion of a problem. Similarly happens in the *Transcendental Dialectic* in which the limits of knowledge are stated from the inside, making it clear that the problems, since they necessarily arise from the operating of thought, mustn't be solved but eradicated as such. Thus, the silence of the *Tractatus* is not the empty silence of idle talks, but the typical one of sentences that show the totality and which, as such, are not properly meaningful. What they show is the sense of the world as a whole (its logical form and its value), against the unjustified strives of saying it beyond the limits of language. In this sense, such a silence testifies a critical attitude in the kantian sense of the *Transcendental Dialectic*.

But in the quoted passage Haller claims that to obtain the appellation of "critical philosopher" it's not enough to have such an attitude. It's possible to add that it's not sufficient to investigate the limits of language or thought to presume to act as a "transcendental philosopher". For this reason it's necessary to mention some more specific problems on a less general level.

With relation to points *b*, *c* and *d*, it could be said that also for Wittgenstein the inquiry on language moves from facts (the evidence, showed in *T.* 4.002 and *T.* 5.4733 that it exists an articulated common language). Furthermore, he conducts his inquiry completely *a priori* as well as Kant does: but, while for Kant the physical-mathematical sciences are only paradigms to run metaphysics on the way of science, for Wittgenstein logic is the omni-comprehensive dimension of reality and of our knowledge of it. Hence logic is not only functional to the method but is the total dimension of the inquiry. About the effects of such a role I'll speak later.

Despite of the omni-comprehensive role of logic, the *Tractatus*, as logic-philosophical inquiry, lays on a level that, like the kantian critique, is not the one of natural sciences. In this sense we can state that the position of the *Tractatus* is transversal in respect to natural sciences precisely in the same way of the *Critique of pure Reason*.

Moreover, in the case of Kant the presumption that reason is a comprehensive and structured faculty determines the possibility of a complete classification of its functions, while in Wittgenstein the logical *a priori* doesn't determine the real possibility of enumerating the forms of language.

In relation to the forms of language, a problem emerges that leads us to the individuation of another important difference: for Kant (see the *Transcendental Deduction*) the objectivity of experience is warranted by the unity of the knowing subject; in Wittgenstein the possibility of necessary and universal logical forms doesn't rest on the unity of the subject but on the internal proprieties of the objects, as it seems from the ontology of the *Tractatus*.

But objects, according to *T.* 4.1272, are not immediately the real objects of the experience but what should correspond to the simplest logical signs, after the logical-transcendental analysis. In this sense, the ontology of the *Tractatus* is not the description of an independent world, but the transcendental mirror of the starting logical presupposition. Furthermore, to consider the objects under this light, implies that logic is the necessary condition of possibility of our representation of the world. If we understand the kantian forms *a priori* not as the subjective forms that apply to the world in itself but as the expression of an isomorphism between world and mind, then they're the

necessary and not knowable conditions of any possible experience; and in this sense, they are analogous to the logical form of language in Wittgenstein.

This last passage leads us to claim a kinship between Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and Kant's *Critique* also on the specific level of gnoseological contents. What interests is, in any case, that under the respect of the method, remains the idea that the Wittgenstein's purpose is to clarify the operating of language and to look for its transcendental condition in the logic, in order to establish the possibilities of language and, accordingly, its limits. As for Kant the possibility of our knowledge of the reality rests on the necessity of some specific operations of mind, so for Wittgenstein it rests on the necessary logical form, showed by the tautologies through the transcendental analysis of language.

Of course many things change if we proceed to a general exam of the *Philosophical Investigations*. In relation to *b* and *d*, it's possible to notice that the intention to investigate the essence of language and to give a necessary and universal foundation of its operating disappears. Language loses its feature of being the *super partes* means to investigate the objectivity of any possible knowledge, to take the one of a "form of life". There's no more a world of objects supposed to be independent from ordinary language, and neither the consequential idea of an isomorphism. So it seems to be impossible to speak of a critical position.

But J. McDowell's opinion is quite different. He claims that

"[...] we can have a position that is critical (in the same roughly Kantian sense: it acknowledges that world and mind are constitutively made for one another), but which, by dropping the "in itself", precisely sheds any need to talk of such a contribution (thereby, one might claim, becoming exactly what a critical realism would need to be). [...] The right thought is not that there are two inseparable contributions to the constitution of the world, but that one cannot do anything at all with the idea of a contribution from an ineffable "in itself" beyond the limits of "ordinary knowledge"" (1998, 307).

In this sense, according to McDowell Wittgenstein can be named "critical" only in the *Investigations* and not properly in the *Tractatus*. Pears, while starting from a different idea of critical philosophy which intends to mark the subjective contribution to knowledge, seems to share this conclusion:

"it is a laborious achievement requiring a sustained contribution from our minds. The meanings of our words are kept constant not by Platonic universals but by the stability of our own practices" (1997, vol. I, 11-12).

But in this perspective the forms of language lose their feature of being necessary functions of knowledge and they gain a praxeological one (Haller, 1988). So, the

isomorphism between mind and world that we find in the *Tractatus* is replaced with a position that can be hardly considered *subjective* in the kantian sense. Finally, in relation to c it can be observed that logic is no more the privileged standpoint and the experience is only an interrelation of language games.

About the role of philosophy, it is notorious its therapeutic character. This outcome, even if it could seem to be near to the kantian position, is on the contrary quite different. To justify this last remark I must premise that in the *Critique of pure Reason* the positive role of *Transcendental Analytic* is so much fundamental as the negative one of the *Transcendental Dialectic*. Therefore, the difference with kantian position is produced by the accentuation of one of the two aspects. So, if one considers the *Dialectic* the core of the critical position, then it is possible to speak of the critical philosophy only as a non-dogmatic and non-metaphysical one. In this way one forgets that it is based on a faith in the unchangeable structures and powers of human reason, which justifies the role of the *Analytic*. So one could think that in the case of Wittgenstein it is sufficient to consider philosophy as therapy to be assured on the possibility of a parallel with Kant. J. Hartnack is one of those who interpret Kant this way. Thus, he pretends to translate some kantian statements in the language of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* by replacing the term "reason" with the term "language". But Hartnack is perfectly conscious that the traditional readings of Kant privilege the *Analytic*. In any case, he writes,

"even if Kant's work is interpreted this way it is still comparable to Wittgenstein's philosophy - not, however, to the Wittgenstein of the *Philosophische Untersuchungen* but to the Wittgenstein who is the author of *Tractatus*. [...] In the *Tractatus* [...] a sentence is the same as a thought. *Tractatus* is consequently an attempt to find the conditions and limits of our thought - or, which comes to the same, to find the conditions and limits of knowledge" (1969, 134).

And this leads us back to the previous considerations.

To conclude: the parallel between Kant and Wittgenstein seems to hold good only if one considers the twofold role of the analytic of possibilities and of the dialectic of limits, hence only in the case of the *Tractatus*. On the contrary, it is misleading in the case of the *Philosophical Investigations*, because in them the therapeutic aspect of the method overcomes completely the idea that the critical inquiry concerns the universal forms of reason (or their expression, as in the *Tractatus*).

Nevertheless, another perspective is possible: if one considers kantian concepts *a priori* as rules for the experience, then the kantian transcendental could be found also in the *Philosophical Investigations*. So it could be possible to retrieve in this work both the

constructive-analytical and therapeutic-dialectical aspects of kantism. Most of the recent bibliography is focused on this theme. But for the moment I must only mention these recent perspectives with the intention of deepening my knowledge of them in a near future.

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# Why study Wittgenstein's diagrams?

Michael Biggs

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This was the title of a seminar that I gave at the Wittgenstein Archives at the University of Bergen in November 1992. The present conference, at which we are undertaking a review of Wittgenstein's works 50 years after his death, would seem to present an opportunity to revisit this title and consider how one might respond in 2001. In 1992 I felt that I did not have a strong argument on which to base my case for a defence of such a study. However, the lack of previous studies seemed surprising,

...based on the observation that more than half of the diagrams in the published works occur as "word substitutes"; that is, they appear within a sentence as though words, and if the diagrams were to be removed and nothing put in their place the grammatical structure of the sentence would be disrupted. (Biggs 1994 200)

Several things have happened since 1992 that either problematize or facilitate the study of the diagrams. Amongst the benefits is, firstly, *the Bergen electronic edition* published by Oxford University Press (Wittgenstein 2000). This contains both a text transcription, including bitmapped graphics in the running text, and a full set of colour facsimiles of the *Nachlass*. As part of the development team I have contributed to the graphical encoding that facilitates combined textual and graphical analysis.

Secondly, I have published a hypertext tool for the retrieval of graphics from the published works, based on a taxonomy of sixteen basic graphical types (Biggs 1998). The graphics may be retrieved on the basis of their form or on the basis of their relationship to five editorially pre-selected keywords with which each graphic is associated in the immediate co-text. The reason for providing retrieval on the apparently trivial basis of form, rather than the more consequential basis of content, is that the hypertext is intended for use as a research tool to investigate the relationship of form and content, rather than to pre-empt it.

Thirdly, and as a result of the research into, and availability of the above, I have undertaken a re-evaluation of the edited graphics that occur in the published works. By edited graphics I mean graphics that have been redrawn by the editors rather than being scanned from the *Nachlass*. The process of editing the graphics is comparable to the process of transferring orthography into typescript, and the *Nachlass* into the published works. It involves decision-making on both form and content. A total of 64 graphics have



been changed with the agreement of the Trustees and are awaiting incorporation into the published corpus. The first example of this graphical revision to be published was *Philosophical Investigations* (1997). In the prefatory note to the so-called "re-issued second edition" I have said that changes have been made on the grounds of "improved legibility, felicity or perspicuity."

There are also problems with the study of the graphics. Although not usually a problem, there are three principal difficulties that can occur during editing: 1) what constitutes a graphic, 2) identifying where in the running text a graphic should occur, (3) is the graphic appropriate in relation to the text as drawn by Wittgenstein? I have discussed problem (1) in an earlier paper at Kirchberg (Biggs 1995). Problem (2) arises because it is Wittgenstein's practice in the Bände to insert a graphic at the beginning of a paragraph and then to wrap the text around it. Unless the text transcription attempts to imitate this page layout, which is not an editorial requirement and is not attempted in the Bergen electronic edition, a decision has to be made about the most effective location of the graphic in the text string. This problem is exacerbated in the notebooks where the structure is even less linear. Finally, (3) there are a few problem cases owing to the limited quality and accuracy of drawing one can expect from Wittgenstein whilst writing. It could be said in some places that Wittgenstein did not draw what he meant. Problems (1) & (2) could be regarded as problems of form while problem (3) could be regarded as a problem of content. The least interventionist editorial approach would seem to be that taken in the Bergen electronic edition, where the graphics are simply scanned and reproduced in monochrome facsimile in the running text. However, this does not in itself solve any of these three problems.

In the case of the published works we have inherited a position in which Wittgenstein's reputation and importance to twentieth century philosophy has been established almost exclusively through posthumously edited works, and the original sources have not hitherto been widely available or consulted. When I discussed the possibility of making changes to the received corpus, G.H. von Wright suggested that any received inaccuracies have not hindered our reception of Wittgenstein's philosophical contribution through the medium of the published works. There is some legitimacy to this objection. One could consider that, like logic, the published work must take care of itself (NB 1). A counter-argument based on the misleading effects of certain graphics would need to be made in order to show that, whilst it might have been sufficient to establish Wittgenstein's reputation as we have it, nonetheless there may be more to be had from a more appropriate representation of the *Nachlass* in the published works (cf. Nedo 1993 84). I shall use the newly available resources above to provide some evidence for this counter-argument.

We can use this distinction between form and content as a theme through which to investigate Wittgenstein's use of graphics. I will take as an example the "impossible machine". It first appears in MS153a 45v, is copied into MS110 286 on 4 July 1931, and published in PG 194. It was eventually succeeded by the more familiar example of the duck-rabbit in MS130 133, dated between 6 May & 22 July 1946. The "impossible machine" is something that looks as though it can function but in practice it cannot and is an analogy to "something that at first sight looks like a sentence and is not one" (PG 194, cf. PI 214). I would like to draw attention to two factors.

Firstly, a visual analogy is made between the machine and a sentence. We are often aspect-blind to meaninglessness in language. It may be easier for us to understand that a machine may be designed in good faith to have a particular function but for us to discover that when it is put to the test it does not perform as we had intended. Our ability to understand this latter problem may be a consequence of our habit of requiring machines to have functions: we do not tolerate functionless machines. It is Wittgenstein's objection that we are less rigorous in our intolerance of functionless sentences, i.e. when language goes on holiday (PI §38). Secondly, the illustrations of machines are representations of rigid mechanisms. We can calculate the performance of a rigid mechanism from its form alone, without the necessity of seeing it move. When we read these graphics we perform a calculus with which we infer the movement of a rigid body in three-dimensions from a representation in two-dimensions.

The machine analogy is a useful paradigm for Wittgenstein's broader use of graphics. Various machines, within which I include balances, slide rules, and other simple machines as well as reciprocating mechanisms, etc., occur from 1929 onwards. The earliest examples are used in connection with the colour exclusion problem (WWK 64, dated 30 December 1929). This is significant because the colour exclusion problem was Wittgenstein's principal reason for rejecting the philosophy of the *Tractatus*. The problem supplies the grounds for refuting the claim that elementary propositions are independent of one another (TLP 6.3751, RLF 167). The elementary proposition that "this is red" excludes the proposition that "this is green" [at the same time and in the same place]. However, elementary propositions, being independent, cannot be mutually exclusive. These early machine graphics show that colour exclusion is not a matter of experience, but of the mode of representation and hence the logic of our colour concepts, and hence our colour language. MS108 54, PR 112 discusses the "slide rule" machine that makes it impossible to set two measurements at the same time. This shows a match between the logical possibility of the representation and the representamen. Our syntax (WWK 65f.) can be exposed by an alternative graphical, rather than linguistic, representation of events. Because Tractarian objects belong to our mode of representation (WWK 43) they cannot be represented from within that system,

hence the rôle of the analogy. It becomes an inference engine for our system of linguistic representation.

There are several occasions in the published works where the graphical construction and hence inferential outcome of a system of objects does not correspond to the meaning of the text. Examples include PR 288 & PG 225 where the movement of the gear wheels is impossible; PG 253 where the ruler cannot be rolled into the various positions without also sliding it; PG 389 where the construction cannot be derived as shown; PG 194 where one reason for non-functionality seems to be the incorrect relative positions of the piston and the crank. Similarly, Nedo's editorial addition of radial lines to the "impossible machine", including a line break suggesting a spatial relationship to the cylinder, (Nedo 1995 325) inadvertently introduces a way in which this machine could function, i.e. as two parallel wheels, one with the cylinder and the other for motion.

Other examples of editorial graphical correction reflect coherence with the *Nachlass*. Such an *übersicht*, as noted in the re-issued second edition of PI, was not possible when the material was first published. For example, Wittgenstein comments on the construction of a spiral and distinguishes between a series of semicircles and a spiral (MS112 29v).

...the spiral is formed from the three semicircles a b c, but the essence of the spiral only comes into existence via the particular manner of their arrangement and therefore a new principle has to be added to the semicircle, in order to let it become a spiral. This comparison is a fairly unfortunate attempt to find the correct/clear representation. (MS112 29v)

"True" spirals therefore need to be substituted for PG 301, PR 199, etc., unless attention is to be drawn to examples that seem to be spirals but are not, e.g. PR 241. There is also a connection between the inappropriate use of semicircle-spirals and the general form of the recursive decimal, for which Wittgenstein finds a better mechanical analogy in MS154 86r, MS113 241, PG 430.

In conclusion, the benefit of studying Wittgenstein's diagrams is that they form an integral part of his method for addressing philosophical puzzlement. Their rôle may be summarised as either a therapy for aspect-blindness or for linguistic idleness, i.e. lack of applicability. Changing the mode of representation makes our concepts perspicuous:

A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command a clear view of the use of our words. - Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in "seeing connections". Hence the importance of finding and inventing intermediate cases. (PI §122)

Why study Wittgenstein's diagrams?

This is the rôle of mechanical analogies such as the "impossible machine". It overcomes our aspect-blindness to something that appears to be a sentence but is not one, by substituting an analogy of a mechanism that appears to have a function but does not. Each of these paradigms shows that both language and other forms of representation such as graphics have meaning in relation to an application in the world of objects. Wittgenstein's linguistic and concept model, especially in the early 1930s, was an activity model, e.g. "the activity of inferring" (RFM 43), "of calculating" (RFM 390), "of translating" (BB 99), "of speaking" (PI §23), "of meaning" (PI §665), "of building" (LW-I §340). Making perspicuous the corresponding activity is to

show an easy escape from this obscurity and this glitter of the concepts. (RFM 274)

Ironically, when summarising the aspect-blinding familiarity of language, Wittgenstein uses a graphical metaphor:

A picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably. (PI §115)

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## **Abbreviations used for Wittgenstein's published works**

BB	<i>The Blue and Brown Books</i> (1958)
NB	<i>Notebooks 1914-16</i> (1961)
PG	<i>Philosophical Grammar</i> (1974)
PI	<i>Philosophical Investigations</i> (1997)
PR	<i>Philosophical Remarks</i> (1975)
RFM	<i>Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics</i> (1978)
RLF	<i>Some Remarks on Logical Form</i> (1929)
TLP	<i>Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus</i> (1961)
WWK	<i>Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle</i> (1979)

# Therapie oder Täuschung

## Vom unterschiedlichen Umgang mit dem Leser bei Ludwig Wittgenstein und Fritz Mauthner

Andrea Birk

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"Sprache ist Sprachgebrauch" (B1, S. 24)<sup>1</sup>, schreibt Fritz Mauthner im ersten Kapitel seiner *Beiträge zu einer Kritik der Sprache*. Im Anschluß daran spricht er sich dezidiert dafür aus, daß die Sprache nicht als abstrakter Gegenstand, sondern als menschliche Tätigkeit, als Sprechen aufgefaßt werden solle. Man muß nicht viel von Wittgenstein verstehen, um durch diese Äußerungen an die Gebrauchstheorie der Sprache aus den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* erinnert zu werden. Zudem scheint ein Vergleich der beiden Autoren dadurch seine Berechtigung zu erhalten, daß Wittgenstein Mauthners Werk offensichtlich kannte. Eine knappe Bemerkung zu diesem Autor findet sich im *Tractatus*, allerdings ist diese eher kritischer Natur: Zwar bekennt sich Wittgenstein zu Mauthners Auffassung der Philosophie als Sprachkritik, weist jedoch darauf hin, daß er den Terminus selbst "nicht im Sinne Mauthners" verstehe (T 4.0031). Damit spielt er sicherlich u. a. auf die Tatsache an, daß er Sprachkritik mit Hilfe der logischen Analyse betreibt, während Mauthner sich in den Beiträgen gegen die Logik wendet. Allerdings unterscheidet dies lediglich den Autor des *Tractatus* von Mauthner; in reiferen Jahren nimmt Wittgenstein explizit von der Klarheit der Logik Abstand und ersetzt die logische Analyse durch die Gebrauchstheorie der Sprache. Es stellt sich daher die Frage, ob mit dieser Veränderung der Sprachauffassung die Annäherung an die Beiträge stattfindet, die Mauthners Auffassung von der Sprache als Gebrauch vermuten läßt.<sup>2</sup>

Auf den ersten Blick spricht Einiges für eine solche Interpretation. Denn die Parallelen zwischen Mauthner und dem späten Wittgenstein scheinen sehr weitreichend zu sein, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Beschreibung der für beide Autoren *funktionierenden* Umgangssprache. So erweckt Mauthner wegen seiner Auffassung der Sprache als "Gesellschaftsspiel" (B1, S. 24 ff.) den Eindruck, er nehme den für Wittgensteins Gebrauchstheorie so zentralen Begriff des Sprachspiels vorweg.

Dieser Interpretation muß allerdings entgegengehalten werden, daß Wittgenstein und Mauthner sehr unterschiedliche Urteile über die Umgangssprache fällen. Bekanntlich ist für Wittgenstein die gewöhnliche Sprache der Ort, an dem wir von den philosophischen Fragen *erlöst* werden, da diese sich dort als Sprachverwirrungen erweisen und infolgedessen als ernstzunehmende Problemstellungen *auffösen*. Die

gewöhnliche Sprache ist der Teil der Sprache, der in Ordnung ist und daher der Wissens- und Erkenntnisvermittlung dienen kann, solange damit nicht der metaphysischer Anspruch verbunden ist, der als unerfüllbar durchschaut ist. Mauthner dagegen nennt die funktionierende Sprache "gemein" (B1, S. 24), ihre Worte "verbraucht, verschlissen und entwertet" (B1, S. 24) und die Erkenntnis, zu der sie dienlich sein kann, eine "soziale Illusion" (B1, S. 34). Hinter diesen diffamierenden Äußerungen verbirgt er den Wunsch nach *mehr* als alltäglicher, mit den Worten der Umgangssprache formulierbarer Erkenntnis, auch wenn er eingesehen hat, daß er dieses Mehr nicht haben kann. Mauthner reagiert deshalb auf die Einsicht in die Täuschungen der Sprache ent-täuscht. Aus dem Blickwinkel des späten Wittgenstein ließe sich diese Enttäuschung als therapiebedürftige Krankheit diagnostizieren, deren Ursache darin liegt, daß das Streben nach Erkenntnis nicht in die Grenzen des Erkenntnismediums Sprache gewiesen wird, sondern jenseits davon aufrecht erhalten bleibt.<sup>3</sup>

Die Ähnlichkeit zwischen dem späten Wittgenstein und Mauthner beschränkt sich also auf den Punkt, der bereits den frühen Wittgenstein mit dem Autor der *Beiträge* verbindet, nämlich auf die Sprachkritik. Differenzen zeigen sich allerdings dort, wo Mauthner auf die ungenügende Sprache lediglich negativ, sprich mit Enttäuschung reagiert, Wittgenstein aber diesen Mangel positiv durch Therapie aufzufangen sucht..

Dennoch bedeutet der gemeinsame Zweifel an der philosophischen Sprache für zwei erklärte Sprachkritiker Wesentliches. Allem voran ist hier die Tatsache zu nennen, daß philosophische Kritik *an* der philosophischen Sprache selbst wiederum nur *in* philosophischer Sprache formuliert werden kann. Wittgenstein und Mauthner sind daher vor das gemeinsame Problem gestellt, daß sie sich mit ihrem Überlegungen gegen deren Ausdrucksform wenden und deshalb ihre Texte nicht in Form einer aus wahrheitsfähigen Aussagen bestehenden Argumentation abfassen können, da diese ihren eigenen Wahrheitsgehalt in Frage stellen würde. Beide wählen daher nicht-behauptende, eher literarisch zu nennende Textformen,<sup>4</sup> die letztendlich tiefgehendere Parallelen aufweisen als die oben zitierten inhaltliche Aussagen zur Sprache als Gebrauch. Wittgenstein äußert sich dazu explizit im Vorwort der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*: Es sei ihm nicht gelungen, seine Gedanken in einer "lückenlosen Folge" zu ordnen, was "freilich mit *der Natur der Untersuchung* (Herv., A. B.) selbst" zusammenhänge. Deshalb enthalte sein Buch eine "Menge von Landschaftsskizzen, die auf den langen und verwickelten Fahrten" seines Denkens entstanden seien. In der Tat besteht Wittgensteins sogenannte zweite Philosophie aus Bemerkungen, die, assoziativ aneinandergereiht, die Unsinnigkeit unterschiedlichster metaphysischer Fragen aufdecken sollen. Ähnlich wie Wittgenstein gesteht Mauthner in der Einleitung der *Beiträge*, daß er Abstand genommen habe von der Selbsttäuschung "ein Buch zu

schreiben gegen die Sprache in einer starren Sprache" (B1, S. 2) und aus diesem Grunde zu dem Entschluß gekommen sei, "Bruchstücke" (B1, S. 2) zu veröffentlichen. Auch sein Werk besteht aus einer Abfolge von locker aneinandergereihten Ideen, aus pointiert formulierten Einfällen, die den Ansprüchen einer wissenschaftlichen Argumentation nicht gerecht werden sollen.

Mit der assoziativen Gedankenführung, die den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* und den *Beiträgen* gemeinsam ist, versuchen Mauthner und Wittgenstein der Tatsache gerecht zu werden, daß ihre Philosophie, verstanden als Sprachkritik, keine auf Behauptungen gründende *Lehre* sein kann, sondern im Vollzug der Überlegung, in der *Tätigkeit* des Denkens bestehen muß. Ihre Texte stellen eine Art Denkbewegung dar, deren Erkenntniswert nicht in der Aussagekraft der Sätze, sondern in der Bewegung selbst liegt. Aus diesem Grunde stellen sie an ihren Leser ganz spezifische Anforderungen. Im Gegensatz zu Lehrtexten, die versuchen, den Leser von der Richtigkeit der in ihnen vertretenen Aussagen zu überzeugen, *appellieren* sie an den Leser, denkend philosophisch *tätig* zu sein und im Vollzug des Gedankengangs Sprachkritik zu üben. Weit mehr als wissenschaftlich aufgebaute Werke, die aufgrund ihres behauptenden Charakters eine eigenständige Bedeutung erhalten, leben Wittgensteins und Mauthners Bemerkungen daher von der Interaktion mit ihren Lesern. Denn die Erkenntnis, die sie vermitteln wollen, kann nicht in Behauptungen *gefaßt* und durch die Lektüre *erfaßt* werden, sondern sie konstituiert sich während des durch den Appell geleiteten Gedankengangs.<sup>5</sup>

Die Ähnlichkeiten der beiden Texte gehen jedoch nicht über den durch den sprachkritischen Ansatz verursachten Vollzugscharakter des Denkens hinaus. Unterschiede zeigen sich vor allem in der Art und Weise, wie die beiden Autoren an den Leser appellieren, bzw. wie sie den Gedankengang bei der Lektüre leiten. Und dies hängt natürlich davon ab, wohin sie ihren Leser *führen* wollen, zurück in die Ordnung der gewöhnlichen Sprache oder in enttäuschte Resignation wegen der Unhaltbarkeit des metaphysischen Erkenntnisanspruchs.

An Wittgensteins *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* fällt unmittelbar auf, daß die einzelnen Bemerkungen in weiten Teilen dialogisch aufgebaut sind. Häufig wendet er sich an ein fiktives *Du*, unterstellt ein *Wir* und führt kurze Dialoge, in denen einer der Gesprächspartner Argumente hervorbringt, die der andere dann entkräftet. Oft beginnen die Paragraphen mit Aufforderungen, die befolgt werden sollen, oder enden mit Fragen, die eine Antwort verlangen. Die dabei entstehenden sogenannten *Leerstellen* des Textes erfordern eine Aktualisierung von Seiten des Lesers. Auf diese Weise wird die nicht in Aussagen vermittelbare Erkenntnis des Textes vom Leser während des Lesevorgangs *erfaßt*. Wenn er sich mit dem Dialogpartners identifiziert, der mit "du" angesprochen



wird, wenn er den Aufforderungen nachkommt und die Fragen zu beantworten sucht, dann entsteht in der Interaktion zwischen Text und Leser der therapeutische Dialog, der in die Ordnung der gewöhnlichen Sprache zurückführen soll.

Die therapeutisch motivierte Appellstruktur der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* möchte ich näher erläutern am Beispiel des sogenannten Privatsprachenarguments, mit dem Wittgenstein seinen Leser dazu bewegen will, die Grundvoraussetzung der neuzeitlichen Erkenntnistheorie, nämlich das epistemische Privileg der subjektiven Bewußtseinszustände vor den objektiven Gegebenheiten, in Frage zu stellen. Die Chance zur Destruktion dieses Paradigmas sieht er bekanntlich in der semantischen Reformulierung des erkenntnistheoretischen Prius als sogenannte *private Sprache*, die - insofern sie *Sprache* sein soll - am Maßstab der *funktionierenden* öffentlichen Sprache gemessen werden müßte. Mit dem Ziel die private Form der Sprache zu demontieren, fordert Wittgenstein in PU, § 258 seinen Leser auf, versuchsweise eine Empfindung mit dem Zeichen E zu benennen. Dann problematisiert er in einer über mehrere Paragraphen gehenden, dialogischen Auseinandersetzung diese *innere* hinweisende Definition, indem er auf die Schwierigkeit hinweist, daß sie nur über das extrem täuschungsanfällige Medium der Erinnerung zugänglich ist. Auf die Beteuerung des Vertreters der Privatsprache, doch "von einer Erinnerung an eine andere" appellieren zu können (vgl. PU, § 265), reagiert der Dialogpartner mit der Frage: "Wäre das Vorstellungsbild (...) nicht selbst auf seine Richtigkeit zu *prüfen*, wie könnte es die Richtigkeit der ersten Erinnerung bestätigen?" (PU, § 265). Die Antwort, die entscheidend ist für die endgültige Beurteilung der privaten Sprache, bleibt Wittgenstein seinem Leser schuldig, legt sie ihm jedoch durch ein sehr suggestives Bild nahe. Er schreibt: "Als kaufte Einer mehrere Exemplare der heutigen Morgenzeitung, um sich zu vergewissern, daß sie die Wahrheit schreibt." (PU, § 265) Wem dieses Bild einleuchtet, der gesteht zu, daß die private hinweisende Definition, die zur Festsetzung der Bedeutung des Zeichens E erforderlich wäre, nicht möglich ist. Er wird infolgedessen die Frage, ob die private Sprache eine semantische Alternative zur öffentlichen Sprache darstellen kann, verneinen und sich für die öffentliche Sprache und ihr Funktionieren aussprechen. Im therapeutischen Rede- und Antwortspiel findet der Leser zurück aus den philosophischen Verwirrungen einer privaten Sprache, in der das bewußtseinsphilosophische Privileg des Inneren vor dem Äußeren seinen Ausdruck findet, in die Ordnung des gewöhnlichen Sprachgebrauchs.

Im Gegensatz zu den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*, deren stilistische Eigenheit bereits bei oberflächlicher Betrachtung durch die Einteilung in kurze Paragraphen zum Ausdruck kommt, erwecken Mauthners *Beiträge* - trotz gegensätzlicher Beteuerungen des Autors in der Einleitung - auf den ersten Blick den Eindruck einer wissenschaftlichen Arbeit, in der Behauptungen aufgestellt und verteidigt werden. Das Werk besteht aus

einem fortlaufenden Text, der zumindest formal argumentativen Ansprüchen zu genügen scheint.

Wer allerdings diesem oberflächlichen Textbild glaubt und *gute* Wissenschaft erwartet, wird bald sehr enttäuscht sein. Denn der Inhalt von Mauthners Arbeit ist gemäß seinen eigenen Aussagen bruckstückhaft, auch wenn die Form den Eindruck eines geschlossenen Ganzen erwecken mag. Doch diesen Widerspruch erzeugt Mauthner bewußt, denn dadurch schafft er im Text ein Störpotential, das die Interaktion mit dem Lesers verursacht. Derjenige, der bemerkt, daß der Inhalt des Textes seine durch die Form erzeugten Erwartungen nicht bestätigt, erlebt - gewißermaßen am eigenen Leibe - die Enttäuschung über die Täuschung der Sprache, die Mauthner vermitteln will.

Das Problem der bewußtseinsphilosophischen Privatheit geht Mauthner daher in völlig anderer Weise an als Wittgenstein. Allem voran ist für ihn die Semantisierung der Problemstellung nicht möglich, denn seiner Meinung nach stellt die öffentliche Sprache trotz ihrer Funktionsfähigkeit keinen verlässlichen Maßstab dar, an dem wissenschaftliche, insbesondere philosophische Rede gemessen werden könnte. Diese kann er letztendlich nur dadurch kritisieren, daß er sie im Stile der pyrrhonischen Skepsis gegen sich selbst wendet, was im Falle der epistemischen Privatheit eine historisierende Relativierung der subjektiven Welterkenntnis und ihres Mediums Sprache bedeutet. Seine Kritik nimmt ihren Anfang bei der Sinnespsychologie, die zu Beginn des vergangenen Jahrhunderts an die Stelle der traditionellen Erkenntnistheorie getreten ist. Trotz Meßbarkeit und wissenschaftlicher Überprüfbarkeit, so Mauthner, können unsere Sinneseindrücke keinen verlässlichen Weltzugriff sichern, denn sie sind selbst einer entwicklungsgeschichtlichen Zufälligkeit unterworfen. Unsere Sinne, so behauptet er, sind *Zufallssinne*, durch die im Vergleich zu den unzähligen Erkenntnismöglichkeiten nur ein verschwindend kleiner Ausschnitt der Wirklichkeit zugänglich wird (B1, S. 344). Mit diesen Überlegungen scheint Mauthner sich für eine entwicklungsgeschichtliche Variante der Sinnespsychologie auszusprechen und damit Argumente hervorzubringen, die im Rahmen der wissenschaftlichen Diskussion zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts durchaus wissenschaftlichen Ansprüchen genügen können. Diesen Eindruck unterstützt er dadurch, daß er Anfang des Abschnitts V des Kapitels Zur *Psychologie* (B1, S. 353 ff.) seinem Leser die Definition des Terminus verspricht. Doch anstatt dies zu tun, beginnt er mit langen historischen Ausführungen zu Lessing, Leibniz, Kant, Nietzsche und anderen, die sich Gedanken zu den menschlichen fünf Sinnen gemacht haben. Erst nach 20 Seiten finden sich einige sinnespsychologischen Erörterungen; allerdings werden auch diese unterbrochen durch Ausführungen zum Mikroskop, zum Problem der Klassifikation in den Naturwissenschaften etc. Hinter diesem verwirrenden Aufbau mit kühnen thematischen Sprüngen verbirgt sich die Absicht, den Leser ständig irrezuleiten. Er, der am Anfang des

Abschnitts eine Definition erwartet, ist am Ende über allerlei informiert, was zum Thema Sinne geschrieben wurde, hat aber sicherlich keine klare Vorstellung dessen, was Mauthner unter dem Begriff *Zufallssinn* verstehen könnte. Der Leser hat "Bücherwissen" (B2, S. 575) angesammelt, kennt jedoch nicht die genaue Bedeutung des Terminus *Zufallssinn*. Doch dies hat seinen guten Grund, denn laut Mauthner handelt es sich dabei um einen sogenannten *Scheinbegriff*, der einen Realitätsbezug vortäuscht, diesen aber nicht gewährleistet, sondern stattdessen auf seine gesamte kulturhistorische Entwicklung hinweist, ja diese in einem gewissen Sinne auch bedeutet (vgl. B2, S. 263).

Die Einsicht in die historische Zufälligkeit der aktuellen Bedeutung des Begriffs *Sinn*, bzw. *Zufallssinn* konstituiert sich durch die Lektüre selbst. Anstelle einer klaren Definition des Terminus, der einen Gegenstand in der Wirklichkeit meint, treten gelehrte Ausführungen, die trotz ihres Bildungswertes den Leser unbefriedigt lassen, der eine wissenschaftliche Untersuchung erwartet. Wenn sich Mauthner also selbst des "Schwatzvergnügens" (B1, S. 149) bezichtigt, so verbirgt sich dahinter die beißende Ironie des Sprachkritikers, der "dem bischen, was wir vom Wissen wissen" (B1, S. 687) durch geistesgeschichtliche Analysen gerecht zu werden sucht.<sup>6</sup>

Hinter dem historisierenden Gelehrten steht der enttäuschte Metaphysiker, der zwar die Täuschungen der Sprache durchschaut hat, sich aber im Gegensatz zu Wittgenstein nicht von den Ideen lösen kann, die durch diese Täuschungen verursacht werden. Trotz begriffsgeschichtlicher Relativierungen bleibt sein Denken in der philosophischen Sprache verhaftet, während Wittgenstein diese - häufig um den Preis scheinbarer Trivialität - am Maßstab der gewöhnlichen funktionierenden Sprache mißt und sich so um die Herstellung der Ordnung bemüht, die die wichtigen Aspekte der Dinge in ihrer Einfachheit und Alltäglichkeit zu Tage treten läßt (PU, § 129). Mauthner versucht die eigene Verzweiflung über das Ungenügen der Sprache seinem Leser zu vermitteln, indem er ihn schockiert, jedoch ohne ihn dann therapeutisch aufzufangen. Seine Philosophie, zu Ende gedacht, mündet in dem am Zweifel verzweifelnden Selbstmord der Sprache, Wittgenstein zielt jedoch auf die Beruhigung des Denkens in geordneten sprachlichen Verhältnissen ab. Der Unterschied zwischen beiden Autoren könnte kaum größer sein.

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## Endnoten

- 1 Das Kürzel B bezieht sich hier und im folgenden auf Fritz Mauthner, Beiträge zu einer Kritik der Sprache, zit. n. d. Neuauflage Wien 1999.
- 2 Vgl. hierzu etwa: Leinfellner, E. 1969, Weiler, G. 1970.
- 3 Vgl. Gabriel, G. 1997, 53.
- 4 Vgl. Gabriel, G. 1991, 32-64.
- 5 Vgl. Iser, W. 1972.
- 6 Vgl. hierzu Bredeck, E. 1995.

# The Concept of Logic in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*

Andreas Blank

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Although talk about the "ontology" of the *Tractatus* is quite common, Wittgenstein himself, in a certain sense, seems to regard the sentences of the *Tractatus* as sentences of logic. For example, in 2.012-2.0121, where he sets forth the theory of internal properties of objects, he points out that, "in logic", nothing can be by chance. Again, in 6.22 he talks about the "logic of the world", and in 6.12 about the "formal - logical - properties of the world". Similarly, in the *Notebooks* 1914-1916, he regards the question of the existence of simple objects as something that can be answered "in LOGIC" (9.5.1915).

This could mean, as several interpreters have thought, that ontological concepts playing a central role in the *Tractatus*, such as 'object' or 'state of affairs', could be defined in purely logical terms. The *Tractatus* ontology, then, would be reducible to logic. In this paper I propose another interpretation of Wittgenstein's conception of logic. According to my interpretation, logical and ontological concepts in the *Tractatus* are mutually dependent on each other: Neither can ontological concepts be defined without logical concepts nor logical concepts without ontological ones. Nevertheless, the ontological aspects of the *Tractatus* are restricted to purely formal and in this sense "logical" properties of reality. It is this restriction that makes the ontological aspects a genuine part of logic in the sense of the *Tractatus*.

## 1. Logic and the Definition of Ontological Concepts

According to Anscombe, the concept of object for Wittgenstein is a purely 'formal' concept, defined by the syntactical role of names in elementary sentences (Anscombe 1965, 82; 99). In a similar vein, Ishiguro holds the view that the concept of object for Wittgenstein is definable with the help of logical concepts alone: an object is whatever is designated by the subject term in a completely analysed sentence (Ishiguro 1990, 25-26). McGuinness gives another logical definition of the concept of object, using Wittgenstein's definition of sameness of signs as the possibility to substitute signs in all contexts (3.341; 3.344): as the same sign, for Wittgenstein, always designates the same object (5.553), an object can be defined as the reference of all signs which are mutually substitutable for each other in completely analysed sentences (McGuinness 1981, 65-

66). Finally, Mikel makes explicit an assumption implicitly contained in all these interpretations: 'object' in the *Tractatus* is used like a variable, designed to stand for whatever may be the ultimate endpoint in the analysis of language (Mikel 1998, 385-388). A similar analysis could be given of Wittgenstein's concept of 'state of affairs'. States of affairs are whatever is expressed by elementary sentences (4.21) or by sentences truth-functionally dependent on elementary sentences (cf. 4.2).

It is true that, in the *Notebooks*, Wittgenstein talks about simple objects in the way suggested by Ishiguro: "But how am I imagining the simple? Here all I can say is always " 'x' has reference " " (6.5.1915; cf. *Tractatus* 4.1272). A few days later, he says: "It need appear only as a prototype, as a variable in our sentences - *that* is the simple thing that we mean and look for." (11.5.1915). This seems to suggest that, in fact, 'object' for Wittgenstein is a concept defined by logical concepts alone. But, in the *Notebook* entry of 30.5.1915, he gives a negative answer to the question "is 'name' so to speak a logical concept?". There, he says that names signalise "what is common to a single form and a single content", i.e. names refer to objects. Here, an ontological component enters into the definition of 'name'. A similar conceptual structure can be found in the *Tractatus*. According to 3.201 and 3.203, objects are those entities, to which names ("simple signs") in completely analysed sentences refer. But in 3.202, names are defined as the simple signs *used* in a sentence. This presupposes that the sentence sign itself is used, i.e. is a meaningful sentence (3.5-4). Meaningful sentences, for Wittgenstein, are pictures of possible states of affairs (2.201; 3-3.02), which means that they are pictures of possible concatenations of objects (2.01). In this way, 'object' and 'state of affairs' enter into the definition of the concept 'meaningful sentence'.

The proposed logical definitions of 'object' and 'state of affairs' are affected by this conceptual structure. If the definitions proposed by Ishiguro and McGuinness are understood in a literal sense, they are clearly wrong. Not all subject terms of completely analysed sentences stand for objects: subject terms in mathematical or logical sentences do not refer to mathematical or logical objects (4.441; 5.4; 6.02). For the same reason, not all mutually substitutable signs in completely analysed sentences are names of objects; mutually substitutable signs in mathematics or logic do not have reference at all. In order to get a correct definition of the concept of object, the definitions suggested by Ishiguro and McGuinness have to be relativised to meaningful sentences, which excludes mathematical and logical sentences (cf. 5.534; 6.1263). Although it is true that, following Anscombe, objects can be defined through the syntactical role of names, the concept of name is not a purely logical concept, but, in turn, presupposes the concept of object. Similarly, only meaningful sentences can be elementary sentences, which means that the concept of 'elementary sentence' as well as that of 'meaningful sentence' depends on the concept of 'state of affairs'.

Consequently, in Wittgenstein's view, neither 'name' nor 'meaningful sentence' nor 'elementary sentence' is a merely logical concept. Rather, logical and ontological concepts, for Wittgenstein, are mutually dependent on each other. The *Tractatus* is built on a system of implicit definitions in which neither logical nor ontological concepts have priority.

## 2. Logic and the Formal Properties of Reality

Then, in what sense does Wittgenstein regard the sentences of the *Tractatus* as sentences of logic? Consider the occurrence of 'logic' (respectively 'logical') in 'logic of the world' (6.22) and 'formal - logical - properties of the world' (6.12). This use of 'logic' and 'logical' indicates that, for Wittgenstein, logical and ontological concepts are not only definitorially intertwined, but also that some aspects of ontology are to be regarded as a genuine part of logic. At the same time, this means that the ontological aspects of the *Tractatus* are restricted to formal (and in this sense logical) considerations.

The ontology inclusive sense of the *Tractatus* conception of logic is connected to Wittgenstein's semantic approach to logic. According to 6.124, sentences of logic represent the structure of the world, in that they presuppose that names have reference and elementary sentences meaning. In the *Notebooks*, he puts forward the question: "can we manage without simple objects in LOGIC?" (9.5.1915). As Wittgenstein makes clear in an early *Notebook* entry (22.1.1915), and again in *Tractatus* 5.4711, sentences of logic describe the nature of all description and *therefore* the nature of the world, the nature of all states of affairs, or the nature of being. In these passages, the structure of the world is tied inseparably to the structure of language with a view to the question of which conditions must be met for a sentence to have meaning. The inseparable connection between logical and ontological concepts in the *Tractatus* and the *Notebooks* can therefore be seen as a consequence of a semantic approach to the problems of logic.

Although this semantic approach leads in a certain sense to an ontology inclusive form of logic, it is important to see that the aspects of ontology included in logic remain purely *a priori*. At the very beginning of the *Notebooks* (22.8.1914), and again in *Tractatus* 5.473, Wittgenstein says that logic "must take care of itself". In this sense, according to Wittgenstein, logic is *a priori* (5.4731). Correspondingly, the central question around which the *Notebooks* turn is: "Is there an order in the world *a priori*, and if so what does it consist in?" (1.6.1915). As a consequence of this, the kind of self-evidence which plays a prominent role in Russell's epistemology in Wittgenstein's view is unnecessary in logic (*Tractatus* 5.4731 and *Notebooks* 8.9.1914). In the *Notebooks*, Wittgenstein makes clear that the irrelevance of any kind of self-evidence in logic holds

in the first instance for the question of subject-predicate form and relational forms: Whether elementary sentences have such forms cannot be shown through experience (3.9.1914). In the same *Notebook* entry, Wittgenstein also points out that the same holds for the question whether a point in visual space is a simple object: according to him, no evidence can decide this question. Again, in 5.552, Wittgenstein considers the kind of experience needed for understanding logic (which is not the same as understanding meaningful sentences, since in the view of the *Tractatus* the sentences of logic are not meaningful). Wittgenstein characterizes this as an experience "that there *is* something", which is not an experience of certain qualities of existing objects, i.e. not an experience of what something is like. Therefore, according to Wittgenstein logic is prior to any experience in a traditional sense.

This *a priori* conception of logic shows up again in Wittgenstein's distinction between 'logic' and the 'application of logic' (cf. Blank 2000, 211-214). According to Wittgenstein, it is the application of logic (not logic itself) that decides what elementary sentences there are (5.557). This does not hold only for examples of elementary sentences, but also for the question of their logical form (cf. 5.55). Logic, therefore, does not consider particular logical forms but what makes logical forms possible (5.555; cf. 4.128). Accordingly, logic cannot decide the question whether objects of a particular logical form - e.g. 27-placed relations - exist in the world (5.553-5.5542).

### 3. Conclusion

Thus, Wittgenstein's concept of logic is connected with two fundamental points concerning the structure of the *Tractatus*. (1) That the sentences of the *Tractatus*, in a certain sense, are logical sentences does not mean that ontological concepts can be defined with the help of logical concepts alone. There is no primacy of logical over ontological concepts or *vice versa*: the *Tractatus* can be seen as a system of implicit definitions comprising both logical and ontological concepts. (2) Nevertheless, the ontological aspects of the *Tractatus* form a genuine part of logic. The *Tractatus* contains only those commitments as to the formal properties of language and the world that can be stated *a priori*. In this sense, the sentences of the *Tractatus* are to be seen as sentences of logic.



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# Does It Pay To Be A Philosopher?

Peter F. Bloemendaal

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## I

There can be little doubt that, for Wittgenstein, the personal and the philosophical were closely related. "Working in philosophy", he wrote, "is really more a working on oneself." (1984: 16e) Wittgenstein believed that the quality of one's philosophy is dependent upon the quality of one's character: "How can I be a good philosopher when I can't manage to be a good man?" (McGuinness 1988: 227) Conversely, he felt that good philosophy should improve one's character: "What is the use of studying philosophy if all that it does for you is to enable you to talk with some plausibility about some abstruse questions of logic, etc. and if it does not improve your thinking about the important questions of everyday life?" (Malcolm 1958: 39)

In this paper I take 'the important questions' to be questions concerning ethics and religion. The problem I want to discuss is in what sense Wittgenstein may have felt that his later philosophy, as exemplified by the *Philosophical Investigations*, improves our thinking on these matters.

## II

Whereas, in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein may have remained silent *in order to* delimit the ethical, in the *Investigations* he is just plain silent. Nowhere do we find him discussing ethics or religious belief. Rather, the problems addressed are philosophical in nature. These are not empirical problems; rather, they arise through a misinterpretation of our forms of language. They can be solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. (Wittgenstein 1994: §§109, 111) What we need is a perspicuous representation - an *Übersicht* - of the grammar of our language. (1994: §122) Philosophy's task, then, is a descriptive one. It may not interfere with the actual use of our language; it can only describe it, leaving everything as it is. (1994: §124)

We need to command a clear view of the use of our words. Wittgenstein presents his descriptive method as the means to achieve such clarity. Can this method improve our thinking on ethico-religious issues? If we take this to mean that it should help us deal with our everyday moral or religious problems, the answer is 'yes, it can' but in a minimal and rather trivial sense. Moral problems are not like philosophical problems in that they

commonly do not originate in a misunderstanding of our forms of language. In fact, if my problem were dissolved by removing linguistic confusion, we would say I did not really face a moral problem at all! Of course, sometimes linguistic confusion may set in and complicate matters. If so, Wittgenstein's method may be of help, not so much in solving my problem, but in clearing away obstacles which prevented me from doing so.

On this reading, Wittgenstein's philosophy does not get us very far. I would like to suggest another possibility, however. In 1942 Rush Rhees and Wittgenstein talked about the moral problem facing a man who must either leave his wife or abandon his work of cancer research. (Rhees 1965) The first thing to note is that in discussing the problem Wittgenstein can hardly be said to engage in grammatical clarification. Rather, he is pondering the different attitudes the man might take, and the various reasons he might give for his eventual decision. The *philosophical* issues arise only later. For Wittgenstein, they have to do with questions as to whether either one of two conflicting ethics *must* be right; whether an ethical theory is possible; the difference between ethical principles, rules and laws; etc. And, here, the need for grammatical clarification *is* emphasised. (Rhees 1965: 24)

Will these latter considerations help the man tackle his moral problem? Hardly. But this does not mean that, in Wittgenstein's view, they do not improve our thinking on the important questions in life. Rather than being a means to a further end, Wittgenstein values clarity as an end in itself. It does not enable us better to tell what is right in any given situation; rather, it allows us to command a clear view of the logical grammar of the variety of moral or religious languages. What we gain is not a moral or religious understanding of life, but a philosophical understanding of morality or religion. Philosophy, we might say, is not *for* anything; its concerns are distinctively its own.

On this reading, the improvement Wittgenstein's method may bring to our thinking becomes rather more substantial. However, it also appears to effect a radical severance between a 'philosophical' and a 'practical' understanding of moral problems. That is to say, one may wonder in what way philosophical understanding may have an impact upon our everyday moral and religious beliefs and practices. Wittgenstein, it seems, should deny that it has any. After all, philosophical clarification must leave everything as it is.

In the remainder of this paper I want to discuss whether philosophical clarification of moral or religious practices and beliefs *can* leave everything as it is. Seeing as the *Investigations* never turns towards matters ethical or religious, our prospects of finding an answer there would seem to be rather slim. Therefore I propose to develop our problem by reference to the work of an author who has written explicitly on this issue. The author I have in mind is D. Z. Phillips.

### III

According to Phillips, Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy is a contemplative one. By means of this term, Phillips aims to bring to the fore what he feels to be two crucial and closely connected aspects of Wittgenstein's philosophy: the independent nature of his enquiry and, what has been termed, Wittgenstein's *quietism*, his insistence that philosophy must leave everything as it is.

Phillips urges us to recognise the independence of the philosophical problems Wittgenstein addresses. The point of struggling with these problems "is not external to philosophy, as though the philosophical reflection were the *means* to attaining it" (1999: 47) In a technological culture such as our own, obsessed with 'getting things done', philosophy tends to be thought of in instrumental terms - as exercises in problem solving or as the therapy that makes one's puzzles go away. (1999: 56)

Phillips is adamant that philosophical enquiry can and must leave everything as it is. That is to say, it remains disinterested. Although it may reveal what various moral or religious perspectives amount to, it neither advocates nor appropriates any one of them. The philosopher's concern is with their conceptual character, not their truth. (1993: 233) If the contemplative philosopher does engage in advocacy, it is advocacy concerning the conduct of our enquiries. (1999: 58)

Yet, even if no single perspective is appropriated or advocated, does that mean that everything is left as it is? First, what about the enquirer? Let us look at some examples. Discussing the practice of child sacrifice in a living religion, Phillips argues that philosophical understanding may amount to seeing the difference between this practice and the massacre at My Lai. We may come to see that, whereas in the first case, the sacrifice *means* something deep to the people who take part in it, in the latter there is nothing of the sort. Still, this understanding "has nothing to do with the judgments people may or may not wish to make...although there will be a difference between judgments made with and without understanding." (1999: 58) Phillips neglects to tell us, however, what this difference may amount to. From an ethical point of view, is not a judgement made with understanding better than one made without?

Turning to matters of faith, we might feel that the 'distance' demanded in the philosophical search for clarity is necessarily at odds with the demands of piety. But, according to Phillips, this need not be so: the "deepening of philosophical understanding may at the same time be the deepening of religious understanding." (1970: 268) Take the Christian virtue of charity; surely, "clarity does not make one yield to charity but neither is it a necessary hindrance to spirituality, because clarity is a condition of seeing the possibility of charity. In certain circumstances, clarity may have a spiritual

significance, not least for worship." (1999: 60) But, once again, Phillips neglects further to examine what these circumstances are, whether the relation between clarity and worship is external or internal, and so on.

It seems philosophical enquiry may have an impact upon the enquirer's moral and religious beliefs. Wittgenstein was right to say that working on philosophy is working on oneself. Phillips warns us, however, that Wittgenstein was referring to *philosophical* difficulties rather than *personal* difficulties. (1999: 46) Yet, at the same time, one finds him agreeing with Peter Winch that, in the *Investigations*, there is "a spiritual dimension seldom met in the works of 'professional philosophers.'" (Winch 1993: 129) This is not simply because of the passion with which Wittgenstein pursued the subjects he discussed, but also because of the ways he brings out how "a lack of clarity about them can have grave implications for [people's] relation to life." (Winch 1993: 130, Phillips 1999: 62) After all, Phillips concludes, "Wittgenstein said that working on philosophy is like working on oneself." (1999: 62) There seems to be some unresolved tension here.

The same tension, I suggest, may be found when we turn from the enquirer to the object of philosophical enquiry. In certain areas, Phillips argues, philosophical enquiry seems to have little effect on the object of enquiry. Not so where moral and religious beliefs are concerned. We cannot say that, whatever answers are given in philosophy, the role which these beliefs play in people's lives goes on regardless. Here, philosophy makes a substantial difference to what is being investigated.<sup>1</sup> (1970: 265, 268) The results may be destructive: in exposing certain of our beliefs as confusions, philosophical clarity will force us to give up such beliefs. On the other hand, they may be constructive: we may come to recognise certain moral or religious possibilities, where formerly we saw none.

If this is true, how can we maintain that everything is left as it is? Phillips may want to say that, although philosophical clarification may affect a person's attitude to, say, religious belief, it has not in any way interfered with the actual use of religious language. We haven't changed *what* we are looking at, just *the way* we are looking at it. But this runs counter Phillips's claim that philosophy makes a substantial difference to *what* is being investigated, namely, moral and religious beliefs, rather than a person's attitude to, or understanding of, them. Moreover, we may wonder whether we can draw such a strict boundary between *what* we are looking at and *the way* we look at it. Finally, if one's perspective *is* transformed, one may well want to engage in some reform as a result. If philosophical clarification has exposed certain confusions, one might feel the need to reform the language which gave rise to these confusions in the first place. Of course, the reformer need not be a philosopher. But, first, if we "cannot divorce philosophical enquiry from the life of the enquirer", (1970: 269) it may well turn out to be. Second, even if it is not, philosophy has still been an agent of change, be it indirectly.

Philosophy would seem to make a difference. This occasions a final question. Does the philosopher carry any responsibility for the kind of change he sets in motion? At times, Phillips seems to deny this. Philosophical clarification may strengthen one's beliefs or weaken them. "The results," Phillips argues, "are unpredictable. In any case, they are not the business of philosophy." (1993: 77) I find this a harsh decision. Phillips might agree. Take the example of the university teacher who realises that his lessons may have a hurtful effect on certain 'weak students'. What is he to do? Should he spare them the truth? Phillips answers: "harsh though it sounds, I think he must be intellectually honest and admit that in this context truth is more important than people." (1970: 269-270) Perhaps this is true. But is this not a moral issue, and may not the teacher's decision be challenged? At any rate, I do not see how this challenge could be met by means of disinterested philosophical enquiry.

#### IV

We began by asking in what way Wittgenstein's later philosophy may improve our thinking on the important things in life. We found that, indeed, it pays to be a philosopher. But the wages are paid in philosophical rather than in moral or religious currency. We then turned to D. Z. Phillips to examine whether there can be no exchange. Phillips's answers, we found, exhibit a certain tension. Can the same tension be found in Wittgenstein's work? An answer to that question would require a lengthier, more careful, examination.

To conclude, I would like to remark that my intention has not been to deny that 'Wittgenstein's quietism' may serve as an important antidote against certain prevailing modes of philosophising. I merely wished to indicate that, taken to the extreme, it carries with it dangers of its own. It may lead us to underestimate the way in which philosophy, even as Wittgenstein conceives of it, may actually change our lives. And, perhaps, it might seduce us to forego any serious discussion as to our responsibility, as philosophers, in this matter.

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- 1 Not just for the professional philosopher. To deny that philosophical enquiry may have an effect on those outside professional philosophy would be to ignore the way in which philosophical discussion impinges upon our everyday moral and religious practices. Indeed, Phillips himself argues that philosophy's influence may be indirect, effecting people's beliefs, whether or not they have ever read any philosophy themselves. (1970: 265)

# Wittgenstein's Criticism of Russell's Distinction Between Pure and Applied Logic

Edgar C. Boedeker, Jr.

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Sections 5.552-5.5521 and 5.557 of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* contain some enigmatic remarks about the distinction between logic (presumably *pure* logic) and its application. I will argue here that these passages, like so much else in the *Tractatus*, are directed against Bertrand Russell's philosophy of logic. In particular, they constitute an important criticism, previously overlooked in the literature, that goes to the heart of Russell's philosophy of logic: Russell's logical Platonism cannot explain how the *applications* of logical propositions are necessarily true. If sound - and I will argue that it is - then this is a very serious objection to Russell's account of logic. For any philosophy of logic holding that logical propositions are necessarily true and can be applied must also be able to account for the necessary truth of the applications of these propositions.

It will first be necessary to sketch out - however briefly and dogmatically, given the time constraints - Russell's view during the period surrounding the publication of *Principia Mathematica* (1910-1913) of the distinction between pure and applied logic. For Russell, the axioms of *Principia Mathematica* constitute the basis of pure logic. The propositions of *pure* logic share four characteristics. First, they are *necessary*, i.e., true in all possible worlds (1912, 78; 1919/1920, 191f). Second, they can be known - and thus understood - *a priori*, i.e., independently of the experience of particular things (1912, 72-75, 84-90, 105f; 1918/1985, 108; 1919/1920, 204; 1914/1993, 66; cf. 1913, 490-492). Third, they contain no non-logical constants, but only logical connectives, quantifiers, etc. (1919/1920, 199-202, 205; 1918/1985, 43, 60f). This characteristic helps to satisfy Russell's demand that the propositions of pure logic be unrestrictedly general (1913, 487; 1919/1920, 197f; 1914/1993, 54, 66; cf. Hylton 1990, 200-205; and Griffin 1980, 122-128, 135-139). Fourth, they contain real (i.e., free) variables (1910/1962, 93; 1908/1956, 66f). This fourth feature ensures that the propositions of pure logic are "typically ambiguous" (1910/1962, 65), i.e., that their variables do not range over objects of any particular type. This, in turn, is Russell's means for preventing these propositions from violating the restrictions imposed by his theory of types (cf. 1910/1962, 5, 65, 92f, 95, 127-129).

Russell's view of the nature of the propositions of pure logic, I suggest, is an attempt to account for these four features within the constraints imposed by what he calls "the



fundamental epistemological principle in the analysis of propositions...: *Every proposition which we can understand must be composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted*" (1910/1917, 159; cf. 1912, 58). One consequence of this "principle of acquaintance" is that, since we can understand the propositions occurring in *Principia Mathematica*, they must be composed wholly of constituents with which our minds are directly acquainted. Indeed, it was for Russell a criterion of the adequacy of a logical symbolism that each of its simple symbols stands for objects with which our minds are acquainted (1918/1985, 58f). Russell's account of pure logic is thus an account of the nature of these objects referred to by the simple symbols of his logical notation.

Russell accounts for both the necessity and the *a priori* knowability of the propositions of pure logic by holding that the simple logical symbols occurring in their expression refer just to *universals*, and that these propositions are true just in virtue of relations holding among these universals (1912, 103). There are two basic sorts of universals that can occur as constituents of the propositions of pure logic. First, there are the referents of the *logical constants* (1903/1938, 106; 1913, 486, 492; 1910/1962, 8, 92). Second, there are the referents of real variables, which Russell calls *logical forms* (1913, 492; 1913/1992, 98; 1914/1993, 52-54, 67; cf. 1918/1985, 106; 1919/1920, 199f; 1903/1938, 45, 53, 106; Hylton 1990, 219f, 248-258). Logical forms include *monadic property*, *2-place relation*, *3-place relation*, *proposition*, etc. (cf. 1903/1938, xi; 1913, 488; 1914/1993, 53, 66; 1919/1920: 196-202). Together, the logical constants and logical forms constitute the *logical objects*. The propositions of pure logic are true in virtue of logical facts - i.e., relations among logical objects (1913, 486, 492; 1913/1992, 98; 1914/1993, 52-54, 66f; 1918/1985, 106; 1919/1920, 197-200) - and can be intuitively, or self-evidently, known though a direct mental inspection of logical facts.

So much for the propositions of pure logic. The *application* of pure logic consists of those propositions that result from substituting non-logical constants for the variables occurring in the propositions of pure logic (cf. 1910/1962, 93, 128; 1913, 488; 1912, 105; 1913/1992, 97f; 1914/1993, 66; 1918/1985, 60f; 1919/1920, 201). Such constants are either names (standing for particulars) or ordinary universals (i.e., predicates or relations). Conversely, the propositions of applied logic occur at the beginning of a process of "purification" (1913, 486), in which one substitutes variables for each of the non-logical constants of these propositions until one ends up with the propositions of pure logic, i.e., those in which no non-logical constants occur (1913, 485-489; 1914/1993, 62-67; 1918/1985, 103-108; 1919/1920, 196-202).

Although the propositions of pure and applied logic can be formed from each other in these ways, Russell insists that the former contain as constituents certain objects that

the latter do not. Naturally, there is *some* degree of overlap between the constituents of the propositions of pure and applied logic. For both contain logical constants, i.e., the objects to which the logical connectives refer. The propositions of pure logic, however, are alone in containing logical forms as their constituents (1913, 491f; 1913/1992, 98; 1914/1993, 63-67; 1918/1985, 106; 1919/1920, 199; cf. 1903/1938, 51). Russell argues that concrete propositions, whose constituents are ordinary names, predicates, and relations, cannot contain logical forms. For if one regards a logical form as something linking the constituents of a concrete proposition, then there would have to be a second form linking these constituents to the first form, and so on *ad infinitum*. This would have the absurd consequence that the simplest proposition would contain an infinite number of forms, and would thus be incomprehensible to a finite mind. Thus logical forms occur only in the *propositions* of pure logic, and (in one version of Russell's multiple-relation theory of *judgment*) in all ordinary judgments (1913/1992, 113-118; cf. 1903/1938, 51).

Let us now examine the *Tractatus* passages mentioned at the outset in the light of Russell's distinction between pure and applied logic. Section 5.552 begins with a head-on attack on Russell's Platonic Realism about pure logic:

The "experience" that we need in order to understand logic is not that something or other is the state of things, but that something *is*: that, however, is *not* an experience. Logic is *prior* to every experience - that something *is* so. It is prior to the "how", not prior to the "what."

Here Wittgenstein makes it clear here that pure logic is *not*, as for Russell, about special objects: the logical forms. Wittgenstein's denial that understanding logic requires a special "experience" is a clear reference to Russell's notion of the mind's "acquaintance with logical objects" (1913/1992, 97; cf. 1912, 109), including logical forms. Wittgenstein is thus denying Russell's claim "that there certainly is such a thing as 'logical experience', by which I mean that kind of immediate knowledge, other than judgement, which is what enables us to understand logical terms" (1913/1992, 97). Instead, what makes *any* proposition logically true is simply that its logical connectives perform truth-operations that make it a tautology (6.1). And a tautology presupposes "that names have *Bedeutung* and elementary propositions sense; that is their connection with the world" (6.124). Thus a proposition of logic - i.e., a tautology - presupposes "that something *is*", i.e., the subsistence of the simple objects referred to by the names occurring in its elementary propositions. These objects are "the 'what'", i.e., the "substance" (2.021), of the world. Tautologies, however, do *not* presuppose the existence of special "logical facts" (cf. 6.111, 5.551) - i.e., "that something or other is the state of things... that something *is* so" (5.552). There are thus for Wittgenstein no "logical objects" for our minds to experience (5.4).

In 5.5521, Wittgenstein offers his reasons for rejecting Russell's view of pure logic: "And if this were not so, how could we apply logic? We might put it in this way: if there would be a logic even if there were no world, how then could there be a logic given that there is a world?" Wittgenstein in this passage is pointing out what he takes to be a fatal difficulty with Russell's distinction between pure and applied logic. Recall that Russell accounts for the necessity and unconditional generality of the propositions of pure logic by holding that they contain real variables referring to logical forms. In order to avoid a vicious regress, however, he insists that the applications of these propositions do not contain logical forms. Russell's view thus entails that the propositions of pure logic would be necessarily true (i.e., "there would be a logic" in 5.5521), even if none of the particular objects or concrete predicates or relations existed (i.e., "even if there were no world" in 5.5521). Nevertheless, the world of concrete facts *does* exist, and we can form propositions about such facts that are tautologous, and thus logically true. Wittgenstein's "it is either raining or not raining" (4.461) is an example of such a proposition. Nevertheless, since the very objects that Russell holds make the propositions of pure logic necessarily true are *not* among the constituents of their applications, Russell's view of logical necessity leaves entirely mysterious the necessity of the applications of logical propositions. Russell's view fails to explain how there could "be a logic given that there is a world" (5.5521), and is thus inadequate.

Section 5.557 takes Wittgenstein's implicit criticism of Russell's distinction between pure and applied logic one step further, exposing what are perhaps its deepest problematic commitments. In the first three sentences of 5.557, he expresses his agreement with Russell that there is a distinction between pure and applied logic, and that "logic must not clash with its application", i.e., that a proposition of pure logic and its applications must be necessarily true together. He then writes in the fourth sentence: "But logic has to be in contact with its application." The "contact" in question is presumably based in the fact that the *same* logical connectives account for the necessary truth of the propositions of pure logic and that of their applications. The "But" here presumably signals the fact that Wittgenstein is objecting to Russell's account of this "contact", in particular, his view that a proposition of pure logic and its applications contain logical constants *referring* to the very same *logical objects*. For Wittgenstein, on the other hand, the logical constants are simply expressions of the performance of truth-operations, i.e., ways of making the truth-conditions of one proposition depend on those of its bases (5.2-5.451).

In the fifth sentence of 5.557, Wittgenstein concludes: "Therefore logic and its application must not overlap." The "overlap" that Russell's theory posits is presumably the basis of Russell's account of the "contact" mentioned just above: that the propositions of logic and their applications refer to *some* of the same objects. Now the

particular overlap with respect to the logical connectives would not seem to pose any difficulties by itself. After all, as we just saw, Wittgenstein himself requires that there be "contact" between logic and its application. The difficulty with the overlap posited by Russell to which Wittgenstein alludes here thus presumably lies not with the overlap between the propositions of pure logic and their applications *per se*, but rather in a further assumption that *entails* this overlap. This assumption, I think, is none other than Russell's "principle of acquaintance", and his closely related view that every meaningful (simple) symbol in an adequate logical symbolism gets its meaning by referring to some object. Recall that it is this assumption that entails the highly problematic conclusion that only the propositions of pure logic are about logical forms. For if one assumes an ultimately referential theory of meaning and the four characteristics of Russell's propositions of pure logic enumerated at the beginning of this paper, then one is virtually compelled to hold that these propositions contain free variables that refer to logical forms. In 5.557 Wittgenstein thus argues plausibly that Russell's commitment to the principle of acquaintance, and the exclusively referential theory of meaning that it implies, is ultimately at the root of his inadequate distinction between pure and applied logic.

The fifth sentence of 5.557, then, alludes to one of the hallmarks of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*: its novel doctrine of the meaning of an expression. Whereas Russell holds that all propositions can be analyzed into simple symbols that *refer* to objects (indeed, objects of acquaintance), Wittgenstein denies that all meaning is ultimately referential. Instead, for Wittgenstein, the meaning of an expression is just its contribution to the sense - i.e., the truth-conditions (2.221-2.222, 4.022) - of the propositions in which it can occur (3.31).

The passages we have examined make it clear that Wittgenstein does accept a distinction between pure and applied logic, but one quite different from Russell's. The exact nature of Wittgenstein's version of this distinction, and the role it plays in the *Tractatus* as a whole, is a topic seldom addressed in the literature. This, however, is a question for another time.

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## Endnote

- 1 In the case of multiple editions Russell's works, I cite date of original work/date of edition used.

# Filling Out the Picture: Wittgenstein on Difference and Alterity

Tracy Bowell

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## I

At several points in his later writings Wittgenstein discusses imaginary forms of life and ways of thinking that appear queer or alien from our point of view; concepts so different from ours that those who think from within them seem to be alternatives to us. Wittgenstein gives an account of his view of such cases at RPP I, § 48, where he writes:

I am not saying: if the facts of nature were different we should have different concepts. That is an hypothesis. I have no use for it and it does not interest me.

I am only saying: if you believe that our concepts are the right ones, the ones suited to intelligent human beings; that anyone with different ones would not realize something that we realize, then imagine certain general facts of nature different from the way they are, and conceptual structures different from our own will appear *natural* to you.<sup>1</sup>

In this paper I argue that reflection on the notions of difference and possibility in play here shows that imaginary cases of alien conceptual schemes or forms of life such as those considered by Wittgenstein are not cases of concepts that are completely unintelligible for us, rather they represent possible, albeit distant, ways of thinking for us. "Different" in this context then, need not mean mutually unintelligible, although it can mean incommensurable. Moreover the extensions of "we" and "our" are much wider in this context than initial contemplation of such apparently alien cases might suggest. I begin with some brief remarks on Wittgenstein's use of "form of life" and then move on to demonstrate how some of these apparently alien cases can be brought closer to home than one might initially suppose. I also show how such cases serve to aid imaginative reflection. By making us contemplate the strange, they help us better to appreciate the familiar.

## II

Characteristically, Wittgenstein neither defines nor explicitly explains his use of the term "form of life". However, in addition to using the phrase itself, he writes about "patterns of living" and "patterns in the weave of our life" (1958, p. 174, p. 229). As "pattern of life" is

close to one ordinary meaning of "form of life", it seems reasonable to take Wittgenstein to be using the term in this ordinary non-technical sense. Such patterns may be incomplete and "varied in a multiplicity of ways", "one pattern in the weave is interwoven with many others" (1981, § 68-69). Wittgenstein's examples - of pretending, hoping and grieving - are all *patterns of activity*, activity that is partly constitutive of living a human life. In Wittgenstein's hands, then, "form of life" can be understood to mean the form(s) that human living takes, the often messy, criss-crossing patterns woven by our activities, not a separate entity over and above the activities that constitute that living. The fact that we live with others means that these activities take place in social, natural and historical contexts and these patterns are thus contextualised and subject to change.

Following Jonathan Lear, we can further clarify "form of life" in its Wittgensteinian context by employing the notion of *mindedness* (1982, p. 385 ). For one's life to take a certain form is to be *minded* in a certain way; for the form(s) of one's life to be in common with others is to be *like-minded*. Wittgenstein's insistence that interpretation of an unknown language takes as its system of reference "the common behaviour of mankind" (1958, §206) can thus be understood as an expression of the recognition that understanding one another requires at least some degree of *like-mindedness*. In what follows, then, I take Wittgenstein's use of "form of life" to have this meaning. My interest in the extent of difference between the cases considered and our own actual one can, then, be understood as an interest in the extent and limits of *like-mindedness*.

### III

At Zettel §387-8 Wittgenstein writes:

I want to say: an education quite different from ours might also be the foundation for quite different concepts. For here life would run on differently - what interests us would not interest *them* . Here different concepts would no longer be unimaginable. In fact this is the only way in which *essentially* different concepts are imaginable.

Drawing upon his discussion of (inter alia) the imaginary case of a tribe brought up such that the expression of feelings is taboo subject to punishment, he notes the possibility of different up-bringing producing different concepts (conceptual schemes), but, importantly, adds that the interests of thinkers who employed such concepts would not be our actual interests. We *can* imagine radically different practices, but what we can't do is imagine what it would be to adopt those practices, to have the interests, perceptual capacities, etc. from which these radically different concepts would have

emerged. The possibility remains more or less empty from our point of view, for such concepts would not be an empirical possibility for us. Imagining what it would be to think from within such concepts is impossible, for it would involve first removing ourselves from our current form(s) of life and adopting a sideways-on perspective.

At Remarks on the *Philosophy of Psychology* I §48 (see above) Wittgenstein makes a related point about the impossibility of such concepts becoming *our* concepts. The possibility of different concepts *being formed* by *someone* against a background different from that against which ours have been formed *is* intelligible, but that need not entail that we with *this* form to our lives would actually find such concepts intelligible while remaining as we actually are. All that becomes *natural* when we perform the act of imagination described is the possibility of concepts radically different from ours, such concepts don't, themselves, become natural to us. Wittgenstein, then, discounts as a genuine empirical possibility our becoming significantly different conceptually while the world and our form(s) of life, interwoven as it is with that world remain as they actually are. That need not rule out our being able to make some sense of the idea of others being conceptually different from us (*other-minded*), in this world or in some other possible world; nor of our being differently minded in an environment in which the facts of nature were different from how they actually are. But if those concepts are essentially different from our actual ones, they are not a possibility to which we as we actually are might switch, they are alternatives to us, not alternatives for us. Whenever we try to make sense of any of these possibilities, the activities that constitute our doing so are themselves part of our form(s) of life. So if we are able to make sense of practices different from those that make up the weave of our lives, their intelligibility for us suggests that they are part of the weave of the larger tapestry that is the form of our life. Conversely, complete inaccessibility would put us in the position that Wittgenstein envisions us to be in were we to be confronted by the talking lion (1958, p. 223). There is no question of our finding our way around within such a form of life because we don't even have a way in.

#### IV

The case of the talking lion is an extreme one that serves to make manifest the limits of familiarity for us. But in many other cases, both imaginary and real, we should not be so ready to abandon attempts to know our way about. The extent to which we can imagine ourselves adopting these practices is an indication of the extent to which in so doing we would remain within the ambit of our own mindedness. Take the transactions described in RFM §153: Wittgenstein remarks that we should be inclined to think such people "insane". Yet if we consider many of our own practices - the coronation of a King - for



example, we come to see that many of our own practices are equally purposeless. Moreover, the case illustrates the possibility of thinking our way into such apparently alien practices such that they come to make sense - we can make our way about. Suppose, for instance, that the "coins", rather than constituting payment for goods, are used simply to indicate that the customer handing them over has a bona fide entitlement to the goods (in the same way that a library ticket or a benefit book functions). The amount handed over is irrelevant. Perhaps people who give more do so simply because the tokens are rather heavy to carry around. By filling-in more details of these people's lives, we can come to see how such practices could make sense in the context of those lives and how, given similar form(s) to our lives, the practices could make sense for us. They could become *our* practices if we were to take on similar interests, etc. Similarly in the case of the wood sellers of RFM I §143 - 150, a richer awareness of the weave of patterns that makes up their lives could enable us to make sense of their practice of selling wood according to the area it occupies on the ground regardless of the height and breadth of the pile. Perhaps the ground on which the logs are placed is valuable for grazing stock, but less so when used for log storage. So the more ground that is freed up from log storage, the more value is restored to it. Wood sellers tried building higher, narrower piles in order to avoid using so much ground but soon found that they were to be punished for placing their logs in private airspace.

The elasticity of and limits of difference from us and familiarity for us can also be manifested by communities who inhabit works of fiction. In a passage worthy of Kripke, Astrid Lindgren invents a tropical island community whose concept of multiplication differs from ours:

'Well you see', she said, 'it's like this: 7 times 7 is 102. Fun, isn't it? 'It's not 102 at all", said Annika. "No - because 7 times 7 are 49', said Tommy. 'Don't forget that we're on Canny Canny Island now', said Pippi. 'The climate is quite different and it's much more fertile, so 7 times 7 are a lot more here than in other places.'", 1979, p. 94

The Canny Canny islanders, then, use a different calculus, one that reflects their tropical climate and the resulting fecundity. Tommy plays the role of interlocuter to Pippi's Wittgenstein: it's not that multiplication here on Canny Canny Island is performed incorrectly and back home in Scandinavia it's performed correctly, rather, this is a different form of a practice that plays a similar role in the lives of Canny Canny Islanders to that played by multiplication in Tommy and Annika's lives. They could be taught to perform Canny Canny Island multiplication should they become sufficiently immersed in other of the Canny Canny Island form(s) of life to come to see the point of the initially queer-seeming multiplication practices.

Wittgenstein's imaginary tribe who have been educated never to express their feelings has the makings of a possible fictional scenario with the same moral. Cases such as these show us the elasticity of the bounds of accessibility and possibility for us. They enable us to explore those limits, to recognise conceptual differences that emerge from differences in purpose and project and to extend the boundaries further. By contrast, however, a narrative centred on a fictional tribe that has no way of taking account of the passing of time could not even get started. It would not be a failing of literary imagination and creativity, rather it would be because, however creative we are, we simply cannot construct such a scenario beyond a bare description. We cannot fill out the picture in the way that we can in the case of the transactions or even of the wood sellers. We have run up against the limits of our language and the limits both of our actual world, interests and needs and of those that are possible for us. Our inability to make sense of cases on the margins of the imagination does not stem from its limits, but from the fact that given the way we actually are and the ways we could be, they just couldn't be made to make sense for us. We cannot get a grip on the possibility of being minded otherwise than we actually are. Similarly, the speaking lion would be unintelligible to us because the interests, purposes and needs that constitute its form of life would be so different from those that emerge from our human one that there would be no behaviour in common to provide a foothold on the process of making it intelligible for us and likewise us for it.

## V

When considered against the background of the environment and other practices that form the weave of a life, then, many *prima facie* alien or queer practices can be made to make sense; that is, we can make sense of them making sense for someone with interests and needs that are other than ours. Adjusting our interests and needs closer to theirs - extending the boundaries of sense-making through imaginative travel closer towards those whom we consider *other* - means that these concepts could, with initiation and training, become our concepts.<sup>2</sup> Our ability to find our way within imaginary cases such as those considered here shows that we are capable of travelling a considerable distance from our actual ways of thinking and yet remaining within them, even though we may at times travel close to their boundaries.

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## Endnotes

- 1 A very similar remark appears at *Philosophical Investigations* II, xii, p. 230.
- 2 Space does not permit me to elaborate here on the notion of "travel" I have in mind. It is akin to, though not identical with, that explored in a somewhat different context by Maria Lugones (1987).

# Wittgenstein and Spengler

Kevin M. Cahill

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In the midst of reflections on the Jewish mind recorded in 1931, we find Wittgenstein making the following comment on his own thought:

I don't believe I have ever invented a line of thinking, I have always taken one over from someone else. I have simply straightaway seized on it with enthusiasm for my work of clarification. That is how Boltzmann, Hertz, Schopenhauer, Frege, Russell, Kraus, Loos, Weininger, Spengler, Sraffa have influenced me. (Wittgenstein, 1980, p. 19)

The appearance of Oswald Spengler's name on this list of those thinkers who Wittgenstein acknowledges as sources of influence has no doubt come as a surprise to many readers. In fact, however, as is shown by this remark, written in 1942 in the context of a discussion of mathematics, the above passage is not the only place where Wittgenstein directly acknowledges an influence from Spengler.

I just want to say: These people should not arrive at the view that they are making mathematical discoveries - but rather only physical discoveries. [How much indeed I am influenced by Spengler in my thinking.] (Wittgenstein, 1999, 125 31v 1 Apr, 1942)<sup>1</sup>

Of course to acknowledge influence is to say very little about its nature. Rudolf Haller has given what I believe is, in the main, a very illuminating account of the influence that Spengler exerted on Wittgenstein. I should like to try to summarize and elaborate on this account here.

Haller contends, first, that it was not so much the *content* of Spengler's philosophy to which Wittgenstein was attracted, but rather its *method*, which Haller characterizes as that of a "Gestalt analysis of history" or the "method of descriptive morphology."<sup>2</sup>

The procedure for comparative research is to determine the archetypal forms taken by the passage of history, and to derive from them - per analogiam - statements that render the future predictable. Of course, these would not be the kinds of predictions that forecast the appearance of certain individual figures or the occurrence of particular events, but rather foretell the direction to be taken by the development of history: these are the content of morphological prognosis. (Haller, 1988, p. 79)

That Wittgenstein was attracted to aspects of Spengler's Gestalt analysis of history is supported by the following passage.

Reading Spengler, *Decline* etc. and finding, despite much that is irresponsible in specifics, many genuinely significant thoughts. *Much*, perhaps most of it, touches on what I myself have often thought. The possibility of several self-contained systems which, once one has them, look as though one were a continuation of the other. And all of this also connects with the thought that we really don't know (or consider) how much can be taken from or given to humans. (Wittgenstein, 1999, 183 17 6 May, 1930) <sup>3</sup>

Haller does not claim, however, that Wittgenstein merely appropriates Spengler's method, but rather that he modifies it and employs it in a way that is not clearly traceable to its source. (Haller, 1988, p. 84) We can perhaps see the influence of this method of descriptive morphology in Wittgenstein's criticisms of Sir James Frazer's anthropological study of magic. Wittgenstein objects to Frazer's way of understanding the primitive rituals of his subjects as proto-scientific theories. Doing so leads Frazer to see a progressive development from these rituals to our modern scientific worldview. According to Wittgenstein, this is nothing more than a modern prejudice, a refusal to look at the actual facts, and a refusal to make a genuine attempt at understanding the real significance that these rituals had in the context of the lives of the people who practiced them. And so for Wittgenstein, Frazer fails to see how the rituals made sense to these people within an overall system of reference that differs from our modern causal scientific way of looking at the world.

The historical explanation, the explanation as an hypothesis of development, is only one way of assembling the data-of their synopsis. It is just as possible to see the data in their relation to *one* another an to embrace them in a general picture without putting it in the form of an hypothesis about temporal development. (Wittgenstein, 1993, p. 131)<sup>4</sup>

But an hypothetical connecting link should in this case do nothing but direct the attention to the similarity, the relatedness, of the facts. As one might illustrate an internal relation of a circle to an ellipse by gradually converting an ellipse into a circle; *but not in order to assert that a certain ellipse actually, historically, had originated from a circle* (evolutionary hypothesis), but only in order to sharpen our eye for a formal connection. (Wittgenstein, 1993, p. 133)

As Haller also makes clear, Wittgenstein not only appropriates aspects of Spengler's method, "He reproaches Spengler for repeatedly making the mistake of extending the scope of statements true of the archetype of contemplation to the objects of

contemplation." (Haller, 1988, p. 84)<sup>5</sup> This idea is particularly significant for what we might want to call the later Wittgenstein's "descriptive morphology" of language games. What this means is that for Wittgenstein, when we let something function as a prototype (*Urbild*) or paradigm (*Paradigma*) for a language game, then statements about the prototype are not ordinary assertions, but rather grammatical remarks that present to us the form of our discussion.<sup>6</sup> If we are clear about the role of the prototype in our discussion, then we shall not be tempted to construe such grammatical remarks as necessary empirical *truths*, nor shall we be puzzled when our ordinary assertions about the objects of our discourse seem to lack the *necessity* that belongs to the grammatical remarks that hold only of the prototype. This is the upshot of this remark by Wittgenstein from 1937.

The only way for us to guard our assertions against injustice [Ungerechtigkeit] - or avoid vacuity in our assertions, is to have a clear view in our reflections of what the ideal is, namely an object of comparison - a yardstick, as it were - instead of making a prejudice of it to which everything *has* to conform. For this is what produces the dogmatism into which philosophy so easily degenerates. But then how is a view like Spengler's related to mine? Injustice in Spengler: The ideal doesn't lose any of its dignity if it's presented as the principle determining the form of one's reflections. A sound measure.-(Wittgenstein, 1980, pp. 26-27)<sup>7</sup>

I believe that these considerations provide compelling evidence for Haller's thesis that Spengler exerted an important influence on the later Wittgenstein's approach to language. At the very least we can say that some of the ideas that we now consider to be most characteristic of the later Wittgenstein's writings on language were born out of his reflecting on themes that he already found in Spengler. This, then, is his reason for including Spengler among those whose thinking he seized upon for his "work of clarification".

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## Endnotes

- 1 This passage was found in the course of my research at the Wittgensteinarkivet in Bergen, Norway, where I spent one and one-half years as a Fulbright fellow from 1998-1999. For the purposes of producing its electronic edition of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*, the Wittgensteinarkivet has adopted what has become the standard numbering system for the typescripts and manuscripts, namely that given by von Wright (1982). In the present case this would be vW 125 31v 1 Apr, 1942 , meaning "von Wright" number 125 page 31 verso. Where possible, I will also include the (sometimes estimated) date of composition, which this case is 1 April, 1942. All subsequent references to *Nachlass* material will follow this format. I also provide the original German in each case.  
Ich will doch sagen: Diese Leute sollen nicht zu der Auffassung kommen, daß sie mathematische Entdeckungen machen- sondern *nur* physikalische Entdeckungen. [Wie sehr ich doch bei meinem Denken von Spengler beeinflusst bin]
- 2 Von Wright seems to agree with Haller here. He writes,  
The actual influence pertains, it seems, chiefly to an idea in Wittgenstein's later philosophy, indeed to one of its most characteristic thought manouvres. This is the idea of 'family resemblance'. It appears to have its origin in Spengler's notion of the Ursymbol (archetype). This characterizes each one of the great cultures and constitutes what Wittgenstein, writing about this, in fact calls a family resemblance between a culture's various

manifestations - its mathematics, architecture, religion, social and political organization, and so forth. The decay of a culture is, in many ways, a dissolution of the resemblances which unite the ways of life and makes, as Wittgenstein puts it, that "the unimpressive spectacle of a crowd whose best members work for purely private ends..." (von Wright, 1982, p. 213 )

There are a couple of things to be said here. First, von Wright suggests that Wittgenstein may have borrowed the idea of a family resemblance (*Familieähnlichkeit*) from Spengler. Given the importance of this idea for Wittgenstein's later thinking, this would be interesting in itself it were the case. It has been plausibly argued by S. Morris Engel (Engel, 1969), however, that Wittgenstein may well have first encountered the idea in Schopenhauer, who uses the term at least twice in the *World as Will and Representation*.

[Morphology] presents us with innumerable and infinitely varied forms that are nevertheless related by an unmistakable family likeness (*Familieähnlichkeit*). (Schopenhauer, 1969, p. 97)

Knowledge of the unity of the will as thing-in-itself, amid the endless diversity and multiplicity of the phenomena, alone affords us the true explanation of that wonderful, unmistakable analogy of all nature's productions, of that family likeness (*Familieähnlichkeit*) which enables us to regard them as variations on the same ungiven theme. (Schopenhauer, 1969, p. 154)

Though there is no way of knowing for sure, the clear reference to morphology tempts me to think that Schopenhauer, in turn, may have had the notion of family resemblance from Goethe (whom Spengler acknowledges as the source for many of the ideas in his work). Given Schopenhauer's admiration and personal acquaintance with Goethe, this seems to me to be entirely reasonable.

Next, von Wright speaks of Wittgenstein employing the idea of a family resemblance to distinguish between cultures whose various manifestations are related to each other as members of one family, and those cultures in which such connections have dissolved. I think we find an excellent example of what von Wright means in the following passage.

The music of every period corresponds to certain maxims of the good and the right from the same period. So we can recognize Keller's maxims in Brahms's music, etc. And therefore any music that has been invented today or recently, one that is thus modern, must appear absurd since if it corresponds to any one of the maxims that are *pronounced* today it must be rubbish. This statement is not easy to understand, but it is true: No one is clever enough today to articulate the good and *all* formulas and maxims that are pronounced are nonsense. The truth would sound *quite* paradoxical to all people. And the composer who feels it within himself must stand with his feeling in opposition to everything that is pronounced now, and according to current standards must also appear absurd and idiotic. But not *charmingly* absurd (since that is in fact what basically accords with the current view ) but rather as *utterly inexpressive*. (my translation, original below)

(Wittgenstein, 1999, 183 59 27 Jan, 1931)

Die Musik aller Zeiten entspricht immer gewissen Maximen des guten und rechten der selben Zeit. So erkennen wir in Brahms die Grundsätze Kellers etc etc. Und darum muß eine Musik die heute oder vor kurzem gefunden wurde, die also modern ist, absurd erscheinen, denn wenn sie irgend einer der heute *ausgesprochenen* Maximen entspricht so muß sie Dreck sein.



Dieser Satz ist nicht leicht verständlich aber es ist so: Das Rechte heute zu formulieren dazu ist so gut wie niemand gescheit genug und *alle* Formeln, Maximen, die ausgesprochen werden sind Unsinn. Die Wahrheit würde allen Menschen *ganz* paradox klingen. Und der Komponist der sie in sich fühlt muß mit seinem Gefühl im Gegensatz stehen zu allem jetzt Ausgesprochenen und muß also nach den gegenwärtigen Maßstäben absurd, blödsinnig, erscheinen. Aber nicht *anziehend* absurd (denn das ist das was doch im Grunde der heutigen Auffassung entspricht) sondern *nichtssagend*.

- 3 Lese Spengler, *Untergang* etc. und finde trotz des vielen Unverantwortlichen im Einzelnen, *vielen* wirkliche, bedeutende Gedanken. Vieles, vielleicht das Meiste, berührt sich ganz mit dem was ich selbst oft gedacht habe. Die Möglichkeit einer Mehrzahl abgeschlossener Systeme welche wenn man sie einmal hat ausschauen als sei das eine die Fortsetzung des Anderen. Und das hängt alles auch mit dem Gedanken zusammen, daß wir gar nicht wissen (bedenken) wieviel dem Menschen genommen - oder auch gegeben - werden kann.

- 4 These remarks were written in 1931, probably less than a year after the passage above where Wittgenstein says that he is currently reading Spengler. Another very interesting detail that Haller points out is that part of *Philosophical Investigations* §122, a well known remark on philosophical method, was taken from these same remarks on Frazer. Here is how the relevant part of the remark appears in §122:

The concept of a perspicuous representation is of fundamental significance for us. It earmarks the form of account we give, the way we look at things. (Is this a 'Weltanschauung'?)

In the original manuscript the remark appears in identical form, except for the parenthetical remark. It reads " (Eine Art der 'Weltanschauung' wie sie scheinbar für unsere Zeit typisch ist. Spengler.)

- 5 See also pp. 85-86

- 6 The expression 'prototype' already appears in the Wittgenstein, 1979 (Cf. 11.12.1914 , and 05.08.1915) and in Wittgenstein, 1974 (Cf. *TLP* 3.315). Although there is no question that its role in these early writings is quite different from the way he employs the expression later, I believe that one could trace (morphologically, perhaps) the evolution of this and related expressions such as 'paradigm', if one began with Wittgenstein's early interest in Hertz's use of models in physical theories and Frege's so-called "context principle". The expressions 'prototype' and 'paradigm', though important for Wittgenstein's later work in general, are particularly important for his writings on mathematics. He sometimes uses the two expressions 'prototype' and 'paradigm' interchangeably. See Wittgenstein, 1978, p. 148

- 7 Winch translates 'Ungerechtigkeit' as 'distortion'. Most of this remark appears in Wittgenstein, 1973, §131. As with §122, the references to Spengler have been removed. For more on the role of the concept of an object of comparison in Wittgenstein's work, see Diamond, 2001.

# A Note On Self-Reference In The Language

Andrei Camyshev

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This paper is a brief exposition of the view that self-references necessarily inserted in a language can offer a jump over type-theoretically-fashioned mental life. In the very first approximation, I emphasise just one pseudo-philosophical formula: "the world is given as the self-reference of the language". It sounds like a tautology, which by Wittgenstein tells nothing valuable about the world, but it *shows* (or is silent of) something crucial for effectiveness of our language in *describing* the world.

Throughout the text I almost do not prove any proposition as it would not be necessary because of the very idea - it proves itself - and any proof can merely be a repetition of the idea in different forms. My only objective is to *set up the brackets* of autonomous belief to make it self-consistent and to be able to go further. This is why the paper is not a philosophical one, in the sense that it does not recommend answers to questions of the kind "What ...?", but it does about the kind "How ...?".

I have to mark that I was essentially stimulated by Wittgenstein (especially by his picture of the world in the *Tractatus*), but I do not care to follow him as a philosopher despite I try to keep silence (what might be the best philosophy in the Wittgenstein meaning).

