

A. Pichler, S. Säätelä  
FIL217 / FIL317- *Wittgenstein  
studies*

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- Wittgenstein's *Philosophical  
Investigations*

## Preliminaries

What is Wittgenstein's aim in the PI?

What kind of method does he use?

Why did he choose such a form of publication/presentation (criss-crossing remarks)? (“externalism” vs. “internalism” about style)

We got a preliminary answer in PI's preface.

## Exegetical issues

- The PI consists largely of a dialog between two or more "voices" or rather a polyphony of several different voices
- Can one of the voices be identified with Wittgenstein?
- Does Wittgenstein present theses or theories (about language, meaning, understanding, rules and rule-following, the impossibility of a private language, etc.)?

Brian McGuinness (2006) on Wittgenstein's philosophical aims and the form of publication of his results:

"If the aim was to clarify by reminding the interlocutor of the obvious when that had been forgotten in the heat of the chase, then the dialogue form and a certain amount of recreating confusion in order to dispel it would be appropriate. The *Tractatus* agrees in its general aim, though it's not in dialogue form but is a parody of a mathematical treatise, and so is itself fundamentally misleading." (p. 379)

But also TLP can be seen as having  
a kind of dialogical structure

6.54 My sentences 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 sentences; then he  
sees the world rightly.

## Content of the *PI*

- § § 1-38 Language and meaning (as use)
  - The Augustinian picture
  - Language games
  - Ostensive definition
- § § 37-88 Names and the determinacy of sense
  - Family resemblance
- § § 89-133 "Chapter on Philosophy"
- § § 134-242 The rule-following considerations
- § § 243-315 "The private language argument"
- § § 316-362 Thought
- § § 363-397 Imagination
- § § 398-411 The self and self-reference 7

- § § 412 – 427 Consciousness
- § § 428 – 465 Intentionality
- § § 466 – 490 Justification by experience
- § § 491 – 570 Meaning and the bounds of sense
- § § 571 – 610 Mental states and processes
- § § 611 – 628 The will
- § § 629 – 660 Intention
- § § 661 – 693 Meaning something

## Structure of PI

Joachim Schulte thinks that text-genetically the PI consists of three different parts:

I: § § 1-188

II: § § 189-421

III: § § 421-693

Of part I, Schulte (2005, 362) says «Wittgenstein was as satisfied with this material as he ever came to feeling satisfied with anything he wrote», whereas II and especially III are much less finished.

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