I give a series of compressed propositions, which plays the role of saying in the very saying and there will be no reason to worry about the meaning (interpretation) until I have assigned some interpretation for the text (otherwise there would be just silence). I intentionally avoid a philosophical treatment of the words used (like there cannot be a philosophical treatment of a tautology) and am asking the reader to do the same: it is now more of showing than of saying and thus I appeal more to imagination rather than to reflection.

All what I can think of is given through the language, and the language is given through itself. The language is possible as soon as possible to *fix* some *differences* I meet in the world. This action I symbolize with "setting up the brackets" for all what I can (or want to) differ. The brackets are like the bounds of everything I cannot distinct; i.e. they are the bounds of my symbolism I will set up for the language.

This is the primary action, that naturally imply attaching names, labels, symbols, etc. (usually they are the elements of the (factor) spaces of, e.g. sounds, or colours, or forms).

I can do now everything I want with the symbols, in other words I can play with them creating new symbols. This game becomes a language if only I am able to return to the primary symbolism (able to translate, or to interpret, or merely to understand the newly generated symbolism). That is why I have to give just one name to "a pair of brackets".

In the very essence, creating symbols of symbols, which keeps understanding (what is of course relative to how I understand), is in the nature of the language.

Let me now expand a bit this essence in a row of formulas supported with brief illustrations (examples).

- (1) It is crucial that I can fix the symbols, i.e. I can think of a number 7 despite the time, place, and form of it. Fixing a symbol is just *the intention* to mean the same (so if I want to let it mean the same). This is the intentional part of a symbol.
- (2) Once this is done, I can set up "rules of a game" (which hopefully preserve the meaning), e.g. "write 7 in a row", then the rows of 7 are the new symbols of something under the original interpretation. It is remarkable that the rules are in some external relation to the symbols as they can be different and independent of the symbolism. They are for generating new symbols.
- (3) As I constantly care to keep the primary meaning, from time to time during this game I reasonably ask myself for example "Do these two symbols have the same intentional part (mean the same)?" This brings me to mathematics.
- (4) Another turning point is when I do not intend to play games. Then I can just stand still where I am and where am one-to-one with the brackets of my interest. However I again involve myself in some kind of a game, but now the rules are given internally with the symbolism. I have everything I can have to play: the symbols, the brackets of symbols, the brackets of brackets of symbols and their symbols, etc. indefinitely long until I will feel, that the meaning of what was symbolised is somewhere at the top (or at the bottom) of this tower.

Building this tower I call philosophy, while my view of it is just a pseudo-philosophy (firstly, because it is much closer to poetry or religion, and secondly, to avoid a trivial conviction of professional philosophers).

It is notable that only natural language (the language I use to write this paper) possesses symbolism necessary for (4). This might be a reason for Wittgenstein's view that philosophical puzzles can be expressed only within natural language; there is never a possible distinction of language and metalanguage within it.

- (5) As in (1), intentional part of a symbol is its crucial feature, but in (4) it becomes changing for the same thing. This yields me to an extra symbol of the tower (do not differ its entries) and never be back again (leave it for mathematicians).

It is impossible to introduce an infinite row of positive integers staying within computational arithmetic (e.g. symbols: 1, 2, ... , and a rule "+"), but it can be done by game (4). We think of a concept of positive integers, like " $n$  is a positive integer", and the game goes on as we differ intentional of  $n$  and its brackets  $\{n\}$ . Creating an extra symbol is setting up the definition:

$$n = \{n\} \text{ Def}$$

This can give all infinite rows of positive integers dependently on how we mean  $\{ \}$ : either we think it as "+1", or "multiply by 2", or " $n$ -digital number that records with first  $n$  digits in the expansion of  $\pi$ ", etc.

In some sense it is a fundamental interplay of two basic origins which natural language mixes: algorithmic and formal ones.

(6) For the sake of simplicity, I understand (4) as "a mirror in a mirror" - the self-reference of what is in the very first mirror I can catch up. A remarkable point is that I can fix the brackets for it (as I can fix the brackets for infinite row of positive integers) and develop my symbolism over. I only want to be able to see the very first image and this gives me the only criteria for the truth. I call it self-consistency.

From this position I have to look differently at well-known semantic paradoxes of logic and set theory. If someone says - "I always lie", this will lead me to the only fact: the symbolism of this man is not self-consistent. And there is no reason to negate the sentence, but to exclude it as well as we exclude a meaningless theory (*obviously*, his "theory" is contradictory). The liar is like a man who constantly "rejects" his own mirror image saying - "It's not me".

The Russell paradox brings more interesting conclusion: there is no Russell's set of "all non-self-containing sets", but there is the Russell's set of "all self-containing sets". It can be empty (in axiomatic set theory with the axiom of well-foundedness), but it can also be nonempty (non-well-founded set theory). It seems to me a powerful idea to think of continuum as of a self-containing set of self-containing sets (counting procedures, which have a good intuition in finite-countable sets of macro-world, become indefinite when we believe continuum as being a Cantor set). Indefiniteness that implicitly would be inserted in the idea could bring a powerful semantic of possible languages of quantum physics, where the idea of Cantor sets as collections of distinct units becomes useless. Of course, the language we might use to do that must be different of a type-theoretical one.

There is no need for a type theory when we make a semantic treatment of logic or set theory, as we can do nothing for "explaining" its symbolism without extension of it. What we can reach via type theories is merely some kind of hygienic rules, which will only restrict the original symbolism.

It is remarkable that in algorithmic languages (in languages of command and control) self-reference is a powerful tool for expanding computational procedures potentially of arbitrary length. E.g. most computational methods for solving non-linear equations are based on recursive definitions of sub-procedures. On the other hand, in formal languages self-references must be fixed as formal objects (as e.g. in recursive definitions of sequences), or as a model of a proof, which also has an algorithmic nature (e.g., a well-known proof of the Gödel's incompleteness theorem uses a model of the liar paradox).

When a mathematician thinks about a semantic treatment of the law of excluded middle, it would be less problematic to view it from a self-consistency viewpoint: apply  $p \vee \neg p$  to itself and look at the self-consistency. This differently shows that intuitionism is not a new mathematics but just a part of it.

The origin of type theory comes from the "natural" treatment of set theoretical symbolism - we usually think about a set as we think about a box of things or (in a better

case) as about a collection of things. There is no ontological reason to distinct different types, as there is no meaningful ontology of a type: the ontological status of a collection is merely the ontological status of at least one entry. The only distinction can be given in the spirit of (4) - complete set theory is (a theory of) symbolic towers from (4), while a type-theoretic semantic brings just a slice of it.

A portrait looks like the original because it has an intention to be a portrait, but being able to think of it (or to believe it a portrait) is possible because there is another intention (the brackets) but now it is directed to the {portrait and original}.

My central opinion is that we are unable to understand (in its traditional meaning) how the natural language works<sup>2</sup> without inserting self-reference explicitly. The paradoxes shown just its simplest form, but every proposition can be presumed as a part of a big mirror implicitly presented in a "natural part" of the language. It cannot change anything in the world, and, at the first look, it seems it cannot change anything in the language<sup>3</sup>, but at least one fact becomes available: it is possible to see the self-consistency of the image and it might be the only point, where we can justify the pictures of the world we draw as they shall speak itself.

It might be viewed as a formal principle for creating new language capabilities in effective description of the world. I do not hope that this might be a purpose, which is somehow acceptable at the moment, but there is a great hope that it will be realized in some future. Then we can see the same world, but renewed and enlarged.

The reader can try to "put a mirror" to my tautological idea and then will hopefully see what I wanted to say.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Cf. the Wittgenstein's view from (Wittgenstein 1956, III-58): "It might also be said: his "I always lie" was not really an *assertion*. It was rather an exclamation."
- 2 And thus to extend type-theoretically constructed languages to the known "totality" of the natural language.
- 3 I mean that someone might presume a mirror like a mere repetition of the objects in its image, but the problem is that we do not know what the objects are, and, for the same reason, we do not know what the images are (moreover they could be the objects too), and thus this will merely lead to the elimination of the very understanding that the language is possible to *reflect* the world somehow<sup>7</sup>. What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence" (Wittgenstein 1922).

# Ist die Logik transzendental gültig? Wittgensteins Tractatus und der sprachliche Behaviorismus

Arkadiusz Chrudzimski\*

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## 1. Die Auffassung der Logik in Wittgensteins Tractatus

In unserem Referat wollen wir einige Thesen aus Wittgensteins *Tractatus* verteidigen, die heute eher unpopulär sind. Wir werden argumentieren, dass die Weise, in der Wittgenstein in seinem *Tractatus* die Natur der Logik sieht, im Wesentlichen korrekt ist. Die Thesen, die wir verteidigen wollen, sind die folgenden:

1. Die logischen Gesetze bilden einen wesentlichen Teil des Mechanismus, mittels dessen sich die Sprache auf die Welt bezieht.
2. In Zusammenhang damit sind die logischen Gesetze *in einem gewissen Sinne* nicht "über die Welt". Sie berichten nicht über die Tatsachen, sondern spiegeln die Form wider, in der die Tatsachen abgebildet werden - "die Form der Abbildung".
3. Die Logik ist konsequenterweise in einem philosophisch wichtigen Sinne inhaltlich leer. Sie schliesst keine möglichen Tatsachen (keine Situationen) aus.
4. Indem jedoch die Logik mit keinen Tatsachen in Widerspruch stehen kann, ist sie *in einem anderen Sinne* doch "über die Welt", und zwar in dem Sinne, dass sie auf jede erdenkliche Welt "passt". Jede Welt muss mit der "logischen Form" übereinstimmen. Die Logik setzt "die Grenzen der Welt".

## 2. Synthetisch und analytisch

Diese Thesen sind heute, wie gesagt, unpopulär. Prominente Philosophen, wie Tarski (1987) und Quine (1953), haben argumentiert, dass man keine scharfe Grenze zwischen dem Analytischen und Synthetischen ziehen kann. Die Autorität der Logik (und aller Wissenschaften, die wir als analytisch betrachten) erweist sich auf dem Boden dieser Auffassung von *pragmatischer* Natur. Nicht die einzelnen Sätze, sondern erst die ganzen Theorien werden mit der Erfahrung konfrontiert. Alle Sätze der Theorie können also als im genau gleichen Sinne "empirisch" betrachtet werden. Wenn wir einen Teil einer solchen Theorie isolieren und die dazugehörigen Sätze als "analytisch wahr" bezeichnen, tun wir es nur deswegen, weil es gewisse Thesen gibt, auf die wir nur sehr

ungern verzichten würden, und zwar deswegen, weil ein solcher Verzicht eine zu grosse Umstrukturierung unseres ganzen Überzeugungssystems bedeuten würde. Die besten Beispiele für derartige Thesen bilden die logischen und mathematischen Theorien, die praktisch in allen unseren Folgerungen involviert sind. Wir sind geneigt, solche von uns immunisierten Theorien eher als ein formales Gerüst der Wissenschaft, die "von den Tatsachen" handelt, zu betrachten, denn als eine Wissenschaft, die selbst die Tatsachen betrifft. Das ändert aber nichts daran, dass der Unterschied zwischen synthetisch und analytisch ein gradueller und im Grunde ein konventioneller, pragmatisch begründeter Unterschied ist. Auch die Thesen der Logik haben also einen "empirischen Gehalt", so dass sie auf Grund der Erfahrung eines Tages revidiert werden können.

Die Auffassung der Logik, die uns Wittgenstein in seinem *Tractatus* vorschlägt, widerspricht diesem Bild. Die Logik ist Wittgenstein zufolge nicht "über die Welt". Die Thesen der Logik schliessen keine möglichen Situationen aus und können deshalb durch keine solche Situation falsifiziert werden. Wir versuchen zu zeigen, wie sich diese Auffassung der Logik mit der behavioristischen Theorie des Spracherwerbs, auf die sich die Kritiker des Begriffs der Analytizität stützen, vereinbaren lässt.

### 3. Die Struktur der Sprache

Stellen wir uns zunächst eine künstlich konstruierte Sprache - wie etwa eine Sprache für die Prädikatenlogik erster Stufe - vor. Eine solche Sprache enthält folgende Elemente:

#### A. *Syntax*:

1. Die primitiven Zeichen:
  - a. deskriptiven
  - b. nicht deskriptiven (logischen).
2. Die (metasprachlichen) Formierungsregeln (die rekursive Definition der wohlgeformten Formeln).

#### B. *Logik*:

3. Axiome.
4. Die (metasprachlichen) Folgerungsregeln.

#### C. *Interpretation*:

Die durch die Elemente 1.-4. bestimmte Sprache wird *interpretiert*, d.h. es wird

5. ein *Universum* für die Sprache bestimmt und
6. eine *Funktion* - die sogenannte "Interpretationsfunktion" - festgelegt, die den Elementen von 1.a. Werte relativ zu 5. zuordnet.  
Z.B.: einem Namen - einen Gegenstand, einem n-stelligen Prädikat - eine Menge von geordneten n-Tupeln von Gegenständen).

7. Von einer solchen Definition ausgehend, kann der Wahrheitsbegriff definiert werden:

Beispiel: ein Satz der Form " $Fa$ " ist dann und nur dann wahr in einem Modell, wenn der Gegenstand, der durch die Interpretationsfunktion dem Namen " $a$ " zugeordnet wird, zur Menge gehört, die durch die Interpretationsfunktion dem Prädikat " $F$ " zugeordnet wird. (Vgl. dazu Tarski 1933)

Die Punkte 1.-4. betreffen die Sprache als ein uninterpretiertes (rein syntaktisches) System. Im Rahmen dieses Systems kann man (dank 3 und 4) gewisse Thesen beweisen, die "analytisch" bzw. "tautologisch" genannt werden. Die Interpretation der Sprache muß so durchgeführt werden, dass diese Thesen in jedem Modell wahr sind. *Aufgrund der Bedingung, dass die Interpretationsfunktion mit den Punkten 3 und 4 übereinstimmen muß*, gelten sie also unabhängig davon, wie die Welt, von der man spricht, beschaffen ist.

#### **4. Die logischen Thesen als eine implizite Definition der logischen Zeichen**

Es gibt bekanntlich viele verschiedene logische Systeme. Verschiedenen Philosophen erscheinen verschiedene Intuitionen als "die Wichtigsten". In der klassischen Logik haben wir z.B. das Prinzip des ausgeschlossenen Dritten: " $p \vee \neg p$ ", in der intuitionistischen Logik gilt es hingegen nicht. Angesichts solcher Diskrepanzen sind grundsätzlich zwei Typen von Erklärungen möglich.

(i) Man kann annehmen, dass die Anhänger der klassischen und der intuitionistischen Logik verschiedene Ansichten bezüglich dessen, was *der Gegenstand* der Logik ist, haben. Ein klassischer Logiker *behauptet*, dass von diesem Gegenstand das Prinzip des ausgeschlossenen Dritten gilt, was ein Intuitionist bestreitet.

(ii) Man kann jedoch auch argumentieren, dass die Anhänger der klassischen und der intuitionistischen Logik die logischen Zeichen (hier Disjunktion " $\vee$ " und Negation " $\neg$ ") in verschiedenen *Bedeutungen* verwenden. Ein klassischer Logiker *versteht* unter der Disjunktion und der Negation etwas anderes als ein Intuitionist. (Vgl. dazu Quine 1960, 58f)

Das Wittgensteinsche Modell folgt der Intuition (ii). Nach Wittgenstein können die Anhänger verschiedener logischer Systeme verschiedene Ansichten bezüglich des Gegenstands der Logik schon aus diesem Grund nicht vertreten, weil es *keinen solchen Gegenstand* gibt. Was sie tatsächlich tun, ist eher, verschiedene Sprachen vorzuschlagen. Die logischen Thesen, die im Rahmen eines bestimmten Systems gelten, sind in Wirklichkeit *implizite Definitionen* der logischen Zeichen. Die logischen Thesen *zeigen*, wie die logischen Symbole *verstanden* werden. Wenn also eines Tages



eine logische These ihre Gültigkeit verliert, haben wir es nicht mit einer Änderung der *Ansichten*, sondern vielmehr mit einer Änderung der *Sprache* zu tun.

## 5. Der sprachliche Behaviorismus

Der sprachliche Behaviorismus, so wie wir hier diesen Terminus verstehen wollen, behauptet, dass die *Bedeutung* unserer Worte sich in den systematischen, konventionell geregelten Weisen des sprachlichen Verhaltens erschöpft. Die Bedeutung der Sprachelemente hängt davon ab, wie wir unsere verbalen Antworten mit den öffentlich beobachtbaren Situationen verbinden.

Wie wir zumindest seit Quine wissen, favorisiert eine solche Theorie eher eine Anti-Wittgensteinsche Auffassung der Logik. Die Analytizität, die man den Thesen der Logik zuschreiben will, hat auf dem Boden des Behaviorismus keinen klaren Sinn, weil der Begriff der Bedeutung, der die Unterscheidung zwischen synthetisch und analytisch legitimieren könnte, keinen klaren Sinn hat.

Bedeutung - behauptet ein Behaviorist - ist etwas, was jeder kompetente Sprecher kennt. Da er aber die Bedeutung nur auf dem Weg über die Verstärkung der "richtigen" verbalen Reaktionen lernen kann, darf die Bedeutung der Termini nichts enthalten, was sich auf diesem Weg nicht manifestieren könnte. Die traurige Tatsache ist nun, dass die einzigen eindeutigen Verbindungen zwischen den beobachtbaren Situationen und den verbalen Antworten höchstens für die einfachsten "Beobachtungssätze" bestehen. (Quine 1960, 32-43) Spätestens wenn wir Satzteile unterscheiden und eine Grammatik konstruieren, tritt eine unvermeidbare behaviorale Unbestimmtheit auf. (Quine 1960, 68-73)

Das Fazit scheint also zu sein, dass wir keinesfalls die Bedeutung solcher Worte wie "oder" und "nicht" so genau kennen können, dass die Entscheidung, ob das Prinzip des ausgeschlossenen Dritten gilt, auf Grund dieser Bedeutungen getroffen werden kann. Ob dieses Prinzip gilt, hängt davon ab, ob die analytischen Hypothesen, die zu ihm führen, richtig sind - und das ist nicht nur eine empirische Frage, die aufgrund der zusätzlichen Erfahrungsdaten eines Tages anders beantwortet werden kann, sondern eine Frage, die vielleicht überhaupt keine eindeutige Antwort hat. Denn die Unbestimmtheit, von der Quine spricht, soll *semantisch* und nicht bloß *epistemisch* sein. (Quine 1960, 73)

## 6. Die informativ leere Interpretation

Die Verteidigung der Wittgensteinschen Auffassung der Logik, die wir unternehmen wollen, will die These, dass eine Zurückweisung des Prinzips des ausgeschlossenen Dritten auf jeden Fall eine Änderung der Sprache bedeutet, aufrechterhalten. Auf dem Boden des sprachlichen Behaviorismus läßt sich diese Position vertreten, wenn wir uns auf die Tatsache der pragmatischen Immunisierung gewisser Teile der Theorie, die selbst Quine betont, konzentrieren. Die analytischen Sätze sind - argumentiert er - nur in dem Sinne analytisch, dass wir die *Entscheidung* treffen, eher jede andere, denn eine als "analytisch" eingestufte These zu revidieren.

Nun ist die ganze *Interpretation* der Sprache gewissermaßen eine Entscheidung, die wir treffen, indem wir die Sprache *als Sprache* benutzen. Das Phänomen, dass einige Sätze in dieser Weise immunisiert werden, wird also aus diesem Grund in keinem Sinne zu einem Phänomen, das wesentlich subjektiver oder in einem größeren Maße von der Pragmatik der Sprache abhängig ist, als es *die ganze Semantik der Sprache ist*. Das Phänomen der Analytizität besteht darin, dass wir im Rahmen der Interpretation einen Teil der Sprache isolieren, der sozusagen informativ *leer* interpretiert wird. Die Interpretation der Sprache ist auf dem Grund des Behaviorismus dadurch bestimmt, wie die Sprache benutzt wird, und die Sätze, die wir als analytisch klassifizieren, werden genau so *benutzt*, dass sie sich auf keinen Fall in einem Konflikt mit der Wirklichkeit finden können. In diesem Sinne werden sie als *informativ leer* interpretiert. Keine mögliche Welt kann sie falsifizieren.

Das alles können wir, wie es scheint, ohne Probleme auf dem Boden des Behaviorismus sagen. Wir sprechen, wie es scheint, nur darüber, wie wir gewisse Sprachstrukturen *benutzen*. Insbesondere brauchen wir den Begriff der Bedeutung nicht.<sup>1</sup>

Der nächste Schritt würde darin bestehen, dass wir unsere Grammatik und die Regeln der Folgerung so bestimmen, damit diese Entscheidung dadurch legitimiert wird. Das Prinzip des semantischen Holismus wird also dabei nicht verletzt. Die Interpretation, die den analytischen Teil der Theorie immunisiert, muß auf jeden Fall die ganze Sprache betreffen. Um z.B. von einer klassischen zu einer intuitionistischen Logik überzugehen, müssen praktisch in allen semantischen Verbindungen des Sprachsystems mit der Wirklichkeit gewisse subtile Verschiebungen auftreten. In diesem Licht bilden übrigens die Grammatik und die Logik real untrennbare Aspekte eines theoretischen Ganzen, die nur sehr künstlich (und konventionell) auseinander gehalten werden können - genau so, wie es Wittgenstein wollte. Im Folgenden werden wir also diesen ganzen Komplex *Grammatik* nennen.

## 7. Die Grammatik als eine "transzendental" gültige Form der Abbildung

Wir wollen behaupten, dass die interpretative Entscheidung, die in die Sprache eine derartige Grammatik einbaut und konsequenterweise einige Sätze als analytisch wahr immunisiert, für die Subjekte von einer endlichen kognitiven Kapazität keine zufällige Tatsache ist. Wir glauben, dass jeder "endliche" Geist, der über eine interpretierte Sprache verfügen will, diese Sprache auf eine solche Weise benutzen muß, dass man in ihr eine solche Grammatik finden kann.

Erstens braucht er einen Mechanismus, der ihm erlaubt, potentiell unendlich viele sinnvolle Weltbeschreibungen zu konstruieren, von denen er zunächst nicht weiß, ob sie richtig sind. Der Begriff der Grammatizität und Widerspruchsfreiheit erledigt diese Aufgabe. Wenn man von der Welt denkt (bzw. spricht), bestimmt man, wie die Welt sein muß, damit der Gedanke (bzw. der Satz) wahr ist. Man schließt einige mögliche Szenarien aus - nämlich diejenigen möglichen Welten, in denen der Satz falsch wäre. Damit das jedoch alles funktionieren kann, muss der Rahmen der Möglichkeit bereits bestehen. Dafür ist eben jener Aspekt der Sprache, den wir (mit Wittgenstein) "Grammatik" genannt haben, verantwortlich.

Noch deutlicher tritt die Notwendigkeit der Grammatik hervor, wenn wir annehmen, dass unser Subjekt ein *rationales* Subjekt ist. Wenn es in seiner Denktätigkeit nicht nur nach den sinnvollen Gedanken, sondern auch nach der epistemischen Begründung strebt, braucht es nämlich auf jeden Fall gewisse "rationalisierende" bzw. "evidentmachende" Relationen zwischen Beschreibungen, die bestimmte Annahmen als im Licht gewisser anderer Annahmen rational bzw. begründet oder umgekehrt als irrational bzw. widerlegt klassifizieren lassen. Ein rationales Subjekt braucht also *eine* Logik, unabhängig davon, ob es außer der deduktiven Logik eine "Logik der Induktion" bzw. noch eine andere epistemische Logik, deren Gesetze über diese zwei hinausgehen (vgl. Chisholm 1989), gibt. Wenn unsere Argumentation richtig ist, *hat* es eine solche Logik zumindest in der Form der als analytisch interpretierten Formeln. Wenn hingegen jede Entscheidung, welche der Formeln revidiert werden sollen, wie es Quine will, *empirisch* sein muß, dann ist es sehr schwierig zu verstehen, worin die gewünschte empirische Begründung überhaupt bestehen könnte.

Für einen endlichen Geist scheint also eine solche Grammatik eine transzendental notwendige Form zu sein, die jedes Repräsentationssystem, mittels dessen sich der Geist auf die Welt bezieht, beinhalten muß. Da diese Form als informativ leer interpretiert wird, kann sie von der Welt nicht falsifiziert werden. In diesem Sinne ist eine solche Grammatik eine "transzendental gültige" Form der Abbildung - "eine Form der Erfahrung die zugleich eine Form der Erfahrungsgegenstände ist".

Zum Schluß bemerken wir nur, dass wir nicht argumentieren wollen, dass die Logik unveränderlich ist. Es ist klar, dass die Logik modifiziert werden kann. Unseres Erachtens erhält man jedoch ein saubereres Bild, wenn man eine solche Modifikation als eine *Modifikation der Sprache* interpretiert. Wenn das oben Gesagte im Wesentlichen korrekt ist, kann auch ein sprachlicher Behaviorist dieses Bild akzeptieren.

Eine Frage, die sich in diesem Kontext stellt, ist allerdings, was eigentlich geschieht, wenn wir tatsächlich zu einer anderen Logik übergehen. Behauptet ein Intuitionist, indem er das Prinzip des ausgeschlossenen Dritten verwirft, nicht doch etwas anderes als ein Anhänger der klassischen Logik. Unsere Antwort ist: Nein! Ein Intuitionist verwendet *eine andere Sprache* und wenn wir seine Ansichten mit den Ansichten einer Anhänger der klassischen Logik vergleichen wollen, müssen wir zuerst ihre Thesen in dieselbe Sprache *übersetzen*. Der Satz "*p* oder nicht-*p*" ist nun in der klassischen Sprache informativ *leer* und er darf keineswegs in die intuitionistische Sprache als "*p* oder nicht-*p*" übersetzt werden, denn der letzte Satz ist in der intuitionistischen Sprache informativ (er kann sich unter Umständen als falsch erweisen).

## 8. Mehrsprachigkeit

Eine Konsequenz, die dieses Bild wesentlich kompliziert, ist allerdings, dass auf dem Boden unserer Theorie kaum ein Subjekt seine kognitive Tätigkeit mittels einer einzigen Sprache durchführt. Denn bemerken wir, dass *im Rahmen einer Sprache* jedes Subjekt gewissermaßen eine *logische Unfehlbarkeit* besitzt. Wenn es nämlich etwas gegen die Gesetze der Logik spricht oder denkt, hört es auf, diese Gesetze leer zu interpretieren. Es ändert demgemäß seine Grammatik und springt zu einer anderen Sprache über.

Um also unser Bild plausibel zu machen, müssen wir annehmen, dass ein typisches Subjekt in Wirklichkeit immer über ein Bündel von Sprachen verfügt und dass es sich darüber hinaus dieser Tatsache sehr oft völlig unbewußt ist. Typische Subjekte sind Polygloten, ohne das zu wissen. Die sogenannten "logischen Fehler" resultieren aus einer unbewußten *Vermengung von mehreren Sprachen*. Sie haben also viel kompliziertere Struktur als man gewöhnlich meint. Die epistemische Disziplin, die man während der Logikkurse mehr oder weniger meistert, besteht im Wesentlichen darin, dass man solche Vermengungen zu vermeiden lernt - man versucht, mit anderen Worten, in jeder gegebenen kognitiven Situation nur eine einzige Sprache zu benutzen.

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## Endnoten

- \* Ich bedanke mich bei Hans-Peter Leeb (Salzburg) für viele wertvolle sprachliche und sachliche Verbesserungen. Die Arbeit an diesem Aufsatz wurde vom *Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung (FWF)* unterstützt.
- 1 Wir brauchen aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach einen normativen Diskurs. Das ist jedoch ein allgemeines Problem des Behaviorismus.

# Subjectivity Reconsidered: Wittgenstein on the Autonomy of "Inner Space"

Michele Contel

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Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology (in short: what is the meaning of mental states and how the epistemology of subjectively mediated items works) enters in many ways in the elaboration of a number of problems including bodily sensations, privacy, pain attribution and so on. Exegesis through the years has painstakingly scrutinized the texts to bring some order in a vast amount of reflection by setting up a sufficient order to make them accessible to the reader in a way which optimizes coherence and softens tensions in his thought'. In this paper I hope to revive some of the tension of Wittgenstein's intellectual effort. The price to be paid is to put in brackets some well entrenched theses established by exegesis. The reward to be gained is the emergence of a perspective about subjectivity in the philosophy of mind which may help to redirect some debated issues concerning how cognition enter into semantics.

## I

The core of Wittgenstein's doctrine on psychology is associated to an essential suspect towards self-proclaimed authority about the contents of one's mind. This emerges eminently in the Private Language Argument of the *Philosophical Investigation*, the culminant point of decades long reasonings about the nature of access to the inner. But the early treatment of the issue of psychological concepts dates back to the discussion about solipsism in the *Tractatus* and, from 1929 onwards, it is extended to the general case of mental concepts ascriptions to others, raising the question of other minds. The asymmetry between first and third person is thus elaborated firstly by adopting a minimal corroboration of others mental contents in terms of observable behaviour and secondly by challenging dramatically the cartesian imagery of the inner. Identification of mental items in this way would lead to the loss of the discriminating power which only characterizes items referred to in a public language. In so far as language is based on grammar and norms, reference to internal states has sense only if context-dependent, i.e. sensitive to a common language. All this leads, exegetical orthodoxy insists, to the final position of the PLA whose positive stress about public accessibility should be understood against the background of the new theory of linguistic meaning in terms of language games and established use within a language community.

The points summarized convey a conviction about how the use of terms for personal experience introduce into language rules which in turn reflect a shared conception of what counts as evidence for the mental (for example as to what is behaviourally apt to guarantee attribution of mentality to others). It is in this complex intersection of themes, dominated by the polemic against cartesianism, that I believe there is room for resuming the autonomy of the mental, which is at the same time subjective based and anti-cartesian.

## II

I now bring forward a second scenario dealing with well known opinions currently held in the theory of meaning. It is customary in present day philosophy of language to draw a line dividing different theoretical attitudes towards the critical relation between items in the public shared language and their mental correlates, broadly into two categories. The first one identifies the content of a given psychological concept by securing a definite object to the thought expressing it; it is so mirrored at linguistic level in so called singular propositions, namely ones characterised by the object itself - and not by a suitable description of it - as part of the relevant content. They are object-dependent and convey a typical russellian flavour<sup>2</sup>. The second looks at the question from a different angle, namely one underlining the precious and not rarely unique role of descriptions in selecting out the appropriate object to which a thought apply; were only objects involved in the determination of how a thought is related to reality, we would sacrifice the role of modes of presentations which often exercise a crucial part in discriminating for the subject the way an object is invoked to determine content. With its characteristic insistence on cognitive distinctions, the position presents clearly a fregean taste and has been defended against neo-russellianism by proponents of an approach to semantic questions which favours also psychological explanations. The details of the two rival theories are furtherly complicated by the different treatments that a formal semantics plus a suitable truth-theory determine on the problem of how mind is related to the World. This is the battleground opposing "externalist" and "internalist": the stakes is the building up of suitable psychological explanations coherent with internal representations but not insensitive to the deliverances of the external world. On this issues the suggestions of Wittgenstein are not without surprise.

## III

It is worth looking at Wittgenstein's conception of the inner in a way untutored by the decisive result of the critique of privacy. In reality there is a lot of evidence in the texts about the phenomenology of the first person point of view. These observations risk to

go unnoticed because all exegetical reconstruction is naturally forced from the final position of the *Philosophical Investigations*, one privileging the negative thesis of the rebuttal of Cartesianism. This is complemented by the positive theses of rule-following and grammar, both to be conceived as a drastic vaccination against the would be explanatory role of the mental. The Private Language Argument, with its distinctive conclusiveness, seems therefore to cast a shadow on any approach to the mental dependent on the characteristic traits of introspective-based epistemology. This in turn has emphasized contrastive readings, polarized against the background of discussion oriented by the perspective of skepticism and the strategies to avoid it. But all this is the final destination. It would be foreign to the spirit of Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology to get rid retrospectively of the profound study and prolonged influence of the first person perspective. I believe there is room for a personal perspective, distinct from cartesianism, but originating on the same ambiguous terrain. This terrain is not textually easy to find, but some texts go in the searched direction, for instance (Wittgenstein, 1953: I, 95): "When we say, and mean, that such and such is the case, we - and our meaning- do not stop anywhere short of the fact, but we mean *this-is* so". This passage has recently gained attention by John McDowell (McDowell 1994)<sup>3</sup>. He mentions it in the context of the discussion of the myth of the given against which it is tempting to react by overbalancing the defect with an appeal to the purity of the conceptual: the realm of the *spontaneity* of thought. This purity is suspect because we are thus easily prey to the "unboundedness of the conceptual", where thoughts exist *void of content*. Anyway, Wittgenstein's observation appears in the context of the critique of those forms of anxious research for underlying reasons and the alleged quest for the "incomparable essence of language", maybe attained through "super-concepts" (Wittgenstein 1953 I, 97). But it is hard to resist a reading of the passage by allowing a sense authorizing the role of subjectivity as essential to production of thought and, more forcibly, to look at the thought itself as *internally* located. This reinforces an interpretation of philosophical psychology focused on the concept of subjectivity moderated by the common status of the public language but also sensitive to the insuppressibility of first person perspective. The problem reappears continuously. Wittgenstein seems to be conscious of the inevitability of this reappearing. For instance in (Wittgenstein 1981, 9), he invites us to imagine how a sentence like "that remark of mine was aimed at *him*", heard casually, can determine an interpretation of the situation involving hypotheses, doubts, suppositions, simulated imaginations but also, crucially, *thoughts*: "But how is this state of mind to be described, i.e. to be identified?-I think of myself into the situation, assume a certain expression and tone, etc.. What connects my words with him? The situation and my thoughts. And my thoughts just in the same way as things I say out loud". It must be noticed here the essential parity of the (internally determined) thought and (externally available) circumstances, a parity based on the insight that the passage



to reference is mediated through the transparent medium of subjectivity. Moreover this seems to be independent from readily available considerations about the role of language games and before the regulatory role of grammar enters to readjust in "social terms" the usual reading of the later Wittgenstein. Another passage (Wittgenstein 1953, I, 429), hints at how we can get the "agreement, harmony of the thought and reality": "If I say falsely that something is red, then, for all that, it isn't red. And when I want to explain the word '*red*' to someone, in the sentence 'that is not *red*', I do it by pointing to something *red*'. This is a crucial passage. It contains a lot of insights. I mention: (i) the idea that no linguistic item gets its meaning from the simple capacity of a thought of expressing something; (ii) the idea that there is a socially governed framework to account for learning of a language with its specific fallibilism; (iii) the idea, in my opinion decisive -that content and context converge *on a par* on the same subject in a way which indexically links her subjective inner space to the the externally determined common space.

#### IV

Well known theoretical approaches in philosophy of psychology rival in the attempt to gain a satisfactory account of a theory of content, namely a theory accounting for how a link can be established between the way our thought influence our actions and the way the world, in respect to the regular success of action, is. Analysis of belief sentences and the ramifications of how propositional attitudes function can, roughly, be summarized by the following rival positions: (i) **reliabilism**: the thesis that a content "that p" is to be secured as content if strongly anchored to a subjective dependent object (normally through the mediation of a conscious experience *descriptive* or not) plus a set of rules of inference; (ii) **direct referentialism**: the thesis that a thought determines a propositional content by associating to it the object *itself* and not its description (maybe made available by means of a psychological mode of presentation); (iii) **objectualism**: the thesis that a judgement concerning a given object is propositionally adequate independently by any explicit representational link; (iv) **representational independence**: the thesis- due to C. Peacocke- that it is rationally acceptable to have the formation of a first person belief even in absence of the condition -typically ones mediated by conscious experience- out of which content conferral is expected. We can appreciate Wittgenstein's original contribution to philosophical psychology by reminding the previously mentioned suggestions about the parity of thought and the content determining circumstance. This emerges also by comparing this intuition with the four previous positions. Extreme cartesianism first: it is clearly the result of conflating positions (i) and (iii). The result is a mixture of hyper-reliability paired with characteristic cartesian infallibility. It is the coherent topology of the inner derived by letting the

epistemology of privileged mental accessibility to develop all its irriducibility. Direct Referentialism, at least in its neo-russellian form (Recanati, 1993), bypasses the risk of the unboundedness of the conceptual but at the price of capturing objects nonconceptually. i.e. duplicating content: the semantical purpose being separate from the pragmatcal one. Representational independence (Peacocke 1997) has perhaps some of the features of the notion of inner space I tried to mutuate from Wittgenstein. Details are at this regard no doubt crucial but I think it is possible to envisage a programme along the following lines. The feature of independence in "representational independence" is proposed to the extent of allowing a subject a rational move to a belief even if the underlying content C is not available in one of the experiential or anyway observational appropriate circumstances that would assure the subject to be in the relevant content relation. For instance, the visual experience associated to the a telephone being on the table would be: "I see (i.e. I experience seeing) a phone on the table". Independence says that it can be dissociated from the resulting belief "the phone is on the table". Dissociation here is to be understood as an acceptable consequence of the machinery of what determines justified belief. The formulation in terms of dissociation between content and beliefs is one in which type-identity of mental contents and subject-based attributed beliefs are the ingredients leading to rationally justified first person thought ascription. But how an experience of something (for example the experience of seeing conceived as an occurring episode of content formation with all its immediacy) can be made coherent with a belief associated to a certain self ascribed judgement, need not the necessary identity between representational content and the subjective entitlement to defend the corresponding subjective judgement. To see this it can be invoked the mentioned idea of parity of thought and circumstance which is typical of preliminary content formation in case of perception. Disputed cases over the application of first person attributed concepts - numerous in Wittgenstein's texts- are also often cases of non univocity of the relation of content to judgement and are also ones hospitable to a conception of subjectivity alert with respect to the potential ambiguities of the inner space and therefore attentive against the incorrigible deliverances of the cartesian mind. This intuition is part of Wittgenstein's legacy in the philosophy of mind that deserves to be made to work in future investigations.

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## Endnotes

- 1 But this is not the case of D. Pears' masterly discussion of the subject in the central chapters of his *The False Prison*, vol. 2. Everybody should be indebted to Pears reconstruction of Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind.
- 2 This flavour has been revived by authors like Gareth Evans and, critically, John McDowell (McDowell 1986).
- 3 *Mind and World*, chapter 2

# Logical Dependence and Independence in the Tractatus

Fabrice Correia

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## 1. Introduction

A central Tractarian thesis is that of the logical independence of the elementary propositions, the atoms. The aim of this paper is threefold. First, I will make precise what the thesis is, and show that Wittgenstein endorses it (section 1). Second, I will identify a concept of logical dependence in terms of which logical independence can be defined (section 2). And finally, I will show that these notions of logical dependence and independence fail to capture certain explanatory links between propositions, and I will then try to refine the previous definitions in order to end up with concepts which do capture such links (section 3). Part of these matters have been dealt with by (Simons, 1981). But as I will show, Simons' investigation is mistaken on independence, and-as a consequence-incomplete on dependence.

## 2. Independence

The aim is here to make precise sense of the claim that some given propositions are *logically independent*, and to show that Wittgenstein held that the atoms are independent in this sense.

Some preliminary definitions will be useful. Where  $S$  is a set of propositions, we define a *state-function* on  $S$  as a function taking each element of  $S$  into itself or its negation; and we shall say that a set of propositions  $\Sigma$  is a *state-description*<sup>1</sup> on  $S$  iff it is the image of  $S$  by some state-function on  $S$ , i.e. iff there is a state-function  $\psi$  on  $S$  such that  $\Sigma = \{\psi(p) : p \in S\}$ . We shall use  $\Sigma \nabla S$  to mean that  $\Sigma$  is a state-description on  $S$ . Note that by definition, there is one and only one state-description on  $\emptyset$ , namely  $\emptyset$  itself. We take as primitive the notions of logical possibility ( $\diamond$ ) and logical necessity ( $\Box$ ), and we assume they are interdefinable in the usual way. Where  $S$  is a set of propositions,  $T(S)$  is taken to mean that all the members of  $S$  are true (so that in particular, it is trivially the case that  $T(\emptyset)$ ); and where  $p$  is a proposition,  $T(p)$  will be short for  $T(\{p\})$ .

With all this in hands, we define the following notions of independence ( $S$  is any set of propositions, and  $n$  any integer):<sup>2</sup>

- D1 the members of S are independent iff<sub>df</sub> " $\Sigma \nabla S \diamond T(\Sigma)$ ;
- D2 the members of S are n-independent iff<sub>df</sub> " $\forall T \subseteq S (\# T = n \Rightarrow \text{the members of } T \text{ are independent})$ ;
- D3 the members of S are finitely independent iff<sub>df</sub> "for every integer n, the members of S are n-independent.

It is easy to see that m-independence entails n-independence if  $m \geq n$ . In case  $m < n$ , we may have m-independence without n-independence. Assume for instance that p, q and r are independent propositions. Then p, q and  $r \vee (\neg p \wedge \neg q)$  are 2-independent, but not 3-independent.

Independence entails finite independence, but the converse does not hold unless certain conditions on the propositions concerned are imposed. For e.g. assume that we have an infinite number of names  $a_0, a_1, \dots, a_i, \dots$ , and consider the set S constituted by (1) the proposition 'there is a finite number of  $\phi$ s', (2) for each integer i, the proposition 'as is  $\phi$ ', and (3) for all integers i and j such that  $i \neq j$ , the proposition ' $a_i \neq a_j$ '. Then the members of S are finitely independent, but not independent *tout court*. Among the conditions on a set S of propositions which make the finite independence of its members entail their independence is finiteness. Another one which will be of interest to us is that all the members of S be atomic.<sup>3</sup>

For any integer n, the number of distributions of truth-values over any given n distinct atomic propositions is the number of state-descriptions drawn from these propositions, namely  $2^n$ . Thus, saying that the number of logically possible distributions of truth-values over them is  $2^n$  is equivalent to saying that every distribution of truth-values over them is logically possible—which by our definition means that these propositions are independent. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein claims that the number of logically possible distributions of truth-values among any n distinct elementary propositions is  $2^n$ :

With regard to the existence of n atomic facts there are  $K_n = \sum_{i=0}^n \binom{n}{i}$  possibilities.

It is possible for all combinations of atomic facts to exist; and the others not to exist (4.27).

To these combinations correspond the same number of possibilities of the truth-and falsehood-of n elementary propositions (4.28).

Therefore, Wittgenstein endorses the claim that any n distinct atoms are logically independent, and thus that the atoms are finitely independent. So given that for the atoms finite independence is equivalent to independence, Wittgenstein holds that the atoms are independent *tout court*.

As a conclusion to this section, let me note that (Simons, 1981) attributes to Wittgenstein the thesis that the atoms are pairwise independent, that is, 2-independent, and claims that this is *the* logical independence thesis of the *Tractatus*. According to the previous discussion, thus, Simons is right on the first claim, not on the second. For Wittgenstein not only accepts that the atoms are pairwise independent: as we just saw, he endorses the (much) stronger claim that the atoms are independent *tout court*.

### 3. Dependence

The question we are facing now is that of identifying a concept of logical dependence, in terms of which logical independence may be defined. The idea will be that some given propositions are independent iff none of them depends on the others. Logical dependence will be defined in terms of some concept of partial logical determination. My approach is quite different from that of (Simons, 1981), and in an important sense more complete: for Simons only deals with pairwise independence and related concepts of 1-1 dependence.

Thus, let us first define *logical determination*. Propositions  $p_1, p_2, \dots$  will be said to logically determine proposition  $q$  in case each truth-value assignment to  $p_1, p_2, \dots$  "fixes" the truth-value of  $q$ . This idea can be made more precise as follows (as before  $S$  is any set of propositions, and  $p$  is any proposition):

D4 the members of  $S$  determine  $p$  iff<sub>df</sub>  $\forall \Sigma \nabla S$ , not both  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{p\})$  and  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{\neg p\})$ .

In case  $S = \emptyset$ , 'the members of  $S$  determine  $p$ ' means that  $p$  is necessarily true or necessarily false.

There are certainly many ways partial logical determination could then be defined. Here is one which I shall adopt:

D5 the members of  $S$  partly determine  $p$  iff<sub>df</sub>  $\exists \Sigma \nabla S$ , not both  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{p\})$  and  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{\neg p\})$ .

That is, propositions  $p_1, p_2, \dots$  partly determine proposition  $q$  in case some truth-value assignments to  $p_1, p_2, \dots$  logically fix the truth-value of  $q$ . Of course, determination is stronger than partial determination, and there may be cases of partial determination without determination *tout court*: for  $p$  and  $q$  independent,  $p \wedge q$  only *partly* determine  $p$ .

In some use of the verb 'to depend', something depends of some other things iff the latter at least partly determine the former (suppose for instance I decide to go to a party with Manu and plan to spend the whole night there if she does, without planning anything

for the case she does not; then, my decision about my staying the whole night or not is partly determined by her decision on the same topic; and we can say, for that reason, that my decision depends on her's). *Logical dependence* is then defined as the converse of partial logical determination:

D6  $p$  depends on the members of  $S$  iff<sub>df</sub> the members of  $S$  partly determine  $p$ ,

and we naturally put:

D7  $p$  is independent from the members of  $S$  iff<sub>df</sub>  $p$  does not depend on the members of  $S$ .

One can then verify that for every set of propositions  $S$ , the members of  $S$  are independent iff every member of  $S$  is independent from the others. In case  $S \neq \emptyset$ , this is also equivalent to: some member of  $S$  is independent from the others.<sup>4</sup> We thus have what we were looking for.

#### 4. Refinements

Perhaps the above notions of independence, dependence and determination capture important logical relationships between propositions, and in particular some relationships Wittgenstein himself took to be important. But it is my view that they fail to capture some other interesting logical ties, which we would actually also express by using the *vocabulary* of dependence and determination.

In one sense of the verb "to determine", by 'the truth-value of  $p$  determines the truth-value of  $q$ ', we intend to express two things: first that once the truth-value of  $p$  is given, there is no room for the truth-value of  $q$  to vary; and second that whichever truth-value  $q$  may have, it has it in virtue of the fact that  $p$  has the truth-value it has. Call the first aspect the *fixing component* of determination, and the second its *explanation component*. Logical determination as defined above captures the *fixing component* of determination. But it is easy to see that it does not capture its *explanation component*. In fact, consider the following consequences of the above definition of determination ( $p$  and  $q$  are any propositions):

- $p$  determines  $q \vee \neg q$ ;
- $p$  determines  $q \wedge \neg q$ ;
- $p \wedge p$  determines  $p$ ;
- $\neg\neg p$  determines  $p$ .

Where  $q$  is any proposition, it should be clear that it is not the case that for every proposition  $p$ ,  $q \vee \neg q$  has the truth-value it has in virtue of the fact that  $p$  has the truth-value it has; some would even be inclined to say that the truth of  $q \vee \neg q$  is not to be explained by the truth of any proposition whatsoever. Similar considerations hold of the case of  $q \wedge \neg q$ . All the same, we do not want to say that proposition  $p$  is, say, true in virtue of the fact that  $\neg\neg p$  or  $p \wedge p$  is true; in fact, we are inclined to say the opposite, viz. that  $\neg\neg p$  and  $p \wedge p$ , if true, are true because  $p$  is.

These considerations call for defining a concept of logical determination with both a fixing and an explanation component. There are plausibly several ways to do so. The one I shall sketch here is in terms of a primitive explanation predicate  $\blacklozenge$ : where  $S$  is a set of propositions and  $p$  a proposition,  $S \blacklozenge p$  expresses that  $p$  is true in virtue of the fact that (some of) the members of  $S$  are all true. We understand  $\blacklozenge$  so that it satisfies the following axioms:

- A1  $\quad \square (S \blacklozenge p \Rightarrow T(S) \text{ and } T(p));$   
 A2  $\quad \blacklozenge (S \blacklozenge p) \Rightarrow \square (T(S) \Rightarrow S \blacklozenge p).$

We then define the new concept of determination, *determination'*, by stating that the members of  $S$  determine'  $q$  iff in any logically possible circumstance,  $q$  has the truth-value it has in virtue of the fact that (some of) the members of  $S$  have the truth-values they have. This may be formally rendered as follows:

- D8  $\quad$  the members of  $S$  determine'  $q$  iff<sub>df</sub>  $\square ((T(q) \Rightarrow \exists \Sigma \nabla S \Sigma \blacklozenge q) \text{ and } (T(\neg q) \Rightarrow \exists \Sigma \nabla S \Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q)).$

It is easy to check that:<sup>5</sup>

- T1  $\quad$  the members of  $S$  determine'  $q$  iff " $\Sigma \nabla S \square (T(\Sigma) \Rightarrow \Sigma \blacklozenge q \text{ or } \Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q).$ "

One can then prove that determination' entails determination.<sup>6</sup>

Of course, the new concept of determination escapes the problems met by the old one. We cannot prove that any tautology or contradiction is logically determined' by any proposition whatsoever. And moreover, under the assumption that it is logically impossible for a tautology or a contradiction to owe its truth-value to the fact that these or those propositions have such and such truth-values, one can prove that tautologies and contradictions are logically undetermined'. All the same, we cannot prove that  $p \wedge p$  determines  $p$  and  $\neg\neg p$  determines  $p$  for any arbitrary proposition  $p$ . Actually, under the plausible assumption that proposition  $p$  never owes its truth-value to that of  $p \wedge p$  or  $\neg\neg p$ , it follows that  $p$  is logically determined' neither by  $p \wedge p$  nor by  $\neg\neg p$ .



Partial determination' can be defined by stating that the members of S partly determine' q iff in some logically possible circumstance, q has the truth-value it has in virtue of the fact that (some of) the members of S have the truth-values they have. The formal rendering is then:

D9 the members of S partly determine' q iff<sub>df</sub>  $\diamond ((T(q) \Rightarrow \exists \Sigma \nabla S \Sigma \blacklozenge q)$  and  $(T(\neg q) \Rightarrow \exists \Sigma \nabla S \Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q)$ ).

It is easy to check that:

T2 the members of S partly determine' q  $\Rightarrow \exists \Sigma \nabla S [] (T(\Sigma) \Rightarrow \Sigma \blacklozenge q$  or  $\Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q)$ .

One can then also prove that partial determination' entails partial determination.

Finally, we may define dependence', the independence' of a proposition from the members of a set of propositions and the independence' of the members of a set of propositions in terms of partial determination', in the same way as before. Independence' will then turn out to be weaker than independence; and so, admitting that the atoms are independent will commit one to the view that they are independent' as well.

## References

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## Endnotes

- 1 The phrase is Carnap's, but my definition differs from his.
- 2 For reasons of formal homogeneity, we shall admit that S may be empty or contain only one element-though of course when we say that some things are independent in some given respect, we have in mind a collection of at least *two* things. For the same reason, we do not exclude  $n=0$  or  $n=1$ , though 0-independence and 1-independence are somehow uninteresting cases. The members of any set of propositions are 0-independent in any case, and the 1-independence of some propositions means that each of them is contingent: each can be true and can be false.
- 3 The fact that finite independence does not entails independence is qualified by logicians as a "non-compactness" fact. First order logic is compact: for sets of first-order propositions (in particular, for sets of atomic sentences), finite independence entails independence *tout court*. In our example, it is the quantifier 'there are finitely many'-which is not first-order definable-which creates problems. It is not clear to me whether Wittgenstein accepts such quantifiers in his "meaningful" language.

- 4 (1) *Proof that the members of S are independent  $\Rightarrow$  each member of S is independent from the others.* Suppose some member  $q$  of  $S$  is dependent on  $S-\{q\}$ . This means that some state-description  $\Sigma$  on  $S-\{q\}$  is such that  $\text{not-}\diamond T(S \cup \{q\})$  or  $\text{not-}\Box T(\Sigma \cup \{\neg q\})$ . Suppose  $\text{not-}\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{q\})$ , and let  $\Sigma'$  be  $\Sigma \cup \{q\}$  (the case where  $\text{not-}\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{\neg q\})$  leads to the same conclusion). Since  $\Sigma'$  is a state-description on  $S$ , this means that the members of  $S$  are not independent. (2) *Proof that some member of S is independent from the others  $\Rightarrow$  the members of S are independent.* Suppose that the members of  $S$  are not independent, i.e. that some state-description  $\Sigma$  on  $S$  is such that  $\text{not-}\diamond T(\Sigma)$ . Then in particular,  $S \neq \emptyset$ . Let  $q$  be in  $S$ , and let  $\Sigma'$  be any state-description on  $S-\{q\}$  such that  $\Sigma' \subseteq \Sigma$  (there are such state-descriptions). Then either  $\Sigma = \Sigma' \cup \{q\}$  or  $\Sigma = \Sigma' \dot{\cup} \{\emptyset, q\}$ . In any case, we see that  $q$  is not independent from  $S-\{q\}$ .
- 5 Using the fact that for every proposition  $q$ ,  $\Box(T(q) \text{ or } T(\neg q))$  and  $\Box(T(q) \Rightarrow \text{not-}T(\neg q))$ , we can prove by basic modal reasoning that the members of  $S$  determine'  $q$  iff  $\Box(\exists \Sigma \nabla S (\Sigma \blacklozenge q \text{ or } S \blacklozenge \neg q))$ . Now, using the fact that for every set of propositions  $S$ ,  $\Box(\exists! \Sigma \nabla S T(\Sigma))$  and axiom (A2), we can prove that  $\Box(\exists \Sigma \nabla S (\Sigma \blacklozenge q \text{ or } \Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q))$  iff  $\forall \Sigma \nabla S \Box(T(\Sigma) \Rightarrow \Sigma \blacklozenge q \text{ or } \Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q)$ .
- 6 Suppose that  $\Box(T(\Sigma) \Rightarrow \Sigma \blacklozenge q \text{ or } \Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q)$ . Then either  $\diamond T(S)$  or not. If not, then trivially it is not the case that both  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{q\})$  and  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{\neg q\})$ . Suppose now that  $\Box T(\Sigma)$ . Then  $\diamond(\Sigma \blacklozenge q \text{ or } \Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q)$ , and so  $\diamond(\Sigma \blacklozenge q)$  or  $\diamond(\Sigma \blacklozenge \neg q)$ . So from axioms (A1) and (A2),  $\Box(T(\Sigma) \Rightarrow T(q))$  or  $\Box(T(\Sigma) \Rightarrow T(\neg q))$ , that is to say, it is not the case that both  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{q\})$  and  $\diamond T(\Sigma \cup \{\emptyset, q\})$ .

# Time and Language in the Transitional Period

João Vergilio Gallerani Cuter

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When Wittgenstein took up philosophy again in 1929, he was convinced that the theories he had put forward in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* were not sustainable as they stood. He began to produce a vast series of texts which were to lead him within a few years to formulate his mature philosophy. It would be pointless to locate the formation of this mature philosophy in a specific text or a particular time. It was by no means a linear process and involved several intermediate stages. However, there is no doubt that when Wittgenstein dictated the *Blue Book* in 1933-34, he had gone well over half-way down the road that was to lead him to the *Philosophical Investigations*. Prior to the *Blue Book* we find a series of manuscripts and typescripts, which are only now beginning to be published and investigated in depth. If examined in chronological order, these texts undoubtedly show Wittgenstein's ideas moving further and further away from the *Tractatus*. The critiques and divergences are steadily sharper and more profound. It is one of these ruptures that I want to discuss in what follows.

In the *Philosophical Remarks* Wittgenstein acknowledges that language is essentially linked to time and the physical universe. Using a terminology that seems to derive from the later writings of Ramsey, he states: "Language itself belongs to the second system. If I describe a language, I describe something essentially physicalist... What we understand by the word 'language' unfolds in the homogeneous time of physics" (Wittgenstein 1989, 98). Let us try to grasp the meaning of these propositions more fully.

First, the use of the expression "physicalist language" in this context enables us to clear up a grave misunderstanding that frequently obstructs analysis of the texts Wittgenstein wrote during what is commonly referred to as his "verificationist phase". It would be a mistake to project into the *Philosophical Remarks* the meanings that the expressions "physicalist language" and "phenomenological language" have in contemporary writings by members of the Vienna Circle. By saying that "language is essentially physicalist", Wittgenstein does not mean that names refer (or should refer) to physical objects, much less that propositions are verified by events in the physical world as distinguished from phenomenal events. On the contrary. All the philosophy in the *Philosophical Remarks* is organised around the opposition between propositions as such, which describe phenomenal events, and "hypotheses", which cannot be verified and hence do not describe anything at all. For the Wittgenstein who concerns us here,

"physicalist language" in the sense of language that refers to physical objects would simply be a contradiction in terms. Any description refers to phenomenological objects, since all descriptions are verified by the occurrence of phenomenical events.

What Wittgenstein means on this point is something quite different. Far from denying that language can refer to phenomena, Wittgenstein is saying that it is impossible to *refer phenomenologically to phenomena*. The target is always a phenomenon, but the arrow that points to it is essentially physical and temporal. The best way to understand this proposition is to analyse the argument that leads up to it. This argument takes the form of an imaginary experiment that has the force of a *reductio ad absurdum*. Wittgenstein tries to imagine languages from which all hypothetical elements have been eliminated. These imaginary languages are laid out in a series. With each step we take along the series we find a hypothetical residue which the next language unsuccessfully attempts to eliminate. At the end we have a language that is as close to phenomena as a language can be, but even here a physicalist residue is evidently present and it is clearly impossible to move another step towards phenomena without destroying the representative nature of this language. Let us see how this is done.

The starting-point is the possibility of constructing a "phenomenical autobiography": in other words, an exhaustive account of each of the phenomenical experiences that make up my life. For this purpose I imagine that I have been endowed with a prodigious memory and elaborate my descriptions in a language that makes direct references to phenomena. To underline the "directness" of these references, Wittgenstein limits himself to the representation of events in my visual field, imagining reference by means of partially painted plaster models. Only the portion effectively seen is painted, carefully bringing out what is blurred in everyday language, i.e. the experience we have effectively had, in opposition to the horizon of the infinite possible experiences corresponding to the idea of a "physical object".

To the description of this first "imaginary language" Wittgenstein adds his first objection: "So far, so good" he says. "But what can be said of the time I take to arrive at these representations?" (Wittgenstein 1989, 97). The objection apparently refers to the practical possibility of making such "records". It seems reasonable to suppose that even a thousand years would not be enough to construct representations capable of accounting for all the phenomena present in a single day of our lives. However, this is an "empirical" limitation, a practical problem that has no relevance to the establishment of a logical possibility. The real problem lies elsewhere. To facilitate the discussion, suppose my life lasts exactly two days. On the first day I have a number of experiences, which I store accurately in my memory. On the second day I set about recalling each of the experiences I had on the previous day and recording these experiences using my plaster models. I remember a visual experience and immediately afterwards I reproduce

the scene in a plaster model. The process clearly involves three distinct phases: the original experience, remembering it, and constructing the model.

It is important to make a careful distinction between a visual experience and the memory of it. The purpose of the plaster model, of course, is to be a faithful reproduction of the latter, which we could call a "mnemonic experience", and not a direct reproduction of past visual experience. The relationship between memory and past experience is evidently hypothetical and presupposes the availability of physical time. At the level of assertions about the physical world we can enumerate criteria that must be met in order for a remembrance to be accurate. None of these enumerations will be exhaustive. It will always be possible to make sceptical objections to the accuracy of memory. However, Wittgenstein decides to limit the problem to the very last link in the chain: the relations between the plaster representation and the mnemonic experience. He leaves aside the question of the accuracy of memory, which in any event does not arise at the level of phenomena. In phenomena, the past is merely an internal property of experiences necessarily confined to a continuous present. From this standpoint the question is simply: to what extent can I reproduce immediately what my memory presents to me immediately? How far can language reproduce immediately the experience of memory? The time employed in constructing representations, however short, evidently becomes relevant. If remembering occurs at one moment and the elaboration of a model takes place later, then it is possible to raise the question asked in regard to the physical world about the relationship between memory and past experience. The plaster representation of memory becomes hypothetical, since it is possible to imagine sceptical objections to the accuracy of this representation. To what extent have I reproduced faithfully in the model which was given to me immediately in memory?

Wittgenstein answers this objection by imagining a second language that adheres to the phenomenon more closely than the first. Suppose, he says, that I am "capable of 'writing' - constructing representations - at the speed of my memories" (Wittgenstein 1989, 97). In other words, I write at the same time as I recall so that the accuracy of my writing is guaranteed by the mere presence in the phenomenal field of the memories I describe. As always, we may doubt the accuracy of memory when we project our experience in the physical world. That is a different matter. The important point here is that it should be logically impossible to doubt the fidelity of the representation of memory, which is a present experience. By adding this "real-time accompaniment" to our requirements, we seem to have achieved the goal of immediate representation. Or have we? Our requirements have been met only with regard to the moment at which the representation is being made. Let us now suppose, says Wittgenstein, "that I re-read the entire description. Would it not be hypothetical this time?" (Wittgenstein 1989, 97).

Indeed, who can be sure that this plaster figure now before me is faithful to the mnemonic experience I had while making it? It is no use saying in the present that the making of the representation was concurrent with the experience. While I was making the representation, the simultaneity of the mnemonic experience guaranteed identity of meaning. Now, however, all I have is the plaster figure before me. The plaster figure affirms the occurrence of a past experience but there is no way in which I can verify immediately whether this experience really occurred in the past. At most, I have the memory of a past memory while I read. But it is to the first memory that the plaster figure is intended to refer and not to the second.

In developing this argument, Wittgenstein takes to an extreme his attempt to imagine what an immediate representation of the past might be. He imagines a mechanism and a "language" associated with it. Here is his description of this imaginary experiment:

"Let us imagine the following representation. The bodies I apparently see are moved by a mechanism in such a way as to give two eyes fixed in a certain place in the model the visual figure to be represented. The visual figure described is therefore determined by the location of the eye in the model and by the location and movement of the bodies. One could conceive, for example, of moving the mechanism by turning a handle and thus 'parroting' the description." (Wittgenstein 1989, 97).

It seems evident that this imaginary mechanism is designed to externalise the perceptive situation, creating the possibility of supposedly objective control over representation. The experience to be represented is the experience captured by the eye fixed at the centre of the mechanism. However, another eye is assumed to exist in the experiment. This is an eye taking notes of the coordinates corresponding to the fixed eye, the objects, and the movements of the machine. A handle enables a person "outside" the mechanism to reproduce the movements performed. This person uses the notes on the coordinates like a musical score. From the standpoint of this external person, the text is "read" mechanically ? it is "parroted", as Wittgenstein says. The sensations this external person has as he turns the handle have no necessary relation to the meaning of the signs on the score. We might imagine that the person does not even see the objects moving as he turns the handle. The objects and their movements are seen by the eye placed at the centre of the machine. From our own standpoint, what the eye now sees is an accurate representation of what it saw before. Our aim is to ensure that this eye does not perceive plaster figures, much less mathematical descriptions of the movements of bodies. We want to bring about a situation in which the representation of past visual figures is produced by present visual representations. Phenomena representing phenomena in the most immediate way possible.

It is obvious that the mechanism imagined here would give the images produced a hypothetical nature. For us on the outside, turning the handle, it would be impossible to verify the absolute accuracy of the representation. Everything would depend on the fidelity of the transcriptions made and the functioning of the machine. The criteria at our disposal for this purpose are necessarily fallible and provisional. If we want to advance still further toward immediacy we will have to assume the viewpoint of the immovable eye at the centre of the mechanism, watching the scenes unfold. In the world of this eye there are neither machines, nor handles nor transcriptions. There is just the recurrent scene, which is eternally present. In itself the scene is not a "reproduction of the past" - or indeed a reproduction of anything. It is a continuous flow of necessarily differing sense impressions. For the representation to become even more immediate, we must put ourselves in the position of the fixed eye. When we assume this position, however, the representation is dissolved. What remains is the flow of life and nothing else.

This is what leads Wittgenstein to say that language belongs to the "second system". To describe a language, he says, is "to describe something essentially physicalist". Not that language cannot refer to phenomena. On the contrary. From the perspective adopted by Wittgenstein in 1929, there is nothing else to which language can refer. It is phenomena that verify the descriptions we produce; hence it is only about phenomena that we can speak. But this reference is always made in a "non-phenomenal" manner - that is, by means of an essentially precarious relationship between the linguistic sign and the expected phenomenon. This creates an evident tension between the two requirements, which if not explicitly contradictory seems at least to pull in opposite directions. It is not unreasonable to presume that this tension played an important role in leading Wittgenstein to abandon the phenomenological project that characterised his work in the early 1930s.

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# Self-Identification and Some Versions of the Dream-Argument

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Wittgenstein's general anti-sceptical argument included in *On Certainty* can be called an argument from semantic certainty: A sceptic must acknowledge that he understands sentences, which he undermines. But when the sceptic claims that he has a reason to doubt all sentences and, at the same time, that he understands the sentences he doubts, he contradicts himself, because one cannot doubt all sentences and understand any of them. Since some sentences are meaning-bearers of words, a total doubt implies complete lack of understanding of their meaning. This argument is expressed in a pragmatic stylization: since some assertions are meaning-bearers, a total doubt would amount to complete lack of understanding.

For example, when a person *A* obeys the order given by *B*: 'Bring me a book', he perhaps has an epistemic doubt as to whether an object, seen from a distance, is a book. But to dispel the epistemic doubt whether the object is a book, he must first have a semantic certainty, i.e., be certain what people mean by the word "book". And, if he did not know what the word meant, he would have to be instructed by help of ostensive definition including the identification sentence 'This is a book'. Identification sentences of the type 'This is *X*', asserted as components of ostensive definitions, are for Wittgenstein indispensable semantic tools (Wittgenstein 1969, § 519).

Assertions identifying external objects are traditionally undermined in virtue of the dream-argument: When a person *A* asserts 'This is *X*', he can be fully convinced that he identifies an external object *X* but, as it is possible that he dreams, it is possible that he actually identifies an internal object. Wittgenstein thinks that the dream-argument can be neutralized thanks to revealing its logical connections with an exceptional case of identification: self-identification.

Characteristically, the classical dream-argument, directed against the possibility of identification of external objects, does not question the possibility of self-identification. The famous dictum 'Cogito, ergo sum' implies that everything can be dubious, but, if one thinks, one cannot doubt both one's existence and one's identity. It remains certain that he who thinks always knows who he is. The possibility of successful self-identification is for Cartesian sceptic so far beyond doubt that even the dream-argument is meant to be too weak to question it.



This exceptional kind of certainty has a very singular aspect. The sceptic's conviction that self-identification is undisturbed follows from his interpreting the act of self-identification in a metaphysical way: as an act of uttering the word "I" in relation to the inner self. From his point of view, the word "I" can always be applied safely just because its application is thoroughly non-relational, i.e., the word "I" is logically unconnected with assertions of other identification sentences, which themselves could be undermined. Metaphysics neglects the question 'Who am I?'. The certainty of the metaphysical "I" is unconditional because the sentence 'This is I' does not follow from any premises and does not imply any consequences.

Wittgenstein stresses that ordinary self-identification means something different. Primarily, it is not understood as an act of naming oneself by applying the word "I" but as a prosaic linguistic custom of repeated application of the name "A" by a person A. An ordinary person does not speak of himself 'My name is I' but 'My name is A' and uses his name in a relational way, i.e., he is ready to make secondary self-identification assertions specifying his identity.

Since ordinary usage of a person's name does not hang in vacuum but is connected with one's ability to make secondary identification assertions, e.g., 'My eyes are green' or 'I have three sons', the power of the dream-argument seems to spread also over self-identification. The ability to make ordinary self-identification ceases to be evident because there is a contradiction between the possibility of dream and certainty of secondary identification sentences concerning external objects. As a result, the ability to utter one's name faultlessly becomes dubious and Wittgenstein faces a paradox: self-identification, interpreted metaphysically, is beyond doubt but interpreted ordinarily becomes again dubious. Claiming that metaphysical self-identification is not a proper kind of self-identification Wittgenstein seems to get into trouble.

Wittgenstein believes that this contradiction can be turned against the sceptic. His pragmatic critique of the dream-argument is carried in the following way: If a person A is uncertain of his self-identity, he does not fulfill the subject-condition of linguistic competence - no person B will be certain that A understands the words he utters in assertions identifying external objects when B doubts that A identifies himself properly. Similarly, if A is uncertain as to some assertions identifying external objects, B cannot be certain that A identifies himself properly.

Wittgenstein considers the following sceptical questions: Is it not possible that a person A, being convinced that he has just waken up, would assert: 'I imagined that my name is B'? Can, therefore, A be certain that he will not wake up again, will be prone to interpret the situation of his first assertion as a dream fantasy and say: 'I imagined that my name is A'? (Wittgenstein 1969, § 642). The hypothesis of many-dimensional dream

evidently undermines certainty of ordinary self-identification: a person *A* can endlessly dream that his name is "*B*", "*C*", an so on; every time he can be convinced that he has different look, qualities of character, personal history, etc.

Wittgenstein seems to be of opinion that the dream-hypothesis is senseless just because it suggests a systematic mistake in self-identification. A hypothesis that undermines the certainty of all self-identification assertions, discredits all assertions of the type 'I cannot make a mistake that *p*' and, therefore, implies that thinking in language is impossible, must be judged as absurdly false.

He admits that one can imagine a non-regressive case of a dream when, after weakening up, a person *A* has no difficulty in distinguishing what was unreal from what is real. But such a case, or its possibility, does not discredit the assertion 'I cannot make a mistake that *p*' insofar as there are sentences of a special semantic status, i.e., sentences belonging to the class of meaning-bearers or semantic assumptions of language (Wittgenstein 1969, § 643). The application of the operator 'I cannot make a mistake... ' is still justified when it ranges over semantic sentences. The operator would be totally discredited only if all semantic sentences appearing within its range were discredited. Sentences of the type 'My name is *A*', for individual language users, are semantic assumptions of their ability to speak consistent language. They informally record a necessary condition of linguistic rationality. So, any reasoning undermining them must be absurdly false.

Wittgenstein's basic argument in favor of certainty of self-identification assertion is that if a person *A* does not know what his name is, it is uncertain whether he controls his speech. One cannot seriously take into account the possibility that a person is always mistaken when he makes a self-identification assertion 'My name is *A*'. If the primary assertion were discredited, all secondary self-identification assertions, e.g. the sentence 'This is *my* hand' would also be discredited. The possibility of a systematic mistake in self-identification is for Wittgenstein unacceptable because systematic successful self-identification is a necessary condition of playing all language games - the subject-condition of ability to use language competently (Wittgenstein 1969, § 644). If a person *A* realized that he made a self-identification mistake, it would be equivalent with her realization of the fact that he had lost ability to make competent judgments: 'If I was making a mistake that my name is *A*, I was unable to make judgments'. If mistakes in self-identification were made permanently or frequently, the fact would change all language games (Wittgenstein 1969, § 646).

There is an essential difference between an exceptional mistake appearing within a language game, which does not destroy the identity of the game, and a regular mistake, which would destroy the identity of the game (Wittgenstein 1969, § 647). If all people

made self-identification mistakes regularly, no language game could be played. Regular mistake in self-identification belongs to the boundary semantic mistakes because it precludes the possibility of entering any language game without deforming it. This mistake is unimaginable in the sense that people either believe that they speak a non-disfigured language and does not make it or make it repeatedly and disfigure the language.

In ordinary situations *A* tries to convince *B* that he does not make an epistemic mistake by removing a limited number of *B*'s doubts. For example, when *A* asserts: '*C* talked to me this morning and said that *p*', *B*'s reasonable doubts are these that are implied by the content of *A*'s assertion, i.e., *B* can reasonably doubt whether *A* talked to *C* or whether *C* actually said that *p*. Such doubts are predictable and it is easy to imagine what *A* should add to dispel them. Wittgenstein admits that such additional pieces of information are unable to exclude the possibility that *A* was dreaming about his talk to *C* and his assertion refers to no real talk (Wittgenstein 1969, § 648). Ordinary epistemic justifications, sufficient to neutralize doubts implied by a sentence's content, are insufficient to remove the possibility of dream. It does not mean, however, that the dream-argument undermines all assertions, self-identification assertion including, because the last one has the special status of a basic semantic assumption: one cannot reasonably claim that *A*, who stubbornly maintains that he is *B*, will be a fully rational speaker.

Wittgenstein mentions two qualities that decide about a special status of the sentence 'My name is *A*'. Firstly, it is for him a non-epistemic sentence, i.e., it does not have a distinctive empirical proof. People consider the sentence as irreversible because they have overwhelming semantic proofs of its certainty; everyone can support an assertion of the type 'My name is *A*' by a system of secondary self-identifying sentences. The strong conviction of its irreversibility is not a result of people's empty-mindedness but of the fact that, having a system of semantic proofs, they are justified in retaining certainty in face of any epistemic counter-proof. As far as the strength of its justification is concerned, the sentence does not differ from elementary mathematical sentences, which, in virtue of their place in a system, have so strong proofs that they are taken to be thoroughly irreversible (Wittgenstein 1969, § 657). The question: Couldn't you be deceived as to the fact that your name is *A* and then become aware of your mistake? is analogous to the question: Couldn't you be deceived that 2 plus 2 is 4?

Secondly, the sentence 'My name is *A*' is not susceptible to doubt because of its essential non-temporality. When *A* says to *B*: 'I cannot be mistaken that I have just eaten dinner', then *B*, in order to undermine this assertion, can only consider the possibility that *A* lost his senses. In this particular case, *A* cannot be suspected of making an empirical

mistake - if *A*'s senses function, it is unimaginable that they could deceive *A* as to the fact that he has just eaten dinner. Wittgenstein suggests that in order to seed a doubt *B* can appeal to a sleep-argument: the person *A* can have, immediately after dinner, a dreamless sleep lasting for a time, not knowing about it, and then, after weakening, claim that he has just eaten dinner. This story suggests an asymmetry between *B*'s ordinary sleep-hypothesis, which is sufficient to undermine the sentence 'I've just eaten dinner', and epistemic reasons which *A* has in favor of his assertion. Wittgenstein underlines that *B*'s sleep-argument is unquestionably rational but, on the other hand, it produces only a doubt of a limited range. Namely, one can still separate such a grammatical form of the sentence, which is immune to the argument. The sentences 'I have just eaten dinner' and 'I ate dinner' are different because the factor of time is inessential for the second one. Wittgenstein claims that the sleep-argument can question *A*'s estimation of the time of eating but is unable to question the bare fact that *A* ate dinner. The sentence 'I have just eaten dinner' is a temporal sentence and that is why it is susceptible to the sleep-argument.

The immunity of the self-identification sentence from the ordinary dream-argument becomes explicable when one pays attention to the fact that the assertion 'My name is *A*' is radically non-temporal. To the question: 'How could I make a mistake that my name is *A*?' an ordinary person should answer: 'If I am normal, I cannot imagine how it would be possible' (Wittgenstein 1969, § 660). This answer is justified by the grammatical fact that the adverb "just", functioning as time determination, cannot be an integral part of the self-identification sentence: the sentence 'I have just eaten dinner' makes perfect sense, whereas the sentence 'My name has just been *A*' is senseless. When a person *A* uses the word "*A*" as his personal name, he has already been called "*A*" for a long time and his name has been certain for him for a long time. If *A* could not manage to make self-identification assertion repeatedly and with utmost certainty, his ability to make assertions identifying other things would be under suspicion. Only if *A* is able to make self-identification assertion with perfect certainty, can one ascribe to *A* the ability of making identification assertions concerning other things. Self-identification is a necessary condition of other things' identification.

Wittgenstein treats self-identification as a personal assumption of one's ability to use language: I can name other external objects, if I can name myself. To the sceptic he is therefore apt to say: If you acknowledge that you know your name, then you imply that you have some semantic knowledge about names of external objects and the dream-argument is an empty fiction. But if you doubt your identity, then you also doubt whether you are able to think in a non-disfigured language. If you need some additional reasons why you should be certain of your identity, pay attention to the fact that 'My name is *A*' is neither an empirical nor a temporal sentence.

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# On Remarks on Colour

João Carlos Salles Pires da Silva\*

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## I

The remarks on colours written by Wittgenstein in his last years of life contain a detailed treatment of grammatical propositions, that is, propositions situated between logic and the empirical, and, exactly for that, have always been an authentic philosophical challenge. (Cf. Wittgenstein, 1977) A few examples relating to colours: "There is no transparent white"; "grey cannot be bright"; "there is no reddish green". Wittgenstein investigates, therefore, the difficult logic of the concepts of colour, and then situates them in language games, installed in forms of life. With that, the classical theme of necessity finds a new formulation, and the current definition of "truth of reason", for example, sees itself menaced as the one which is true in all possible worlds.

Wittgenstein's immediate target in those remarks is Goethe's *Farbenlehre*, but the reach of his analysis is wider indeed. Specifically, against a very well established tradition of Goethe's interpreters, Wittgenstein enunciates a heresy: Goethe did not write for painters. Goethe, he himself a hard-working painter, could not possibly write to the authority whom he preferably addressed. And that paradoxical situation would certify the failure of his specific phenomenological project. However, Goethe finds himself in the paradoxical situation of doing bad phenomenology just and simply for intending to do it, for discoursing on the "character" of colour. Thus, in a more comprehensive way, extremely paradoxical is maybe the project of a phenomenology, whatever that is, for, on trying to fix the identity of the colour, it necessarily stops writing for its favourite authorities (the ones who mostly become masters of distinctions in the visual field), and at most attends to decorators, that is, to limited conceptual games. Phenomenology, condemned in its fundamentals to an ostensive definition of colours, would be incapable of abandoning itself to the learning of the colour, in which field painters have a lot to teach. After all, it escapes phenomenology the game of chromatic occurrence and, above all, the other games which are not at all exterior to the correct use of the words with which we describe our visual field.

With Goethe's paradox, Wittgenstein states the essential paradox of a phenomenology: its incapacity before phenomenological problems, however legitimate. On discussing how internal relationships may be caught by the look, and displayed in the phenomenon itself, his analysis of the logic of the concepts of colours, in *Remarks*

*on Colour*, offers us a successful example of "therapy" of such problems, no longer involving an intolerable fixing of essences. Thus, the book holds a central place in his work, for it deepens themes which are essential for it, and it still benefits from the most remarkable results of *Philosophical Investigations* and from its remarks on the philosophy of psychology.

## II

Also from a material point of view, *Remarks on Colour* constitute a very refined collection, one even especially resulting from an investigation plan carried out literally. Besides, they are Wittgenstein's last collection of reflections that have the complete mark of procedures which characterise his work as an author, lacking only the typing stage. As an investigation process, it was carried out in a concentrated way in a few months, in 1950, so that they prepare and precede (chronologically and theoretically) the substantial part of what today is named *On Certainty*. However, Prof. G. E. M. Anscombe's edition, in spite of its many merits, compromises the dating, the ordering and even the selection of its paragraphs. Consequently, the edition makes difficult the reconnaissance of the importance of the work, of its position in the wittgensteinian *corpus*, and, moreover, it makes difficult the reading of its central theses, which I partially summarised above.

In fact, the comparison of Anscombe's edition of *Remarks on Colour* with the photocopies of manuscripts 176, 172 and 173 leads us to the discovery, in that edition, of a damaging absence of paragraphs and variants, mistaken dating and wrong ordering of paragraphs in MS 172, which compromise its sense and value. While I was working on the grammar of colours in Wittgenstein, I could make that comparison and, taking into account the mistakes I identified in her edition, I decided to write Prof. Anscombe asking her for an opinion. At that point, I was still translating the text - which today is already completely reestablished and translated, including the variants and paragraphs omitted in Anscombe's edition, with another ordering for the second part, and even with the addition of a fourth part. Being the work over and done with, it would be possible, now, to write a more precise argumentation, but I prefer to recover the text of the letter, mailed on October 30, 1995, in which, after indicating that I would be making a translation of *Remarks on Colour*, parallel to the making of my thesis, I argued as follows:

"(...) I was able to compare the text you edited to the photocopy of Wittgenstein's manuscripts found in the edition of Cornell University. That work led me to a few conclusions which I would like to submit to your appreciation, for I fear to be mistaken due to the lack of data or just to sheer misjudgement in evaluation. My conclusions have led me to diverge from some information given in your preface and, especially, from the

ordering of the paragraphs in Part II of the *Bemerkungen über die Farben* [*Remarks on Colour*], so I would like to submit the summary of those conclusions to your appreciation:

"First, it seems to me that the original ordering of the text in Part II differs from the one you edited. The text ought to begin at § 11 up to § 20, and following them §§ 1-10. This way, I believe, the text would improve in force and clarity, for (a) the present § 1 will be no longer isolated, and will complete the series of fictitious situations contrary to Goethe's phenomenological analysis; (b) new argumentative groups would arise and none would be dissolved; (c) §§ 11, 12 and 13 would then accomplish the perfect function of introducing a proposal for treating the problem of colours. I feel then that the text is a clear analysis project of the grammatical propositions about colours - a project which will be explored and accomplished in Parts III and I. Besides, there are empirical indexes showing that this new proposal of ordering does not conflict with the manuscripts, and what is in them even supports it.

"I call your attention (i) to the blank space at the end of § 10, which is an index that the text might end there. And (ii) to the fact that the inversion of the order would be easy and possible. If the four pages of the manuscript happen to be in detached sheets of paper, the change in the order might be made easily. If, however, it happens to be in a sheet of folded foolscap, what might have happened was that the internal pages were transformed into external pages. I am including a composition of the manuscript that shows that both orderings are possible; the one you have proposed, that is to know, page 1 (§ 1 up to part of § 5), page 2 (part of § 5 up to § 10), page 3 (§§ 11-14), page 4 (§§ 15-20); and the ordering that I propose, according to which we would have the following order to the pages: 3, 4, 1, 2.

"Secondly, I have some doubts concerning the date of composition of Part I. You state that it would have been composed in March 1951, at Dr. Bevan's house. However, it seems somewhat unlikely to me that Wittgenstein, having such a short lifetime ahead of him and having so much to say about certainty, dedicated the first days after resuming work, after radiotherapy had been suspended, to the review of texts that he had already written. Besides, if he really did that, he would have had little time left to compose Part I, because from March 10 on there are almost daily notes - with registered dates - about certainty, which begin in a notebook (MS 175) and continue on March 21 in another notebook (MS 176) in which we also find notes on colours. It is evident that he only changed into another notebook (MS 176) after there were no more pages left in the other notebook (MS 175). Besides, there is the clue offered by the vertical lines in Part II (which was left at your home) which suggest that review work was done aiming at the composition of Part I. Since every note about certainty is dated (MS 175, MS 176 starting from sheet 22 and MS 177), as if to indicate the importance of every work day, because



of the nearness of death, I feel that it is very strange that there is no date on the first 22 sheets of manuscript 176, where Part I of the notes about colours is found. I finally observe that, if the dates presented by Mr. Ray Monk in his biography of Wittgenstein are reliable, contrary to what is stated in your preface, Part III would not have been composed in Oxford, but in London and in Cambridge. Would it not have been Part I the one you claim to have been composed at your home? It is obvious that the questions I raise about the dates of composition of the manuscripts are not remarkable, except to indicate the continuity of a work about colours and even the priority that was given to them in relation to the reflections about certainty, taking into consideration that both themes are contiguous in MS 172. (...)"

After having sent that letter (to which, unfortunately, there was no answer), it was possible to come to other findings. From among those I would like to emphasise, as a result of a more likely dating, the clear indication of the agreement of theme and period between the collection of *Remarks on Colour* and eight paragraphs of MS 169, which, to be fair, from now on should be included as a fourth part of it, both for its contents, and still for the presence of signs with which Wittgenstein usually separated a block of text: --|-- (Cf. Wittgenstein, L. 1969, vol. 71, fls 77-80; 2000, MS 169, 77v-80v; 1993, 64-66).

### III

A lot of the damaging effects from that edition and from others of Wittgenstein's work were corrected in the recent electronic edition of his estate by Oxford University Press. And, no doubt, it is important to praise an edition that preserves all the hesitations of the original text, keeps its variants and even the revision signs of Wittgenstein himself, for, after all, those ones too are part of the text and indicate, at least, the stage of elaboration - with which very suggestive inter-relations can be restored (Cf. Schulte, 1987). With that, the editor finally stops substituting for the author and competing with the interpreter. However, as an inheritance of previous mistakes, a few slips remain, like the ordering of the Second Part of *Remarks on Colour*, which is still misleading. The persistence of such a mistake by itself absolutely justifies the warning in this text, which may thus be understood both as a praise to the estate monumental diplomatic edition, and as a suggestion that maybe not all the work of textual establishment of the wittgensteinian *corpus* is complete.

Textual criticism is of extreme importance. Undoubtedly, its work does not coincide with philosophical criticism, but, once it prepares the ground for it, it may favour or damage it a lot. And, in the case of *Remarks on Colour*, aspects pertaining to a textual criticism certainly present clear philosophical consequences, such as the possibility to see a more clear connection between the investigation of the logic of the concepts of

colour and the one of the grammar of the expressions "see" and "see as". Then, in that and in other aspects, the edited text should make more clear the project (proper, e. g., of MS 172) of investigation of phenomenological problems without a phenomenology.

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## Endnote

- \* Department of Philosophy at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA). This work would not have been possible to accomplish without the encouragement and counselling of Professor Arley Ramos Moreno, advisor in my Ph.D. in Philosophy at the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP).

# Tacit Element in Lebensform

Rasa Davidaviciene

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Here I will interpret the reference to instinctual behavior, habitual acting in the relation to the 'life-form', which Wittgenstein mentioned in a few unelaborated passages in his *Nachlaß*'. Also I will try to show that this practical aspect of *Lebensform* constitutes the core of 'life-form', the metaphor, introduced by Wittgenstein in his later philosophy.

The word 'tacit' is borrowed from Michael Polanyi (Polanyi, 1967), who described it as a fuzzy knowledge of something what we know, but can not put into words. As it is formulated in one sentence - we know more, when we can tell. And this 'more' that does not fall into the words is activated by the movements of our body, which is a part of practical knowledge. In this sense the *Lebensform* is not only verbally expressed meaning, but also the skill, the habituated style of living or the practice.

Explicitly Wittgenstein said very few words on form of life, indeed one of the most interesting metaphors in his later philosophy. There are several contexts in which this metaphor is mentioned. The first context - is that of language:

19. It is easy to imagine a language consisting only of orders and reports in battle.- Or a language consisting only of questions and expressions for answering yes and no. And innumerable others.- And to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life.

23. <...> Here the term "language -*game*" is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life. <...>

241. "So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?"-It is what human beings *say* that is true and false; and they agree in the *language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life. (Wittgenstein, 1958)

"Umgekehrt könnte ich mir auch eine Sprache (und das heißt wieder eine [Lebensform/ Form des Lebens] denken, die zwischen Dunkelrot und Hellrot eine Kluft befestigt.etc." (MS 115, 1936: p. 239)<sup>2</sup> (On the contrary, I could also think of the language (it also means [life-form/ form of life]) in which the distance between the dark red and light red would be bigger. etc.)<sup>3</sup>

Another contexts where metaphor of life-form is used in "Philosophical Investigations" is the phenomena of hope, belief and acceptance:

"Can only those hope who can talk? Only those who have mastered the use of a language. That is to say, the phenomena of hope are modes of this complicated form of life." (Wittgenstein, 1958: 174e)

"What has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - *forms of life*. (Wittgenstein, 1958:226e)

Existing interpretations of life-form refer mainly to the relation between life-form and language game; of life-form and what has to be accepted as given; the relation of it with hope and agreement and are summarized, for example, in Newton Garver's book "This complicated form of life" (Garver, 1994). Also Wittgenstein's expressions on *Lebensform* could be viewed as the constellation of various aspects of 'life-form'.

Let us consider a few of Wittgenstein's parallels of life-form and acting:

(I) "Ich will sagen: es ist charakteristisch für unsere Sprache, [daß sie auf dem Grund fester Lebensformen, regelmäßigen Handelns./ regelmäßiger Handlungen,] [emporwächst./ wächst.] / daß sie auf dem Grund fester Lebensformen, [regelmäßigen [Handlungsformen/ Formen des Handelns]/ regelmäßigen Tuns], emporwächst." (MS 119, 1937: p. 74)

(I want to say: it is the nature of our language [that it develops/ grows] on the basis of tough life-forms, regular acting/ regular actions.] /that it develops because of steady life-forms, [regular forms of actions/ forms of acting ]/regular acts)

Or in other place, the parallel of life-form and instinctive behaviour written down by Wittgenstein in 1948:

(II) "...Wie fangt es denn an? Das Kind schreit, und niemand spricht von <Verstellung</ möglicher Verstellung>. Sollte etwas ausschauen wie Verstellung, so wäre es <eine tierische Verstellung, eine Lebensform./ eine instinktive Handlung>" (MS 124, 1948: p. 59)<sup>4</sup>

(...How does it start? A baby is crying and nobody talks of <tanglement</ possible tanglement>. If something has to look as a tanglement, it would be <a brutal tanglement, a life-form/ an instinctive acting>)

The better known passages in which Wittgenstein draws the parallel between form of life and irrationality are found in his "Über Gewißheit/ On Certainty" (Wittgenstein, 1984:358, 359), where the meaning of *Lebensform* is connected with the '*Sicherheit*', which is not rational, but brutal '*animalisches*' certainty grounding any possibility of acting.

There are two words in German language what in English was translated as certainty. '*Gewißheit*', which even etymologically has the direct connection with the verbally expressible knowledge, and '*Sicherheit*' whose meaning is closer to the feeling of safety, or irrational certainty. The certainty which is finally the life-form should be understood in the opposition to the verbally explicable rationality of human life. It is something pointing to the tacitly functioning rationality. The feeling of certainty as '*Sicherheit*' primarily is to be connected not with the belief, but with acting, because belief, even though it is retrospectively recoverable in every human act, stands in opposition to doubt.

'Animalishes' certainty, which Wittgenstein situates beyond any justification and superficiality does not deal with the doubt necessarily implicating some rational, i.e. verbally communicable knowledge. Rather it deals with the irrational side of acting, which is inexpressible. That is why Wittgenstein's comment in brackets on the life-form and '*Sicherheit*' relation says, that it is badly expressed and also badly thought out.

In the above quoted passages from manuscript life-form is related with practical aspect of living. The accentuation of acting, of regular actions in the first quotation, marked (I), reveals that human activity is constitutive of *Lebensform* and has the formative power with the respect to language.

In the later Wittgenstein's philosophy action has the very wide application. Briefly, it can be characterized as covering all human life, because in a proper sense everything that people 'do' - talking, thinking, willing, walking, loving, etc.- is action. Even the language is seen by Wittgenstein as a practical skill, habit, which is learned by speaking.

It should be added, that naming every human activity as action in the context of Wittgenstein's later philosophy is not naming by definition. The centrality of action in his theory shows that verbs like to speak, think, will, etc. compose the unsubstantial 'axis' of human life, which shortly can be called - practicing.

Is practice rational or irrational? The answer to this question can not be monosemantic. For example, when someone talks mother tongue s/he practices speaking normally without thinking about the rules of language. Such a speaker usually thinks of what s/he wants to say and not about the language rules. This example shows that practice embrace both rational and irrational sides of activity. The paradox of practice reveals itself only when the theoretical evolvent is made of it. During the process of action this paradox disappear, because of the interplay between rational potentiality and actuality.

The constant reference to practice which is so characteristic of the later Wittgenstein's philosophy demands that we view practice in a wider cultural and religious context. Even though the exposing of tendencies in national character is some kind of schematization, it can be helpful for understanding the meaning of action in the theory of Wittgenstein, who was of Jewish descent and himself defined his own philosophy as Jewish through and through.

Martin Buber (Buber, 1989:57-61) describing the essence of being Jewish views it as the spiritual process revealing itself through the actualization of three interconnected ideas: the idea of wholeness, the idea of action and the idea of the future. These ideas are not abstract concepts but organic tendencies of an ethnic Jewish character. Ethnic tendencies described by Buber are steady and constantly revealed in theories and art

by Jewish people with the unbelievable power. The regularity of mentioned ideas makes of them spiritual values of Jewish nation and because of it the tendencies of wholeness, action and future has absolute meaning in the lives and theories of Jewish thinkers.

Buber describes these inclinations as national instincts, which are raised to the level of spirituality and creativity. The idea of wholeness has the unquestionable priority with the respect to parts in the minds of Jewish people, because the holistic aspect of everything for them is more important. For example, the forest is more substantial thing than separate trees making the forest, or Jewish are better at seeing the relations between events than the separate event.

The meaning of action as the tendency of Jewish national character is deeply religious. From the archaic times the center of Jewish religious consciousness was not the belief as for all Christianity, but the deed. Every action how small and insignificant it can seem to be in Judaism is understood as divine. Because of that acting, doing, producing something is much more important for Jewish people than experiencing.

Keeping in mind Buber's description of Jewishness further interpretation of the connection of *Lebensform* and acting points to the religious element which is at the 'core' of human life, the purpose of which is life-form as making in deeds, as practicing of what you really are.

What meaning does the regularity of action bring into the relation of life-form and practice? Regularity of action can be understood in many different ways: as repetition formatting habitus which is constitutive of human everyday life; repetition as refreshment of steady forms of behavior; repetition caused by forgetfulness. Finally, all religious practices are also based on regular acting.

Through everyday speaking we learn how to use the language. What do we achieve through regular acting? In the quotation (I) Wittgenstein uses regular acting as synonym of steady form of life. By repeating our actions we repeat ourselves. Regular acting which brings the specific shape into living is some functioning of an identity in process, which in the context of Wittgenstein's philosophy more precisely can be named as personal integrity.

The relation of instinctive behavior and life-form, mentioned in the quotation (II), shows that the importance of irrationality is better revealed not by reference to the existence of animals, but in composite rationality of human form of life. In the tension between rational and irrational the constitutive power of instinctive behavior in the life of humans can be uncovered.

Let us consider the Wittgenstein's example with the crying baby in the second quotation from manuscript. Why does Wittgenstein talk of the absence of entanglement

or misplacing of something in this example? "Nobody talks of entanglement, possible entanglement" - there is just the cry of the baby - the expression of infant life form. The cry here is the *Lebensform* at its starting point and it is the instinctive behavior, which is not covered by any social norms and rules. It is spontaneous and genuine. Could it mean, that Wittgenstein in the infant's instinctual behavior finds the beginning of formation process of human life? In the same way he viewed the language - that it is not just the symbolic system given in one moment, but rather it is learned, practiced in the childhood, as intertwined in the different practical contexts.

Life-form is also 'learned' as the skill starting from the first cry of a baby and the formation of it ends with the last breath of the person. The death puts the final stroke on the shape of life-form. By getting older the spontaneity of baby is covered by rational models of acting, social rules, cultural enigmas, etc. In this sense structure of life-form seems to have the shape of 'onion', made up of many layers, with no hard core holding at the center.

In terms of time, at the very beginning of life-form, or in terms of space - at the farthest layer of life-form there is spontaneity of acting - just like a cry of a baby which is the first code of enclosed language.

Is the cry of a baby verbally expressed rationality, or is it irrational behavior? The instinctive element of *Lebensform* should be interpreted in the tension between rational and irrational sides of human life and the answer to the question is suggested by the concept of tacit element which is paradoxical and includes both rational and irrational dimensions of human life.

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## Endnotes

- 1 I am very thankful to the staff of Wittgenstein's Archives in Bergen, Norway, who helped me to get acquainted with the electronic version of Wittgenstein's manuscripts and especially for their valuable discussions concerning various questions of Wittgenstein's philosophy.
- 2 It is Professor's von Wright's numbering of Wittgenstein's Nachlaß// in von Wright "Wittgenstein. To the Memory of L. Wittgenstein".- Basil Blackwell, 1982: p. 43-49. Date indicate the year when Wittgenstein wrote the remark. Page refer to page numbers in the original. The marking [.../...] means, that the second part of devided expression was written on the top of the first one.
- 3 Translations into English are in brackets.
- 4 The marking <...< shows the corrections, words in italic - what was later deleted by Wittgenstein.



# Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Mathematics and the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence

Boudewijn de Bruin

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## I

Humanity, its scientific members in particular, has long been fascinated by the possibility of extraterrestrial intelligence. Although the idea of creatures inhabiting nearby heavenly bodies lost credence after expeditions to the Moon and Mars, several members of the SETI Institute (the institute for the search of extraterrestrial intelligence) still maintain on statistical grounds that "alien civilizations in the galaxy are likely to number anywhere from 10,000 to one million" (Broad 1998).

But, what does it mean: "extraterrestrial intelligence"? The first association most readers will probably have is the prototype of a Martian: a green, and slimy creature in which all sorts of human traces, mental as well as physiological, can be discerned. Furthermore, this creature - let us call him Joe - is very intelligent; in particular, he excels in mathematics. In fact, the very way in which we got in contact with Joe was by means of mathematics: large radiotelescopes picked up sequences of prime numbers, which we returned with part of the sequence of Fibonacci numbers... and he arrived on earth.

There is an underlying assumption of tremendous importance: mathematics is a language shared by all civilizations, it is a universal language, so to speak. This assumption has had enormous consequences for the SETI project. It has restricted the definition of "extraterrestrial intelligence" in the same way as old-fashioned IQ tests have done with the notion of *human* intelligence: intelligence is equated with the outcome of the test, discarding the possibility of an external criterion for the correctness of the test; analogously, "extraterrestrial intelligence" has been declared equivalent to "possession of mathematical abilities similar to ours." But, why would extraterrestrial civilizations have the same mathematics as we do? Is not a different mathematics possible? That is, how can we be sure that the above definition of "extraterrestrial intelligence" does not exclude civilizations that do their math in a different way, but are interesting to get in contact with anyway? Do such civilizations exist? *Can* such civilizations exist?

In this paper, I will argue that Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics provides an interesting view on the assumption that mathematics is a universal language. The argument as I give it here will probably not convince someone who is not familiar with

Wittgenstein's thought. For a different audience, I would have elaborated on different points. Furthermore, I have not dwelt upon any connections with, say, the problems of other minds and cultures, relativism, and the like. Altogether, it is only a short note on what I think is not an unimportant issue.<sup>1</sup>

## II

*The Assumption: Mathematics is a universal language, and hence forms the most plausible way to get into contact with extraterrestrial intelligence.*

*First Problem: Mathematics Is Not Universal.*

*Why would anyone think that?* A possible defense of the claim may run like this. After all, it seems very appealing to consider mathematics as a universal language. Thinking about mathematical statements, it is just too hard to doubt the truth of statements like  $2 \times 2 = 5$ . We simply cannot imagine mathematics to be false. If prompted to answer why not, people tend to tell you that it cannot be imagined that twice combining two apples would give you five apples, and that, hence, no counter-example to the mathematical statement can be thought of. And therefore, they would continue, even though at different planets they may have different fruits, still if they twice combine two pieces of them they will end up with four, not five. Or briefly: mathematical statements are true everywhere, and hence mathematics is universal.

*What is wrong with this argument?* Again briefly: it neglects the fact that mathematics, in order to be universal in any meaningful sense, has to be universally *used* as well. In order for mathematics to be the right tool to talk to foreign species, it is at least necessary that they have it in their tool kit. And now the question becomes whether the (if you wish) universal *truth* of mathematical statements implies its universal usage. I will argue that Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics casts severe doubt on this. The following quote from the fourth of the *Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics* makes this quite clear.

[A mathematical statement is i]ndependent of experience because nothing which happens will ever make us call it false or give it up. Dependent on experience because you wouldn't use this calculation if things were different. (Wittgenstein, 1976, 41-2)

The first sentence states very clearly in what sense we could call mathematics universally true. No experiments will ever be able to falsify mathematical statements, and hence, in every out of the way corner of the cosmos, they will be true. But, that corner may be so different from our world, that our mathematics would not arise there. If the world is too different, the math will be different.

Wittgenstein argues for this by means of "fictitious natural history" (*Phil. Inv.* xii). That is, he constructs thought experiments, or scenarios, describing how particular (mathematical) practices came into existence. Let us - only to get some idea of his argument - distinguish two kinds of scenarios. The first one is situated in a really fictitious environment, quite different from ours. Usually, we are asked to imagine an *only slightly* different culture, where, for instance, the price of timber is not related to *volume*, but to the *surface* it covers, and quite often, Wittgenstein makes it plausible that in such a culture different mathematics would arise. Or at least, he shows that it is hard to imagine that in such a culture *our* mathematics would find a place.

For a start it seems as if we can make good sense of these thought experiments because the differences with our own situation are only small. Thinking things through, however, we quite quickly get the feeling that we can only give such small deviations a consistent place if a whole lot more in our idea of the fictional culture is changed. We need to allow for more than *only slight* differences between them and us. At the end we might even say that Wittgenstein has only given us the *suggestion* of a different culture rather than a consistent and convincing description. I will not go into that question - especially since it has provoked discussion at several other places.<sup>2</sup> However, if we do not think that the above argument is even serious as an attempted proof - the idea of course being that in all those fictional cultures mathematics will not be ours - another line of reasoning can be found in Wittgenstein's writings.

This second kind of thought stays within our own culture and only asks us to reflect on the origin of our mathematics. Near the argument of the wood sellers, for example, we find in the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* a wonderfully short sentence expressing a hint at the origin of multiplication.

We teach someone a method of sharing out nuts among people; a part of this method is multiplying two numbers in the decimal system (*Remarks*, Part I, 142).

Of course, Wittgenstein did not intend this as a serious contribution to the history of mathematics. As it stands, it is very possibly even false. The point is, however, that he draws our attention to the way in which a particular mathematical practice is so to speak implicit in the way we do things. Arithmetic grew out of, say, "sharing nuts." Geometry from dividing land. And that connection is essential for the development of mathematics. This line of reasoning is perhaps best brought out by a quote from again the *Lectures*:

All the calculi in mathematics have been invented to suit experience and then made independent of experience (Wittgenstein 1976, 43).

*Second Problem: Mathematics Is Not A Language*

*Why would anyone think that?* I think that this position is often confounded with the

alleged universal character of mathematics, and thus defended along the lines sketched above: mathematics is true everywhere, so it is perfectly suitable as an *Esperanto* for the whole universe. A more sophisticated defense is this. Mathematics has proved extremely useful in describing the important physical characteristics of our planetary system, the milky way, the structure of the atom, and so on, and so forth. Now, one of the first things that we would like to communicate to alien civilizations is exactly how our physical environment looks like. So mathematics is a straightforward option.

*What is wrong with this view?* To see why this is false, we only need to inspect Wittgenstein's well-known argument against the picture theory of meaning. Were the meaning of a word or sentence a picture, then we would need to know how to interpret that picture. But such an interpretation would stand in need of an interpretation itself, and so an infinite regress would arise. Of course, the reason why we know the meaning of a sentence is that we have learned how to use our language.

Let us with this caricatured version of Wittgenstein in mind look more closely at an example. Suppose we would like to send a message that tells any receiving - and as yet unknown - civilization how our planetary system looks like.<sup>3</sup> The idea is to cut the message into two parts. The first part presents a logic with operators for notions like "planet," "star," "inhabitable object," etc. The second part gives a description of our planetary system in terms of this logic. The receiver is now supposed to apply the first part of the message first, and give a representation of his own planetary system in terms of this logic. Then, having found the meaning of the operators, he will be able to interpret the second part of the message and so get to know something about *our* planetary system.

It is clear that the designers of such systems have realized that straightforward message sending is probably not going to work because the receivers will not know how to interpret the messages. That is, sending "images" (depicting the human body, the structure of the Helium atom, the planetary system, etc.) is not an option. The novel idea is to send messages that have built in a device that allows the receiver to construct the right interpretation without ending up in a Wittgensteinian regress. Sure, that is quite sophisticated. But, I think, a variant of the infinite regress will appear anyway, just at a different level. Indeed, how does the receiver know that this is a message, and not something else; and even if he does, how does he know that its first part gives a partial key to the second part, and that he has to look at his planetary system (rather than the structure of the Helium atom or so) in order to find the full key? The message is so constructed that once he has decoded the first part, he will have the semantics for the second. But what guarantee do we have that he will ever get the semantics of the first part? He would need a key to the *whole* message, too. And a key to that key, and so on.

### III

I have sketched how two fundamental problems permeate the search for extraterrestrial intelligence, and I admit to have presented them in a rather blunt way. In this last section, I will try to formulate some implications. But first, let me set something right.

In the literature (the technical, not the popular) there is a tightly felt distinction between two projects: the *search* for extraterrestrial intelligence, and the *communication* with extraterrestrial intelligence. Perhaps in its early days, the SETI Institute had a more ambitious program, but right now, the first goal is to search for constant or slowly pulsing narrow-band signals (called "carriers"; think of a constant flute-tone). They do not scan for signals that rapidly modulate (like a rhythmic melody); not for *messages* so to speak. Yet, witness the example above, *communication* is studied at other departments, and the arguments I have sketched are in the first place directed at such an enterprise.

Now about the argument. I have certainly not presented an argument that shows that the search for extraterrestrial intelligence is a hopeless and doomed to fail. I think, however, that this argument shows that we should not expect that we will get into contact with intelligence that is too different from ours. Not surprisingly, the popular image of extraterrestrial intelligence is the thoroughly anthropomorphic Martian rather than one inspired on Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris*. At the end, then, one could say that we will not be able to go beyond the anthropomorphic. The search for extraterrestrial intelligence is a search for extraterrestrial human beings.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Another critical argument is (Rescher 1984). A staunch defense is (Minsky 1985).
- 2 An interesting paper is (Gasking 1953), who explicitly acknowledges that his "debts to the lectures of Wisdom and Wittgenstein, in writing this paper, is very great."
- 3 This is not a fictitious example. The idea to do this kind of stuff started, if I am right, with the Dutch mathematician Hans Freudenthal's "Lingua Cosmica" in the 1960's; see his (Freudenthal 1960). For more recent work related to the above example, see, for instance, (Ollongren 2000.)

# Moral Rights and Conflicts

Barbara de Mori

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Moral theories are profoundly influenced by the problem of conflicts. Their force is often measured in terms of the capacity they show to solve the inevitable conflicts between rival ideals, interests, needs, claims, liberties and so on which moral agents require to have be recognized and protected by society.

Utilitarianism has been sometimes regarded as the one moral theory that ménages to avoid the issue of conflict. Since it is 'a single-principle conception' it does not face (at least apparently) the problem of weighing different principles against one another.

One of the most recent and interesting examples of the utilitarian approach to the problem of conflicts is that of the two-level of reasoning elaborated by R.M. Hare (Hare, 1981). At the intuitive level, the conflict may seem to be irresolvable, but at the critical level the conflict is explained and resolved in the light of the appeal to the utilitarian principle of the 'egalitarianism of interests' (Hare, 1989, p. 137).

By contrast, one of the main current charge to the possibility of developing a moral theory of rights is its incapacity to justify some procedure by means of which weighing the rights in conflicts. But much of the impetus towards rights in the first place stemmed from a deep unease about the way utilitarianism thinks to solve moral conflicts. To many theorists of rights, the utilitarian approach to conflict resolution is unfair. It is well known, in fact, that the utilitarian reasoning seems to involve trade-offs: the benefits of an agent A can be 'traded-off' in our moral computations against a commensurate benefit to an agent B. That is, an agent A can be used for the benefit of an agent B, or for the general benefit of B,C,D, etc. agents.

The idea of rights has often been conceived as a way of resisting these trade-offs: rights impose limits on what can be done to individuals for the sake of the greater benefit of others. But, if rights themselves conflict, the specter of trade-offs is reintroduced: an individual can feel his right to be traded-off against the rights of others in moral comparison. So, it is of vital importance for a theory of rights to offer, at least, an attempt at solving conflicts between competitive rights.

In this paper I would like to make a comparison between the utilitarian approach and that of the theories of rights to the problem of conflicts focusing on the two-level strategy. I will refer most exclusively to conflicts between *moral rights*.

## I.

Theories of rights have dealt at length with the problem of conflicts, starting from the evidence they do not have an ultimate criterion or principle to which they can refer in case of conflicts between competitive rights. Conflicts between, say, the moral right of a pregnant woman to decide what happens in and to her body and the moral right of the fetus to life, or between the fundamental right to life of an aggressor and the right to self-defense of the victim of the aggression are to be solved directly, weighting the interests, needs, ideals and so on at stake, on a case by case basis, looking for compromises worked out in practice.

The general problem, so, is 'How can moral reasoning resolve the irreducible conflict of rights?' Two questions are involved in this problem: first, are conflicts between rights even possible? And, secondly, if they are possible, how could we try to solve them?

The first question is directly tied to the absolutism with which rights are usually conceived: we usually think to have an inalienable or absolute right to, say, life, liberty and property. But, if things are left in this way, the second question does not arise at all: between two absolute competitive rights we cannot even discuss the possibility to solve their conflict on a case by case basis.

It is for these reasons that among theorists of rights have become consolidated the proposal of considering rights not from an absolutist point of view, but rather through the notion of *prima facie*, the notion first introduced by D. Ross for duties, but today mostly in use for describing moral concepts liable to be weighed against each other without necessarily being traded-off (Ross, 1930).

Describing a right as *prima facie* has the primary function to indicate that it is not absolute and that it is not possible, if not case by case, to provide a definitive account of its weight. This allows us to offer a plausible explanation as to why a right, in given circumstances, can be *infringed* without being *violated*, and it indicates, therefore, a way of approaching, if not resolving, conflicts. And so we can try to answer the second question.

In given circumstances, that is, a certain right can be overwhelmed by other considerations or other rights, through mechanisms of negotiation or strategic interaction, or through criteria of comparative evaluation of the moral priority of rights or the elements through which these rights enter into conflict.

For example, we could think in terms of a model in which each person is represented by a point-centre of force and the forces (the *prima facie* rights) obey an inverse square law (Mackie, 1985, p. 115). By means of this model we look for compromises which will



have to be worked out in practice and, anyway, will be morally defensible in so far as they reflect the equality in value, that is the equal weight in front of violation, of the *prima facie* rights.

It has to be noticed that, in this way, the value of a certain right remains unaltered and its reclaiming preserves the characteristic of universalization which is demanded by morality. Even if my *prima facie* right to, say, free speech is, in some circumstances, infringed by the right of others non to be disturbed, my right remains universally valid, in so far it has not been violated and can be applied, in the correct circumstances, when its weighing with other competitive rights will assign priority to it. All this, then, allows us to explain how a theory of rights can deal with conflicts.

But the more interesting suggestion is about the possibility of explaining, differently, the infringement and the violation of rights in the light of a two-level strategy. A theory of rights could in fact make use of something similar to R.M. Hare's 'two-level' reasoning and explain the infringement of a given right by means of the distinction between what happens at the intuitive level and what happens at the critical level: at the critical level, the right is not violated since it is fully considered, while at the intuitive level the right might, on the basis of reflections at the critical level regarding the comparison with other rights and the need for cooperation, be infringed. But, let's clarify this point.

## II.

The utilitarian thinker R.M. Hare attempts to explain the centrality of rights in contemporary moral thought by referring to his two-levels theory, within which rights are justified by virtue of the 'egalitarianism of interests'. At the intuitive level, he says, we see individuals appealing to a lot of conflicting rights; at the critical level, we use the utilitarian principle of the equal consideration of the interests of all as the criterion to explain the real meaning of the intuitive rights and to solve their apparent conflicts.

But this idea, defended by Hare, of basing moral reasoning on the distinction between the two levels of thought, can be taken up again within a moral theory of rights, by reading it, so to speak, the other way round. Rights, that is, can be conceived of as reasons excluding utilitarian motives, reasons of the second level which are able to exclude utilitarian reasons of the first level (Mackie, 1985, p. 186). That is, through the distinction between the two levels of thought, it is possible to determine principles for the resolution of conflicts between rights which respond to criteria of negotiation and debate, and not to higher criteria of utility to which the rights themselves lead.

Transactions like promising, for example, lend themselves well to confirming the possibility of applying the two-level reasoning within a theory of rights: at the intuitive

level we observe the right-duty relationship just as fixed by their correlativity; at the critical level, we account both for the bonds of compulsoriness and those of entitlement (which a promise confers, respectively, on he who promises and he who receives the promise), through one or more fundamental rights possessed by all individuals as moral agents.

At the intuitive level, therefore, the enormous proliferation of the appeal to rights, the 'rhetoric of rights' which seems to characterize the contemporary ethical debate could be explained; at the critical level, it would be possible to justify the centrality of the concept of rights for normative ethics and the method of looking for compromises which will be worked out in practice by means of a case by case basis. A method that can easily be considered 'weak', in the sense of a refusal of a rationally stringent derivation from an unitary principle, as in utilitarianism, but that can avoid the unpalatable results of trade-offs.

Besides, by means of the two-level strategy we can also explain the relation there is between the concrete, institutional rights which individuals claim case by case and the cluster of formal abstract *prima facie* rights which individuals appeal to in order to resolve conflicts. That is, at the intuitive level, we see the particular, substantive rights as they are conceived by individuals; at the critical level we understand the reason of that substantive rights and explain their conflict in the light of *prima facie*, abstract rights, which will form a model on the basis of which to construct a theory of rights.

### III.

Even if all of this is true, there is another aspect of the question. The problem at this point, in fact, is not the infringement of a certain right in given circumstances of practical conflict at the 'intuitive' level, but rather its violation at the level of 'critical' thought. The violation of a right, in fact, directly involves an injustice towards its possessor (Thomson, 1986).

Violating a right means not considering its moral force at any level, not taking it into consideration, at the critical level, in negotiation or interaction. The sense of moral indignation, of 'injustice' which is created in consequence of the violation of a right, is, in this sense, an important indicator of the special status which rights enjoy within moral life and thought.

The main difficulty concerning the violation of rights, therefore, is to establish on what bases we must distinguish between the violation of a right, which is unjust, and its infringement, which, however, is lawful. Appealing to some higher principle which does not depend on rights is tempting; but we could try to solve the difficulty directly on the

level of relations between *prima facie*, fundamental rights and not on the basis of their derivation from something else.

The solution is offered in the light of the two-level strategy, distinguishing between concrete, institutional rights and *prima facie*, abstract rights and also by means, for example, of the concept of compensation and those judicial practices relative to the questions of sanction and responsibility. It is not possible to examine these questions in detail here, but the suggestion is that a theory of rights can solve conflicts between competitive ideals, needs, interests and so on without violating any rights of individuals, working out compromises and infringements at a practical level, by means of the criteria of justice, a sort of intermediate between the 'two levels' of rights.

It is in this way that a theory of rights shows its profound link with the concept of justice, and proves the possibility of giving an account of such important aspects of moral and social practice as justice of actions and institutions and justice in the cases of responsibility and punishment and in transactions between moral agents, without appealing to some unitary principle as in the case of Hare's egalitarianism of interests.

A theory of rights, thus, starting from an abstract system of *prima facie*, fundamental, moral rights can directly intervene in the affairs of social justice - as the theories of Nozick, Dworkin, or Rawls demonstrate. But, rather than asserting that moral rights are the means of maintaining the justice of social institutions, we could say that justice is the means of maintaining, promoting, realizing, modifying, and so on, the system of *prima facie*, fundamental, abstract rights which is developed at the critical level.

If, that is, the starting point is not institutions, but rather the abstract system of *prima facie*, fundamental, moral rights, the link between justice and rights, between actions and institutions, can be maintained and consolidated in the light of the ways in which a substantive system can be derived from a formal system, without the intervention of higher universal principles, but rather through negotiation, compensation, cooperation, and interaction.

Surely, substantive, institutional rights can stray, even quite considerably, from the *prima facie* rights they derive from. But this is due to the complex, stratified ways in which a substantive theory can relate to the formal model from which it derives. The derivation of substantive rights can be a complicated operation, and it is important to distinguish the system of institutional rights which it is the task of institutions to defend and promote, from the system of *prima facie*, fundamental rights from which they derive on the basis of a moral theory grounded on rights.

From this we can say that a theory of rights can deal with conflicts, since *prima facie* rights can be considered within this theory as morally fundamental without being

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absolute, and it is precisely in this that their strength and special priority lie. Substantive, institutional rights, those that are taken up, claimed, infringed, etc., in practice, derive their *raison d'être* precisely from *prima facie*, fundamental, abstract rights.

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# What Cannot Be Spoken Of

Czeslaw Dmochowski

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Tractatus as a way to philosophical understanding of the world.

*We shall not cease from  
exploration, and the end  
of all our exploring will  
be to arrive where we started  
and know the place for the  
first time.*

T.S. Eliot

*Alle Philosophie verbirgt  
auch eine Philosophie.  
Jede Meinung ist auch ein  
Versteck und jedes Wort  
auch eine Maske.*

Nietzsche

Philosophy is a task of a single man and this task is expressed in the proposition 6.54 of the Tractatus. As we know this proposition says: "My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. ( He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it.) He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly."

I think that we can understand this proposition in two ways. We can understand it in agreement with Wittgenstein`s advice which we find in the proposition 6.53 - "The right method of philosophy would be this. To say nothing what can be said, i. e. the propositions of natural science, i. e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy: and then always, when someone else wished to say something metaphysical to demonstrate to him that he had given no meaning to certain sings in his propositions. (...)."

The second possible understanding which I prefer, is to consider 6.54 to be a key to the Tractatus. To my mind this proposition says that only when we recognize the propositions as senseless, will we acquire philosophical understanding of the world. This proposition is a task, not a solution, and like philosophy itself belongs to the task, not to its performance. In the light of this proposition Wittgenstein's Tractatus turns out to be not only a metaphysical system, but a philosophical method as well.

I believe that so called mystical propositions of the Tractatus are "necessary" consequences of all previous propositions, which - it seems to be a paradox - "prove" their own senselessness, and in this way they are that "ladder" on which we are climbing up.

The problem is that when we have understood their senselessness, we are forbidden to say anything for we have found ourselves in an ethical domain, and in this meaning Wittgenstein speaks about his book as having an ethical sense which he expressed as being silent.

What is the ethical sense of the Tractatus? Trying to answer, let's put the following question: What is the phenomenon (resp. possibility) of understanding and the sense (resp. value) of the world?

Since "The proposition is a picture of reality." (4.01), the world is represented in language, hence "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world." (5.6). Understanding of the world is based on this representation. But for propositions, picture facts and only the facts ("The world is determined by the facts, and by these being all the facts." /1.11/ ), there is no value in the world and no statement of fact can ever be, or imply a judgment of absolute value. Propositions say nothing about the world, they represent it only. When we are speaking about the world, we still remain in it and can not "leave" it, we can not see it from the outside. Thereby all propositions about the world are senseless for "... In the world everything is as it is and happens as it does happen. In it there is no value (...). If there is a value which is of value, it must lie outside all happening and being-so. For all happening and being-so is accidental, it is of no value, and if it is of no value, it is senseless. Facts do not say anything about the world as a whole, only when we see the world as a whole - limited whole - we see it rightly, i. e. sub specie aeterni, and only from this point of view the world is of value. To see the world sub specie aeterni is to see it from the point of view of ethics, which cannot be expressed for it is transcendental (6.13).

Only from a point of view of ethics can we answer the question "why?". The condition of assent to the world as a whole, is its sense (resp. value). The question "why?" - why in the world everything is as it is - anticipates ethics. The phenomenon of the sense of

the world is not constituted by isomorphism of language and the world, for any value does not have its equivalent in reality.

The propositions of the Tractatus show what is inexpressible - ethics, and from its point of view these propositions are senseless. Only ethics "expresses" the truth about the world as a whole but this truth is inexpressible and indefinable itself. There is only one way to express the truth - to be silent. Ethics itself does not say anything about the world. Ethics - says Wittgenstein - must be the condition of the world, like logic.

Above conclusions results from my understanding of the notion of the "senseless". Let us consider this notion in another way - how does Wittgenstein "prove" senseless of his propositions? According to my account the following answers can be possible:

- (1.) The Tractatus` propositions are to prove that we can not speak about the world as a whole for the world divides into facts (1.2) and states of affairs are independent of one another (2.061), and - as we know - facts and only the facts are represented in language. Thereby when we are trying to describe the world as a whole, and we do this in language, our sentences must be senseless.
- (2.) In language we cannot speak about the sense of the world. The Tractatus` propositions prove that there is no sense in the world and they say nothing about the sense but it fact - in my opinion - nothing but the sense makes it possible to speak about the world, and therefore denying that "there is not the sense of the world" is senseless. In language we can neither confirm existence of the sense of the world nor deny its non-existence.
- (3.) The Tractatus` propositions prove that while speaking about the world, we remain in it, for the limits of my language mean the limits of my world. This proposition is senseless for "belongs" itself to the world but at the same time it proves through its senselessness, that each sentence about the world as a whole is senseless - but is cannot be said, it shows itself.
- (4.) When we stop speaking about the world we can see it sub specie aeterni. The contemplation of the world sub specie aeterni is its contemplation as a limited whole (6.45). The feeling of the world as a limited whole is the mystical feeling. Which manifests that "The world is my world" (5.641), "The world and life are one." (5.621), and - concludes Wittgenstein - "The subject does not belong to the world but it is a limit of the world." (5.632). "The subject" - "The philosophical I" sees the world sub specie aeterni and from this point of view, all propositions about the world are senseless.
- (5.) The truth about the world as a whole is inexpressible for language only represents the world. Only "the philosophical I" being not a part but the limit of

the world, can experience this truth - it means - can see the world rightly. Drawing a limit to the expression of thoughts in language, Wittgenstein proves that "the philosophical I" does exist.

- (6.) If "in the world everything is as it is and all happening and being-so is accidental", all sentences about the world are accidental and relative too, and they cannot express any truth about the world for the truth must be non-relative.
- (7.) Logic "forces" us to remain in the world for the limits of logic are the limits of the world, but the propositions of logic say nothing for they are tautologies (6.12). "Propositions can represent the whole reality, but they cannot represent what they must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it - the logical form." (4.12) Therefore true relation between language and reality is hidden and inexpressible. The proposition shows the logical form of reality (4.1212), hence the sense of the proposition cannot be explained.
- (8.) Mutual relationship between language and the world is "finite" for there is a fixed form of the world, an unchanging order of logical possibilities. Objects contain the possibility of all states of affairs. Totality of possible states of affairs is the form of the world. The objects are unchanging in themselves. Their actual combinations change but not their possible combinations. The possible configurations of the objects provide the boundary of what can be said. What can be said is unchanging, hence our possibility of expressing our thoughts is limited. The isomorphism makes it impossible to say something about the world, to describe it as a whole, thus we are not able to express the truth about the world.

Understanding of the world implies comprehending it as a whole, and only being the whole - as we noticed - it is of value, i. e. ethical sense, and the task expressed in the proposition 6.54 has ethical sense too. This sense we also find in the proposition 6.4321 - "The facts all belong only to the task and not to its performance."

The ethical sense of the Tractatus is hidden - what Wittgenstein says himself - there can be no ethical propositions, for the sense of the world must lie outside the world for all in the world is accidental. The sense of the world - I think we may interpret the Tractatus in this way - is in the relationship between a thought and the world.

Philosophy as a search for truth turns out to be ethics. I think that so called "mystical propositions" are in a way ethical propositions but their ethics is "hidden" in them, they "show" that what is ethical in them. There is only one sense - ethical sense - and this sense the world has got only as a whole.



The Tractatus' propositions are senseless for they say nothing about the world - as we remarked - as a whole. The propositions of the Tractatus say about the principles of picturing of the world in language, but this fact - these principles - say nothing about the world, they have a lack of value.

To see the world rightly is to see it sub specie aeterni. In order to see it rightly we must be silent, and seeing it sub specie aeterni we are silent, for eternity is inexpressible.

The truth, like the sense of the world is hidden in the relation between a thought and the world - between that what we think and that what exists.

Philosophy is a trial to reveal this relationship and to reveal it philosophy must be a dialogue, and as the dialogue philosophy reveals "how" we think, and on this "how" is based "what" we think about the world.

Wittgenstein's silence reminds Husserl's epoche - his restraint from judging, suspension of convictions. Phenomenological experience is inexpressible, and such is Wittgenstein's - what cannot be spoken of - the phenomenon (possibility) of understanding of the world - we must be silent about.

If the phenomenon of understanding of the world could be expressible, there would be no difference between that what we think about the world and the world itself. If there was not this difference, there would be no questions at all. Nothing but this difference enables one to ask questions. In spite of the fact that the world is pictured in language, this difference still remains for the state of affairs are changing, and only the logical form as the basis of the phenomenon of understanding of the world is fixed and unchanging and as such makes the world understandable.

The above consideration has just shown a possible direction at which we can aim at and how we can understand the Tractatus when we are investigating it.

# Wittgenstein und die österreichische experimentelle Poesie

Thomas Eder

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Ich werde im folgenden auf einen frühen Aufsatz des "experimentellen" Dichters Gunter Falk mit dem Titel *Experimentelle Literatur* (Falk 197?)<sup>1</sup> zurückgreifen. Die in der Wiederlektüre seines Aufsatzes formulierbaren Fragen zum "Experiment in der Literatur" werden mit Überlegungen zum Einfluß der Philosophie Ludwig Wittgensteins auf eine sprachorientierte Literatur in Österreich nach 1945 verknüpft.

Falk kommt in dem erwähnten Aufsatz zu folgendem Befund für eine experimentelle Literatur:

Planmäßige Isolierung, Kombination und Variation: Man geht rational vor, nach einem Plan, das Material wird ausgesucht, isoliert und wird irgendwelchen, schon vorher geplanten Einflüssen oder Variationen unterworfen. Dieses Verfahren ist in der Literatur sehr wohl denkbar; die Permutation eines Textes wäre ein Beispiel. Aber was bezweckt man mit dem Experiment? Man will Beobachtungen anstellen, diese Beobachtungen, Protokollsätze, sollen durch ein Gesetz, das man aufstellen wird, erklärt werden. 'Das Experiment ist eine Frage an die Natur, das Gesetz ihre Antwort', sagen die Physiker gerne. Verfolgt der experimentierende Literat solche Absichten? Will er Gesetzmäßigkeiten aufzeigen? Offenbar nicht. Aber auch das wissenschaftliche Experiment wäre in dieser Form unvollständig. (Falk 197?)

Unvollständig deshalb, weil zwei gegenläufige Prinzipien - jenes der Erklärung und jenes der Verifikation - in den Wissenschaften wechselweise angewandt werden. D.h., daß zuerst eine Hypothese gebildet wird, die zur Erklärung der Protokollaussagen<sup>2</sup> dienen soll, und daß dann aus dieser Hypothese noch nicht bestehende Protokollaussagen abgeleitet werden. Mittels Experimenten ermittelt man den Wahrheitswert dieser bislang noch nicht technisch überprüften Protokollaussagen, man verifiziert oder falsifiziert sie. Erweisen sie sich als wahr, so gilt die Hypothese, aus der sie abgeleitet wurden, als bestätigt, sie wird Gesetz. Die dem Experiment vorausliegende Hypothese reguliert demnach die Art, die Richtung und den Gegenstandsbereich des experimentierenden Forschens, "ein Experimentieren ohne eine leitende Hypothese ist nicht denkbar". (Bochensky 1993, zit. n. Falk 197?)

Man geht also von einer Hypothese aus, man hat bereits eine bestimmte Vorstellung, Meinung, wenn man zum Experiment schreitet, man hat eine Theorie, wie wir verallgemeinernd, wenn auch terminologisch unrichtig [es müßte wohl: Hypothese heißen, TE], sagen wollen. Diese Theorie soll im Experiment bewiesen und widerlegt werden. (Falk 197?)

Weil es unentscheidbar sei, was vorgängig ist: die durch Experiment bzw. Erfahrung gewonnenen Beobachtungsdaten, die das Bilden von Hypothesen erst ermöglichen, oder die Hypothese, die Beobachtungen und Experimentanordnungen leitet, scheinen (experimentelle) Literatur und exakte Naturwissenschaft sich in dieser Hinsicht einander anzunähern. Denn weder ist die Naturwissenschaft so frei von Zufall und Spekulation, wie sie es gemäß ihrer Selbstdefinition gern sein möchte, noch ist die Dichtung ausschließlich Resultat einer unerklärlichen Inspiration und bloß eine Kumulation von versprachlichten Assoziationen. Gerade für das Schreiben "experimenteller Literatur" sieht Falk rationale Operationen als konstitutiv an, auch wenn er die unumschränkte Dominanz der Rationalität relativiert:

Wir würden also festlegen, daß man insoweit von experimenteller Literatur sprechen kann, als ihr Herstellungsprozeß vorwiegend rational vor sich gegangen ist, der Autor von einer bestimmten Vorstellung, Theorie über das, was er erreichen will und wie er es erreichen will, ausgeht und das vorgegebene Material nach einem aus der Theorie ableitbaren Verfahren behandelt. Das Ziel des Prozesses ist jedoch nicht das Auffinden von Gesetzmäßigkeiten - der Autor will ja einen Text produzieren, der wohl irgendwelchen Gesetzen, syntaktischen etwa, gehorchen wird, im übrigen aber wieder Besonderes, Gegenstand, nicht Allgemeines, Gesetz, ist. Bestenfalls wird er seine Theorie verifizieren wollen. Doch letztlich wird er beabsichtigen - einen Text herzustellen. [...] Wir haben vorhin die Forderung nach Rationalität durch 'vorwiegend' eingeschränkt. Tatsächlich gibt es kaum einen Autor, der rein rational vorgeht, allein der Impuls zur Produktion wird im allgemeinen nicht rationaler Natur sein; aber, bekanntlich ließe sich der Satz Valéry's, daß der erste Satz dem Autor geschenkt wird, für das Weitere man jedoch selbst sorgen muß, auch für die Wissenschaft verwenden. Wir sehen als Zeichen von Rationalität die Entstehung des Textes aus einer Hypothese, Theorie an, bzw. im Akt der Analyse: die Möglichkeit einer Rückführung in die Hypothese, bzw. einer Erklärung durch die Hypothese. (Falk 197?)

Die angeführten Ähnlichkeiten zwischen naturwissenschaftlichem und literarischem Experiment dürfen freilich nicht darüber hinwegtäuschen, daß es zwischen beiden eminente Unterschiede gibt. Diese Diskrepanzen rühren vor allem aus dem Umstand her, daß der Künstler in anderer Weise als der Naturwissenschaftler Teil des Experiments und des Erlebens während der Produktion (und auch Rezeption) von künstlerischen Experimenten ist. Der wohl in diesem Zusammenhang auch auf Falk

enormen Einfluß ausgeübt habende Oswald Wiener, dessen literarisch-naturwissenschaftliche Entwicklung ihrerseits exemplarisch und konkurrenzlos für die Beziehung von Kunst und Wissenschaft steht, bringt dieses Dilemma auf den Punkt. Wiener sieht die Aussichten des literarischen Experiments limitiert durch folgenden Umstand: Die Naturwissenschaften sind im Lauf ihrer Entwicklung

immer dezidierter darauf verpflichtet worden, die Wirklichkeit als außerhalb des Bewußtseins liegend [...] darzustellen, [...] und das Bewußtsein aus der Beziehung der Konstrukte (Aussagesysteme) zu dem durch sie Darzustellenden möglichst herauszuhalten. Demgegenüber arbeitet die Kunst über dem Umstand, daß Menschen Inhalte erleben. Inhalte werden erlebt, weil das einzelne Bewußtsein mit einer jeweiligen Struktur, auf welche die Wahrnehmung projiziert wird, identisch ist. [...] Inhalt ließe sich durch intersubjektive Zeichen in genügend eindeutiger Weise nur ersetzen, wenn man konsequent von der Existenz des Bewußtseins absehen könnte. (Wiener 1979, 182)

Die daraus resultierende Crux des künstlerischen Experiments - wenn man es aus der Sicht der Naturwissenschaften betrachtet - liegt nach Wiener in einer fehlenden Unterscheidungsmöglichkeit begründet: Weil Menschen bei Kunstproduktion und -rezeption Inhalte konkret erleben und nicht wie ein unbeteiligter Beobachter außerhalb des Bewußtseins liegende Abbildungen des Erlebten *konstruieren*, können sie im künstlerischen Experiment nicht unterscheiden zwischen "Theorie" und "Wahrnehmungsdaten, auf welche sich die Theorie bezieht". Sie können aber auch nicht unterscheiden zwischen der "Theorie" und weiteren "Verfahrensweisen", mittels deren die "Wahrnehmungsdaten" auf die "Theorie" bezogen werden. (Wiener 1979, 182)

Diese Nichtunterscheidbarkeit zwischen Erleben und Gegenstand, die das künstlerische Experiment vom naturwissenschaftlichen scheidet, kann aber dort zur "Chance" des künstlerischen Experiments werden, wo auch die exakten Wissenschaften es mit einem weitgehenden Zusammenfallen von Beobachter und beobachtetem Gegenstand zu tun haben: wenn es um eine wissenschaftliche Beschreibung von Verstehen, Bewußtsein, Selbst etc. geht, also im weitesten Sinne um das Verhältnis von mentalen und physischen Phänomenen. Oswald Wiener fordert aus seiner naturwissenschaftlich akzentuierten Perspektive auch für die Literatur: "Literatur scheint mir nur mehr beachtenswert, insofern sie sich dem großen, dem einzigen Thema unserer Epoche zuwendet: dem Begreifen der elementaren Mechanismen des Verstehens." (Wiener 1998, 95)

Falk, der diese Thesen mit einer theoretischen Fixiertheit auf den Primat der Sprache vor dem Inhalt entwickelt, rekurriert auf die informationstheoretische, numerisch-statistische Ästhetik Benses, der die Eigenwelt in der Interaktion des Sprachmaterials vor der sogenannten Außenwelt der Texte akzentuiert:

Der ästhetische Zustand eines Textes, sofern er ein sprachlicher Zustand ist, kann nur sprachlich realisiert sein, d.h. er gehört ganz und gar der sprachlichen *Eigenwelt* der Texte an, nicht ihrer sprachlichen *Außenwelt*, also nicht dem, worüber gesprochen wird. (Bense 1969, 104)

Wenn diese restlose Absage an eine Textaußenwelt im folgenden bezweifelt wird, so soll nicht einem überkommenen Inhaltsdenken das Wort geredet werden, das vom literarischen Kunstwerk eine angemessene Relation zu einer vorgängig fixierten äußerlichen Erlebenswelt fordert. Auch der folgenden Sentenz Benses ist mit einer - allerdings wesentlichen - Einschränkung zuzustimmen:

Das Verhältnis der identifizierenden (redundanten) zur innovativen (informationellen), der wahrscheinlichen zur unwahrscheinlichen Ordnung definiert die numerische Graduierung des ästhetischen Zustandes in einem statistischen Sinne, der erkennen läßt, wie sehr der ästhetische Zustand kein wirkliches, sondern nur ein wahrscheinliches Sein besitzt, das fragil und in höchstem Maße unbestimmt ist, ausschließlich abhängig von der Distribution der selektierten Elemente über dem selektierbaren Repertoire. (Bense 1969, 107)

[...]

Besonders an Texten lassen sich solche statistischen Ausmessungen oder Auszählungen relativ leicht durchführen, und zwar [...] in allen Schichten der den Text konstituierenden Elemente, von bloßen Materialien bis zu erklärten Bedeutungen. (Bense 1969, 106)

Die Einstellung auf die Botschaft als solche für die *ästhetische* - oder mit Roman Jakobson - für die *poetische* Funktion von Texten zu halten<sup>3</sup> ist jenes unschätzbare Verdienst der Poetik der Moderne, jener Wurf, der auch in Max Bense und der Stuttgarter Schule (Mon, Harig, Esser, Döhl etc.) bedeutende Mit-Konstrukteure gefunden hat. Benses generalisierende Annahme aber, daß sich statistische Auszählungen in allen Schichten des Texts, von der materialen bis zur Bedeutungsebene vornehmen lassen, ist zumindest aus heutiger Sicht problematisch. Denn Bense baut auf die von Claude Elwood Shannon formulierte Theorie der Automaten bei seiner Bedeutungserschließung, obwohl Shannon immer wieder betont hat, daß derartige Formalisierungen keinerlei Bezug auf "Inhalte" oder die "Bedeutungs"-ebene haben.<sup>4</sup>

Ähnlich formuliert Max Bense zur semantischen Seite der Textproduktion (für den Fall, daß diese nicht-aleatorisch, d.h. nicht-zufällig und nicht-willkürlich verläuft):

Aber die Selektion kann auch nicht-aleatorisch, nicht rein zufällig sich abspielen; in diesem Falle ist sie gesteuert, mehr oder weniger determiniert, und dann gehören auch nicht-materiale Elemente zum Repertoire, Regeln, Grammatik, semantische Kategorien, Semanteme. [...] Man schreibt, wenn man schreibt, sowohl auf der Graphemebene der Texte wie auf der Semantemebene. (Bense 1969, 101)

Literarisches Schreiben bedeute also sowohl eine Selektion der Materialien wie auch eine Selektion der Semanteme, womit wir uns aber vor dem Problem der Formalisierung von Inhalt und Bedeutung, mithin im Zirkel der nicht-umgeharen Bedeutungsinterpretation und mitten im Strudel der nicht-umschiffbaren Frage nach der Textsemantik, für die die numerische Ästhetik nur wenig befriedigende Formalisierungs- und Generierungsversuche anbietet, befinden. Bense legt selbst seinen analytischen Finger auf die Wunde seiner ästhetischen Theorie, wenn er der Metapher in seinen Überlegungen besondere Bedeutung beimißt. Grob gesprochen versucht er auch deren formalistische Fixierung, nachdem ihre eminente Rolle für die Literatur literarhistorisch nachgewiesen ist. Generell sei die Metapher eine Übertragung eines Wortes aus natürlichem, frequentem Zusammenhang in einen künstlichen, niederfrequenten. In ein funktionales Schema gebracht, könne die Metapher als Abbildungsschema der Texttopologie verstanden werden. Die Metapher gehöre dem Bereich der Metasprache an, also jenem Sprachbereich, in dem man über die Sprachverwendung, die sich auf nicht-sprachliche Gegenstände bezieht (die sogenannte Objekt-Sprache), spricht und diese charakterisiert - so zweifelhaft die Unterscheidung von Objekt- und Metasprache für natürliche Sprachen auch ist.<sup>5</sup> Nun geht Bense davon aus, daß es in der Objektsprache, also im Reich der nicht-metaphorischen Formulierungen, eine unendliche Anzahl von Wörtern gibt, daß diese jedoch prinzipiell abzählbar ist. (Bense 1969, 117ff.) Man zählt und zählt und kann immer noch ein weiteres Wort dazugeben, alle diese Wörter sind deutlich voneinander geschieden - diskret, wie es so schön heißt. Für die Metapher nun verhalte es sich anders: Die metaphorischen Bedeutungen seien zwar auch unendlich, jedoch unter der Zusatzannahme, daß diese Unendlichkeit nicht abzählbar ist, so wie eine geometrische Linie aus unendlich vielen Punkten besteht, die ihrerseits nicht voneinander diskret sind. Damit sind die Bedingungen einer Formalisierung zumindest erschwert. Denn wie sollte eine statistische, numerische Methode auf nicht-diskrete, also nicht voneinander abgrenzbare Größen angewendet werden? Bense wählt den Ausweg eines Analogieschlusses: Er vergleicht die Funktionsweise der Metapher mit der nicht-aristotelischen Seinsthetik Gotthard Güntherscher Prägung. Ohne dieses Günthersche Modell, das eine nicht-aristotelische, dialektische Logik (Günther 1991) insinuiert, hier im Detail zu beschreiben, fällt doch die Strategie Benses auf: Analogieschluß, Vergleich, Übertragung zur Erklärung der Metaphorik entstammen dem selben Bereich wie das zu Erklärende. Sollte sich also die Metapher als die basale Operation der Bense'schen Beweisführung erweisen? Als basale Operation - könnte man der Bense'schen Ästhetik gerafft vorwerfen -, die zudem aus dem Bereich der exakten Wissenschaften z.B. informationstheoretische oder kybernetische Modelle auf ästhetische Phänomene so überträgt, daß der Erkenntnis- und Wahrheitswert solcher Übertragungen nicht über den Status des Metaphorischen hinausreicht und damit im Bereich des Literarischen bleibt, auch wenn er kraft der

gewählten Terminologie auf seine "Wissenschaftlichkeit" und mithin Wörtlichkeit verweisen möchte.

Gunter Falk folgt in den weiteren Ausführungen seines Vortrags, die um das Verhältnis von literarischem Text und Wirklichkeit, zwischen Sprache und Welt kreisen, wiederum Max Bense, aber er folgt auch René Wellek und Austin Warren und rekurriert mit diesen auf Ludwig Wittgensteins *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*<sup>6</sup> (Wittgenstein 1984):

Die Literatur, das literarische Kunstwerk ist Darstellung, Bild der Welt, einer Welt, sei sie fiktiv oder real, und diese Sprache-Welt-Relation ist für den Bereich der wirklichen Welt von Wittgenstein im 'Tractatus logico-philosophicus' klassisch formuliert worden [...] (Zit. n. Falk 197?)

Falk spielt auf die von Wittgenstein im *Tractatus* entworfene realistische Referenzsemantik an (der Satz sei ein Bild der Welt<sup>7</sup>, es gebe eine Isomorphie zwischen der - logischen - Form des Satzes und den Gegenständen/Sachverhalten der Welt), er zitiert<sup>8</sup> Wittgenstein:

- 2.16 Die Tatsache muß, um Bild zu sein, etwas mit dem Abgebildeten gemeinsam haben.
- 2.161 In Bild und Abgebildetem muß etwas identisch sein, damit das eine überhaupt ein Bild des anderen sein kann.
- 2.17 Was das Bild mit der Wirklichkeit gemein haben muß, um sie auf seine Art und Weise - richtig oder falsch - abbilden zu können, ist seine Form der Abbildung.
- 2.171 Das Bild kann jede Wirklichkeit abbilden, deren Form es hat. (Wittgenstein 1984, 15f.)

Und Falk weiter:

Ein literarisches Kunstwerk, ein Sprachkunstwerk würde mit Wittgenstein also, für den Bereich der Wirklichkeit die Form von logischen Sätzen annehmen, doch ist die Welt, die im literarischen Werk abgebildet wird, nie die Realität an sich, sondern eine fiktive Welt, die mehr oder weniger Bezug zur Realität haben kann. (Im Surrealismus, der eine surreale Welt vorgibt, kennen wir die berühmten alogischen Sätze.) [...] Diese Abbildungsfunktion der Literatur, wie ja der Sprache an sich, hat vielfach zu falschen Auffassungen über die Seinsweise des Sprachkunstwerks geführt. So verlegten die klassischen Ästhetiken das Schöne in den Bereich des Abzubildenden, der Gegenstände, Sachen, Personen, Handlungen, und als 'schön' wurde etwa nicht das Wort 'rose' angesehen, sondern der Gegenstand, die Rose selbst. [...] Der Großteil der Mißverständnisse über moderne und neue Literatur hat im Verkennen der Abbildungsfunktion mit dem Abgebildeten seine

Wurzel. Wenn man über Joyce spricht, spricht man vielleicht über die Problematik der Psychoanalyse statt über die Problematik der Sprache. (Falk 197?)

Wenn es bei Wittgenstein im Tractatus weiter heißt: "Seine Form der Abbildung kann das Bild nicht abbilden; es weist sie auf" (2.172) (Wittgenstein 1984, 16) und "Das Bild stellt dar, was es darstellt, unabhängig von seiner Wahr- oder Falschheit, durch die Form seiner Abbildung" (2.22) (Wittgenstein 1984, 16), und damit der oft mißverständene Unterschied zwischen "Sagen" und "Zeigen" ("4.1212 Was gezeigt werden *kann, kann* nicht gesagt werden" [Wittgenstein 1984, 34]) entwickelt wird, so führt dies Bense in seiner Textästhetik zu der Ableitung, daß "die ästhetische Botschaft eines Textes [...] nicht anders als in ihm verwirklicht werden [kann], denn sie zeigt sich nur mit der Realisierung des Textes" (Bense 1982, 296). Für die Unterscheidung zwischen semantischen und ästhetischen Texten recurriert Bense abermals auf Wittgenstein:

der semantische Text besteht aus Sätzen, die wahr oder falsch sind und 'die Wahrheitsbedingungen bestimmen den Spielraum, der den Tatsachen durch den Satz gelassen wird', wie es [...] im 'Traktat' (4.463) heißt. [...] In einem ästhetischen Text nun verengen die Schönheitsbedingungen der verknüpften Sätze den Spielraum der Wahrheitsbedingungen für den Spielraum, der den Tatsachen durch den Satz gelassen wird [...]; ästhetisch [...] ist der Spielraum eines Satzes nur er selbst, identisch mit sich, weder größer noch kleiner als seine materielle Realisation, *ästhetisch sagt der Satz nur, was er zeigt*. Ästhetische Sprache geht im Prinzip der Objektsprache voraus, so wie die Metasprache dieser nachfolgt. (Bense 1982, 297f.)

Bense referiert hier nochmals die schon oben angedeutete Vorrangigkeit der sprachlichen Eigenwelt eines Textes vor der außersprachlichen Außenwelt, wenn es um ästhetische Zusammenhänge geht, er schlägt damit auch abermals in die philosophische Kerbe Gotthard Günthers, wie sich in dem Bense-Zitat, das Falk in seinem Vortrag bringt, deutlich zeigt:

Gotthard Günther hat in seinem fundamentalen Werk 'Ideen und Grundriß einer nichtaristotelischen Logik' zwischen einer ersten Art von Reflexion, die sich auf Objekte, also auf Welt und einer zweiten Art, die sich auf sich selbst, ihren eigenen Vorgang bezieht, unterschieden. In der ersten sind die Probleme der Transzendenz, in der zweiten die Probleme der Transzendentalität enthalten. Denkt man nun daran, daß sich jede Reflexion nur sprachlich vollziehen kann, also auch ein Zeichenprozeß ist und daß die Zeichen einer Sprache in 'Zeichen für...' und 'Zeichen von ...' eingeteilt werden können, so fällt es nicht schwer, die Günthersche Differenzierung in aristotelische Logik 'für' Welt und nichtaristotelische Logik 'des Denkens des Denkens' zur Idee einer weiteren neuen Unterscheidung auszunützen, und zwar von aristotelischen *Texten für...* und nichtaristotelischen *Texten von ...* (Bense 1960, 115, zit. n. Falk 197?)



Falk kommentiert diese Abkehr von der Vorstellung, "die Welt zu dichten" und die Hinwendung zu einem "Dichten des Dichtens" mit einer Rückbindung der zweiten Reflexion Gotthard Günthers an "experimentelle Texte":

Die Abbildungsfunktion ist für sie [für nicht-aristotelische *Texte von...* , TE] nicht mehr relevant. Damit ist nicht gesagt, daß die Worte (und die Texte) keine Bedeutungen mehr tragen können, jedoch müssen sie es nicht länger, womit die Möglichkeit von Lautgedichten gegeben wird, im weiteren bedeuten und bezeichnen Bedeutungen, wenn sie auftreten - was im allgemeinen der Fall sein wird - nicht länger Welt, sie bedeuten Sprache, sie bedeuten Bedeutung. Sie bedeuten - und auch so können wir uns ausdrücken, das ist eine Sache der Terminologie -, sie bedeuten Denken. (Falk 197?)

Damit vollzieht Falk eine Wendung von der Abbildtheorie und der realistischen Referenzsemantik des frühen Wittgenstein zu dessen Spätwerk: zu den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*, in denen Wittgenstein - grob gesagt - zu einer Gebrauchstheorie der sprachlichen Bedeutung in verschiedenen Sprachspielen, die man während des Spracherwebs durch Abrichtung erlernt, gelangt. Gunter Falk faßt zusammen:

Ich möchte nochmals wiederholen: Was ein Wort bedeutet, lernt man, indem man sieht, wie es gebraucht wird.

Und hat man auch seinen Gebrauch kennengelernt, so hat man auch gelernt, was es bedeutet. [...]

Hiermit ist nun zugleich gesagt, daß das, was das Wort benennt, nicht seine Bedeutung sein kann. (Falk 197?)

In seiner Wittgenstein-Exegese geht Falk schließlich so weit, daß er für seinen Vortrag das rhetorische Mittel Wittgensteins einer "Mäeutik an sich selbst" anwendet, wenn er mehrere Sprachspiele anhand von Beispieltexten sich selbst (und damit den Höreren) im fragespielenden Dialog zu erklären versucht. Er schließt mit der Zusammenfassung:

Dieses Spiel ließe sich nun eine hübsche Zeitlang weiterführen; ich möchte es abbrechen. Halten wir fest: Sprache ist kein Sammelsurium von Namen, mit denen die Dinge belegt werden, auf daß man über sie sprechen könne. Sprache im Sinne von *langue*, *langage*, ist ein sinnvolles Zeichengefüge, in dem etwas mitgeteilt werden kann. Die Bedeutung der Zeichen ist nicht extensional, eindeutig festgelegt. Die Bedeutung eines Zeichens ergibt sich aus seinem Gebrauch, sie *ist* der Gebrauch des Zeichens. Wenn ich ein Zeichen, Sprachzeichen, gebrauche, gebrauche ich es in einem bestimmten Zusammenhang. Dieser Zusammenhang, in dem das Zeichen gebraucht wird, bestimmt seine Bedeutung. (Falk 197?)

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## Endnoten

- 1 Der Falk-Text *Experimentelle Literatur* ist ein unveröffentlichtes, nicht paginiertes Vortrags-Typoskript, das sich im Nachlaß von Gunter Falk im Bestand des Österreichischen Literaturarchivs der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek (ÖLA) befindet und das bisher nicht genau datiert werden konnte, mit höchster Wahrscheinlichkeit jedoch aus den siebziger Jahren stammt. Dieser Aufsatz wurde zusammen mit anderen Texten Gunter Falks von Michael Hammerschmid im Rahmen eines Forschungsprojekts am ÖLA, das die Aufarbeitung des Nachlasses von Gunter Falk zum Gegenstand hatte, rekonstruiert. Um einen Einblick in diesen Text zu ermöglichen, werde ich die aussagekräftigsten Teile ausführlich zitieren; eine Gesamtedition des Textfragments liegt in dem Forschungsbericht von Michael Hammerschmid (Hammerschmid 1998) vor.
- 2 Protokollsätze sind die grundlegenden Erfahrungs- und Beobachtungssätze über Sachverhalte, wie sie im Logischen Empirismus des Wiener Kreises gefordert sind, ähnlich den "Elementarsätzen" Wittgensteins.
- 3 Vgl. Jakobson 1979, 92: "Die *Einstellung* auf die BOTSCHAFT als solche, die Ausrichtung auf die Botschaft um ihrer selbst willen, stellt die POETISCHE Funktion der Sprache dar."
- 4 Vgl. Oswald Wiener zu Benses und Abraham Moles empirischer Ästhetik auf dem Hintergrund der Informationstheorie (Wiener 1990, 111): "Diese Versuche sind, erstens, von allzu seichten ästhetischen Voraussetzungen ausgegangen. Man hat etwa die Ideen von Shannon herangezogen, obwohl Shannon selbst immer wieder betont hat, daß seine Überlegungen keinerlei Bezug auf 'Inhalte' oder auf die 'Bedeutungs'-Ebene haben. Eine Ästhetik ohne diese Ebene ist von vornherein zum Scheitern verurteilt. Und zweitens hat man gleich versucht, aus diesen unzulänglichen Vorstellungen spezifische Rezepte für das Kunstmachen und -konsumieren abzuleiten."
- 5 Unter Objektsprache versteht die Wissenschaftstheorie "in theoretischen Untersuchungen über sprachliche Ausdrücke die Klasse derjenigen sprachlichen Ausdrücke, die untersucht, insbesondere *erwähnt* [...] werden, im Unterschied zur Metasprache als der Klasse derjenigen sprachlichen Ausdrücke, der sich die Untersuchungen selbst bedienen. [...] Gelegentlich entstehen Zweideutigkeiten, wenn 'Objektsprache' nicht als 'Sprache, die Objekt (einer Untersuchung) ist' verstanden wird, sondern als 'Sprache über nicht-sprachliche Objekte', also als die *unterste* Objektsprache in der Hierarchie der Sprachebenen. Natürliche Sprachen sind im Unterschied zu explizit eingeführten Wissenschaftssprachen oder auch formalen Sprachen durch eine Einheit von objektsprachlichen und metasprachlichen Ausdrücken beliebiger Stufe gekennzeichnet." Vgl. Mittelstraß *et al.* 1995, 1054f.
- 6 Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*. Frankfurt/Main (Suhrkamp) 1984 [1921]. (= Werkausgabe Bd. 1; suhrkamp taschenbuch wissenschaft 501).
- 7 Vgl. auch die diesbezügliche Kritik an dem Stück *kaspar* Peter Handkes, die von Reinhard Priessnitz und Mechthild Rausch (Priessnitz/Rausch 1975, 147f., 152) formuliert wurde: "nun treten zwar im 'kaspar' *ainsager* in aktion, die den spracherwerb seiner hauptfigur durch mustervorlagen steuern, anregen etc., aber ihr einsatz arbeitet vielleicht auf eine zu einseitig gesehene funktionsweise der sprache hin: nämlich auf die abbildende. *ein tisch ist ein wahrer tisch, wenn das bild vom tisch mit dem tisch übereinstimmt* (handke, 'kaspar') - das stimmt im falle von original und dem es reproduzierenden abbild (wenn inhaltliche ähnlichkeit festgestellt werden kann) und ist letztlich trivial, aber wenn handke damit den

wittgensteinschen *bildbegriff* (den des *tractatus*) meint - und dafür spricht u.a ... ist *ein wahrer tisch* ... - so fasst er ihn naiv auf und wird selbst zu voreiligen folgerungen verleitet. [...] wittgensteins bild-begriff in dessen 'tractatus' ist abstrakter zu verstehen; er ist mehr von der form einer mathematischen abbildung. als naturalistisches bild wäre er ja wieder ein ding usw. (darüber gibt es ja bereits jede menge fachliteratur). - nun braucht handke, als dichter, nicht philosophische klarheit für sich in anspruch nehmen. es sollte jedoch gezeigt werden, auf welch verschiedenen wegen man zur *poetisierung* gelangen kann. und was sie eigentlich soll oder wem sie nützen könnte, scheint uns höchst fragwürdig."

- 8 Falk gibt in seinem Aufsatz *Experimentelle Literatur* keine genauen Zitationsangaben, welche Stellen aus dem *Tractatus* er an dieser Stelle referiert hat. Ich halte mich im groben - mit einigen Erweiterungen - an eine Auswahl, die Michael Hammerschmid vorgeschlagen hat. Vgl. Hammerschmid 1998.

# Certain Beyond all Reasonable Doubt - Wittgensteins narratives Modell des Wissens

Claudia Fahrenwald

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Mit der Frage nach dem Wissen begann vor über zweitausend Jahren die Geschichte der abendländischen Philosophie. Nach Aristoteles paradigmatischer Formulierung im berühmten ersten Satz seiner *Metaphysik* streben alle Menschen von Natur aus nach Wissen. Mit ihrer Selbstbezeichnung als Wissensgesellschaft scheint die Gegenwart somit in gewisser Weise endlich beim Telos einer langen philosophischen Tradition angekommen zu sein. Doch bezieht sich die heutige *Wissensgesellschaft* in ihrem Selbstverständnis keineswegs primär auf ihre philosophische Tradition, sondern auf ihre technologische Kompetenz. Möglicherweise resultieren jedoch gerade aus dieser Marginalisierung der philosophischen Implikationen des Wissensbegriffs - so meine These - viele ihrer immensen ungelösten Probleme.

## 1. Das wissenschaftliche Wissen

Die heutige informationstechnische Globalisierung ist das Ergebnis einer theoretisch-wissenschaftlichen Erfassung der Welt seit dem Beginn der Neuzeit. An ihrem Anfang stand die Vision, Wissen objektivierbar und für möglichst viele Menschen zugänglich zu machen. Mit dem Aufbau eines weltumspannenden Datennetzes scheint die Realisierung dieses Projekts ein gutes Stück vorangekommen zu sein. Notwendige formale Bedingung für die Durchführung des Programms war die Festlegung auf ein exaktes, geschlossenes und reproduzierbares Zeichensystem, wie es bereits Galilei in seinem Satz vom Buch der Natur, das in der Sprache der Mathematik geschrieben sei, für einen weiteren Erkenntnisfortschritt implizit vorausgesetzt hatte. Seither setzt die wissenschaftliche Methode auf ein Erklärungsmodell der Welt ohne Rest. Für das zwanzigste Jahrhundert kann Wittgensteins *Tractatus* als die sprachphilosophische Vollendung dieser neuzeitlichen Rationalisierungstendenz verstanden werden. Der *Tractatus* stellt den Versuch dar, die Welt logisch neu zu fassen und so auch sprachtheoretisch den Erkenntnisbedingungen der Moderne gerecht zu werden. Sein Wahrheitsbegriff orientiert sich dabei klar am wissenschaftlichen Paradigma: "Die Gesamtheit der wahren Sätze ist die gesamte Naturwissenschaft." (T 4.11) Die Welt reduziert sich damit auf ein System von Tatsachen. Die Philosophie nimmt Wittgenstein jedoch bereits hier explizit von der wissenschaftlichen Methodik aus: "Die Philosophie

begrenzt das bestreitbare Gebiet der Naturwissenschaft. Sie soll das Denkbare abgrenzen und damit das Undenkbare." (T 4.113-4.114) Diese Aussage enthält ein klares Bewußtsein für die Grenzen des wissenschaftlichen Wissens. Eine Einheit des Wissens ist nach Wittgenstein nicht länger aufrechtzuerhalten. Diese Einsicht formuliert auch das berühmte Schweigegebot am Ende der Schrift. Das Schweigen rettet die Welt vor dem Versuch einer vollständigen rationalen Erschließung.

An dieser Bruchstelle des Erkenntnismodells wird deutlich, daß Wittgensteins Sprachanalyse über ein positiv(-istisch)es Wissensmodell hinauszielt. Jenseits der klar definierten Welt des Sagbaren eröffnet sich ein nicht zu definierender Raum des Unsagbaren, dessen Bedeutung für das menschliche Leben jedoch von existentieller Tragweite ist: "Wir fühlen, daß, selbst wenn alle *möglichen* wissenschaftlichen Fragen beantwortet sind, unsere Lebensprobleme noch gar nicht berührt sind." (T 6.52) Das definitive Scheitern des Versuchs, mit dem *Tractatus* noch einmal ein geschlossenes sprachliches System des Wissens zu formulieren, bringt in der Folge das "Luftgebäude" (PU §118) des modernen wissenschaftlichen Wissens in Wittgensteins Philosophie zum Einsturz. Bekanntlich zog er sich, als Konsequenz aus diesem Ergebnis, für Jahre aus der Philosophie zurück. Sein späteres Denken empfand er als zutiefst unzeitgemäß. In zunehmendem Maße kritisiert er offen die wissenschaftlichen Ideale der Moderne. In einem Entwurf für ein Vorwort zu den *Vermischten Bemerkungen* spricht er 1930 davon, daß der Geist dieses Buches ein anderer sei " als der des großen Stromes der europäischen und amerikanischen Zivilisation" (VB 458). Mit dem zunehmenden Verzicht seines Philosophierens auf Geschlossenheit, Eindeutigkeit oder Sinn distanziert er sich radikal von der engen neuzeitlichen Form der Rationalität und vollzieht einen erkenntnistheoretischen Paradigmenwechsel hin zu Kategorien wie Pluralität, Offenheit und Differenz.

Heute erscheint uns Wittgensteins Philosophieren gerade in seiner gebrochenen Reflexionskontinuität zeitgemäß wie kaum ein anderes und als eine intellektuelle Vorwegnahme jenes umfassenden technologisch-ökonomischen Wandels, den wir gegenwärtig durchleben (Meder 1987, 11). Es durchläuft und vereint auf geradezu exemplarische Weise die fundamentalen Gegensätze des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts: Einerseits demonstriert Wittgenstein auf faszinierende Weise die Möglichkeiten eines klaren und konsequent zu Ende gedachten Rationalismus und entwickelt doch gleichzeitig ein Gefühl für die Grenzen dieser Denkform. Ein Shakespeare-Zitat aus dem King Lear sollte ursprünglich als Motto vor den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* stehen: "I'll teach you differences!" (Rhees 1987, 217) Rückblickend wissen wir, daß mit dieser Aussage nicht nur eine Dezentrierung des eigenen Werkes gemeint war, sondern gleichzeitig der Beginn einer Dekonstruktion von grundlegenden philosophischen Prämissen des gesamteuropäischen erkenntnisoptimistischen *mainstreams* seit der

Aufklärung. Ausgehend von diesen kulturkritischen Tendenzen in Wittgensteins Spätphilosophie möchte ich versuchen, einen bislang vernachlässigten Aspekt seines impliziten Wissensmodells zu skizzieren und mit dem Selbstverständnis der heutigen Wissensgesellschaft zu konfrontieren.

## 2. Das ästhetische Wissen

Bis in die achtziger Jahre des letzten Jahrhunderts wurde Wittgenstein hauptsächlich als ein positivistischer Denker rezipiert. Erst in jüngster Zeit setzte sich zunehmend - sicher auch begünstigt durch eine Veränderung des gesamtulturellen Kontextes - die Einsicht durch, daß Wittgenstein im Prinzip lange vor den französischen Poststrukturalisten "eine Art sinnkritischen Anti-Diskurs" (Mersch 1991) begonnen hat. An die Stelle unendlicher Reflexion treten in seinem Spätwerk zunehmend Reflexionen der Endlichkeit. Dem neuzeitlich-modernen Wissensideal wird eine unmißverständliche Absage erteilt: "Mein Ziel ist also ein anderes als das der Wissenschaftler, und meine Denkbewegung von der ihrigen verschieden." (VB 459) Im Grunde stellt Wittgensteins gesamtes späteres Philosophieren eine Auseinandersetzung mit dem wissenschaftlichen Denkmodell dar. So schreibt er 1947: "Es ist z.B. nicht unsinnig, zu glauben, daß das wissenschaftliche und technische Zeitalter der Anfang vom Ende der Menschheit ist; daß die Idee vom großen Fortschritt eine Verblendung ist, wie auch von der endlichen Erkenntnis der Wahrheit; daß an der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnis nichts Gutes oder Wünschenswertes ist und daß die Menschheit, die nach ihr strebt, in eine Falle läuft. Es ist durchaus nicht klar, daß dies nicht so ist." (VB, 529) Diese totale Absage an das neuzeitliche Wissensmodell ist eindeutig und kompromißlos. Für Wittgenstein erfassen wissenschaftliche Fragestellungen die Wirklichkeit unter einem reduzierten Blickwinkel: "Die Wissenschaft: Bereicherung und Verarmung. Die *eine* Methode drängt alle anderen beiseite. Mit dieser verglichen scheinen sie alle ärmlich, höchstens Vorstufen. Du mußt zu den Quellen niedersteigen, um sie alle nebeneinander zu sehen, die vernachlässigten und die bevorzugten." (VB, 536)

Sein philosophisches Modell des Wissens öffnet sich dagegen zunehmend von der Logik zur Ästhetik hin und entdeckt dabei "die seltsame Ähnlichkeit einer philosophischen Untersuchung mit einer ästhetischen." (VB 485) Die ästhetische Betrachtungsweise gibt den Dingen ihre ursprüngliche Rätselhaftigkeit und Bedeutungsvielfalt zurück: "Die Wahrheit ist, daß die wissenschaftliche Betrachtungsweise einer Tatsache nicht die gleiche ist, in der man sie als Wunder ansieht." (VE, 17) Unter solchen veränderten Erkenntnisperspektiven verändern sich auch die Bewertungskriterien von Erkenntnis: "Die Menschen heute glauben, die Wissenschaftler seien da, sie zu belehren, die Dichter und Musiker etc., sie zu erfreuen."

(VB, 501) Auf diese Weise holt Wittgenstein explizit das *Erkenntnis*potential der Kunst in den Diskurs des Wissens zurück.

Die in seinen letzten Lebensjahren entstandenen und bis wenige Tage vor seinem Tod durchgeführten Aufzeichnungen *Über Gewißheit* enthalten noch einmal Wittgensteins radikale Reflexionen über die Möglichkeiten und Grenzen von Erkenntnis. Das theoretisch-abstrakte Wissensideal der Moderne wird definitiv überführt in die eher situativ-konkret begründete Gewißheit der jeweils augenblicklich praktizierten Sprachspiele. Jedes Wissenskonzept erweist sich damit im Grunde als partikular und fiktiv: "Aber mein Weltbild habe ich nicht, weil ich mich von seiner Richtigkeit überzeugt habe. Sondern es ist der überkommene Hintergrund, auf welchem ich zwischen wahr und falsch unterscheide."

(ÜG 94) Jeder Glaube an eine Objektivität des Wissens ist ein Irrtum: "Das Wissen gründet sich am Schluß auf der Anerkennung." (ÜG 378) Auch unser wissenschaftliches Weltbild ist keineswegs rein rational begründet, sondern beruht in letzter Konsequenz auch auf rhetorischer Übereinkunft: "Am Ende der Gründe steht die Überredung." (ÜG 612) Solche Einsichten führen zu einer paradigmatischen Verschiebung des Wissensmodells: "Hier ist *wieder* ein Schritt nötig ähnlich dem der Relativitätstheorie." (ÜG 305) Das Wissen verliert seinen feudalen Herrschaftsanspruch und seine lineare Perspektive: Wissen wird zu einer Konstruktion, abhängig von Raum, Zeit und Kultur.

### 3. Das narrative Wissen

Am Anfang der abendländischen Geschichte der Rationalität entdeckten die griechischen Philosophen, "daß Wissen ohne Erzählung auskommen kann" (Schlaffer 1990, 58). In seiner Kritik am wissenschaftlichen Wissensmodell kehrt Wittgenstein an diese Anfänge des europäischen Denkens zurück. In Analogie zur ästhetischen Perspektive entwickelt er einen neuen, kontemplativen Blick auf die Welt: "Nun scheint mir aber, gibt es außer der Arbeit des Künstlers noch eine andere, die Welt sub specie aeterni einzufangen. Es ist - glaube ich - der Weg des Gedankens, der gleichsam über die Welt hinfliege und sie so läßt, wie sie ist - sie von oben im Fluge betrachtend." (VB 456) Eine solche Betrachtungsweise verändert den Zugriff auf die Wirklichkeit und entwirft auch ein *anderes* Modell des Wissens. Spätestens seit Bacons Verknüpfung von Wissen und Macht am Beginn der Neuzeit war die kontemplative Form von Erkenntnis in Vergessenheit geraten. Das Programm der neuzeitlichen Rationalität formulierte einen ausschließlichen Herrschaftsanspruch über die Welt. Angesichts der unvorstellbar großen Menge an Daten und Wissen, die sich mittlerweile angesammelt hat und die in keinen sinnvollen individuellen Erfahrungszusammenhang mehr integriert werden kann, erfahren wir heute unmittelbar in unserem alltäglichen Handeln diese von Wittgenstein



lange vor ihrer technischen Realisierung thematisierte Problematik von der Irrationalität unseres Wissensmodells.

In Wittgensteins Spätphilosophie führt die ästhetische Verschiebung seiner Erkenntnisprämissen letztlich zu einer Absage an jedes einseitige, wissenschaftlich-rationalistische Modell des Wissens und zur Wiederentdeckung einer *anderen* und sehr alten Form des Wissens: "Es gibt Probleme, an die ich nie herankomme, die nicht in meiner Linie oder in meiner Welt liegen. Probleme der abendländischen Gedankenwelt, an die Beethoven (und vielleicht teilweise Goethe) herangekommen ist, und mit denen er gerungen hat, die aber kein Philosoph je angegangen hat (vielleicht ist Nietzsche an ihnen vorbeigekommen). Und vielleicht sind sie für die abendländische Philosophie verloren, d.h., es wird niemand da sein, der den Fortgang dieser Kultur als Epos empfindet, also beschreiben kann." (VB 462) Mit dieser Wendung von einer logischen zu einer *anthropologischen* Perspektive lenkt er die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Bedeutung des *narrativen* Wissens als zentralen Ort der Selbsterkenntnis einer Gesellschaft zurück. Das narrative Wissen provoziert geradezu einen permanenten fiktiven Deutungswechsel und die spielerische Erprobung von immer neuen (Sinn-)Alternativen. Diese Wiederentdeckung des aufklärerischen Gestus von Erzählungen zeichnet sich an den Grenzen eines rein wissenschaftlichen Weltentwurfs ab und eröffnet so eine Möglichkeit, kulturgeschichtlich tradierte Semantiken aufzubrechen. Wenn jeder Weltentwurf an Sprache gebunden ist, kann es kein Wahrheitsmonopol des Wissens geben.

Die offene und vieldeutige Signatur des narrativen Wissens rehabilitiert auch die oftmals paradoxen Wissensstrukturen unserer Alltagspraxis: -, Certain beyond all reasonable doubt'- (ÜG 416). Eine solche Aussage *jenseits* der wissenschaftlichen Vernunft rückt uns unserem Leben wieder ein Stückchen näher. Wittgensteins narratives Modell des Wissens eröffnet somit in einer kulturkritischen Vorwegnahme den philosophischen Dialog mit der Wissensgesellschaft.

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# The Imagination's Piano In Wittgenstein's Philosophische Untersuchungen

Luis Flores H.\*

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*"Das Ausprechen eines Wortes ist gleichsam ein Schlagen einer Taste auf dem Vorstellungsklavier" (PU,§6)*

## 1. Our Claims

Our purpose is to take into account Wittgenstein's analyses about imagination in the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, in order to articulate them and elaborate a concept of imagination (*Vorstellung*). My first claim is that it is possible. My second claim is that the role of this concept has not been taken into consideration (See Arrington R. and Glock, H.-J. 1991; Hallett, G. 1977; Sluga, H. and Stern, D. 1996; Vohra, A. 1986). In some other cases, imagination has been taken into account only partially (Genova, J. 1995; Schulte, J. 1993, Chapter 7 about "Memory"). Some other accounts about Wittgenstein's concept of imagination are more developed (Glock, H.-J. 1996, see the word "imagination" in his Dictionary; Budd, M. 1989, see Chapter V; White, A. 1990, see Chapter 10), but we disagree with some of their conclusions. Our third claim concerns our disagreements. These are:

a) The role of the imagination in *Philosophische Untersuchungen* is not trivial. White says that: "There is no mention of seeing-as in Zettel where Wittgenstein's primary interest is in visualizing, but only in *Philosophical Investigations* where he displays no particular interest in visualizing" (White 1990, 114). Certainly, this concept is not specially thematized, but as an operative concept is important, because it is half way between understanding (*Verstand*) and perception (*Wahrnehmung*).

b) In my viewpoint, imagination has to be understood not only as a mental state, but also as a practice (*Praxis*), as a behaviour (*Verhalten*), as an activity (*Handlung*). In Budd's view, "this kind of concept is a concept of the performance in the imagination of an activity that, when it is not performed in the imagination, involves external behaviour" (Budd 1989, 115-116). I suppose that sometimes is more than "involving". I argue that imagination as praxis is essentially connected with our lived body (*Leib*).

c) Imagination must be sharply distinguished not only from perception, but also from understanding. Briefly, *imaginatio* differs both from *perceptio* and *intellectio*.

## 2. Wittgenstein's General Strategy about Imagination

Imagination is not an entity to be discovered, but a praxis connected with a special language-game. The way is to know how the word "imagination" is used. Briefly, its niche is its grammar. Consequently, it has proper rules. That implies that "imagination" is used in certain contexts. In another way it supposes a precise net of circumstances (*Umstände*).

Imagination supposes not only mental contents, but also it can turn out into a drawing or even a non-verbal behaviour: e.g. a person can pretend to be a king. Imagination can be used also in more abstract contexts such as imagination of hypotheses.

If we reduce imagination to the mental contents, even in this case, imagination has not been well understood by the imagist tradition because this tries to understand it by taking perception as a model (*PU*, § 301). Wittgenstein comprehends imagination neither as a thing, nor as a private experience that we can show (*PU*, § 382). In addition, when I imagine is determinant that I imagine (*PU*, § 377) and that I *want* imagine what I want to imagine (*PU*, 213e).

Moreover, imagination is neither a mere mental entity nor a set of linguistic features. It is also a kind of praxis. In Wittgenstein's philosophy, imagination becomes also a methodological recourse, that is to say, a procedure for searching the typical features of a language-game through the invention of imaginary cases. It becomes a technique of variation. According to this, there is a relationship between imagination and overview (*Übersicht*) because this allows us to grasp the language-game in which we are imagining. A joke always supposes an imaginative leap, that could be unintelligible without the complicity of the interlocutors concerning the inherent inverosimilitude of the joke.

## 3. Analysis of Three Metaphors concerning Imagination

Wittgenstein does not compare imagination with chess; nevertheless, if we consider imagination in chess and one of the chess players imagines a move in the chessboard, then this move is a praxis that cannot be reduced to a mental state or a physical movement (*PU*, § 33). That notwithstanding, the move is perceptible in the space-time. What a chess player imagines is not only a mental event, it is also something that he can draw in a diagram.

Wittgenstein compares imagination with a piano (*PU*, § 6). Certainly, it corresponds to Wittgenstein's earlier conception concerning language and thought. Nevertheless, imagination is conceived as a piano, because it has a combinatory role to combine sounds, notes, *etc.* And it is always the piano player who decides the combination. The piano as thing exists there, but as musical combinatory exists only when the piano player plays (the act of playing is similar to a move in chess).

Wittgenstein conceives imagination as a game (*Spiel*) (*PU*, § 216). Let us remark that Anscombe's translation of "*Spiel*" is here "play": I disagree. This comparison reinforces the combinatory role of imagination and the idea that the performance of imagination is a kind of praxis having its own rules.

#### 4. Focusing on Wittgenstein's *Philosophische Untersuchungen*

If essence is expressed by grammar, then "one ought to ask not what images are or what happens when one imagines anything, but how the word "imagination" is used. But that does not mean that I want to talk only about words." (*PU*, §370). Accordingly, we have to find out, outside philosophy, where we use the words "I imagine that...", "Imagine that..." (*PU*, §393) The question is: which is the language-game of imagination? Consequently, circumstances have to be pointed out. We need a pragmatics of imagination, which is related to a general pragmatics in the *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Flores 1998). Concerning imagination, Wittgenstein uses two verbs "*sich vorstellen*" and "*sich denken*". Nevertheless, he sometimes uses both for the *same* object, for instance a rule: a) "Can't we imagine (*uns...denken*) a rule determining the application of a rule?" (*PU*, § 84); b) "Can we not now imagine (*uns... vorstellen*) further rules to explain *this* one?" (*PU*, §86) Or for a language-game: a) "Imagine ( *denke dir*) a language-game in which..." (*PU*, § 21); b) "the sentence only seems queer when one imagines (*man vorstellt*) a different language-game for it from the one in which we actually use it" (*PU*, §195).

Imagination or imagining or visualization (*Vorstellung*) is first of all a praxis. This possibility is recognized insofar as sometimes we can *imagine* a pain: "it is enough to imagine it -for instance, you screw up your face a bit" (*PU*, § 311). If I imagine conscientious looking-up, "as I do this I assume a particular expression of face (say that of a conscientious bookkeeper)" (*PU*, §173). And isn't mimicking what someone looks like "just as good as imagining it"? (*PU*, § 450). In a situation similar to imagining, Wittgenstein says that "our criterion for someone's saying something to himself is what he tells us and the rest of his behaviour (*Verhalten*)" (*PU*, § 344). Although is not our target, *Zettel* (§§ 627, 629) confirms this conception of imagination as *activity* (*Handlung*) and as behaviour (*Verhalten*). Finally, Wittgenstein assumes that

imagination can be fully embodied: "Suppose, however, that someone were to draw while he had an image (*Vorstellung*) or instead of having it, though it were only with his finger in the air. (This might be called 'motor imagery' (*motorische Vorstellung*))" (*PU*, 177e).

Imagination is more than a mere or isolated praxis: it is a power (*Vorstellungskraft*) (*PU*, § 251 and 207 e).

There is no ownership of images of imagination: the visual room, an imagined picture of a landscape, an imaginary landscape, "inasmuch as it can not be any one else's it is not mine either" (*PU*, §398).

Imagination is imagination of human situations (*PU*, §393 and 220 e), a language (*PU*, §19), a doubt (*PU*, § 84), a language-game (*PU*, §60), a rule (*PU*, §84), people who... (*PU*, 188e), a form of life (*PU*, §19), a significant context (*PU*; 211 e) and so on.

Imagination is a power of combination (*Zusammenstellung*): "What if I imagine senseless combination of words?" (*PU*, §512). This aspect is also relevant in accordance with the metaphors of piano and game.

Imagination aspires to possess clarity: "Here we all have a quite clear idea (*Vorstellung*) of what 'above' and 'below' mean" (*PU*, §351).

The concept of an image (*Vorstellung*) is akin to the concept of an aspect, because seeing an aspect and imagining (*Vorstellen*) are subject to the will. Sometimes to see an aspect ("to take the bare triangular figure for the picture of an object that has fallen over") requires "capacity of imagination (*Vorstellungskraft*)" (*PU*, 207e). Let us remark that Anscombe translates "*Vorstellungskraft*" by "imagination": I disagree.

Imagination fulfills also a methodical role, because we can visualize imaginary cases similar to *Gedankenexperimente* (*PU*, §312).

Wittgenstein uses some other terms related to imagination (*Vorstellung*), for instance, fiction (*Erdichtung*) (*PU*, 210e), imagination (*Phantasie*) (*PU*, 213e). In (*PU*, §398), "*Phantasie*" becomes more distant from perception, and in (*PU*, §141) it seems to be less concerned with will.

An image is not a picture (*Bild*), but a picture can correspond to it (*PU*, § 301). Furthermore, Wittgenstein says: "What makes my image of him an image of *him*? Not its looking like (*Ähnlichkeit*) him" (*PU*, 177e). Accordingly, imagination cannot be understood within the perceptual framework. This is one of the limits of the imagination. The second one is the domain of the imaginable (*Vorstellbaren*). There are unimaginable objects, for instance, the construction of the heptagon (*PU*, § 517). This

reactivates the paradigmatic example of the chilogone concerning Descartes and Leibniz's defence of the difference between *intellectio* and *imaginatio*. The third limit concerns the sharp difference between image (*Vorstellung*) and meaning (*Sinn*) (*PU*, § 449). This difference implies two kinds of grammar: "This shows clearly that the grammar of 'to mean' is not like that of the expression 'to imagine' and the like." (*PU*, 18 e). This lead us to the limit concerning imaginability insofar as this is not essential for the understanding of a proposition: "It is no more essential to the understanding of a proposition that one should imagine anything in connexion with it, than one should make a sketch from it." (*PU*, § 396. For Wittgenstein, "there is a lack of clarity about the role of *imaginability* (*Vorstellbarkeit*) in our investigation" (*PU*, § 395). The reason why is that we do not know "the extent to which it ensures that a proposition makes sense" (*PU*, §395). Let us remark that this lack of clarity only concerns an investigation focused on sense. Finally, Wittgenstein is not confined in a mere *actual* imagination, because his concept of imaginability emphasizes the relevance of possible imagination. In my viewpoint, this concept should be taken into account by Wittgenstein's commentators.

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## Endnote

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# Spiele als Algebra

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## Zusammenfassung

Wittgenstein braucht häufig den Begriff des Spiels, "Brettspiel" aber auch "Sprachspiel"; ihn beschäftigte die Frage, was den Charakter eines Spieles ausmacht.

Die neuere Mathematik, insbesondere Universale Algebra, erlaubt es, Spiele als Algebren zu sehen. Eine Algebra ist eine mathematische Struktur, bestehend aus einem Träger, einer Anzahl von Operationen und Axiomen; Algebren beschreiben Verhalten ohne auf andere, grundlegendere Definitionen angewiesen zu sein.

Spiele bestehen aus Operationen der Teilnehmer, die im allgemeinen in einer bestimmten Reihenfolge ausgeführt werden. Spiele mit ihren Regeln lassen sich ohne Zwang als Algebren beschreiben. Spiele sind in sich selber definiert, ohne Verweis auf andere Regeln. Brettspiele lassen sich auch losgelöst von physischen Brettern und Figuren beschreiben - z.B. in einem Schachbuch.

Zwischen Algebren können strukturerhaltende Abbildungen, sogenannte Iso- und Homomorphismen, definiert werden. Zwischen dem physischen Spiel mit Figuren auf einem Brett und der Beschreibung der Züge in einem Buch besteht ein solcher Homomorphismus. Die Struktur des Spieles, als Algebra verstanden, lässt sich verallgemeinern und es zeigt sich, dass Sprache, als Spiel, die Realität - ebenfalls ein "Spiel" - beschreibt; zwischen den sprachlichen Beschreibungen und der Realität bestehen strukturerhaltende Abbildungen.

## 1 Einleitung

Wittgenstein hat sich über lange Zeit mit dem Begriff "Spiel" und den verschiedenen Verwendungen beschäftigt. Er stellt sich z.B. die Frage, was in verschiedenen Verwendungen des Wortes "Spiel" das Gemeinsame sei (z.B. Philosophische Untersuchungen, Wittgenstein 1960):

Betrachte z.B. einmal die Vorgänge, die wir "Spiele" nennen. Ich meine Brettspiele, Kartenspiele, Ballspiel, Kampfspiele usw. Was ist allen diesen gemeinsam? (66, p. 324)

An anderer Stelle fragt er bezogen auf das Damespiel, was denn das Essentielle des Spieles (den "Witz") ausmache und ob die Regel, dass "Damen" durch einen zweiten, daraufgelegten Stein markiert werden, zum Spiel gehöre:

...Im Damespiel wird deine Dame dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass man zwei Spielsteine aufeinanderlegt. Wird man nun nicht sagen, dass es für das Spiel unwesentlich ist, dass eine Dame aus zwei Steinen besteht? (562, p. 459)

Sagen wir: die Bedeutung eines Steines (einer Figur) ist ihre Rolle im Spiel. ... (563, p. 459)

Ich bin also geneigt, auch im Spiel zwischen wesentlichen und unwesentlichen Regeln zu unterscheiden. Das Spiel, möchte man sagen, hat nicht nur Regeln, sondern auch einen *Witz*. (564, p. 459)

Wittgenstein macht auf den Zusammenhang zwischen Sprache und deren Notation einerseits und Spiel andererseits aufmerksam und weist auf Parallelen beim Erlernen der Wörter einer Sprache und den Regeln eines Spieles hin (Wittgenstein 1960):

Die Art und Weise, wie die Sprache bezeichnet, spiegelt sich in ihrem Gebrauch wider. (Tagebücher, 11.9.1916, p. 175)

Die Worte "Das ist der König"... sind nur dann eine Worterklärung, wenn der Lernende schon >weiß, was eine Spielfigur ist<. (Philosophische Untersuchungen, 31, p. 305)

Mit den mathematischen Methoden seiner Zeit - im Wesentlichen Logik, in der Form von Theorien erster Ordnung, wie sie von Whitehead und Russell untersucht worden waren (Whitehead and Russell 1910-1913) - war es Wittgenstein wohl nicht möglich, den Begriff des Spieles schärfer zu fassen. Ich will in diesem Beitrag zeigen, dass mit seither entwickelten Instrumenten der Mathematik - insbesondere der Universalen Algebra (Birkhoff 1945) - ein besserer Zugang möglich ist und dass die Intuition Wittgensteins formal nachvollzogen werden kann. Wittgenstein spricht zwar von ‚struktureller Ähnlichkeit‘ (Wittgenstein 1960, Tagebücher 23.11.16), sein Begriff von Operationen ist aber noch ein wesentlich speziellerer, näher an den arithmetischen Operationen, als der verallgemeinerte Begriff, den Birkhoff eingeführt hat und der seither besonders von der Informatik (Ehrich *et al.* 1989, Loeckx *et al.* 1996) noch weiter verallgemeinert wurde (vgl. Wittgenstein 1960, Tagebücher 17. und 29.8.16).

Mit den Mitteln der Universalen Algebra gelingt es, die Ähnlichkeit von Spiel und Sprache formal zu belegen und den Bezug als Isomorphismus zu beschreiben. Daraus ergibt sich dann verallgemeinernd auch eine Ähnlichkeit zwischen der Welt (das "wirkliche" Spiel) und Sprache.

## 2 Spiele

Wie Wittgenstein bemerkt hat, ist der Begriff Spiel nicht leicht abgrenzbar; es zeigt, was die neuere Linguistik ‚Prototyp-Effekte‘ nennt. Rosch (1973; 1978) hat mittels empirischer Untersuchungen gezeigt, dass viele Begriffe keine scharfen Grenzen haben und dass sie konzeptionell um Prototypen - besonders typische Exemplare - organisiert sind. Das trifft für alltägliche Wörter wie ‚Hund‘ oder ‚Vogel‘ zu: Deutscher Schäfer ist wohl ein prototypischer Hund, Chihuahua eher ein untypischer, ein Sperling ein typischer Vogel, Pinguin und Strauß eher untypische. Spiel kann auch als Homonym angesehen werden mit zumindest drei wesentlich verschiedenen Bedeutungen, die später analysiert werden.

Für das Folgende wählen wir das auch von Wittgenstein herangezogene Damespiel als Prototyp und zeigen nachher, wie die dabei gemachten Feststellungen auf das gesamte Feld des Begriffes ausgeweitet werden können.

### Damespiel

Um ein konkretes Beispiel zu haben, hier eine leicht vereinfachte Beschreibung der Regeln:

Es wird auf einem Brett mit 32 weißen und 32 schwarzen Feldern gespielt, wobei nur auf den schwarzen Feldern gezogen wird (für jeden Spieler gilt: rechts unten ein weißes Feld). Jeder Spieler hat 12 Steine, zu Beginn in den drei ersten Reihen platziert.

Beim Ziehen und Schlagen werden die Steine immer nur diagonal vom Ausgangsfeld aus bewegt. Es wird immer nur ein Feld vorgezogen, Zurückziehen ist nicht möglich. Beim Schlagen allerdings kann ein gegnerischer Stein diagonal übersprungen werden, wie dies durch die Anordnung der freien Felder möglich ist. Erreicht ein Stein die achte Reihe, so wird er in eine Dame umgewandelt. Damen können beim Ziehen diagonal so viele Felder nach vorwärts oder rückwärts ziehen (und auch schlagen), wie dies möglich ist. Auch Damen dürfen nie über einen Stein ihrer eigenen Farbe springen.

Es verliert der Spieler, der keinen Zug mehr ausführen kann (weil er blockiert ist oder keinen Stein mehr besitzt).

## 3 Formale Beschreibung von Spielen

Wittgenstein hat immer wieder wichtige Aussagen formal mit den zu seiner Zeit gebräuchlichen Methoden der Logik beschrieben, um sich der ihm bewussten Unsicherheit des Ausdruckes natürlicher Sprachen zu entziehen.

Mit der zu seiner Zeit üblichen Prädikatenlogik der ersten Ordnung (Carnap 1958, Tarski 1995), bzw. den darauf aufbauenden Theorien, ist es nicht leicht möglich, Spiele zu beschreiben. Logik der ersten Ordnung kann Zustände beschreiben, nicht aber Veränderungen (als sogenanntes "frame problem" bekannt (McCarthy und Hayes 1969)). Prädikatenlogik ist zwar prinzipiell ausdrucksstark genug, um alles, was formal notiert werden kann, auch darzustellen; die Notation wird aber außerordentlich kompliziert und ist nicht geeignet um Einsichten zu gewinnen.

Das Wesentliche an einem Spiel ist die Abfolge von Zügen, die je einen Zustand des Spieles in einer reglementierten Art verändern und in einen neuen Zustand überführen. Dazu sind die um die Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts entwickelten Theorien der Universalen Algebra geeignet (Birkhoff 1945). Diese gehen auf Arbeiten des 19. Jahrhunderts zurück, zu denen Whitehead mit einem wichtigen Werk, auf das auch die Bezeichnung "Universale Algebra" zurückgeht, Wesentliches beigetragen hat (Whitehead 1898). Erst die Verbindung von moderner Mathematik mit den praktischen Anforderungen der Programmierung komplexer Ausschnitte der realen Welt bietet die Abstraktionsebene, mit der Wittgensteins Hinweise formal nachvollzogen werden können (Ehrich *et al.* 1989, Goguen *et al.* 1975, Guttag *et al.* 1985, Loeckx *et al.* 1996).

### 3.1 Universale Algebra

Algebra als Unterrichtsfach der Mittelschule behandelt die Umformung von Gleichungssystemen. Sie beruht auf Regeln wie

$a + b = b + a$	<i>kommutatives Gesetz</i>
$(a+b) + c = a + (b + c)$	<i>distributives Gesetz</i>
$a (b + c) = a b + a c$	<i>distributives Gesetz</i>

Diese Regeln beschreiben die eigentliche Algebra der reellen Zahlen, für welche die Unbekannten in den Gleichungssystemen stehen (diophantische Gleichungen, bei denen die Unbekannten natürliche Zahlen sind, sind nicht nach einfachen Regeln zu lösen und werden deshalb im Unterricht nur selten diskutiert).

Das Konzept der Algebra der reellen Zahlen kann systematisch aufgebaut werden, indem wir zuerst Zahlen mit nur einer Operation (üblicherweise Addition) und deren Umkehrung (Subtraktion) und einer ausgezeichneten Zahl (Null) definieren, für welche die folgenden Regeln (1) und das kommutative Gesetz gelten:

$$\begin{aligned} a + 0 &= a \\ b - a + a &= b \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

Wird eine zweite Operation (üblicherweise Multiplikation) mit einer Umkehrung (Division) mit einer ausgezeichneten Zahl (Eins) eingeführt, so sollen dafür die gleichen Regeln (2), formuliert für die Multiplikation, gelten:

$$\begin{array}{ll} a * 1 = a & (2) \\ (b / a) * a = b & (\text{mit } a \neq 0) \end{array}$$

und zusätzlich die Regel über die Verbindung der zwei Operationen, die oben als Distributivgesetz angeführt ist.

Die erste Gruppe von Axiomen (1) definiert die natürlichen Zahlen, wie sie landläufig verwendet werden, die zweite Gruppe von Axiomen (2) die reellen Zahlen. Diese Regelsysteme erfassen den ‚Witz‘ der Zahlen, und gelten unabhängig von der Art der Notation:

$$\begin{array}{ll} III + IV = IV + III & (\text{römische Zahlen}) \\ 3 + 4 = 4 + 3 & (\text{arabische Zahlen}) \\ 11 + 100 = 100 + 11 & (\text{Binärnotation}) \end{array}$$

Aus algebraischer Sicht definieren die Axiome je die Eigenschaften von algebraischen Strukturen, nämlich Gruppe und Körper; natürliche Zahlen mit Addition bilden eine Gruppe, Rotation von geometrischen Figuren ist ein anderes Beispiel.

### 3.1.1 Definition Algebra

Eine Algebra - aus einer Sichtweise, die sich aus den Anforderungen der Untersuchung von Programmierung ergibt - besteht aus

- einem Träger (manchmal Sorte genannt) - einer Menge von unterscheidbaren Elementen;
- Operationen, die Elemente aus dieser Menge verknüpfen;
- Axiomen, die Ergebnisse aus solchen Verknüpfungen beschreiben.

Die Algebra der natürlichen Zahlen (oben 1) ist ein Beispiel dafür. Träger sind die Zahlen (z.B. in der gebräuchlichen Notation), die Operationen sind +, -, \* und die Axiome sind die oben angegebenen.

Dieses Konzept wurde von Birkhoff (1945) verallgemeinert, indem mehrere Träger und allgemeine Operationen zugelassen werden. Diese Idee ist bereits in der Vektoralgebra angelegt, bei der Vektoren mit einer Addition (nach Regeln (1)) mit dem Feld der reellen Zahlen (mit den Regeln (2)) durch eine neue assoziative äußere Verknüpfung, skalare Multiplikation (.) genannt, verbunden werden:

$$n \cdot (v + w) = n \cdot v + n \cdot w \quad \text{wo } n \text{ eine reelle Zahl und } v, w \text{ Vektoren sind}$$
$$1 \cdot v = v$$

Es ist nützlich, universale Algebren typisiert darzustellen (eine Verallgemeinerung der Typen Theorie von Russell (1903)). Dabei werden die Träger als Typen angesehen und die Operationen nur zwischen Elementen bestimmter Typen erklärt; dies wird in der Signatur der Operation festgelegt (Cardelli 1997).

Universale Algebren erfassen das Wesentliche an den Operationen, die zu einer Klasse von Objekten gehören; die gleiche Algebra, d.h. die gleichen Regeln für Operationen, werden in den verschiedensten Situationen angetroffen. Die Allgemeinheit wird betont und Regelsysteme unabhängig von bestimmten Anwendungen untersucht. Moderne Algebra leistet dies (MacLane and Birkhoff 1967) und erreicht dabei sogar noch eine weitere Verallgemeinerung zu Kategorien (Barr and Wells 1990, Asperti and Longo 1991, Pierce 1993) oder Modelltheorie (Hodges 1997).

Reiter hat kürzlich gezeigt, wie mittels komplexer Funktionen - realisiert als Prolog Programme - Operationen, die Zustände ändern, auch in ein Logik-basiertes System eingebracht werden können (Reiter in preparation); dieser Beitrag kann auch als Erweiterung der Logik um algebraische Elemente, d.h. Operationen, die Zustände verändern, gesehen werden.

Die theoretische Analyse von Programmen, die Situationen der realen Welt beschreiben, und von Programmierung im allgemeinen mit Logik führen zu unübersichtlichen Beschreibungen mit Vorbedingungen und Konsequenzen für Operationen (Wirth 1975). Auf algebraischer Grundlage wurde die Theorie der abstrakten Datentypen und algebraischer Spezifikationen aufgebaut (Goguen *et al.* 1975, Gutttag und Horning 1978), die zur Beschreibung von Semantik geeignet sind (Frank und Kuhn 1995).

### 3.2 Spiele als Algebra

Ein Spiel wie das Damespiel besteht aus zwei Spielern, einem Brett, das als Menge von Positionen aufgefaßt werden kann, und aus Steinen. Ein Spiel geht durch eine Reihe von Zuständen des Brettes, bis es zu Ende ist und einer der Spieler gewonnen hat. Das lässt sich als Algebra mit den Trägern (Sorten) beschreiben:

- Brett, das aus  $8 * 8$  Positionen besteht, an denen Spielsteine liegen können;
- Spielsteine haben die Farben Schwarz oder Weiß und die Werte Bauer oder Dame;
- 2 Spieler (Schwarz, Weiß).

Die Signaturen der wichtigsten Operationen sind:

```
initialisieren :: brett
zug :: spieler x position x position x brett -> brett
ist_gueltig :: spieler x position x position x brett -> Bool
ist_zuEnde :: brett -> Bool
hat_gewonnen :: brett -> Spieler
```

Die Beschreibung als Algebra sagt, dass Dame gespielt wird, indem zuerst das Brett initialisiert wird und dann die Spieler ziehen. Es gibt Tests, um zu sehen ob ein Zug gültig ist, ob das Spiel zu Ende ist (weil ein Spieler nicht mehr ziehen kann) und welcher Spieler ein beendetes Spiel gewonnen hat. Zu den angeführten Signaturen der Algebra gehören Axiome, welche die Details der Spielregeln beschreiben. Diese Regeln können z.B. in der formalen Notation der funktionalen Programmiersprache Haskell (Bird 1998, Hudak 2000, Peterson *et al.* 1996) angegeben werden.

Eine solche Algebra beschreibt alle möglichen Damepartien nach den gegebenen Regeln und erlaubt, für jede Sequenz von Zügen, zu entscheiden, ob diese ein legales Damespiel beschreibt, das die Regeln einhält, oder nicht. Die Algebra, mit der Operation *hat\_gewonnen* bestimmt auch das Ergebnis der Partie. Die Algebra gibt hingegen nicht an, wie ein Spiel gewonnen wird, sie beschreibt keine Strategie für einen Spieler und kann auch nicht direkt dazu verwendet werden, um für eine Spielsituation den günstigsten nächsten Zug zu finden.

## 4 Was ist ein Spiel?

Mit diesem formalen Apparat können wir bereits verschiedene Bedeutungen des Begriffes ‚Spiel‘ analysieren und finden drei Bedeutungen (das Wort ‚Spiel‘ als Homonym):

- Spiel als Regelwerk mit dem ein Gewinner festgestellt werden kann,
- eine bestimmte Realisierung eines Spieles,
- eine Spielsequenz losgelöst von einer Realisierung.

### 4.1 Spiel als Regelwerk

Ein Spiel im allgemeinen besteht aus dem abstrakten Regelwerk, so wie wir es oben als Algebra formuliert haben. In gleicher Form können die Regeln für andere Brettspiele, wie z.B. Schachspiel, etc., beschrieben werden, aber auch die Regeln für das Fußballspiel. Ein extremer Fall sind die Regeln für simulierte Fußballspiele von virtuellen Agenten, die in Wettbewerben gegeneinander antreten (um die Fähigkeiten der Ersteller

der Agenten-Programme zu testen); hier sind die Regeln verbal beschrieben und dann auch formal gegeben durch das Programm, das deren Einhaltung prüft. Die Spieler sind Agentenprogramme, die Züge aufgrund der Spielsituation, wie sie sie erfassen, ausführen. Ein Spiel kann durch Visualisierungsroutinen als "Fußballspiel" sichtbar gemacht werden (Robocup 2001).

Die Regeln bestimmen alle möglichen regelkonformen (legalen) Spiele. Für jede legale Sequenz von Zügen kann ermittelt werden, wer das (deterministische) Spiel gewinnt.

## 4.2 Eine bestimmte Realisierung eines Spieles

Die Damepartie, die ich gestern abend mit meiner Freundin gespielt habe, ist eine Sequenz von Bewegungen von Holz-Damesteinen, die wir auf dem Brett im Wohnzimmer ausgeführt haben. In diesem Kontext galten die Holz-Scheibchen als Damesteine (und zwar die dunklen als "schwarz" und die helleren als "weiß" im Sinne des Damespieles - auch wenn die wirklichen Farben eher beige und dunkelbraun waren) auf einem Brett, mit dunklen und hellen Feldern.

## 4.3 Spielsequenz losgelöst von einer Realisierung

Eine bestimmte Realisierung kann beschrieben werden, so dass die gleiche Sequenz von Zügen immer wieder ‚gespielt‘ (instantiiert) werden kann. Natürlich wird die gleiche Sequenz - für den hier interessierenden Typ deterministischer Brettspiele - immer wieder den gleichen Ausgang haben. Schachpartien, zum Beispiel, werden in der Zeitung publiziert, diskutiert und nachgespielt; sie haben eine Identität unabhängig von der Realisierung mit bestimmten Steinen auf einem bestimmten Brett zu einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt - sie ‚existieren‘ abstrakt, zeit- und materielos; meist wird für eine Spielsequenz ein Name gewählt, der an die Personen oder den Ort ihrer ersten Instantierung erinnert (Abbildung 1).

Schwarz: Pribyl Josef (2395)

EU-chT Skara (5), 1980, [D85]

1.d4 Sf6 2.c4 g6 3.Sc3 d5 4.cxd5 Sxd5 5.e4 Sxc3 6.bxc3 Lg7 7.Sf3 b6 8.Lb5+ c6 9.Lc4 0-0 10.0-0 La6 11.Lxa6 Sxa6 12.Da4 Dc8 13.Lg5 Db7 14.Tfe1 e6 15.Tab1 c5 16.d5 Lxc3 17.Ted1 exd5 18.exd5 Lg7 19.d6 f6 20.d7 fxg5 21.Dc4+ Kh8 22.Sxg5 Lf6 23.Se6 Sc7 24.Sxf8 Txf8 25.Td6 Le7 26.d8D Lxd8 27.Dc3+ Kg8 28.Td7 Lf6 29.Dc4+ Kh8 30.Df4 Da6 31.Dh6 1-0





Abb. 1.

Für das Schachspiel ist eine formale Notation von Partien sehr gebräuchlich. Es werden die Züge der zwei Spieler aufgelistet, wobei jeweils der Typ des Spielsteines (Bauer, Läufer, König) und die Position am Anfang und am Schluss des Zuges angegeben wird. Auch für das Damespiel lässt sich eine Notation analog angeben, wobei die genaue Art der Notation nicht wichtig ist. Spielsequenzen können aber auch in natürlicher Sprache beschrieben werden, was z.B. bei Fußball die gebräuchliche Form ist.

## 5 Was haben die drei verschiedenen Verwendungen des Begriffes Spiel gemeinsam?

Der allgemeine Ausdruck ‚Damespiel‘ beschreibt eine unendliche (oder zumindest sehr große Zahl) von Spielsequenzen, die nach diesen Regeln gespielt werden können; die Algebra beschreibt alle diese realisierbaren Spiele und grenzt sie gegen alle illegalen Sequenzen von Zügen ab, die nicht als Damespiele gelten. Es ist möglich, automatisch alle Spielsequenzen zu generieren und aufzulisten.

Ein bestimmtes Damespiel ist eine bestimmte Sequenz von Zügen, die zu einem bestimmten Gewinner des Spieles führt; die gleiche Sequenz führt immer zum gleichen Gewinner. Eine solche Sequenz kann auf verschiedene Art realisiert werden:

- durch physische Bewegung von Steinen auf einem Brett
- durch die Beschreibung von Zügen in natürlicher Sprache
- durch eine formalisierte Beschreibung der Züge

Die verschiedenen Realisierungen sind gleichwertig; in jeder kann geprüft werden, ob dies ein legales Damespiel ist und welcher Spieler gewinnt. Es besteht eine Abbildung zwischen je zwei dieser Realisierungen, so dass eine Spielsituation in der einen in eine äquivalente Spielsituation in der anderen Realisierung abgebildet wird und ein Zug in der einen Beschreibung in einen Zug in der andern. Diese Abbildung muss die "Struktur" (d.h. den Wittgensteinschen "Witz") des Spieles erhalten.

Abbildungen, welche die Struktur erhalten, werden auch als Morphismen, insbesondere Homo- und Isomorphismen, bezeichnet (der Unterschied spielt auf der Ebene von Formalität, die hier gewählt wird, keine Rolle). Es muss gelten, dass eine Funktion (der Test, welcher Spieler gewonnen hat) in einer Situation (formalisierte Beschreibung der Züge) oder die korrespondierende Funktion auf die in eine andere Realisierung transformierte Situation angewendet, das korrespondierende Ergebnis liefert. Formal:

$$f(\text{nachspielen}(\text{Züge})) = \text{spielen}(f(\text{Züge}))$$

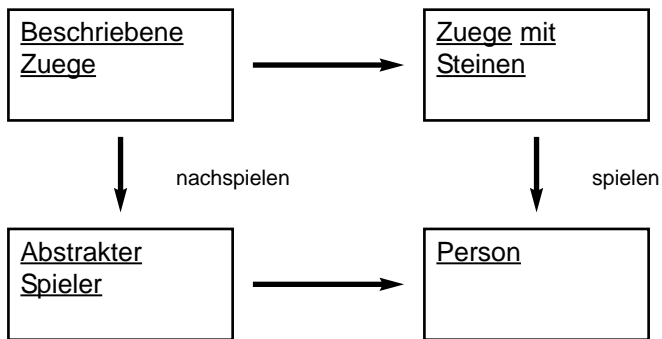


Abb. 2:

## 6 Abbildung von abstraktem Spiel auf physisches Spiel am Brett

Ein physisches Spiel am Brett ist homomorph zu einem abstrakten Spiel; man kann sagen, dieses Spiel sei eine Instantierung des abstrakten Spieles. Zu einem abstrakten Spiel gibt es viele verschiedene Instantierungen, denn zwei Instantierungen sind schon verschieden, wenn ich nicht den gleichen physischen Stein von meinen 12 Steinen, die ich zur Auswahl habe, benutze um ein bestimmtes Feld zu besetzen. Damit lässt sich auch Wittgensteins Frage nach dem ‚Witz‘ des Spieles und dem Verhältnis zu

zusätzlichen Regeln, wie diejenige über die Markierung von Damen durch zwei Steine, erklären:

Die Regeln für das Spielen von Dame mit physischen Steinen braucht einige zusätzliche Operationen, z.B. eine Operation, die auf einen einfachen Stein einen zweiten legt und damit eine Markierung für eine Dame schafft.

```
dame_machen:: stein x position x brett -> brett
```

Diese Operation muss genau dann angewendet werden, wenn durch die vorangehende Bewegung eine Dame entsteht; die Regeln, welche die Legalität von Zügen bestimmten, kontrollieren dies.

Es ergibt sich damit eine Abbildung von einem realen Brett mit Steinen, die je eine Individualität haben, auf ein abstraktes Brett; einfache Steine werden auf Bauern, doppelte Steine auf Damen abgebildet; meine Freundin und ich werden auf die beiden abstrakten Spieler ‚Weiß‘ und ‚Schwarz‘ abgebildet. Es ist leicht zu zeigen, dass diese Abbildung die Struktur erhält: Gewinner des abstrakten Spieles und des realen Spieles korrespondieren.

Wittgenstein weist also richtig darauf hin, dass der Witz des Spieles die Algebra des abstrakten Spieles ist. Die zusätzliche Regel, wie die Figuren dargestellt werden, gehört nicht zum Kern, sondern nur zur physischen Realisierung. Mittels des Formalismus kann dies nachvollzogen werden.

## 7 Natürliche Sprache zur Beschreibung eines Spieles

Die Beschreibung eines bestimmten Spielverlaufes in einer natürlichen Sprache ist möglich. Wenn die Beschreibung ausreichend ist, so kann das Spiel nachgespielt werden. Die Übersetzung in eine Sequenz von Zügen oder auch in eine formalisierte Sprache ist im Prinzip und für einen Menschen möglich und gibt bei ‚guten‘ Beschreibungen keinen Anlass zu Missverständnissen.

Die natürlich-sprachlichen Begriffe erhalten im Rahmen eines Spieles eine besondere Bedeutung, wie auch reale Sachverhalte eine besondere Bedeutung erlangen. Wittgenstein macht darauf aufmerksam, dass die Erklärung "das ist der König" (Wittgenstein 1960, p. 305) (31) nur verständlich ist, wenn die Regeln des Schachspieles bekannt sind. Die Begriffe des Spieles haben nur innerhalb des Kontextes des Spieles einen Sinn. Im Spiel erhalten bestimmte Sachverhalte eine bestimmte Bedeutung (z.B. die doppelten Steine gelten als Damen). John Searle hat dafür die Formel "x gilt als y im Kontext z" geprägt (Searle 1995), die sich hervorragend für Spiele anwenden lässt.

Sogar ein mentales Spielen im Kopf ist eine mögliche Form eines Spieles und isomorph zu einer Beschreibung eines Spieles in einer natürlichen oder formalen Sprache. Wenn ich real mit einem Partner spiele, stelle ich mir mögliche Sequenzen von Zügen vor und beurteile das Ergebnis; wenn ich die Sequenz nachher auf dem Brett nachziehe, kann ich höchstens sehen, wo ich ‚einen Fehler‘ gemacht (gedacht) habe. Allerdings muss ich mir die Züge beider Spieler vorstelle und wenn der Gegner nachher einen andern Zug wählt, als ich angenommen habe, bin ich überrascht und es entsteht eine andere Sequenz.

Nicht alle Beschreibungen eines Damespieles in einer natürlichen Sprache enthalten alle notwendige Information, um die Partie nachspielen zu können. Manche Beschreibungen werden mehr Details enthalten, als dafür notwendig sind. Das formale Konzept ‚Damespiel‘ wählt aus der Komplexität der Welt eine genau bestimmte kleine Zahl von relevanten Details aus, die das Spiel ausmachen. Diese und nur diese machen ein Damespiel losgelöst von einer bestimmten Realisierung aus und aus der Perspektive des Damespiels sind alle Instantierungen, mit den gleichen Eigenschaften für diese Details - d.h. die Züge - äquivalent (technisch: isomorph).

## 8 Spiel und soziale Realität

John Searle (1995) hat darauf hingewiesen, dass viele Aspekte unseres Lebens sozial konstruiert sind (siehe auch (Berger and Luckmann 1996)). Spiele sind ganz offensichtlich soziale Konstruktionen, die wesentliche Aspekte des Lebens, besonders des Krieges, in einer abstrakten und formalen Form darstellen (Go, Schach, u.a.).

Auch andere Aspekte der sozialen Realität lassen sich mit den Konzepten darstellen, die wir hier am Beispiel von Spielen (insbesondere Brettspiele) entwickelt haben. Spiele sind, wie von Wittgenstein angeregt wurde, prototypische Situationen - zwei Aspekte der sozialen Realität.

### 8.1 Gesetz als Spiel

Die große Ähnlichkeit des Regelwerkes eines Spieles mit den staatlichen Gesetzen zeigt sich schon aus der Ähnlichkeit der Formulierungen. In beiden Fällen werden nur bestimmte Aspekte aus der komplexen Realität herausgegriffen und darüber Regeln aufgestellt. Im Unterschied zum Spiel, bei dem Vorgänge in einem künstlich hergestellten und abgegrenzten Modell beschrieben werden, regelt das Gesetz Handlungen der Realität. Searle hat für institutionelle Realität gezeigt, wie hier physische Dinge eine bestimmte Bedeutung im Kontext des Gesetzes erlangen; z.B. gilt eine bestimmte Form von bedrucktem Papier in Österreich als ‚Geld‘ - das ist nicht

grundsätzlich verschieden von der Festlegung, dass zwei aufeinandergelegte Steine als Dame gelten. Das Gesetz legt dann fest, welche Regeln für Handlungen mit Geld gelten; z.B. tilgt das Übergeben von Geld Schulden - was vergleichbar ist mit den Regeln, welche Züge mit Damen ausführbar sind.

Wir haben ein reales österreichisches Gesetz mit über 100 Paragraphen in Algebren übersetzt, im wesentlichen dem Beispiel des Damespiels folgend (Navratil in Vorbereitung). Daraus zeigt sich auch formal die Ähnlichkeit zwischen Gesetzen und Spielregeln.

Die meisten Begriffe in einem Gesetz sind in diesem oder einem andern Gesetz definiert; leider werden manchmal in verschiedenen Gesetzen die gleichen Begriffe mit unterschiedlicher Bedeutung verwendet, z.B. gibt es in Österreich mindestens fünf gesetzlich definierte Begriffe ‚Wald‘, für die unterschiedlichen Regeln gelten. Gesetze enthalten aber auch Verweise auf reale Sachverhalte, die nicht legal definiert sind: Person, Geburt, Tod, Land, die dann im Rahmen des Gesetzes eine bestimmte Bedeutung erhalten und durch bestimmte Handlungen verknüpft werden, denen ebenfalls eine bestimmte Bedeutung beigelegt wird (vgl. den Zügen im Spiel): Heiratszeremonie, die eine Ehe begründet, u.a.

## 8.2 Sprache als Spiel

Bei der Beschreibung eines Spieles gilt, dass die verbale (oder formalisierte) Beschreibung homomorph zu einem (oder vielen) realen Spielabläufen ist. Das lässt sich - Hinweisen von Wittgenstein folgend - auf andere sprachliche Beschreibungen verallgemeinern:

Zwischen den realen (physischen) Objekten und den Operationen damit und den sprachlichen Zeichen besteht ein Homomorphismus. Dies ist besonders einfach für die Namen von Dingen einzusehen: Wörter wie ‚Max‘, ‚Ludwig Wittgenstein‘, etc., stehen für bestimmte, physische Personen; andere Konstruktionen bestimmen Personen oder Gegenstände mittelbar: ‚meine Frau‘, ‚der Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten‘ und ‚meine Gabel (während dieser Mahlzeit)‘. Es gilt aber auch für andere Wortarten und die Kategorien der Grammatik, und kognitive Linguisten schlagen vor, nicht mehr zwischen Grammatik und Vokabular zu unterscheiden (Langacker 1987).

Genau so, wie ein Spiel(partie) abstrakt beschrieben werden kann, das noch gar nie gespielt wurde, kann mit Sprache eine Realwelt-Situation beschrieben werden, die nicht oder noch nicht existiert. In diesem Sinne beschreibt oder schafft eine sprachliche Beschreibung eine Welt, ähnlich wie die Beschreibung eines Spieles dieses Spiel schafft. Die Regeln der realen, erlebten Welt - soweit bekannt - erlauben zu beurteilen,

ob die Beschreibung legal ist, ob dies ein möglicher Ablauf ist und erlauben oft Vorhersagen über das Ergebnis der Handlung. Mark Johnson hat übrigens gezeigt, dass die Konstruktion verschiedener möglicher Abläufe und die Beurteilung des Ergebnisses Voraussetzung für jede Diskussion über Ethik und Moral ist (Johnson 1993).

## 9 Zusammenfassung

Spiele sind eine sehr wesentliche kulturelle Leistung; in ihnen werden Abläufe des wirklichen Lebens (z.B. Krieg) in einer vereinfachten und schematischen Form modelliert und können gefahrlos ausprobiert werden. Wittgenstein hat unsere Aufmerksamkeit auf Spiele gelenkt, weil Wesentliches aus ihnen gelernt werden kann.

Mit den formalen Mitteln seiner Zeit konnten Wittgenstein Spiele nicht adäquat formal beschrieben. Wir sehen heute, dass Spiele als universale Algebren formalisiert werden können und dass das Konzept der ‚strukturerhaltenden Abbildung‘ (Iso- und Homomorphismus) zwischen verschiedenen Realisierungen fruchtbar ist. Die Beziehung zwischen einem Spiel wirklich auf einem Brett ausgeführt, meiner Vorstellung im Kopf eines Spielablaufes, der Beschreibung eines Spieles in natürlicher Sprache oder einer formalisierten Notation kann dann als Isomorphismus beschrieben werden, der immer wieder zeigt, welche Dinge im gegebenen Kontext als Elemente des Spieles gelten. Schon Kindern ist klar, dass man das gleiche Spiel mit sehr verschiedenen wirklichen Objekten spielen kann - das Wesentliche, der Witz, am Spiel sind die Regeln, die durch die Algebra beschrieben sind.

Diese Einsicht kann verallgemeinert werden: Gesetze regeln das wirkliche Leben ähnlich wie Spielregeln Spiele regeln; Spielregeln geben an, welche Aspekte eines wirklichen Handlungsablaufes relevant sind, welche als Handlungen des Spieles mit bestimmten Folgen gelten. Gesetze wählen in gleicher Art bestimmte Aspekte aus und schreiben ihnen bestimmte Bedeutung zu, die wiederum im Rahmen der Gesetze definiert sind. Searle hat dies als ‚soziale Realität‘ beschrieben und dafür die Formel "x gilt als y im Zusammenhang z" geprägt. In beiden Fällen, Spiel und Gesetz, stehen am Ursprung Sachverhalte und Handlungen der Wirklichkeit, auf denen diese Regelgebäude aufgestellt sind, von denen aber sofort abstrahiert und nur die Struktur (im Sinne der Algebra) diskutiert wird.

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# Are Elementary Propositions Essentially Positive?

Fu-tseng Liu

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In her book about Wittgenstein's *Tractatus (TLP)* (Anscombe 1959,31), Anscombe gives five theses which hold for *TLP*'s elementary propositions. One of these theses is : elementary propositions are essentially positive. It seems to me that her explanation of this thesis is not clear or even inadequate. In this paper I would like to show why it is inadequate. I will primarily use the *TLP*'s concepts of positive and negative facts as well as the falsity and negation of an elementary proposition to account for this.

First of all, what is the meaning of the word 'positive' in her thesis? This Anscombe seems not to have made clear enough. She is certainly aware that Wittgenstein has said "Of course no elementary propositions are negative (Wittgenstein 1979,131)"(Anscombe 1959,34). Here the meaning of the word 'negative'is denying, the opposite of affirmative. If 'positive' here means affirmative, this thesis would be trivially true in the *TLP*. However, she seems to mean 'positive' as not merely this sense. She explains her thesis this way:

This we can infer from 4.25: 'If the elementary proposition is true, the atomic fact exists; if it is false the atomic fact does not exist, together with 2.06: 'We also call the existence of atomic fact a positive, and their non-existence a negative fact': the elementary proposition therefore is such as to express something *positive*, namely the holding of an elementary situation. (Anscombe 1959, 33)

For convenience sake, let's adjust some terminology and let both 'atomic facts' and 'elementary situations' stand for 'state of affairs'. Two things we can say from this explanation. First, clearly, Anscombe explains "the elementary proposition is positive" as "the elementary proposition is to express the holding of a states of affairs." And secondly, it seems that what Wittgenstein calls a positive fact is the holding of a states of affairs. From these points we should say Anscombe maintains that elementary propositions are essentially to express positive facts, but not negative facts. If this is so, I would say her thesis is inadequate or even false, since as we will see that elementary propositions express not only positive but also negative facts, i.e., not only the existence but also the non-existence of states of affairs.

Here let's construe 'to express' as 'to describe' (3.12, 3.13, 3.142, 4.023). We need to explain the terms and concepts of positive and negative facts as well as the existence and non-existence of states of affairs.

In the *TLP*, the concepts of positive and negative facts seem to be not

indispensable. Some books on the *TLP* do not even mention them (Fogelin 1987; Hintikka 1986). Most books just touch on them lightly (such as Anscombe's). This might be because they are only different names for the existence and non-existence of states of affairs. But what is the *strict meaning* or the ontological status of the *existence* and *non-existence* of states of affairs?

I have already pointed out in another place that the need for a possible world in the *TLP*'s philosophy (Weingartner 1989, 407-410). The concepts of the *falsity* and *negation* of an elementary proposition and the *non-existence* of state of affairs are triplicate concepts in the *TLP*'s semantics and ontology. These concepts presuppose a possible world in the *TLP* or force its ontology to include a possible world.

We know that in the *TLP* the world is the totality of the existence of states of affairs (1.1,2). A state of affairs is a combination of objects (2.01). Objects are simple and unalterable; their configuration is changing (2.02, 2.027, 2.0271). The configuration of objects produces states of affairs (2.0272). Any possible (imagined) world has the same objects as this real world (2.022).

Let's for the moment suppose that the *TLP*'s world is a mini world which has only four objects *a*, *b*, *c* and *d*. There are only eight possible states of affairs *ab*, *bc*, *cd*, *ac*, *cd*, *abc*, *bca*, and *abcd*, and no such combinations or possible states of affairs as *ba*, *ca*, ..., *acb*, ..., *bacd*. Only *bc*, *ac*, *cd*, and *abc* are existing or real, expressed as *<bc>*, *<ac>*, *<cd>* and *<abc>*. We use braces '{ }' to express a world. Thus {*<bc>*, *<ac>*, *<cd>*, *<abc>*} will be the real mini world. A possible world must contain *some* possible states of affairs *and all* objects. Thus {*ab*, *abcd*}, {*<ac>*, *cb*, *cd*} and {*abcd*, *ba*} are possible worlds, since they contain some possible states of affairs and all objects and in the third one *ba* is vacuous. But {*ab*, *<bc>*} and {*ca*, *bacd*} are *not* possible world, since the former does not contain all objects, and the latter does not contain any possible states of affairs.

In addition we need further the concepts of any or some possible worlds, all possible worlds, the world in question or focus world, and cross-world or trans-worlds. According to the *TLP*, if an elementary proposition is true, then the state of affairs which it describes or expresses exists; if an elementary proposition is false, then the state of affairs which it describes or expresses does not exist (4.25). In regard to *TLP*'s semantic and ontology, one important thing we want to ask. When the state of affairs *exists*, *where* or *in which world* does it exist? In case the proposition is true, we can simply answer right off that the state of affair exists in this real world. But there are several things we have to consider. One is that if the proposition is false, can we say this state of affairs does not exist in this real world or any other world without *its* existing in *some* world? My answer is 'no'. Since in the *TLP*, we can only say about something which can be named or described (3.144, 3.221). Thus, if we can say that any state of affairs does not exist

in this real world, *it* must already exist in some *other* world. Thus in the *TLP*, the falsity of a proposition and the non-existence of a state of affairs force us to have a possible world. For example, we cannot say the state of affairs *acb* does *not* exist in the world  $\{ba, bacd\}$  unless it exists in some world, such as  $\{cd, acb\}$ . If *acb* does not exist in *any* world, we cannot say *it* at all.

Obviously, when we consider the truth and falsity of a proposition or the existence and non-existence of a state of affairs, we need to be concerned with at least two worlds: a cross-world -which can be large enough to include *all* worlds. Among them there is usually a world in which and from which we are primarily concerned with and pay our attention to the problems of the truth of propositions and the existence of states of affairs. This is the world in question or the *focus* world. We should know that the concepts of truth of propositions and the existence of states of affairs should be initially considered or defined with respect to a focus world. And then as the need arises, extend to other worlds one by one. Hence these concepts are world-dependent. Although this real world is usually taken to be the focus world, we may choose any other possible world as the focus one.

According to the *TLP*, a proposition is a tautology if it is true for all truth-possibilities of its elementary propositions; a proposition is a contradiction if it is false all for such cases (4.46, 4.41). Besides these two extreme cases, there is an ordinary case in which every proposition is true for some truth-possibilities and false for some other truth-possibilities. In logic books we call these propositions contingencies. Obviously, the concepts of tautologies, contradictions, and contingencies must refer to a possible world. The former two even refer to all possible worlds, since all truth-possibilities of a proposition means that the truth and falsity of the proposition in all possible worlds.

The *negation* of an elementary proposition asserts that the state of affairs which the proposition describes or expresses *does not* exist in the world in question or the focus world (4.21). If this state of affairs does not exist in the focus world, as pointed out before, it must exist in some other (possible) worlds, otherwise we cannot even say it does not exist in the focus world or any world, since we cannot describe or express it. Hence the negation of a proposition must refer to a possible world and the concept of negation is of necessity cross-world. The negation of a proposition is a logical constant. Since negation is something crossing more than two worlds, it does not exist or belong to any single world. That is why Wittgenstein says, 'logical constants' are not representative (4.0312) and there are no 'logical objects' or 'logical constants' in the (single) world (3.4).

The *TLP* says, the positive *proposition* necessarily presupposes the existence of the

negative *proposition* and vice versa (5.526). Why is so? Let's not assume the law of double negation (i.e.  $\sim\sim p = p$ ) already holds, otherwise this assertion will be trivially true. A positive proposition can be true or false. If it is true, it presupposes no negative proposition, since it can assert only that the state of affairs which it describes exists in the focus world. If it is false, it *must* presuppose a negative proposition, since it must assert what it describes *does not* exist in the focus world. Here 'does not' presupposes a *negative* proposition. A negative proposition can also be true or false. Whether it is true or false, it must presuppose a positive proposition. Let's take our mini-world to show this. Take a true negative proposition "The state of affairs *ab* does not exist in the (focus) world  $W_i = \{ \langle bc \rangle, cb, bacd \}$ " for example. Since *ab* does not exist in the world  $W_i$ , it must exist in some other world such as  $W_j = \{ ab, \langle cd \rangle \}$ . Here the positive verb 'exist' presupposes a positive proposition such as "The state of affairs *ab* exists in the  $W_j = \{ ab, \langle cd \rangle \}$ ". Take a *false* negative proposition "The state of affairs *cb* does not exist in the  $W_i = \{ \langle bc \rangle, cb, bacd \}$ " for example. Since this proposition is false, this means that *cb* exists in  $W_i$ . Hence a false negative proposition presupposes a positive proposition.

The above attempts to show that in *TLP*, the triplicate concepts of falsity, non-existence and negation presuppose possible worlds or force us to have possible worlds.

Now we are in a good position to account for what a positive or negative fact is. We remember that if an elementary proposition is true, the state of affairs exists; if it is false, the state of affairs does not exist. The existence of state of affairs is a positive fact, and its non-existence a negative fact. Now I would like to construe a positive fact (the existence of a state of affairs) as a state of affairs which an elementary proposition describes or expresses and exists in the focus world; and a negative fact (or the non-existence of a state of affairs) as a state of affairs which an elementary proposition describes or expresses and does not exist in the focus world but exists in some other possible world

As said before, Anscombe explains her thesis that elementary propositions are positive as meaning that elementary propositions are such as to express the holding of states of affairs. Here we can construe 'the holding' as 'the existence'. But she does not make clear which world or what kind of world the states of affairs in question exists in. If she means the state of affairs in question exists in *some* world, then her thesis could vaguely hold. If she means it exists in the focus world, then her thesis is untrue, since the state of affairs which a false elementary proposition expresses does not exist in the focus world but exists in some other world.

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# Wittgenstein's Private Language Arguments

Brian Garrett

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## 1. The Semantic Argument

What most people think of as "the Private Language Argument" receives its clearest expression at #258 of *Philosophical Investigations*. There Wittgenstein writes:

"Let us imagine the following case. I want to keep a diary about the recurrence of a certain sensation. To this end I associate it with the sign "S" and write this sign in a calendar for every day on which I have the sensation. -I will remark first of all that a definition of the sign cannot be formulated. -But still I can give myself a kind of ostensive definition. -How? Can I point to the sensation? Not in the ordinary sense. But I speak, or write the sign down, and at the same time I concentrate my attention on the sensation -and so, as it were, point to it inwardly. -But what is this ceremony for? For that is all it seems to be! A definition surely serves to establish the meaning of a sign. -Well, that is done precisely by the concentrating of my attention; for in this way I impress on myself the connexion between the sign and the sensation. -But "I impress it on myself" can only mean: this process brings it about that I remember the connexion right in the future. But in the present case I have no criterion of correctness. One would like to say: whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we can't talk about 'right'."

A reconstruction of (what I shall call) this Semantic Argument against private language might run as follows:

- (1) In any (possible) language, there must be an is right/seems right distinction;
- (2) In a private language, no such distinction can be drawn; so
- (3) There cannot be a private language.

The idea behind (1) is presumably the unobjectionable one that meaning is normative. To say that a word has meaning is thereby to say that there are (or can be) uses of the word which are correct (right) and uses which are incorrect (wrong). What makes, e.g., 'table' a word (part of a language) rather than a meaningless squiggle is that there are uses of it which are clearly correct, and uses of it which are clearly incorrect.

It is just this distinction which Wittgenstein thinks cannot be made out by the private linguist: in trying to give meaning to a sign by 'inner' ostensive definition, " ... I have no criterion of correctness. ... whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only

means that here we can't talk about 'right'." (#258) Hence, the rationale for (2).

Of course, strictly speaking, what Wittgenstein has provided a rationale for is not (2), but:

(2\*) No private linguist can make out *to himself* an is right/seems right distinction.

Some have objected that the step from (2\*) to (2) is verificationist: why should the fact that the private linguist cannot *make out to himself* such a distinction imply that *there is no* such distinction? This step may be just worth calling verificationist, but it should be noted how weak it is. Verificationism about meaning is much less controversial than verificationism about truth. It does seem bizarre to suppose that there could be distinctions of meaning in a language necessarily inaccessible to speakers of that language, whereas it is far from bizarre to suppose that there can be forever inaccessible truths about the external world. Further, the possibility of conceding (2\*) yet denying (2) is hardly a congenial one for a defender of private language.

Moreover, the case for (2\*) has not been made out. Wittgenstein considers and rejects two ways in which a private linguist might make out an is right/seems right distinction: at #265 he considers an appeal to memory, and at #270 he imagines that one might use the connection between the occurrence of a sensation and some external effect (e.g., a manometer registering a rise in blood-pressure). However, Wittgenstein's objections to these suggestions, and his presentation at #258, suffer from the same defect: an over-simplified view of the resources a private linguist might draw on.

As Crispin Wright has emphasised, the private linguist might turn theorist, naming not just one sensation but many, and noting regularities in their occurrence.<sup>1</sup> The linguist as theorist can then make perfectly good sense of the possibility that he might be *mistaken* in one of his judgements. (For example, he might notice that S1, S2 and S3 always occur in a certain sequence. His identification of a sensation as type S3, may make him realise he was wrong to classify his previous sensation as S1.) In this way, the linguist's theory can provide the materials for the construction of an operational is right/seems right distinction.

Nor is (1) unobjectionable. A. J. Ayer wondered whether even English admitted of an is right/seems right distinction, in the sense that Wittgenstein requires.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, one can be corrected by one's fellows, but ultimately agreement about usage can only be based in individuals' memories and appearances, and how can we then sustain an 'objective' is right/seems right distinction? It may be replied that correct usage simply consists in conformity with one's fellows. But this view is counterintuitive: surely an is right/seems right distinction for a public language like English ought to allow for the possibility that we all might go 'off the rails' in our use of a word. Moreover, simply to

assert this definition of 'correct usage' is to beg the question against a defender of private language.

Further, one might ask why ordinary self-ascriptions (e.g., 'I have a headache') are not counterexamples to (1). Such ascriptions are perfectly meaningful, yet seem not to admit of any is right/seems right distinction. It may be replied that a word like 'headache' features in first- and third-person attributions, where grasp of both kinds of attribution is essential to understanding the word, and the third-person or criteria-based use does allow for an is right/seems right distinction (e.g., 'I thought he had a headache, but now I see he was only acting'). But how does that help with the first-person case, which still seems resistant to our target distinction?

There is also a problem with contingently private languages in the case of the #258 argument. It is generally agreed that contingently private languages are possible. Does the #258 argument not exclude such languages? That is, is premise (2) not indifferent to whether the private language is contingently private or logically private? After all, a socially isolated Crusoe, who invented his own language from scratch, can only rely on his memory and senses, just like the private sensation linguist. How then can Crusoe make out an is right/seems right distinction? It may be replied that Crusoe does indeed speak a language when he names the trees and mountains around him, and that his language admits of an is right/seems right distinction in virtue of the fact that we could, in principle, learn his language and so make sense of what it would be for some of his uses to be mistaken.

However, a defender of the possibility of a logically private language might reasonably reply that this response begs the question: it simply assumes that an is right/seems right distinction is available only for languages which others can in principle learn. Why should this be conceded? Second, if Crusoe speaks a language, he surely does not do so in virtue of the fact that we might understand and correct him; he does so in virtue of intrinsic facts about him and his world.

The problem raised by contingently private languages reinforces our conclusion that the #258 argument cannot be cogent.

## **2. The Metaphysical Argument**

The discussion in the previous section has been somewhat negative. Let me now try to extract from Wittgenstein a better argument against private language, one which gets to the heart of the issue. The textual support for this reading is not extensive, but it fits with many of Wittgenstein's ideas and intentions. Here I draw heavily on John



Cook's excellent article 'Wittgenstein on Privacy'.<sup>3</sup>

What we are trying to show to be impossible is a *logically* private language, that is, a language which necessarily only one person can understand. What could be as much as a (putative) example of such a language? Only a private sensation language, since any language about 'outer' objects could, in principle, be learnt by others. But this is only the right answer on a certain conception of sensations, *viz.*, sensations as private objects, in terms of which sensation words are to be defined. Without that conception of the terrain, there is no subject matter for a logically private language to be about. And the claim will be that Wittgenstein does make suggestions as to how we might resist the view of sensations as private objects, and thus undermines the only rationale there could be for believing in the possibility of a logically private language.

At #253 Wittgenstein writes:

"Another person can't have *my* pains." Which are my pains? What counts as a criterion of identity here? Consider what makes it possible in the case of physical objects to speak of "two exactly the same", for example, to say "This chair is not the one you saw here yesterday, but is exactly the same as it".

In so far as it makes sense to say that my pain is the same as his, it is also possible for us both to have the same pain. (And it would also be imaginable for two people to feel pain in the same -not just the corresponding - place. That might be the case with Siamese twins, for instance.)

I have seen a person in a discussion on this subject strike himself on the breast and, say: "But surely another person can't have THIS pain!" The answer to this is that one does not define a criterion of identity by emphatic stressing of the word "this". Rather, what the emphasis does is to suggest the case in which we are conversant with such a criterion of identity, but have to be reminded of it."

The root of the idea of sensations as private is that, e.g., however similar our headaches might be, you and I cannot (literally) have the same headache. On this conception of headaches, and only on this conception, if I define the word 'headache' ostensively, I have invested that word with a logically private meaning. If we can undermine this conception of headaches (and other sensations), we can finally lay to rest the idea of a logically private language.

How might we do this? The first two paragraphs of #253 are suggestive, and Cook is the philosopher who has most fully worked out this suggestion. The standard account of sensations assumes that two people cannot literally have the same sensation, however similar (in duration, intensity, etc.) those sensations might be. According to

Wittgenstein, this account misconstrues our language-game with sensations: "... it is ... possible for us both to have the same pain." And he gives, as illustration, the case of Siamese twins who feel a pain in a common part. However, Wittgenstein surely intended his comments to apply quite generally, and not just to the case of Siamese twins. Cook suggests how such a generalisation might be motivated.

As noted, on the standard view, the sentence 'I have the same headache as my father' (where we both have a headache of exactly similar duration, intensity, etc), understood literally, expresses an impossibility. What we should say is: my father and I have similar headaches. It is this piece of reasoning which, in the name of Wittgenstein, Cook wants to ridicule. He suggests that this reasoning is as wrong-headed as the following: "the sentence 'I have the same build as my father' (where we have an exactly similar build), understood literally, expresses an impossibility. Builds are, literally, private. What we should say is: my father and I have similar builds."

According to Cook, the just mooted line of reasoning is a travesty, and contrary to the 'grammar' of the word 'build'. In the case of builds, unlike that of tables and chairs, there is no space for a distinction between 'same F' and 'exactly similar but distinct Fs'. There is no (strict or literal) sense in which I fail to have my father's build. In the only sense there is, I have the same build as my father (which I can also express by saying that we have similar builds). It's not as if I have something (my build) which my father cannot have, however physically similar to me he may be. Builds are simply not private in that way.

Cook's suggestion is that the conception of sensations as private or unshareable, without which there could be no logically private language, gained currency because the language-game with sensations was wrongly assimilated to that for ordinary physical objects, with its firm distinction between numerical and qualitative identity. A better model of the language-game for sensations is that for builds (or character, gaits, senses of humour, etc.). Once we see that, we see there is simply nothing to the idea (vividly expressed in the final paragraph of #253) that what I have in having a pain is (literally) something that you cannot have. And now, at last, we have a cogent argument against private language: there is simply nothing that could be the subject-matter of a logically private language; so there could not be such a language.

## References and Endnotes

- 1 Crispin Wright "Does *Philosophical Investigations* #258-60 suggest a cogent argument against private language?" in P. Pettit & J H McDowell (eds) *Subject, Thought & Context* (OUP: 1986).
- 2 A. J. Ayer "Can There Be a Private Language?" in *The Concept of a Person* (Macmillan: 1963)
- 3 J. Cook "Wittgenstein on Privacy" in G. Pitcher (ed.) *Wittgenstein* (Macmillan: 1966)

# What Wittgenstein Can Teach Literary Theory

John Gibson

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It happens sometimes that a timely suggestion falls upon sadly deaf ears. This, at any rate, seems to have been what has befallen a suggestion a handful of philosophers have tried to offer literary theory about what they might learn from Wittgenstein.<sup>1</sup> The suggestion, put simply at first mention, is that it is possible to see literary fiction as offering the sort of 'perspicuous representation' of our linguistic practices that Wittgenstein believes sheds such light on a relation that interested him throughout his philosophical life, namely the relation between our language and what we humbly call 'the way our world is.' And this, a handful of philosophers have argued, would offer any literary theorist willing to listen to the suggestion a novel way of undoing the reasoning that leads so many current literary theorists to embrace anti-humanism. In this paper I will briefly canvas this Wittgensteinian suggestion. I will then offer a few reflections both on why it has fallen on deaf ears and how we might refashion it such that the audience for which it was intended might be willing to give it a second hearing.

## 1. Anti-humanism

I'll begin saying something about the general form of the arguments given against humanism, so that we may understand the target of the Wittgensteinian suggestion I want to discuss in this paper. The anti-humanist typically begins his argument by pointing out that the humanist, like any other theorist who is trying to describe a putative *literary* value, is constrained to show that the value he wants to attribute to a literary text is an actual *literary property*, something we come into contact with when we examine, if you will, the *interior* of a particular literary work. The anti-humanist argues that if the humanist fails to meet this very minimal condition, he will then fail to identify a genuine *literary* value, and thus he will default on his promise to tell us something informative of the nature of literature. The upshot of the argument for anti-humanism is that the humanist is necessarily unable to meet this condition. A very simple reflection suffices to point out why so many think the humanist cannot do this. As Peter Lamarque puts it,

The particulars presented in a novel are *fictional*, and how can any view, however objective, of *fictional* particulars, give us truth? Ex hypothesi, it is not a view of the real world. (Lamarque, 1969, p. 105).

In other words, and as we well know, literature speaks of people made of paper, who inhabit worlds made only of words. To wit, when we examine the interior of literary works, we come into contact with fictional worlds rather than descriptions of the actual world. And from this very obvious observation we can see why so many literary theorists argue that humanists are by nature naïve, foolishly attempting to identify the value of literature with an *extra-literary* property, namely insights into *extra-textual* reality. Of course, by asking, say, political or philosophical questions of a work of fiction, we will surely find that it spurs discussions that are fruitful for achieving a greater understanding of our world. But this is just to identify a *social* value of literature, how we can *use* literary texts for extra-literary (or extra-aesthetic) purposes. If literary texts exhale fictions from beginning to end, the argument at hand is that the humanist will never be able to identify a humanistic species of a *literary* value. For to illuminate what we find when we look *within* literary works is to illuminate worlds none of which are quite our own.

## 2. The Wittgensteinian suggestion

It is a fairly easy task to explain the basic structure of the Wittgensteinian suggestion offered against the reasoning that leads to anti-humanism. Indeed, it requires only connecting a very obvious feature of Wittgenstein's later philosophy of language with an equally obvious description of what we find when we look within works of literary fiction. Much of what Wittgenstein offers the humanist is hinted at in the following quote from the *Philosophical Investigation* (*PI* henceforth):

A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command a clear view of the use of our words—Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing a connection.' (*PI* §116)

The "failure to understand" spoken of here is a failure to understand how our language *works*. Now as we know, for Wittgenstein commanding a clear view of the workings of our language is attained by scrutinizing and illuminating not metaphysical entities or abstract semantic properties, but something thoroughly concrete: all of what goes into grasping what we often throw under the blanket term 'use', the way in which a word or concept is given life - a role, a value, a function - *by our form of life*. The "failure to understand" is a failure to see, if you will, the patterns of human behavior into which these words and concepts are woven. If it is the fabric of our living human practices that we are directed to in our search for a 'perspicuous representation', these representations would presumably attempt to bring into clarifying light the workings of those practices, practices the *Philosophical Investigations* teaches us ultimately define and delimit a crucial object of 'understanding', namely the relation between 'what our words mean' and 'the way our world is.'

Now what the philosophers who have developed the Wittgensteinian suggestion ask us to see is how perfectly suited literature is for the task of offering these 'perspicuous representations' of our cultural practices. While it is true that the particulars that inhabit the world of a work of literature are fictional, these practices in which these fictional characters engage are also *our* practices: this is one way of explaining how literary fiction is *intelligible*: we share with fictions this undercurrent of common cultural reality. And to see how the Wittgensteinian suggestion gets on its feet, we need only point out that one power we habitually attribute to literature is its ability not merely to show us these practices, but to show them to us in all of their varied complexity, at a level of detail and insight that eludes us in our much less dramatic everyday lives. All the Wittgensteinian suggestion consists in is pointing out how crucial this, that it invites the possibility of seeing our literary heritage as offering us 'perspicuous representations' of the practices that constitute our form of life. If our failure to understand our grammar, our language, is in part accountable for by the fact that we fail to command a clear vision of the structure of our cultural practices, then literature would appear to be precisely where we should turn to correct this ignorance, to find fully articulated representation of the fabric of these practices.

If we can say that in describing literary content we are at once also describing the practices that are common to our form of life, then surely it is only a small step to making the claim that activity of elaborating a *humanistic* value be coextensive with an elaboration of a proper *literary* value. In other words, the Wittgensteinian suggestion would appear to offer an fine way of showing that the humanist can do precisely what the anti-humanist claims he cannot do: make sense of the idea that an examination of the interior of a work of fiction may also be at once an examination of the way our world is.

### 3. Why such deaf ears?

Although I have given only a very cursory overview of the suggestion, I think it suffices to make it clear how it could be of help to that corner of literary theory that discusses the relationship between fiction and reality. And, for a field such as literary theory, a field which tends towards theoretical excess and unnecessary complexity of argumentation, this suggestion provides such an elegantly simple way of addressing this question. So why would this suggestion have fallen on such deaf ears? To answer this, one must do a little guessing. My hunch is that there are two claims popular in literary theory which give us a very good idea of why literary theorists turn a deaf on this Wittgensteinian suggestion. Let me briefly explain each.

The first claim concerns the so-called critical power of literature. One idea that is popular in current literary theory is that any *good* theory of literature should do justice to literature's ability to *challenge* entrenched conceptions of the nature of our shared cultural reality. And to many current literary theorists it will seem that this Wittgensteinian suggestion leads to the very conservative claim that the business of literature is merely to document the conventions that constitute our cultural reality, unable to offer a rebuke to or refinement of existing conceptions of this reality. If we say, as we have, that literature offers 'perspicuous representations' of our established practices, this will ring in the ears of many literary theorists as amounting to the claim that literature can merely offer us representations of practices with which we are presumably already quite well acquainted. And to this extent, to many the Wittgensteinian suggestion will therefore seem to cast literature as critically and cognitively trivial.

The second claim concerns a popular conception of the nature of interpretation, namely that the old belief that there is *one* correct interpretation of a literary text is thoroughly senseless. The claim, in other words, is that literary texts are such that disagreement is inherent in the practice of literary criticism. Indeed, these days at least, a great many current literary theorists believe the activity of literary criticism to be one of *embracing* this disagreement and going on to treat as object of literary investigation the documentation of the ways in which a literary work can generate these varied readings and seemingly incongruous interpretations. But if common opinion is such, then the literary theorist will surely cringe when the Wittgensteinian humanist speaks of literary interpretation as a matter of elaborating '*the* representation of our practices' offered by a particular text. If the Wittgensteinian humanist wants to say that literary content is a sustained elaboration of some *specific* feature of cultural reality, the literary theorists will point out that there is not enough of 'the way a text is' to think that a text can be united with a unique vision of 'the way our world is'. A literary work certainly constrains the range of possible interpretation invited by it. But within this range too much is permissible to think that we will ever achieve the agreement needed for us to be able to conclude our attempts to specify the humanistic value of a text with the claim: "and *this* is what it shows us about the way our world is."

#### **4. How to salvage the Wittgensteinian suggestion**

Times being as they are, I think that any attempt to develop a position in literary theory that cannot accommodate either of these two claims will be duly ignored. At any rate, given current trends in literary theory I would think that this explains much of the reason that the Wittgensteinian suggestion has fallen on deaf ears. But what I would like to show in conclusion to this paper is that the Wittgensteinian suggestion can be salvaged, indeed that on inspection it becomes clear that it can sit quite comfortably with these two claims.

Recall that in elaborating the Wittgensteinian suggestion we said that what invites the notion of 'perspicuous representation' is the fact that literature can show us those patterns of human action and webs of cultural relations that reveal our practices to us in their complexity, with a precision of detail and depth of vision that our everyday encounters with our world rarely afford us. Now, to remind ourselves of something we already know, it is of course this *complexity* that causes so much critical disagreement. The power of great works of literature resides in part in the fact that the patterns of behavior we find in these literary works defy simple description. In other words, many great works of literature *challenge* the ability of our linguistic and conceptual resources to permit us to state adequately what it is that we are witnessing in our encounters with them. This, to take but one obvious example, is why despite 400 years of interpreting *Othello* we still have not reached critical consensus on a question as simple as that of whether Iago's behavior amounts to calculated villainy or thorough madness.

It is tempting to stop the story here—as much current literary theory does—and say that literature's critical power is the negative one of showing up the fragility of language, that what the endless absence of critical agreement reveals to us is that our language, put bluntly, is not up to the task of offering adequate descriptions of the way our world is. But the Wittgensteinian suggestion allows us to say something much more interesting (and reasonable, I think) than this. If these perspicuous representations of our practices offered by literature elude simple description, presumably they will also prod us to correct what it is that prevents us from describing them adequately. That is, they will prod us to create conceptual and linguistic tools that are adequate for the task at hand. So when we try to offer adequate descriptions of these perspicuous representations that so challenge our linguistic and conceptual resources, this will lead involve us in activity of attempting to *refine* our language, our concepts, our grammar and our criteria, so that we may meet the this challenge. And what this means is that we can see our critical encounters with literature as inviting a quite crucial cultural activity, one very much similar to that in which the philosopher engages: the attempt to develop ever more adequate vocabularies for speaking about the way our world is.

If this is so, then it is clearly wrong to think that the Wittgensteinian suggestion casts literature as critically impotent. For what we have just said amounts to the claim that literature can *transform* our linguistic and conceptual relation to our world. And this, of course, is precisely because the representations of human action literature offers *defy* simple or uniform interpretation. In other words, there do not appear to be *any* good reasons for literary theorists to ignore this Wittgensteinian suggestion. And given the boundless skepticism and annihilating cynicism of so much current literary theory, I would think it about time for literary theory to give it a serious listen.



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## Endnote

- 1 The philosophers who have urged a form of the suggestion I will discuss here are, most notably, David Schalkwyk (1995) and Bernard Harrison (1993). It is often thought that the writing of Stanley Cavell naturally lead to a position of the sort I elaborate here will, though as far as I am aware Cavell never explicitly states the argument in this form.

# Wittgenstein and the philosophy of punishment

Virginia M. Giouli

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## Abstract

To see punishment as a prerequisite to democracy with its meaning lying in the protection of social values rather than impartial enquiry on retribution and utility does not make it easy. The gulf between the sensible and the realm beyond it is simply too broad for leaping, Wittgenstein states. But the meaninglessness of the traditional arguments on punishment may suggest human attempts to overcome such difficulties .

## Wittgenstein and the philosophy of punishment

There is a passage in Culture and Value (81e), which contains the most striking things that Wittgenstein ever wrote regarding the nature of the institution of punishment. Suppose someone were taught: there is a being, Wittgenstein says, who, if we do such and such or live thus and thus, will take us to a place of everlasting torment after we die; most people end up there , he continues , a few get to a place of everlasting happiness. This being, Wittgenstein states, has selected in advance those who are to go to the good place and, since only those who have lived a certain sort of life go to the place of torment, he has also arranged in advance for the rest to live like that . Wittgenstein here raises the question of what the effect of such a doctrine might be. Well , he states it does not mention punishment , but rather a sort of natural necessity . And if we were , he continues , to present things to anyone in this light, s/he could only react with despair or incredulity to such a doctrine . Teaching it, he says, could not constitute an ethical upbringing. If we wanted to bring someone up ethically while yet teaching her/him such a doctrine, we would have to teach it to her/him after having educated her/him ethically, representing it as a sort of incomprehensible mystery.

Now, obviously, this is not a justification for this institution as a prerequisite to democracy, in the sense of providing it with logically sufficient grounds. It does not provide its meaning as harboured in our public experience while planning for the institution of punishment. It is not presented as a retributivist nor as a utilitarian Justification of punishment. In one way this disarms criticism. If we renounce all attempts to justify our intuitions on punishment, one of the oldest human institutions, then no-one

can quarrel with us over the merits of our justifications. But, in another way, these intuitions seem open to obvious objection. And it may understandably be asked whether the analysis of penal concepts or of the distinctive nature of punishment, or even the traditional arguments for the justification of punishment, have really any vital connection with the actual penal practice. But when such questions are raised, questions i.e. outside philosophy of punishment - in politics or in social life - then problems of the relevant sort can scarcely fail to present themselves: what sort of obligation do individuals have to obey the laws of their state ? What constitutes a just law? How far is the state justified in intervening in individual lives by means of criminal controls? And a sensitivity to these essentially philosophical problems, our consuming passion for them, suggests that we are concerned over such things as what precisely we mean when we call punishment right or wrong, good or bad, or what kind of justifications can we offer it. In brief , instead of just thinking about punishment as characteristically unpleasant for those who are punished or about the penal leniency, we can now think about the meaning harboured in our public experiences of planning for the institution of punishment. The functioning of this social institution can be one essential element in our moral and historical development.

The question of the moral justification of punishment has been raised from two different perspectives. On the retributive theory of punishment, a manifestation of a retrospective or backward-looking theory of punishment, its justification lies in rectifying past wrongs. On the reductionist view of the justifying aim of punishment, a manifestation of a teleological , utilitarian, forward-looking theory of punishment, its justification lies in the reduction of the crime committed. This is a future goal which it is hoped will be achieved by the practice of punishing. Can we really hope to have this justification both ways, as the passage quoted seem to suggest; on the one hand to have freedom of all arguments over whether the values that determine the realisation of penal truth belong in the realm beyond the sensible, i.e. beyond the logical framework that determines the retributivist and the utilitarian theories of punishment. On the other hand, to have an institution according to which penalties of some kind are imposed on those who offend against the written or unwritten rules in terms of which a historical community is governed. Punishment can be a symbol of the rule of law in a free society.

Why are we thus inclined to plan for this institution? A possible answer may suggest that we endeavour a realisation of values. The value of equality will determine and protect our freedom and our basic liberties, our rights.

Thus our intuitions regarding individual justice are accomplished without curtailing our pursuit of the great benefits which we may expect a criminal justice system to have in terms of preventing the misery and other costs associated with crime. Freedom and

equality are thus safeguarded through the institutional means of the legislation. Once all such sanctions wither away in society (Popper 1966, 200-201), once the call of personal responsibilities regarding the realisation of the formula of the avoidance of suffering is over looked (Popper 1966, 235) we begin the suppression of reason and truth in history. And we end with the most brutal and violent destruction of all that is human. If we wish to remain human, we must use what reason we may have to plan as well as we can for institutions safeguarding both equality and freedom. Nature, we may infer from the passage quoted, does not know norms; the introduction of norms, the most important of human achievements, Protagoras states (322a) , is due to man (Popper 1966, 66). Institutions (Dworkin 1991,413) and sanctions (Castoriadis , 59,119-120, 131) that are established against the violators of legislation (Habermas, 49) were thus what raised men above the brutes. Thus, rationalism establishes a moral obligation towards the support of the institution of punishment. We have a duty to respond, to answer where our actions affect others. We are furnished with the recognition of the claim to tolerance, at least of all those who are not intolerant themselves.

The concept of punishment as a prerequisite to democracy and its concomitant justification is simply not one which all those involved in penal procedures - as we know them, at any rate- use in identifying or explaining the order of things in such procedures. This concept is not part of the permitted equipment for playing the penal proof game; and similarly with any concept of the unknown in human affairs. Their task is surely to make sense of such things within a certain conceptual range, as determined by the retributivist and the utilitarian frameworks regarding the justifying aims of punishment. Such empirical justifications however do not stand up to criticism, since they over look human responsibility regarding the realisation of the above mentioned values. They are not so much liable to offer a demonstration that the proposed doctrine of punishment is false, as to say that it lies altogether outside their competence.

Penal truth, according to which punishment is realised in order to protect the values of freedom and equality, lies in the realm of the unknown. The meaning of punishment lies in the protection of freedom as determined by equality. We certainly use different conceptual equipment to establish things according to the said doctrine in the above mentioned procedures. And we frame different statements rather than simply disagree over their truth-values. Our statements regarding punishment as the prerequisite to democracy are too far apart to contradict or to criticise the traditional arguments that justify punishment. The essential difference is not so much over what punishment really is : individual justice or social utility; but what it may possibly determine. A rigorous assessment of any particular claim of the above mentioned possibilities is of course required.

We may again infer from Culture and Value (32e-33e, 64) and from Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief (56) that the above mentioned difference cannot be reduced to a difference between facts or values; for there is a difference logically more fundamental than either of these, over the ranges of concepts which determine, in essential part what facts we identify and formulate and what values we pursue. Thus, our attempt to establish punishment beyond the natural order of things, i.e., beyond individual justice and social utility presupposes that we have already adopted some such ranges of concepts. This range determines what questions we ask, what answers we are prepared to take seriously, what possibilities we are willing to consider. We could not explain the concept of the punishments of hell, it is stated in Culture and Value (80e), without using the concept of punishment. And we could not explain that of God's goodness without using the concept of goodness, Wittgenstein says. If we want, we may say together with him, to get the right effect with our words, we should expand our conceptual equipment in the realm of the unknown.

Our conceptual equipment can be expanded towards the realm of the unknown, the uncertain and the insecure in order to grasp penal truth. This is the realm of incomprehensible mystery. We may use another passage of Culture and Value (77e) in order to illustrate further the above mentioned expansion. "God has commanded it, therefore it must be possible to do it". That means nothing, Wittgenstein states. There is no "therefore" about it. In this context, he continues, "He has commanded it" means roughly: He will punish anybody who doesn't do it. And nothing follows from that about what anybody can or cannot do. And that is what "predestination" means, he states. But that doesn't mean, he continues, that it's right to say: "He punishes you even though you cannot do otherwise". - Perhaps, Wittgenstein continues, though, one might say: in this case punishment is inflicted in circumstances where it would be impermissible for men to inflict it. We may infer from him that we may fight to make the institution of punishment more rational than it is adopting the angle of vision on the unknown, as mentioned above. We may plan cautiously for this institution having in mind the platonic lesson of things that cannot be done since men are not gods (Tractatus, 3.031). And then the whole concept of punishment changes, Wittgenstein adds. For now we can no longer use the old illustrations, or else we have to apply them quite differently. We have seen how the opposition between the retributivist and the utilitarian conceptions of punishment can be surpassed at a purely moral level (Dworkin 1977, 12) determined by the protection of above mentioned values. These logical frameworks have overlooked the responsibility for the above mentioned expansion, they have overlooked that for every reason they offer there is a valid counter-reason (Culture and Value, 29e), they have overlooked rationalism planning for the institution of punishment. When an ethical law of the form, "Thou shalt....", is laid down, Wittgenstein states (Tractatus, 6.422),

one's first thought is, "And what if I do not do it?" It is clear, however, he continues, that ethics has nothing to do with punishment and reward in the usual sense of the terms. So, he says, our question about the consequences of an action must be unimportant. At least, he continues, those consequences should not be events. For there must be, he says, something right about the question we posed. There must indeed be some kind of ethical reward and ethical punishment, but they must reside in the action itself. And it is also clear that the reward must be something pleasant and the punishment something unpleasant, Wittgenstein adds. His passage is particularly appropriate here; it sums up so much of the moral resolution of the opposition between the traditional arguments on punishment.

Punishment thus is not a sort of a coercive (Farsedakis, 89), system of control (Magganas and Lazos ,105-109) and becomes a symbol of law . Punishment thus should be meted out impartially to rich and poor, to the famous and the ordinary. This can justify the public character of this social institution. We cannot, naturally verify nor prove our devotion to the above mentioned system of values false. Our viewpoint on the unknown does not oppose or support any political and social system, nor does it underwrite the authority of temporal rulers (Popper 1972, 30).

To see punishment as a prerequisite to democracy with its meaning lying in the protection of social values rather than impartial enquiry on retribution and utility does not make it easy. The gulf between the sensible and the realm beyond it is simply too broad for leaping. Wittgenstein states. But the meaninglessness of the traditional arguments on punishment may suggest human attempts to overcome such difficulties.

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"Entwickelten die Flöhe einen Ritus, er würde sich auf den Hund beziehen" -

## Wittgenstein über das Verstehen und die Inkommensurabilität fremder Denk- und Lebensformen

Thomas Göller

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"Alle kindlichen (infantilen) Theorien finden wir in der heutigen Philosophie wieder; nur nicht mit dem Gewinnenden des Kindlichen" (Wittgenstein, Bemerkungen über Frazers "*The Golden Bough*", S. 50).

Wittgensteins These von der Sprachspielgebundenheit menschlicher Denk- und Lebensformen besitzt offensichtlich einen nachhaltigen stimulierenden Einfluss. Gegenwärtig versucht vor allem Richard Rorty - wie vordem schon gewissermaßen Peter Winch - die damit implizierte Auffassung von kultur- und lebensformabhängigen Realitätssichten zu radikalieren. Gemeinsam ist diesen Positionen bei allen Unterschieden im Detail, dass Sprachen, Lebensformen und Kulturen eine eigene *inkommensurable* Realität bzw. Realitätssicht konstituieren.<sup>1</sup> Weil alle Realitätsauffassungen - wie u.a. die magisch-mythische und die (natur)wissenschaftlich-kausalanalytische - gleich berechtigt und gleich gültig sind, deshalb gibt es laut Winch auch kein bzw. kein sprachspielunabhängiges Kriterium, mit dessen Hilfe sich entscheiden ließe, welche dieser Realitätsauffassungen "objektiv(er)" ist und besser mit "der Wirklichkeit" übereinstimmt. Und Rorty zufolge besteht keine Möglichkeit, Aussagen, die einen bestimmten kulturellen und/oder lebensweltlichen Kontext transzendieren, in ihrer Gültigkeit zu rechtfertigen. Abgesehen davon, ob das haltbare Thesen sind, berufen sich sowohl Winch als auch Rorty auf Wittgensteins Spätphilosophie. Doch - so lautet meine zentrale Frage - hat Wittgenstein selbst tatsächlich eine ähnlich radikale Inkommensurabilitätsthese vertreten und was sagt er über das Verstehen fremder Denk- und Lebensformen?

Bei meiner Untersuchung geht es mir hauptsächlich um Wittgensteins Bemerkungen zu Frazers "*The Golden Bough*" und nicht um seine Philosophie insgesamt. Denn die Kommentare zu Frazer, die Wittgenstein im Jahre 1931 begann und in den darauffolgenden Jahren immer wieder ergänzte, befassen sich explizit mit der Möglichkeit des Verstehens fremdkultureller Praktiken und magisch-mythischer Riten.<sup>2</sup> Sie sind schon allein deswegen aufschlussreich, weil sich Wittgenstein kritisch



mit dem monumentale Werk des schottischen Kulturanthropologen James George Frazer (1854-1941) auseinandersetzt, in dem es - wie es im Untertitel heißt - um das "Geheimnis von Glauben und Sitten der Völker" geht.<sup>3</sup> Frazer versucht nämlich, bestimmte gemeinsame Züge von Riten und Mythen aus einer Vielzahl unterschiedlicher Traditionen und Kulturen herauszuarbeiten und einander in Beziehung zu setzen. Sein zumindest implizites Ziel ist dabei, Praktiken und Riten des antiken und mittelalterlichen Denkens sowie des bis in die Gegenwart hinein wirksamen Volksglaubens oder "Aberglaubens" zu "entmythologisieren" bzw. sie rational zu erklären. Genau dieses Anliegen provoziert die Kritik Wittgensteins. Er bezieht sich deshalb teils kommentierend auf einzelne Textpassagen Frazers, teils entwickelt er davon unabhängige - freilich fragmentarisch gebliebene - Reflexionen über das Thema des Fremdverstehens. Ich werde im Folgenden versuchen, zentrale Aspekte bzw. Themenmotive oder -komplexe herauszustellen, indem ich drei Fragen diskutiere: *Erstens*, warum lässt sich Wittgenstein zufolge von magisch-mythischen Riten nicht behaupten, sie seien "falsch"? *Zweitens*, inwiefern kann man fremdes, magisch-mythisches Denken verstehen oder, wie Wittgenstein eigentlich sagt, "erklären"? Welche Rolle kommt dabei sprachlichen Ausdrücken zu? Und, *drittens*, in welcher Weise geht Wittgenstein tatsächlich von der *Inkommensurabilität* unterschiedlicher Kulturen und Lebensformen aus?

## 1. Magisch-mythische Denkformen als Lebensformen

Wittgenstein vertritt am Anfang seiner "*Bemerkungen*" die aufklärerisch anmutende These, man könnte, um zur "Wahrheit" zu kommen, die "Quelle des Irrtums" aufdecken, indem man den "*Weg vom Irrtum zur Wahrheit*" (38) weist.<sup>4</sup> Er hält also explizit daran fest, dass es so etwas wie "Wahrheit" geben kann und dass sie sich von der Falschheit bzw. vom Irrtum unterscheiden lässt.<sup>5</sup> In diesem Sinne versucht Wittgenstein, *methodisch* die Unrichtigkeit des Frazerschen Ansatzes aufzuzeigen. Dieser ist - wie Wittgenstein jedoch zugleich abschwächend bemerkt - nicht gänzlich "falsch". Allerdings ist er "unbefriedigend", da Frazer das magische, mythische bzw. religiöse Denken gewissermaßen als einen "Irrtum", den es zu korrigieren gilt, darstellt (vgl. ebd.). Wittgenstein fragt sich zunächst, inwiefern eine religiöse Überzeugung, eine magisch-mythische Praxis überhaupt "wahr" oder "falsch" sein kann. Und von welchem Standpunkt aus lässt sich eine solche Frage beantworten?

Für Wittgenstein sind Gebräuche, die lebensweltlich vollzogen werden, keine "Meinung" oder gar eine "Theorie", weshalb die Frage nach ihrer Wahrheit irrelevant ist. Religiöse und/oder kulturelle Riten oder Praktiken können ebenso wenig falsch bzw. richtig sein, wie sich ein Vertreter einer religiösen Überzeugung "irren" kann - es sei denn, er versuchte, "eine Theorie aufzustellen" (39).

Es wird bei diesen Passagen allerdings nicht ganz klar, was Wittgenstein unter einer "Theorie" verstanden wissen will und wie er sie genauer gegen eine "Meinung" oder eine religiöse Überzeugung und dergleichen abgrenzen möchte. Gewisse Textpassagen legen jedoch nahe, dass Wittgenstein damit insbesondere das reflektierte oder explizit reflektiert-distanzierte Verhältnis des Menschen zu sich selbst und der ihn umgebenden Welt meint, welches (auch bzw. vor allem) für das wissenschaftlich-kausalanalytische Denken charakteristisch ist (vgl. 41ff.). Dieses darf jedoch *nicht* einfach gegen das magisch-mythische Denken ausgespielt werden. Wittgenstein kritisiert demgemäß an Frazer, dass er genau einen solchen ethnozentrischen Kardinalfehler begehe, wenn er Kategorien des eigenen Denkens unbefragt auf andere Lebensformen appliziert. Denn damit unterstellt Frazer nicht nur, dass man extern auf magisch-mythische Praktiken und ihre Gültigkeit angemessen reflektieren kann, sondern auch, dass in einer - in diesem Falle: magisch-mythischen - Lebensform *immanent* deren eigene Gültigkeit thematisiert wird. Eine solche unterstellende Annahme würde allerdings voraussetzen, dass eine reflexive Distanz zu einer Lebensform, und zwar *innerhalb* dieser selbst, besteht. Wittgenstein hält eine solche Ansicht jedoch für nicht angemessen, da dadurch der Kontext einer bestimmten Lebensform oder Kultur zu einer bloßen "Meinung" oder "Theorie" über etwas depraviert werden würde. Anders gesagt, die *Praxis*, die eine Lebensform als solche charakterisiert, hätte den Status einer Theorie, weshalb sie den ihr eigenen Praxischarakter verlieren würde. Aus diesem Grunde formuliert Wittgenstein seine Einwände gegen das Frazersche Vorgehen so: "Ich glaube, das Charakteristische des primitiven Menschen ist es, daß er nicht aus *Meinungen* handelt (dagegen Frazer)" (47). "Vielmehr ist das Charakteristische der rituellen Handlung gar keine Ansicht, Meinung, ob sie nun richtig oder falsch ist, obgleich eine Meinung - ein Glaube - selbst auch rituell sein kann, zum Ritus gehört" (44).

Mit den Ausführungen Wittgensteins ist zum einen impliziert, dass die Akteure derart in einer bestimmten Lebensform verwoben und ihr verhaftet sind, dass sie diese nicht - oder nur sehr schwer - überschreiten oder transzendieren (können). Die Ausführungen implizieren zum zweiten: Ein "Irrtum" lässt sich erst dann konstatieren und magisch-mythisches Denken lässt sich erst dann als "falsch" bezeichnen, wenn es "wissenschaftlich ausgelegt wird" (41). Das heißt also, wenn diese Denk- und Lebensformen anhand von *Kriterien* beurteilt werden, die *außerhalb* des zu beurteilenden Kontextes selbst liegen. Deshalb wäre es nach Wittgensteins Auffassung auch verfehlt, wollte man jemanden von der Falschheit eines religiösen oder kulturellen "Gebrauch" (39) überzeugen, indem man versuchte, ihn "auf seinen Irrtum aufmerksam zu machen, um ihn von seiner Handlungsweise abzubringen" (39). Das aber ist bei religiösen Überzeugungen, rituellen Praktiken und allgemein gesagt, bei tragenden Grundüberzeugungen innerhalb einer Lebensform Wittgenstein zufolge gerade *nicht* möglich.<sup>6</sup> Denn insbesondere bei der magisch-mythischen Lebensform handelt es sich

um eine Lebensform, die einer analytisch-diskursiven oder wissenschaftlichen Unterscheidung von "Theorie" und "Praxis" vorausliegt, weshalb es keinen Sinn macht, mit Hilfe eines externen Theoriekonzeptes eine solche Lebensform kritisieren zu wollen: beide sind *inkommensurabel*.

## 2. Inkommensurabilität von magisch-mythischer Weltsicht und (natur)wissenschaftlicher Empirie?

Nach Wittgensteins Ansicht hat die Inkommensurabilität von magisch-mythischer und "theoretisch"-wissenschaftlicher Weltsicht zur Folge, dass (was auch Frazer zu bemerken scheint) es sehr schwer ist, den "Irrtum in der Magie" (39) aufzudecken.<sup>7</sup> Da Frazers Anliegen aber gleichwohl in dem Versuch besteht, die Richtigkeit seines eigenen Vorgehens zu erweisen, kritisiert Wittgenstein an ihm drei Punkte: *Erstens*, Frazer erkennt nicht den entscheidenden Grund, warum es so schwierig ist, magisch-mythisches Denken zu falsifizieren. Es ist, *zweitens*, falsch, einem solchen Denken einfach "Dummheit" (vgl. 48) zu unterstellen. Schließlich, *drittens*, ist es nicht zutreffend, Magie als "falsche Physik, bzw. falsche Heilkunst, Technik, etc." zu diskriminieren (44). Für Wittgenstein besteht das Charakteristische magisch-mythischer Praktiken auch darin, dass sie gegen (empirisch-wissenschaftliche) Falsifikationen geradezu resistent sind, da ein solcher Gedanke ein fremder und lediglich importierter ist, der in dieser Lebensform gar nicht auftreten würde. Aus diesem Grunde sind *immanent*, d.h. in dieser Lebensform und aus ihrer Eigenperspektive betrachtet, solche Überlegungen, die auf ihre Falsifikation zielen, absurd. Darüber hinaus meint Wittgenstein, dass für jemanden, der im Kontext einer magisch-mythischen Lebensform lebt, eine bestimmte magische Praxis - worin sie im Einzelnen auch immer bestehen mag - dem in diesem Kontext für real Gehaltene *nicht* widerspricht. Zum einen schon deshalb nicht, weil gar keine Konfrontation von magisch-mythischen Handlungen und "der Realität" gesucht wird. Deshalb ist es von vornherein ausgeschlossen, dass es zum Konflikten zwischen der immanenten Sichtweise einer Lebensform und einer (hierzu inkommensurablen) Denkform kommen kann.<sup>8</sup>

Wittgenstein bezieht sich dabei auf folgende Beispiele Frazers: Ein Regenmacher wird erst dann zur Hilfe gerufen, wenn die Regenzeit ohnehin schon kurz bevor steht. Oder die Riten, die das Ende der Nacht und das Hellwerden herbeiführen sollen, werden immer erst gegen Morgen zelebriert usw. (vgl. 48). Wittgenstein stellt sich in diesem Zusammenhange allerdings auch die naheliegende Frage, was denn passieren würde, wenn man die Eingeborenen auf diese Sachverhalte hinweisen und ihnen raten würde, z.B. die Rahmenbedingungen für eine solche rituelle Zeremonie zu ändern. Doch genau diese Fragen, die mit einer "kritischen" Überprüfung oder eines (falsifizierenden oder verifizierenden) Testes aufgeworfen sind, stellen sich innerhalb eines magisch-

mythischen Kontextes oder einer Lebensform Wittgenstein zufolge überhaupt *nicht*. Denn der Mythos oder die Magie sind in sich so kohärent bzw. so eingerichtet, "daß sie mit der Erfahrung" (49) eines Volkes übereinstimmen *können*.

Ja, Wittgenstein geht sogar noch einen Schritt weiter. Denn er meint, magisch-mythisches und wissenschaftlich-kausalanalytisches Denken differierten hinsichtlich ihrer elementaren Wahrnehmungsmuster oder in Bezug auf ihre empirischen Grundstrukturen *nicht* signifikant. Die "Naturerkentnis" der Eingeborenen - so Wittgenstein - würde, "wenn sie sie niederschrieben" "von der unseren sich nicht *fundamental* unterscheiden. Nur ihre *Magie* ist anders" (49f.). Wobei der "Unterschied zwischen Magie und Wissenschaft" darin besteht, "daß es in der Wissenschaft einen Fortschritt gibt, aber nicht in der Magie. Die Magie hat keine Richtung der Entwicklung, die in ihr selbst liegt" (50). Wittgenstein führt allerdings nicht weiter aus, wieso die Wissenschaft einen "Fortschritt" kennen kann und worin er bestehen soll. Auch sagt er nicht, inwiefern "unser" Denken - unterstellt man es wiederum als theoretisches bzw. wissenschaftlich-kausalanalytisches - überhaupt Raum für "Magie" (außerhalb des Varietés) oder gar für eine "andere" Magie lässt.<sup>9</sup>

Bei der magisch-mythischen Lebensform können auch Sichtweisen koexistieren oder gar koinzidieren, die für das "theoretische" bzw. wissenschaftlich-kausalanalytische Denken zueinander in Konflikt treten müssten oder gar als inkommensurabel beurteilt werden würden. So geht derselbe "Wilde", der eine magische Praxis vollzieht, indem er ein Bild seines Feindes - "in effigie" - durchsticht, um ihn zu töten, in einem anderem Zusammenhang gewissermaßen selbst wissenschaftlich-technisch bzw. kausalanalytisch vor - beispielsweise indem er eben diesen Pfeil kunstgerecht schnitzt und seine Hütte aus richtigen Hölzer oder Balken baut - und nicht etwa nur "in effigie" zimmert und errichtet (vgl. 41). Allein die *Interpretation* (49) bestimmter Phänomene ist es also, die nach Wittgenstein - wie er selbst sagt - ausschlaggebend für den Unterschied magisch-mythischer und wissenschaftlich-kausalanalytischer Denk- und Lebensformen ist. Doch lässt sich und inwiefern lässt sich unterscheiden, welche von ihnen richtig oder zumindest "richtiger" als die andere ist?

### 3. Zur Symbolfunktion der Sprache

Die Frage nach der Richtigkeit unterschiedlicher oder gar inkommensurabler Realitätsauffassungen diskutiert Wittgenstein - so weit ich sehe - nicht.<sup>10</sup> Was dagegen die Koexistenz oder gar Koinzidenz von unterschiedlichen Sprachspielen innerhalb ein und derselben Lebensform betrifft, so scheint dies durch den *symbolischen Charakter der Sprache* möglich zu sein. Damit ist gemeint, dass der Vollzug magischer Praktiken notwendig an die Sprache gebunden ist und die Sprache voraussetzt. Wittgenstein ist

dabei der Überzeugung, dass die Magie "immer" "auf der Idee des Symbolismus und der Sprache" (41) beruhe. Bei diesem Diktum Wittgensteins scheinen mir vor allem zwei Aspekte im gegenwärtigen Problemzusammenhang von Relevanz zu sein. Einmal der, dass nur dann, wenn ein Zeichen als Repräsentant oder als Stellvertreter für etwas genommen wird, eine grundlegende Voraussetzung für magisches - und wie zu ergänzen ist: religiöses, mythisches, aber auch wissenschaftliches Denken - erfüllt ist. Denn erst jetzt kann es sich um eine bestimmte *Interpretation* oder *Realitätssicht* handeln. Und diese ist derart an die in Frage stehende Lebensform gebunden, dass man *nicht* gleichsam aus ihr heraustreten kann und eine Lebensform *unabhängig* von der jeweiligen Sprache und den in ihr vollzogenen Sprachspielen verstehen oder beurteilen kann.

Der andere Aspekt scheint mir darin zu liegen, dass zumindest in magisch-mythischen Denk- und Lebensformen der Unterschied zwischen einem Zeichen und seinem Denotaten oder Referenten *nicht* in der Weise gemacht oder reflektiert wird, wie dies beim wissenschaftlich-kausalanalytischen Denken der Fall ist. Wittgenstein bezieht sich dabei explizit auf den Anfang von Frazers "*The Golden Bough*". Gemeint ist die dort geschilderte Erzählung vom Priesterkönig Nemi, der als "Majestät des Todes" bezeichnet wird. Wittgenstein ist der Ansicht, beim magisch-mythischen Sprechen und Denken würden die bezeichnete Sache und das sie bezeichnende Wort gewissermaßen eine Einheit bilden: "Das Leben des Priesterkönigs stellt das dar, was mit jenem Wort gemeint ist" (40). Der Priesterkönig ist nichts anderes über und neben dem, was der Ausdruck "Majestät des Todes" bedeutet. Aufgrund der angenommenen Identität von Signifikant und Signifikat handelt es sich also um ein *Symbol*, dem keine "*Meinung*" (40), sondern eine bestimmte Praxis, ein Gebrauch oder Vollzug zugrunde liegt. Auch wenn es sich bei dieser ausgeübten Praxis selbst um ein Sprechen handelt, so ist dieses Sprechen wiederum etwas anderes als ein - thetisches bzw. explizit propositionales - Sprechen *über etwas*. Den Unterschied, den Wittgenstein zwischen beiden Sprechweisen oder Sprachverwendungen macht, liegt wiederum darin, dass der Vollzug oder das Ausüben einer Regel oder Praxis für sich genommen (qua Vollzug) weder "wahr" noch "falsch" sein kann. Wittgenstein ist also auch im Zusammenhang dieser sprachtheoretischen Überlegungen der Überzeugung, dass erst dann, wenn auf die Differenz zwischen Praxis und Vollzug auf der einen Seite und dem in der Praxis Vollzogenen und damit möglicherweise "Gemeintem" reflektiert wird, von einem Wahrheitsbezug gesprochen werden kann. Solange dies nicht explizit gemacht und nicht eigens reflektiert wird, ist die Wahrheitsfrage - jedenfalls immanent betrachtet und auf eine bestimmte Lebensform bezogen - *irrelevant*.

Wittgenstein macht jedoch eigens darauf aufmerksam, dass er nicht gemeint habe, Bild und Sache dürften bei magischen Sprachspielen schlicht als identisch angesehen

werden. Denn auch einem sogenannten "Wilden" ist der Unterschied zwischen einem Zeichen oder einem Bild auf der einen und der bezeichneten oder dargestellten Sache oder Realität auf der anderen Seite durchaus bewusst. Auch für ihn sind das Unterschiede und auch für ihn bleiben diese Unterschiede bestehen (vgl. 40f.). Allerdings, so möchte ich hinzufügen: nicht als theoretisch reflektierte Unterschiede, sondern als Unterschiede, die als praxisrelevant erkannt und eingeschätzt werden, weshalb auch an ihnen festgehalten wird.

#### 4. Möglichkeit und Grenzen des Erklärens fremder Denk- und Lebensformen

Wittgensteins Ausführungen zur Erklärung fremder Denk- und Lebensformen sind nicht sehr präzise und auch nicht allzu elaboriert. Grundsätzlich geht Wittgenstein davon aus, dass Erklärungen immer nur *hypothetischen* Charakter haben können.<sup>11</sup> Und bei dem, was man den engeren oder den *methodologischen* Begriff des Erklärens nennen könnte, steht der Aspekt der Synthese einzelner Tatsachen bzw. die Konstruktion scheinbar disparater Elemente zu einem (konsistenten) Zusammenhang im Vordergrund. Dabei geht es - wie Wittgenstein in gleichsam phänomenologischer Manier formuliert - darum "Zusammenhänge zu sehen" (45).<sup>12</sup> Gemeint ist damit wohl, dass das "Tatsachenmaterial" (vgl. 45) so zu arrangieren oder zu gruppieren ist, dass es sich zu einer "übersichtlichen Darstellung" zusammenfügen lässt.<sup>13</sup> Ein solches synoptisches Verfahren - eine Art ‚Zusammenschau‘ - wird durch das Finden von hypothetischen "*Zwischengliedern*" (45) möglich,<sup>14</sup> die die Aufmerksamkeit auf "die Ähnlichkeit, den Zusammenhang der *Tatsachen*" (45) lenken.<sup>15</sup> Eine darüber hinaus gehende "Erklärung" kann es Wittgenstein zufolge *nicht* geben. Warum, das führt Wittgenstein im Einzelnen nicht weiter aus.<sup>16</sup>

Gleichwohl - oder gerade aus diesem Grunde - macht Wittgenstein auf das Beliebige oder gar Irreführende der Frazerschen Erklärungsversuche aufmerksam, indem er darauf hinweist, dass man sie "selbst erdichten könnte" (42). Darüber hinaus betont Wittgenstein, Frazers Erklärungen könnten überhaupt *keine* Erklärungen sein, "wenn sie nicht letzten Endes an eine Neigung in uns selbst appellierten" (ebd.). Frazers "Erklärungen" erklären also in Wahrheit nichts, da sie ihre Plausibilität *nicht* aus dem zu erklärenden kulturellen Kontext beziehen, sondern sozusagen aus demjenigen Kontext importieren, *für* und *in dem* sie eine Erklärungsfunktion erfüllen sollen. Sie beileben also in jedem Fall den dort praktizierten und gültigen Erklärungsmustern verhaftet. Denn was Frazer mit den von ihm intendierten "Erklärungen" allenfalls erreicht, ist, dass er magisch-mythische Praktiken solchen Menschen plausibel machen kann, "die so ähnlich denken wie er" (39) selbst. Wittgenstein konstatiert geradezu entsetzt: "Welche Enge des seelischen Lebens bei Frazer! Daher: Welche Unmöglichkeit, ein anderes

Leben zu begreifen als das englische seiner Zeit!" (42). Und an anderer Stelle urteilt er gar: "*Seine* Erklärungen der primitiven Gebräuche sind viel roher, als der Sinn dieser Gebräuche selber" (45).<sup>17</sup>

Doch nicht nur die ethnozentrische Sichtweise Frazers verhindert ein wirkliches Verstehen oder Erklären magisch-mythischen Denkens, sondern es gibt noch einen weiteren Grund. Er ist Wittgenstein zufolge in der *Verschiedenheit der Sprachen* zu sehen. Wenn Frazer beispielsweise das englische Wort "ghost" verwendet, so insinuiert er zweierlei: Einmal, dass dadurch scheinbar ein "Aberglaube" verstehbar wird, da er "mit einem ihm geläufigen abergläubischen Wort erklärt" (44) wird. Doch dadurch wird Wittgenstein zufolge die spezifische Differenz, die zwischen ihm und dem Unbekannten oder Fremden besteht, nivelliert. Zum anderen impliziert dies, dass auch "in uns etwas für jene Handlungsweisen der Wilden spricht" (44). Denn wenn ein so geläufiges (englisches) Wort wie "ghost", "shade" oder gar "Seele" und "Geist" bzw. "spirit" (46) zur Hand ist, um fremde Lebensformen zu beschreiben, dann deutet das auf eine (möglicherweise überraschend enge) "*Verwandtschaft*" (46) unseres Denkens mit dem scheinbar ganz anderen, dem magisch-mythischen Denken hin. Das zeigt sich nicht zuletzt an den uns geläufigen sprachlichen Ausdrücken. Wittgenstein konstatiert infolgedessen: in "unserer Sprache ist eine ganze Mythologie niedergelegt" (46).<sup>18</sup>

Darüber hinaus identifiziert Wittgenstein Riten schlicht und einfach mit "Ausdrucksgesten". So als handelte es sich bei ihnen um bloße Injektionen oder um instinktive Entäußerungen: "Wenn ich über etwas wütend bin, so schlage ich manchmal mit meinem Stock auf die Erde oder an einen Baum etc. Aber ich glaube doch nicht, daß die Erde schuld ist oder das Schlagen etwas helfen kann. ‚Ich lasse meinen Zorn aus.‘ Und dieser Art sind *alle* Riten. Solche Handlungen kann man *Instinkt-Handlungen* nennen" (48).<sup>19</sup> Wichtig ist, dass Wittgenstein meint, *historische* Erklärungsversuche hätten bei solchen rituellen "Instinkt-Handlungen" überhaupt *keine* explikative Relevanz: "Und eine historische Erklärung, etwa daß ich früher oder meine Vorfahren früher geglaubt haben, das Schlagen der Erde helfe etwas, sind Spiegelfechtereien, denn sie sind überflüssige Annahmen, die *nichts* erklären" (48). Denn nach Wittgensteins Ansicht ist nicht mehr als die äußere bzw. phänomenale Entsprechung der beiden Gesten oder Äußerungen feststellbar: "Wichtig ist die Ähnlichkeit des Aktes mit einem Akt der Züchtigung, aber mehr als diese Ähnlichkeit ist nicht zu konstatieren" (48). Er folgert daraus: "Ist ein solches Phänomen einmal mit einem Instinkt, den ich selber besitze, in Verbindung gebracht, so ist eben dies die gewünschte Erklärung; d.h. die, welche diese besondere Schwierigkeit löst" (48).

Mit anderen Worten: Sobald ein Zusammenhang zum *eigenen* instinktiven Verhalten hergestellt ist, erübrigt sich jeder weitere Erklärungsversuch. Abgesehen davon, ob man in dem von Wittgenstein angeführten Falle tatsächlich von einem "instinktiven" Verhalten

sprechen kann oder ob es sich dabei nicht auch um eine kulturell erworbene Praxis handelt, lässt sich zu Recht fragen: Eine solche ist doch nur dann möglich, wenn eine gleichsam allgemein-menschliche Grundstruktur für alle Menschen angenommen wird, die letztlich das - universale (?) - Fundament für alles kulturelle Verstehen und Erklären bildet. Doch setzt Wittgenstein damit nicht allzu unbefragt eine gleichsam durchgängige Menschennatur voraus, wobei er zudem noch magisch-mythischen Praktiken allzu voreilig mit instinktivem Verhalten identifiziert und ihnen als anthropologische Konstanten transkulturellen Status zuspricht?

Diese Fragen diskutiert Wittgenstein genauso wenig wie die, worauf er eigentlich seine Ansichten stützt. Gleichwohl insinuieren seine Thesen sowie seine Kritik an Frazer, dass Wittgenstein im Besitz von *Kriterien* ist, anhand derer sich (a) der "Sinn" solcher Gebräuche feststellen und (b) *adäquat* beurteilen lässt.<sup>20</sup> Wittgenstein ist darüber hinaus der Ansicht, dass sich *keine* Begründung dafür anführen lässt, warum ein bestimmter Ritus entstanden ist oder warum irgendein Gegenstand verehrt wurde, beispielsweise ein Eichbaum: "d.h. überhaupt kein *Grund* kann es gewesen sein, was gewisse Menschenrassen den Eichbaum verehren ließ, sondern nur das, daß sie und die Eiche in einer *Lebensgemeinschaft* (Hervorhebung von mir [T.G.]) vereinigt waren, also nicht aus Wahl, sondern, wie der Floh und der Hund, miteinander entstanden" (48) sind. Wittgenstein weist also alle weitergehenden historisch-genetischen Erklärungsversuche mit dem Hinweis auf eine nicht weiter explizierbare "Lebensgemeinschaft" (bzw. Lebensform) zurück. Denn in ihr sind Ritus bzw. rituelle Praktiken und Gegenstände sowie deren Gebrauch und Vollzug durch die Akteure derart miteinander verwoben und derart durch natürlich vorgegebene Lebensbedingungen determiniert, dass sie eine untrennbare Einheit oder symbiotische Beziehung bilden. Diese Symbiose ist aber nicht das Ergebnis einer freien Entscheidung des Menschen, sondern seiner kontingenten und zugleich unabdingbaren Lebensumstände. Diese verleihen einer Denk- und Lebensform ihren unverwechselbaren und inkommensurablen Habitus - oder wie eine Metapher Wittgensteins das prägnant so auf den Punkt bringt: "Entwickelten die Flöhe einen Ritus, er würde sich auf den Hund beziehen" (48).



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## Endnoten

- 1 Vgl. Winch 1987 und 1991; Rorty 1994 und 1995, 11-37. Vgl. zur Darstellung und Kritik dieser Positionen auch Göller 2000, 137-175 sowie Göller 1999.
- 2 Wittgenstein hat sich, folgt man den Angaben von Rush Rees, der sich wiederum auf M.O.C. Drury bezieht, sehr wahrscheinlich im Jahre 1930 mit der einbändigen Ausgabe des Frazerschen Werkes befasst. In dem im Jahre 1931 fertiggestellten Typoskript seiner Manuskriptbücher nimmt Wittgensteins Kritik an Frazer etwa zehn Seiten ein. Eine zweite Gruppe von Bemerkungen schrieb Wittgenstein erst Jahre später, nicht jedoch vor 1936, wahrscheinlich erst nach 1948. Es handelt sich dabei um auf einzelne Papierstücke geschriebene Bleistiftnotizen, die vielleicht in das von Wittgenstein benutzte Exemplar von "*The Golden Bough*" gelegt werden sollten (vgl. Wiggershaus 1975, 37f.).
- 3 Das Werk Frazers (2000) ist im Jahre 1890 zunächst in zwei Bänden erschienen und wurde bis 1939 auf dreizehn Bände erweitert. Es beinhaltet eine umfangreiche Auswertung von - heute freilich überwiegend veraltetem - empirischem Material, das eine eingängig anschauliche, teils sogar literarische Form hat. Trotz seiner methodischer Mängel stellt das Werk ein beeindruckendes Kompendium dar, das mit Akribie unterschiedliche und zum Teil entlegende Quellen benutzt und auswertet. Frazer, der selbst nie ethnologische Studien vor Ort bzw. Feldstudien durchführte, ist gleichwohl nicht ohne Einfluss auf die sich damals entwickelnde *empirische* Ethnologie geblieben - so auf B. Malinowski, R. Benedict und M. Mead. Vgl. auch Lotter 2000, bes. 88f.
- 4 Alle Seitenangaben im Text beziehen sich auf Wittgenstein 1975.
- 5 Darin besteht ein Unterschied zu Rorty, dessen Ansatz manchmal den Eindruck erweckt, er sei keinem Wahrheitskonzept verpflichtet. Vgl. Göller 2000, bes. 165-175.
- 6 Track 1999, 159 hebt hervor, dass sich auch bei religiösen Ansichten die Frage nach deren Beurteilungskriterien stellen. Denn oberflächengrammatisch gesehen erheben viele religiöse Äußerungen einen Wahrheitsanspruch. Track kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass Wittgensteins "Interpretationen religiöser Äußerungen bei all ihrer Entdeckungskraft [...] die Kriterienfrage offen lassen" (159).
- 7 Besonders diesen Aspekt hat Winch (1991, bes. 277, 285) betont. Vgl. zur Position und zur Kritik der Position von Winch auch Göller 2000, 137-152.
- 8 Vgl. zur Frage nach dem Konflikt der Lebensformen: Lütterfelds, W. / A. Roser 1999.
- 9 Dass Wittgenstein (natur)wissenschaftliches Denken insgesamt als "Magie" oder als "Aberglaube" auffasst, lässt sich aus dem Zitat nicht ableiten. Schulte 1992, bes. 139 betont: "Der springende Punkt ist also nicht der, daß wir dem Glauben an den Kausalnexen skeptisch gegenüberstehen sollten, sondern der, daß jegliche Form von Aberglauben letztlich auf einer Form des Glaubens an den Kausalnexen beruhe."
- 10 Jedenfalls nicht in den "*Bemerkungen zu Frazer*", aber auch meines Wissens an keiner anderen Stelle.
- 11 "Jede Erklärung ist eine Hypothese" (40).
- 12 Vgl. zur Kritik an Wittgenstein auch Lotter 2000, bes. 95. Sie betont zu Recht, dass Wittgenstein die Bedingungen interkulturellen Verstehens nicht klar macht und

- dessen quasi-phänomenologische Methode nicht geeigneter ist als die von Frazer.
- 13 Wittgenstein bezieht sich hierbei auf Goethes "Metamorphose der Pflanzen": "Und so deutet das Chor auf ein geheimes Gesetz" (45). Vgl. dazu Schulte 1992, 146 und Clack 1999, 64ff.
  - 14 Vgl. dazu auch die Passagen in Wittgensteins "*Philosophischen Untersuchungen*" (1977), bes. Nr. 122 (und folgende).
  - 15 Als Beispiel führt Wittgenstein die Ähnlichkeit einer Kreisform zu einer Ellipse durch das Hervorgehen einer Ellipse aus einer Kreisform an (45). An anderer Stelle zieht er das Beispiel eines Gesichtvergleiches heran (50). Vgl. im Übrigen die Äußerungen zum Verhältnis von Gegenstand und Komplex in den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*, Nr. 52ff., auf die Wittgenstein selbst verweist.
  - 16 Zu Recht urteilt deshalb Clack 1999, 93: "Wittgenstein has only idiosyncratic reasons for rejecting explanation [...] Wittgenstein's suggestions for anthropology are rather poor."
  - 17 Den oben zitierten Passagen geht voraus: "Frazer ist vielmehr savage, als die meisten seiner savages, denn diese werden nicht so weit vom Verständnis einer geistigen Angelegenheit entfernt sein, wie ein Engländer des 20sten Jahrhunderts" (45).
  - 18 Wenn beispielsweise "Götter" mit "Göttern anderer Völker" identifiziert werden, so besagt das, dass man sich davon überzeuge, "daß die Namen die gleiche Bedeutung haben" (45).
  - 20 Vgl. zur Rolle des kulturellen Kontextes für das Kulturverstehen Göller 2000 und 2001.

# Zeigt Uns Wittgenstein Einen Ausweg Aus Dem Fliegenglas?

Rainer Gottlob

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"Was ist dein Ziel in der Philosophie? -- Der Fliege einen Ausweg aus dem Fliegenglas zeigen." (P.U. 309).

## 1. Die Metapher.

Nur wenige Menschen kennen heute Fliegengläser: Es sind das Gläser mit einer engen Öffnung, die manchmal von einem gewundenen Kanal gebildet wird. Innen befinden sich Stoffe, deren Geruch auf Fliegen attraktiv wirkt. Fliegen lassen sich durch den Geruch verleiten und dringen in das Glas ein. Wegen der Durchsichtigkeit des Glases können die Fliegen keinen Ausweg finden. Ähnlich geht es Fliegen, die aus einem Zimmer ins Freie gelangen wollen. Sie fliegen dem Licht zu, ihr Flug ist plötzlich durch das Fensterglas gestoppt; auf Grund ihrer genetischen Ausstattung können die Fliegen das Glas nicht wahrnehmen, ihre Vorfahren waren mit solchen Hindernissen nie konfrontiert.

## 2. Die Menschheit im Fliegenglas.

Die heutige Situation der Menschheit ist der der Fliege im Glas oder vor der Fensterscheibe nicht unähnlich. Auch sie befindet sich in einer Situation, für die sie genetisch nicht vorprogrammiert ist. Im Unterschied zur Fliege hat sie aber diese Situation selber herbeigeführt. Hierzu einige erläuternde Beispiele:

a) In der gesamten Evolution waren Arten bevorzugt, deren Angehörige fähig waren, eine große Nachkommenzahl in die Welt zu setzen. Diese "*Reproductive Fitness*" haben die Menschen ins Übermaß gesteigert. Sie haben die Kindersterblichkeit auf ein Minimum reduziert, mit hygienischen Maßnahmen das durchschnittliche Lebensalter zumindest verdoppelt. Sie haben die Nahrungsmittelproduktion im Rahmen der grünen Revolution auf vorher unvorstellbare Höhen gebracht und sind dabei, eine weitere Steigerung mit genetischen Methoden herbeizuführen. Das hat zu einer gewaltigen Zunahme der Bevölkerungszahl geführt, die Menschheit hat sich zahlenmäßig vervielfacht und ist zu einem gefährlichen Parasiten der Erde ausgewachsen. Da zunehmend große Areale für Wohnzwecke, Straßenbau etc. benötigt werden, und daher

für arable Zwecke ausfallen, wird die Nahrungsmittelproduktion früher oder später an eine natürliche Grenze stoßen. Dann sind Hungerkatastrophen vorprogrammiert.

b) *Kriege, Unterdrückung von ethnischen Minderheiten, Genozide* sind weiter auf der Tagesordnung, sie verhindern eine geistige Entwicklung, die die Menschheit befähigen könnte, einen Ausweg aus dem Fliegenglas zu finden. Nationalismus und Rassismus sind Atavismen, die wir uns schon lange nicht mehr leisten können. Der Nationalstaat unterdrückt Minderheiten, die sich mit Waffengewalt ihren eigenen Nationalstaat erzwingen wollen. Der Gedanke, daß man mit Minderheiten nur dann gut leben kann, wenn man sich jeder Diskriminierung enthält, eher den Minderheiten gewisse Privilegien konzidiert, hat sich noch nicht durchgesetzt, er wird kaum ventiliert und so haben selbst Kulturstaaten unter zunehmendem Terrorismus zu leiden.

c) Die *industrielle Revolution* hat die Menschen bereichert, Arbeitsplätze geschaffen, diese zum Teil wegrationalisiert, die erhöhten Gewinne in die Schaffung neuer Arbeitsplätze investiert u. s. w. Der Ausstoß an Abfallprodukten vergiftet das Wasser, den Boden und vor allem die Luft. Wir sehen, der Fliege im Glas gleich, nicht die in die Luft geschickten Treibhausgase, wir stellen nur fest, daß sich unser Klima weltweit erwärmt, daß das Eis der Polkappen schmilzt. Es hat zwar immer auf der Erde Klimaschwankungen gegeben, aber selbst der Verdacht, daß die derzeitige vom Menschen gemacht sein könnten, müßte uns aufrütteln. Unsere Ge- und Befangenheit im selbsterzeugten Fliegenglas geht daraus hervor, daß eine Verminderung des CO<sub>2</sub>-Ausstoßes unsere industrielle Produktion hemmen würde, wir dann nicht die Mittel hätten, soziale Aufgaben durchzuziehen und die Menschen in einer intensiveren Schulbildung mit den Problemen vertraut zu machen um sie dadurch für potentielle Lösungen zu gewinnen. Es ist noch nicht gelungen, das Überleben der Menschheit in einer lebenswerten Umwelt als ethische Aufgabe mit hohem Stellenwert klarzumachen, obwohl absehbar ist, daß schon unsere Enkel von Umweltkatastrophen bedroht sind.

d) Wir fühlen uns mit Recht verpflichtet, das Elend in vielen unterentwickelten Ländern zu lindern, die Menschen an unserer Bildung, an unserer technischen Fähigkeit teilhaben zu lassen. Bisher war die Entwicklungshilfe wenig erfolgreich. Im Rahmen der Globalisierung, im Zuge der Verlagerung vieler industrieller Produktionen in die Entwicklungsländer, konnten dort deutliche Erfolge erzielt werden. Diese Erfolge werden aber dazu beitragen, daß neben der industriellen Produktion auch der Ausstoß von Schadstoffen in den Entwicklungsländern zunimmt und sukzessiv an den Ausstoß in den Industrieländern angeglichen wird.

Wir wollen uns hier mit diesen wenigen Punkten, die mit materiellen Gefahren zu tun haben, begnügen und das Abholzen der Regenwälder, das Ozonloch, die Zunahme von Suchtgifterzeugung und von Delikten des internationalen organisierten Verbrechens

oder von Aids nur kurz erwähnen. Trotz der durchaus realistischen Horrorszenarios erscheint mir eine weitere Tendenz besonders gefährlich:

e) *Zunahme der Irrationalität.* Es müßte für aufmerksame Beobachter klar sein, daß alle Erfolge, die die Menschheit bisher errungen hat, Erfolge rationalen Denkens waren. Technik und Naturwissenschaften, Philosophie und Soziologie verdanken ihre Fortschritte rationalem Denken. Fehlentwicklungen sind das Resultat von irrationalen Anwendungen. Irrationale Methoden haben keine Erfolge aufzuweisen, sie waren katastrophenträchtig, denken wir an die irrationale Perversion der Aufklärung in der Französischen Revolution, an die irrationalen Geißeln des 20. Jahrhunderts, den Kommunismus, der für sich das Pathos der Aufklärung beanspruchte und den Faschismus, der es verstand, die Massen zu fanatischen Wirgruppen zu verhetzen. Beide haben Millionen von Morden und einen Weltkrieg mit etwa 60 Millionen Toten und etwa ebensovielen Verstümmelten zuwege gebracht (nicht zu "verantworten", weil hier Verantwortung unmöglich ist).

Nach der teilweise gegenseitigen Vernichtung, teilweise Besiegung durch die westliche Welt ist kein Wandel zu Rationalität eingetreten. Sekten florieren, das "*New Age*" wurde ausgerufen, die Demokratien stehen im Abwehrkampf gegen Korruption und Populismus und den Vereinten Nationen sind in den meisten Konflikten die Hände gebunden. Verschiedenen Fortschritten, etwa der Europäischen Menschenrechtsgesetzgebung, stehen Massenverdummungen durch quotensüchtige Medien gegenüber. Eine weltweite, nüchterne Information der Menschen über die Gefahren, denen ihre Nachkommen ausgesetzt sind, ein weltweiter Plan zur Beseitigung der Unbildung, eine weltweite Aufklärung über Familienplanung und Menschenrechte und ein durch ausreichende Machtmittel gestütztes Weltribunal gegen Kriegsverbrechen, Umweltverbrechen und Massenverdummung steht noch aus. Neben dieser Irrationalität im Großen floriert die Irrationalität im Kleinen. Die Kunst trägt des Kaisers neue Kleider. Pornographie wird als Aufklärung maskiert. Dinge, die bisher vom Kunstbetrieb ausgeschlossen waren, Vulgäres, Ausscheidung, mit Recht bisher als unappetitlich Verpöntes gilt als progressiv, Neues, das oft gar nicht so neu ist und Provokantes will als avantgardistisch gelten. Harmonien, die in Tönen, in Bildern oder Poesie zugleich Ausdruck von Mathematik und Naturgesetzen sind, zugleich der *Conditio humana* entgegenkommen, gelten als verpöft. Naturgesetze gelten als unbeweisbar und als unnötiger Zwang, Vernunft ist negativ besetzt.

### **3. Die Philosophie im Fliegenglas ?**

Auch für die Philosophie gibt es Grenzen der Erkenntnis, die durch unsere genetische Ausstattung bestimmt sind. Ähnlich wie in den Naturwissenschaften lassen sich diese

Grenzen durch Schließen von Bekanntem auf Unbekanntes ausdehnen, aber nicht annullieren. So pendelt die Philosophie zwischen zwei Extremen, die einerseits durch einen strengen Positivismus und Szientismus, andererseits durch Richtungen gegeben sind, die *intuitive Erkenntnis* anstreben, wie Hermeneutik oder Formen des Idealismus, die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisse gering schätzen und einen extremen Relativismus propagieren.

#### **4. Neuere Überlegungen zur Überwindung der Fliegenglas-Situation.**

In der Informatik hat sich das Prinzip des "*Randomized Local Search*" oder "*Greedy Algorithm*" (z.B. Koutsoupias, E und H. Papadimitriou, 1992) durchgesetzt. Es wird angewandt, wenn man bei dem Versuch, Probleme durch hochentwickelte Rechner zu lösen, oft auch nach längerer Zeit, etwa nach einer Stunde, zu keiner Lösung gelangt. In solchen Fällen hat es sich als nützlich erwiesen, den Versuch in der begonnenen Form nicht weiterzuführen, sondern abubrechen und mit einem neuen Ansatz wieder aufzunehmen. Ich verdanke die Kenntnis dieses Prinzips meinem Sohn, dem Informatiker, Prof. Dr. Georg Gottlob, von dem auch die Analogie zu dem Verhalten der Fliege am Fensterglas stammt.

Nach längeren erfolglosen Versuchen, das ihr unsichtbare Hindernis an einer Stelle zu überwinden, gibt die Fliege auf, fliegt zurück und versucht an einer anderen Stelle einen Ausweg zu finden. Dieses Verhalten steht im Einklang mit dem Randomized Local Search der Informatiker und muß, evolutionär gesehen, als vorteilhafte Verhaltensform angesehen werden, weil es so schließlich möglich wird, doch manchmal den Ausweg zu finden.

#### **5. Wittgensteins Auswegsuche**

hat uns in seiner Philosophie ein ähnliches Verhalten vorgeführt. Für die Genialität Wittgensteins spricht, daß seine verschiedenen Versuche mit unterschiedlichen Ansätzen weltweit von verschiedenen Richtungen der Philosophie übernommen wurden. Es ist keine große Übertreibung, wenn wir sagen, daß Wittgenstein sowohl den Grundstein für die Moderne, als auch für die Postmoderne gelegt hat, zumindest, was die Philosophie betrifft.

Da war zunächst die *positivistische Phase*. Bei R. Carnap (1963, S. 24) lesen wir: "Im Wiener Kreis wurde ein großer Teil von Ludwig Wittgensteins Tractatus Logico Philosophicus laut verlesen und Satz für Satz diskutiert. Oft waren lange Überlegungen notwendig, um herauszufinden, was gemeint war. Und manchmal fanden wir keine

klaren Interpretationen. Und doch, einen guten Teil davon verstanden wir und dann gab es darüber lebhaftere Diskussionen." Wenn wir aber den TLP studieren, sehen wir neben den positivistischen Ansätzen schon deutliche Versuche, diese zu übersteigen. So finden wir schon im Vorwort die Meinung vertreten, "die Probleme im Wesentlichen endgültig gelöst zu haben", gefolgt von dem Passus "daß sich zeigt, wie wenig damit getan ist, daß die Probleme gelöst sind".

In TLP 4.024 finden wir in gemildeter Form den Leitsatz der logischen Positivisten: "Einen Satz verstehen, heißt, wissen was der Fall ist, wenn er wahr ist." und neben Sätzen, die ähnlich mit den Grundanschauungen der logischen Positivisten übereinstimmen: "Die richtige Methodik der Philosophie wäre eigentlich nichts zu sagen, als was sich sagen läßt, also Sätze der Naturwissenschaft..." finden wir bereits Passagen, die, weil "metaphysisch", mit dem logischen Positivismus unvereinbar sind. So 6.41: "Der Sinn der Welt muß außerhalb ihrer liegen ....." oder "Die Ethik ist transzendental. (Ethik und Aesthetik sind Eins.) -(6.421). und das mehrfache Eingehen auf das "Mystische", des "Unaussprechliche".

Wie wir aus Wittgensteins Biographie wissen, war er weit davon entfernt, mit den Thesen des TLP zufrieden zu sein. Schon 1913 befaßte er sich mit hypnotischer Trance "in der Hoffnung, klare Antworten auf Fragen zu geben, die Schwierigkeiten in der Logik betreffen (N. Malcolm, 1972, S.327). Das war nur ein kurzes Intermezzo. Nach dem Tractatus kam es aber zum eigentlichen

## 6.: "Localized Random Search". Wittgensteins in den P.U.

Die Abkehr vom Tractatus wird deutlich in P.U.114: "*Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung* 4.5: `Die allgemeine Form des Satzes ist: Es verhält sich so und so´-- Das ist ein Satz von jener Art, die man sich unzählige Male wiederholt. Man glaubt, wieder und wieder der Natur nachzufahren, und fährt nur der Form entlang, durch die wir sie betrachten."

Hier kommt die ganze Subjektivität zum Ausdruck, die die Kritik des Relativismus am logischen Positivismus und an verwandten Denkrichtungen, einschließlich des "wissenschaftlichen Denkens" durchsetzt. Aus dem Satz des TLP, dem Sachverhalt, allem was der Fall ist, sind "Sprachspiele" geworden, eine Betrachtung, die "alles Große und Wichtige, zu zerstören scheint? (Gleichsam alle Bauwerke; indem sie nur Steinbrocken und Schutt übrig läßt.) Aber es sind nur Luftgebäude, die wir zerstören, und wir legen den Grund der Sprache frei, auf dem sie standen." (P.U.118) -- "Die Ergebnisse der Philosophie sind die Entdeckung irgendeines schlichten Unsinn und Beulen, die sich der Verstand beim Anrennen an die Grenze der Sprache geholt hat. Sie, die Beulen, lassen uns den Wert jener Entdeckung erkennen." (PU 119)



Spätestens hier ist der "Linguistic Turn" eingeleitet und damit der Random Local Search vollzogen.

## **7.: Hat uns einer der beiden Zugänge den Ausweg aus dem Fliegenglas gezeigt?**

Das müssen wir bezweifeln. Ähnlich, wie nach dem Tractatus sind keineswegs alle Probleme gelöst und neue Probleme haben sich aufgetan. Der Tractatus hat erheblich dazu beigetragen, den vorher verbreiteten Idealismus einzudämmen. Wir haben gelernt, daß in Wissenschaft und Technik eine präzise Terminologie möglich ist, daß das Gramm-Zentimeter-Sekundensystem zwar bei weitem nicht alles, aber vieles präzise definieren kann. Offenbar ist es leicht, einen Motor durch Zeichnung und sprachliche Beschreibung so zu definieren, daß es möglich wird, ihn nachzubauen. Dagegen haben wir aber auch gelernt, daß vieles, das zu den Ingredientien des Lebens gehört, nur ungenau zu beschreiben ist und bestenfalls näherungsweise durch kontextuelle Ergänzungen mitgeteilt werden kann. So war der logische Positivismus in der Folge des Tractatus ein Teilerfolg, aber kein Durchbruch, kein Ausweg aus dem Fliegenglas in dem sich die Menschheit, wie in Abschnitt 2 dargelegt, befindet.

Zwar sind durch die Sprachphilosophie viele Luftgebäude, wo sie vorhanden waren, zerstört, Unsere Sprache ist auf dem Prüfstand, vielleicht sogar auf dem Seziertisch gelegen, ihre Ungenauigkeiten, die besonders dort liegen, wo unsere intimeren Lebensprobleme berührt werden, haben uns erschreckt, unsere Sensibilität bestärkt, aber uns praktisch kaum weiter geholfen. Wir haben etwas über die Konsistenz des Glases gelernt, in dem wir befangen sind, über spezielle Qualitäten unserer Natur, über "die Verhexung unseres Verstandes durch die Mittel unserer Sprache", aber keine Arkanum, mit dem wir den Bann brechen, mit dem wir uns über unsere Natur erheben könnten.

Und doch können wir sagen, daß uns beide Versuche Wittgensteins, einen Ausweg zu finden, viel gelehrt haben. Ohne Einblicke in die Topographie unseres Gefängnisses ist jeder Ausbruchversuch zum Scheitern verurteilt. Wittgenstein hat uns gezeigt, wie solche Ausbrüche gelingen könnten: nicht durch ständiges Anrennen gegen eine Wand, sondern durch die Methode des Randomized Local Search, duch neue Anläufe in andere Richtung, wenn wieder einmal ein Ausbruchsversuch gescheitert sein sollte. Das Scheitern macht uns klüger, einmal dadurch, daß wir wissen, welcher Ausweg nicht gelingen kann und dadurch, daß wir gelernt haben, nicht aufzugeben, sondern durch Randomized Local Search mit neuen Ansätzen weiter zu suchen.

Zeigt Uns Wittgenstein Einen Ausweg Aus Dem Fliegenglas?

## Zitierte Arbeiten

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# Wittgenstein, Freud and the Therapy of Language: Recognizing the Perspicuous or Constructing Mythologies?

Marie Guillot

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The most obvious respect in which Wittgenstein can be compared to Freud is that they are both therapists of language. In accordance with the programmatic assertion that "The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness" (1953, § 255), Wittgenstein dedicates his thought to healing grammar diseases and subsequent conceptual confusions. Similarly, Freud's attention goes to all the anomalies that jut out of speech - puns, slips of the tongue, and above all dreams, the latter being relevant to the linguistic paradigm since they are regarded as rebuses or cryptic texts in need of deciphering. The following objection might nip the comparison in the bud: apparently, for Wittgenstein, language distortions are the *causes* of the illnesses - "mental cramps" (1958, p. 59) and "sicknesses of the understanding" (1956, p. 157) - whereas for Freud, they are only *symptoms* betraying deeper troubles of another nature. For Wittgenstein, speech disorders would come first in the etiological chain, where for Freud they come last. But this opposition may be a superficial one. For Wittgenstein, strictly speaking, language as such cannot be responsible for philosophical diseases; for it would be inconsistent with the claim "that every sentence in our language 'is in order as it is'. (...) Where there is sense there must be perfect order." (1953, § 98) Language is not intrinsically misleading or deviant; it is not likely to de-regulate itself spontaneously. Hence, there must be a prior cause of linguistic illnesses, which should be searched for beyond the immanence of grammar. Wittgenstein seems to find this cause in an unconscious, metaphysical desire of the understanding to break the rules, to "[run] its head up against the limits of language" (1953, § 119). Thus, for Wittgenstein as for Freud, linguistic anomalies are the *manifestations*, rather than the ultimate causes, of diseases whose source is to be found in repressed cravings of the human mind<sup>1</sup>.

The kinship between the objects of Wittgenstein's and Freud's therapeutic investigations being established, the question remains open whether their therapeutic *method* can be compared as well. The purpose of this paper is to solve this problem. In doing so, we will meet with the following ambivalence in both Wittgenstein's and Freud's thought: does therapy consist in the *recognition* of a meaning that has always been open to view, or in the *construction* of one? Does it involve vision, or action?

## 1. Recognizing the obvious

In order to compare Wittgenstein's and Freud's methods of healing, a preliminary remark on the analogy of structure between their respective conceptions of language is necessary. For both authors, speech is based on a *dual pattern*, on a complementary pair of opposite principles. Indeed, a parallel can be drawn between the Wittgensteinian distinction between *saying* and *showing* and the Freudian distinction between *manifest content* and *latent content* (or speech and symptom). The two authors are aware that all that is *expressed* in language is not necessarily *said*, but can also *show* itself; and that, correlatively, understanding the spoken content of an utterance does not guarantee that all the dimensions of its sense have been grasped. Both thinkers are interested in what happens within language but exceeds the reach of language itself, in what language exhibits or betrays but does not tell. In Freud's case, this elusive element coincides with the presence, in a conscious utterance, of unconscious meanings that are unintentionally manifested - shown - by the speaker. In Wittgenstein's works, the unsaid dimension of language is first identified with its logical form (1922), and then, more generally, with its grammar rules (1953): we understand spontaneously the sense conveyed by the sentences of ordinary language, but we are not necessarily conscious of the *rules* which govern their formation, however visible they are.

This is where linguistic troubles may intervene. Both authors believe that language becomes a prey to diseases when its second dimension (what is not told but shown) passes unnoticed. Philosophical confusions appear when grammar rules are overlooked, despite their perspicuity; similarly, neuroses come from the blindness to unconscious desires that show on the surface of conscious words. Wittgenstein and Freud explore this puzzling paradox: the second dimension of language, like the object of Dupin's quest in E. A. Poe's *The purloined letter*, is all the more easy to miss as it is open to view. The most evident is also the most difficult to see; or, in Wittgenstein's own words: "The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. (One is unable to notice something - because it is always before one's eyes.)" (1953, §129)<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, as counterintuitive as it may sound, a therapy of speech must consist in *learning to see the obvious*<sup>3</sup>. It implies taking a different look at language - what Wittgenstein calls an "Übersicht" (1953 § 92, 122) - so that what was repressed may be expressed (Freud) and so that we may "pass from a piece of latent nonsense to something that is patent nonsense" (Wittgenstein, 1953, § 464). All that is required to lift neurotic symptoms or to solve a philosophical problem is to pay sincere attention to what we say, in order to see what has always been visible, yet unseen. In philosophy, for instance, as soon as the ordinary, perspicuous grammar rules whose neglect provoked conceptual muddles are laid bare, these confusions

vanish in an instant illumination that is closely akin to the dazzling feeling of evidence in the Freudian lifting of repression. Recognising the obvious is enough to "show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle" (1953, § 309). Thus, just as the task of the psychoanalyst confines itself to listening carefully, for the later Wittgenstein, philosophy should restrict itself to a close study of our "language games" and to their description. As he says, "Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. - Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us" (1953, §126).

Wittgenstein's and Freud's therapeutic methods are closely akin in that they both aim at a vision of the obvious. Hence, both authors could be described as "phenomenologists of speech": they pay an extreme attention to what we actually say, in its literalness. Their way of healing linguistic diseases involves a passive attitude of responsiveness to what already exists, rather than positive acts. This may help to understand Wittgenstein's provocative claim that philosophy "may in no way interfere with the actual use of language" and "leaves everything as it is" (1953, § 124). In order to cure speech illnesses, there seems to be nothing to *do*, but only things to *see*.

## 2. Is therapeutic speech a performative use of language?

This first approach to Wittgenstein's and Freud's therapeutic methods raises more problems than it solves. Indeed, it conflicts radically with another conceivable point of view, according to which their therapeutic use of language is a *performance*.

The speech of the therapist, philosopher or psychoanalyst, cannot be described only in terms of passivity and receptivity. It must also be regarded as a genuine *action*, for it is a particularly relevant example of J. L. Austin's *performative utterance* (1962). Wittgenstein and Freud "do things with words": their speech does not, or not only, elaborate a *theory* of therapeutic devices, but constitutes the therapeutic intervention itself. For Wittgenstein, the main task of the philosopher is to give explicit verbal expression to conceptual muddles; similarly, the purpose of the psychoanalyst is to obtain from the patient a complete account of his symptoms. But putting the diseases into words is in neither case a *preliminary* to healing them; it is in itself the method of healing. Whereas in medical science, accurate description of the manifestations of illnesses is needed *before* any therapeutic act is attempted, as a neutral, purely constative precondition for action, for Wittgenstein and for Freud, description is action. Thus, to adapt Austin's words, "The uttering of the [account of the disease] is, or *is* part of, the doing of an action, which (...) would not *normally* be described as, or as 'just', saying something" (1962, p. 5); namely, the action of alleviating the disease in question.

Freud was conscious as early as in the *Studies on Hysteria* that his method rested on the performative power of language. He reports that he "found (...) *that each individual hysterical symptom immediately and permanently disappeared when we had succeeded in bringing clearly to light the memory of the event by which it was provoked, and when the patient had described that event in the greatest possible detail and had put the affect into words.*" (p. 6) The proceeding was christened "talking cure" by one of Freud and Breuer's first patients, Anna O.: she meant by this name that wording the symptom and its genesis was removing it, so that the cure resided *in* the talking; talking was acting.

In the Wittgensteinian analysis of conceptual disorders, the performative dimension of language is no less obvious. Philosophical problems are solved simply by "looking into the workings of our language" (1953, § 109): it is by describing carefully our entanglements in our own grammar rules, and by subsequently remembering these rules, that we disentangle ourselves. Thus Wittgenstein, like Austin, undermines "an age-old assumption in philosophy - the assumption that to say something (...) is always and simply to *state* something." (Austin, 1962, p. 12) In (or by) saying what he says, the philosopher-therapist *does* something: his conceptual investigations suffice to produce a sudden liberating effect, such that "the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear" (1953, § 133). The efficiency of mere words in the treatment of philosophical illnesses confirms Wittgenstein's insistent claim that "Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity" (1922, 4.112). As he says: "What I want to teach you isn't opinions but a method. (...) I don't try to make you *believe* something you *don't* believe, but to make you *do* something you won't do" (quoted by R. Rhees). The speech of the philosopher, if a genuinely therapeutic one, is always a performance. This feature seems to conflict with the neutrality and passivity implied in Wittgenstein's description of philosophy as "leaving everything as it is". Does his method of healing consist in *seeing* something, or in *doing* something? In Wittgenstein's case, this ambivalence is only an apparent one, for doing something does not involve introducing anything new within language, but only achieving a conversion of the look we take at it. Hence, it is not incompatible with the idea that healing language illnesses comes down to seeing the obvious.

In Freud's case however, the tension between action and the mere vision of what is already there is a really problematic one: psychoanalytic speech is performative in a more radical sense than in Wittgenstein's philosophy. In his late publications (e.g. 1937), Freud expresses the idea that the search for the patient's repressed thoughts and memories does not so much consist in recollecting as in *reconstructing* them. Rather than a description of what already exists, i.e. an *avowal*, the expression of the

unconscious is a *creative act*. Hence, there is a real ambiguity in Freud's thought as to whether therapy consists in uncovering a meaning that has always been open to view, or in building a radically new one. This is where Wittgenstein and Freud diverge, since the performative efficacy of the former's remarks is in no way that of a *construction*. On the contrary, Wittgenstein's therapeutic method rather consists in the *destruction* of our linguistic "houses of cards" (1953, § 118). Accordingly, his look at Freud's method of healing by means of constructions, rather than strict descriptions, is a highly critical one, to the point that he includes psychoanalysis's ingenious elaborations within the range of language diseases as *mythologies*. Freud's and Wittgenstein's performative uses of language prove to be of two very different kinds: the former speaks to *do* something, the latter to *undo* something. Does that mean that Wittgenstein is one step ahead Freud in what makes their modernity and their usefulness for all future philosophy, i.e. their common struggle against fantasy and illusion?

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## Endnotes

- 1 Repressed thoughts are explicitly ascribed a role in the aetiology of conceptual difficulties in a passage of *Philosophical Grammar* where Wittgenstein openly speaks as a "disciple of Freud": "A mathematician is bound to be horrified by my mathematical comments, since he has always been trained to avoid indulging in thoughts and doubts of the kind I develop. He has learned to regard them as something contemptible and, to use an analogy from psychoanalysis (*this paragraph is reminiscent of Freud*), he has acquired a revulsion from them as infantile. That is to say, I trot out all the problems that a child learning arithmetic, etc., finds difficult, the problems that education represses without solving. I say to those *repressed doubts*: you are quite correct, go on asking, demand clarification!" (P. 381-382; my emphasis.)
- 2 Our ambiguous attitude towards such a simple thing as the functioning of a sentence is an illustration of Wittgenstein's paradoxical claim that the most familiar is the most difficult to see. One is tempted to think that "A proposition is a queer thing!" (1953, § 94), whilst knowing that "nothing out of the ordinary is involved" (id.). This ambivalent impression could be fruitfully analysed in the light of the Freudian concept of *the uncanny*: the "*Heimat*" becomes "*unheimlich*" because it meets with resistances. (Cf. S. Cavell, 1989, p. 47.)
- 3 For both Wittgenstein and Freud, the recognition of the obvious coincides with a *return to the origin*. Psychoanalysis is a kind of archaeological research in the depths of the patient's history, where unconscious desires took their source. And Wittgenstein's grammatical analysis consists in bringing each word back in its native context, "in the language-game which is its original home (*Heimat*)" (1953, § 116). (Cf. Cavell 1989, pp. 32-40.)



# How Do I Know That The Colour That I Am Now Seeing Is Called "Green"?

Martin Gustafsson

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## I

In his discussions of language use and rule-following, Wittgenstein repeatedly emphasises the importance of *acting without reasons*. Sometimes, he even makes a connection between ordinary cases of language use or rule-following, and situations in which fear or panic makes us say things without reflecting at all. Consider §§211-212 in *Philosophical Investigations*:

How can he *know* how he is to continue a pattern by himself - whatever instruction you give him? Well, how do I know? - If that means "Have I reasons?" the answer is: my reasons will soon give out. And then I shall act, without reasons.

When someone whom I am afraid of orders me to continue the series, I act quickly, with perfect certainty, and the lack of reasons does not trouble me.

Or, look at the following passage from *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*:

How do I know that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green"? Well, to confirm it I might ask other people; but if they did not agree with me, I should become totally confused and should perhaps take them or myself for crazy. That is to say: I should either no longer trust myself to judge, or no longer react to what they say as to a judgement.

If I am drowning and I shout "Help!", how do I know what the word Help means? Well, that's how I react in this situation.-Now *that* is how I know what "green" means as well and also know how I have to follow the rule in the particular case. (VI-35)

It is very difficult to provide an adequate reading of passages such as these. The difficulty is not just that of seeing the possibility of questioning the over-rationalistic picture of language use that is Wittgenstein's most visible target. It is equally hard to avoid ascribing to Wittgenstein a view which constitutes the dialectical opposite of that over-rationalistic picture. The temptation is strong to think that rejecting the idea of language use as somehow based on reasons all the way down, must involve *depriving*

language of something - what one might want to call its "content", or "cognitive significance". We are inclined to believe that if we fail to make sense of the idea that our linguistic practices have a rational foundation, then we are forced to conclude that such practices can only, to use Kripke's phrase, consist in a series of impulsive "stabs in the dark". (Kripke, 1982) We will then read the passages just quoted as offering a view according to which, basically, language use is not a form of mindful action at all, but just a series of spontaneous, though remarkably unison, reactions.

Now, most Wittgenstein interpreters would probably agree that this sort of reading is mistaken. In recent years, it has often been said - correctly, I think - that Wittgenstein's emphasis on acting without reasons is *not* meant to deprive language of anything. Rather, it is argued, his basic goal is to help us overcome the very dialectic which makes it seem as if we have to choose *either* the over-rationalistic view, *or* its impoverished antithesis. A recurrent theme in many discussions of Wittgenstein is the struggle to understand how, more precisely, he thought the overcoming of this dialectic was to be achieved.

What follows is meant as yet another contribution to this struggle. I want to shed some further light on why Wittgenstein's emphasis on acting without reasons is best seen as an attempt to show why *both* the above pictures of linguistic practice are flawed. My strategy will be to reflect, as Wittgenstein himself often did, on our use of colour words. I hope my reflections can make clearer how passages such as those quoted above can be seen, not as depriving language of anything that we can meaningfully want to find there, but as doing justice to language as we already know it.

## II

With respect to our use of colour words, it will be helpful to distinguish between cases of two different sorts. The first sort is illustrated by the following example. Suppose one of my friends shows me a scrap of green paper, and asks me, "Martin, do you know what this shade of green is called?" I look at the paper and answer, with some confidence: "This colour is called 'Emerald Green'."

Now, even if I feel sure that my answer is correct, it may well turn out to be false. Suppose that later, I compare the scrap of paper with the samples of a colour chart, and find that the colour of the scrap matches the colour chart's sample of Pistachio Green rather than that of Emerald Green. In this situation, my confidence in my former judgement would be shaken. If I double-checked with one or two other colour charts and got the same result, I would probably take my claim to have been refuted. "I was wrong," I would say: "The colour is called 'Pistachio Green', not 'Emerald Green'."

The second sort of case is quite different. It is illustrated by the following example. Suppose a colour-blind friend shows me a scrap of paper, the colour of which I immediately recognise as green. He asks me, "Would the colour of this paper be called 'red' or 'green'?" I answer, without hesitation, "Green'." The sort of confidence involved in this answer is of a different kind than the confidence I displayed in the previous case. One might say that in the previous case, I just *felt* confident, whereas in this second case, my confidence is a key characteristic of my *use* of the word "green." Thus, suppose I found a colour chart which seemed to go against my saying that the colour of the paper is called "green": a chart, say, where the sample named "red" had the same colour as the scrap of paper shown to me by my friend. This would not make me withdraw my claim, or make me any less certain that what I said was true. That is to say: I would not treat the colour chart as a piece of counter-evidence. Rather, I would immediately conclude that the chart has been wrongly constructed; that the red and the green samples have been mixed up. Conversely, a colour chart which is in line with what I say - that is, a chart where the sample named "green" has the same colour as the scrap of paper shown to me by my colour-blind friend - would not lend additional support to my claim. For the confidence I have in my ability to tell immediately that the colour of the scrap of paper is called "green," is no less than the confidence I have in my ability to read colour charts correctly, or the confidence I have in my ability to see that the scrap of paper and the samples of the colour chart have the *same* colour. So, the notions of justification and counter-evidence are *both* out of place here.

In the first sort of case, when I tell my friend that the colour is called "Emerald Green," I feel sure that I am right. This feeling has no clear rational basis; at most, I rely on certain vague memories of things that I have heard people call "Emerald Green" before. One might aptly characterise my answer as an "inspired guess." I *could* have been more careful when my friend asked me about the name of the colour. For example, I may have hunted up a colour chart in order to provide a more informed response. But I preferred to take a chance, as it were, and trust my fallible feeling that I was right.

It is tempting to conceive the second sort of case along similar lines. After all, the feeling of confidence and the lack of a reasons are both there. However, when I tell my colour-blind friend, "This colour is called 'green'," I do not guess. That this colour is called "green" is as certain as anything can possibly get. But then, how is this certainty compatible with my lack of reasons? The answer is that in this case, my lack of reasons has nothing to do with my being careless, or my "taking a chance." Rather, I lack reasons because in this sort of case, *there just is no such thing as my having reasons*, or my looking for reasons. My use of the word "green" is characterised by the fact that, in cases such as the one described, nothing is treated as a clear reason for or against my claim that the colour of the scrap of paper shown to me is called "green." I could not have been

more careful than I was, for the notion of a "further justification" has been given no place in this sort of situation.

If one fails to keep this in mind, Wittgenstein's parallel between my knowing that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green," and my shouting "Help!" when I am drowning, is almost bound to be misconstrued. Why? Well, fear or panic often makes us do things impulsively which, had we kept a clear head, we might not have done: driving at a high speed or walking on thin ice without reflecting on whether the danger of such behaviour stands in reasonable proportion to the real cause of our fear. If we had not panicked, we would and could have looked for reasons - checked if the ice were tolerably safe, or if the traffic situation allowed for fast driving. The misconstrual I have in mind reads Wittgenstein as claiming that when I say that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green," I lack reasons in a similar sense. Supposedly, I could have looked for reasons - but I didn't.

However, the real point of Wittgenstein's parallel is very different. Again, what he wants to show is that with respect to my saying that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green," the phrase "looking for reasons" has been given no content at all. Hence, my lack of reasons is not due to my being hasty, or somehow under pressure; rather, it is part of what my use of the word "green" looks like. Of course, alternative uses of the word "green" are imaginable, where colour charts are allowed to override my immediate judgement. But those would not be more rational ways of using the word. They would just be different.

### III

In order to get a more complete understanding of the points I have just tried to make, the next thing we need to do is to look at what Wittgenstein says about the role of *agreement* in one of the passages I quoted at the beginning of this paper. After having asked how I know that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green," Wittgenstein goes on to say that "in order to *confirm* it, I may ask other people." This talk of "confirmation" may well strike the reader as peculiar. For how can other people confirm to me that this colour is called "green"? Again, the problem is that the notion of "confirmation" seems to run idle here; for no confidence can be greater than the confidence I already have that this colour is called "green." On this matter, I put no greater trust in other people's judgements than in my own. Indeed, I also have no greater confidence in my ability to understand other people's expressions as expressions of agreement, than in my ability to decide, without further ado, that this colour is called "green." So, isn't it altogether misleading to speak of "confirmation" in this sort of case?

Well; in a way it is. However, look at how Wittgenstein continues the passage. If the people I ask do *not* agree with me, he says, "I should become totally confused and should perhaps take them or myself for crazy." Clearly, he is aware that, in the case at issue, other people's opinions do not function as evidence or counter-evidence in any ordinary sense. Other people's disagreement would not simply contradict my claim that this colour is called "green." What is at stake here is a more radical form of breakdown - a breakdown at a different, more fundamental level. Wittgenstein says that if people disagree with me, "I should either no longer trust myself to judge, or no longer react to what they say as to a judgement." In other words, rather than concluding that my claim that this colour is called "green" is simply wrong, I would perhaps lose sense of what it would mean for it to be *either* right or wrong. Or, I might become completely uncertain about what it is that the people around me are actually doing: are they really disagreeing with me, or are they just joking or ejaculating meaningless noises? What Wittgenstein is talking about is nothing less than a beginning disintegration of the very notions of "claim," "judgement," "evidence," "counter-evidence," "agreement" and "disagreement." And such disintegration is, of course, very different from an ordinary refutation by means of counter-evidence.

Consequently, Wittgenstein's discussion about the role of agreement does not go against what I said above, about there being no such thing as reasons for or against my saying that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green." For what he claims is not that my judgement gains *support* from the fact that other people agree with it. It is not in virtue of other people's agreement that what I say is correct; and, conversely, their disagreement would not prove me wrong. Rather, the agreement comes in at a more fundamental level, namely, as the background against which it can be clear that I am saying something at all, true *or* false.

#### IV

In his discussions of language and rule-following, Wittgenstein often notices that "The chain of reasons comes to an end." What I have argued in this paper is that this observation should be taken quite literally. The chain of reasons does come to an end, not just in the weak sense that, at one point or another, I decide to act even if, in principle, I could have continued to look for reasons; but in the stronger sense that, at one point or another, the phrase "to continue to look for reasons" ceases to play a meaningful role. Of course, we could always give that phrase a meaning. We could, for example, start treating colour charts as reasons for or against my claim that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green." But this would just mean to change the use of the word "green" - to make it more similar to the use of the word "Emerald Green." And, of

course, the chain of reasons would still come to an end: after my having looked at one, or perhaps two or three, colour charts, nothing would count as my "looking for additional reasons." So, we cannot say that this sort of use would have a "firmer foundation" than the current one. Again, it would just be different.

How, then, should the acting without reasons that Wittgenstein is emphasising be described? Well, to characterise such acts as "inspired guesses" or "stabs in the dark" is clearly mistaken: for such characterisations are used in opposition to expressions such as "well-founded judgement" and "rationally based verdict". However, what I have argued in this paper is that the sort of action Wittgenstein is talking about takes place at a level where the *opposition* between well-founded judgement and mere guesswork does not gain any foothold. Words such as "impulsive", "instinctive" and "spontaneous" may also be misleading in this context, for the same reason. Such words make it sound as if, had he only been more rational and clear-headed, the agent could have looked for further reasons. Whereas what Wittgenstein wants to show is that, at this level, the contrast between acting impulsively and clear-headedly is out of place. What he is talking about is a form of action which must already be taken for granted when the contrast between impulsive and rational conduct is introduced.

This is immediately connected to the opposition I described in the beginning of his paper, between the over-rationalistic picture of language use and its impoverished, meaning-sceptical antithesis. Wittgenstein's way of overcoming the dialectic characterised by this opposition, is to show how both these pictures arise from a blindness to or misunderstanding of the sort of unfounded action I have been talking about. The over-rationalistic picture thinks no such unfounded action takes place at all. Thus, it tries to conceive of my claim that the colour that I am now seeing is called "green," as if it were based on some sort of self-evident insight into the meaning of the word "green"; an insight which is somehow separable from, and serves to sanction, my not being prepared to count anything else as a reason for or against what I am saying. Recoiling from this over-rationalistic picture, its meaning-sceptical antithesis tries to conceive language use as if the chain of reasons *never* comes to an end. This makes it seem as if, at one point or another, the language users have to act *irrationally*, as it were. The idea is that, in principle, there will always be more reasons to look for - but, in order to ever use language, we will sooner or later have to take the plunge and act without a completely secured foundation.

I hope at least to have indicated why Wittgenstein regards these pictures as mistaken. According to his diagnosis, they both arise from a failure to realise that to act without reasons does not always mean to act *unreasonably* or *irrationally*. The acting without reasons that Wittgenstein is interested in, is a sort of acting which is

presupposed by the very contrast between rational and irrational conduct. To emphasise the importance of such acting, is not to deprive language of its "content" or "cognitive significance". It is, rather, to clarify what we can mean when we use notions such as these to characterise our customary linguistic activities.

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# Can we change the past?\*

Adrian Haddock

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The notion of the past itself actually *changing* is nonsense. So said Elizabeth Anscombe, although she later came to believe that sense could be made of this notion. For imagine Jill shoots Jack, and two days later Jack dies as a direct result of being shot by Jill. Then Jill killed Jack. But when did she kill him? When she shot him? How, if he did not die immediately? When he died, then? How, if she was asleep at that time? Anscombe solves this problem by distinguishing between the action and the numerous descriptions that are true of it. The description 'Jill killed Jack' is true of her action of shooting him, but not until he is dead. So at 2:00pm on Monday it is true that Jill shoots Jack, but not yet true that she killed him; that is not true until 5:00pm on Wednesday. The description 'Jill killed Jack' thus becomes true of her action over time, even it was made true not only by Jill's action, but also by the later event of Jack's death.

While there is nothing odd about statements 'becoming true' -- we make statements true all the time simply by acting -- it sounds a little unusual to say that statements become true of actions that are no longer taking place. For what happens is that, although the act is over, many things come to be true of it, as further happenings unfold. So, in a sense the past has changed, for a past action is truly described in a new way by a statement whose truth depends upon consequent events. This is a kind of change in the past, albeit a 'harmless' one -- what Anscombe calls 'a mere "Cambridge change"'.

Ian Hacking has recently argued for the same conclusion, in *Rewriting the Soul*, his book-length study of Multiple Personality Disorder. Yet, the truth of the statements that concern him do not depend upon future *events*, as they do not refer, or even implicitly allude, to these. Rather, they 'change the past' simply by being part of a future practice of describing and classifying. Hacking has recently admitted that he is not entirely happy with this argument, even though he is satisfied that no one has said anything better on the subject -- yet. So, here goes.

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Hacking makes his case with reference to a striking, if horrific, example: the sexual abuse of children. In the early seventeenth century, a small child (in fact, the future King Louis XIII of France) had his genitals fondled in public by various adults. For the 'psycho-historian' Lloyd DeMause, this child was the victim of child abuse. However, no one was



using the expression 'child abuse' until the twentieth century, and Hacking claims that the concept of child abuse did not 'come into being' until 1961, at a meeting of the American Medical Association held in Denver, Colorado. For this reason another historian, Phillippe Aries, takes the view that Louis XIII was not abused; rather, the incident gives evidence of a freer, less cluttered attitude to homosexuality.

Hacking understands DeMause's as saying, no doubt contrary to DeMause's intentions, that although children *were* abused before 1961, statements to this effect are not true until people (in the future) use them to describe past actions. The linguistic practices of people in the future are needed for the action to be truly described as child abuse. Hacking claims that this conclusion is a logical consequence of Anscombe's notion of actions as 'under a description'.

For Hacking, the idea of action as 'under a description' implies that I must be 'acquainted' with the description of an action, in order to intend to perform the 'action under that description'. I take it that if I am acquainted with one then -- at the very least -- I have the capacity to describe my action in its terms. Clearly this capacity is unique to language users. However, an actor lacking this capacity can still perform the action, for Hacking does not deny that an action can be performed *unintentionally* at some time *t* even if its description is not available at that time (and hence no one is 'acquainted' with it).

I could of course choose to do something A, to which a subsequently constructed new description B applies; then by choosing to do A, and doing it, I did indeed do B, but I did not intend to do B. (Hacking 1995, p. 235)

What Hacking does deny is that it is *true* at *t* that I did B at that time, even though it is true that I did B at that time.

Only later did it become true that, at that time, one performed an action under that description. ... These redescriptions may be perfectly true of the past; that is, they are truths that we now assert about the past. And yet, paradoxically, they may not have been true in the past... That is why I say that the past is revised retroactively. I do not mean only that we change our opinions about what was done, but that in a certain logical sense what was done itself is modified. (Hacking 1995, pp. 243; 249)

Hacking's point is that only when people are using it to describe the past action can the statement that P did B at that time truly describe B's action; and because of this, the statement becomes true over time. Yet this has nothing to do with actions being 'under a description'. For that idea does not even imply that the actor need be acquainted with the description at the time he acts for it to truly describe his *intentional* action -- Anscombe insists that non-language users can still act intentionally. She gives the

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example of a bird that lands on a twig and in the process gets stuck on bird-lime. Both of these descriptions are

satisfied by the same occurrence, which was something that the bird did, but under one description is was intentional, under the other unintentional. *That the bird is not a language-user has no bearing on this.* (Anscombe 1979, p. 210)

Hacking gets into the position of thinking that his view is Anscombe's because he assumes that if there is no description B at time t, then there is no 'action under the description B' at time t. But this follows only if we assume that 'action-under-a-description' is the subject of the sentence and thus refers to a certain kind of entity distinct from 'action' per se. For as there was no description B at t, so an entity that requires the presence of this description in order to exist could not exist at this time. We can see Hacking treating action in this way when he writes 'Activities are recorded [by a camcorder], but not actions under a description'; and 'Despite my insistence that action is action under a description, I am suspicious of our incessant verbalising of the human condition'. Anscombe explicitly warned us against such talk, by stressing that the subject of the sentence is simply 'action', with 'under the description X' as its predicate: 'under a description' is simply '*qua* in modern dress'. To put it starkly, a description truly describes an action if what is required to satisfy that description takes place. Recall our opening example, where if Jill shoots him and he dies as a result then she kills him: *that* description is true of her action regardless of whether or not we say it is.

While Hacking's conclusion does not follow from this idea of Anscombe's, it can follow from another of her useful notions - that of 'linguistic idealism'. She tells us that this position is sometimes attributed to Wittgenstein in virtue of his remark that 'Essence is expressed by grammar'. Yet, a linguistic idealism would maintain, by contrast, that an object's essence is rather *created* by grammar. That is: the table in front of me would not exist unless there were that practice with words whose existence shows that we have the concept 'table'.

Now while we do not want to say *that*, it seems we might assent to something like it when dealing with entities of a different kind. A paradigm case would be a goalpost. For example, if the wooden stumps on the field near where I live are goalposts, then people must recognise and treat them as such. For if people did not, then they would not be goalposts at all, but just wooden stumps. By contrast, wooden stumps remain wooden stumps no matter how people happen to treat them. It follows from this that when people are not treating the stumps as goalposts that they are not goalposts. So it would be silly to say that our practice of treating them as such in 2001 makes it true that they were goalposts back in 1970. But this seems to be what Hacking is saying -- that our practice of describing past actions as child abuse makes it true that those actions fall under our

new concept. Surely for action A at time t to fall under a concept of this kind the requisite practice must be present at time t, for whether it is present later than t is irrelevant?

This position overlooks the difference between child abuse and goalposts. For instance, child abuse arouses great passions in a way goalposts do not. For if a child has been abused then it follows -- trivially -- that she has been harmed in some way. But more than that: it would surely be impossible for us to assert that the child has been abused, but deny that the abuser had done anything wrong. For this reason, contemporary abusers often refuse to describe what they did as child abuse, even though they may willingly accept that they touched, fondled, had sex with etc. the child. Even for them there is no space between the factual claim that the child was abused and the value judgement that abuse is wrong; they refuse to accept that they have abused the child because, to their mind, they have done nothing wrong. For this reason, the statement 'The man abused the child' is as much a (negative) judgement of value as it is a statement of fact.

De Mause thought, and I take it some of us think, that Louis was abused partly because we feel that what was done to him was wrong. We want to say: he was abused back then, even though no one at the time thought so, for that kind of behaviour is wrong - and people at the time were wrong for failing to see that it was. We do not feel the same ethical compulsion in the case of goalposts. Like a goalpost, certain practices need to be in place; but unlike a goalpost, it is not necessary that they are in place at the time. Some people may feel that Louis was abused simply on account of the physical evidence. Others may feel it only if there is some evidence that Louis was upset, or troubled, by what was going on. They may say that this is actually enough to make it true *back then* that he was abused back then. Others may say that that is only enough to make it true back then that he was troubled; for he can only be *abused* if a moral atmosphere wherein such actions are condemned is present.

I make no attempt here to adjudicate between these three positions. My point is simply that to make sense of Hacking's conclusion we need to (a) understand it as dependent, not on Anscombe's idea of actions as 'under a description', but on that of linguistic idealism; and (b) to recognise the value-laden nature of statements about child abuse, for it is this that enables us to make the case for seeing practices in the future as prerequisites for past actions to be truly described as such. And if these practices are not in place until many years after the events are said to have happened then, although this statement cannot be true *in* the past, it can truly describe the past events later in time once these practices are present. So if they are, and if the action in question satisfies the right physical description, then the statement does become true over time. So Hacking was right after all -- but for the wrong reasons.

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## Endnote

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# Zur Gesetzmäßigkeit und materialen Notwendigkeit von Versprechen

Ruth Hagenruber

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## I.

Wittgensteins These aus dem Tractatus, es gebe ein unmittelbares Verhältnis von Wirklichkeit und Aussprechbarkeit sowie seine spätere Theorie der regelbestimmten Konventionalität der Sprache stehen am Anfang vieler Analysen über die Möglichkeit und Vereinbarkeit dieser Thesen. Ich will im Folgenden zeigen, dass beide Annahmen in einer Theorie, die die Gesetzmäßigkeit bestimmter Begriffe postuliert, vereinbar sind.

John Searle hat in der Anwendung seiner Sprechakttheorie die Tatsache des Humeschen Problems als Defizit der Sprachtheorie identifiziert und konstatiert, dass der Übergang von Deskriptionen zu Werturteilen möglich sei. Die Richtigkeit von Deduktionen sei nicht durch semantische Referenzen, sondern in der begrifflichen Explikation zu begründen, d.h. durch logische Relationen "analytisch, folgt aus, widersprüchlich". Auf diese Weise könnten Wert- bzw. Qualitätsurteile durch eine bestimmte Anzahl von Kriterien erfasst werden. Werte und Qualitäten seien objektivierbar. (Searle 1983, 202). Am Beispiel des Versprechens versuchte Searle, seine Theorie zu exemplifizieren. Er zeigte, dass das Versprechen und die Übernahme der Verpflichtung analytisch verknüpft seien und dass dabei weder moralische noch wertende Ableitungsprämissen notwendig seien (88 ff, 270). Searle hat allerdings seinen analytischen Definitionsanspruch relativiert, indem er seine Erläuterungen zum Versprechen für nicht vollständig erklärte, insofern mit der Bedeutung des Wertausdrucks - der analytisch ableitbar ist - noch nicht bekannt sei, unter welchen objektiven Bedingungen die Aussage anwendbar und nicht anwendbar sei. Dafür kann es nach Searle nie eine Bestimmung geben, da eine Regel für diese Anwendbarkeit von einem neutralen Standpunkt aus geschehen müsse, den es de facto nicht gebe. Er zieht daraus das Fazit, dass die tatsächliche Geltung der Versprechensverpflichtungen institutionell bedingte Tatsachen sind. *Bedeutungskonstitutiv* für das Versprechen ist nach Searle die dem Wort implizite Übernahme einer Verpflichtung; der *Geltungsraum* dieser Bedeutung dagegen sei davon unabhängig und institutionell, d.h. kontingent geordnet.

## II.

Zahlreiche Einwände richten sich gegen Searles Trennung des *richtigen Wortgebrauchs* von der *Wortbedeutung*. Searle begründet die Wortbedeutung analytisch und ihren Gebrauch in der Intention des Sprechers. Gegen Searles Theorie des regelgeleiteten Konventionalismus wendet sich der bedeutungstheoretische Instrumentalismus von Ruth Millikan. Nach ihrer Auffassung begründen biologische Funktionen die Sprachkonventionen und deren Bedeutung. Abweichungen davon, ein willkürlicher institutioneller Einfluss auf die Sprache habe im Grunde nichts mit echter Sprachkonvention zu tun, eben so wenig wie die Anweisung, wahr zu sprechen, so ihre Behauptung. Das schließt allerdings nicht aus, dass echte Konventionen institutionalisiert und reguliert werden. (1998, 175).

Die funktionalistische Argumentation kann manche Antwort auf die Frage geben, in welchen Fällen Versprechen verpflichtend, in welchen sie es nicht sind. Warum macht sich Searle - und nicht nur er - problemlos von dem Versprechen frei, wenn er sein Erscheinen auf einer Party zugesagt hat, aber nicht, wenn es sich dabei um ein Versprechen handelt, das als "gewichtig" einzuschätzen ist und wofür stets das Heiratsversprechen als Beispiel angeführt wird? Ist seine funktionale Bedeutung in einem gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhang so wichtig, dass seine Einhaltung mit dem Versprechen besiegelt wird? Sicherlich nicht, denn nach wie vor ist die Bedeutung des Versprechens für viele Handlungen konstitutiv, obwohl es für das Zusammenleben von Menschen offenbar mancherorts nicht mehr wichtig ist, wohl aber für Handlungen, deren funktionaler Kontext zu mindest problematisch ist, wie etwa das Versprechen, "wir fliegen zum Mars".

Stimmt es, wie Searle anführt, dass hier immer der Kontext, also die institutionellen Normen für die Bewertung ausschlaggebend sind? Muss man nicht vielmehr feststellen, dass die Institutionen und alle von ihr sanktionierten Regeln nur deshalb gelten, weil sie auf einem grundsätzlichen Versprechen oder Vertrag beruhen? Hat Barry Smith recht, wenn er sagt, dass Versprechen, Regeln, Verpflichtungen, Ehrlichkeit selbst Konzepte sind, durch die Ordnung und Autorität überhaupt zustande kommen und ist es wahr, dass sie "éxperiment des nécessités matérielles irréductibles", ist es also richtig, dass es sich auch im Falle des Versprechens um ein Konzept handelt, das a priori gelten muss? (Smith 2000, 198, vgl. auch 1992).

## III.

Mich interessiert die Frage nach dem Verhältnis von materialen Notwendigkeiten und Wortbedeutungen. Dass es eine Übereinstimmung von Wortbedeutung und materialer

Wirklichkeit geben muss, scheint mir daraus zu rechtfertigen zu sein, weil sich nur in diesem Zusammenhang definiert, was unter einer *sinnvollen* Begriffsbedeutung zu verstehen ist. Um meine These zu begründen, wie die Begriffsbedeutung auch die Bestimmung materialer Notwendigkeiten und Funktionen mitdefiniert, erläutere ich zuerst die Gesetzmäßigkeit des Begriffs. Daraus leite ich meine Begründung ab, inwiefern das Konzept *Versprechen* mit materialen Notwendigkeiten in Übereinstimmung steht.

#### IV.

Nach Searle sind die Sprechakte den Intentionen nachgeordnet, so dass die wirkliche Begründung der Sprachbedeutung in den Intentionen zu suchen ist. Schon im Zusammenhang mit dem Versprechen und seiner möglichen Geltung spielt die Intention bei Searle eine wichtige Rolle. So unterscheidet sich das aufrichtige vom unaufrichtigen Versprechen allein durch die Intention des Sprechers, ja, selbst die Unaufrichtigkeit der Handlung begründet Searle an dieser Stelle in der *täuschenden* Absicht: "Um die Möglichkeit eines unaufrichtigen Versprechens erklären zu können, brauchen wir nur die Bedingung 6 so zu verändern, dass in ihr nicht mehr verlangt wird, dass der Sprecher die Ausführung von A beabsichtigt, sondern dass er die Intention zur Ausführung von A anerkennt" (1983, 96). Searle meint, die 5. Regel, die er die *wesentliche Regel* nennt und die die Übernahme der Verpflichtung von A durch S formuliert, aufrecht erhalten zu können, wenn die Intention der Verpflichtung durch eine Anerkennung der Handlungsabsicht relativiert wird.

Searle löst damit die Bedeutungskonstitution des Versprechens auf; die analytische Deduktion wird kontingent, wenn an die Stelle der Intention des Sprechers zur Übernahme der Verpflichtung nur noch die grundsätzliche Anerkennung, dass es diese Bedeutungsimplication gibt, erfolgt. Praktisch gesehen hat Searle allerdings Recht; für die Praxis reicht die Tatsache, dass der Person, die das Versprechen abgibt, bewusst ist, dass die Bedeutung des Wortes die Handlung impliziert. Searle sieht klar, dass die Bedeutung des Versprechens "nur von der Absicht des Sprechers" abhängt, "denn wenn ein Sprecher zeigen kann, dass er bei seiner Äußerung jene Absicht nicht im Sinn hatte, so gilt das als Beweis dafür, dass seine Äußerung gar kein Versprechen war" (1983, 93).

#### V.

Searles These, mit dem Begriff des Versprechens gehe eine Verpflichtung einher, dieses Versprechen zu halten, und diese sei logisch begründet, scheint mir wesentlich stärker zu sein, als Searle selbst ausführt. Denn Searle relativiert diese Bedeutung, erstens, indem er die Regularität der unaufrichtigen Versprechen den aufrichtigen gleichsetzt und

zweitens, indem er die konstitutive Rolle der Institutionen für das Versprechen aus den Einwänden gegen den Objektivismus und Subjektivismus von Versprechungen ableitet. Er meint, sie relativieren zu müssen, weil aus den Wörtern keine Verpflichtung hervorgehen könne, wenn es keinen Bezug auf objektive Fakten gibt und weil Versprechen nicht gelten können, da sie bloß subjektiv sind (1983, 265-272).

Deuten wir die Begründung der Sprachhandlung in der Intention und überprüfen wir diese im Hinblick auf ihre Pragmatik, um die "Wertigkeit" von Versprechen zu begründen. Die Wortbedeutung des Versprechens kommt aus dem impliziten Zusammenhang von Versprechen und Übernahme einer Verpflichtung, wie Searle gezeigt hat. Es scheint einerseits kein Problem zu sein, diesen Zusammenhang analytisch zu definieren. In der Tat darf zwischen den beiden Momenten kein Widerspruch auftreten und dies geschieht auch nicht, solange wir die Verpflichtung als einen analytisch verknüpften Teil des Versprechens ansehen. Nun soll nach Searle ein unaufrichtiges Versprechen dieselbe Wortbedeutung konstituieren. Dagegen sind zwei Einwände vorzubringen. Wesentlich bei einem aufrichtigen Versprechen ist der analytische widerspruchsfreie Zusammenhang von Versprechen und Verpflichtung; dieser Zusammenhang wird aber beim unaufrichtigen Versprechen aufgebrochen. Die Handlung, die dem Versprechen folgen soll, wird ja ausdrücklich in der Intention des Sprechers negiert. Eine analytische Bedeutungskonstitution ist damit unmöglich. Der zweite Einwand bezieht sich darauf, dass die unaufrichtige Handlung sich nolens volens - siehe Einwand 1 - stets auf die erste nämlich analytisch widerspruchsfreie Bedeutungskonstitution beziehen muss, um überhaupt gelten zu können. Der Sprecher muß diese Absicht vortäuschen (Searle 1983, 95).

Wer verspricht und zugleich gewillt ist, das Versprechen nicht zu halten, vollzieht einen Widerspruch in seiner Intention. Die Intention hebt sich auf; also kann sie nicht bedeutungskonstitutiv für das Versprechen sein. Dass unaufrichtige Versprechen im Einzelfall als Versprechen aufgefasst werden, liegt nicht an der Intention des Sprechers, der diese doch negiert hat, sondern daran, dass die Hörer das Versprechen für ein aufrichtiges Versprechen halten. Searle kann unmöglich die "Bedeutung" des unaufrichtigen Versprechens im Gewirr der Intentionen des Sprechers klären. Richtig ist hingegen, dass jedes *unaufrichtige* Versprechen, dem eine Bedeutung zugemessen wird, für ein *aufrichtiges* Versprechen gehalten werden muss, damit es überhaupt eine Bedeutung haben kann.

## VI.

Da Widersprüche nur logisch bedeutsam sind, ist die materiale Durchführung dieser gegenläufigen Absichten praktisch irrelevant, so scheint es auf den ersten Blick und so



meint auch Searle. M. E. ergeben sich aber materiale Konsequenzen aus der "nur" logischen Stringenz der Begriffsbedeutung. Wer unaufrichtig oder falsch verspricht, kann dies nur dann realisieren, wenn sein Versprechen für ein wahres Versprechen gehalten wird. Das heißt, dass in der praktischen Umsetzung des Versprechens die der Sprachhandlung voraus gesetzte Intention entscheidend ist. Niemand wird ein Versprechen, das unter Zwang gegeben wurde, anerkennen und niemand wird ein Versprechen als solches bezeichnen, für das die Schwierigkeit der Handlungsverpflichtung nicht ebenso konstitutiv wäre. Diese Schwierigkeit bezieht sich wiederum nur auf die praktischen Möglichkeiten und Bedingungen, denen der Versprechende unterliegt. Es ist kein *echtes* Versprechen, die Sterne vom Himmel holen zu wollen, da es die praktischen Möglichkeiten überschreitet; und es handelt sich nur dann um ein Versprechen, auf einer Party zu erscheinen, wenn der Konflikt, diese Handlung auch durchzuführen, Teil des Versprechens ist. Folglich lassen sich Schlussfolgerungen hinsichtlich der materiellen Bedingungen des Versprechens aufzeigen und diese müssen so sein, dass die Gesetzmäßigkeit der Handlung eine Voraussetzung ist, die für den Sinn der Handlung konstitutiv ist.

## VII.

Die gesetzmäßige Bedeutung muss folglich der materialen Notwendigkeit voraus gesetzt sein und diese mitdefinieren. Dies lässt sich am besten indirekt aufzeigen. Man stelle sich vor, die Bedeutung des Versprechens beruhe nicht auf seiner logischen Konsistenz. Wäre die vorausgesetzte widerspruchsfreie Intention nicht wesentlich, könnte jeder beliebig Versprechen geben, halten oder brechen, ohne die notwendige Bedeutungsreferenz. Ohne die unbedingte Voraussetzung, dass die im Versprechen übernommene Verpflichtung auch eingehalten wird, würde sich die Bedeutung des Begriffes "Versprechen" alsbald auflösen oder es gäbe sie gar nicht.

Nun soll aber auch noch deutlich werden, dass die logische Konsistenz des Begriffes im Falle des Versprechens, d.h. gerade wegen der impliziten Übernahme einer Verpflichtung seinen Geltungsraum definiert. Um zu verdeutlichen, was mit dem Geltungsraum gemeint ist, soll die allgemeine und widerspruchsfreie Geltung des Begriffes am Beispiel dargestellt werden. Versprechen ist kein empirischer Begriff und kann nicht sinnlich wahrgenommen werden. Seine Geltung ist abhängig von der Intention des Sprechenden, ferner von der Übereinkunft zwischen den Menschen, die den Sinn des Versprechens aus der Allgemeinheit und Widerspruchsfreiheit ableiten. Den Versprechungen kommt eine große Bedeutung in unserem Leben zu; Versprechen sind nur wiederholbar, wenn sie auch eingehalten werden. Wer sich selbst und anderen stets falsche oder unaufrichtige Versprechen macht, wird bald mit der

Widersprüchlichkeit seiner Aussagen konfrontiert werden, seine Versprechen werden als solche nicht mehr anerkannt. Die Diskrepanz zwischen Rede und Sachverhalt tritt hervor, deren Einheit elementar für die Wortbedeutung ist. Die Begriffsbedeutung besteht in der widerspruchsfreien Beziehung zwischen dem Versprechen und der Übernahme der Verpflichtung, wobei die Verstöße dagegen nicht die Bedeutung des Versprechens schlechthin aufheben, sondern nur die konkrete, nämlich ausgebliebene Verwirklichung einer Handlung. Der Begriff ist nur in dieser Abhängigkeit von seinem Bezugssystem wirklich und sinnvoll. Allein in diesem Bezugssystem kann sich Widersprüchlichkeit oder Widerspruchsfreiheit der Begriffsanwendung in ihrem Geltungsbereich zeigen. Praktisch gesprochen heißt dies, dass Gemeinschaften oder Institutionen eben nicht abhängig von materialen Bedingungen begründet werden, sondern aus der Zustimmung zu bestimmten Begriffsbedeutungen hervorgehen. Man kann sagen, eine Gemeinschaft von Begriffsverständigen entsteht nicht aufgrund territorialer oder anderer funktional definierter Zusammengehörigkeiten, sondern sie definiert den Zusammenhang von Funktionen und materialen Gegebenheiten stets im Rückgriff auf die widerspruchsfreie Anwendung von Handlungsfolgen (Vgl. Hagengruber 2000, 193-203). Nur wenn die Bedeutung des Versprechens von dem Teil der Gemeinschaft Zustimmung erfährt, der relevant für die Beurteilung konsistenter Handlungskonsequenzen ist, können soziale Institutionen entstehen und kommt ihnen Regeln eine Bedeutung zu.

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# Theory versus Understanding in Psychotherapy

John M. Heaton

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In the 20th century psychotherapy is supposed to have made huge advances; these advances have been made under the banner of theory - psychoanalysis, analytic psychology, Kleinian theory, object relations theory, Lacanian theory, Rogerian theory, cognitive psychology and so on all have a theoretical base. Psychotherapists are divided into many schools and the name of the school usually depicts the theory that defines it; and the practice is supposed to derive from the theory. The theories are mostly modelled on those of the natural sciences; having a theory is supposed to give the school a badge of scientific respectability.

Now much of the *Philosophical Investigations* is devoted to exposing the conceptual confusions that are involved in creating a 'science of the mind'; for such an undertaking presupposes a picture of mental states and processes and the notion of a mental apparatus all of which Wittgenstein is concerned to undercut. The 'anatomy' of the mental apparatus, for example, is absolutely central to psychoanalytic theory; it is what the theory is about.

To quote Wittgenstein: '...we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all *explanation*, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light, that is to say its purpose, from the philosophical problems. These are, of course, not empirical problems; they are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognise those workings: *in spite of* an urge to misunderstand them (Wittgenstein 1958 §109).

I want to show that there is a way of thinking about psychotherapy which avoids theory and follows Wittgenstein's advice, so I will first give a brief example and then go on to discuss it and contrast it with the psychoanalytic approach.

## Clinical example

A man came to see me whose main complaint was that when he got up in the morning he felt his next door neighbour was directing rays at him that were shrivelling up his

brain. There were other difficulties he had but I want to concentrate on his main initial complaint.

Now to me this man's complaint is *sense/less*. By this I mean that although his words appear grammatically correct, they are in the right order etc., I do not know what they are referring to, what work they are doing except that they are expressing distress but it is obscure just what sort of distress they are expressing.

Thus I do not know of any machine that produces the feeling of 'shrivelling' in the brain. The brain has no sense organs, if one touches it the subject does not feel anything in the brain itself. Some brains I have seen look shrivelled but the patients did not complain of their brains feeling shrivelled.

Furthermore although many troubles arise from next door neighbours, large sections of the law deal with complaints between neighbours, it must be very unusual for one to persecute his neighbour by standing with an instrument trying to shrivel his brain every day for at least a year which was the time my patient said it had been going on.

Another point was that my patient had first gone to consult his doctor about the problem who had sent him to a psychiatric clinic and eventually onto me. This also does not make sense. Thus if I thought my neighbour was trying to shrivel my brain every day before breakfast I would first try some neighbourly tactics and ask him politely what did he think he was doing; if that did not work I would consult my lawyer or go to the police. My patient had done none of this; he told me he had never said more than a few words of greeting to his neighbour over some 5 years, had no complaint about him other than the one we are discussing, and had only consulted his doctor about the problem.

So my response when I heard his complaint was to look puzzled and say I did not understand him. I did not make any interpretation or pretend that I understood him or knew how to help him but I politely looked puzzled. The patient's response was to look puzzled too, he was obviously used to people responding as if they knew what he was talking about. I then went on to say that I did not know of any machines that shrivelled people's brains so I did not know what he was talking about. For the rest of the session we had a conversation about various nefarious machines and science fiction.

The main point was that we had entered into a conversation and were finding our way using ordinary language; instead of my taking up the position of the knower who knew what he meant and what was distressing him and implying that by some clever technical manoeuvres I might fix his problems.

So after a few weeks he no longer talked to me using his rather weird 'technical' metaphors of machines and frizzled brains. Instead of trying to explain his predicament

he increasingly used the ordinary language of desiring, believing, thinking, and the like to express his ordinary fears and confusions which of course are far more manageable than machines that shrivel brains.

'A philosophical problem has the form: 'I don't know my way about'(Wittgenstein 1958 §123). This was my patient's problem; he had got entangled in the rules of various language games with which he sought to explain his experience and so felt stuck. He was unable to express his troubles in an understandable form. So, by bringing his words back to their everyday use enabled him to make sense of his experience and so carry on with his life.

## Theory

I want to contrast this approach with the more usual theoretical approach. Now this patient was deluded, luckily a not very fixed delusion; many delusions are very difficult or impossible to loosen up. Of course there are many theories about delusions. They are usually taken to be false beliefs which are incorrigible, unshared and preoccupying. In the case I am discussing it would be seen as a delusion of reference, the theory being that it is a projection in which the subject attributes to another person feelings and wishes that he fails to recognise in himself. In the case I am discussing it would be aggressive feelings of his own which he cannot acknowledge and so projects them onto his neighbour.

To quote Freud 'The mechanism of symptom-formation in paranoia requires that internal perceptions, or feelings, shall be replaced by external perceptions. Consequently the proposition 'I hate him' becomes transformed by *projection* into another one: 'He hates (persecutes) me', which will satisfy me in hating him'. Thus the unconscious feeling, which is in fact the motive force, makes its appearance as though it were the consequence of an external perception'(Freud 1911).

Now there is much that could be said about this quotation which puts forward an explanation that is now fundamental to psychoanalytic theory. Thus Freud assumes that what the patient says is a *symptom* of some underlying trouble. He assumes that if I hate someone I look inside myself and perceive my hate. Wittgenstein argues in many places that this is a gross misunderstanding of our psychological concepts; there is not an inner world in which we perceive our feelings and feelings are not objects or processes that we perceive. And language and meaning are not symptoms of something behind the phenomena that cause them.

I want however to make some other points. First I would claim that my patient had a philosophical problem. Now he was an ordinary quite intelligent man who had not been

to university; he certainly did not consider himself to be a philosopher and no academic philosopher would acknowledge him to be of their rank. But he had a philosophical problem in that he was conceptually confused, wanted clarity and sought peace cf.(Wittgenstein 1958 §133). 'People are deeply embedded in philosophical problems, ie., grammatical confusions. And to free them from these presupposes pulling them out of the immensely manifold connections they are caught up in.' (Wittgenstein 1993 p.185). One might say that the way he presented his problem was naive but at root the conceptual problems involved in idealism, Platonism, materialism, and so on are similar.

Another point, made especially by Goldfarb (1992 p.109-21), is that Wittgenstein taught that conceptual work must be done before the question of the applicability of science should be raised. Science and scientific explanations are not of use in dealing with every question. Wittgenstein taught that for each question we treat we are to tease out what we are aiming for and then to see whether our objectives will or will not be served by a scientific investigation. We must recognise how the urge to look to science for answers elides or ignores so much as to suggest that we are held captive by a philosophical picture.

'What is your aim in philosophy? - To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle' (Wittgenstein 1958 §309). One might say that the aim of psychoanalysis is to guide the fly into it.

Thus Wittgenstein (1958 §158) shows how scientific investigators may say that the investigation can come out one way or another; that it is only a scientific hypothesis that such and such a state or process will be found; nevertheless they are moved by an *a priori* demand that things *must* turn out a certain way. The claim of a modest empiricism is mere lip service; Freud is a particularly good example of this tendency, he repeatedly claims he is a modest, hard working empirical scientist but actually has very definite *a priori*, but unacknowledged, notions of how the mind *must* be.

This turning of neurotic problems into scientific ones has enormous advantages to the practitioner. It enables a special vocabulary to be developed to describe the various mental mechanisms, and so the practitioner becomes a special sort of expert. Our ordinary psychological language of desire, feeling, and thought has developed over thousands of years to describe and express ourselves; it is learned in the nursery and developed with great subtlety by novelists, poets, dramatists and others; all of us use it with skill although, like all human activities, some have more ability than others. Special technical languages on the other hand are developed about unfamiliar areas - the anatomy and physiology of the brain, sub-atomic phenomena and so on. By having a special vocabulary the practitioner can claim to have a superior understanding to the ordinary person, one that is special, unitary and definite.

## Understanding

A person in neurotic conflict needs to be understood and may require help to understand the nature of his conflict. So we need to consider the nature of understanding. Wittgenstein discussed it many times, I cannot summarise his probings here. But I want to make a few points.

He argued that there is not a definite state of understanding that in and of itself, in some way determines everything that counts as a manifestation of that understanding. He asks us to look at the varied range of our practices relevant to an ascription of understanding. If we do so we may come to realise the nonuniformity of our criteria for understanding and their intertwining with much in our physical, social, and mental lives.

Suppose someone's child has recently died. How do we express our understanding of his grief? It depends on many cultural and personal matters and much, in our culture, on how well we know that person. Thus if we did not know that person well we might express a good understanding of his grief by saying nothing to him. To explain it by talking theoretically of the gradual withdrawal of cathectic energy from the lost object is not to give a description of some ultimate process that grounds the ascription of mourning; for a start this explanation completely disregards the physical manifestations of mourning, the way we express it. Could we understand mourning if there were never any behavioural manifestations of it? This is what psychoanalysis asks us to believe. However the mourner may perfectly well understand what is happening to him without thinking of the psychoanalytic understanding of it. In fact if he were mourning and were to think solely of the psychoanalytic explanation he would be subject to a picture of the mind which *has* to be there. This would be an obstacle to his mourning because he would not be attending to the experience but to a picture of it.

This can be generalised. A deep obstacle in psychoanalysis is that the patient is continually subject to the analyst's picture of the mind which is conveyed by his interpretations. Instead of assembling reminders that clarify and neither explain or deduce anything, the patient may be encouraged to go on a wild goose chase for what 'must' be hidden in the unconscious (Wittgenstein 1958 §126-7).

The answer to the meaning of neurotic conflict is not to be sought by penetrating the phenomena and picturing the structure of some mental apparatus. Anything isolable enough within that apparatus to be usable for the identification of a particular mental process could reflect little of the range of our practices. Consequently any state that is so identified must have a tenuous claim to being a state of understanding.

Rather we need to explore the different ways we operate with words when we are caught in neurotic conflict and when we seek to understand it. This involves negotiation

and judgements between people. All kinds of things must be taken into consideration such as the honesty and seriousness of the participants. This is a far cry from the fixity of meaning assumed to occur between unconscious processes and manifestations of neurosis. A belief displayed by Freud's wish that a plaque be put outside the house where he 'discovered' *the* meaning of dreams.

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# Wittgenstein's Missing Map

Wasfi A. Hijab

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## Abstract

Introducing Cambridge, you either walk around its streets for a few days, or give the newcomer a map, point to a spot on it, and say, "You are now here." This is how Wittgenstein used to lament missing a map that would shortcut and replace his slow and laborious technique. After defining metaphysics ostensibly, and delineating Wittgenstein's bumpy road to truth, I present my attempt to develop such a map. It consists in a group of litmus tests for spotting and evading metaphysical muddles. The future of philosophy is then discussed in the light of Wittgenstein's concept of the new role of the philosopher as a street sweeper of conceptual muddles that hinder traffic in the thoroughfares of human thought.

## 1. Ostensive Definition Of Metaphysics

Metaphysics is ostensibly defined as the common ingredient among some 50 thinkers discussed in Russell's *History of Western Philosophy*. This group includes some of the finest minds in the history of mankind: Brilliant astronomers, mathematicians, physicists, biologists, theologians, and logicians, among others. In general, they contributed magnificently to their fields of competence. However, their common ingredient is this: They all crossed beyond their field of competence into speculation about such abstract concepts as reality, existence, time, and meaning. This extracurricular involvement is what qualifies them as philosophers.

Metaphysics shares with science its avowed goal to advance knowledge through appeal to reason; with mathematics, the semblance of a *priori* necessity of formal systems; with religion, an unshakeable faith in providing ultimate truth; with poetry, an aura of linguistic beauty; and with insanity, an absurd hallucination, if one takes seriously Kant's thing-in-itself or Zeno's denial of motion.

Yet, metaphysics is a linguistic mode all its own. It is a mode that has an ensnaring magical charm with which I fell in love during my undergraduate study of mathematics. In 1945 I abandoned my math career when I received a 3-year full scholarship to study philosophy at Trinity College and Cambridge University. This is where I met a certain Ludwig Wittgenstein, who put a brutal and traumatic end to this love affair.

## 2. My First Lecture With Wittgenstein

In the first few minutes, Wittgenstein emphasized punctuality, and his requirement of attending for the whole term. He pointed out that his course was really very dull, and fervently and repeatedly requested the students to drop it. Obviously, he was ill prepared. He was not sure of what to say, and kept jumping around various thoughts. Often there were long pauses of solemn silence. He was stern and stone-faced at all times.

In an earlier meeting with Wisdom, he asked me why I wanted to study philosophy. I gave what I thought was the obvious answer, "To find the truth." He struggled to suppress a desire to laugh out loud, and managed to say, "The Cambridge school of philosophy is not noted for finding the truth." But Wisdom was wrong. After my first lecture with Wittgenstein, I knew that this man could show me how to analyze concepts into their ingredients and how to synthesize those ingredients into the original concepts. He could show me how to find the truth.

Braithwaite was my first supervisor. He was proud of his own pragmatic decision to distance himself from Wittgenstein. After accepting my first assignment as part of my dissertation, he exhorted me not to shift to Wittgenstein as supervisor, as then there would be no dissertation. His prophesy was correct, but his advice came too late. After my first lecture with Wittgenstein I was fit only to sit at his feet and learn from his wisdom. My assignment was discarded as waste paper.

## 3. Metaphysics As An Idling Mode Of Language

When Wittgenstein used to be exasperated with me during the tutorials, he would say, "Listen, Hijab, can't you think of a *single* example?" Examples are the bread and butter of his technique.

I finally thought of a good one. When idling, the car's motor keeps running, but it remains stationary. Similarly, in metaphysics language is in an idling mode. Thinking is manifestly going on, but there is no corresponding advancement of knowledge.

Language can be employed in different modes. By definition, there is a difference in mode when a word or pronouncement is meaningful in one mode but is empty or nonsense in another mode. I use 'nonsense' here as a technical term to qualify any linguistic product that is empty and thus fails to advance knowledge.

In an astronomers' meeting T.S. Elliot's 'Do I dare, do I dare, do I dare disturb the universe?' is a palpable nonsense. In a poetry recital, he receives a standing ovation. Neither mode is more legitimate than the other. Novels and dreams are also modes that could change character of language from sense to nonsense.

Consider another example. Holding a cup of coffee, I say, "This is regular coffee." This familiar word 'regular' does not add to my knowledge before the discovery of decaf coffee. After that discovery we need a word like 'regular' to avoid ambiguity. Before that discovery we can ask, "Regular? As opposed to what?" Having no contrasting entity robs the word of meaning. The word is listed in the dictionary, but here it is empty and superfluous. Occam's razor chops it down as nonsense.

But we have to be careful when calling anything nonsense. Suppose I produce my own brand of coffee, and I find that calling my brand 'regular' helps my sales. Here 'regular' is no longer pointless. It acquires an advertising function. It may not add to my science, but it does add to my profits. This advertising mode reconfers meaningfulness to it, even before the discovery of the decaf coffee.

#### **4. Wittgenstein's Bumpy Road To Truth**

Wittgenstein grew up in a very rich but a very tragic family. I surmise that he and his brothers were exceptionally serious, and inherited money hit them as tainted and corruptive. They sought a meaningful destiny for themselves and faced Hamlet's dilemma of 'To be or not to be'. His brothers chose the second alternative and they all committed suicide. Ludwig, however, found his salvation in seeking the truth.

He sought the truth at first in engineering, then in mathematical logic. The latter field was passing through an exhilarating period of innovation and discovery. Somehow it toppled him into the metaphysics of the *Tractatus*.

We probably can derive more insight into Wittgenstein's thought by reading the prefaces of his two books than by reading the books themselves. Paraphrasing, the Preface to the *Tractatus* says, "... traditional philosophy tried to draw a limit to thought. ... But the aim of my book is to draw a limit to the expression of thought. It will therefore only be in language that a limit can be drawn, and what lies on the other side of the limit will be simply nonsense."

In the Preface to the *Investigations* he says, "For since beginning to occupy myself with philosophy again, ... I have been forced to recognize grave mistakes in what I wrote in that first book." Thus, he realized that drawing a limit in language to the expression of thought is equally reprehensible. In his lectures, Wittgenstein often used his committing these mistakes as the *raison d'être* for his ongoing investigations.

A press release about an international chess tournament reported that the white king had been always moving one square at a time. A bunch of truth seekers showed that report to Wittgenstein and complained bitterly, "Wittgenstein, this is what you have done

in the Tractatus. It is your gravest mistake. It is an admixture of fact and logic, without knowing which is which, It is impossible to extricate these two distinct modes of language. *It is a muddle!*" Wittgenstein responded, "I know, I know. That is why I asked you to use it as a ladder and then discard it as nonsense." Their response was, "Wittgenstein, don't you think it is time to give up this infantile ploy of a ladder?" Wittgenstein responded, "Stop this. Just stop it! I have to withdraw all by myself and figure out this whole thing again." Actually, the bunch of truth seekers consisted in only one person, and that person was Wittgenstein himself.

I surmise this realization by Wittgenstein had been very traumatic. His road to truth was now blocked and he was faced with deciding what to do next. He would not consider suicide, for he had courage. He volunteered for the army and was decorated for bravery. But he did take an extremely drastic step by giving away his huge wealth, and withdrawing to teach an elementary school in an isolated small village, and later as an assistant gardener.

## 5. Major Discoveries Of Wittgenstein

Some time during his vow of silence and after he moved to Cambridge Wittgenstein made the following discoveries:

-1- The reason why a truth seeker is beguiled into the metaphysical mode is that he becomes entrapped by paradigms and precursor concepts that are deeply ingrained in our language.

-2- It would not help to launch a frontal attack on the Tractatus. This would merely lead to shifting to the other horn of the dilemma and producing another metaphysics. This has been the pattern of events in traditional philosophy.

-3- He developed a brand new technique to defuse the entrapment or, if you prefer, to exorcise the metaphysical devil. Simply stated, the technique consists in replacing the implicated concepts by their corresponding language games.

The language game of an utterance is defined as the overall delineation of how we use it, how we learn it, how we teach it, how we verify it, as well as displaying some of its more primitive precursors. The technique also marshals innumerable carefully chosen examples, and it would resort to ridicule, scorn and sarcasm when needed.

In characterizing Wittgenstein's technique, it is easy to see how he is often misunderstood as a behaviorist, as a logical positivist, or as a linguistic analyst. He is none of the above, because he carried out these investigations not for their own sake, but for dispelling the ensnaring power of some paradigms of language. Without the

Tractatus there would never have been an Investigations. It is really Wittgenstein, not Kant, who had a fateful awakening from his metaphysical slumber.

## 6. Developing Wittgenstein'S Missing Map

Wittgenstein used to say there were two ways of introducing Cambridge to a newcomer. Either walk around the streets for a few days, or a much shorter way of providing a map, pointing to a spot on it, and saying, "Now, you are here!" He lamented missing such a map to replace his slow and laborious technique. But there is no need to despair. I am presenting below selections from a manual for spotting and evading metaphysical muddles.

The guiding principle in these tests is the following: "Beware! When you are tempted to talk about reality and existence or to use such words as whole, all, everything, and limit, when that happens beware! The moment you start talking about the whole of reality is probably the moment you are about to lose touch with reality!"

-1- "WHAT IS X?" muddle

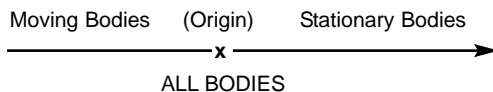
EXAMPLE; "What is space?"

SOLUTION; The concrete ancestral concept is that of a container. Increasing its size to hold more things pushes us into a container with no shell, which is a contradiction. This contradiction is what endows the question with its enchanting and mercurial character. Think up examples like Wittgenstein's "What is Oxygen" to remind yourself of cases where this type of question is working.

-2- "EVERYTHING IS X" muddle

EXAMPLE; "Everything is stationary."

SOLUTION; Draw, say, a 10 cm line segment, add an arrow on the right end and add an origin at its center. Above the line write 'stationary bodies' on the right and 'moving bodies' on the left.



Search for the principle of the dichotomy. Zeno's test, "A body is stationary if it covers zero distance in an instant." This test is ineffective, since a moving body also covers zero distance in an instant. This should be replaced with, "A stationary body covers zero distance in an interval of time, but a moving body covers a non-zero distance in an interval of time.' Thus the source of the muddle is confusing an instant of time with an interval of time. May be in Zeno's time, the concept of an instant was more

primitive and covered both an instant as well as an interval. This analysis is also pertinent to Bergson's muddle.

EXERCISE; Illustrate above steps by dividing the 24-hour day into daylight and night. Note that here the origin as well as the criterion for division change with latitude and season.

HOMEWORK: Repeat the above steps for 'Everything is mental', and thus resolve the Mind and Body problem.

-3- "X IS ALL OF Y'S,," muddle

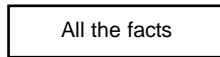
ILLUSTRATION: The Barber of Seville Paradox.

EXAMPLE; "The world is the totality of facts."

SOLUTION; This is more difficult, since it is not apparent that this is a muddle.

Draw a rectangle to include all the y's, and write 'x =' at the left of the rectangle.

The World =



Universe of Discourse

Now ask, "Is the world a fact?" and generate a Barber of Seville type of paradox. Note that the resolving of the Barber's paradox by ejecting him outside the universe of discourse is not available here, since here is no outside in this muddle. Now apply Occam's razor.

-4- "EXISTENCE OF A NECESSARY BEING" MUDDLE

EXAMPLE 1: 'Justice Idea exists, instances are appearances'.

SOLUTION: Plato is a frustrated Euclid who tried to force what I call rope concepts into one of two paradigms: (i)the concept of the general term of a sequence, or (ii)the concept of a variable ranging over a set. A rope concept is defined as the concept of a long rope that is made of a large number of much shorter strands of twine that are weaved together by Wittgenstein's concept of family resemblance's.

EXAMPLE 2: The physicist's muddle of 'Aether must exist.'

SOLUTION; May be light is neither corpuscular nor a wave. Wave mechanics was invented to handle such cases.

-5- "THE WHOLE OF REALITY IS X". This is left as an exercise!

## 7. The Future Of Philosophy

Some think that there is a conspiracy of silence by professional philosophy regarding the Wittgenstein of the Investigations. It is really more a case of ignorance is bliss. I may be

wrong, but I believe that professional philosophy has not yet understood the later Wittgenstein, and therefore does not know how to teach him or what to make of him. His thought is really difficult, and I do not think that I would ever have understood him by only reading the Investigations. Rereading the Tractatus and then perusing the Investigations as a correction of the mistakes of the Tractatus might help. Even with my extensive exposure to his thought, I needed many years of reflection to assimilate its full significance.

You are the present of philosophy and therefore the precursors of its future. I ask you, "What do you do in philosophy?"

Throughout the history of thought, philosophy has been the R&D department, the research and development department, for mathematics and science. It has been the cutting edge of research where new and more powerful concepts are manufactured, That is why it has also been the breeding ground of paradoxes and controversy. But this is a very slippery road, and you could also be helpless captives at the wrong end of Wittgenstein's inverted bottle.

Wittgenstein thinks that the new philosophy that he invented to replace the traditional one does not advance knowledge and, therefore, it is not important. In his new role the philosopher is a street sweeper who clears away the muddles that hinder traffic along the thoroughfares of thought. Thus each of you should find your own broomstick and try to clear up muddles in your chosen field. Otherwise, leave philosophy and find something honest and useful to do, like an elementary school teacher or an assistant gardener.

# Wittgenstein's Metaphilosophical Development

Paul Horwich

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It is often said that Wittgenstein gave us two utterly distinct and contradictory philosophies, issuing from two radically different views of meaning: supposedly, the first of these philosophies, contained in *his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922), comes out of the theory that the meaning of a word is its referent; and the second one, articulated in the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), comes out of a use theory of meaning. The main purpose of the present paper is to oppose this picture and to propose an alternative. I will suggest that the basis of Wittgenstein's thought was always his view of what philosophy is, rather than his view of what *meaning* is. From that perspective we should see the fundamental defect in the *Tractatus* as a certain incoherence within its *metaphilosophy*, and we will be able to explain the *Investigations* as what emerges when this incoherence is rectified. If that is right, then we ought to think of the *Tractatus* as providing a sort of flawed first draft of his mature position rather than a profoundly different and wholly rejected point of view.

Let me begin by quoting the well-known passage from the end of the *Tractatus* where Wittgenstein acknowledges that much of what has come earlier in the book is senseless, but tries to remove the sting from this concession by suggesting that these meaningless remarks can nonetheless help us to see things properly

6.54 My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it). He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly.

However, the question naturally arises as to whether the metaphor that Wittgenstein offers us here succeeds in making his position coherent. For how can one consistently endorse certain propositions and at the same time categorize them as meaningless? Perhaps the most serious worry about the *Tractatus* is the suspicion that this resort to the image of 'throwing away a ladder' is a vain attempt to mask a fatal contradiction.

Let us be a little more concrete about the problem. In the course of the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein makes a series of interconnected pronouncements on language, meaning, metaphysics, and metaphilosophy. He claims -- or seems to claim -- the following



Regarding *language*: that each 'proposition' (i.e. sentence + meaning) is constructed in the course of the following procedure:-- (i) combine primitive terms ('names') with one another to form elementary propositions; (ii) operate on these with "not", "and", "every", etc., to form logically complex propositions; and (iii) introduce defined terms for the sake of abbreviation.

Regarding *meaning*: that each 'name' refers to a simple 'object'; that each 'elementary' proposition 'depicts' a possible 'atomic' fact (and is true if and only if that fact exists); and that the meaning ('sense') of every other proposition is a function which yields a truth value for each possible combination of truth values assigned to the elementary propositions.

Regarding *metaphysics*: that the world -- the collection of all actual facts -- is determined by which 'atomic' facts exist and which do not.

And regarding *metaphilosophy*: that philosophical questions are disguised nonsense. They look meaningful, but turn out to have no basic conceptual analysis.

I will call this collection of pronouncements 'The Tractatus Theory' -- or 'T'. Now, returning to the problem, is there not a contradiction between Wittgenstein's claim that T is meaningless and his claim that T can nonetheless help us to see the world rightly? How can T possibly articulate a correct view of things, or rationally persuade us of anything (even of its own meaningfulness), if it doesn't make sense?

Well Wittgenstein does have a little room to maneuver here -- but not very much. What he could say is that T helps us, not by articulating a correct view of things and not by rationally persuading us of anything -- How could a bunch of meaningless squiggles do that? -- but by somehow causing us to enter a certain state of enlightenment -- a state in which we are not inclined to engage in philosophical theorizing, but only to debunk, through conceptual analysis, other people's attempts to do so. Thus point might be fleshed out by means of his famous distinction between 'saying' and 'showing': although T neither says nor shows anything, perhaps it can nonetheless enable us to appreciate that certain things of great importance -- things which cannot be said -- are implicitly revealed by the forms of ordinary non-philosophical propositions.<sup>1</sup>

But although a defense of Wittgenstein's position might be attempted along these lines, it would be glaringly unsuccessful.

In the first place, we would be left in the dark about *how* an encounter with T might manage to induce the state of philosophical enlightenment. Is it something like taking a drug, or being given a good massage!?

In the second place, it is very puzzling how what can allegedly be shown but *not* said -- e.g. facts about logical and metaphysical structure -- can also be 'got across' in *attempting* to say them, by affirming T.

And in the third place, there is a further and deeper tension within Wittgenstein's metaphilosophical position -- a tension that the proposed maneuver would do nothing to relieve: namely, a conflict between, on the one hand, the anti-theoretical dictum to the effect that philosophy can do no more than expose pseudo-questions for what they are, and, on the other hand, the idea that one can legitimately produce philosophical 'theories' -- such as T -- which, although meaningless, are of considerable intellectual value. Thus, not only does Wittgenstein endorse propositions which he goes on to condemn as meaningless, but, in addition, he prohibits philosophical theorizing on the basis of a philosophical theory.

Some more recent commentators have suggested, as an alternative way out of this pair of difficulties, that Wittgenstein should not be read as *endorsing* T, but merely as entertaining it for the sake of *reductio ad absurdum*.<sup>2</sup> But I don't believe that this interpretation can be accepted either -- for the following reasons:

- (a) On the proposed account, the upshot of the book would merely be that T is not true. But this negative point is extremely weak -- involving much less than Wittgenstein himself appears to claim in his remark that we end up "see(ing) the world rightly". In particular, it could not disallow the conclusion that some other metaphysical theory -- something other than T -- might be correct!
- (b) Wittgenstein's Preface gives no indication that what follows is intended as a sort of *reductio*. Nor is there any hint of it in the expositions by Russell and Ramsey, with whom he discussed his project in great detail.
- (c) In the *Investigations* Wittgenstein explicitly contrasts his new position with various theses -- elements of T -- that he admits were asserted in the *Tractatus*.

Thus it seems to me that what emerges in the 'ladder paragraph' is a pair of undeniable conflicts within Wittgenstein's position. And no clever metaphor, or other form of fancy footwork, is going to be enough to get rid of them.

What he has to do to resolve these difficulties, and what he does eventually do in the *Philosophical Investigations*, is to make a small but significant change in his metaphilosophy -- retaining most of it, but abandoning the component that is responsible for the internal tensions. Let us see how this is accomplished.

The *Tractatus* metaphilosophy is committed to the following sequence of ideas

- (1) Philosophical questions are provoked by confusion (rather than by ignorance, which is the source of *scientific* questions).

- (2) Therefore, they articulate pseudo-problems, which can only be eliminated not solved.
- (3) Consequently, no philosophical explanations, theories, or discoveries are possible.
- (4) Philosophical confusions originate in misunderstandings about language.
- (5) To be more specific, such confusions arise because of the considerable distances between the superficial forms of certain propositions and their 'ultimate analyses' in terms of fundamental primitives.-- For example, "The F is G" should be analysed as " $(\exists x)(Fx \ \& \ (y)(Fy \rightarrow x=y) \ \& \ Gx)$ ".-- This distance can be so great that we can easily fail to appreciate a statement's real meaning. And in the case of certain statements, we fail to appreciate their lack of meaning.

It seems clear that the double incoherence with which we are concerned stems from the conflict between the *anti*-theoretical import of (1), (2), (3) and (4), and the detailed *theoretical* diagnosis of philosophical confusion that is offered in (5). For, first, that diagnosis categorizes itself, together with (1) through (4), as meaningless. And, second, it advances a substantive philosophical theory of language: namely that each meaningful proposition has an ultimate conceptual analysis to be provided in certain specified terms.

Consequently, Wittgenstein can hang on to the heart and the bulk of his metaphilosophy, but avoid the tensions within it, if he gives up his theory-laden account in (5) of the way in which we are confused by language, and replaces it with an alternative. And this is precisely what he eventually does. The metaphilosophy of the *Investigations* keeps (1), (2), (3), and (4). Thus Wittgenstein continues to hold that philosophical puzzlement derives from confusion about language; and so he continues to hold that philosophy cannot yield knowledge. But he comes to see that the nature of our linguogenic misunderstanding is not the gap between superficial grammatical form and 'underlying logical form' -- a notion which he abandons -- but rather something with no theoretical presuppositions: namely, our tendency to take certain linguistic analogies too seriously. More specifically, he replaces (5) with

- (5\*) Philosophical confusion stems from the temptation to overdraw analogies in the uses of words.

To elaborate this a little:-- his idea is that the words in a certain small class are seen to function in many respects like the words in another, more prominent, class; however, we tend to overlook the differences and, as a consequence, are inclined to raise improper questions and thereby fall into philosophical bewilderment -- the sort of bewilderment from which no *theory* can adequately deliver us. For example, the numerals function in many ways like the names of physical objects. Therefore, neglecting the important differences, we are tempted to ask the sort of questions about

what numerals designate that we ask about the referents of other names:-- Where are they? What are they made of? How can we interact with them? And if we can't, how is it possible to know anything about them? The traditional way of responding to such puzzles is to develop philosophical theories -- theories such as platonism, constructivism, or fictionalism. But from Wittgenstein's point of view this sort of 'theoretical' response takes the questions more seriously than they deserve to be taken, given their confused origin. The right reaction to our puzzlement is to expose and eliminate the mistakes that provoke it -- that is, to recognize how the questions derive from the over-stretching of linguistic analogies. Once this has been done we will not be left with any philosophical knowledge, but merely with a certain resistance to philosophical confusion. Thus, as in the *Tractatus*, there can be no philosophical theories, explanations, or discoveries. But whereas in that book the diagnosis of philosophical confusion adverts to a sophisticated philosophical theory of language, meaning, and reality -- rendering the overall account doubly incoherent, as we have seen -- the later metaphilosophy does not presuppose any such theory. It is fully anti-theoretical. Both inconsistencies have been removed.

The improvement in Wittgenstein's metaphilosophy to which I am drawing attention -- the change from (5) to (5\*) -- lies at the bottom of the other important differences between the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*. Most importantly, it explains the huge emphasis that he comes to place on the fact that the various kinds of word in a language are used in very different ways. From the very outset of the *Investigations* -- and throughout that work -- we are advised to give characterizations of language that describe how idiosyncratically the different words are used -- and not to be concerned with their referents or psychological bases. His point is not that theories of these other kinds would be incoherent or false or serve no purpose at all, but that they are not what are needed for the treatment of philosophical problems. For insofar as these problems result from inattention to linguistic variation -- from the exaggeration of linguistic analogies -- they must be treated by pertinent reminders of the divergent ways that terms are actually deployed.

It is important to appreciate the difference between this aspect of the *Investigations* -- the focus on word-use -- and a related, but quite distinct point: namely, Wittgenstein's identification of the meaning of a word with its use. It is one thing to say, for the reason mentioned above, that philosophical illumination will be promoted by attention to how words are used, and a quite different thing to say that the meaning of a word consists in its use in the language. The first of these points clearly plays a vital role in determining Wittgenstein's approach to particular philosophical problems -- problems regarding experience, mathematics, knowledge, art, ..., and also meaning. But it is the second point that is usually emphasized by commentators on Wittgenstein. -- Indeed it has been

given much more weight in his thinking that I believe it deserves.

For notice, to start with, that it is far from obvious that Wittgenstein changed his mind about the nature of meaning en route from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations*. After all, he explicitly acknowledges that the word "meaning" is ambiguous:-- *Investigations* paragraph 43 defines meaning as use, but only

For a large class of cases -- though not all -- in which we employ the word "meaning" ..

Clearly he is not -- as is often wrongly supposed -- saying that it is only the meanings of certain words that may be identified with their uses. Rather, he is allowing that there are various cases in which, in speaking of a word's "meaning", we have in mind its referent, or its pragmatic force, or some concurrent intention, or perhaps something else. And this is a point that squares perfectly well with the *Tractatus* emphasis on meaning qua referent. Thus Wittgenstein's use-conception of meaning does not represent a major departure from his *Tractatus* position.

Nor can credit be given to it as the source of Wittgenstein's new metaphilosophy. For in fact that metaphilosophy cannot be derived from the use theory of meaning. Moreover, no such inference is needed. The real (and potentially quite adequate) basis for it is the observation of so many problems whose sources are, as he contends, linguistic overgeneralization. He need not, and should not, go so far as to say that the theories proposed as solutions to these pseudo-problems are necessarily meaningless. It suffices to recognize that -- meaningless or not -- such theoretical claims are not properly motivated, and hence unjustified.

From this metaphilosophical perspective the problems surrounding the phenomenon of X-ness must be treated by focussing on the various ways that the word "X" is used. And applying that methodology to the word "meaning" we will arrive at the identification of the meaning of a word with its use. Thus the direction of thought is from Wittgenstein's metaphilosophy to his use conception of meaning rather than the other way around.

To summarize: I have been arguing that, early and late, it is Wittgenstein's view of philosophy, rather than his view of meaning, that plays the pivotal role in his thought. His account of meaning has few significant implications and does not undergo substantial revision. His metaphilosophy is what is central and revolutionary. It does change somewhat -- an incoherent element is removed from it and replaced -- and this modification gives rise to considerable differences in the way that specific philosophical problems are treated. But the correction in his core metaphilosophical position is small in relation to all that is retained:-- namely, that philosophical questioning is provoked by

linguogenic confusion, and therefore cannot be answered, and therefore cannot yield philosophical knowledge. Thus the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations* represent improving expressions of the same basic insight.

## Endnotes

- 1 See work by Ramsey, Black, Anscombe, Pears, Geach, and Malcolm.
- 2 See works by Diamond, Goldfarb, Ricketts, and Conant.

# The World as We See it

## A Late-Wittgensteinian Argument for Direct Realism

Wolfgang Huemer\*

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Ever since Brentano (re-)introduced the notion of 'intentional inexistence' it has become a commonplace in philosophy of mind to characterize (at least) most of our mental episodes by their being directed towards something as an object. The majority of these mental episodes, most notably our perceptual experiences, are directed towards objects that are part of our physical environment. The difficulty that philosophers since Brentano struggle with is to explain how our mental episodes that are part of the realm of the mental can be directed towards physical objects. In this paper I will argue that many of these attempts have had little success because they work with an underlying picture that is deceiving, a picture according to which there is a gap between mental episodes on the one side and physical objects that are "out there," on the other; and according to which that gap is bridged, in some mysterious way, by the intentional relation.

There can be hardly any doubt that our perceptual experiences are caused by the objects towards which they are directed. Several philosophers, however, have argued that causal theories of perception are insufficient to explain why our perceptual experiences can have content. In his attack of the Myth of the Given, Sellars has pointed out that our mental episodes stand in rational relations of justification to other mental episodes - they justify or are justified by them. A perceptual experience (understood as *seeing that*), to take a common example, is a propositional attitude that justifies perceptual beliefs and observational knowledge. This experience, however, cannot stand in rational relations to non-conceptual episodes like sensations or raw sense-data, nor can it stand in such relations to the actual object which does not have propositional structure, either. Thus, there can be only a causal, but not a rational, relation between object and experience. A merely causal relation, however, cannot justify the propositional content of the experience.

Dretske formulates a different argument in his book *Knowledge and the Flow of Information*. He points out that the causal relation is not a two-place relation between the object and the episode. Rather there is a long causal chain that leads up to the episode; the object towards which we are directed is just one of the many causal antecedents of the experience. Causal theories of perception, Dretske argues, cannot provide us with a criterion that allows us to pick out the object of our perceptual experience from the many causal antecedents of that experience.

Both Dretske's and Sellars's argument show that a merely causal account does not suffice to explain why our perceptual experiences have a specific content. In what follows I will defend the thesis that we can solve these problems if we appreciate the fact that the intentional relation between our experiences and their contents is not only determined by our physical environment, to which we are connected through a causal chain, but also by our social environment, i.e., by the way in which the persons around us interact with this physical environment. In other words, we need to engage in social practices in order to establish the intentional relation to the object; this relation is, thus, not only determined by our physical, but also by our social environment, or, to put it in Wittgensteinian terms, they depend on our form of life.

This emphasis on the social aspect of intentionality has been criticized for leading to unwanted ontological consequences. Let us imagine a group of people that lives, for the sake of the argument, in a deep and hidden valley in the Alps and has never had any contact with other human beings. We can imagine that members of this Alpine tribe engage in social practices and speak a language - which is an important part of their social practices - that are quite different from ours. If the thesis that the contents of our experiences depend also on our social practices is correct, this means that their perceptual experiences are about different kinds of objects than ours. Even if we are under the same conditions in the same environment, the content of the perceptual experiences of the members of the Alpine tribe will differ from the content of our experiences. In other words, they do not see the world in the way we do.

In his article "On the very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme" Davidson has shown that the language of our imaginary Alpine tribe must be translatable into ours - otherwise it would not qualify as a language. In consequence, it does not cause any difficulty to imagine that, given we have enough time and experience, we can learn to speak their language and, more generally, engage in their social practices. If the thesis of the social aspect of intentionality is correct, that means that we can learn to see the world as they do.

Davidson's argument, however, does not calm our ontological worries. It might still be argued that the thesis of the social aspect of intentionality entails a form of transcendental idealism: if we can know the object only through social practices we can never know the object as it really is, but only relative to these practices. If we move between different forms of life, as we do when we learn to see the world in the way the Alpine tribe does, we still know it only relative to certain social practices; we can never know it independently of them. We can learn to see the world through different lenses, as it were, but we must always wear some sort of lenses in order to see something as an object.



This argument also can be illustrated with the less exotic example of chess perception. In order to see a rook (in the sense of seeing as) one has to be able to engage in certain social practices - one has to know at least the basic rules of chess. If somebody who does not know anything about chess, who does not even know about the existence of this game, looks at the board at the same moment when I do, she sees a wooden figurine of a certain shape where I see a rook. Our perceptual experiences have different content because we engage in different social practices. In consequence, if my friend learns the rules of chess, she learns to see rooks as I do. At this point the transcendental idealist can come up with the following argument: the physical object out there is neither a rook nor a wooden figurine. It is a raw, unstructured object that you interpret as a *rook* and your friend as a *figurine*. Strictly speaking, the transcendental idealist continues, the two experiences have the same object. This object is, however, in an important sense inaccessible to all of us: we can know it only as a *rook* or as a *figurine*, etc., but we cannot know it as *it really is*. Thus, we end up advocating a form of transcendental idealism.

This argument depends on the assumption that we can meaningfully distinguish between the object as it is given through our social practices on the one hand and the object as it really is on the other. (For the sake of simplicity, I will refer to this assumption as the 'transcendental assumption.')

In *On Certainty* Wittgenstein offers an argument that shows that this assumption cannot be meaningfully formulated. If we accept the transcendental assumption, the argument goes, we undermine the very basis of our language game - with the consequence that we lose the very possibility of stating this assumption.

According to the later Wittgenstein, as is well known, the meaning of our words and the truth-value of our sentences depend on criteria that are determined by our social practices. We acquire these social practices in the process of growing up, by learning to play a language game. This process starts with the child's being trained to interact in a certain way with the world, a world that is there independently of our interacting with it. The child acquires a background that consists of practices some of which can be described as tacit assumptions or beliefs. She does not, however, acquire these practices and beliefs one by one, she rather acquires a whole set of beliefs at once or, to use a Wittgensteinian metaphor: "Light dawns gradually over the whole." (OC, 21, § 141). The basis of the child's background is not her acquisition of beliefs like "This is a chair" and "This is a cup," for example, but her learning that she can sit on chairs and drink from cups, etc. Rather than acquiring a set of true propositions about chairs and cups, she learns about chairs and cups by interacting with her physical environment. "It is our *acting*, which lies at the bottom of our language games." (OC, 28, § 204). The child learns to have mental episodes that are about objects like chairs and cups, etc., only

through these interactions with the physical world that are guided by the people around it. These interactions and social practices provide a background without which we could not have mental episodes at all. The child learns to play more complex language-games only on the basis of this background, as Wittgenstein points out when he compares this background to propositional knowledge: "The child, I should like to say, learns to react in such-and-such a way; and in so reacting it doesn't so far know anything. Knowing begins at a higher level." (OC, 71, § 538).

For Wittgenstein the background is not just a set of propositions, it rather reaches down to the facts: our acting and interacting with the actual world lies at the bottom of our language-games. At one point Wittgenstein even goes so far as to say that the background actually contains facts. After pointing out that it is hard to imagine that we could be wrong in our knowing that water boils and does not freeze under such and such circumstances, he states: "This fact is fused into the foundations of our language-game." (OC, 73, § 558). In another place, Wittgenstein states that "the possibility of a language-game is conditioned by certain facts. In that case it would seem as if the language-game must *show* the facts that make it possible. (But that is not how it is.)" (OC, 82, §§ 617f).

These passages show that Wittgenstein opposes a view that creates a gap between words and mental episodes on the one side and the objects towards which they are directed on the other. It would be wrong to say that the language-game shows something that is "out there." We cannot separate mental episodes from the facts towards which they are directed, they do not refer to something "out there," on the other side of the gap, so to speak. Our mental life as well as our language-games are conditioned by the facts and objects in our physical environment. If the world were completely different, our mental life and our language-game would be completely different, too. "Certain events would put me into a position in which I could not go on with the old language-game any further" - they would "throw me out of the saddle" (OC, 82, § 617ff.) The very possibility of speaking a language or having mental episodes presupposes that facts and objects exist; and we speak the language that we do and have the mental life that we have because of the specific facts that found the basis of our language-games and our mental lives. If these facts were completely different, our language-games and our mental life would be completely different, too.

As a consequence, statements that express a general doubt about the existence of objects, like the sceptic's question "Do physical objects exist?" cannot be formulated meaningfully, since they undermine the very basis of the language-game of which they are part. While it is possible to doubt the existence of particular things like *this* table in front of me, it does not make sense to generalize this doubt to all objects. "If you tried to doubt everything, you would not get as far as doubting anything. The game of doubting itself presupposes certainty." (OC, 18, § 115). Consequently, metaphysical realism and

idealism are positions that cannot be formulated meaningfully because they try to give an answer to the sceptic's question rather than rejecting it. The same holds for the transcendental assumption according to which we can meaningfully distinguish between the (raw, unstructured) object and the object as it figures in our form of life. This assumption presupposes that we can give a positive answer to the question: "Do objects exist in the way we perceive them?" We can play our language-game only because objects do exist in the way they figure in them; the question thus undermines the basis of our language-games and, more generally, of our form of life. "... a doubt about existence only works in a language-game. Hence ... we should first have to ask: what would such a doubt look like? and don't understand this straight off." (OC, 5, § 24).

This argument allows us to reject a picture according to which there is a gap between mental episodes and the object towards which they are directed. By insisting that facts are at the bottom of our social practices including our language-games we can create an alternative position according to which our mental episodes and our words stand in a direct relation to facts and objects. There is no gap between the episode and its object that has to be bridged in some mysterious way by the intentional relation.

According to this argument we cannot meaningfully distinguish between the world as we see it and the world as it really is. This position allows for local error, for we might misperceive that table over there etc., but there is no space for universal error. We cannot always be wrong, error is possible only before a picture of the world that is largely correct; "Doubt comes *after* belief." (OC, 23, § 160).

In consequence, if Wittgenstein is correct, the world is by and large as we see it. In the example of the imaginary Alpine tribe that I have discussed above, however, we have seen that there can be different forms of life that see the world in different ways. Does that mean that they are seeing a different world or is their - or our - picture of the world just wrong? The answer to both questions is no. They do see the same world, the same objects and facts as we do. These objects and facts are the basis of different social practices and language-games, though. The members of the Alpine tribe, thus, see the objects from a perspective that is very different from ours, but they nonetheless see the same objects. Similarly for the example of chess perception: when I see a rook and my friend sees a wooden figurine, we both see the same object, which *is* a rook and which *is* a wooden figurine. In addition, the fact that the members of the imaginary Alpine tribe interact with the same world and that they have the same sense-organs as we do indicates that their social practices will probably differ less radically from ours than the imagination of some philosophers makes us believe.

As a consequence of this account we realize that we live in a world full of everyday objects. There are rooks, dogs, symphonies, houses, books, and computers etc. All

these objects can be described in different ways. Rather than talking about tables and chairs, we could be talking about micro-particles that are organized in some specific way, for example. This shows only that we can switch from one language game into another, and that the perspective from which we perceive an object depends on the social practices we engage in. It does not mean, however, that only physics can accurately describe our physical environment - what counts as an accurate description rather depends on criteria that are determined by our social practices. Most importantly, it does not mean that there is a raw, unstructured world out there that is in principle inaccessible to us.

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- \* I want to thank Alex Burri, John Gibson, and Sonia Sedivy for valuable comments on earlier drafts of this paper.
- 1 Cf. Dretske (1981, 153-168).
  - 2 It seems that the full impact of this passage is not always appreciated among Wittgenstein interpreters. Even Georg Henrik von Wright, co-editor of Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*, distorts this sentence when he quotes it in his article on *On Certainty*. Von Wright uses this quotation in the following sentence: "Their truth 'is fused into the foundations of our language game' (§ 558)..." (von Wright, 1982, 167). Wittgenstein, however, is not writing about the truth-value of some description of a fact, but the very fact itself being fused into the foundations of our language game.

# Shame and Cognitivism

Phil Hutchinson\*

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Cognitivist accounts of the emotions attempt to offer explanations of emotional states in terms of the propositional beliefs of the agent. Cognitivist accounts often divide emotions into two groups; emotions such as pride, shame and guilt, which lend themselves to cognitive interpretation, and emotions such as fear and disgust, which do not readily do so (Taylor 1980: 385, 1985: 1). The former are characterised as sophisticated emotions of self-assessment and the latter as less sophisticated, affective states, which are thus less amenable to cognitive accounts. Proponents of cognitive accounts can be divided into two groups: objective cognitivists such as Donald Davidson (1976) and subjective cognitivists such as Gabriele Taylor (1985).

For Davidson a propositional emotion is explained by beliefs, one of which will be universal in form. For the explanation to be rationally intelligible it must be possible to be phrased in syllogistic form. In the case of shame the syllogism would be as follows; *premise 1*: 'I failed to act to save the life of my fellow inmate'; *premise 2*: 'all morally competent people ought to act so as to save the life of their fellow inmate'. This is my universal premise. *The conclusion*: 'I am morally inept' is deduced from the two premises and serves as the belief, which identifies and is constitutive of my shame. The universal belief provides the explanation with its objectivity.

While Taylor agrees that the agent's propositional beliefs explain emotions, she argues that a universal belief is not required. Taylor's subjective cognitive approach can be identified through the following example. 'I may identify my shame through the belief that I have exposed myself in public. I arrive at work and visit the bathroom. As I look in the mirror I notice that my flies are open and I am exposing myself. I believe that I must have been doing so throughout my journey to work on the train, when I sat opposite other people, men, women and children. This belief manifests itself in my feeling shame.' This belief is supported by further beliefs about public decency: 'I believe that a decent person would diligently observe the communal norms as to what it is acceptable to expose of one's body in public.'

It is tempting to see this example in terms of Davidson's syllogistic framework with the belief that; 'all ought to observe the communal norms as to what it is acceptable to expose of one's body in public' serving as the universal premise. However, the agent might say, 'I did not intend to flout the norms of public decency, it was merely an

oversight on my part that led to the public exposure. I merely forgot to tuck everything away and button up after a rushed visit to the station lavatory prior to jumping on the soon-to-depart train. I *do* observe the norms of public decency. So what belief explains my shame? I could feel shame because I smiled and nodded at the woman and her two children sitting opposite me, and I can imagine them now reporting me to the Transport Police. It is their description of my character that I imagine them to put *me* under, which makes me feel shame. I feel shame because I imagine others to understand me, my character, as other than I *am*. I feel tainted by the description that I imagine those people to have put me under.'

The agent feels shame on imagining a negative representation of him, far from being universal it is rather a belief that is particular to the agent.<sup>1</sup> This example therefore, conforms to Taylor's notion of a rationally intelligible explanation. For while a universal belief does not play an explanatory role, the emotion is explained by beliefs offered by the agent. For Taylor these beliefs, alongside some biographical information regarding the agent - such as that he holds public office - make the agent's shame rationally intelligible.

I will now suggest a third scenario that conforms to neither Davidson's nor Taylor's demands. 'I identify my shame through the belief that I am tainted by an event in which I was involved earlier in life. When I notice a child's gaze upon me or I see a parent and child at play, I am reminded of the fact that a child died as a result of being hit by my car while I was driving. When I feel shame I begin to search for reasons, asking was I driving in a careful enough manner that day? I also reflect on the wider consequences of my action as regards the destruction of a family. I sometimes believe that what was once a happy family of four will now be barely a family at all. A brother-less little girl not understanding where her brother has gone, blaming her parents. Parents who can't help but secretly blame each other for the fact that their son was playing near the road. I occasionally believe I have done this to them. I sometimes believe all three must despise me for killing their son/brother. These beliefs may constitute my shame.'

The agent of shame in this example was not guilty. He had not contravened any laws, nor had he acted in ignorance of any social norms. So what explains his shame? Well he doesn't feel shame all the time, his shame is accessed<sup>2</sup> through his noticing the eyes of a child upon him, or his own observation of others, others whom he sees as demonstrating convivial family life. It seems that he is still looking for the belief that will explain his shame to him. As each belief is assessed, it is dismissed. It is not a stable set of *beliefs* that accompany the agent's feeling of shame in the third example but a sense of desperation as he is afflicted by shame once again and mulls over the incident that he believes gave rise to the emotion in the first place. I hesitate here to equate intelligibility of the emotional state with the discovery of an explanatory belief(s),

because I find the agent's feeling intelligible, even given the elusiveness of a stable set of reasons. The agent feels shame. This he *does* know. Why? This he does *not* know. Does this mean that shame cannot be what he feels? Can I say this to him? 'You do not feel shame! Shame is a propositional emotion, an emotion of self-assessment, it is both constituted and identified by beliefs.' Can I say this to the agent in the third example?

The agent goes over the event in his mind, whenever the emotion is upon him, he plays the event over and over. 'I am and have always been a conscientious driver. That day I drove very slowly, aware I was in a residential area. I was alert, had not been drinking and had not had a late night the night before. I always switch off my phone when I am driving, my God I do not even have the radio on because I think it distracting. My car was new and was in good working order. Even the policeman who attended said it was not my fault and that I had his sympathies! The kid just came from nowhere; just shot into the road in front of me on his bike, I had no chance to stop. Given that the child died after being hit by my car while I was driving I could not be any less responsible for the child's death than if someone else had been in my place. But it was *me* there, driving, in control of the vehicle that killed the child and destroyed a family - I did that, I killed the child and now, when a child looks at me I am overcome by shame. When I see parents at play with their children I feel sick with shame as I begin to think of my part in denying a family days like those.'

Shame is felt in situations where the agent is reminded of an incident that involved him earlier in his life. But he cannot explain this through the invocation of beliefs. He tries to, but seems doomed to go round in circles looking for the belief(s) that explains his shame. Explanation, even in Taylor's delimited sense, is not available to him. There just seems to be no *reason* for his shame. All he can do is persist in offering descriptions of the original event in the hope that reasons will become manifest. So is his shame rationally intelligible? I argue that if we have a degree of imaginative engagement with the agent of the emotion, if we imagine what *he* is going through, then *his* shame might become intelligible to us. But the insistence upon *rational* intelligibility rules out situations like the third example where I feel shame but can offer no stable reason for that shame. 'I am oppressed by shame yet all attempts to offer reasons for my shame fail.' Along with Taylor and Davidson we may well desire more than what is on offer. We want to justify or verify our use of the word shame to others and this leads us to want to support it with a rational syllogism or reasons. In this respect I find I apposite a remark of Wittgenstein's in *On Certainty*,

And here the strange thing is that when I am quite certain of how the words are used, have no doubt about it, I can still give no *grounds* for my way of going on. If I tried I could give a thousand, but none as certain as the very thing they were supposed to be grounds for. (Wittgenstein. 1975: §307)

Davidson's understanding of rationality leads him to assert that beliefs which explain an emotion must be able to be phrased as a syllogism conforming to principles of deductive reason. These are the grounds Davidson gives 'for my way of going on', that is, for my feeling and expressing shame. Taylor's understanding of rationality leads her to argue that beliefs, serving as reasons, explain the emotion. These beliefs are the grounds Taylor gives 'for my way of going on', that is, for my feeling and expressing shame. Davidson's and Taylor's approach would either misrepresent or fail to recognise the shame expressed in examples two and three, and three respectively. The reason for the emotion, for the feeling of shame, in example three is there for all to see. Rationality is not required, what is certain is my shame.

In the third example no stable beliefs operate as reasons for my shame. The cognitive building blocks are absent, yet the shame is felt and expressed. Paraphrasing Wittgenstein we might say the language games within which shame is expressed are not based on grounds, they are neither reasonable nor unreasonable (*ibid*: §559). But for Taylor, in the absence of stable beliefs constituting my shame it becomes difficult to justify that shame. So can I justify my shame? Taylor must answer no. In the absence of beliefs Taylor is forced into questioning the justifiability of the individual's shame. Her theoretical depiction of shame, as resting upon rational foundations, holds her captive. Individuals who feel and express shame are not fettered by such theoretical considerations. One might add that the grammar of shame proffers no such restrictions either. Whether I talk of shame as an emotion, affective state, or a feeling, I need offer no reasons for my shame because I can simply say I feel, am effected by or experience the emotion - *this is simply what I do* (Wittgenstein 1963: §217). The desire for a theory or definition of shame serves only to restrict our view of the ways in which people feel and express shame.

Contra Davidson and Taylor, it is admissible for an agent, in response to a request for reasons for their shame, to say 'this is simply what I *feel*'. That is not to say that Davidson's or Taylor's theses misrepresent *all* expressions of shame. We might very well not exhaust the justifications demanded by either Davidson's or Taylor's theses and feel shame with the attending beliefs. However, how these beliefs might be demonstrated to be constitutive of the individual's shame and not merely outcomes of or attendant to it, is unclear. We must remain open to the possibility that causes and justifications might not be available, and at this point bedrock is reached (*ibid*). Davidson's and Taylor's theses support nothing. That is to say people will feel shame even when unable to fulfil the criteria laid down in Taylor's definition, indeed others may even find that feeling intelligible.

To conclude, there was an event, which involved two people, an adult and a child. The outcome of that event was the death of the child. The event *is* what links the two



people and leads to the feeling of shame. Again taking the voice of the agent. 'My shame is intelligible because I feel it. Shame acts upon me in these situations since this event. Does this not make sense to you? I *feel* shame! I do not rationally arrive at a state of shame, whether through deduction or the presentation of reasons.'

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## Endnotes

- \* The following people have been helpful during the writing of this paper: Rebecca Neal, Veronique Pin-Fat, Nigel Pleasants, Philippe Rouchy & Wes Sharrock.
- 1 It should also be noted that not all negative representations, imagined or not, would necessarily bring about a feeling of shame. Indeed this imagined negative representation might not have brought about this feeling of shame for this agent at another time.
- 2 'Accessed' can lead one to imagine something is there waiting. It should not do so. Also, I have to fight a tendency to want to say shame 'is brought to the surface' but this implies that 'it' lies in wait and, that 'it' does so is not at all established nor do I have any desire to attempt to establish this!

# 'Description Alone' and the Future of Philosophy

Daniel D. Hutto

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Many philosophers take exception to Wittgenstein's bold injunction that, "...we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place." (PI 119). This is often regarded as nothing short of betrayal of philosophy; a lowering of our sights. For many it is seen as the abandonment of a much more creditable and noble end; that of distinguishing appearance from reality, of getting at the true nature of things.

Prima facie, it would seem that his self-avowed method of clarification, by which sense and nonsense are to be distinguished, amounts to just this. For in an important sense, during both his early and late periods, his aim was not the traditional one of apprehending reality but the therapeutic one of, "...working on oneself" (CV: 16). Remarks that belie this purpose surfaced in different ways and places throughout his career. For example, he stressed that his work was not meant to spare his readers from thinking and would only have the appropriate affect on those who had had the same or similar thoughts themselves and who approached his writings in the correct spirit (PI: viii, TLP: 3, CV: 7e). Thus he writes that, "I ought be no more than a mirror, in which my reader can see his own thinking with all its deformities so that helped in this way, he can put it right" (CV: 18).

In alarming contrast to the endeavors of most contemporary philosophers we are warned that, "In philosophy we do not draw conclusions. 'But it must be like this!' is not a philosophical proposition. Philosophy only states what everyone admits (PI §599, cf. CV: 6e). Or more precisely, philosophy only states what everyone would admit, if they were not held captive by a theory or picture. For, as he reminds us, "...when ...we have got a picture of our ordinary way of speaking...we are tempted to say that our way of speaking does not describe the facts as they really are" (PI § 402).

Of course, even if we accepted that this were the only legitimate end of philosophy, it would be wrong to suggest, as Wittgenstein does that philosophy, "...leaves everything as it is" (PI §124). Genova offers to make sense of this and vindicate him of the charge of excessive pessimism by focusing on his views on seeing aspects. For when we see aspects, it is clear that, "...reality does not change, only our attitude towards it" (Genova 1995: 14).

This seems right. Indeed, his thinking on these matters is deeply rooted. We find echoes of it in his earliest writings. For example, in the *Notebooks* he was attracted to a vision of transcendental will that enters the world from without. It is strongly distinguished from the psychological will, in that the former is not to be understood as being within the world. Thus, "The thinking subject is surely mere illusion. But the willing subject exists" (N: 5.8.16, 80e). To understand this aright we must see that the Will equates to the ethical attitude of the subject to the world. Thus he asks: "But can we conceive of a being that isn't capable of Will at all, but only of Idea (of seeing for example)? In some sense this seem impossible. But if it were possible then there could also be a world without ethics" (N: 21.7.16: 77e).

In drawing this line between the world and our attitude towards it, the world (the totality of facts) was regarded as being akin to an alien will. He was inspired by the idea that nothing that happens in world is ultimately under our control. Whereas we are responsible for our attitudes, we cannot be held responsible for the world.

Similar views were expressed in the *Tractatus*. Once again, our attitudes alone are seen as the locus of value. Only they can be influenced. For example, we can come to see that the meaning of life cannot be found in the world. It cannot come in the form of a proposition (TLP 6.52). Thus, we are told that there is no value in the world. Hence, "What is Good or Evil is essentially the I, not the world" (N 5.8.16: 80e). This relates to his famous remark:

6.43 If the good or bad exercise of the will does not alter the world, it can alter only the limits of the world, not the facts - not what can be expressed by means of language.

In short the effect must be that it becomes an altogether different world. It must, so to speak, wax and wane as a whole.

The world of the happy man is a different one from that of the unhappy man.

Of course, in the context of the early writings, these remarks generate a host of difficult questions. Why is it that our attitudes are not regarded as merely contingent facts, in the same fashion as thoughts and other psychological episodes? How can the transcendental will, which stands 'outside' of the world, be moved in any way? How is it that we can be held responsible for our attitudes, but not other events and happenings?

Nevertheless, it is against this background we can begin to better understand a likely source for his claim that philosophy leaves everything as it is. For as he saw it, all that is possible in philosophy is that we affect a change in our attitude toward things, not a change in how things stand in the world. Indeed, we find him espousing something very like this doctrine, as late as 1946 when he writes:

If life becomes hard to bear we think of a change in our circumstances. But the most important and effective change, a change in our attitude, hardly even occurs to us, and the resolution to take such a step is very difficult for us. (CV: 53e).

But, given this, why should Wittgenstein talk in the later writings as though philosophy brings about no effect at all? As we have seen, he was originally prepared to allow that a change in the way one sees things changes *everything*, for one comes to inhabit an 'entirely different world'.

To properly understand how these views connect with his views about 'description', we must realise that in the later writings forms of life play essentially the same role that logical form played in the *Tractatus*. Crucially, both govern 'the bound of sense' and remain outside the scope of the explicable, strictly sayable or articulable. Neither logic nor grammar can make any pronouncements, as they are the transcendental limits to sense. For this reason, these limits cannot be stated or positively charted.

This is ultimately why we must eschew explanation in favour of description. This is completely in line with the therapeutic task of clarification. Thus we are told:

A philosopher is a man who has to cure many intellectual diseases in himself before he can arrive at the notions of common sense (CV: 44e).

Barring other differences, this can look as if the later Wittgenstein's grammar might serve as a substitute for Kantian *synthetic a priori* categories. But there is an important difference. For although grammar is essence it would be wrong to think of 'commonsense' concepts and categories as defining a fixed, settled and positive limit to the bounds of sense (cf. McDowell 1998: 277-278). Nor is there a single commonsense description that could replace our misleading philosophical pictures. Once we get back to the rough terrain, we need to describe many different landscapes by noting similarities and differences. At its heart, the move from logical form to forms of life was a move away thinking what is transcendental necessary in static terms as opposed to dynamic ones. Moreover, it was also recognition of the social character of the norms that underwrite meaning and conceptual development (see Hutto forthcoming).

Wittgenstein had a much more fluid vision of what drives conceptual change and fixes boundaries of sense. He bids us to realise that, "...the extension of the concept is not closed by a frontier...For how is the concept of a game bounded?...Can you give the boundary?" (PI §68). Thus, "We do not know the boundaries because none have been drawn. To repeat, we can draw a boundary for a special purpose. Does it take that to make the concept usable? Not at all" (PI §69, cf. also §79-80). Concepts get their lives from our practices, not *vice versa*.

His point is not that there is some singular untainted commonsense view of the world that we must try to regain. In reminding ourselves of what we have always known we are reminding ourselves about our practices as they are. Moreover, because these practices develop and evolve there can be no transcendental setting of limits to sense in advance or once and for all. It for this reason that philosophers cannot theorise from the general to the particular, but must instead merely describe and be vigilant of transgressions of sense. We cannot explicate the nature of our forms of life, the basis of grammar, *via* theory any more than a proposition could simultaneously represent some state of affairs and its means of representation.

But, even if we take seriously the idea that our concepts not fixed once and for all, we might wonder why Philosophy's task couldn't, indeed shouldn't, be more than just descriptive. Why shouldn't it play a part in changing our way of seeing by steering conceptual development. It may be thought that changing our 'way of seeing', or our attitudes, can be achieved by changing our collective view of the world as a whole.

Churchland advances an extreme scientific naturalist version of this idea when he claims that, "Our best and most penetrating grasp of the real is still held to reside in the representations provided by our best theories. Global excellence of theory remains the fundamental measure of rational ontology" (Churchland 1989: 151). The follow-up thought is that the best theories are those which are developed wholly within the bounds of natural science.

Brandom advances a much more modest version of the view in *Making It Explicit*. Although he identifies with much in Wittgenstein, in particular he rejects, "...his theoretical quietism..." (Brandom 1994: xii). Thus he proposes to develop a theory of meaning that reveals how both the pragmatic and semantic aspects of meaning are united. Yet, unlike scientific naturalists he stops short of a reductive attempt to 'theorise' about meaning, since he denies that norms exist outside of human societies. Nevertheless, he hopes to understand the norms that constitute our socially instituted practices as by expressing the way in which they confer *commitments* and *entitlements* to participants in various language games. Ultimately, he regards this as producing an 'expressive theory of logic'. For despite its being embedded in the world and language, "Logic is the organ of semantic self-consciousness..." (Brandom, 1994: xix). This is important since, "The formation of concepts - by means of which practitioners can come to be aware of anything at all - comes itself to be something of which those who can deploy logical vocabulary can be aware" (Brandom, 1994: xx). But even if we were to endorse this quasi-rationalist position, according to which it is an explication of logic that enables us to chart the inferential relations between commitments and entitlements, philosophy would still be unable to play a substantive role in guiding the development of

concepts. It could not, for example, help us to choose, from on high, between better and worse concepts, even if it could reveal conflicts and contradictions in our thinking. Hence, other than performing this important role, it would not provide an authoritative insight into how our concepts ought to develop.

The point is that both these approaches ultimately flounder for the same reason. For in both cases there can be no 'external' explanation or justification of the particular initial commitments we adopt or of the general commitments to science or rationality. By comparing Wittgenstein's approach with these two neo-Hegelian ones, we can better understand just what he found objectionable in the idea that philosophy can provide a rational basis for conceptual progress. With this in mind, it is thus easier to see precisely where he stops and why. For him, unlike science, philosophy should not aim to provide us with collective general knowledge. This is why, for him, the important focus is always our individual attitudes. Moreover, once we recognise that philosophy's task is ultimately therapeutic in this way, it becomes clear what is involved in 'description alone', which is hardly easy, and just how far can it take us.

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# Familienerinnerungen – Heimatmuseum des Großbürgertums? Zu Orientierungsversuchen im Wien der vierziger Jahre. Am Beispiel der Erinnerungen der Familie Wittgenstein.

Nicole L. Immler

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Die *Familienerinnerungen*<sup>1</sup> der Familie Wittgenstein, von Hermine Wittgenstein – der Schwester von Ludwig Wittgenstein – in den Jahren 1944-49 in Wien und auf dem Landsitz der Hochreit auf Anregung ihrer Schwester Helene verfaßt und bislang unpubliziert, sind dem Wittgenstein-Publikum nicht unbekannt, da bereits das Kapitel bezüglich Ludwig Wittgenstein veröffentlicht wurde. Hinsichtlich der Familie wurden nur Teile herauszitiert, ohne daß jene bis jetzt als Ganzes rekontextualisiert, reflektiert und kritisch beleuchtet wurden. Wie es bei Guy Miron heißt: „The very choice made by a particular individual to write down memoirs [is] a form of participation in social processes“ (Miron 2000, 252). In diesem Sinne kann an den Wittgensteinschen *Familienerinnerungen* beispielhaft die Identifikationsstrategie einer Familie des Großbürgertums im Wien der vierziger Jahre gezeigt werden. Um die Familienerinnerungen als historische Quelle (bezüglich geographischer und emotionaler Zuordnungen) zu lesen, sind jene theoretisch abzusichern: Familienerinnerungen sind ein literarisches Genre, eine Textsorte mit Intention, Funktion und Rezeption – wie auch Teil einer Erinnerungskultur, die ihren Ursprung im 19. Jahrhundert hat und wiederbelebt wird durch den Erinnerungsboom der neunziger Jahre.

## Familiale Erinnerungskultur

Bekam die Familie im 19. Jahrhundert zunehmend Bedeutung zugesprochen, so wurden auch Familienerinnerungen ein populäres Genre. Parallel zu der Nationalstaatskonzeption des 19. Jahrhunderts, der Schaffung von öffentlichkeitswirksamen „imagined communities“ (Bendict Anderson), sind die Familienerinnerungen eine bewußte Strategie für ein Identifikationskonzept im Privaten: Mit dem Prozeß der Verbürgerlichung und Individualisierung wurde die Familie „umgedeutet von einem Ort der Produktion und materiellen Absicherung zu einem Ort der Intimität und Selbstverwirklichung“, und die Familienerinnerungen werden als Instrument für die angestrebte Verinnerlichung des bürgerlichen Wertekanons



eingesetzt (Gebhardt 1996, 175). Damit ist die familiäre Erinnerungskultur ein historisches Phänomen, „das seine größte Bedeutung in der Übergangszeit zwischen dem traditionellen kollektiven Erinnern und dem modernen individuellen Erinnern hatte“ (Gebhardt 1996, 177).<sup>2</sup> Obwohl im Erinnerungsdiskurs um 1900 das kollektive Gedächtnis den Mittelpunkt bildet, gilt doch die Individualisierung der Erinnerung als das Phänomen der Modernisierung (vgl. die subjektiven Erinnerungsmodelle von Freud, Dilthey und Bergson; Patzel 1996, 192), da mit der Pluralisierung der Lebenswelt kollektive Denk- und Verhaltensmuster dem einzelnen immer weniger Orientierung bieten konnten. Diese Spannung zwischen kollektiven und individuellen Identitätsstrategien initiierte nicht nur den Erinnerungsboom am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts (Autobiographien etc.), sondern auch die Renaissance des Begriffs ‘Erinnerung’ in gesellschaftlicher wie wissenschaftlicher Hinsicht zu Anfang der Neunziger Jahre.<sup>3</sup>

Im Gegensatz zur nationalstaatlich ausgerichteten Elitengeschichtsschreibung<sup>4</sup> werden seitens der Wissenschaft seit den achtziger Jahren solche autobiographischen und lebensgeschichtlichen Erzählungen auch als historische Quellen anerkannt. Dieser ‘narrative turn’ wurde initiiert durch den individuellen Zugang zur Vergangenheit des Nationalsozialismus. Großkollektive wie das Nationale wurden obsolet und es kam zu einer breiten „Akzeptanz der Repräsentation des Gesellschaftlichen im Individuellen“, einem Paradigmenwechsel (Patzel 1996, 207). Die Unterscheidung zwischen objektiv und subjektiv wird mit dem aufkommenden Schlagwort ‘facts and fiction’ (Richard Evans) zunehmend obsolet geführt. Der Gedanke von der Subjektivität aller historischen Quellen wird nicht nur akzeptiert, sondern dem scheinbar einschränkenden Faktor der Subjektivität und Selektivität wird Wert und Qualität beigemessen.

Maurice Halbwachs hatte bereits in den siebziger Jahren, diese neuen Ansätze vorwegnehmend, als erster eine systematische Erinnerungstheorie formuliert und von einem kollektiven Familiengedächtnis gesprochen: In dem sich Familienerinnerungen auszugsweise auf bestimmte Ereignisse konzentrieren, sind sie „symbolhaft“ in der Definition der Gruppe, mit der sich der einzelne über seine Erinnerung identifiziert.<sup>5</sup> Damit bilden sie keine historische Realität ab, sondern konstruieren unter dem Blickwinkel der Gegenwart die Erinnerung jeweils neu. Somit formt die Denkweise der Gegenwart die Erzählungen des Vergangenen.<sup>6</sup> Welche Aussagekraft hat dann das Genre als historische Quelle? Es interessiert die Repräsentation in ihrer Konstruktion; nicht die Chronologie und Details der Familiengeschichte, sondern der Anlaß zu den Erinnerungen, die Auslassungen, Betonungen und Brüche in der Erzählung – entsprechend neuer Ansätze in der Autobiographieforschung, konzentriert auf Schnittstellen und Lebensphasen und weniger auf Gesamtdarstellungen.

Die Wittgensteinschen *Familienerinnerungen* können im Sinne Pierre Noras als metaphorischer Gedächtnisort betrachtet werden. 'Orte des Gedächtnisses' (*lieux de memoire*) sind Orte, „an die sich das Gedächtnis lagert oder in die es sich zurückzieht“ (Nora 1990, 22). Im Prozeß von Identitätskonstruktionen greifen Individuen wie kollektive Identitäten auf solche Orte zurück. Wenn das Heimatmuseum ein 'Gedächtnisort' par excellence ist, eine Legitimitätsversicherung des Kleinbürgertums und Manifestation ihrer Kultur im Monument (Köstlin 2000), so befassen sich die folgenden Überlegungen mit abstrakteren Räumen: mit 'kulturellen Codes' als Erinnerungsstrategien im Wiener Großbürgertum. Solche Codes sind maßgeblich in der Konstruktion von personalen und kollektiven Identitäten, und wie Moritz Csáky betont, sind jene im Prinzip, wenn auch zuweilen national instrumentalisiert, von „vielmehr gesamtregionaler, europäischer oder 'globaler' Provenienz bzw. Relevanz“.7 Anhand der *Familienerinnerungen* soll der Versuch unternommen werden, einen Heimatbegriff zu bestimmen, der seine Besonderheit aus dem sozialen Kontext des Wiener Fin de Siècle, dem pluralistisch verfaßten Raum der Monarchie, ableitet, der – so die These – weniger im nationalen als transnationalen, mehr durch „Mehrfachkodierung“ und „Multipolarität“ als Einheitlichkeit ausgezeichnet ist. Denn, während im Deutschen Kaiserreich das identitätsstiftende Merkmal der *Nation* den öffentlichen Diskurs zur Jahrhundertwende bestimmte, brachte der Nationalgedanke die k.u.k.-Monarchie, welche durch Pluralitäten (Vielfalt der Sprachen, der verfassungsmäßigen Struktur, der kulturellen Symbole) bestimmt gewesen war, zu Fall. Diese Nachwehen des Modernisierungsprozesses prägten das individuelle und kollektive Bewußtsein der Bürger der Habsburger Monarchie und manifestierten sich im kulturellen Gedächtnis der Nachfolgestaaten durch identitätsstiftende Sprach-, Denk- und Lebensformen (Csáky, Reichensperger 1999, 16). In diesem Sinne soll der Wittgensteinsche Begriff von 'Heimat' – im Sinne von Identität – untersucht werden: hinsichtlich der geographischen Zuordnung, der emotionalen Zuordnung und der Zuschreibungen von außen. Nachdem Identität nur in einem Netzwerk, oder mit Pierre Bourdieu gesprochen in einem 'Feld' ausgebildet wird, sind die *Familienerinnerungen* in der Interaktion mit anderen Autobiographien, Texten und Zeugen zu betrachten, denn: „The view from inside which means the hermeneutic text interpretation is not able 'to see the real break-ups; it leads to systematic misjudgements and false estimation'“ (Liebau 1987, 87). Das dekonstruierende Korrektiv wird sich in diesem Rahmen auf einige Verweise auf Ludwig Wittgensteins Äußerungen, wie auf einige Zeitstimmen zu den behandelten Fragen beschränken.

## Die Familienerinnerungen

Man könnte die Wittgensteinschen *Familienerinnerungen* mit Guy Miron „echoes of the system of bourgeois civil values“ bezeichnen (Miron 2000, 256). Was der

Kulturhistoriker Peter Gay bezüglich dem Tagebuch ein „bourgeoise style of thinking“ (Zand 1999,18) nennt, zeichnet auch jene aus. Obwohl Hermine Wittgenstein am Anfang das Bewußtsein formuliert nur „Strohhalme“ abbilden zu können, zeigt ihre konservative Darstellung und das Bemühen um Ordnung, Linearität und Kontinuität ein illusionistisches und darin auch bürgerliches Verlangen. Dazu gehört das Schildern der Erfahrungen in Kindheit und Jugend im prozeßhaften Herausbilden der Charaktere. Unpolitisch, deskriptiv und ein Beispiel für die geübte ‚Nabelschau‘ einer sozialen Klasse, präsentiert sie einen höchst individualistischen Zugang zur Geschichte, ohne jegliche Kontexte zu berücksichtigen – darin abweichend vom bürgerlichen Genre der „contemporary history in miniature“ (Warneken, 1995, 9)<sup>8</sup>. Nur bei Karl Wittgenstein wird deutlich, daß er die österreichische Geschichte nicht nur miterlebt sondern auch mitgestaltet hat. Aus diesem „freundlichen Rahmen“ (Fam.Er., 153) von Liebheiten, Tugendhaftigkeit und sozialem Engagement fällt die Beschreibung des Jahres 1938 heraus; ein historischer Einschnitt in Österreich, der die Familienmitglieder zum Handeln veranlaßt. Dieser „herausfallende“ Abschnitt bildet das Zentrum der Argumentation.

Hermine Wittgenstein setzt den Anfang mit dem Großvater mütterlicherseits, Wilhelm Figdor, einem in Wien ansässigen Großhändler: „Sie waren Juden, fühlten sich aber, wie man das damals konnte, als Österreicher und wurden auch von Anderen als solche betrachtet“ (Fam.Er., 3). Auch wenn sie zum Jahr 1938 schreibt, daß sie selbst keine Ahnung gehabt habe von ihrer jüdischen Herkunft, scheint doch genau jener Umstand der zentrale Ausgangspunkt für die Aufzeichnung der Familiengeschichte zu sein. Auch bei Großvater Hermann Wittgenstein – Wollgroßhändler aus Westphalen, der 1839 Fanny Figdor heiratete und 1859 nach Wien übersiedelte – schildert sie, wie die Familie sofort Anschluss fand und vermutet, daß „dabei die Anziehung, die das reichsdeutsche Element auf Hermann Wittgenstein ausübte, eine Rolle spielte. Gerade in jener Zeit lebten und wirkten viele Reichsdeutsche in Wien, fühlten sich sehr wohl und wurden dort sehr geschätzt“ (Fam.Er., 32). Auch dessen Sohn Karl Wittgenstein – der Vater von Hermine und Ludwig Wittgenstein, der Begründer des österreichischen Stahlimperiums – wird als kein Vertreter der alten Habsburg-Ordnung beschrieben. Er wurde auch von der Öffentlichkeit als Deutscher wahrgenommen, so nennt ihn Karl Kraus in der Fackel einen deutschen Großkapitalisten mitsamt seinen „auch-deutschen Kumpanen“ (1900, 31), die *Arbeiterzeitung* einen „Amerikaner“ (26.1.1899), seines aggressiven und rücksichtslosen Unternehmertums wegen. Tochter Hermine nennt es in den *Familienerinnerungen* lediglich die „unösterreichische“ Art des Vaters:

Die überenergische Art und Weise meines Vaters hatte etwas sehr Unösterreichisches an sich. Er selbst empfand es schmerzlich, dass er im bürokratischen Österreich mehr angefeindet als anerkannt wurde und sagte oft, dass hier jeder Unternehmer hauptsächlich als Geldgewinner angesehen wurde und dass die geistige Arbeit, die Energieleistung, das

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Aufzunehmen eines grossen Risikos, die von einem Unternehmer verlangt werden, hier geflissentlich unbeachtet bleiben; in Amerika sei das anders! (Fam.Er., 64)

Ihre Darstellung des Vaters folgt dem gängigen Topos des sozialen Aufsteigers, wie es Miriam Gebhardt in einer Studie über das deutsch-jüdische Bürgertum formuliert: „Der Familiengründer als klassischer selfmade man, der sich am eigenen Schopf packt und wirtschaftlich und kulturell ‘verbessert’ – diese bürgerliche Selbstlegitimation beschreibt in idealtypischer Weise den Ethos der jungen industriellen Leistungsgesellschaft.“ Darauf sei oft die ganze Dramaturgie des Erinnerns abgestimmt: „Die stereotype Erinnerungsfigur wird aufgeladen mit den Tugenden Fleiß, Sparsamkeit, Bescheidenheit, Bildungshunger, Keuschheit und so zum Musterfall bürgerlicher Sittlichkeit“ (Gebhardt, 184). Andere Beschreibungen konterkarieren das Bild der Tochter, so wenn Karl Wittgenstein es aus Stolz auf seine bodenständige Karriere „zwar ablehnt, sich nobilitieren zu lassen, aber dafür umso aristokratischer lebte, wozu die regelmäßige Veranstaltung von Jagdgesellschaften gehörte“ (Sekler 1984, 158), oder die luxuriöse Ausgestaltung des Jagdhauses auf der Hochreit durch die Wiener Werkstätte. Zeigt Hermine Wittgenstein ihren Vater vor allem als großzügigen Mäzen<sup>9</sup>, so kritisiert sie doch, wie er die künstlerischen Neigungen seiner Söhne negiert:

... der einzige Beruf, der meinem Vater erstrebenswert schien, war der Doppelberuf des Technikers und Kaufmanns, daher sollte natürlich sein ältester Sohn diesen Beruf ergreifen, und da mein Vater selbst früh vom Elternhaus davongelaufen war und sich die Vorbildung für Leben und Beruf durch Umtun in der Fremde und in den verschiedenartigsten Betrieben angeeignet hatte, so sollte auch der ganz anders geartete Hans ähnliche Vorteile geniessen. Ja, wenn ein grosser Mensch sich in eine Idee verrennt und Fehler begeht, dann gehen auch diese ins Grosse! (Fam.Er., 100)

Liegt der Erfolg seines Stahl-Imperiums wesentlich in seiner Menschenkenntnis begründet, war diese Sensibilität gegenüber der Familie nur bedingt gegeben. Beispielhaft ist das Schicksal des ältesten Sohnes Hans, der seit seiner frühesten Kindheit „nichts als Musik im Kopf“<sup>10</sup> hatte und vom Vater nur Unverständnis erntete. War in kultureller Hinsicht die Familie weitgehend vom 19. Jahrhundert geprägt, mit seinem Mäzenatentum, den privaten Musikzirkeln, Leseabenden und Theateraufführungen, so steht dieses Wertesystem dem unerbittlichen Glauben Karl Wittgensteins an die neuen Werte des 20. Jahrhunderts (von Ingenieur, Technik und Fortschritt) gegenüber. War der Vater zu sehr vom Geniekult des 19. Jahrhunderts beeinflusst, der ihm das Talent von Hans als ungenügend betrachten ließ, das ihn veranlaßte dem Sohn die Karriere des Ingenieurs aufzuoktroieren, und damit den Wertidealen des neuen Zeitalters zu gehorchen?<sup>11</sup> Werden die Erziehungsmaßnahmen dem Vater von der Tochter Hermine als erzieherisches ‘Unverständnis’ angelastet, so wird das zugrundeliegende Dilemma

nicht mitreflektiert: Hier wird die „unnormale Erziehung“ (Fam.Er., 102) als Unsensibilität des Vaters individualisiert, statt sie auch als Reaktion auf einen Werteverlust zu sehen und als ein generationsspezifisches Dilemma in ausgeprägteste Form. Karl Wittgenstein war dem Glauben an die Wertesysteme zweier Zeitalter bedingungslos verhaftet. Diese Ambiguität ist charakteristisch für die soziale Trägerschicht des Fin de Siecle, im wesentlichen das liberale Bildungsbürgertum, für eine Generation, die durch ihre ökonomischen Leistungen bald zur wirtschaftlichen Führungsschicht gehörte und versuchte auch im kulturellen und sozialen Bereichen durch Mäzenatentum und Karitativität hervorzutreten. Karl Wittgensteins Identifizierung mit dem bürgerlichen, viel mehr amerikanischen Arbeitsethos machte es ihm in Wien nicht leicht: Wien war im kulturellen Sinne modern, ohne zugleich wirtschaftliche und soziale Konsequenzen daraus zu ziehen. Wurde diese Diskrepanz zwischen dem Willen zu einer modernen, radikal neuen Sicht auf die Welt und dem Unwillen diese neue Sicht praktisch anzuwenden (Brix, Werner 1990, 10) oft euphemistisch auch als kreative Spannung gedeutet<sup>12</sup>, führte nicht nur bei den Wittgensteins das Aufeinanderprallen dieser unterschiedlichen Weltbilder zu Konflikten.

Zeigte der Vater auch nach dem Verschwinden seines ältesten Sohnes Hans 1902 und dem Selbstmord von Rudolf (1904) und Kurt (1918) mehr Verständnis und Geduld für die jüngeren Söhne, sie durften eine öffentliche Schule besuchen und ihren eigenen Interessen nachgehen, hatte Ludwig Wittgenstein diesen Konflikt doch internalisiert. So wenn er auf Drängen des Vaters einen Ingenieurberuf ergriff, dann aber dem inneren Streben folgend sich der Philosophie zuwandte, doch über jene sagte: „Mein Vater war ein Geschäftsmann, und ich bin auch einer. Ich möchte, daß meine Philosophie geschäftsmäßig ist, daß etwas erledigt und in Ordnung gebracht wird.“<sup>13</sup> So wie er seinen Erbeil zurückweist aus dem Grund 'unbelastet' sein zu wollen, sieht er die Philosophie als „Tätigkeit“, von der er erwartete auch leben zu können. Es seien diese gesellschaftlichen Spannungsfelder im Wien der Jahrhundertwende zwischen abstrakt-individualistischen und kollektiv-romantischen Konzepten, die Wittgensteins Philosophie maßgeblich prägten, betont Ernest Gellner.<sup>14</sup>

Es bleibt die These zu verfolgen, ob Hermines Identifizierung der Familie mit Österreich als einer Kulturtradition der Versuch ist, diese Gegensätze zu harmonisieren. So bildet in den *Familienerinnerungen* die Melodie der Monarchie die Basis eines Selbstverständnisses: Denn, trotz des „unösterreichischen“ Charakters gehörten sie bald zu den reichsten und führenden Familien der Monarchie, und verstanden sich trotz dieser Widersprüche als Teil derselben. Das Familienpalais in der Argentinierstraße war Ort eines kulturellen, vornehmlich musikalischen Zirkels um Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Josef Labor und Gustav Mahler. Mit den Werken von Rudolf von Alt aus der Gemäldesammlung identifizierte sich Hermine in besonderem Maße, wenn sie

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schreibt: „[...] prächtige Werke [...] die mir als Österreicherin ganz besonders zu Herzen sprechen“. Wenn die Aufzählung der Werke im Anhang deutlich ihrer Intention folgt „einem kunstverständigen Menschen einen kleinen Begriff vom Geist der einstigen Besitzer“ (Fam.Er., 77) zu geben, vermittelt die Darstellung des einstigen Österreich noch viel mehr von diesem 'Geist':

Das Weltreich Österreich war buchstäblich zerfallen, und was jetzt Österreich hieß, bestand nur mehr aus Wien und einigen mehr oder minder gebirgigen Kronländern. Dem Durchschnittsösterreicher kam das vielleicht nicht einmal so ganz zum Bewusstsein, denn er hatte meist nur diesen Teil des Reiches kennen gelernt; wer kannte denn die ungarische Puszta, das einförmige Galizien, das halbtürkische Bosnien, den Karst und so fort? Nur das Militär und der Militärdienst hatten eine gewisse Beziehung zu den entfernt gelegenen Kronländern vermittelt. Jetzt war das Militär geächtet, das Kaiserhaus abgesetzt, seine Güter als Staatseigentum erklärt, und das verstümmelte Land war ein Land vom Gnaden der Feinde geworden [...]. (Fam.Er., 130)

Der Bezug zu Österreich zeigt sich insbesondere mit dem Anschluß Österreichs an Deutschland im März 1938:

Die Geschehnisse bestimmen selbst den Stil, und wenn das Kapitel, das von den Jahren 1938 und 39 handelt, notgedrungen aus dem Rahmen dieser Familienerinnerungen fällt, so liegt das daran, dass die Ereignisse selbst aus dem freundlichen bürgerlichen Rahmen herausfielen, der bisher unserer Familie umgeben hatte. (Fam.Er., 152)

Der Rückgriff auf den Anschluß erfolgt chronologisch exakt. Es ist offensichtlich, daß Hermine um Authentizität und Exaktheit ringt im Versuch objektiv Geschichte zu präsentieren. Hier wird offensichtlich was Guy Miron das Schreiben mit einer „double consciousness“ nennt: „the point of view of the author, and the imagined point of view of the 'other' to whom the memoirs are addressed“ (Miron 2000, 255) Hermine Wittgenstein schreibt:

Ich erinnere mich, wie Paul mir eines Morgens nach dem 'Umbruch' (dies der offizielle Name für die Einnahme Österreichs) mit bleichem Entsetzen mitteilte, wir gälten als Juden. Ich selbst, in meiner Weltfremdheit, konnte mir nichts anderes dabei vorstellen, als dass mich vielleicht einige Leute nicht mehr grüssen würden, und mein Leben, das sich beinahe nur in meinen vier Wänden abspielte, wäre vielleicht wirklich zuerst kaum berührt worden. (Fam.Er., 156)

Hier ist bereits die „Weltfremdheit“ einer großbürgerlichen Schicht formuliert, die aufgrund ihrer Sozialisation (22 Privatlehrer hatten die acht Wittgenstein-Kinder unterrichtet) und der Abgeschlossenheit ihrer Kreise, sich mehr über eine soziale Identität definiert, als über Raum und Nation.<sup>15</sup>

[...] niemand in meiner Umgebung [hatte] rechtzeitig die ganze Bedrohlichkeit des von Deutschland herannahenden Hitlertums erkannt [...] Unsere engste Familie hatte sich nie für Juden gehalten, weil unsere drei nicht arischen Grosseltern teile alle getauft waren (im Falle Kalmus auch die Urgrossmutter), und so verblendet waren wir, dass sich niemand von uns die Mühe nahm, die Nürnberger Gesetze überhaupt anzusehen. (Fam.Er., 154f.)

Hermine nennt es „Verblendung“, Möglichkeiten, wie die Liechtensteiner Staatsbürgerschaft anzunehmen, im Jahr 1934 von der Hand gewiesen zu haben, aber:

Wie schon erwähnt, hielten wir uns ja nicht für Juden. Auch zeigte sich das Gespenst einer wirklichen Lebensgefahr für Juden erst im Zusammenhang mit dem Gespenst des drohenden Kriegausbruches im Herbst 1938, denn erst dieser schien die Ausschaltung oder Austilgung der zu Feinden gemachten Juden zu gebieten.

Zudem schildert sie die Beziehung zur Staatsbürgerschaft als eine emotionale:

[...] und da ich mich erinnere, wie Paul und ich seinerzeit von Leuten dachten, die aus rein materiellen Gründen ihre Staatsbürgerschaft ändern, so verstehe ich, dass er, der mit Leib und Seele Österreicher und österreichischer Reserveoffizier war, den Rat rundweg ablehnte. [...] Man hätte vielleicht einen Teil des Jahres im Ausland verbringen müssen und die Möglichkeit, zu jeder Zeit und Jagdperiode auf die Hochreit zu fahren, wäre in Frage gestellt gewesen; mein Schwager war österreichischer Staatspensionist und auch das hätte Komplikationen ergeben können. Das Entscheidende liegt aber darin, dass uns eine klare Voraussicht der Gefahr und der feste Wille, alle Schwierigkeiten zu überwinden, vollkommen fehlten. (Fam.Er., 155f)

Kommt bisher der kulturell konnotierte Österreichpatriotismus eines Großbürgertums zum Ausdruck, sieht hier Hermine die Familie in einem Österreich verankert, assoziiert mit einem System der Bürokratie und einem Lebensstil. An dieser Stelle zeigt sich ganz besonders auch ein Wunschdenken, war doch die Realität in Anbetracht der äußeren Zwänge bereits eine andere: Der Bruder Ludwig hatte 1938 die englische, wie Paul 1946 die amerikanische Staatsbürgerschaft angenommen (lebte seit 1938 dort).

Es ist die Idee von Schwester Margarete, die bereits seit 1905 durch ihre Heirat Amerikanerin war, eine Zusammenstellung aller besonderen Leistungen der Familienmitglieder vorzunehmen und jene in Berlin vorzulegen, „um die ‚arische Behandlung‘ womöglich doch zu erlangen (...) aber vergebens, ‚ein zweiter arischer Grosseltern teil sei nötig‘, hiess es“ (Fam.Er., 157). Es folgte der Erwerb von jugoslawischen Pässen und nach dem Aufliegen dieser Aktion ein finanzieller ‚Kuhhandel‘ mit der Reichsbank, denn Hermine wollte anders als ihr Bruder Paul nicht ins Ausland flüchten, sondern lieber als „Ausnahmsjude“ im Land bleiben: „Ich wollte

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weiter in der gewohnten Atmosphäre leben, wenn auch eventuell in viel einfacheren Verhältnissen, nur nicht auswandern!“ (Fam.Er., 178). Daß der Großvater schließlich doch noch als „Arier“ eingestuft wurde, verdankten die Geschwister wohl vor allem ihrem großen Vermögen.

Hier stellt sich die Frage nach der Bedeutung des ‚Jüdischen‘ für die Familie Wittgenstein. In der Reaktion auf das Jahr 1938 findet sich in den *Familienerinnerungen* die These des Kunsthistorikers Ernst Gombrich wieder, „that the notion of Jewish Culture was, and is, an invention of Hitler and his fore-runners and after-runners“ (Gombrich 1997, 5). Das Sehnen nach Selbstverortung scheint vor allem eine Antwort auf die nationalsozialistische Gegenwart und deren von außen aufgezwungene Zuweisung zu sein. Der Rückgriff auf die Herkunft erfolgt als Reaktion auf die gesellschaftlich prekäre Lage für das jüdische Bürgertum im Wien Anfang der Vierziger Jahre. Damit spielte der Aspekt des Jüdischen für die Entstehung der *Familienerinnerungen* eine maßgebliche Rolle.

Beschäftigt sich Wittgenstein bereits seit Ende der Zwanziger Jahren in den *Manuskripten* mit Gedanken über das ‚Jüdisch-Sein‘ (ab 1931 Teil seiner Geständnisse)<sup>16</sup>, beginnt er zur selben Zeit (1929) mit einer Autobiographie.<sup>17</sup> Eine bizarre Parallele.

Während die Erinnerungskultur des 19. Jahrhunderts eher ein positives Ausgangsmotiv hatte, dem öffentlichen Identifikationstrend des Nationalstaates mit einem privaten zu folgen, ist in der Zwischen- und Nachkriegszeit eher ein negatives Moment der Auslöser. Damit sind die *Familienerinnerungen* nicht nur eine Antwort auf die Ambivalenzen der Moderne, eine Antwort auf den Kontinuitätsverlust und die Delegitimierung zu Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts, sondern auch der Versuch der Hilflosigkeit des Staates mit einer privaten Verwurzelungsstrategie zu begegnen bzw. dem kollektiven ein individuelles Erinnern entgegenzusetzen.

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## Endnoten

- 1 Wittgenstein, H. (1948), Familienerinnerungen (Fam.Er.), Typoskript, Wien, 1-250. Sie stehen in einer Tradition des bürgerlichen autobiographischen Schreibens, welches zumeist an die Familie gerichtet war, nicht publiziert wurde, oder nur im Privatdruck in einer kleinen Anzahl hergestellt wurde. Vgl. Gebhardt, M. (1999)
- 2 Miriam Gebhardt verfolgt die These, daß die familiäre Erinnerung bei der Modernisierung der deutschen Juden mithalf, da hier der Modernisierungsprozeß "schneller und nachhaltiger" abgelaufen sei, wie auch das kollektive Erinnern hier immer eine zentralere Funktion eingenommen habe. Vgl. Gebhardt (1996, 188).
- 3 vgl. insbesondere zur Autobiographieforschung der letzten Jahre: Holdenried, M. (2000); Wagner-Egelhaaf, M. (2000).
- 4 vgl. die Konzepte von Benedict Andersons 'Imagined Communities', Eric Hobsbawms 'Invention of Tradition' oder Pierre Noras 'Regions of Memories', welche sich auf den herrschenden Diskurs in Form von institutionalisierter Erinnerung in der Öffentlichkeit beziehen
- 5 Das Familiengedächtnis selbst ist nicht homogen, sondern selbst wiederum Bestandteil verschiedener anderer kollektiver Gedächtnisse. Vgl. Halbwachs (1966, 239) Demnach sind auch Individualität und Kollektivität nicht als gegensätzliche Konzepte zu betrachten, denn gerade im autobiographischen Schreiben kommt es oft zu einem Überlappen eines 'Ich' und 'Wir'. vgl. Patzel (1996, 189)

- 6 vgl. Halbwachs, M. (1991); Ders. (1966).
- 7 vgl. Csáky, M., Einführungstext, 1f.; Seminar Gedächtnis - Erinnerung - Kultur in der Postmoderne/Globalisierung, an der Universität Graz, SS 2001. Ders., Orte des Gedächtnisses. Seminar an der Universität Graz, WS 1998/99.
- 8 vgl. zu den unterschiedlichen Merkmalen von Autobiographien aus dem Bürgertum und Arbeitermilieu, 7- 14 - Neben diesen sozialen Faktoren kann hier auf die kulturellen Faktoren (literarische Vorbilder wie die Erinnerungen von Moses Mendelssohn, Wilhelm von Kugelgen, Helene Lecher etc.), die auch die Repräsentation des Selbst bestimmen, nur verwiesen werden.
- 9 Er unterstützt die Gründung der Secession, die Wiener Werkstätte, Gustav Klimt u.a..
- 10 Fam. Er. 97 - Hans spielte mit neun Jahren jeden Sonntag beim Hochamt die Geige, später die Orgel und Klavier. Seine musikalischen Interessen neben der Tätigkeiten im Familienwerk werden "mehr oder weniger vor [dem Vater] geheim gehalten". Fam.Er., 100
- 11 Eine Spekulation, die auf den Geniekult im Wien um 1900 verweist, dem Genie als Symbolfigur für die Versöhnung des "Individuums mit der Ganzheit" (Le Rider 1990, 61). Dieser hatte möglicherweise einen großen Einfluß auf die Familie, auf die Auffassung vom Menschen und seinen Leistungen und der Kunst. Anregungen zum Thema verdanke ich u.a. Michael Nedo und Petra Strähle.
- 12 vgl. Brix, Janik (1993); Schorske (1982, 138); Janik, Toulmin (1984)
- 13 Wittgenstein 1930 im Gespräch mit Maurice Drury. Rhees (1987, 159)
- 14 Vor dem Hintergrund seiner zentraleuropäischen Sozialisation skizziert Ernest Gellner Wittgensteins Entwicklung von einer Privatsprache, die ohne Kultur auskommt und einem logischen Sprachideal folgt, wie im *Tractatus* vorexerziert, hin zu einer kontextgebundenen, von Alltag und gesellschaftlicher Praxis geprägten Sprache. Gellner (1998, 186).
- 15 Gespräch mit Pierre Stonborough, Enkel von Wittgensteins Schwester Margarete, verheiratete Stonborough. Wien, 1. Mai 2000 - Gespräch mit Cecilia Sjögren, Ludwigs Großnichte, Tochter von Clara Sjögren, der Tochter von Wittgensteins Schwester Helene, verheiratete Salzer, Wien, 3. Mai 2000.
- 16 Das sind gewissensreinigende Gesprächen, die Wittgenstein zwischen 1931-36 mit einigen Freunden und Familienangehörigen führte, in denen er Sachverhalte ausführte, die nie explizit ausgesprochen waren und ihn deswegen bedrückten; beispielsweise seine jüdische Herkunft. Vgl. Somavilla (1997, 134, 136f.); Vgl. Rhees (1987, 236f.).
- 17 vgl. Philosophische Betrachtungen, in: Nedo (1994, 2, 156, 1). - Vgl. zum vieldeutig konnotierten Heimatbegriff von Ludwig Wittgenstein: Immler (2001, 289-310).

# L. Wittgenstein : A Critical Examiner of Modern Civilization

Tsuneyuki Ishikura

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## 1. The Alienation of Modern Culture

Wittgenstein's theory of language games is the theory of cultures. His philosophy of language is the critical examination of modern civilization and a struggle with the fall of this civilization. Wittgenstein lived the "*Untergang des Abendlandes*", the decline of the West, as Brian McGuinness says ( McGuinness 1982 ).

1-1 Western civilization settled on a direction in which to go through realizing the Enlightenment in 18th century whose slogan was 'liberty, equality and philanthropy'. And we see the modernizing process of this civilization in the phenomena of popularization of culture. This trend and character is a historical product by the purely rational practical ideals, 'equalization of human rights' and 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'.

Our modernized lives and activities became indiscriminate and equalized in every aspect. This is symbolized by the environmental condition that rural areas and border districts are disappearing. The way of speech, people's life styles, manners and customs are all urbanized now. Local cultures are gradually fading out. I hear the languages of minorities are on the rapid decrease. This means that their cultures are going to ruin and that modern civilization has disregarded or excluded heterogeneous cultures, cultures of anomalous unusual style, or has transformed, deformed and assimilated them. Within European history, for example, the Jews "are experienced as a sort of disease, and anomaly" ( CV,p.20 ). The spirit of this civilization which has been led by the idea of equality and fairness came to be alien and uncongenial to the author of "*Culture and Value*" and to ourselves, too, because of blindness to the true worth and values, of the uncommon, of the extraordinary and of even the abnormal.

1-2 It comes into question that the Enlightenment, namely, belief in human intelligence has been reflected in a project of conquering nature, which was combined with a desire and a will for supernatural power and ability. The spirit of Western civilization has manifested itself in the making of machines. The machine symbolizes man's destructive sway over nature and the construction of something supernatural by man's hand. 'Constructive is destructive, destructive is constructive' in the modern world.

The development of information technology is the latest frontier of such modernized Western intelligence. And here, we must note that our modern culture is under the influence and under the rule of science and technology of such a character as to produce supernatural machines. The mechanization of culture has produced the world of virtual images and calculable commercialized value. And furthermore, we hear the voice of nihilism, 'Everything is empty. Everything is the same'. Is this a voice of people who have lost places for themselves to live their own lives in this mechanized world?

It is necessary to listen to Wittgenstein, saying, "A culture is like a big organization which assigns each of its members a place where he can work in the spirit of the whole" ( CV,p.6 ). But our civilization is operated by a group of specialists who profess the technique and the thought of mechanism. "Typically it constructs" ( CV,p.7 ). So our culture, whatever form it may take, can not but be composed of supernatural virtual images and naturally fall under the management and control of the information industry. Replicas and copies are taking the place of masterpieces and originals.

**1-3** Modern civilization started with the liberation of originality and the independence of personality. Intellectual activities of various kinds of brilliant talent were the source of cultural vitality, i.e. the power of producing new forms of culture. The birth of the fine arts and natural science ( new philosophy ) is a noticeable fact in particular.

But now, we can not help feeling that our civilization has lost its life and its propagating power, i.e. its vivid imaginations, plastic energies and magnificent thinking mind. We are having difficulties in the preservation of traditional culture. We often experience its complete ruin, with only its technique being preserved. "Perhaps one day this civilization will produce a culture" ( CV,p.64 ) tells the truth of our civilization. Human life in the present age is cut off from the past. The 'independence' of personality has changed its meaning and resulted in the 'isolation' of people and has turned out a cloud of lonely persons who collect replicas for their culture.

This also means that modern culture is of a character which by nature analyzes itself into its constituents, and takes them apart. This character is typical of modern science and art whose fields or territories become more and more specialized. The disconnection of one form of culture from another is also remarkable. A painter is not a sculptor and an architect is not a mathematician. The relation of modern civilization to the non-modernized foreign civilizations, and its connections with heterogeneous foreign cultures, are also issues to discuss. A civilization will produce a culture and will form itself only in the organic interrelationships with other ones. When isolated, it will lose its personality and will decline.

## 2. The Decline of Human Intelligence

The alienation of culture is the decline of human intelligence, which Wittgenstein views as "the bewitchment" "by means of language" ( CI,109 ). His philosophical struggle was to criticize language for breaking its spell, and tactics which he took were 1. to break up the metaphysical usage of language and 2. to examine the concepts that characterize too specialized modern science.

**2-1** The idea of the 'equality' of cultural values comes from "the power of language" or "the clothing of our language" which makes every thing look the same ( CV,p.22 / PI,II,p.224 ). But Wittgenstein puts a question to us : how to know that two people mean the same when each says he believes in God ( CV,p.85 ). It is possible that the disguised agreement of their words hides a difference between their religious conducts ( language-games ). There can be no doubt that we have rules to follow in our language-games. But this does not contradict the diversity of our acts and the fluidity of our cultural life. A language-game is never determined by a rule. We follow a rule "blindly", that is, according to "customs ( uses, institutions )" ( PI,219 / 199 ).

Western culture is shadowed by another illusion, i.e., "the concept of some ideal exactitude given a priori" ( CV,p.37 ). Guided by this, our intelligence says, "But still, it isn't a game, if there is some vagueness in the rules" ( PI,100 ), and looks for the boundaries of our language-games this time. But Wittgenstein asks about a blurred photograph of a person, "Isn't the indistinct one often exactly what we need ?" ( PI,71 ). Our problem lies in the forms of language inquiring into the 'essence'. We ask, "What is language ?", etc. It is questionable that the answer is to be given "once for all" and "independently of any future experience" ( PI,92 ).

**2-2** A typical intelligence in the modern ages is natural science, and its question is to find causal connections in empirical phenomena of nature. So the scientific study of humanity also cannot but be bound by an urge to search for causality, which often takes the conceptual form of 'historical regularity' or 'historical law' for the systematic explanation of various cultural forms and cultural transformation. As for this, Wittgenstein says, "There is nothing more stupid than the chatter about cause and effect in history books" ( CV,p.62 ). The concept of 'causal necessity' is accompanied by a belief that all the mystery of the universe will be ultimately solved. Everything must be calculated to be prophesied and human beings must be something treated as abstract material objects, too.

It also is stupid to combine the concept of 'progress' with morality and culture. But "our civilization is characterized by the word 'process'" ( CV,p.7 ). This concept is connected with the thought of the independence of science from unreasonable tradition.

And this thought has expanded into a strong conviction that man's artificial technological effort can change and reconstruct his life and the world. So the fact is that the progress of science is the progress of technology, which does not necessarily mean the progress of humanity. "The sort of technical improvement we see in cars" is not to be compared with the formation of an artistic style ( CV,p.3 ). In 1947 Wittgenstein writes, "It isn't absurd, e.g., to believe that the age of science and technology is the beginning of the end for humanity", and "the idea of great progress is a delusion" ( CV,p.56 ).

### **3. To Show the Way out of the Fly-bottle**

Our modern civilization has strayed off into the bottle of problems affecting its fate. The way out Wittgenstein attempted to show us was that of a change in the way of thinking, that is, a change in the way of life "which would make all these questions superfluous" ( CV,p.61 ).

**3-1** According to Wittgenstein's view, the examination of language-games is done by seeing and comparing their 'family resemblance'. This implies that linguistic and cultural phenomena "have no one thing in common" ( PI,65 ) and that we shall "also find a resemblance between members of different families" ( CV,p.14 ) as well as within a family, namely, that we can "throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities" ( PI,130 ). Conquering the flatness and uniformity of cultures and acquiring active productivity is dependent upon how connections are formed with the peculiar, the anomalous, and even the abnormal in domestic and foreign civilizations. It is negative moments that revive a culture.

Culture is man's activity which produces new expressions and values through the medium of the expression of something given in opposition to him and to his cultural environment. From another viewpoint, culture is a symbolic place where the given provokes an expression, i.e. where the other being which is seen in opposition excites a man's activity of expression. A new culture will be formed through the medium of symbolic encounters and interactions with what is heterogeneous. We can give a typical example, the Buddhist art at Gandahara that is the synthesis of the Hellenistic art and the Buddhism.

**3-2** A problem looks here to be forgotten : How is it possible to compare the beauty of a Gothic Cathedral with the beauty of a symphony by Beethoven for example? Wittgenstein's advice is that it is due to our misunderstanding of the use of the ideal that we expect some "preconceived idea to which reality must correspond" ( PI,131 ). When we give the ground, it, in the end, comes to "our acting which lies at the bottom of the language-game" ( OC,204 ). This problem of various meanings of values is concerned with various ways of our seeing and expressing values in order, namely, our way of

understanding the linguistic symbolical connections of values, i.e., cultures as the language-games. When the old way of thinking changes, the problem vanishes.

The understanding of culture consists in "arranging what we have always known" ( PI,109 ) and giving prominence to "distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily make us overlook" ( PI,132 ). We discover different kinds of connections of language-games, i.e., different styles or forms of cultures. We must note, here, that the discovery is the practice ; making new connections, creating the concept of these connections and producing the new way we look at things. It is not the finding of connections which always are there. "They do not exist until it makes them" ( RFM,III,31 ). This, however, does not mean that the real aim of cultural activities is to construct the building of virtual images. What is important is that we "*command a clear view*" of various types of language-games, and "represent all the interrelations" between them ( PI,122 / CV,p.12 ). Our civilization is lacking symbolically perspicuous views and expressions of all types of things and of interrelationships between them.

**3-3** The character of Japanese classic culture is suggestive to our discussion. We have the tea art or the tea ceremony established in 15th century, and its name and popularized forms are spread in the world today. I will note its original characteristics. It is composed of different fields of culture, which are integrated organically as a whole. Things to be arranged at the ceremony are a tea bowl which is a work of ceramic art, a hanging picture which is a masterpiece of Japanese classic painting, flower arranging which later develops to become an art and landscape which is symbolized by a Japanese-style garden.

Then, what on earth produces this aesthetic connection of the various forms of art ? Okamura Kakuzo, the author of "*The Book of Tea*" says, "All of the ideal of the tea ceremony came from the thought of *Zen*" ( Okakura1991,p.68 ). Every form of culture and aesthetic value is based on *Zen*, and morality and forms of ordinary life of people are also under the influence of this sect of Buddhism, which is originated in the Taoism and the Indian Buddhism. The tea ceremony shows typically that culture can be formed only in the network of symbolically complicated connections.

The tea ceremony proves and justifies that "thinking is not an incorporeal process which lends life and sense to speaking" ( PI,339 ). Its soul and spirit consists in the practice of ethical thought and the training of its mystic and aesthetic bodily forms, which are expressed by the way of walking, talk manners, and occasionally the way of going to the other world like Sen no Rikyu, who accomplished this ceremony.

The tea ceremony, I hear, offered the place to hold a dialogue peacefully or to interchange questions and answers with works of master artists and even with nature.



Wittgenstein says, "Remember the impression one gets from good architecture, that it expresses a thought. It makes one want to respond with a gesture" ( CV,p.22 ). It was in the civil war era preceding the peaceful Edo era that this graceful aesthetic style of ceremony was formed and refined.

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# In Conversation With Other Cultures

Joaquín Jareño

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This paper tries to analyse the critique Wittgenstein does of James G. Frazer, in order to point at some differences between explanation and interpretation, indicating what the Wittgensteinian point of view consists of and which are the criteria sustaining it.

With James Frazer anthropology can be considered as a science in the positivistic tradition. His works on culture show his interest to explain the phenomena characterising peoples' behaviour, intending to clarify the *enigmas* appearing in the different manifestations of such conduct. In his explanations, Frazer puts magic and religion as mere moments of human development surpassed by the scientific interpretation of reality. In this sense, their contributions can be said to lack importance. Wittgenstein's reaction against this view is radical. The symbolic and expressive character of human behaviour has a value Frazer was unable to understand while trying to explain it. According to Wittgenstein, the explanations he provides for customs do not really grasp their meaning.

Frazer's exposition of *primitive* cultures, though respectful<sup>1</sup>, maintains a strong intellectual distance with such cultures, and in his work *The Golden Bough* he tries to analyse what he thinks a fragment of cultural *evolution* is. The fact that he speaks of cultural evolution shows the relation Frazer has with his object of study. Thus, he supposed that those formulations coming from magic and religion were but hypotheses, justifiable when they were posited, but inadequate in contrast with later evidence.

How should we understand *error* in anthropology? To what extent is a custom wrong? Is the study of cultures something merely descriptive? How must we carry out such a study to be sure that we have achieved an adequate understanding of them? These are some questions relevant for anthropology as a specific discipline. In a sense, the possibility for anthropology to be considered as a science depends on them. It is Wittgenstein himself who accuses Frazer to attempt the understanding of cultures from prejudices of his own culture. Without taking them into account he tries to value the results he achieves with his study. To what extent can we criticize Frazer's view? It is common place in contemporary anthropology to stress the importance of minimizing the anthropologist's own categories to start an intended objective analysis. What must realise this objectivity is unreachable, but the only way to rigorously understand a different culture seems to avoid these particular prejudices of the culture we depart from.

This modifies the perception of the object, given that the understanding of it must be achieved in the very terms the original culture produces them. In this sense, to speak of *error* is something superfluous. Nevertheless, we have the problem to justify if we have actually understood anything.

Frazer tries to discover the laws and generalizations subjacent to the *primitive* comprehension of reality. He assimilates magic to intended science, and thinks there is continuity in the human intentions when individuals are introduced in those processes to understand their social and ecological medium. Only by accepting such continuity the anthropologist can attempt to deal with his/her object of study as Frazer does. He tries to discover the logic and coherence inner to customs and traditions. His aim is doing science, and he leaves apart the importance of the expressive meaning of the customs he studies. This allows him to speak of categorial "errors" in that model of logic proper to *primitive* individuals. Frazer realises there is bad understanding of how the laws of nature work and that there is use of wrong methodology in magic processes: dancing and offering sacrifices to obtain rain, for instance. This can be one of the big differences between the *civilized* individual and the *primitive* one.

Wittgenstein's rejection of Frazer's point of view can be understood when he stresses the symbolic character of human beings. It is possible that at the basis of customs there exists a wrong association while trying to deal with reality. Nevertheless, what is important is the reaction/answer the human being has when facing those events of his/her life. Such answer shows the perception the individual has of the different processes in relation with life, death, birth, etc. Therefore, studying the coherence of such reactions or searching for that logic subjacent to their expressions to systematise it is something superfluous. The presumable relation between the theoretical basis of customs and how it is developed, lacks specific value when interpreting individual's behaviour in cultures different from ours. The important thing is the symbolic satisfaction appearing in such conducts. In a sense, it is our duty to place such satisfaction within the context where it is produced. This is the only way to give the real value and expressivity it has.

What we wonder is if this is the best way to understand a culture which is, in principle, alien to us. If this is equal to mere description, we can ask to what extent we have reached a fruitful interpretation of such culture. Wittgenstein's initial intention seems to be this: to leave things as they are when we face those individuals object of our study involved in their symbolic processes. The problem is if there can be description without interpretation of any kind. Due to the fact that no interpretive process is given on a vacuum, we are obliged to accept the necessity of departing from any point in order to achieve comprehension of that object we are trying to deal with. At the same time,

description -though it could be understood as narration- is not given by itself, that is, it needs any sort of comprehension of what it is being narrated in order to be developed.

For Wittgenstein, explanation in Frazer's sense is something to show the rational processes guiding those individuals whose customs we are dealing with. While basing explanation in such kind of exigencies, we indeed become more and more separated from what we are intending to understand. This categorial separation does not help us to give an account of such customs. According to Wittgenstein, Frazer does not realise that many of the processes where anthropologist or natives get involved are similar. Here it is important to consider that the human *form of life*, being the same, can produce different symbolic contexts. The difficulty is on stating that such contexts can achieve meaningful coherence by themselves, that is, autonomously. Just as Wittgenstein says, perspectives are meaningful insofar as they are such for those individuals sustaining them. If this is so, we are facing an enormous obstacle for anthropology. We are tempted to say that no understanding is possible.

There is a problem as if there exists *authentic* meaning. The simplest answer is to say that the meaning of a custom is the meaning those participants in that tradition give to it. But this places theoretical anthropology in a difficult position: what is, in this case, epistemologically possible?

As it has been stressed<sup>2</sup>, it could be that our formulations of symbols from different peoples must be actor-oriented. This could be the best way to preserve their meaning. But if this is taken to an extreme point, analysing a culture is just leaving it as it is. In this case, we have to explain if we have done any sort of analysis or achieved comprehension. The result of it must be, in principle, the estimation of cultural manifestations just as they are produced. How can the anthropologist grasp the real meaning? Does it exist any possibility to discover the ideas within customs without being modified by researcher's contributions? When Geertz speaks of intending a conversation with those individuals object of study, he tries to place meaning in its context in order to know how every culture gives sense to behaviour: "we are not (...) seeking either to become natives or to mimic them. We are seeking, in the widened sense of the term in which it encompasses very much more than talk, to converse with them, a matter a great deal more difficult, and not only with strangers, that is commonly recognized"<sup>3</sup>. Such *conversation* should allow us to get into a cultural context different from ours, just because meaning is something public. This is what leads to reconstruct other ways of expression, other symbolic systems by means of sorting out the structures of signification and determining their social ground and import.

Nevertheless, there are many difficulties we have to take into account when we try to carry out such a task. One of the most relevant is what Villard Quine posits in his

thesis of the *indeterminacy of translation*. According to Quine, we are at best providing hypotheses whose accordance with empirical evidence does not say anything definitive about it. In spite of it, it is the very view Wittgenstein has on this topic what shows us a way to dialogue with other cultures. It is possible to converse without setting the understanding in the intellectual *arrogance* of he/she who begins the conversation, namely, the anthropologist. We start with our own interpretations in order to get to the interpretations actors do of their own performances. We leave apart hypotheses the way Frazer used them, to give way to comprehending the symbolism actor themselves use in their conducts. Then, we cannot say there exists any sort of *error*. The explanation of customs goes together with the centrality of the symbols used, whose understanding is what really helps us to clarify the whole process.

To carry out this task we need to leave apart any temptation in relation with relativistic proposals. That is, we can only try to *converse* with other cultures if we admit that there exist ways that make such conversation be possible. The analysis of customs and traditions is in close dependence with the existence of a basic communion between the elements by means of which meaning is codified. As we pointed out, any interpretive analysis has to start from something. This does not mean that the interpreter necessary imposes his/her conceptual scheme. However, if interpretation has no foundations, it is not possible, and the *conversation* cannot begin. In anthropology there is no description that is not mixed with interpretive elements, that is, there is no pure description as pure account of facts. To place facts in a specific way is just to make a projection of our interpretive instruments. Nevertheless, we cannot derive from it that the analysis is unavoidably prejudiced: it is the only way to provide it.

In his criticism of Frazer, Wittgenstein reveals the *forgetfulness* of that author when he does not realise the enormous affinity between the anthropologist and the *savage*. The reactions characterising many of the conducts of the latter are based on a background similar to both of them. The mistake of anthropologists like Frazer is not acknowledging the many similar elements between them, carrying out a misleading comprehension of what the behaviour under study actually is. Explanation is only one of the many ways to join data and, in the case of Frazer, he does not take into account the importance of the symbolism and expressiveness of those elements characterizing such union of data. This symbolism is not alien to the different cultures, though it can be expressed in different ways. As Wittgenstein himself states, it is true that in our language there is a whole mythology, but it does not follow from it that the, so to speak, different mythologies particular to every culture are in absolute separation each other or are incommensurable. Conversing with other culture and interpreting it in the conditions it develops and manifests, is only possible if the different mythologies share similar reactions and symbolic elements: "I wish to say: nothing shows our kinship to those

savages better than the fact that Frazer has at hand a word as familiar to us as "ghost" or "shade" to describe the way these people look at things (...). What is queer in this is not limited to the expressions "ghost" and "shade", and too little is made of the fact that we include the words "soul" and "spirit" in our civilized vocabulary"<sup>4</sup>.

We can make other cultures understandable to us if we follow this way to approach them. Our form of life -characterised by language- is the same for us all. This idea plays a central role in the whole process. Only if we take this into account can we think of dialoguing with other cultures without much fear to our prejudices, given that our interpretation is rooted in those elements suitable for meaning interchange and transfer. Wittgenstein himself puts it clearly in his well known paragraph 206 of *Philosophical Investigations*: "Suppose you come as an explorer into an unknown country with a language quite strange to you. In what circumstances would you say that the people there gave orders, understood them, obeyed them, rebelled against them, and so on? The common behaviour of mankind is the system of reference by means of which we interpret an unknown language"<sup>5</sup>.

So, we can even surpass those limitations that seem to appear in the analysis Wittgenstein makes of the relations between certainties and action in his work *On Certainty*. The fact that words acquire their meaning by means of their use in the context where they appear (that meaning has a social character) does not obstruct communication. It is not that we have to convince others. Rather, we want to get into the way other contexts perform meaning. This task is not impossible, due to the dispositions proper of the characteristic human form of life, as well as the acceptance of its many ways of expression. This is what allows Wittgenstein to reduce the distance Frazer has established between him and the *primitive*, and start a *conversation* in terms of equality in spite of the many limitations imposed by the different ways to achieve information.

## Endnotes

- 1 Cf. *La Rama Dorada*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Madrid 1984, p.312.
- 2 Cf. C.Geertz: *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 1973, p.14.
- 3 Cf. *Ibid.*, p.13.
- 4 L.Wittgenstein: *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*, Brynmill Press, Doncaster 1987, p.8e.
- 5 Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1984.

# Wittgenstein's Method

Charles W. Johnson

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Kant once remarked that a conversation between two philosophers reminded him of one person holding a sieve while the other attempted to milk a he-goat. Wittgenstein said that he wanted to put an end to sieve holding and he-goat milking. Yet, it continues. Wittgenstein's method was designed to stop such futile activity. Wittgenstein said, following a paper at the Moral Sciences Club at Cambridge, "This sort of thing has got to be stopped. Bad philosophers are like slum landlords. It's my job to put them out of business." (2, p. 69) However, Wittgenstein's method is seldom used in academic philosophy. The slum landlords have continued in business as usual. Indeed, few of his own acolytes have used his method. Why is this the case? To answer this question we must briefly review his method and then consider some causes for its lack of employment.

No matter how successful or unsuccessful Wittgenstein was with respect to his results, the important thing, he insisted, was that a method had been found. (2, p. 44 and 11, p. 21) His method was comparable to a Copernican revolution. As he put it, the method's discovery was analogous to chemistry emerging from alchemy. The method involves a kind of thinking very different from what is present in the sciences. It is neither a method of justification nor a method of discovery. Rather it is intended to obtain a new way of seeing, a new perception, a new perspective. This new way of seeing involves the removal of distortions that are imposed upon us by our grammatical misconceptions. In this respect, Wittgenstein did not want to construct new and better eyeglasses for us. Rather he wanted to remove the eyeglasses that we are already wearing, the eyeglasses that produce distortions. (9, §103 and 3, p. 34)

Wittgenstein cited at least two sources for our confusions and false prisons. They are substantives and language when it is idling. Regarding substantives, we fall into the habit of talking about some things as though they were objects. We talk about being in pain and being in a room. We talk about having a toothache and having a brick. This can easily lead us to suppose that pains are objects like rooms, and toothaches are objects in the same way bricks are. This may further lead us to ask questions about the purported properties and characteristics of these illusory objects, even though the "objects" are grammatical fictions.

Secondly, confusion occurs when language is idling. Philosophers are often obsessed with definitions, names, and the referential theory of meaning. They presuppose that language is fixed and rigid. They try to formulate universal definitions. While it is meaningful to talk about good pizzas and good backstrokes, it is not meaningful to talk about good in itself. Good in itself is an idling word that is not doing work. It is the active use of words in actual conversation that give them their life and their meaning. Just as you cannot easily tell what a machine can do by watching it when it is idling, you also cannot determine the meaning of an idling word. Since language is a rule governed *activity*, a word without a use is a word without a meaning. An idling, useless word is also meaningless.

If, by some natural means a word such as 'haruspex' came to be etched on a rock on the surface of Neptune, the scratches on the rock would not mean anything. If some future astronauts come across the rock and understand the etchings as a word, then they recognize its potential use. The scratches on the rock were not sitting there meaning anything [humming with meaning] during all the interminable eons that they reposed on Neptune undisturbed and undiscovered.

Wittgenstein's method must begin with sincere puzzlement. Our puzzlement is sincere only if we genuinely want to escape from it. For example, we are puzzled about the concept of "time," because we are accustomed to speak and think of time using spatial metaphors. We talk about being in time, having time, and time passing. Our grammatical and conceptual habits lead us to take these metaphors literally. When we do so, we sink into confusion. If we enjoy puzzling about time, we will not be inclined to get out of the confusions in which we are mired.

The method gives us an overview (*Übersicht*) of a portion of language. We obtain an overview by looking at many examples of specific word uses in context. When an overview is successful, we can perceive connections between the examples. This enables us to understand the concepts that puzzle us. He called the assembled examples "reminders." (9, §127) Reminders are familiar, once we have been made aware of them. (9, §129) We feel foolish for not having seen them earlier. The aspects of things that are most important to us seem hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. "(We are unable to notice something ?? because it is always before our eyes.) . . . we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful." (9, §129)

Apprehending a reminder and its relevance is like being in the dark and then, suddenly, being brutally forced into a fully illuminated room. The reminders are interconnected in many significant ways. We must pay close attention to how they are related to one another, if we want to understand the point of presenting them. The



connections are the important things, not the reminders themselves. If successful, the assembled reminders will produce a "sudden understanding." Gasking and Jackson described the experience:

At first one didn't see where all the talk was leading to. One didn't see, or saw only very vaguely, the point of the numerous examples. And then, sometimes, one did suddenly. All at once, sometimes the solution to one's problem became clear and everything fell into place. (2, pg. 52.)

Wittgenstein's method does not provide simple solutions; indeed, there are no solutions at all, if by 'solution' you mean the conclusion to an argument. Strictly speaking, there are only *resolutions*. A resolution cannot readily and rapidly be articulated to someone who has not gone through the protracted process of assembling reminders and has not perceived their connections. Yet, for those who have been through the process:

The solution, once seen, seemed so simple and obvious, such an inevitable and simple key to unlock so many doors so long battered against in vain. One wondered how one could possibly fail to see it. But if one tried to explain it to someone else who had not seen it one couldn't get it across without going through the whole long story. (2, pg. 52.)

The assembling of reminders is for a particular purpose. (9, §127) Its purpose is to enable anyone perplexed by a philosophical confusion to find relief. Relief comes from an insight generated by an *Übersicht* of the troublesome portion of language. The method does not involve argumentation or the construction of theories. Theories get us into trouble. They prevent us from stopping doing philosophy when we want to. It is characteristic of the history of traditional philosophy that new theories generate new questions and new problems. A philosophical problem is like an intricately tangled rope. Our task, as philosophers, is to untangle the knot. To do this, we must take the rope through all the twists and turns that got it tangled in the first place. This is an enormously complex procedure requiring considerable patience. The result, however, is not a new and better knot, but no knot at all. Using Wittgenstein's method we resolve philosophical problems, not solve them by theorization. We finally come to the realization that the riddle that perplexed us does not exist. At this point we can stop doing philosophy.

Why is it that Wittgenstein's method is so seldom used in contemporary academic philosophy? Professional, academic philosophers apparently do not feel the need for the cure that it provides. They may be so wrapped up in their confusions that they do not recognize the need. Just as a fish may be among the last to realize the existence of water, philosophers may not realize that they are immersed in grammatical

confusions. After all, it seems to them that they are making sense when they carry on their metaphysical conversations. *Seeming* can be both deceptive and compelling. The fact that, when metaphysicians speak among themselves it seems to them that they are making sense proves nothing. We must remember the difference between it seeming to us that we are correct and actually being correct. *Seeming* is not a viable criterion for meaningfulness or correctness. "It seemed to me at the time that I was right" typically implies that I was not right. (Cf. 9, §202 & 256.)

One reason for resistance to Wittgenstein's method is that unlike the methods of traditional philosophy, there is no guarantee of success. A person can be given an overview of a portion of language and still not detect the patterns, just as a person can view the drawing of the duck-rabbit and not see the duck. There is no guarantee that the method will enable an individual to detect the patterns or see the duck. George A. Paul noted:

And there is no method for "*being struck by*" one fact rather than another. Yet no matter how much detail about a use we may methodically assemble, we may, and commonly do, "fail to be struck by what, once seen, is *most* striking and most powerful." The fly in the fly-bottle may countless times eye the way out - and not be particularly struck by it. (2, p.130)

This is one respect in which Wittgenstein's method differs from the traditional "scientific" style methods. Certainly it differs from algorithms in logic or mathematics where success is assured in some finite number of steps. No doubt, there are many people who attended Wittgenstein's lectures, and many more who read his books, who have not detected the connections between his examples or even the point of presenting them.

Yet another reason for resistance to Wittgenstein's method is the lack of sincere puzzlement in academic philosophy, where 'sincere' is the operant term. It is difficult to assess why the puzzlement in academic philosophy is not sincere. One reason may be that academic philosophers simply enjoy Socratic debate. Wittgenstein provided warnings about this. Once Malcolm made an unguarded remark concerning the stereotypical German character. Wittgenstein became very angry with him. Subsequently he wrote in a letter that, if all that the study of philosophy does for you is enable you to speak cleverly about some arcane topics in logic, then it is not worth doing. If it does not help you live your life better and in a more orderly manner, if it does not help you find your way about, then it is a useless enterprise.

An additional symptom of this lack of sincerity is what Quine called "refusal to understand." Oftentimes I have encountered academic philosophers who had this

disease - Quine's disease. It seems as though they regard philosophical conversations as competitions to be won or lost. Their intent is not to accomplish something but to display their own cleverness through logical gymnastics. It is vitally important to them to disagree with all other philosophers.

Wittgenstein's reminder method resulted from the fact that he had no patience for people who in ordinary conversation displayed clear understanding of the meanings of words, yet when they sat down to do philosophy pretended that they no longer understood. We have all witnessed people speaking freely, easily, and without hesitation about good persons, good pizzas, and good ideas. Yet, when they engage in philosophical discourse concerning ethics, they pretend to no longer understand what 'good' means. It seems as though they have suddenly forgotten the meaning of the word. This is cultivated, contrived amnesia. In ordinary circumstances we understand perfectly well what 'good', 'virtue', and 'freedom' mean, but when we set about doing philosophy we pretend to no longer remember. Wittgenstein's reminders are intended to encourage us to remember what we already know, but for some reason, have artificially forgotten.

Perhaps another reason for resistance to Wittgenstein's method is the attractiveness of mystery, depth, and profundity that draws some people into academic philosophy. Such people might look at the patterns of actual usage of the word 'good' in real, mundane conversation and insist that there must be something more to the concept than this. These people are attempting to go beyond the limits of language, to say things that are unsayable. It takes a bit of discipline to come to the end of language and stop speaking. Wittgenstein noted in *On Certainty*:

471. It is so difficult to find the beginning. Or, better: it is difficult to begin at the beginning. And not try to go further back.

Both language and Wittgenstein's method are activities. Using his method we can clarify patterns of uses by coming to the point that we can detect them. Perspicuity will change our perceptions and our attitudes. If we can finally apprehend the sources of our confusion by examining examples of usage patterns in actual conversation, then we will have achieved the insight that will put our puzzlements to rest. We can then stop doing philosophy. We can prevent futile he-goat milking and not become he-goat milkers or sieve-holders ourselves.

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## Endnote

Perhaps an important reason why Wittgenstein's method is not often used in academic philosophy is that we are held captive by our grammatical habits. We are held captive in prisons of our own design (Jim Morrison's phrase). Wittgenstein likened this to a person beating futilely against a series of false doors not realizing that a perfectly workable, open door was available to him all the while. Wittgenstein's methodological therapy attempted to turn the puzzled person around, get him to look in a new direction, and realize that there is a route for escape that was readily available to him all the while.

# On The Nature Of Wittgenstein's Revolutions Of Philosophy

Alexander Kanev

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In this paper, I shall try to shed light on the revolutions Wittgenstein participated in by comparing them with the philosophical revolutions initiated by Descartes and Kant. I shall argue that the role Wittgenstein played in the development of the philosophy of language is analogous to the role played both by Descartes and Kant in the development of epistemology. Finally, I shall briefly explain why the most important shifts in philosophy concern the relations between language, mind, and reality, and why they can be of two essentially different kinds.

In order to understand what is essential to Descartes' revolution, one has to answer two questions:

- (1) What preserves Descartes from the philosophical tradition he inherits?
- (2) In what respects does he transform it?

I think, it is out of doubt that Descartes maintains the fundamental principles of metaphysics from Plato to St. Thomas. These are:

- (1) Human mind is capable of cognizing the objective reality.
- (2) Reason is capable of extending knowledge beyond the bounds of experience.
- (3) Language serves as a means for representing the pre-linguistic reality.
- (4) Words have for their meaning entities that are associated with them by virtue of mental acts.

In assenting to or arguing for these principles in his philosophical writings, Descartes continues to pursue the programme of metaphysics and respectively its paramount goal: to be a science of the ultimate structure of reality. This indicates that Descartes' revolution does not amount to paradigm shift, since it neither transforms the basic principles of metaphysics nor does it change its programmatic goals. What alters Descartes is precisely the method of their achieving. Hence, his revolution is of methodological nature. Notably, its centerpiece concerns the shift toward the subject of knowledge. Human mind turns out to be the central subject of philosophy, but this does

not go against the programme of metaphysics, for the shift is undertaken by Descartes in order to provide a defense of its (epistemological) principles.

Let me now turn to Kant's revolution in philosophy. Its most characteristic feature is precisely the rejection of the metaphysical principles governing the relation between mind and reality. For Kant, mind is not capable of representing the reality in itself, and reason is not in a position to extend knowledge beyond the bounds of experience. Therefore, the programme of classical metaphysics must be abandoned-philosophy cannot be a science of the objective reality. This shows that compared to Descartes' turn in philosophy Kant's revolution is of completely different character. Kant delineates a new philosophical programme and ascribes a new role to philosophy. Therefore, his revolution is not of methodological nature. Rather, it amounts to paradigm shift since it transforms the basic principles and then the fundamental goals of philosophical activity. As regards to the positive features of Kant's programme, it is worth noting that it preserves the metaphysical principles governing the relation between language and reality. More importantly, however, it maintains the metaphysical striving for certainty in knowledge and thus Descartes' foundationalistic endeavour. All these features of Kant's philosophical programme are also shared by the project of reductionistic empiricism. Its proponents also dismiss the first two principles of classical metaphysics as stated above, and also maintain Descartes' foundationalistic project. This indicates that transcendentalism and reductionistic empiricism are respectively the aprioristic and the empiricistic offsprings of one and the same fundamental view of the relations between language, mind, and reality. Having this in mind, it would be perhaps more appropriate to speak of a Humean-Kantian revolution rather than only of a Kantian one.<sup>1</sup>

Now it is a characteristic feature of Kant's method of setting limits to thought that it turns on the investigation of the structure of human mind and its cognitive abilities. Thus it faced the danger to depend on philosophically dubious psychological considerations and the danger became even greater with the development of psychology as an independent empirical science. The expansion of the psychologistic account of logic and cognition made it clear that another method of delineating the limits of thought and clarifying the essence of scientific knowledge should be found, at that a method that, in preserving the spirit of foundationalistic epistemology, does not lead into relativism and skepticism. To some extent this challenge was met in the writings of Frege, Husserl and Russell, but it was Wittgenstein who promoted the new methodological turn in philosophy. In the preface to the *Tractatus*, he specifies his attitude to philosophical tradition in three points. First, in stating that the fundamental goal of the book is to draw limits to thought, Wittgenstein maintains the most essential part to Kant's programme. Then he explains why Kant's method of achieving it is inadequate. And finally, he announces his new method of setting limits to thought, introducing thereby the linguistic

turn in philosophy. Thereafter, my thesis is that the revolution the early Wittgenstein participates in is of methodological nature. My reasons run as follows.

My first point is that Wittgenstein's *Lebenswerk* not only does not transform the metaphysical principles governing the relation between language and reality, it even provides strong defense for them. The early Wittgenstein shares the traditional view that the major function of language is to represent reality and that words have for their meaning entities. He also maintains the conviction that it is possible to speak absolutely clear and unambiguously about the world. Thus, it would be a bad mistake to present his *Tractatus* as introducing a revolutionary view of the relation between language and reality. It would be an even worse mistake to interpret it as breaking with the established tradition of considering the relation between mind and reality. For Wittgenstein is not a metaphysical realist. He stands by the Humean-Kantian view that one can cognise only what is given in her experience and that what is given there does not exist in itself. As Peter Hacker has put it, Wittgenstein is both empirical realist and transcendental solipsist. So there is no paradigm shift here. Neither in the view of the relation between language and reality, nor in the view of the relation between mind and reality.

My second point concerns the relation between Wittgenstein's early philosophy and the epistemological principles on which both reductionistic empiricism and transcendentalism rest. In my lights, the *Tractatus* makes out a powerful case for perhaps the most fundamental principle of both traditions that knowledge of reality cannot be extended in a purely logical way and thus beyond the bounds of experience. All propositions that are true on purely logical grounds are (materially) tautological and, therefore, do not contribute to our knowledge of reality. Wittgenstein accepts also the principle that scientific knowledge turns on the possibility of immediate acquaintance with the objects we cognise. This in turn sustains his holding on to the epistemological atomism of tradition, according to which there is a body of basic empirical propositions that, being not dependent for their meaning on any hypothetical constructions, can serve as a neutral basis for the building and verifying of scientific theories. The early Wittgenstein further espouses the empiricistic principle that there cannot be any a priori synthetic propositions. But his conception embodies also the transcendental principle that there can be a priori synthetic truths, that is, truths about non-logical necessities. Clearly, the unassailable truths he speaks of in the preface to the *Tractatus* are for him non-empirical truths about the necessary relations between language, mind, and reality. These, however, cannot be expressed by meaningful propositions; they can only be shown. Thus the doctrine of what can be meaningfully said maintains the tradition of empiricism, while the conception of what can be only shown embodies some fundamental features of transcendentalism.

My third point concerns the impact of the *Tractatus* upon the philosophy of logical positivism. This is of crucial importance here, because Wittgenstein's linguistic turn reveals its nature in the way it influences the subsequent development of philosophy. In my lights, the initial programme of Vienna circle, as stated in its manifesto, retains rather than repudiates, the programme of reductionistic empiricism. It seems to me that the essential change it promotes is of methodological nature. The programme of logical positivism invokes the revolutionary logical achievements of Frege and Russell and, taking into account Wittgenstein's linguistic turn, focuses upon the analysis of language rather than upon human mind and its cognitive abilities. This, however, does not imply that it breaks with the principles of the empiricism it inherits. Rather, it endorses a new methodology of their carrying out in philosophy.

All this indicates that the turn Wittgenstein advances in his *Tractatus* is analogous to Descartes' revolution in philosophy. The shift toward the subject of knowledge and the turn toward language do not dismiss the underlying *principles* of the traditions they revolutionize. For what is revolutionised there is the methodology of *their* carrying out in philosophy.

Let me now turn to the second revolution Wittgenstein participates in. His *Philosophical Investigations* renounces the fundamental principles of the understanding of language, which have dominated Western philosophy since Plato. According to the later Wittgenstein, words haven't for their meaning entities, sentences do not describe a reality (logically) prior to linguistic practice, and mental activity is not a sufficient condition for meaningful speaking. In making out a powerful case for these points, Wittgenstein does attack not only the traditional view of language, but also-and above all-the underlying principles both of classical metaphysics and foundationalistic epistemology. Thus the epistemological programmes characterizing the development of philosophy since Descartes turn out to be founded on illusory views. The holistic, antiessentialistic view of meaning and knowledge, which the later Wittgenstein argues for, implies that all foundationalistic attempts to put science on an unshakable, a-historical basis are doomed to failure from the very start. Instead he advances a new, holistic paradigm of considering the relations between language, mind, and reality that dismiss both metaphysical and semantic realism, the former being grounded on the latter.<sup>2</sup> In this respect his revolution is analogous to that of Kant. As Kant comes to the conclusion that the objects of knowledge cannot be entities, primary and independent in relation to the subject of knowledge, so the later Wittgenstein argues for the view that words cannot have for their meaning entities that are primary and independent in relation to linguistic practice. Clearly, their revolutions are not of methodological nature since they transform the underlying principles of the traditions they concern. Rather, they are paradigmatic revolutions, radical shifts towards entirely new understanding of the subject.



In the concluding part of this paper, I'd like to raise two important questions and to sketch briefly my answers to them. Firstly, Is it a matter of accident that the most important shifts in philosophy concern the views of the relations between language, mind and reality? My understanding is that the answer should be "No", for the views in question constitute the very ground of philosophical activity. In determining what is (un-)achievable in philosophy, they determine its proper tasks and its real subject. For example, before the revolutionary writings of Hume and Kant, the majority of philosophers were convinced that human mind is capable of representing the structure of the objective reality; accordingly, they regarded the subject of metaphysics as central to philosophy. After their writings, however, they gradually abandoned this view and began to consider the subject of philosophy in a rather different way. The same holds for the writings of Wittgenstein and Heidegger.

The second question is: Why are there just two kinds of revolutions in philosophy: methodological and paradigmatic? In order to provide a brief answer to it, I shall assume that by their nature the relations between language, mind, and reality can be of two kinds: representational and non-representational. They are of the first kind if the vehicle of representation (language or thought) reveals its object as it exists independently of it; otherwise they are non-representational. In the ages dominated by representationistic views, the efforts of philosophers might be directed toward different targets. If they consider the possibility of representation as self-evident, then the central subject of their interest is the object of representation. However, gradually the possibility of representation might become problematic, and, therefore, the vehicle of representation might turn out to be the central subject of philosophical investigation. This shift in philosophical interest might appear so radical that it could be taken for a paradigmatic revolution in philosophy. And precisely this mistake, I think, make Habermas and Dummett when they consider Descartes and Frege (or the early Wittgenstein) founders of new paradigms in philosophy. They, however, found only new methods of legitimising the already established paradigms.

Recapturing the great shifts in philosophy, Wittgenstein proves to be the only philosopher in the history of the subject who plays a major role in two revolutions. By introducing the linguistic turn, his *Tractatus* marks a methodological break with philosophical tradition, whereas by arguing for an anti-essentialistic, holistic view of meaning and knowledge, his later work contributes to establishing of a new philosophical paradigm.

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## Endnotes

- 1 It is worth noting here that a very influential counter-revolution took place against the one initiated by Hume and Kant. In developing dialectics as the proper method of philosophising, Schelling and Hegel tried to defend the basic principles of metaphysics and thus to pursue further its programmatic goals. The role of dialectical method was to show that pure thought isn't (cognitively) impotent, as Hume and Kant have it, but is capable of capturing the essence of the world as it is in itself. Thus their dialectical counter-revolution was at the same time the second methodological revolution within metaphysical paradigm. The post-Hegelian development of philosophy, however, shows that the majority of philosophers have considered it unsuccessful.
- 2 Of course, the shift towards antiessentialistic holism is not only due to Wittgenstein's work or to that of Quine and his pupil Davidson. It is advanced also in the hermeneutical conceptions of Heidegger and Gadamer who develop the anti-naturalistic offspring of the current paradigm and is maintained further in the poststructuralist writings of J. Derrida. For a strong case for this point see Rorty (Rorty 1991, 50-65).

# The New Wittgenstein: Some Critical Remarks

Edward Kanterian

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## 1. Introduction

The recently published collection of essays *The New Wittgenstein* advances a novel and provocative interpretation of Wittgenstein's work.<sup>1</sup> The aim of my paper<sup>2</sup> is a critical discussion of the Tractatus strand of this interpretation, with the main focus being put on Cora Diamond's article 'Ethics, Imagination and the Method of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*'. A very brief summary runs as follows<sup>3</sup>: the *Tractatus* is not, as the traditional view claims, a collection of philosophical claims about the metaphysical essence of world and language. Wittgenstein knew very well that philosophy is an illusion and that its statements are pure, not illuminating nonsense (as the traditional view claims), since they are based on the chimerical conviction that we can view the world from an 'external point of view'. But a sophisticated therapy can free us from this illusion and the *Tractatus* offers an example for it. The book has a twofold structure: it is divided in the *frame* and the *body*. The frame consists of the preface and the concluding remarks (6.53-7) and the body is the rest, the text in-between. The frame defines the whole aim and meaning of the body as plain nonsense. In order to realize this the reader has to go through the book, experience the illusionary character of its philosophical statements and thus understand the utter nonsensicality of the Tractatus propositions, which are mere illustrations of philosophical nonsense. In other words: Wittgenstein is playing a twisted game with us. He pretends to be a traditional metaphysician, but by 'framing' his propositions he actually demonstrates that one cannot be one. We are freed from philosophy if we experience its nonsensicality, if we play the same game by *pretending* to read nonsense as sense, i.e. by *realising* that it actually is nonsense.

## 2. Discussion

My discussion will deal with both aspects of the new interpretation, Diamond's hermeneutics and her notion of nonsense.

### 2.1 Hermeneutics

1. First, it should be acknowledged that Wittgenstein never mentioned anything about the game he allegedly played in the *Tractatus* and that he did think to have advanced metaphysical claims such as the saying/showing distinction. Peter

Hacker has demonstrated this convincingly in his article "Was he trying to whistle it?"<sup>4</sup>

2. A careful reading of the preface and the last remarks fails to find support for the existence of the frame/body distinction. In the preface, which is not supposed to be twisted, it is clearly stated that one value of the book is that *thoughts* are expressed in it and also that their *truth* is unassailable. We should read the preface as what it is: a perfectly ordinary foreword which gives an overview of the book, anticipates some of its results and defines its aim and character. When Wittgenstein says that the *Tractatus* is not a textbook, this does not mean anything obscure, but just the fact that the book is to be taken as a condensed collection of theses and chapter titles rather than as an introduction for beginners or a complete monograph which spells out all connections and implications between those theses.
3. To count remarks 6.53-7 as part of the frame, but no previous sentence looks like an ad hoc decision, since they *do* result from the previous remarks, the discussion of the mystical, the ethical, solipsism, the nature of world and language, in short - from the whole *Tractatus* doctrine. Also, in her discussion of why propositions containing formal concepts are nonsense, Diamond relies not on what is defined in the frame, but actually on Wittgenstein's treatment of formal concepts in 4.126-4.1272 and on 5.473-5.4733. So these remarks are then not twisted either. But of course, they occur in the middle of the book ('the body') and as such are logically embedded in the rest of the text and make up a part of the picture drawn by the *Tractatus*. If they are meaningful (not twisted) in the sense in which the frame is, so is the rest of the *Tractatus*, whose interrelated doctrines are all supposed to flow from the nature of the proposition.
4. In Diamond's view, 6.53-7 determines that the previous text is plain nonsense. But the question is: why should this be so? The *Tractatus* notion of nonsense is not defined in the frame, but in the body. In other words: the whole theory of symbolism, including the bipolarity of the proposition, is presupposed for achieving the insight of the frame, for climbing up the ladder. Thus we cannot consider the body nonsensical if we do not accept the proper definition of nonsense, which is to be found in the body, as straightforward and not twisted. This is indeed a paradox of the *Tractatus*, which should be a hint that the book as a whole is misconceived, rather than encourage us to 'save' it by advancing obscure interpretations.
5. The idea of framing nonsense is useless. For it does not tell us anything about the nature of philosophical propositions in general. To hold the claim that

philosophical propositions are nonsense, we have to come up with a *general understanding* of the nature of these propositions, i.e. indicate criteria of meaningfulness. Whereas the frame, in Diamond's vein, can only dogmatically presuppose such an understanding, since it is semantically cut off from the body (in which the bounds of sense are actually determined). Paradoxically, the frame/body game would be pointless then: it would presuppose the insight that the body is nonsensical. And since the insight is supposed to be the result of the game, what would we still need the game for?

## 2.2 Nonsense

### 2.2.1 The notion of nonsense

1. Let us look at how Diamond defines nonsense. She relies on its determination in the *Tractatus*, which briefly occurs in 6.53, but more elaborately in 4.126-4.1272 and 5.473-5.4733. Her favourite example for a nonsensical proposition is 'Socrates is identical'. It is nonsensical because we have failed to assign meaning to one of its constituents, i.e. 'identical'.<sup>5</sup> 'Socrates is identical' is as nonsensical as 'A is an object', and for the same reason. But to be sure, this is not why propositions containing formal concepts or ascribing formal properties are nonsensical in the *Tractatus*. 'Socrates is identical' does not try to express what can only be shown, a necessary, metaphysical truth, whereas 'A is an object' does. In the *notation of logical analysis* the application of the sign A in a proper proposition shows that it stands for an object, that it is a name, but this cannot be expressed. Such notation also shows that 'object' is a bound variable and that 'There is an (object) x, such that x is a table and x is an object' is misconstrued. What a proposition can express/say is whether a fact obtains or not, so that if the fact obtains it is *also* thinkable that it does not obtain, and vice versa. This is what characterises the bipolarity of a proposition, a feature which 'A is an object' lacks and for which reason it is nonsensical. In contrast, the issue whether 'Socrates is identical' is bipolar or not does not even arise. 'A is an object' is not nonsensical because we have failed to assign a predicative meaning to 'object'. We could do this any time, but this move would miss the fact that the nonsensicality arises from the metaphysical impossibility of expressing the logical form of an object, not because some word lacks some meaning. The neglect of the *Tractatus* metaphysical justification of sense and nonsense, of the logical form of the world and correspondingly the logical syntax of any symbolism explains why Diamond holds on to the relatively primitive notion of plain nonsense as it applies to 'Frabble not why', and why she mistakenly likens the sentences of the *Tractatus* to such plainly nonsensical sentences.

2. Furthermore, there are many examples of nonsense which is not brought about because a certain type of meaning has not been assigned to a word, namely in those cases in which the word *has* that type of meaning in our language. It is evident that 'red' has a predicative meaning, e.g. in 'This apple is red', and still it would be nonsense to say 'This sound is red'. This is why we should not content ourselves with any definition of nonsense unless we carefully analysed various examples of nonsense. Why a sentence makes no sense can have very different reasons. It is reasonable to say, as Diamond does, that there are no *kinds* or *degrees* of nonsense, but wrong to infer that no form of distinction applies to nonsense at all. Acknowledging the reason why the sentence 'I am my brain' is nonsense, i.e. providing a logical-linguistic analysis is very instructive indeed, whereas analysing nonsense such as 'Frabble is frabbly frabble' is useless. It is not only the case that there is illuminating nonsense as opposed to plain nonsense, but that its discovery is the foremost task of philosophy, at least according to the Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*.
3. Diamond's definition of nonsense seems to lead to self-contradiction. Nonsense is solely determined by lack of meaning of at least one constituent of '*p*'. But then ' "*p*" is nonsense' is nonsense itself, since one of its constituents, "*p*" lacks meaning. So how are we supposed to understand the sentences in her article themselves? Such sentences as 'The propositions of the *Tractatus* are plain nonsense' or 'There is only one type of nonsense, plain nonsense' are surely nonsense themselves, and since nonsense is austere nonsense, there cannot be anything illuminating about Diamond's sentences. We could follow that she does not *really* advance a new reading of Wittgenstein, that there is nothing *really* wrong with the traditional view, that traditional philosophy is not *really* nonsense, etc. She does seem to come close to such a conclusion herself.<sup>6</sup> But I don't think there can be any other way out of this dead-end other than by rejecting her approach.
4. In respect to his later work we should be aware that Wittgenstein would deny that 'A is an object' is meaningless. On grounds of us being able to infer from 'A and B and C are on the table' 'There are three objects on the table' he would regard 'A/B/C is an object' as a *rule of grammar* which justifies such inferential transitions. After all, we do perfectly well understand such a sentence and would not consider it as nonsense, unless we are highly attracted by the *Tractatus*' narrow understanding of nonsense. Diamond, it seems to me, uncritically takes over a story-relative *Tractatus* notion of nonsense (not even the right version) and disregards the much more adequate account of nonsense offered by the later Wittgenstein. But it is the latter which holds the key for understanding what

is wrong with the *Tractatus*, be it its notion of nonsense or various other doctrines.

## 2.22 Understanding nonsense

I now turn briefly to Diamond's theory of understanding nonsense as sense.

1. For Diamond understanding the philosophers' nonsense amounts to entering the same imaginative world and experiencing their illusion. But how do we *enter* the imaginative world of somebody else? More importantly, how can I be sure that I really entertain the same 'mental images', since otherwise I would not be able to understand this particular philosopher? Is not the whole point of making the distinction between the meaning of a word/its role in a sentence and the 'mental images' associated with it that the latter differ from person to person? This is what at least Frege had in mind, whom Diamond cites as an authority in this respect. Her method does not seem to make it possible to attain objective understanding of nonsense, of a certain type of nonsense or certain philosopher's nonsense.
2. It is a curious thing to say that we understand nonsense, whether ours or somebody else's. Diamond derives this from her analysis of understanding a person who makes sense.<sup>7</sup> But it is superfluous to say 'who makes sense'. If we understand someone's utterances, then this is *because* they make sense, and this is why it is pointless to hold on to an understanding of utterances which *don't* make sense. One important reason why one can tell somebody 'I don't understand you' is because what she says makes no sense. Indeed, nonsense means: not understandable, unintelligible (against the background of a shared language).
3. There is such a phenomenon as *believing one understands* a sentence and then realising that it was nonsense. But this does not mean that we did understand that very nonsense, but rather *that and why* it is nonsense. My friend can understand my illusion that I might be my brain only if he understands the confusion of my thought. 'p is nonsense because ...' is not nonsense itself, and since such an explanation is part of the task of philosophy, Diamond's dictum that philosophy itself is nonsense ('illusion of understanding') misses the point.
4. Does 'The letter e is green' look like a meaningful sentence because 'green' triggers the same associations ('mental images') it does in 'This tomato is green' or in 'Mr. Green is green'? First of all, it is not the case that 'mental images' pop up in our mind each time we utter a sentence. Second, not every expression

seems to have a corresponding 'mental image', e.g. 'is', 'and', 'by the way', etc. Thirdly, Diamond gives no reason why 'green', taken as a sound, should trigger the same association (or set of associations?) each time it is uttered. I can think about the wife of my neighbour Mr. Green and rather associate him with a body-builder than with 'green things'. Fourthly, and this is the essential point, we are sometimes misled by nonsensical sentences because they have a *Satzklang*, are similar to meaningful sentences and can be analysed on purely grammatical grounds. The temptation lies in the similarity between 'The letter e is green' and 'This tomato is green', not in the steady recurrence of a 'mental image' in different instances of the word 'green'. When asked why this sentence looks meaningful, we do not say: 'Oh, when I read it first, some mental images of a genuine sentence popped up in my mind and they deceived me', but rather indicate that the sentence contains an ambiguity regarding its subject; it could be taken to be a statement about a letter-token, and hence as meaningful as 'This tomato is green', or about a letter-type, and hence nonsensical.

### 3. Conclusion

Following are the results of my discussion:

1. Diamond's hermeneutics is deficient, since it lacks textual evidence and leads to self-contradictions.
2. Her notion of nonsense, which her interpretation relies on, is one-dimensional. It fails to capture the more complex *Tractatus* notion and even more so the later view on nonsense.
3. The theory of reading nonsense as sense, which allegedly leads to the right approach to the *Tractatus*, is seriously flawed.

The key for a proper understanding and evaluation of the *Tractatus* lies in the later work and its much more refined account of nonsense and philosophy. The later Wittgenstein would not have thrown away the ladder, like Diamond, but most doctrines of the *Tractatus* and with them the ladder analogy *itself*, in other words cease to believe that it is instructive at all.



## References

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- Diamond, C. (1991) "Throwing Away the Ladder: How to Read the *Tractatus*", in Diamond, C., *The Realistic Spirit: Wittgenstein, Philosophy, and the Mind*, Cambridge: MIT Press
- Hacker, P. M. S. (2000) "Was He Trying to Whistle It?", in Crary/Read (eds)

## Endnotes

- 1 see *References*.
- 2 This is a shortened version of a more elaborate unpublished paper. Given the limited space, I shall not discuss Diamond's elaborations on ethics here.
- 3 A very useful overview is offered by Alice Crary's introduction in Crary/Read (eds) 2000.
- 4 cf. Hacker 2000.
- 5 Diamond 2000, p. 164, also Diamond 1991, p. 197.
- 6 Cf. Diamond pp. 151, 162, and especially 169.
- 7 Diamond 2000, p.156.

# Wittgenstein und die "philosophy of mind" - Warum der Naturalismus nicht falsch, sondern sinnlos ist

Christian Kanzian

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In meinem Beitrag möchte ich einige Auffassungen Wittgensteins zur philosophischen Psychologie, oder wie man heute auch sagt, zur "philosophy of mind" untersuchen. Ein erster Einwand gegen ein solches Projekt liegt auf der Hand und soll deshalb gleich zu Beginn angesprochen werden: Die Bedeutung Wittgensteins für die philosophy of mind sei rein historisch. Wittgensteins Philosophie habe zwar insofern Verdienst, also sie einschlägige Debatten in Gang gesetzt habe, z.B. über die Semantik mentaler Ausdrücke. Auch mag es sein, daß man durch Verweis auf Wittgenstein manche klassischen Probleme in diesem Bereich, z.B. das Leib-Seele-Problem, endgültig als *Scheinprobleme* beiseite legen könne. Insgesamt sei Wittgenstein und seine Schule aber überholt: zu dominierend sei der main-stream "realistischer" Deutungen des Mentalen und Geistigen; jener Auffassungen, die, im Gefolge der Erfolge von Neurowissenschaften und AI-Forschung, nach Mentalem und Geistigem als solchem fragen, und sich nicht mit sprach-analytischen Vorfelduntersuchungen begnügen. Wittgenstein ist tot. Seit 50 Jahren.

Wenn ich im folgenden Auffassungen Wittgensteins zur philosophy of mind erörtere, tue ich das, weil ich derartige Einwände für falsch halte. Deshalb, weil man, allgemein gesprochen, aus der Feststellung, daß es seit einer Theorie weitere Entwicklungen im Bereich der Theorie gegeben hat, nicht schon auf die sachliche Irrelevanz der Theorie schließen darf. Weil Wittgenstein vor der Etablierung dessen, was heute als philosophy of mind vorliegt, geschrieben hat, folgt m.E. keineswegs, daß *das*, was er zu diesem Bereich geschrieben hat, nicht Relevanz auch für die aktuelle Debatte hat. Und genau darüber möchte ich handeln.

Worin aber sehe ich die Relevanz Wittgensteins? Ich sehe sie darin, daß sich ausgehend von seinen einschlägigen Thesen Kritikpunkte am sogenannten Naturalisierungsprogramm des Mentalen und Geistigen formulieren lassen. Es sind drei Aspekte, anhand derer ich das zeigen möchte: Erstens an Wittgensteins Überlegungen über *Kriterien der Identität* für mentale Zustände; zweitens, damit zusammenhängend, an seinen Ausführungen über die (vermeintliche) *Referenz* mentaler Ausdrücke; drittens, als Anwendung, anhand einer Kritik des "*Qualia-Problems*", frei nach Wittgenstein.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Die "Identität" mentaler Zustände

Bekanntlich lehnt es Wittgenstein in den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* (PU) ab, mentale Zustände als etwas aufzufassen, über das wir genauso reden könnten, wie wir über physikalische Zustände unserer alltäglichen Lebenswelt sprechen. Mehr noch: Es habe überhaupt keinen Sinn, den Bereich des Psychischen als eine Art "innere Bühne" aufzufassen, die wir durch Introspektion erfassen und in der Folge spezifisch beschreiben könnten. Ich möchte eine Begründung dieses Standpunkts herausgreifen. In PU stellt Wittgenstein immer wieder in Abrede, daß wir für mentale Zustände überhaupt ein "Kriterium für ihre Identität" angeben können. Darin unterscheiden sich s.E. mentale Zustände von physikalischen signifikant. Oft, so Wittgenstein in PU 253, verwechselte man die emphatische Betonung des Wortes "diesen" z.B. in "Aber der Andre kann doch nicht DIESEN Schmerz haben" mit der Angabe eines solchen Kriteriums. Oft vergesse man schlicht und einfach, wie wichtig es überhaupt ist, Fragen zu stellen wie: "Wie vergleichen wir diese Erlebnisse; was legen wir fest als Kriterium der Identität des Geschehnisses?" (PU 322) Wenn nun die Angabe von Kriterien der Identität eine unabdingbare Voraussetzung unseres Redens über mentale Zustände ist, die Angabe solcher Kriterien aber ausbleibt, dann fehlt uns eben eine unabdingbare Voraussetzung unseres Redens über mentale Zustände.

Wittgenstein gibt selbst keine Auskunft darüber, was er für adäquate Kriterien für die Identität von (mentalen) Zuständen halten könnte; ja nicht einmal darüber, welche Form die Angabe solcher Kriterien habe. Aus dem Kontext seiner Ausführungen in den PU wird aber zumindest klar, daß es sich nicht um Kriterien für *numerische* Identität handelt. Es handelt sich vielmehr um Kriterien, die es erlauben, mentale Zustände als *qualitativ* die gleichen, sprich als Vorkommnisse derselben Art oder desselben Typs aufzufassen. Heute würde man von solchen Kriterien deshalb nicht als von Kriterien für die (numerische) Identität oder *Identitätskriterien* sprechen, sondern besser als *Identifizierungs-* bzw. *Re-Identifizierungskriterien*. Das sind eben Kriterien, die es gestatten, etwas als Vorkommnis eines bestimmten Typus zu bestimmen bzw. über eine Zeit hinweg wieder zu bestimmen.

Was aber hat das mit *Naturalismuskritik* zu tun? - Was naturalistischen Auffassungen in der philosophy of mind, seien sie eliminativ, reduktionistisch oder Supervenienz- bzw. Emergenztheorien, allesamt kennzeichnet, ist die Meinung, daß Mentales (numerisch) identisch sei mit Physikalischem. Daraus folgt aber, daß man Mentalem, qua Physikalischem einen ontologischen Stellenwert beimißt. Es gibt mentale Zustände als physikalische *Entitäten*. Nicht nur das: Mentales gibt es "im Inneren" (ist man Internalist: *nur* im Inneren) seines Trägers, es ist Bestandteil des Nervensystems. Weiterhin ist es naturalistisches Gemeingut, daß man über Mentales,

qua Physikalisches, reden kann. (Wie sollte es auch etwas geben, über das man nicht reden könnte?) Unterschiede zwischen naturalistischen Positionen betreffen lediglich die Art, wie man über Mentales redet. Extrempositionen nach unterscheiden sich mentale von physikalischen Redeweisen nicht, mentale Redeweisen sind deshalb vollkommen verzichtbar. Moderateren Positionen, z.B. Supervenienztheorien nach, hat die mentale Rede, sprich die Rede über mentale Zustände, irreduzible Eigenarten.

Nimmt man aber an, daß man über mentale Zustände als inneren Vorgängen zu reden vermag, setzt man nach Wittgensteins Einsicht aber voraus, für mentale Zustände auch (Re-)Identifizierungskriterien angeben zu können. Und zwar, im Falle naturalistischer Extrempositionen, dieselben wie für innere physikalische Zustände (das sind neuronale Basis-Zustände mentaler Zustände); im Falle moderaterer Versionen eben andere. Ich behaupte nun, daß die Meinung, es gäbe solche Kriterien, falsch, oder polemisch gesagt, ein naturalistischer Mythos ist. Nicht einmal für innere physikalische Zustände gibt es, allgemein akzeptierte, (Re-)Identifizierungskriterien. Weder Kriterien, die sich aus raum-zeitlicher Kontinuität ergeben, noch solche aus der kausalen Rolle von Zuständen, oder andere, haben sich als wirklich plausibel erwiesen. Wenn es für innere physikalische Zustände keine, zumindest keine allgemein akzeptierten (Re-)Identifizierungskriterien gibt, dann auch nicht für mentale Zustände. Für naturalistische Extrempositionen liegt das auf der Hand. Auch für moderate Positionen ist klar, daß man keine (Re-)Identifizierungskriterien für mentale Zustände angeben kann, ohne sie an jene für neuronale Basis-Zustände anzukoppeln - sonst hörten sie auf, naturalistisch zu sein.

Wenn meine Behauptung stimmt, und weiterhin Wittgenstein darin recht hat, daß die Angabe von (Re-)Identifizierungskriterien unabdingbare Voraussetzung unseres Redens über etwas ist, ist das Naturalisierungsprogramm obsolet. Daß Wittgenstein recht hat, scheint klar zu sein. Das Problem ist die Rechtfertigung meiner Behauptung, es gäbe keine plausiblen (Re-)Identifizierungskriterien für innere (mentale) Zustände. Und zwar deshalb, weil ich eine solche hier nicht einmal im Ansatz leisten kann. Somit begnüge ich mich damit, darauf hinzuweisen, daß das Problem der Angabe solcher Kriterien für Autoren im Kontext des Naturalisierungsprogramms schwer wiegt. Pointierter gesagt: Identitätstheorien über Mentales erzeugen eine immanente Inkonsistenz, solange sie nicht stichhaltige Auskunft geben über solche Kriterien. Sie geben dann nämlich vor, über etwas zu reden, ohne eine unverzichtbare Voraussetzung des Redens über dieses etwas zu gewährleisten.

## 2. Die Referenz mentaler Ausdrücke

Das bislang Gesagte läßt sich unter Berücksichtigung eines weiteren Gesichtspunktes ergänzen. Allgemein bekannt ist Wittgensteins Auffassung, daß man sich bei der Verwendung mentaler Ausdrücke, etwa für Empfindungen, nicht *referierend*, gleichsam auf Vorkommnisse einer "inneren Bühne" bezieht. Die Bedeutung mentalen Redens ergibt sich vielmehr daraus, daß es Teil von spezifischen *Verhaltensweisen* ist (Vgl. u.a. PU 244ff), die Wittgenstein auch als "Muster" bezeichnen sollte. Es wäre wohl ein Mißverständnis, wenn man diese These Wittgensteins als Folge seiner Ablehnung oder seiner Ignoranz des referierenden Sprachgebrauchs insgesamt auffassen würde. Und zwar deshalb, weil Wittgenstein den referierenden Sprachgebrauch, auch in PU, gerade nicht einfachhin ablehnt oder ignoriert. Natürlich verwenden wir auch seines Erachtens manche Ausdrücke, allen voran Namen, um auf Gegenstände Bezug zu nehmen. Was Wittgenstein in den PU nur deutlich zum Ausdruck bringt ist, daß wir die Deutung des Sprachgebrauchs insgesamt nicht an dieser einen, der bezugnehmenden Funktion der Sprache, aufhängen dürfen. Referieren ist ein Sprachspiel unter anderen (vgl. u.a. PU 7, 37). Und als eigenes Sprachspiel hat es spezifische Regeln und Erfolgsbedingungen (u.a., und damit können wir an das vorherige anknüpfen, daß man den jeweiligen Referenten (re-)identifizieren kann.)

Wenn wir dies beachten, können wir Wittgensteins These, daß wir mentale Ausdrücke nicht *referierend* verwenden, auch so verstehen, daß die naive Übertragung des Referenzmodells der Sprache auf die mentale Sprache unstatthaft ist. Das Sprachspiel des mentalen Redens dürfen wir nicht verwechseln mit dem Sprachspiel des Benennens, etwa äußerer physikalischer Zustände. Wir müssen es uns hier versagen, auf die vielfältigen Begründungen Wittgensteins für diese These einzugehen. Um nicht wieder auf das bereits ausgeführte Problem mangelnder (Re-)Identifizierungskriterien für mentale Zustände zurückzukommen, sollen Wittgensteins Hinweise auf den Modus, wie wir uns mentale Ausdrücke *aneignen*, angesprochen sein. (Vgl. PU 256, 263, 258, 265; NL 287) Der springende Punkt ist, daß wir die Verwendung mentaler Ausdrücke nicht einfach über hinweisende Definitionen lernen können. Und zwar deshalb nicht, weil sich für mentale Ausdrücke, und darin unterscheiden sie sich von "physikalischen", kein *Verfahren hinweisender Definition* angeben läßt. Der Grund dafür ist darin zu sehen, daß es einfach keine *Kriterien* gibt, nach denen sich die *Richtigkeit* von Verbindungen zwischen mentalen Ausdrücken und mentalen Empfindungen gewährleisten ließe. Wenn es aber keine solchen Richtigkeitskriterien geben kann, dann auch keine referierende Verwendung mentaler Ausdrücke. Wie sollte man auch einen Ausdruck referierend verwenden, ohne angeben zu können, wie man das richtigerweise tut? Es ist nicht notwendig, dies hier auszufalten. Wir wollen nur

festhalten, daß wir nach Wittgenstein das Referenzmodell nicht auf mentales Reden übertragen dürften. Mentales Reden ist vielmehr erfolgreich, sprich bedeutungsvoll, wenn man es als Teil spezifischer Verhaltensweisen oder Muster verstehen kann.

Wieder steht die Frage im Raum, was denn das alles mit Naturalismuskritik zu tun habe? Wie schon oben erwähnt, ist es allgemeines naturalistisches Glaubensgut, daß es mentale Zustände als Referenten mentaler Rede im Inneren ihrer Träger gibt. Worin sich naturalistische Positionen unterscheiden, ist die Deutung der Referenz mentaler Ausdrücke. Extrempositionen nach sind mentale Ausdrücke starre Designatoren. Durch einzelne Ausdrucks-"tokens" eines Typs nehme man stets auf physiologische Konstellationen desselben Typs Bezug. Moderatere Positionen lehnen das ab. Durch einzelne Ausdrucks-"tokens" eines Typs könne man sich auf ganz verschiedene physiologische Konstellationen beziehen. Worauf es aber ankommt, ist das angesprochene naturalistische Glaubensgut, daß man sich mit mentalen Ausdrücken, genauso wie mit physikalischen, auf etwas, eben auf mentale Zustände beziehe. Die mentale Sprache funktioniere nach den Regeln referierenden Sprachgebrauchs, eben nach dem Referenzmodell. Wertend gesprochen kommen verschiedene Varianten des Naturalismus darin überein, naiv das Referenzmodell auf die mentale Sprache zu übertragen.

Diese Wertung begründe ich damit, daß die Meinung, es gäbe Kriterien der Richtigkeit für Verbindungen zwischen mentalen Ausdrücken und mentalen Zuständen falsch, oder polemisch gesagt, ein naturalistischer Mythos ist. Wenn meine Behauptung stimmt, und weiterhin Wittgenstein darin recht hat, daß die Angabe solcher Kriterien Voraussetzungen sinnvollen referierenden Sprachgebrauchs ist, ist das Naturalisierungsprogramm obsolet. Auch hier ist natürlich die Rechtfertigung meiner Behauptung das Problem. Auch hier kann ich sie nicht leisten. Auch hier muß ich mich damit begnügen, darauf hinzuweisen, daß das Problem der Angabe solcher Kriterien gerade für Autoren im Kontext des Naturalisierungsprogramms schwer wiegt. Identitätstheorien über Mentales erzeugen eine immanente Inkonsistenz, wenn sie nicht stichhaltige Auskunft geben über solche Kriterien. Sie geben dann nämlich vor, über etwas zu reden, ohne eine unverzichtbare Voraussetzung des Redens über dieses etwas zu gewährleisten.

### **3. Kritik am Qualia-Problem - eine Anwendung**

Vor dem Hintergrund des Naturalisierungsprogramms wird das Sprechen über mentale Zustände in strenger Analogie zur Rede über physikalische Zustände gedeutet. Wittgensteins Naturalismuskritik, so können wir zusammenfassend festhalten, besteht

nun gerade darin, daß dies schlicht unsinnig ist. Im Unterschied zu physikalischen Zuständen können wir für mentale keine (Re-) Identifizierungskriterien angeben. Auch für die Referenz mentaler Ausdrücke, also die Beziehung zwischen mentalen Ausdrücken und ihren Referenten (was immer die auch sein mögen), haben wir keine Kriterien für Richtigkeit. (Es tut der Stichhaltigkeit der Kritik keinen Abbruch, daß das zweite auch als Folge des ersten verstanden werden kann.)

Im folgenden soll kurz angedeutet werden, wie diese Einsichten Wittgensteins auf eines der "hard-problems" der philosophy of mind angewendet werden können, das sogenannte Qualia-Problem. Dieses Problem erhält sich bekanntlich deshalb hartnäckig am Leben, weil sich Naturalisten v.a. damit schwer tun, mit dem Wie, sprich der subjektiven Qualität, in der wir mentale Zustände erleben, umzugehen. Solche Qualitäten oder *Qualia* sind von Natur aus privat und subjektiv. Wie sollte man da intersubjektiv, ja objektiv über sie theoretisieren, wie es das Naturalisierungsprogramm vorsieht? Soll man Qualia eliminieren zugunsten irgendwelcher physikalischer Basisvorgänge? - wie naturalistische hard-liner das vorschlagen. Oder soll man sie, etwa unter Berücksichtigung des Seelenlebens von Fledermäusen, in eine naturalistische Weltansicht integrieren?

Welche Lösung auch immer angestrebt wird. Jede beruht auf der Voraussetzung, daß man nicht nur über das Daß bzw. über das Was mentaler Zustände reden kann wie über das Daß bzw. über das Was physikalischer, sondern auch über das Wie, die subjektive phänomenale Qualität, wie uns mentale Zustände gegeben sind. Hat Wittgenstein recht, ist das, ja gerade das, in den Bereich des naturalistischen Mythos zu verbannen. Erst recht für subjektive Qualitäten kann es keine kommunizierbaren (Re-) Identifizierungskriterien geben, (somit) auch keine Möglichkeit, die Referenz von Ausdrücken für solche Qualitäten in den Griff zu bekommen. Wittgenstein opponiert deshalb massiv gerade dagegen, unser Reden über solche Qualitäten nach dem Referenzmodell der Sprache zu analysieren, in der Folge diese Qualitäten als "innere Entitäten" zu erachten. Die Grammatik unseres Redens über Qualia ist eine andere, als die unseres Redens über physikalische Zustände. Ich kann das nicht weiter ausführen, muß das angesichts der Bekanntheit von Wittgensteins Psychologie auch nicht tun. Ich beschränke mich auf den kritischen Hinweis Wittgensteins, daß derjenige, der das nicht begreift, und naiv das Referenzmodell insbesondere auf das Reden über Qualia anwendet "eine Unklarheit über die Grammatik von Wörtern in der Form einer naturwissenschaftlichen Frage ausdrücken" wird. (Blaues Buch, 63) M.E. kann man nicht deutlicher machen, warum Lösungen des Qualia-Problems inadäquat sind, bzw. warum das Qualia-Problem überhaupt entsteht: Man macht aus grammatikalischen Problemen quasi-naturwissenschaftliche.

#### 4. Zum Abschluß: Ein Sinnkriterium für Naturalismuskritik

Natürlich können diese bescheidenen Überlegungen niemanden widerlegen, schon gar nicht das gesamte Naturalisierungsprogramm. Zu wenig "wasserdicht" müssen manche meiner Behauptungen bleiben. Dennoch sollte zumindest im Ansatz klar werden, daß man Wittgensteins grundlegende semantische Einsichten durchaus in die aktuelle Naturalismusdebatte einbringen kann. Man kann sie nicht einfach mit der Bemerkung abtun, daß sie bereits vor einigen Jahrzehnten geäußert wurden und deshalb sachlich *irrelevant* seien. Auch heute gilt m.E., daß man, übernimmt man das Referenzmodell für die mentale Sprache, auch die Verpflichtungen dieser Übernahme einlösen muß, sprich zeigen muß, inwiefern mentales Sprechen die Erfolgsbedingungen referierenden Sprachgebrauchs erfüllt.

Möglicherweise sind diese Überlegungen aber nicht nur geeignet, Probleme des Naturalismus anzudeuten, sondern auch Schwierigkeiten mancher Formen der Naturalismuskritik. So z.B. könnte man nach Wittgenstein als ein Kriterium sinnvoller Naturalismuskritik annehmen, daß sie nicht selbst jene grundlegenden semantischen Irrtümer begeht, die den Ausgang naturalistischer Scheinfragen und Fehlschlüsse markieren. Dies wäre etwa der Fall, wenn man, etwa im Sinne dualistischer Annahmen, unser mentales Reden wiederum als Sprechen über eine irgendwie geartete innere Bühne verstünde. Auch für Dualisten stellten sich die Probleme naiver Übernahme des Referenzmodells auf die mentale Sprache.

Vielleicht muß die philosophy of mind in Zukunft kreativer nach Auswegen suchen, als dies in einer einfachen Naturalismus-Antinaturalismus bzw. Monismus-Dualismus-Debatte geschehen kann. Und damit können wir unmittelbar an Wittgenstein anknüpfen, dessen philosophische Psychologie genau unter diesem Motto steht.

BB: L. Wittgenstein, *Das Blaue Buch*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/Main 11984. NL: Wittgenstein's Notes for Lectures on "Private Experience" and "Sense Data". Hrsg. v. R. Rhees. In: *The Philosophical Reviews* 77(1968), 271-320.

PU: L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/Main 11977.

#### Endnote

- 1 Von *dem* Naturalisierungsprogramm zu sprechen, ist sicher eine Idealisierung bzw. grobe Simplifizierung. Zu unterschiedlich sind einzelne Strömungen und Positionen, die darunter subsumiert werden. Also idealisiere bzw. simplifiziere ich grob, um meine Überlegungen vorzutragen. Problematisch ist mein Unterfangen auch, weil ich die II-Literatur zum Thema unerwähnt lassen muß, um überhaupt zu meinen Punkten zu kommen. Also bin ich unwissenschaftlich, um zu meinen Punkten zu kommen.



# Die Wittgenstein-Werkausgabe und ihre Quellen im Nachlaß

Peter Keicher

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Die im Frankfurter Suhrkamp-Verlag erscheinende *Werkausgabe* bildet für das Studium der Philosophie Wittgensteins im deutschen Sprachraum bislang die wichtigste und am weitesten verbreitete Textgrundlage in Buchform. Mit der *Bergen Electronic Edition* steht der Forschung jedoch seit diesem Jahr der gesamte Nachlaß auf CD-Rom zu Verfügung. Für vergleichende Studien erweist es sich nun als ein Mangel, daß in den Vorworten der Herausgeber der Frankfurter Bände oft nur indirekte oder unpräzise Hinweise darüber zu finden sind, welche Manuskripte und Typoskripte den veröffentlichten Texten im einzelnen zugrundeliegen. Im folgenden werde ich für die acht Bände der Suhrkamp-Ausgabe - mit Ausnahme des Teil I der *Philosophischen Grammatik* und der *Vermischten Bemerkungen* - alle Manuskript- oder Typoskriptquellen im Nachlaß anführen und teilweise in der gebotenen Kürze auf das jeweilige Editionsverfahren der Herausgeber eingehen.<sup>1</sup>

Der erste Band der *Werkausgabe* beinhaltet den *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, die *Tagebücher 1914-1916* und die *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*. Die Textgrundlage für die Erstveröffentlichung des *Tractatus* von 1921 bildete TS 202, das sogenannte *Engelmann-Typoskript* der *Logisch-Philosophischen Abhandlung*, das im Nachlaß allen folgenden Neuauflagen des *Tractatus* am nächsten steht. Die *Tagebücher 1914-1916* gehen auf die Manuskripte MS 101, 102 und 103 zurück. Ihre Bezeichnung ist aus zwei Gründen verwirrend. Erstens wurden von den Herausgebern hier all jene *tagebuchartigen*, persönlichen Eintragungen Wittgensteins ausgespart, die später unter dem Titel *Geheime Tagebücher* veröffentlicht wurden (Baum, 1991). Zweitens reichen die *philosophischen* Aufzeichnungen Wittgensteins in MS 103 bis in den Januar 1917. Dem Anhang I lag in der ersten Auflage der *Werkausgabe* das TS 201b zugrunde, die sogenannte *Costello-Fassung* der *Notes on Logic*. Seit der zweiten Auflage wird stattdessen TS 201a2, die sogenannte *Shwayder-Fassung* der *Notes on Logic* veröffentlicht (vgl. McGuinness, 1972). Anhang II geht auf D 301 zurück. Die Druckvorlagen für die beiden "Teile" der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* sind nach den Angaben der Nachlaßverwalter bislang verschollen. Der "Teil I" ist jedoch weitgehend text- und numerierungsidentisch mit TS 227. Die Druckvorlage für den "Teil II" hat im von Wright-Verzeichnis die Nummer TS 234 erhalten. Dieses verschollene Typoskript dürfte auf Grundlage des MS 144 erstellt worden sein, welches mit dem in

der *Werkausgabe* veröffentlichten Text weitgehend identisch ist. Das Manuskript enthält jedoch Bemerkungen, die in der Veröffentlichung nicht zu finden sind. Es ist wahrscheinlich, daß solche Auslassungen und eine Reihe von Umstellungen bei der Herstellung des TS 234 von Wittgenstein selbst vorgenommen wurden, doch ist den *Bemerkungen der Herausgeber* in der *Werkausgabe* indirekt zu entnehmen, daß auch sie Umstellungen vorgenommen haben (WA 1, 227). Die Bezeichnung des Textes als "Teil II" stammt nicht von Wittgenstein. Es ist nicht sicher, ob er dieses Manuskript als Fortsetzung oder Ergänzung der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* angesehen hat.

Der zweite Band der *Werkausgabe* enthält die von Rush Rhees herausgegebenen *Philosophischen Bemerkungen*. In Wittgensteins Nachlaß existieren zehn Manuskripte gleichen Titels. Der *Werkausgabe* liegt das TS 209 aus dem Mai 1930 zugrunde, dem Wittgenstein selbst diesen Titel gab. Das Vorwort hat Rhees dem Manuskript MS 109 (S. 211f.) entnommen. Es ist unwahrscheinlich, daß dieser Vorwortentwurf vom November 1930 für TS 209 bestimmt war. Das TS 209 "konnte (...) mit minimalen Eingriffen von seiten des Herausgebers veröffentlicht werden." (von Wright, 1982, 72) Rhees ist der Auffassung, daß Wittgenstein das Stück "nicht ohne Überarbeitungen veröffentlicht" und daß er, "um sein Typoskript übersichtlicher zu machen (...) wohl Paragraphennummern eingeführt" hätte (WA 2, 316). Dafür gibt es jedoch keine konkreten Hinweise. Die wichtigsten formalen Eingriffe des Herausgebers sind ein dem Text des TS 209 vorangestelltes, etwa 40 Seiten umfassendes Inhaltsverzeichnis, eine Kapitelunterteilung des Textes in I-XXII, sowie die Numerierung einzelner Bemerkungsgruppen. TS 209 enthält keine Nummern oder Kapitel. Im Anhang finden sich die "Aufsätze" *Komplex und Tatsache* (TS 214a), *Unendlich lang* (TS 215a) sowie *Unendliche Möglichkeit* (215b) mit geringfügigen Auslassungen von Bemerkungen. Auf den Seiten 245f. der *Werkausgabe* hat Rhees eine kurze Notiz aus Waismanns Nachlaß eingefügt.

Der dritte Band der *Werkausgabe* enthält ausschließlich Aufzeichnungen aus dem Nachlaß von Friedrich Waismann. Der vierte Band der *Werkausgabe* enthält die von Rush Rhees herausgegebene *Philosophische Grammatik*. Die wichtigsten formalen Eingriffe des Herausgebers bestehen auch hier in der Erstellung eines etwa 30 Seiten umfassenden Inhaltsverzeichnisses, in der Einteilung des Textes, bzw. der unterschiedlichen zugrundeliegenden Texte in zwei Hauptteile mit Kapiteln, Teil I, I-X, und Teil II, I-VII, sowie in der Numerierung einzelner Bemerkungsgruppen. Der Titel stammt nicht von Wittgenstein, der einen solchen Titel jedoch 1931 in MS 110 (S. 254) für eine mögliche Veröffentlichung erwogen und drei danach entstandene Manuskriptbände ähnlich benannt hat. Etwas irreführend ist Rhees' Hinweis: "Die Hauptquelle unseres Textes ist ein großes Maschinenskript" (WA 4, 487), wobei das *Big Typescript* von 1933 gemeint ist. Texte aus dem *Big Typescript* finden sich aber nur im

Anhang zu Teil I und in Teil II. Dem Teil I der *Philosophischen Grammatik* liegen drei Manuskripte zugrunde, bei denen es sich um Umarbeitungen des *Big Typescript* handelt. Daß das *Big Typescript* deren Ausgangspunkt bildet, hat Rhees vielleicht zu seiner eigentümlichen Formulierung bewogen. In Teil I der *Philosophischen Grammatik* hat er auf Grundlage von MS 114ii, 115i und 140 (*Großes Format*) sehr präzise die *Umarbeitung des Big Typescript* rekonstruiert, was aufgrund der vielen Hunderten von nachträglichen Umstellungsangaben und "Sprüngen" Wittgensteins innerhalb und zwischen diesen Manuskripten eine beachtliche Leistung darstellt. Mit der *Bergen Electronic Edition* läßt sich nachweisen, wie präzise Rhees hier gearbeitet hat. Die "Sprünge" sind so zahlreich, daß hier auf detaillierte Seitenangaben verzichtet werden muß. Ein Problem des Teil I besteht jedoch darin, daß es keine Anzeichen dafür gibt, daß Wittgenstein seine Umarbeitung tatsächlich fertiggestellt hat. Im Anhang zu Teil I gehen die Kapitel 1-3 auf die Typoskripte 214a, 214b und 214c zurück (vgl. WA 2, Anhang), Kapitel 4A auf das Kapitel 28 aus dem *Big Typescript* (TS 213, 100-101), Kapitel 4B auf das Manuskript MS 116 (S. 80-82 und 122-126), die Kapitel 5-8 auf die Kapitel 31-34 des *Big Typescript* (TS 213, 113-140). Im Teil II der *Philosophischen Grammatik* liegen den Kapiteln 1-10 die Kapitel 66-75 des *Big Typescript* (TS 213, 294-352) zugrunde, den Kapiteln 11-37 die Kapitel 108-134 des *Big Typescript* (TS 213, 530-721), dem Anhang zu Kapitel 37 das Manuskript MS 112 (47v-51r), den Kapiteln 38-43 die Kapitel 135-140 des *Big Typescript* (TS 213, 722-768). Während Rhees im Teil I der *Philosophischen Grammatik* Wittgensteins Angaben zur Anordnung des Textes gefolgt ist, besteht der Anhang zu Teil I und der gesamte Teil II aus einer *Auswahl* von Texten, die von Rhees nach inhaltlichen Kriterien zusammengestellt wurden, über die er keine Rechenschaft gibt. In der Nachlaßforschung wurde Rhees dafür kritisiert, daß bei seiner Rekonstruktion "recht umfangreiche Textstücke unter den Tisch gefallen sind und bis heute unveröffentlicht geblieben sind." (Schulte, 1989, 46). Das eigentliche Problem der *Philosophischen Grammatik* besteht jedoch darin, daß der Unterschied zwischen dem *Big Typescript* von 1933 und seiner nachfolgenden Umarbeitung von 1933-34 verwischt wird. Die Umarbeitung ist vollständig veröffentlicht, während von den insgesamt 140 Kapiteln des *Big Typescript* im Anhang zu Teil I und in Teil II nur 48 Kapitel wiedergegeben werden.

Der fünfte Band der *Werkausgabe* enthält *Das Blaue Buch* und *Eine Philosophische Betrachtung (Das Braune Buch)*. Dem *Blauen Buch* liegt der englische Text des D 309 von 1933/34 zugrunde, den Petra von Morstein ins Deutsche übersetzt hat. Die Veröffentlichung des *Braunen Buchs* in der *Werkausgabe* geht nur teilweise vom englischen Original D 310 aus. Dem größeren Teil (WA 5, 117-237) liegt das Manuskript MS 115ii (118-292) von 1936 zugrunde. Dabei handelt es sich um Wittgensteins eigene Übertragung von etwa drei Vierteln des *Braunen Buchs* ins Deutsche, eine Vorstufe zu

den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*, der Wittgenstein bereits diesen Titel gibt, und die vom ursprünglichen Text des D 310 teilweise abweicht. Nur etwa das letzte Viertel des *Braunen Buchs*, D 310 (117-168), das Wittgenstein nicht mehr überarbeitet hat, wurde von Petra Morstein ins Deutsche übersetzt (WA 5, 237-282). Damit stellt das *Braune Buch* in der *Werkausgabe* ein der *Philosophischen Grammatik* vergleichbares Mischgebilde aus der *früheren* und der *späteren* Fassung eines Textes dar. Was die Bezeichnung des Textes anbelangt, bezieht sich Rhees auf ein Manuskript, in dem Wittgenstein, im Juni 1931 - also vier Jahre vor D 310, fünf Jahre vor MS 115ii - geschrieben hatte: "Mein Buch kann heißen: Eine philosophische Betrachtung." (MS 110, 214).

Der sechste Band der *Werkausgabe* enthält die *Bemerkungen über die Grundlagen der Mathematik*. Der Titel, den Wittgenstein im Nachlaß niemals erwähnt oder verwendet hat, sowie das 23 Seiten umfassende Inhaltsverzeichnis, die Kapiteleinteilung und die Bemerkungsnumerierung stammen von den Herausgebern. Der Band wurde aus kürzeren und längeren Passagen aus drei Typoskripten und acht Manuskripten zusammengestellt, die zwischen 1937 und 1944 entstanden sind. Er verdankt sich der Überzeugung der Herausgeber, keine von Wittgensteins Schriften über die Philosophie der Mathematik zu veröffentlichen, "hätte geheißen, der Welt ein schlimm verstümmeltes Bild seines Lebenswerkes zu vermitteln." (von Wright, 1982, 71). Teil I dieser Montage geht auf TS 222 (1-135 und 148-149) zurück, Anhang I auf TS 222 (136-147), Anhang II auf TS 224 (1-10), Anhang III auf TS 223 (1-10); Teil II, Nr. 1-22 auf MS 117 (97-109), Nr. 23-62 auf MS 121 (27r-92v); Teil III, Nr. 1-58 auf MS 122 (4v-112v), Nr. 59-90 auf MS 117 (154-267); Teil IV, Nr. 1-50 auf MS 125 (5v-73v), Teile von Nr. 50 auf MS 126 (12-17), Nr. 51-54 auf MS 125 (75r-79r), Nr. 55-58 auf MS 127 (80-90), Nr. 59 auf MS 125 (67r-68r), Nr. 60 auf MS 121 (74v-75r); Teil V, Nr. 1-34 auf MS 126 (24-157), Nr. 35-53 auf MS 127 (10-230); Teil VI auf MS 164 (1-151); Teil VII auf MS 124 (7-200). Nur die Teile I und VI geben mit Auslassungen einer Reihe von Bemerkungen den Text in etwa so wieder, wie er in den Manuskripten von Wittgenstein entwickelt wird. Alle anderen Teile wurden von den Herausgebern zusammengestellt, wobei einige von Wittgenstein in den Manuskripten behandelte philosophische Themenfelder ausgespart blieben, die der Auffassung der Herausgeber zufolge nicht die *Grundlagen der Mathematik* betrafen. Neben den *persönlichen* Aufzeichnungen wurden offenbar auch stilistisch nicht ausgereift erscheinende Bemerkungen ausgelassen und solche, in denen Wittgenstein selbstkritisch auf das zuvor Geschriebene Bezug nimmt.

Der siebte Band der *Werkausgabe* enthält die *Bemerkungen über die Philosophie der Psychologie* und *Letzte Schriften über die Philosophie*. Beide Titel stammen von den Herausgebern. Die *Bemerkungen über die Philosophie der Psychologie* gehen auf drei Typoskripte zurück, die zwischen 1945 und 1948 entstanden sind: TS 228, das von

Wittgenstein als *Bemerkungen I* bezeichnet wurde, TS 229, die unmittelbare Fortsetzung von TS 228, sowie TS 232, ein Typoskript ohne Titel. Verwirrend ist die Unterteilung der *Bemerkungen über die Philosophie der Psychologie* in "zwei Bände". In der *Werkausgabe* findet sich kein Hinweis darauf, daß hier auf die diesem Text zugrundeliegende, gleichzeitig deutsche und englische Erstveröffentlichung der *Bemerkungen über die Philosophie der Psychologie* bei Basil Blackwell in zwei Bänden Bezug genommen wird (Band 1 und 2, Oxford 1980). Band 1, Nr. 1-11 geht auf TS 228, (S. 186-189) zurück, Nr. 12-1137 auf TS 229 (S. 190-457). Von TS 228 wurden also nur die letzten vier Seiten ausgewählt, während das im Nachlaß mit der Seite 190 beginnende TS 229 vollständig und ohne Auslassungen wiedergegeben wird. Band 2 geht ohne Auslassungen auf TS 232 (600-773) zurück. In diesen drei Typoskripten hat Wittgenstein die Bemerkungen selbst numeriert, doch die Veröffentlichungen folgen nicht der Numerierung der Textquellen. Band 1, Nr. 1 beginnt mit Nr. 699 aus TS 228; in Band 2 wurden einige Numerierungsfehler Wittgensteins ausgeglichen, wodurch auch hier die Nummern nicht mit denen des Typoskripts übereinstimmen. Im Vorwort der Herausgeber zu den *Letzten Schriften über die Philosophie der Psychologie* ist nochmals von "zwei Bänden" die Rede und abermals findet der Leser keinen Hinweis darauf, daß damit auf die diesem Text zugrundeliegende deutsche und englische Erstveröffentlichung der *Letzten Schriften über die Philosophie der Psychologie* in zwei Bänden bei Basil Blackwell Bezug genommen wird (Band 1, Oxford 1982; Band 2, Oxford 1992). Der dabei erwähnte zweite Band, wurde in der *Werkausgabe* zudem überhaupt nicht veröffentlicht. Was hier als Band 1 bezeichnet wird, geht auf zwei Manuskripte zurück; Nr. 1-694 auf MS 137 (76a-143b), Nr. 695-979 auf MS 138 (1a-32b). Die gesamte erste Hälfte des MS 137 wurde nicht berücksichtigt. Ansonsten erfolgte die Veröffentlichung mit nur sehr wenigen Auslassungen. Die Bemerkungsnummern stammen von den Herausgebern.

Der achte Band der *Werkausgabe* enthält die *Bemerkungen über die Farben*, *Über Gewißheit*, *Zettel* und die *Vermischten Bemerkungen*. Die Herausgeber entschieden sich für eine Veröffentlichung der letzten Aufzeichnungen Wittgensteins aus den Jahren 1950 und 1951 in zwei unterschiedlichen Teilen, "obwohl die Manuskripte keine derart krasse Trennung erkennen lassen, und obwohl ein großer Teil der *Bemerkungen über Farben* auch inhaltlich ganz offensichtlich zum Themenkomplex *Über Gewißheit* gehört." (Schulte, 1989, 46). Beide Titel stammen von den Herausgebern. Die *Bemerkungen über die Farben* wurden in drei Teile gegliedert, denen drei verschiedene Manuskripte zugrundeliegen. Teil I geht auf MS 176 (1r-22r) zurück, der kurze Teil II auf MS 172 (21-24), Teil III auf MS 173 (ii-100r). In *Über Gewißheit* gehen Nr. 1-65 auf einen Teil des MS 172 (1-20) zurück, der in den *Bemerkungen über die Farben* nicht berücksichtigt worden war. Die Nr. 66 stammt bereits aus MS 174. Tatsächlich liegt zwischen Nr. 65 und Nr. 66

von *Über Gewißheit* das Manuskript MS 173, das bereits im Teil III der *Bemerkungen über die Farben* wiedergegeben wurde. Ab Nr. 66 werden die letzten Notizbücher Wittgensteins kontinuierlich wiedergegeben. Nr. 66-192 gehen auf MS 174 (14v-40v) zurück, Nr. 193-425 auf MS 175 (1r-79), Nr. 426-637 auf MS 176 (23r-81v), Nr. 638-676 auf MS 177 (1-11). Bei den veröffentlichten Passagen wurden nur wenige Bemerkungen ausgelassen. Die Numerierung der Bemerkungen stammt auch hier von den Herausgebern. Die *Zettel* gehen auf eine von Wittgenstein aus losen Blättern zusammengestellte Sammlung von Bemerkungen zurück, die er in einer Schachtel mit der Aufschrift *Zettel* aufbewahrt hatte. Durch ein Mißgeschick fielen die *Zettel* später heraus, und die Rekonstruktion ihrer ursprünglichen Reihenfolge war nicht mehr möglich. Peter Geach hat eine Neuordnung des gesamten Materials vorgenommen, TS 233, bei der leicht der Eindruck entstehen kann, dieses Arrangement stamme von Wittgenstein. Die von G.H. von Wright herausgegebenen und zusammengestellten *Vermischten Bemerkungen* sind insgesamt 55 Manuskripten des Nachlasses aus allen Schaffensperioden Wittgensteins entnommen. Sie betreffen jene ethischen, ästhetischen oder kulturphilosophischen Bemerkungen, die bei der Veröffentlichung derselben Manuskripte in der *Werkausgabe* meist ausgespart blieben. Aufgrund der Vielzahl von Quellen muß auf Seitenangaben verzichtet werden.

Die Veröffentlichungen in der *Werkausgabe* sind also in hohem Maße von den editorischen Verfahrensweisen und Entscheidungen der Herausgeber geprägt. Die Zusammenstellung scheinbarer Werke Wittgensteins aus unterschiedlichen Manuskripten oder Manuskriptteilen, ihre Bezeichnung mit Titeln, die meist nicht von Wittgenstein stammen, ihre Strukturierung durch Inhaltsverzeichnisse, Kapitel und Bemerkungsnummern und ihre Ergänzung durch Vorwortentwürfe Wittgensteins, läßt die allgemeine Tendenz erkennen, aus dem Nachlaß Publikationen zusammenzustellen, die herkömmlichen Buchkonventionen möglichst weitgehend entsprechen. Betrachtet man jedoch den Nachlaß, so fällt z. B. auf, wie selten Wittgenstein in seinen Manuskripten Bemerkungen numeriert, und wie redundant er seine Bände mit oft identischen Titeln versehen hat. Hinsichtlich einer möglichst textgetreuen Wiedergabe der Quellen weist die *Werkausgabe* für die *Nachlaßforschung* deutliche Mängel auf. Die naheliegende Idee einer kritischen Gesamtausgabe der Schriften Wittgensteins ist nun meines Erachtens durch die *Bergen Electronic Edition* keinesfalls obsolet geworden, sondern sie steht aufgrund der nunmehr vollständigen Transkription des Nachlasses der Möglichkeit ihrer Realisierung vielleicht näher als je zuvor. Meine Ausführungen zur *Werkausgabe* verstehe ich *auch* als einen Beitrag zur Diskussion über die mögliche Form einer Gesamtausgabe, insofern die kritische Evaluierung der bereits existierenden Editionen für diese Diskussion unverzichtbar erscheint.<sup>2</sup>

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## Endnoten

- 1 Für die Bezeichnung der Stücke im Nachlaß verwende ich die von Wright-Numerierung, bei den Seitenangaben beziehe ich mich auf die *Bergen Electronic Edition*, mit der mein Beitrag erarbeitet wurde. Biggs/Pichler (1993) enthält Quellenangaben zu weiteren Veröffentlichungen aus dem Nachlaß.
- 2 Dazu gehören auch die von M. Nedo herausgegebene *Wiener Ausgabe*, sowie Somavilla (1997) als Beispiel für die vollständige Publikation eines Manuskripts auf Grundlage einer am Wittgenstein-Archiv in Bergen entwickelten Transkriptionsmethode.

# Formal Concepts In A Material World

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## Abstract

Taking two clues from Wittgenstein and one from Prior, I try to find out how to determine which are the formal concepts of our language and what it is that makes them formal.

Many uses have been made of the notion of a formal concept. It has been held to explain why we can deduce from " $Fa \wedge Ga$ " that the *same* object is both  $F$  and  $G$ , why we cannot speak of the number of *all* objects without restricting our quantifiers, why " $a$ " refers to  $a$ " *shows*, rather than tells us, what it is that " $a$ " refers to and so on. In this talk, however, I will not use, but mention, the notion of a formal concept and try to find out which formal concepts there are.

The notion of a formal concept is closely bound up with the notion of a tautology. Propositional connectives, e.g., express formal concepts because we use them to build propositional tautologies. Formal concepts are what tautologies have in common and what makes them tautological. The notion of tautology I use, then, is not limited to first-order logical truths. I am with Wittgenstein here:<sup>1</sup>

"Even if there *were* propositions of [the] form " $M$  is a thing" they would be superfluous (tautologous) because what this tries to say is something which is already *seen* when you see " $M$ ." (NDM: 111)

Formal concepts include mathematical (e.g. "number"), logical (e.g. "logical constant") and ontological concepts (e.g. "thing", "proposition", "part / whole"). So the following sentences should come out as tautologies:

- " $p \vee \neg p$ ", for any proposition  $p$ .
- " $\forall x (x = x)$ ", for any variable  $x$ .
- " $\forall x (Fx \rightarrow Fx)$ ", for any predicate  $F$ .
- " $a=a$ ", for any individual constant  $a$ .
- " $n$  is a number", for any numeral  $n$ .



- "a is an object", for any individual constant  $a$ .
- "p is a proposition", for any proposition  $p$ .
- "Every state of affair is complex"
- "x is part of  $x \oplus y$ " (where " $\oplus$ " denotes fusion), for any  $x$  and  $y$  to which the laws of mereology may be applied.

These tautologies will then enable us to recognize " $\forall$ ", " $\nabla$ ", " $=$ ", "... is a number", "... is an object", "... is a proposition", "... is a state of affairs", "... is complex", "... is a part of ... etc. as formal concepts.

To determine which formal concepts there are, I propose the following strategy: Let us accept as fundamental the notion of a tautology. Suppose we had determined a set  $S$  of tautologies in our language. Which would then be our formal concepts? We would have to find a suitable axiomatisation of  $S$ , a recursive set of clauses generating all infinitely many members of  $S$ . A concept could then said to be formal iff it belonged to the primitive vocabulary of our axiomatization. As there are different possible axiomatizations, there will be different and even mutually exclusive sets of formal concepts. But this had to be expected.

Our task, then, is to find a suitable set of tautologies.

## 1. Tautologies

Let us start with two ideas of Wittgenstein. Tautologies are propositions that stay true under all admissible substitutions. Although they may contain names and predicates and thus at least *seem* to ascribe properties to objects, they do not thereby constrain the way these objects may be:

"The combination of symbols in a tautology cannot possibly correspond to any one particular combination of their meanings - it corresponds to every possible combination..." (NDM 118)

Tautologies, furthermore, are propositions the truth of which we decided when we adopted a certain linguistic framework. When we restricted the domain of a certain family of variables to some one logical type and introduced  $a, b, \dots$  as *individual* constants, we already decided of the truth of all propositions of the form "a is an object":

"That  $M$  is a *thing* can't be said; it is nonsense: but *something* is *shewn* by the symbol " $M$ ". In [the] same way, that a *proposition* is a subject-predicate proposition can't be said: but it is *shown* by the symbol." (NDM 109, cf. TLP 4.126)

Both these ideas, while they correctly state properties of tautologies, do not help us if we want to find out which tautologies there are and determine on this basis the formal concepts out of which they are build. Truth under all substitutions means, in effect, truth of all propositions of the same *form*, where material concepts are replaced by other material concepts. Propositions made true by choice of a linguistic framework likewise are propositions containing 'essentially' only words that serve to give our language its structure, i.e. formal concepts. So both features of tautologies presuppose, rather than determine, an independent grasp of the formal concepts in our language.

## 2. Aboutness

The idea which I want to use to break into these circle of interdefinables is the following: Tautologies are true even if they are not *about* the objects of which they contain names.

We can say, for a start, that if a proposition  $p$  is about an object  $a$ ,  $p$  is, if true, true of  $a$ , and, if false, false of  $a$ . So if  $p$  is about  $a$ ,  $a$  has to exist provided  $p$  is to have a truth-value.<sup>3</sup> Suppose  $p$  contains a name for  $a$ . If  $p$  is about  $a$ , it can either be true or false of it, and so in every possible world. If it is true in every possible world where it is about  $a$ , it is never false of  $a$ . It can then be taken to ascribe to  $a$  a property  $a$  has necessarily. Other propositions, however, do not seem to depend for their truth on the existence of objects, although they contain names of them. Whatever our views about the existence of the past and thus about the existence of Socrates, "Socrates walks or does not walk" is true, though perhaps not *about* Socrates. The idea, then, is that tautologies are those truths that do not depend on the existence of any objects, i.e. that may be true without being about the objects of which they contain names.

To make precise this distinction, I propose to use an idea A.N. Prior has found in John Buridan. Suppose possible worlds are sets of latin sentences of the form {Omnis, Quaedam, Nulla} | {propositio, affirmativa, negativa} | {est, non est} | {affirmativa, negativa}. A proposition is true in a world  $w$  iff its latin translation belongs to  $w$  and is true of the latin sentences in  $w$ .<sup>4</sup> Propositions which describe some possible worlds correctly, on the other hand, are true *of* these worlds. A proposition is *possibly-true* iff there is a world in which it is true, and *possible* iff there is a world of which it is true. To be *necessary*, then, a proposition has to be true of all worlds, to be *necessarily-true* it has to be true in all worlds, i.e. true only of all worlds of which it is a part. "Nulla propositio est negativa", e.g., is false in every world, i.e. false of every world of which it is a part, but it may well be true of a world, i.e. a world containing only positive propositions.<sup>5</sup>

To adapt this framework to the distinction we are after, we have to ask ourselves what it takes for a proposition to exist in a world. Observe, first, that the two notions just

introduced are interconnected: If  $p$  is true in  $w$ , then  $w$  is a world such that  $p$  is true of it. Conversely, if  $p$  is true of  $w$  and true in virtue of something, this something will have to exist in  $w$ , making  $p$  true in  $w$ . Tautologies, however, which are propositions not true in virtue of something, may well be true of a world without being true in it. They do not have to be made true in order to be true. What makes a proposition true is a (proper or improper) subset of the objects (and perhaps properties) it is about. So the natural explanation of a proposition's  $p$  being true of  $w$ , while not being true in  $w$ , is that some of the objects  $p$  is about do not exist in  $w$ . For if it existed, they would make  $p$  true, not only of, but in  $w$ .

### 3. Truth by fiat

So we now see that not all propositions depend for their existence on the objects they are about. Tautologies do not. In order for a tautology to exist in a world  $w$ , it is enough that the objects it is about exist *according to  $w$* , that they are taken to exist and named in  $w$ . In this sense, tautologies may be true of a world  $w$  without being true in  $w$  and nevertheless be recognized as tautologies in  $w$ . I take this to be parallel to our ability to state necessary truths about merely possible (or even impossible objects). Take Superman, necessarily identical to Clark Kent and necessarily a person. Likewise, the square circle seems to be necessarily square and round - this is what allows us to recognize that there cannot be such a thing. We do not have to know whether there are unicorns to know that they are animals, if they exist. We do not have to know anything about the bachelors there are to know that they are all unmarried men. So we know necessary truths without knowing anything about the objects they speak about.

Analytic truths, traditionally, are truths not about the world but about language. Even if our world were different, bachelors would still be unmarried men. We have learned from Quine, however, to mistrust the temptation to call analytic truths necessary. They depend on the way we speak, which depends on the way we learnt our words and this in turn cannot neatly separated from all the other things we learnt. But even if they are not necessary, analytic truths do not seem to be contingent neither. So there is a distinction to be made.

The distinction I propose, following Stalnaker (S 9) is the one between "considering a world as actual" and "considering a world as counterfactual". Evaluating  $p$  in a world  $w$  considered as actual is imagining the utterance of " $p$ " to take place in  $w$ . If  $w$  is a world with different semantic facts than ours, the meaning of  $p$  in  $w$  will be different from its actual meaning. If it is true in  $w$  that "tiger" means "sofa" there, then  $w$  is a world where tigers are pieces of furniture.

This contrast corresponds to a difference between indicative and subjunctive conditionals. Of the following two sentences,

- (1) If "tail" would mean "leg", horses would have four tails.
- (2) If "tail" means "leg", horses have four tails.

the first is clearly false: a change in our language cannot change the anatomy of horses. (2), however, seems true: if "tail" and "leg" are synonymous, horses have four tails iff they have four legs. The upshot of this, I think, is that indicative but not subjunctive conditionals can change the language in which their consequent has to be interpreted.

A tautology  $p$ , then, is necessarily-true in the sense that "If  $q$  were true,  $p$  would be false" is false for any  $q$ . It is not necessary, however, for there are  $q$ 's (e.g. propositions supposing our language to be other than it is) that make "If  $q$  is true,  $p$  is false" come out true. The reason for this is that indicative conditionals require only that the consequent is true of every world *in* which the antecedent is true, while subjunctive conditionals require that it be true of every world *of* which the antecedent is true.

#### 4. Vacuous truth

Tautologies, however, are not just truths not true in virtue of something - they also are truths made *vacuously* true by the objects they speak about. They are not necessarily about the objects they contain names of, but they are nevertheless necessarily-true, depending neither for their existence nor for their truth on how the world happens to be. They cannot be false in a world, for this would mean that a contradiction could be made true in some world.

Not any proposition true of a world while not being true in it is true of all possible worlds, however - even given our language. Descartes is famous for having recognized that he exists necessarily, in the sense that "Ego sum" is true "quoties a me profertur, vel mente concipitur" (AT VII 25). As he believed in an omnipotent God, however, who even could make contradictions true, he would not have dared to claim that he exists in every possible world. Propositions like "I exist", "There is an English proposition" and "I am here now" are necessarily-true, their existence being their own truth-maker, while, of course, not being necessary *tout court*.

So we have to make another, and last, distinction: A proposition  $p$  is necessarily about  $a$  iff it true only in worlds where  $a$  exists. Tautologies are necessarily-true, i.e. they are true in all worlds where the objects they are about exist. Not all necessarily-true propositions are tautologies, however: some of them are also necessarily about some of the objects they name, like e.g. " $a$  exists".

## 5. Concluding remarks

What then is a tautology? A proposition which is true in every world, even if it fails there to be about any objects.

We are thus left with two classes of tautologies: propositions true of all worlds, i.e. necessary truths, and necessarily-true propositions which are true in some of the worlds where the objects they are about do not exist and which lack truth-value in others. The first class contains logical formal concepts, the second ontological formal concepts. If we believe that mathematical entities exist according to every world, we classify the formal concepts of mathematics in the first group. If we think that some possible worlds are nominalistic, we put them in the second group.

Tautologies of the ontological kind may fail to be true, without there being anything impeding their truth. This presumably was the reason why Wittgenstein took sentences like "There are two objects", "p is a proposition", "1 is a number", "a=a" to lack any sense (*unsinnig*) (TLP 4.126, 4.1272, 4.1274, 4.243). He may have had his reasons, but I hope to have shown that we are not forced to mimick him.

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## Endnotes

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- 1 Probably, this will not do as an exegesis of Wittgenstein. In the *Tractatus* he distinguishes sentences like "a is an object" from the tautologies of the propositional calculus. While the former are "unsinnig" (and thus not part of the sensible language), the latter are only "sinnlos" (devoid of sense, i.e. having empty truth-conditions) (TLP 4.1272, 4.4611). My use of "tautology" thus is broader than Wittgenstein's.
  - 2 Please replace quotation marks with Quine corners where necessary.
  - 3 This meshes with a standard view about essence, according to which  $p$  is true in virtue of the nature of  $a$  iff  $p$  is true in every world where  $a$  exists and  $a$  depends on  $b$  iff there is a proposition about  $b$  which is true in virtue of the nature of  $a$ , i.e. true in any world where  $a$  exists. Any proposition giving the essence of  $a$  will then also be about  $b$ , in conformity with the claim that  $a$  depends on  $b$  iff we have to mention  $b$  to say what  $a$  is (F 68). As propositions exist iff they have a truth-value (since they have essentially a truth-value if they have one), a proposition  $p$  may be said to be ontologically dependent on any object  $a$  it is about, the proposition in case being " $p$  is about  $a$ ", which is true in virtue of  $p$  and about  $a$ . Thanks to Fabrice Correia for having made me see this.
  - 4 So "Omnis propositio est affirmativa." is true in  $w$  iff it is in  $w$  and there is no proposition in  $w$  which either begins with "nulla" or has "non est" for its copula.
  - 5 The reason for this is that we did not assume our valuations to be total. If we made them total, every world  $w$  would either contain  $p$  or  $\neg p$ . One of them, suppose  $p$ , would be true of  $w$ . So either  $p$  would be true in  $w$  or  $\neg p$  would be false in  $w$ . In both cases,  $p$  could not be false in  $w$ .

# Wittgensteins Rettung des Nicht-Identischen

Jens Kertscher

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## I.

Die Auffassung, daß der "...sprachliche Sinn [...] sein Sein in einem Prozeß der Interpretation" (Wellmer 1999, 60) hat, scheint zu den Gemeinplätzen der gegenwärtigen Sprachphilosophie zu gehören. Aus der Sicht einer hermeneutisch orientierten Sprachphilosophie hat die Alltäglichkeit des reibungslosen Umgangs mit Bedeutungen die Tatsache verdeckt, daß die Berechtigung von Bedeutungszuschreibungen tatsächlich von Interpretationen abhängt. Die Urszene der Kommunikation besteht demnach nicht im reibungslosen Vertrautsein zwischen den Mitgliedern einer Sprachgemeinschaft, sondern in der Fremdheit zwischen Personen, die wenig miteinander ge-meinsam haben. Verstehen und Interpretieren treten damit als Grundoperationen der Kommunikation in den Vordergrund des sprachphilosophischen Interesses. Wittgenstein habe dagegen der Tatsache, daß es bei der Sprache nicht nur darauf ankommt, daß gesprochen wird, sondern vielmehr, daß das Gesprochene verstanden wird, nicht genügend Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt. Der von ihm zugrundegelegte Fall des fraglosen Verstehens und seine Verankerung der Sprache in den Konventionen einer Sprachgemeinschaft zeichne somit ein einseitiges Bild der Kommunika-tionsprozesse.<sup>1</sup>

Diese Sicht auf Wittgensteins Philosophie ist allerdings in mehrfacher Hinsicht problematisch. Die Fixierung auf das Verstehenwollen verkennt nicht nur, daß Wittgensteins Sicht auf die Sozialität sprachlicher Kommunikation durchaus differenzierter ist. Vor allem wird der Status seines Verweises auf die in einer Lebensform eingebettete gemeinsame Sprache verkannt. Seine Funkti-on ist nicht primär, ein sprachphilosophisches Problem aufzulösen durch den schlichten Hinweis auf die Faktizität gelingender Kommunikation, sondern er impliziert eine ethische Dimension im Sinne der Akzeptanz von Kontingenz und irreduzibler Differenz. Man könnte dies Wittgensteins Rettung des Nicht-Identischen nennen. Wenn diese Vermutung zutrifft, dann lautet die Frage nicht mehr, ob dem blinden Verstehen oder dem mehr oder weniger bewußten Interpretieren der Vorrang einzuräumen sei. Das Problem der hermeneutischen Sprachauffassung besteht vielmehr darin, daß sie, indem sie den Primat des Verstehens proklamiert, Gefahr läuft, eine unüberbrück-bare Spannung zwischen Ausdruck und Identifizierung zu verdecken. Wittgensteins Philosophie erlaubt es, diese Gefahr zu erkennen, indem sie lehrt die Fragilität des Sprachspiels, das *Nicht-*

*Wissen des Anderen* (Cavell) anzunehmen. Die Unverzichtbarkeit der Philosophie ergibt sich vor dem Hintergrund dieser Einsicht nicht mehr aus der Notwendigkeit, Erfahrung interpretativ zu bewältigen, sondern aus der Forderung, die Spannung zwischen dem Nicht-Wissen des Anderen und der Vertrautheit, dem philosophisch motivierten Ausbruch aus den normalen Sprachspielen und die Annahme der kontingenten, menschlichen Lebensform zu artikulieren.

## II.

Wenn das Verstehen fremder Äußerungen auf keine festen Grundlagen in Gestalt stabiler Bedeutungen mehr vertrauen kann, also Deutungsabhängig bleibt, wie kann dann ein Sprecher *wissen*, was der andere meint? Man könnte hier die Gegenfrage stellen: Wenn die Verständigung in der Sprache doch meistens blind funktioniert, warum soll sie dann einer zusätzlichen Versicherung bedürfen? Der Hermeneutiker kann diese Frage mit dem Hinweis beantworten, daß den Handlungen und Aussagen eines Individuums verschiedene Bedeutungen zugeschrieben werden können und demnach anscheinend keinerlei neutrales Faktum zu identifizieren ist, das es erlaubt, die Bedeutung dessen festzulegen, was ein Individuum meint, sagt oder tut. Bezieht man diese Überlegungen auf Wittgensteins Erörterung des Regelfolgens, kann man das Problem so formulieren, daß jede Anwendung eines Zeichens ebenso vereinzelt dasteht wie das Zeichen selbst, das in zukünftigen Fällen wiederum verschieden aktualisiert werden kann. Das würde bedeuten, daß erst in dem Moment klar ist, was es heißt, eine Regel korrekt fortzusetzen, wenn das Zeichen auf bestimmte Weise interpretiert wurde. Die Unterscheidung zwischen Anwendungen, die mit der Bedeutung des Zeichens übereinstimmen und solchen, die das nicht tun, ist nur auf der Grundlage einer adäquaten Interpretation möglich. Mit dieser Auffassung wird zugleich der Bedeutungsbegriff im Sinne einer stabilen Entität in Frage gestellt, denn wenn Verstehen Interpretieren heißt, dann bedarf jede Interpretation wiederum einer Interpretation, um einen bestimmten Zeichengebrauch determinieren zu können. Wittgenstein hat dies bekanntlich als Paradox formuliert: "Unser Paradox war dies: eine Regel könnte keine Handlungsweise bestimmen, da jede Anwendung mit der Regel in Übereinstimmung zu bringen sei. Die Antwort war: Ist jede mit der Regel in Übereinstimmung zu bringen, dann auch zum Widerspruch. Daher gäbe es hier weder Übereinstimmung noch Widerspruch." (PU § 201). Die Idee der Übereinstimmung löst sich hier selbst auf, denn durch den von Wittgenstein bemerkten Interpretationsregreß läßt sich jede Handlung in Übereinstimmung mit jeder Interpretation der jeweiligen Regel bringen. In jedem Fall müßte eine neue Entscheidung getroffen werden. Daraus folgt nicht nur, daß Regeln keine Garantien für adäquates Verstehen gewähren, sondern auch, daß der Regelbegriff verabschiedet werden kann.<sup>3</sup>



Der Verzicht auf den Regelbegriff als sprachphilosophische Kategorie und die Dynamisierung des Bedeutungsbegriffs führen den Hermeneutiker allerdings nicht in die semantische Anarchie. Sprachlicher Sinn stellt sich in der gemeinsamen Interaktion her und bildet sich aus im Prozeß der Kommunikation. Dabei wird vorausgesetzt, daß Sprecher über eine Menge gemeinsamer wahrer Überzeugungen verfügen, die Verständigung durch progressive Annäherung der Perspektiven prinzipiell ermöglichen. Der konstitutive Wahrheitsbezug des Sprechens sowie die hermeneutischen Präsumptionsregeln sollen das unendliche Spiel der Interpretationen, der wechselseitigen Korrektur von Sinnzuschreibungen vor dem Abgleiten in Beliebigkeit bewahren. Verstehen ist dann das Ereignis, in dem die in Vorgriffen sedimentierten Interpretationsstrategien der Kommunizierenden anlässlich einzelner Äußerungen zur Deckung gelangen.

### III.

Wittgenstein nimmt eine andere Perspektive ein: Die Praxis geht dem Regelfolgen voraus und das Zeichenhafte der Sprache wird umgekehrt hin zu dem transzendent, was sich in der Praxis *zeigt*. Gerade weil die Auffassung des Regelfolgens als Deutung in einen Regreß von Regeln für Regeln führt, so der springende Punkt seiner Argumentation, ist auch nicht jede Handlungsweise mit einer Deutung der Regel zu vereinbaren.<sup>4</sup> Nach Wittgenstein wird eine Sprache nicht so gesprochen wie sie gesprochen wird, weil die Sprecher bestimmten Regeln folgen. Der sprachliche Ausdruck 'Regel' muß vielmehr in Zusammenhang gebracht werden mit einer erlernten Reaktionsweise, die wiederum in einer dazugehörigen Praxis verankert ist.<sup>5</sup> Erst die Anwendung der Regel ist ein Kriterium dafür, daß ihr jemand tatsächlich folgt. Der Verweis auf bestehende Gepflogenheiten, und die Charakterisierung des Regelfolgens als Institution fassen diese Einbettung des Gebrauchs von Regelausdrücken in von ihnen bestimmte Handlungsweisen zusammen.<sup>6</sup> Die Kluft zwischen der Regel und ihrer Anwendung, muß demnach nicht durch Interpretationstheorien überbrückt werden. Das bedeutet auf der anderen Seite, daß jede Anwendung einer Regel mit einer grundlegenden Ungewißheit behaftet ist, die nur dadurch abgefedert wird, daß der Handelnde sich zugleich immer auf etwas verläßt: "Ich will eigentlich sagen, daß ein Sprachspiel nur möglich ist, wenn man sich auf etwas verläßt. (Ich habe nicht gesagt 'auf etwas verlassen kann'.)" (ÜG § 509). Die ergänzende Bemerkung markiert die Differenz zu einem Denken, das sich von dieser abgründigen Fragilität der Sprachspiele beunruhigen läßt, indem sie die Ungewißheit herausstellt, die jedem Vertrauen innewohnt und jeder Diskursivität innerhalb des Sprachspiels vorausgeht.

Das Faktum des Mißverstehens, erscheint bei Wittgenstein vor diesem Hintergrund in einem anderen Licht. Regeldeutung wird zu einem semiotischen Phänomen, bei dem

ausschließlich Re-gelbeschreibungen ineinander überführt werden. Die Frage, was ein Sprecher mit einer Äußerung gemeint hat, wird "durch einen Satz beantwortet, der den unverstandenen Satz ersetzt." (PG § 3) Etwas pointiert könnte man daher sagen, daß das wahrheitsbezogene, auf Wissen gerichtete hermeneutische Spiel der Interpretationen bei Wittgenstein einem semiotischen Spiel der Erklärung von Zeichen durch andere Zeichen weicht: "Wenn man aber sagt: 'Wie soll ich wissen, was er meint, ich sehe ja nur seine Zeichen', so sage ich: 'Wie soll er wissen, was er meint, er hat ja auch nur seine Zeichen.'" (PU § 504) Ausdrücke wie 'Bedeutung' oder auch 'Regel' sind insofern dis-kursive Phänomene als sie an den Begriff der 'Erklärung' gebunden sind.<sup>7</sup> Die Sprache selbst ist jedoch kein diskursives Phänomen. Eine Regel, sofern sie in Anwendungskontexten relevant ist, ist demnach von der Formulierung der Regel in Interpretationssituationen abzugrenzen. Im Rückgriff auf Wittgensteins Unterscheidung zwischen *sagen* und *zeigen* kann man dann behaupten, daß Regeln sich nur zeigen, aber nicht formuliert werden. Geschieht dies doch, dann in Situationen kommunikativer Disharmonie. In solchen Fällen sind die Sprecher aber wiederum auf eine Übereinstimmung angewiesen, die nicht gleichzeitig zur Disposition gestellt werden kann, und ihre dabei vorgebrachten Erklärungen sind keine Erklärungen ihrer Praxis insgesamt.<sup>8</sup>

Auf diese Weise kann Wittgenstein dem Begriff der Übereinstimmung ein Recht verleihen, nach-dem dieser Begriff sich durch das Interpretationserfordernis der Hermeneutiker aufzulösen drohte und der Stabilität gerecht werden, die unsere Urteile bisweilen haben mögen.

#### IV.

Die von Wittgenstein betonte Kontingenz und Endlichkeit der Regeln sowie die Fragilität des Sprachspiels sind ebensowenig Indiz für das Scheitern des Regelbegriffs wie die Sprache dadurch grundsätzlich unzuverlässig wird, daß sie auf bloßer Übereinstimmung beruht.<sup>9</sup> Übereinstimmung ist aber nicht nur eine hinzunehmende Gegebenheit der endlichen menschlichen Lebensformen. Der Verweis auf die Lebensformen ist zudem Notwendig, weil eine strikte Trennung von sprachlichem und nicht-sprachlichem Handeln unmöglich ist. Der Zeichencharakter der Sprache wird ausgeweitet, indem Sprachverwendung nicht auf den Wortgebrauch eingeschränkt, sondern als ein Zusammenspiel von sprachlichen und nicht-sprachlichen Ausdrucksphänomenen gedacht wird, bei dem Gestik, Mimik, Klang, Blick usw. zu berücksichtigen sind. Wenn Wittgenstein daher am Ende der Begründungen konstatiert: "So handle ich eben" (PU § 217), dann überschrei-tet das so die Sprache hin zu dem, was sich als Ausdrucksphänomen zeigt und auf das andere Sprecher reagieren, wenn sie damit

konfrontiert werden. Demnach wäre, wie Stanley Cavell hervorgehoben hat, das Verstehen bei Wittgenstein weniger ein kognitives als ein Phänomen der Reaktion auf Expressivität.<sup>10</sup> Die sich einstellende Kenntnis der anderen ist daher in starkem Maße von dem abhängig, was sie ausdrücken und wir unsererseits anerkennen: "[M]ein ist, wie wenn man auf jemanden zugeht." (PU § 457). Durch die Forderung der Anerkennung wird der Sprecher auf eine Verantwortung zurückgeworfen, der er sich weder durch Berufung auf eine Regel noch durch die Sicherheit eines als solches bestimmtes Verstehens entbinden kann.<sup>11</sup>

Das Erstaunen über die Tiefe der Übereinstimmung und über die Beruhigung, die von dem ge-währt wird, worauf man sich verläßt, kann die Erfahrung irreduzibler Fremdheit daher auch niemals überdecken. Obwohl Wittgenstein die Gemeinsamkeit der menschlichen Handlungsweise als letzten Bezugspunkt betont hat, war er sich der Tatsache Bewußt, daß die Reaktionen und Wahrnehmungen des (sprachlichen) Verhaltens anderer problematisch sein können, und zwar gerade deshalb, weil dieses Verhalten expressiv ist. Dieser Fall ist aber kein Mißlingen von Erkenntnis, das Scheitern einer Hypothese, sondern ein Scheitern der Anerkennung, das, wie bei der Zuschreibung psychischer Zustände generell, mit der Unfähigkeit zutun hat, den anderen als lebendigen Körper, als menschliches Wesen zu sehen: "Meine Einstellung zu ihm ist eine Einstellung zur Seele. Ich habe nicht die *Meinung*, daß er eine Seele hat" (PU II, S. 495).<sup>12</sup> Oder aber es hängt mit unüberbrückbaren Unterschieden zusammen und der Feststellung, daß wir nicht auf die gleiche Art leben, vielleicht nicht einmal in derselben Welt. Dort, wo die Begründung ein Ende hat, wird immer auch eine Grenze gezogen und der Einzelne bleibt mit sich allein, auf sich als einzige Grundlage rückbezogen, wird gewahr, daß es kein 'wir' gibt: Ich bin jetzt hier und tue dies.<sup>13</sup>

## V.

So wird deutlich, daß nicht nur die Regeln und die ihnen vorausgehenden Lebensformen unsicher sind; auch die Übereinstimmung selbst kann jederzeit scheitern, nicht nur im Mißverständnis, sondern in der grundlegenden Form des Rätselhaften, das eine fremde Lebensform oder ein einzelner Mensch immer sein kann: "Wir sagen von einem Menschen, er sei uns durchsichtig. Aber es ist für diese Betrachtung wichtig, daß ein Mensch für einen anderen ein völliges Rätsel sein kann. Das erfährt man dann, wenn man in ein fremdes Land mit gänzlich fremden Traditionen kommt; und zwar auch dann, wenn man die Sprache des Landes beherrscht. Man *versteht* diesen Menschen nicht. [...] Wir können uns in sie nicht finden." (PU II, S. 568). Diese Kluft zwischen Übereinstimmung und Abspaltung kann durch den hermeneutischen Gestus des Verstehenswollens ebensowenig überbrückt werden wie die Kluft zwischen Ausdruck und

Identifizierung. Als solche sind die Kluft und Abspaltung aber ebenso konstitutiv für unsere endlichen Lebensformen wie die Übereinstimmung.

Die Einsicht in die Ambivalenz der menschlichen Lebensformen bleibt nicht ohne Konsequenzen für die Philosophie selbst. Sie erinnert daran, daß ein Verstehen, wenn es eines gibt, es nicht als solches bestimmt werden kann. Verstehen wäre dann, um es mit einem Wort Derridas zu umschreiben, als ein immer "suspendiertes Verhältnis" (Derrida 1999, 194) offen zu halten. Indem die Philosophie sich ihre Verankerung in der Sprache bewußt macht und darauf beharrt, daß wir beachten müssen, was mit uns und unseren Worten geschieht, wenn wir philosophieren, wird sie zum Ort, an dem das Schwanken zwischen dem Willen zur Beherrschung der Unsicherheit und die Einsicht in ihre Akzeptanz ausgetragen wird. Wittgenstein hat für dieses Ringen der Philosophie mit der Sprache und der Sprache mit sich selbst in der Philosophie eindrucksvolle Bilder gefunden: "Hier ist es schwer, gleichsam den Kopf oben zu behalten, - zu sehen, daß wir bei den Dingen des alltäglichen Lebens bleiben müssen, um nicht auf den Abweg zu geraten, wo es wir doch wieder mit unsern Mitteln gar nicht beschreiben könnten. Es ist uns, als sollten wir ein Spinnennetz mit unsern Fingern in Ordnung bringen." (PU § 106)

Der Wunsch, die Probleme der Philosophie definitiv zum Verschwinden zu bringen wäre dem-nach Ergebnis derselben Haltung, die diese Probleme erzeugt hat. Eine philosophische Antwort ist dagegen durch die Ernsthaftigkeit und Unermüdllichkeit gekennzeichnet, mit der sie Klarheit wiederherzustellen und dabei dem Endlichen, Kontingenten und Singulären gerecht zu werden versucht. Um aber diese Alterität nicht zu verraten, muß sie die Spannung artikulieren, die beide Seiten - den Ausbruch aus dem Sprachspiel und den angestrebten Frieden in den Gedanken, Ausdruck und Identifizierung, Vertrauen und Fremdheit - unversöhnlich nebeneinander stehen läßt. Diese Spannung ist eine Negativität, die im beständigen Gegensatz zu den alltäglichen Lebensformen steht und ihnen immanent ist. Neben dem Hervorheben des alltäglichen Sprachgebrauchs verlangt Philosophie eine ihm gegenüber nachdenkliche Haltung, die stets aufmerksam gegenüber den eigenen Behauptungen bleibt, und die, während sie zur Restituierung der endlichen Lebensform aufruft, gleichzeitig ihren gegenwärtigen Verlust betrauert.

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## Endnoten

- 1 Wellmer (1999, 56f.).
- 2 Ebd., 59.
- 3 So Davidson (1990, 390f.).
- 4 Zum Regreß vgl. PU § 86, ferner Z § 229: "Eine Deutung ist doch etwas, was in Zeichen gegeben wird. Es ist diese Deutung, im Gegensatz zu einer anderen (die anders lautet). - Wenn man also sagen wollte 'jeder Satz be-darf noch einer Deutung', so hieße das: kein Satz kann ohne einen Zusatz verstanden werden."
- 5 Wittgenstein gebraucht in diesem Zusammenhang das Beispiel von Wegweisern, die verknüpft sind mit der Handlungsweise, ihnen in die Richtung, in die sie zeigen, zu folgen: "ich bin zu einem bestimmten Reagieren auf diese Zeichen abgerichtet worden, und so reagiere ich nun." (PU § 198).
- 6 PU §§ 198 f. und 202.
- 7 Vgl. Majetschak (1995, 371).
- 8 So Krämer (2001, 129f.).
- 9 Darauf hat Stanley Cavell (1999, 44f.) aufmerksam gemacht.
- 10 Vgl. Cavell (1999: 241).
- 11 Ebd., 368f. und 312.
- 12 Dazu ausführlich Cavell (1999, 378ff.).
- 13 Ebd., 19f.

# When Whistling is Saying

Andy King

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## I

WITTGENSTEIN advises us in the Preface to the *Philosophical Investigations* that his later work can "be seen in the right light *only* by contrast with and against the background" of his Tractarian *Denkweise*. For many years it was accepted that the *Tractatus* relied on the say-show distinction to communicate 'numerous ineffable truths' about the nature of language and the world.<sup>1</sup> Recently however, building on the work of Cora Diamond, a group of scholars have challenged the predominant so-called 'metaphysical' interpretation in the form of what has become known as the 'therapeutic reading'. In a radical departure from the prevailing orthodoxy they argue that far from promulgating a series of 'ineffable truths' the *Tractatus* actually seeks to undermine both the *lure* and coherence of this idea through the deployment of nonsensical propositions in a complex and ironic self-subverting ladder.

While the specifics of this debate is not the concern of the present paper, it does form its backdrop, for what interests me here is the common foundations that structure it. It seems to me that one can summarise this with the assistance of Frank Ramsey's succinct criticism of the *Tractatus* that, "what we can't say we can't say, and we can't whistle it either" (1990, 146). Indeed P.M.S. Hacker, the foremost apologist for the metaphysical interpretation, does exactly this.<sup>2</sup> So, broadly speaking, on the one hand Hacker, Ramsey and the other advocates of the metaphysical reading argue that Wittgenstein sought to communicate that which cannot be said, while on the other hand, the protagonists of the therapeutic reading claim not merely that Wittgenstein was not trying to whistle it, but furthermore, that there is *nothing* to be whistled; nonsense is nonsense, good and plain. Both camps therefore, as Marie McGinn puts it, share the same "general assumption that if Wittgenstein's remarks contain anything, then it must be ineffable truths about the nature of reality" (1999, 498).

Having identified the territory of the current controversy in this way it is clear that the crux of the debate resides in the specifics of the relation between Wittgenstein's nonsense propositions and showing. To begin with let us examine the nuance of Hacker's reading of the *Tractatus*. Hacker contends that it is possible to mean things that are inexpressible.<sup>3</sup>

What one *means* when one tries to state these insights is perfectly correct, but the endeavour must unavoidably fail. For the ineffable manifests itself, and cannot be said. He was indeed, as Ramsey claimed, trying to whistle it...

Apparently what someone else means or intends by a remark can be grasped even though the sentence uttered is strictly speaking nonsense (2000, 382; 1989, 26).

Here and elsewhere Hacker argues that Wittgenstein shows forth ineffable truths by *trying to state* (i.e. say) them. So although he admits that Wittgenstein is aware that all attempts to say the ineffable inevitably fail to *state* it because what is shown cannot be said in the language of scientific propositions, he suggests that the very *attempt* to do so provides the vehicle by which the inexpressible, namely what Wittgenstein 'meant' to say, is shown forth.<sup>4</sup>

This approach seems to me to engender confusion. Hacker's suggestion that Wittgenstein seeks to communicate ineffable 'truths' through the *act*, albeit indirectly, of *trying to state* them, implies that in the process of attempting to state the inexpressible Wittgenstein 'means' something that is 'perfectly correct'. As such, Hacker leads us to believe that Wittgenstein attempts to communicate these 'truths' as if they were comparable to descriptions of ordinary experiences; for what is 'meant' were Wittgenstein trying to communicate something sayable would also be 'correct'. On this account, the only difference between 'meaning' something sayable and 'meaning' something ineffable, is that communication of the latter cannot occur through directly *stating* the truths but rather only indirectly, somehow, in the failure of such truths to be *stated* in spite of their being 'meant' or 'present' in Wittgenstein's mind.

In supposing that Wittgenstein proposes to communicate 'inexpressible truths' by *attempting* to state them, just as he would were he describing something in the world, Hacker presents *showing* as a parallel activity of saying and thereby distorts our understanding of what Wittgenstein's means by the inexpressible. Hacker portrays showing as what one does when one wants to communicate something but knows one cannot say it. Thus when the author means to communicate an ineffable insight it is implied that he can rest content that it will be shown forth simply by his *trying* to say it. However, this is to construe the ineffable as if it were a '*thing*' to be shown. In essence therefore Hacker treats the genesis of our communication of showable insights in an identical way to the genesis of authentic propositions, which supposes that it makes sense to speak of Wittgenstein's 'meaning' ineffable *some things*, correctly or otherwise, when it is exactly this notion that Wittgenstein wants to undermine.

As such, my dispute lies with Hacker's interpretation of 'ineffable truth' in the *Tractatus* insofar it presents showing in terms appropriate only to saying. While his

account may be suitable for certain forms of Tractarian showing it remains an inappropriate mechanism for outlining Wittgenstein's ethical and religious intent. If I am correct, far from preserving the show-say distinction against the attack of the therapeutic protagonists, Hacker's claim that Wittgenstein *tries* to *state* '*meant*' 'ineffable truths' in the text of his book in fact confounds the dissonance between what is shown and *what* is said and thereby undermines the 'cardinal' importance of this distinction to philosophy.<sup>5</sup> The mistake is, in effect, to treat whistling, i.e. showing (at least in the context of ethics), as a poor man's saying.<sup>6</sup>

## II

In numerous places in his early work up to, and including, the 'Lecture on Ethics', Wittgenstein states explicitly that what is shown cannot be said. Of ethics, he writes, 'we cannot speak'; it is 'transcendental', the world seen from outside.<sup>7</sup> He also speaks of 'contemplating' or 'feeling' the world as a limited whole, that is, viewing it *sub specie aeterni*, as the mystical; *that* the world is, as opposed to, *how* the world is.<sup>8</sup>

At first sight the 'Lecture' appears to undertake a systematic *analysis* of a selection of paradigmatic ethical and religious expressions, concluding that *any* attempt to give an account of something inexpressible, such as absolute value, will of necessity result in nonsense.<sup>9</sup> On this much the 'Lecture' is clear: Because ethics has nothing to do with *how* the world is, nothing, that is, to do with authentic thoughts, it *cannot of necessity* be rendered into propositions without producing nonsense. Thus, the book of all true propositions will contain "simply facts, facts, and facts but no Ethics" (1993, 40).

This, Wittgenstein observes, tempts us to conceive that our conception of analysis is insufficient, for analysis either denudes ethical expressions of their significance, or reveals their inherent nonsensicality. Locked into the perspective of scientific propositions, we think ethical expressions attempt to do the impossible; it seems that "we cannot express what we want to express" (1993, 44). Wittgenstein gives voice to this temptation by suggesting that many of us will be 'perfectly clear' that the tension between the ubiquitous tendency to speak in this way, and the inability of analysis to confer sense on these expressions, can be resolved by identifying a further dimension to logical analysis—a conclusion that would mirror Wittgenstein's aborted paper 'Some Remarks on Logic Form'.<sup>10</sup> Unlike that paper however, this is categorically *not* what Wittgenstein concludes. In defiance of that suggestion he replies:

Now when this is urged against me I at once see clearly, as it were *in a flash of light*, not only that *no* description that I can think of would do to describe what I meant by absolute value, but that I would reject *every* significant description that



anybody could possibly suggest, *ab initio*, on the ground of its significance. That is to say: I see now that these nonsensical expressions were not nonsensical because I had not yet found the correct expressions, but that their nonsensicality was *their very essence* (1993, 44; my emphases).

Not only does Wittgenstein point out that ethical expressions are essentially nonsensical but he explicitly renounces 'the scientific way of looking' at them insofar as it treats them as 'significant descriptions' couched in 'significant language'. In short, he eschews the appropriateness of treating ethical expressions as subject to the same kind of analysis as contingent factual descriptions. By emphasising the fact that humans *do* seek to express themselves religiously and ethically, and moreover, that this tendency is one to be revered, Wittgenstein puts clear water between himself and the Logical Positivists-as Engelmann testifies-scientific language fails to constitute an adequate vessel for capturing the ethical, aesthetic and religious dimension of the human predicament.<sup>11</sup> If we read his conclusion that "Ethics can be no science" in this light, it is clear that what seem like genuine attempts to treat ethics as a science in the 'Lecture' *when taken together* as an activity in fact constitute an elaborate *reductio* of that very idea.

The real point of the 'Lecture' is thus in tension with its *prima facie* content.<sup>12</sup> It explores the treatment of ethics as a science to conclude, as analysis demands, that all such expressions are nonsense, only then to suggest that it is our *proclivity* to treat these expressions as 'significant descriptions' that is at fault, as opposed to the method of analysis *qua* analysis, or the expressions themselves. If we transfer this reading to the numerous *Tractatus* passages where Wittgenstein also seemingly attempts to express the ineffable, whether it be something ethical, religious or mystical, it becomes clear that what seems like a series of attempts, be they direct or indirect, to convey the inexpressible with words, is rather a cohesive effort to make the opposite clear, namely, that, of necessity, no expression can 'convey' such things. Read in this manner, the *Tractatus*, like the 'Lecture', stands as a critique of the desire to attempt such enterprises insofar as they misconstrue the nature of the ineffable.

At the culmination of this *cohesive* series of attempts the reader apprehends, as Wittgenstein intimates, 'in a flash of light', that any concerted attempt to put the inexpressible into words betrays a distorted grasp of the character of the inexpressible. Insofar as she is aware that one cannot 'mean' anything ethical in 'significant language', no longer can her utterances be envisaged as attempts to state a genuine inexpressible 'insight'. The ethical thus is not *anything* at all; indeed one cannot even 'mean' it as one would mean a thought. Describing something about the world, indeed, thinking or meaning anything is hence qualitatively opposed to expressing oneself ethically. Ethical

expressions do not convey Tractarian thoughts. In contradistinction with Hacker and Ramsey then, what is 'meant' by Wittgenstein's apparent attempts to state these insights is entirely *incorrect*. Just like tautologies then, Wittgenstein's ethical propositions neither state anything nor attempt to state anything, although both create the illusion of stating *and* seeking to state something.

### III

In closing I wish to present Hacker's work in a more positive light by offering some tentative suggestions about how we might regard Wittgenstein's ethical endeavour both in the *Tractatus* and the 'Lecture'. For it seems to me that Hacker's suggestion that Wittgenstein attempts to *state* the ineffable is also *half* right. Wittgenstein says that he comes to see, 'in a flash of light' as it were, that he would reject the ethical candidacy of "every significant description that anybody could suggest, *ab initio*, on the grounds of its significance" (1993, 44). That is, the inexpressible nature of 'absolute value' *comes to him in a flash* at the culmination of an authorial activity which seeks to effect a similar revelation in the reader by engaging her in the same practice so as she sees that what seem *prima facie* like attempts to describe the ethical are in fact *not* genuine attempts to do so in any sense, but rather only apparent attempts to do so. In coming to apprehend this the reader becomes aware that the nonsense propositions of Wittgenstein's strategy are actually individually in tension with what they purport to do. One thereby surmounts *them* as a whole, (6.53) through being complicit in the peculiar self-subversive *activity* Wittgenstein's authorial strategy embodies, an activity which stands as a *critique* of the desire to pass off nonsense as senseful, be it ethical or otherwise.

The success of this strategy requires that *we reject* the notion that the inexpressible can be conveyed outright. We see rather that Wittgenstein employs language against itself in the *self-conscious* effort to do things he knows it cannot do so as to undermine the idea that the ineffable is a *something* or other. This emphasises that the inexpressible or unutterable is revealed in the nature of an *activity* as opposed to simply *saying* it.

The poem by Uhland is really magnificent. And this is how it is: if *only* you do not try to utter what is unutterable then *nothing* gets lost. But the unutterable will be \* unutterably \* *contained* in what has been uttered.<sup>13</sup>

In insisting that we must not *try* to utter the unutterable, Wittgenstein does not advocate *complete* silence. Rather, silence is to be balanced against saying something, the unutterable is 'contained' in what is uttered, only insofar as one doesn't try to *state* it. Moreover, as he points out in the *Investigations*, we approach ethics not by *saying*

something but through the *activity* of saying everything and nothing—that is, by negating the structure of sameness and difference that differentiates the things that can be said.<sup>14</sup> As such, contra Hacker, one cannot 'mean' the ineffable merely by trying to state it, but rather by *doing* something. What then, Wittgenstein wonders, is the role of talking in religion and ethics?

"Is talking essential to religion? I can well imagine a religion in which there are no doctrinal propositions, in which there is thus no talking. Obviously the essence of religion cannot have anything to do with the fact that there is talking, or rather: when people talk, then this itself is part of a religious *act* and *not* a *theory*. Thus it also *does not matter at all* if the words used are true or false or nonsense" (1979, 117).<sup>15</sup>

Here Wittgenstein makes clear that religious utterances must be considered in the context of their associated *activities* in contradistinction, we note, from the isolation in which the *Tractatus* analyses factual propositions. Hence the 'atomic' kind of analysis appropriate to ordinary factual language is inappropriate to religious and ethical utterances because they are *acts* not merely descriptions. In this lies the seed of much of Wittgenstein's later thought.

If this is correct, both Wittgenstein's 'Lecture' and *Tractatus* employ isomorphic strategies to those found in the deliberate apophatic *activities* of Meister Eckhart. As way of a parting shot I shall end by noting that this need not be as surprising as one might think given that Wittgenstein's foremost early influence Schopenhauer drew heavily on the work of Eckhart, calling it "the most perfect explanation, springing from deep and inward conviction, of what I have described as the denial of the will-to-live" (1969, 387), i.e., the most perfect explanation of the apotheosis of his philosophical system. Wittgenstein, perhaps by way of Schopenhauer, in turn by way of Eckhart, admits of his ethical expressions in the 'Lecture':

For all I wanted to do with them was just *to go beyond* the world and that is to say beyond significant language (1993, 44).

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## Endnotes

- 1 See Hacker 2000, 353.
- 2 See Hacker 2000, 357, 368, 382 (cited below).
- 3 See Hacker 2000, 368.
- 4 See Hacker's discussion of 'illuminating nonsense': 1989, ch.1. For a persuasive and contrasting reading of the remarks on solipsism see Mounce 1981, ch. 9 and 1997.
- 5 In a letter to Russell (19.8.1919) Wittgenstein (1995, 124) suggests that the problem of what can be said and what cannot be said but can be shown is the 'cardinal problem of philosophy'.
- 6 This is ironic as it is well acknowledged that the metaphysical reading stresses the say-show distinction.
- 7 Wittgenstein 1922, 6.423, 6.421; 1979, 83 (7.10.1916): "the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*."

- 8 Wittgenstein 1922, 6.45, 6.44.
- 9 Wittgenstein 1993, 44.
- 10 See Wittgenstein 1993, 44.
- 11 Engelmann's comments are quoted and discussed by Hacker 2000, 372-373. See also Wittgenstein 1993, 40, there is more water than can be held in a teacup so to speak.
- 12 Wittgenstein alludes to this problem in his introductory remarks to the reader which highlight the difficulty of seeing "both the way and where it leads to" (1993, 37).
- 13 Wittgenstein's analysis of Uhland's poem *Graf Eberhards Weissdorn* in a letter to Engelmann dated 9 April 1917. Cited by Hacker 2000, 372.
- 14 1958, §77: "Everything-and nothing-is right." I have amended Anscombe's translation from 'anything' to 'everything'.
- 15 Wittgenstein remarks to Waismann in December 1930; my italics.

# Metaphysik und moralische Verbindlichkeit

## Bemerkungen zum Begriff des Ethischen beim frühen Wittgenstein

Heiner F. Klemme

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1. Der *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* ist, wie Wittgenstein Bertrand Russell im August 1919 brieflich<sup>1</sup> mitteilt, dem Kardinalproblem der Philosophie gewidmet, nämlich dem Unterschied zwischen dem, was durch Sprache gesagt und somit gedacht werden kann, und dem, was sich bloß zeigen läßt. Wittgenstein will im *Tractatus* nachweisen, daß dasjenige, was nicht gesagt, aber immerhin gezeigt werden kann, zwar sinnlos ist, aber nicht unwichtig sein muß. Sinnvolle Sätze sind Sätze der Naturwissenschaft, mit denen wir sagen, wie die Welt ist, also was der Fall ist. Bei allen anderen Sätzen handelt es sich demnach um Äußerungen, (a) die bloß sinnlos sind, (b) die sinnlos sind, aber etwas zeigen, oder (c) die sinnlos sind, aber etwas zeigen und zudem wichtig sind. Wittgensteins Interesse gilt selbstverständlich nicht den trivialerweise sinnlosen sprachlichen Äußerungen, die gegen die Logik sprachförmiger Sätze verstoßen. Seine Aufmerksamkeit richtet sich auf diejenigen sinnlosen Sätze, die etwas zeigen.

Wittgenstein orientiert sich an einer alten Denkfigur, wenn er die von mir so genannten Satzklassen (b) und (c) mit Blick auf die Differenz zwischen der Frage nach dem Daß und der nach dem Wie der Welt unterscheidet. Die Naturwissenschaft beantwortet zwar die Frage, wie die Welt ist, aber sie selbst ist nur möglich, wenn es etwas gibt, was vor ihr liegt, nämlich die Logik (vgl. TLP 5.552). Die Logik, die Sätze der Klasse (b) umfaßt, markiert "die Grenzen der Welt" (TLP 5.61) und ist transzendental. Der *Tractatus*, der keine naturwissenschaftlichen Sätze enthält, stellt somit eine Ansammlung von sinnlosen Sätzen dar, die etwas zeigen.

Wie die Logik ist auch die nach der Existenz der Welt und ihren Sinn fragende Ethik, die nach Wittgenstein Ethik und Ästhetik gleichermaßen umfaßt, sinnlos. In unseren Versuchen, eine Antwort auf die Frage nach dem Daß der Welt zu geben, zeigt sich das Mystische (vgl. TLP 6.44). Die Ethik ist zwar wie die Logik sinnlos, aber darüber hinaus ist sie auch wichtig, weil sie Sätze umfaßt, mit denen wir das "Rätsel des Lebens" (TLP 6.4312) lösen wollen. Paradoxerweise gibt es dieses Rätsel nach Wittgenstein aber gar nicht (vgl. TLP 6.5), weil wir keine Frage stellen können, die überhaupt nicht sinnvoll zu beantworten ist.

In einem Brief an Ludwig von Ficker betont Wittgenstein im Oktober oder November 1919, daß der Sinn seines *Tractatus* ein ethischer sei und gibt Ficker zu verstehen, sein Buch bestehe eigentlich aus zwei Teilen: "[...] aus dem, der hier vorliegt, und aus alledem, was ich nicht geschrieben habe. Und gerade dieser zweite Teil ist der Wichtige. Es wird nämlich das Ethische durch mein Buch gleichsam von Innen her begrenzt; und ich bin überzeugt, daß es, *streng, nur* so zu begrenzen ist."<sup>2</sup>

2. Wittgensteins negative Metaphysik, wie man sie nennen könnte, gliedert sich also in zwei Teile, in die Logik und in die Ethik. Im folgenden möchte ich mich auf die Ethik konzentrieren. Folgt aus der Behauptung, daß alle wahrheitsfähigen Sätze solche der Naturwissenschaft sind, daß wir über den gesamten Bereich des Ethischen eigentlich schweigen sollten? Meine These lautet, daß es sehr wohl sinnvolle ethische Sätze gibt. Dies setzt allerdings voraus, die Frage, auf die die Ethik eine Antwort gibt, in einer anderen Weise zu stellen, als Wittgenstein dies tat. Bevor ich meine These erläutere, möchte ich jedoch zur weiteren begrifflichen Klärung von Wittgensteins Position auf den Argumentationsgang seines "Lecture on Ethics" eingehen. In ihm versucht er in einer für ihn untypischen epischen Breite, die Thematik des zweiten Teils des *Tractatus* erneut "von Innen her" zu begrenzen. Wittgenstein hielt diesen Vortrag am 17. November 1929 vor der Gesellschaft "The Heretics"<sup>3</sup>, also noch vor seiner Wende zur Gebrauchstheorie der Bedeutung.

In seiner Vorlesung führt Wittgenstein aus, daß sich der Gegenstand der Ethik nur in einer Reihe von synonymen Charakterisierungen zeigen läßt, mit denen wir an persönliche Erfahrungen jedes Einzelnen appellieren. Danach fragt die Ethik nach der richtigen Weise zu leben, nach dem, was wirklich wichtig ist, was einen Wert hat und was unserem Leben Bedeutung gibt (vgl. 1965, 5). Mit G. E. Moore vertritt er die Auffassung, daß die Ausdrücke "gut", "wichtig" und "richtig" entweder einen relativen oder aber einen ethischen und absoluten Sinn haben. Werden sie in einem relativen Sinn verwendet, beziehen wir sie auf kontingente Zwecke, Wünsche oder Ziele. Alle relativen Werturteile können in Tatsachenerurteile übersetzt werden. Wenn ich ein bestimmtes Ziel oder einen bestimmten Zweck verfolge, haben bestimmte Dinge und Handlungen einen für dieses Ziel oder diesen Zweck relativen Wert. Der normative Sinn eines absoluten Wertes erschließt sich aber nicht über die zufälligen Ziele und Zwecke von Gegenständen und Handlungen. Er gilt ohne einschränkende Bedingung und ist insofern auch nicht auf eine Tatsachenaussage reduzierbar, in der beschrieben wird, welche kontingenten Zwecke Personen aufgrund ihrer psychischen Dispositionen wollen.

Wittgenstein bewegt sich in neuzeitlichem Fahrwasser, wenn er die These vertritt, daß Tatsachenaussagen keinen absoluten oder intrinsischen Wert ausdrücken oder

implizieren können (siehe 1965, 6). Würde es ein Buch mit sämtlichen Beschreibungen der Welt geben, würde es keine ethischen Urteile oder irgend etwas enthalten, welches logisch derartige Urteile impliziert. Unsere sinnvollen Sätze drücken nur Fakten aus, die Ethik ist aber "supernatural" (1965, 7).

Die Analyse absoluter Wertausdrücke führt zu einem paradoxen Ergebnis: Verwenden wir die Ausdrücke "absolut gut" oder "absolut wertvoll", beschreiben wir einen Zustand, den jedermann unabhängig von seinen Neigungen und seinem Geschmack mit logischer Notwendigkeit herbeiführen oder aber sich beschämt darüber fühlen müßte, daß er ihn nicht herbeigeführt hat. Von keinem Zustand in der Welt geht aber nach Wittgenstein ein derartiger Zwang aus. Trotzdem verwenden wir diese Ausdrücke. Unser beständiges Anrennen gegen die Grenzen der Sprache ist Zeichen unseres Wollens, das Unaussprechbare mitzuteilen. Welche Erfahrungen wollen wir mit ethischen Scheinsätzen ausdrücken? Wittgenstein unterscheidet drei Erfahrungen, nämlich das Verwundern darüber, (a) daß die Welt existiert, (b) daß ich absolut sicher bin und (c) daß ich mich für etwas schäme. Besondere persönliche Bedeutung mißt Wittgenstein der ersten Erfahrung zu. An ihrem Beispiel erläutert er denn auch, in welcher Weise wir die Sprache mißbrauchen, wenn wir versuchen, eine derartige Erfahrung auszudrücken. Wir mißbrauchen die Sprache, weil wir uns über etwas wundern, von dem wir uns nicht vorstellen können, daß es nicht der Fall ist (vgl. 1965, 8). Wir können uns also über die Existenz der Welt nicht wundern, weil wir uns nicht vorstellen können, daß sie nicht existiert. Unsere ethischen und religiösen Ausdrücke scheinen Gleichnisse darzustellen, die für etwas stehen müssen. Aber wenn wir dieses Etwas durch ein Gleichnis beschreiben, muß es auch möglich sein, es direkt zu beschreiben. Da dies jedoch ausgeschlossen ist, mißbrauche ich die Sprache, wenn ich sage: "Ich wundere mich über die Existenz der Welt."

Personen - und Wittgenstein zählt sich ausdrücklich zu ihnen - die derartige Erfahrungen gemacht haben, sind somit mit einem Paradoxon konfrontiert: Sie schreiben ihren entsprechenden Erfahrungen einen intrinsischen oder absoluten Wert zu. Erfahrungen stellen aber Tatsachen dar, die keinen absoluten Wert haben können. Also können diese Personen auch keine entsprechende Erfahrung gemacht haben. Wittgenstein versucht das Paradoxon durch den Hinweis auf zwei verschiedene Standpunkte aufzulösen, die wir gegenüber einer Tatsache einnehmen können. Er verdeutlicht dies am Beispiel eines Wunders, das er als ein Ereignis definiert, welches uns bisher nicht begegnet ist (vgl. 1965, 10). Nehmen wir diesem Ereignis gegenüber den wissenschaftlichen Standpunkt ein, versuchen wir es wie alle anderen Naturereignisse zu erklären. Aus dem Umstand, daß es für die Naturwissenschaft keine Ereignisse gibt, die grundsätzlich nicht erklärt werden können, folgt jedoch nicht, daß es



keine Wunder gibt. "The truth is that the scientific way of looking at a fact is not the way to look at it as a miracle." (1965, 11)

Übertragen auf den Fall unseres Erstaunens über die Existenz der Welt bedeutet dies: Hier betrachten wir die Existenz der Welt als ein Wunder. Die richtige sprachliche Form, dieses Ereignis auszudrücken, findet sich nach Wittgenstein aber nicht *in* der Sprache, sondern in der *Existenz* der Sprache selbst. Die Ethik verdankt sich unserem Wunsch, etwas über den Sinn des Lebens sowie über die Bedeutung des absolut Guten und Wertvollen auszusagen, aber sie erweitert in keinerlei Weise unsere Erkenntnis dessen, was in der Welt der Fall ist. Ob wir die Ethik als wichtig betrachten oder nicht, hängt von unseren persönlichen Erfahrungen ab, also davon, welchen Standpunkt wir gegenüber der Welt einnehmen (vgl. 1965, 12).

**3.** In der Absicht, eine systematische Alternative zu Wittgensteins Begriff des Ethischen anzudeuten, möchte ich an die neuzeitliche (Wieder)-Entdeckung des autonomen Bereichs der Ethik in der schottischen Moralphilosophie und bei Immanuel Kant erinnern. Die hier in einem engeren, moralphilosophischen Sinne verstandene Ethik ist primär nicht auf die Klärung des Sinnes unseres Lebens gerichtet, und sie fällt auch nicht mit ästhetischen Wertschätzungen zusammen. Vielmehr geht es ihr um die Aufklärung derjenigen Handlungsnormen, deren Befolgung wir berechtigterweise von allen Mitgliedern der moralischen Gemeinschaft verlangen können. Im Zentrum dieser Ethikkonzeption steht also der Begriff der moralischen Verbindlichkeit. Ich möchte fragen, ob wir über diesen Kernbegriff der neuzeitlichen Ethik wirklich, wie Wittgenstein meint, grundsätzlich schweigen müssen, weil wir über ihn nur sinnlose Sätze äußern können. Wittgenstein weist die neopositivistische Reduktion des Ethischen in den Bereich des Beliebigen zwar zurück, aber er meint zugleich, daß die Erfahrung moralischer Verbindlichkeit kein Gegenstand öffentlicher Rede ist, weil sie eine persönliche Erfahrung eines vereinzelt existierenden Subjekts darstellt. Die Gretchenfrage der Ethik: "Was geschieht, wenn ich nicht so handle, wie es von mir verlangt wird?" (vgl. TLP 6.422), kann nicht sinnvoll beantwortet werden, weil wir sie überhaupt nicht stellen können. Das Problem der moralischen Verbindlichkeit ist somit allein schon deshalb ein Scheinproblem, weil es keine von allen Subjekten geteilte moralische Welt gibt.

Die neuzeitliche Ethik geht demgegenüber in ihrer zweifachen Frontstellung einerseits gegen die neoepikureischen Theorien von Hobbes und Mandeville und andererseits gegen die rationalistische Fundierung der Ethik in einer metaphysischen Wesensschau von Gott, Welt und Ich von dem Faktum der Moral aus. Die schottischen Moralphilosophen und Kant teilen die Auffassung, daß sich unsere moralische Billigung und Mißbilligung von Personen und Handlungen zwar nicht auf - wie sich Wittgenstein

ausdrücken würde - naturwissenschaftliche Sätze reduzieren läßt, aber trotzdem nicht sinnlos ist. Zwischen der Erkenntnis naturwissenschaftlicher Tatbestände einerseits und unserer Sprache von moralischen Rechten und Pflichten andererseits besteht ihrer Meinung nach selbstverständlich kein logisches Implikationsverhältnis. Ist die Welt alles, was in einem streng wahrheitsfähigen Sinne der Fall ist, würden auch Francis Hutcheson und Kant sagen: Die Ethik ist kein Teil der Welt. Und doch sahen beide Autoren das Ethische nicht als etwas an, was ausschließlich gezeigt werden kann. Ihre zentrale systematische Einsicht reduziert sich denn auch nicht auf die Erkenntnis, daß Naturwissenschaft und Ethik zwei grundsätzlich eigenständige Bereiche menschlichen Erkennens und Handelns kennzeichnen. Sie meinen vielmehr, daß sich ethische Sätze sinnvoll formulieren lassen müssen, weil sich Menschen konstitutiv als *vergemeinschaftete* Subjekte verstehen, für die moralische Ansprüche *unmittelbar* und *irreduzibel verbindlich* sind. Pointiert zusammengefaßt: Wir verstehen uns als Subjekte in einer von vielen Subjekten bevölkerten moralischen Welt und handeln unter der Idee moralischer Verbindlichkeit. Im Unterschied zu Wittgenstein verstehen wir sehr wohl, was gemeint ist, wenn Kinderschändung moralisch mißbilligt wird. Mit unseren ethischen Sätzen erheben wir einen uneingeschränkten, an alle moralfähigen Subjekte adressierten Richtigkeitsanspruch.

Hutcheson<sup>4</sup>, David Hume<sup>5</sup> und Kant teilen zwar die Ansicht, daß das moralische Phänomen der Verbindlichkeit irreduzibel ist und in einer von allen Moraladressaten verständlichen Sprache ausgedrückt werden kann. Sie unterscheiden sich allerdings erheblich in der theoretischen Aufklärung dieses Phänomens. Während sich Hutcheson veranlaßt sah, unsere moralische Einstellung gegenüber Personen und Handlungen durch einen letztlich theologisch abgedeckten moralischen Sinn zu erklären, griff Hume auf die naturwissenschaftliche Methodik von Beobachtung und Erfahrung zurück, um gewissermaßen als Soziologe unseren Gebrauch moralischer Ausdrücke auf allgemeine Prinzipien der menschlichen Natur zurückzuführen. Beide Ansätze haben entscheidende Nachteile: Hutcheson muß moralische (und ästhetische) Phänomene durch einen moralischen Sinn erklären, der einen bloß postulatorischen Sinn hat. Hume seinerseits scheint den verbindlichkeitstheoretischen Sinn moralsprachlicher Ausdrücke im Resultat zu verfehlen, wenn er Moral aus der Außenperspektive empirischer Wissenschaften zu erklären versucht. In der Sprache Wittgensteins formuliert: Hutcheson und Hume geben keine *ethische* Antwort auf eine ethische Fragestellung.

Nun steht die Kantische Moralphilosophie sicherlich nicht unter Empirismusverdacht. Aber auch die mit seinem Namen verbundene deontologische Ethik scheint von vornherein zum Scheitern verurteilt zu sein, weil mit ihr, so G. E. Moore in den *Principia Ethica*, die Auffassung verbunden ist, "daß ethische Wahrheiten sich logisch aus metaphysischen Wahrheiten ergeben." (1996, 164) Moore unterliegt jedoch

einem weitverbreiteten Mißverständnis: Die Metaphysik impliziert kein moralisches Sollen, vielmehr erzwingt nach der *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785) das allen vernunftbegabten Subjekten vertraute Phänomen der moralischen Verbindlichkeit seinerseits eine psychologiefreie Metaphysik der Sitten, in der allein unsere moralischen Pflichten und Rechte expliziert und gerechtfertigt werden können. Nach Kant erschließt sich der Sinn des moralischen Sollens denjenigen Subjekten, deren empirisches Wollen (Neigungen, Wünsche) unter der einschränkenden Bedingung ihres praktischen (moralischen) Wollens steht.

Der von Wittgenstein prinzipiell erhobene Vorwurf der Sinnlosigkeit ethischer Sätze muß angesichts des Faktums moralischer Verbindlichkeit zurückgewiesen werden. Wer nach der Klärung moralischer Gründe immer noch fragt, warum er so handeln soll, wie diese Gründe es ihm gebieten, stellt in der Tat eine sinnlose Frage. Aber diese Frage ist meiner Einschätzung nach nicht deshalb sinnlos, weil es kein autonomes moralisches Sollen gibt, sondern weil der Fragende nicht verstanden hat, was ein moralischer Grund ist.<sup>6</sup> In Abwandlung von *Tractatus* 6.44 möchte ich daher formulieren: "Nicht *wie* die Ethik ist, ist das Mystische, sondern *daß* sie ist. Aber *daß* sie ist, ist nicht das Problem der Ethik." Warum es in der Welt Menschen gibt, die sich als moralische Subjekte verstehen, ist in der Tat eine weder naturwissenschaftlich noch ethisch zu beantwortende Frage. Sie wird in Theologie und Mystik thematisiert. Das Kerngeschäft der Ethik besteht vielmehr in der Aufklärung des Phänomens der moralischen Verbindlichkeit<sup>7</sup>, eines Phänomens, welches wir - wie auch Wittgenstein zugestehen würde - durch den Rekurs auf empirische Wünsche und Zwecke nicht hinreichend zu erklären vermögen. So wie die Logik ist letztlich auch die Ethik nicht auf Psychologie reduzierbar. Und weil die Ethik nicht auf die Frage nach dem *Daß* der Welt und ihres Sinnes zielt, kann sie zumindest aus diesem Grunde auch nicht sinnlos sein. Daran ändert auch die Vermutung nichts, daß wir wohl noch immer über die Grundlagen unserer moralischen Rechte und Pflichten debattieren werden, wenn alle natürlichen Phänomene in der Welt erklärt worden sein sollten.<sup>8</sup>

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## Endnoten

- 1 Wittgenstein 1980, 88.
- 2 Wittgenstein 1980, 96.
- 3 Siehe Wittgenstein 1983, 230.
- 4 *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, London 1725.
- 5 *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, London 1751.
- 6 Vgl. hierzu u. a. die "klassischen" Beiträge von Prichard 1912 und Falk 1948.
- 7 Dies betont in ihrer Wittgenstein-Kritik auch Putnam 1980, 311.
- 8 Siehe zu diesem Bild Hume 1975, 278.

# Solitude, Culture, and the Technology of Communication

Zsuzsanna Kondor

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*Philosophical Investigations* was first published in 1953. It is, of course, widely regarded as the most important posthumous publication of Wittgenstein, containing the main elements of his later philosophy.<sup>1</sup> *Prints and Visual Communication*, the work of William M. Ivins Jr., was published in the same year. The main topics of these two books are quite different, but in both we can find a critique of Plato's philosophy. In what follows I would like to compare these critical considerations - with each other, but also against the background of Ernest Gellner's notion of "abstract universalistic individualism" and the rival position which he calls "romantic communalism".

I will first recall, very briefly, Wittgenstein's criticism of Plato in the *Philosophical Investigations*, and then describe Gellner's historically oriented point of view of the above-mentioned traditions in philosophy. Finally, I shall cite arguments by Ivins concerning Plato which - I hope to show - offer an alternative to the dualism represented by Gellner.

Wittgenstein quotes these sentences from the *Theaetetus*:

"If I make no mistake, I have heard some people say this: there is no definition of the primary elements - so to speak - out of which we and everything else are composed; for everything that exists in its own right can only be *named*, no other determination is possible, neither that it is nor that it is not. . . . But what exists in its own right has to be named . . . without any other determination. In consequence it is impossible to give an account of any primary element; for it, nothing is possible but the bare name; its name is all it has. But just as what consists of these primary elements is itself complex, so the name of the elements become descriptive language by being compounded together. For the essence of speech is the composition of names." (PI § 46)

In the course of the next paragraphs Wittgenstein calls attention to difficulties which arise when we think of language along the lines Socrates understood it in the *Theaetetus*, i.e. when we consider "speech" as if it was "the composition of names". Distinguishing between composite and simple elements (PI § 47), essential and inessential features of an object (PI § 62), as well as the existence and non-existence of the object of a proposition (PI § 79) create unsolvable anomalies. These anomalies can

be eliminated only by adopting a basically different conception of language. Such conception of language is put forward in the later philosophy of Wittgenstein - as opposed to that of the *Tractatus*. According to the *Philosophical Investigations* the only authentic approach to language is given through its use - not through distinctions and concepts formulated with the help of some abstract logic.<sup>2</sup> Traditional concepts of logic such as sentence, word, and symbol are defined from a new perspective, in a wider context, i.e. in the light of linguistic usage. "[T]he meaning of a word is its use in the language." (PI § 43)

"Our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, and of houses with additions from various periods; and this surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs with straight regular streets and uniform houses."<sup>3</sup> (PI § 18) Language is not a static phenomenon it is changing in the course of its use. "[T]he speaking of language is part of an activity, or a form of life." The term "language-game" emphasises this fact.<sup>4</sup> The so-called "private language argument"<sup>5</sup> emphasises the communal character of language, i.e. the fact that speaking a language means obeying rules<sup>6</sup> - agreement in definitions and implicit presuppositions<sup>7</sup> which gain sense only in a community.

The very idea that language is a form of life<sup>8</sup> implicitly involves that language is closely bounded to culture. But Wittgenstein is not concerned with culture directly. His main interest relates to philosophical questions such as meaning, understanding, sentence, concept of logic, foundations of mathematics, sensory data and the opposition of idealism and realism.<sup>9</sup>

Gellner unambiguously places Wittgenstein's later philosophy in the tradition of "romantic communalism", contrasting it with the *Tractatus* which he sees as representing the tradition of abstract individualism.<sup>10</sup> By this contrasting of philosophical traditions Gellner can relate Wittgenstein's philosophy to a given cultural-political situation. According to Gellner's interpretation Wittgenstein tries to find a way out from the solitude into which atomistic individualism has led. He doesn't succeed, the pursuit of the way out leads to another kind of solitude. The pursuit of Wittgenstein mirrors the intellectual and political atmosphere of Kakania, i.e. the Habsburg empire.

"...what does make sense is that, having worked out one philosophy in terms of abstract and universal reason and having found that it led to intolerable solitude, he replaced it by another philosophy, inspired by the one thing which, in the pervasive atmosphere of Kakania, was widely recognised to be the alternative to reason: namely roots. Roots, not logical form, dictate our speech and confer our identity on us and limit our world. He renamed it 'a form of life'."(Gellner 1998, 106)

Atomistic individualism, that is the Crusoe tradition which started - according to Gellner's opinion<sup>11</sup> - with Descartes, sees human knowledge as developing step by step due to the intellectual effort of the individual. It doesn't take into account either communal or institutional circumstances as regards cognition. Human beings gain knowledge by their own cognitive efforts and/or private experiences. Acquisition of knowledge is possible only through abstract, distinct, and well-defined concepts, in the course of some systematic process. By contrast romantic communalism stresses the pervasive power of tradition, culture and community. This tradition has a much older history than the other, but became systematised only later.

"Once upon a time mankind lived, by and large, in closed intimate communities, governed by practices simultaneously geared both to maintaining internal order and adjusting to nature .... The criteria adapted for judging the acceptability of practices ... were, so to speak, self-validating, traditional. They were not systematised; no attempt was to deduce them either from some supposedly self-evident general premise or from some single authoritative revelation. . . . Then, one day, a new style of cognition emerged, which separated the referential inquiry into nature from the concern with internal social harmony and which, by means which are still only partly understood, succeeded in acquiring astonishingly accurate, general and consensus-securing understanding of the environment." (Gellner 1998, 189)

Gellner stresses that both traditions have their own function, i.e. they have explanatory force in regard to different segments of our life: the tradition of "universalism-atomism" helps to explain, e.g., the development of science and the functioning of the economy; and the tradition of "communal romanticism" can help, e.g., to find a way to harmonise individual, communal, and even natural aspects, both factual and normative. Gellner criticised Wittgenstein because of a special one-sidedness: "He lived out the two options in reverse order, and decreed that the romantic one constituted normality, and the universalistic one was a disease of language. He projected his own rather bizarre development onto the history of thought." (Gellner 1998, 191)

Criticising Wittgenstein, Gellner believes: "The real intellectual problems that modern society faces consist, in very large part, of the relationship between the two styles." (Gellner 1998, 190) In what follows I would like to show that these "two styles" do not exclude each other necessarily as regards their explanatory power; moreover, on the some issues they can complement each other.

In *Prints and Visual Communication* Ivins sketches the development of the printed picture from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the emergence of photography in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Besides the technical inventions he takes into account, also, their cognitive

consequences. "I propose", writes Ivins, "to look at the evidence from the point of view of that communication of visual information and ideas which, for the last four centuries, has been the primary function of the exactly repeatable pictorial statement." (24) The importance of exact reproduction becomes obvious if we think of verbal communication. Ivins stresses that the institution of verbal communication is built upon the fact of there being exactly repeatable linguistic elements. We think of exact repeatability as something evident in the case of oral or written communication, mediating thoughts verbally, but this is not the case with pictures. As Ivins puts it: "pictures were of little use as definitions or descriptions because they could not be exactly repeated" for a long time. (62) There is no use of definitions and descriptions which can change each time when they are repeated.

"Plato's Ideas and Aristotle's forms, essences, and definitions, are specimens of this transference of reality from the object to the exactly repeatable and therefore seemingly permanent verbal formula. An essence, in fact, is not part of the object but part of the definition. Also, I believe, the well-known notions of substance and attributable qualities can be derived from this operational dependence upon exactly repeatable verbal descriptions and definitions - for the very linear order in which words have to be used results in a syntactical time order analysis of qualities that actually are simultaneous and so intermingled and interrelated that no quality can be removed from one of the bundles of qualities we call objects without changing both it and all the other qualities. " (63)

Accordingly, ancient Greeks, and even "thinking people" of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, lack the proper technology with which they can take into account, and handle, particularities; so they think in generalities.<sup>12</sup> The interpretation of Platonic ideas from a point of view focusing on communication constitutes an explanatory supplement to the criticism of Plato as formulated by Wittgenstein. We can find here a plausible explanation as regards the need for abstract and systematic definition.

Ivins calls attention to another important aspect of graphic representation when speaking about the "scheme for laying lines" that became "grammars and syntaxes which, while making handmade pictorial statements possible, also greatly restricted and influenced their power of statement." (164)

Let me here introduce some remarks by Michael Polanyi to the effect that in the course of reproducing or describing reality we have to choose between either being precise or being close to the richness of living context. It is impossible to simultaneously grasp precision and the "immense wealth of living shapes", the richness of the whole context.<sup>13</sup>



The very fact that sometimes we have to abstract from the living context implies that we need various, different, cognitive or technical instruments to be able to articulate and communicate ideas.<sup>14</sup> Abstract individualism can be considered as a tradition which fabricates cognitive instruments to be able to handle these capacities, and lack of capacities, and romantic communalism as a tradition representing the other side - being, that is, less precise in concepts and closer to the "immense wealth of living shapes". The idea that the technology of communication has a great importance as regards the cognitive styles of human beings is made plausible by the considerations sketched above, and can be documented by data drawn from the history of culture and philosophy.<sup>15</sup>

The point of view focussing on the technology of communication seems to be fruitful both as regards the philosophy of Wittgenstein,<sup>16</sup> as well as casting light on the overlapping elements of the traditions explicated by Gellner. In the light of the connection between, first, the technology of communication, and, second, possibilities as well as limitations in terms of intellectual capacity, and, third, communal-social habits, romantic communalism seems to be somewhat less mystical, and abstract individualism perhaps somewhat more dissociated from real life.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Compare Gellner 1998, p. 71
- 2 The same basic conviction of Wittgenstein is of course present in those remarks which deal with the function or limits of philosophy. See *Philosophical Investigations* §123, §124, and §125.
- 3 The regularity and uniformity of new boroughs can be considered as a reference to the tradition of - in Gellner's terminology - abstract universalistic individualism.
- 4 *PI* § 23. See also: "I shall call the whole, consisting of language and actions into which it is woven, the language-game." *PI* § 7.
- 5 On the private language argument from the point of view of the technology of communication see Nyíri 1992, p. 105-113.
- 6 See *PI* § 202.
- 7 "If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also ... in judgements." *PI* § 242.
- 8 *PI* § 19.
- 9 TS 225:i-iv as quoted in Nyíri 1983, p. 83.
- 10 "The *Tractatus* had portrayed the human condition, cognitively, morally, semantically - in the spirit of an uncompromising, extreme, virtually comic universalism. Not only science but the mystical as well were described as ineluctably identical in all men. Culture, religion, gender, none of these, or any other specific characterisation, make any difference to anything that really matters in our life. We are all alike, the differences belong to a zone of insignificant. - And just these differences lay at the heart of Wittgenstein's later philosophy." (Gellner 1998, 105)
- 11 Recall Wittgenstein's critique of Plato, in the light of which the latter can in fact be interpreted as an ancestor of that kind of abstract individualism.
- 12 As Ivins writes: "They [thinking people of 18th and 19th century] had not means to think in particularities, which are always irrational, and they had to think in generalities. ... To a very considerable extent they were still in the situation and the frame of mind that had caused the Greeks to think as they did about some of the basic problems in philosophy. Thus just as the ancient Greeks developed the Platonic doctrine of Ideas and Aristotle's essences, so the eighteenth century developed ideas of the Truth of Science and of the Laws of Nature." (91)
- 13 "Higher degrees of formalization make statements of science more precise, its inferences more impersonal and correspondingly more 'reversible'; but every step towards this ideal is achieved by a progressive sacrifice of content. The immense wealth of living shapes governed by the descriptive sciences is narrowed down to bare pointer-readings for the purpose of the exact sciences, and experience vanishes altogether from our direct sight as we pass on to pure mathematics. - There is a corresponding variation in the tacit coefficient of speech. In order to describe experience more fully language must be less precise. But greater imprecision brings more effectively into play the powers of inarticulate judgement required to resolve the ensuing indeterminacy of speech. So it is our personal

participation that governs the richness of concrete experience to which our speech can refer. Only by the aid of this tacit coefficient could we ever say anything at all about experience - a conclusion I have reached already by showing that the process of denotation is itself unformalizable." (Polányi 86-87)

- 14 One of Gellner's earlier studies touches upon this problem in the course of explicating the function of philosophy. See Gellner 1964 p. 68.
- 15 See works of Eisenstein, Havelock, and Ivins.
- 16 Cf. Nyiri 1996/97.

# Wittgenstein's way out of Kantian Philosophy

Oskari Kuusela

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Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* can, and has been plausibly interpreted as an exercise in Kantian critical philosophy. As Kant's critical philosophy is an attempt to determine the foundations of knowledge through considerations of the necessary conditions of possibility of knowledge, and to set limits to knowledge claims in this way, so the *Tractatus* can be understood as an attempt to determine the foundations of language through considerations of the necessary conditions of possibility of language, and to set limits to language use in this way. Some commentators have suggested that Wittgenstein's later philosophy, too, could be understood as critical philosophy in this sense. In this paper I will argue, however, that this is problematic. Although Wittgenstein's later philosophy is concerned with limits of language, it is not an attempt to give foundations and set limits to language, - these being attempts to give reasons or grounds for why language must / can only be used in certain ways. Rather Wittgenstein questions the idea of philosophy as giving foundations. Thus, he does not e.g. move from a strong absolutist view of foundations to a weaker relativistic view of foundations, or deny that foundations can be determined for language either in the strong or weak sense. Rather, he points out that the idea that philosophy gives foundations does not make sense, - and hence that there is nothing to deny. Consequently, he puts forward a different conception of philosophy: philosophy as description of language use, where description is not a new way of giving foundations.

Kantian interpretations of Wittgenstein's later philosophy are sometimes (cf. Apel 1998, 10; Hintikka & Hintikka 1986, 4) taken to get support from a certain remark by Wittgenstein - one of the very few in which he mentions Kant: "The limit of language manifests itself in the impossibility of describing the fact that corresponds to [...] a proposition without simply repeating the proposition. (We are dealing here with the Kantian solution of the problem of philosophy.)" (MS 110, 61; TS 211, 171) I will, however, argue that rather than identifying himself as a Kantian philosopher, Wittgenstein identifies here a problem in Kantian philosophy as an attempt to give foundations. It is in this sense that Wittgenstein says he is dealing with the Kantian solution to the problem of philosophy. Yet, this question of interpretation cannot be decided on the basis of the remark alone or its immediate context. It must be decided in the broader context of Wittgenstein's philosophy. To do this I will draw on other remarks to be found in MS 110, as well as on remarks in the *Philosophical Investigations* (PI). But let us start by taking a look at the immediate context of the remark.

The remark occurs in a context where Wittgenstein discusses a tendency to think that the meaning of a symbol were determined by something else, namely by what it talks about. Thus, there is a tendency to think that e.g. the meaning of the word "red" derives from the colour red, or the meaning of the word "wish" from a mental state, say, a feeling of dissatisfaction. Yet, this is not so, according to Wittgenstein. Singling out the colour red and the feeling of wishing presupposes the corresponding concepts. Thus one cannot point out a state of affairs, say, that a ball is red, without presupposing the appropriate concepts, without the proposition's being embodied in one's actions of pointing, as it were, and without the proposition's being repeated in this sense. Accordingly it is impossible to describe the fact without repeating the corresponding proposition. (See MS 110, 60-64; cf. TS 211 169-173)

Let us now return to the quoted remark. According to Wittgenstein, as this repetition of a proposition occurs, we are at the limits of language. But what is the issue and problem here? Why would one want to have a description of the state of affairs independent of the proposition in the first place? And why is it important to notice that one just ends up repeating the proposition while attempting this? The context of the remark suggests an answer. If one had a description of the state of affairs independently of the proposition one would have found a foundation for language in what it talks about. However, this attempt to give foundations involves the unnoticed repetition: one imagines not to be employing concepts while employing them nevertheless. In the attempt to ground the proposition one simply repeats it, and thus the attempt to give grounds does not succeed.

But how does this show that Wittgenstein is not a Kantian philosopher? Surely no Kantians wish to ground language or concepts on what is found in the world in the way described above. Is it not precisely the point of Kant's Copernican turn not to try to do this? Consequently, does not this interpretation support the idea of Wittgenstein as a Kantian philosopher, rather than show that he is not a Kantian? I agree with all of this except for the conclusion. Hence I would rather say: from Wittgenstein's point of view Kant moves to the right direction, and both Wittgenstein and Kant reject what Kant calls "transcendental realism". Yet, the very same problematic repetition occurs in Kantian attempts to give grounds and reasons for language too, and this, I believe, is why Wittgenstein mentions Kant in the remark in question. - But to see this the remark must be seen in the wider context of what Wittgenstein says about philosophy. First, however, let us consider an example of an attempt to give foundations which could more naturally be called "Kantian".

By Kantian attempts to give foundations for language use I understand attempts to give reasons or grounds for why language should be employed in certain ways through

considerations of necessary conditions of possibility, - or better: why it should not be employed in certain ways, i.e. in ways conflicting with its necessary conditions. (The latter formulation, I believe, captures better the idea of a Kantian critique.) In this purpose, one might then put forward an argument of the following kind concerning the concept of rule following: "If rule following were not a practice there would be no criteria for following or going against a rule. Therefore rule following must be a practice.". Allegedly this would then show that one should call "rule following" only something which is (at least potentially) part of a practice.

Let us accept for the sake of the argument that there being criteria for following or going against a rule depends on rule following's being a practice. Granted this, one can say that rule following is necessarily a practice, and that only something which is part of a practice is correctly called "rule following". Yet, the alleged argument above gives no reason or ground for this being so. For a reason or ground should be independent of what it is a reason or ground for. Here, however, this is not the case. Thus, were one to adopt another kind of way of using the word "rule following", the supposed reason and ground for using the word in the first way would thereby vanish too. That is, if one were to use this word in such a way that there would be no distinction between following and going against a rule, it is not that the distinction would now be missing, as it were, and the concept incomplete. It is not that there would still be worries about whether someone follows or goes against a rule, and yet no way of deciding this. Rather, there simply would no longer be questions about following or going against. To worry about deciding this here is a misunderstanding. Likewise the alleged reason "otherwise there would be no criteria for following or going against" has no existence independent of the usual use of the word, and this shows that it cannot function as a reason or ground for adopting this use.

As to the relation of this example to the red and wish examples in MS 110, the idea that the clause "otherwise there would be no criteria for following or going against" expresses a ground for why only a practice can be called "rule following" involves precisely the same problematic repetition which takes place in the earlier examples. What strikes one as a ground for one's having to use the word in this way, is not given independently of the use, and by referring to the alleged ground one just repeats what was supposed to be given grounds. That is, one gives a paraphrase for the use, but no grounds for it. Thus the second, more clearly Kantian attempt to give foundations fares no better than the two first ones. There are no grounds or reasons to be found for why the word should be used in this way. Consequently, insofar as possible ways of giving foundations are now exhausted, philosophy cannot give language foundations. Its task is merely descriptive. This is what Wittgenstein seems to think. He writes in PI, in a remark originally drafted in MS 110: "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual

use of language; it can only in the end describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either." (PI, 124; MS 110, 188)

Accordingly, no limits are set through considerations of necessary conditions of possibility. The limit of language comes to view here but no reasons or grounds can be given for why it should be respected. Grammar is arbitrary, as Wittgenstein says (cf. MS 110, 133), which in the end, means, I believe, that no philosophical reasons or grounds can be given for why words must be used in certain ways. In a remark on the notion of the arbitrariness of grammar Wittgenstein writes: 'The rules of grammar may be called "arbitrary", if that is to mean that the *aim* of grammar is nothing but that of the language. If someone says "If our language had not this grammar, it could not express these facts" - it should be asked what "*could*" means here.' (PI, 497)

Thus, if one is inclined to say something like: "if rule following were not a practice, one could not distinguish between following and going against", one should, ask what is the sense of "could" here. And the answer is: to use the word "could" here is quite misleading. There is no could here, i.e. something one might try to do but only to find it impossible. Insofar as there were no criteria for following or going against, it is not that one *could* not distinguish between these two. Rather one simply *would* not distinguish between following and going against a rule. (Cf. MS 136, 121b)

To look at the issue from point of view of yet another remark of Wittgenstein's, he writes in MS 110 about the idea that grammar forbids something:

The grammatical rule is supposed to, for example, forbid something, say, that the word 'A' can be substituted for the word 'B'. But how can it forbid that the 'is' in " $2 \times 2 = 4$ " is substituted for 'is' in "the rose is red"? This is nonsense.

This arises from the pernicious idea that behind the word there would be as if an invisible train of rules so that it would make sense to talk about *two* words which look the same. The question is about *one* word which can be substituted for by two words that cannot substitute for each other. (MS 110, 207)

So, there may be a word *x* which, when used like this, is to be substituted for by the word *a*, but at another occasion is used like that and to be substituted by the word *b*. But it is not that the word *x* is, as it were, two words at once because of these two different possibilities of substitution. Rather the sign *x* is a symbol when it is used as a symbol, and what symbol it is depends on the particular use given to it. Thus it does not happen that it symbolises in two incompatible ways at once at any particular occasion of its use, as if its identity as a symbol were independent of the particular use which is made of it, after all.

Similarly for the word "rule following". If it is used in such a way that there is no way of deciding what counts as following the rule and what as going against it, this is merely a use different from the normal one. There is, however, no inconsistent or impossible use for the word to be excluded from language, where one would like to talk about following and going against but there would be no criteria for deciding this. To be sure the word can be used in inconsistent ways on different occasions, but at none of these particular occasions is its use inconsistent as such. The idea that the integrity of the word use somehow need to be protected by setting limits, so that the inconsistent case would not arise is a confusion. It can be pointed out that one is using the word in incompatible ways on different occasions, but there is no impossible use to be excluded from language, and thus no limits to be set for language. All one can do is describe the different uses and point out their mutual incompatibility.

And finally in regard to the attempts to give foundations: it is not that one is trying to do something impossible here either. Rather, one is just being inconsistent. To determine necessary conditions of possibility is simply not what one usually calls "giving grounds". Yet, as this has been pointed out it has not been shown that the expression "give grounds" must be used in any particular way. To point out that on one occasion one is contradicting something one adheres to or presupposes on another occasion is not to lay down foundations, but just to point out inconsistencies.

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