

# A. Pichler, S. Säätelä: *Introduction to Wittgenstein*

Lecture 9 22.10.2024:

- Family resemblances
- “übersichtliche Darstellung”

# Cf. Simo, Lecture 6

PI §90: We feel as if we had to see *right into* phenomena: our investigation, however, is directed not towards *phenomena*, but, as one might say, towards the '*possibilities*' of phenomena. What that means is that **we call to mind the *kinds of statement* that we make about phenomena.** [...] Our inquiry is therefore **a grammatical one.**

PI §116: When philosophers use a word —"knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition", "name" — and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: **is the word ever actually used in this way in the language in which it is at home?** —

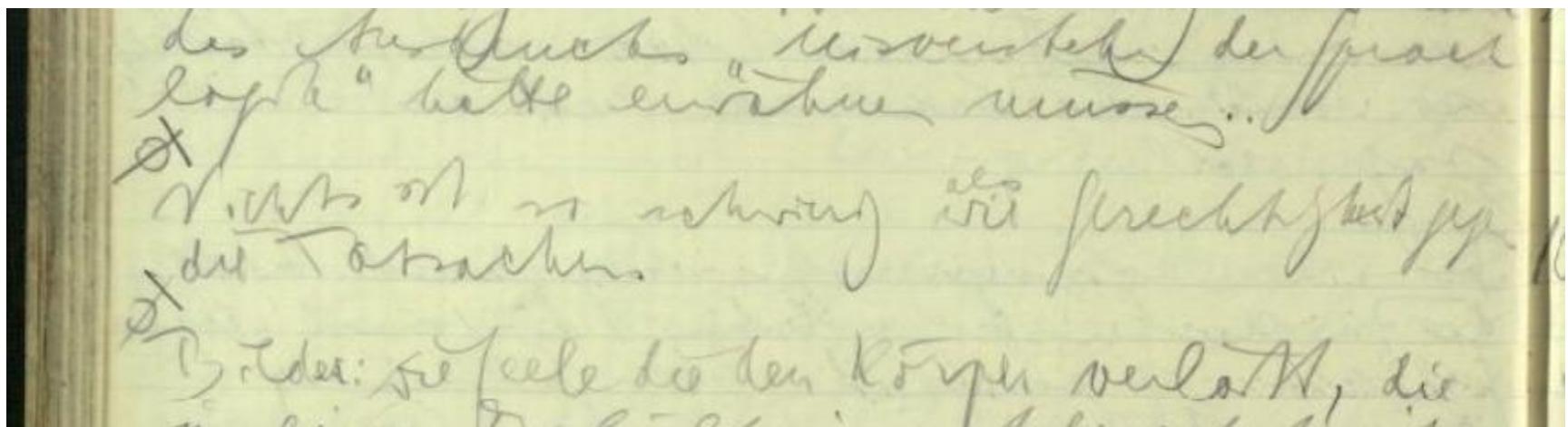
PI §199: Is what we call “following a rule” something that it would be possible for **only one person, only once in a lifetime, to do?** — **And this is, of course, a gloss on the grammar of the expression** “to follow a rule”. ...

PI §371: *Essence is expressed in grammar.*

PI §373: **Grammar** tells us what kind of object anything is. (Theology as grammar.)

PI §383: **We do not analyse a phenomenon** (for example, thinking) **but a concept** (for example, that of thinking), and hence the application of a word.

# Ms-110,184 (20.6.1931)



des Vertrags, insbesondere der praktischen  
Logik hätte einzuholen müssen...  
~~X~~ Niemand ist so schwierig wie Gerechtigkeit gegen  
die Tatsachen.  
~~X~~ Bilder: sie fehle den Körper verlassen, die

Nichts ist so schwierig wie || als  
Gerechtigkeit gegen die Tatsachen.

# Ts-213,414r

89

Methode der Philosophie: die übersichtliche Darstellung der grammatischen // sprachlichen // Tatsachen.

Das Ziel: Durchsichtigkeit der Argumente. Gerechtigkeit.

Methode der Philosophie: die übersichtliche  
Darstellung der grammatischen || sprachlichen  
Tatsachen.

Das Ziel: Durchsichtigkeit der Argumente.  
Gerechtigkeit.

# Alois, Lecture 3:

TLP 6.54: My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless [*unsinnig*], 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.

# Introduction to the PI (§§1-88) under 7 headings

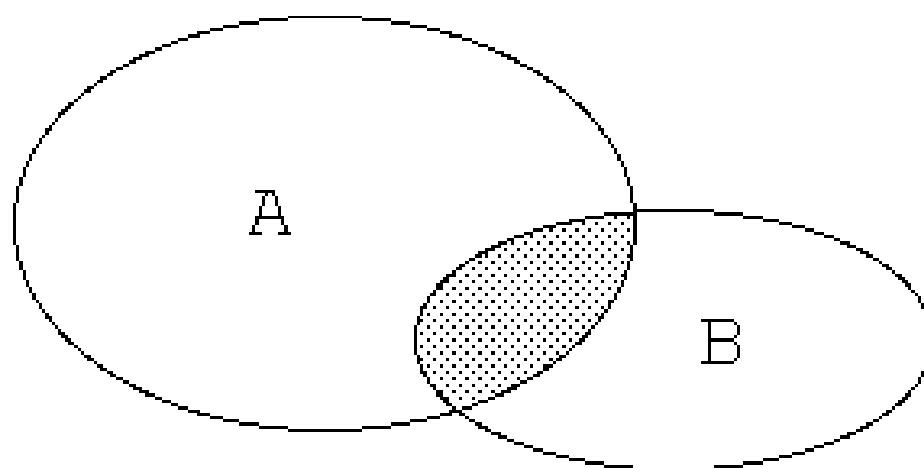
- 1) Acting
- 2) The language game-method and the language game
- 3) Bringing philosophy back to everyday language games  
(``einfach'', ``Bedeutung'', ``Satz'' ...)
- 4) Form of life
- 5) Mistakes of the ``Augustinian picture''
- 6) Family resemblance
- 7) Übersichtliche Darstellung

# Family resemblances

# Universals –

What is the justification for generic concepts  
(``Allgemeinbegriffe``)?

# «Homo = animal + rationale»



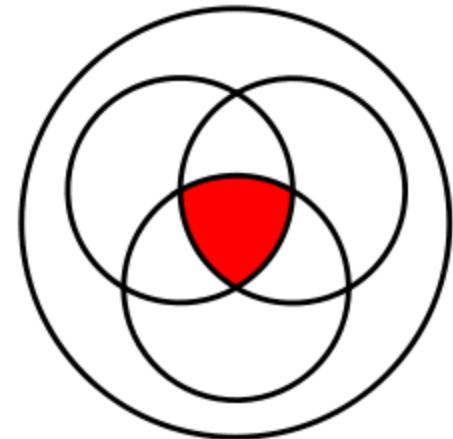
(Graphic from *Wikibooks*, [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikibooks/de/8/84/Mengenlehre\\_schnittmenge.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikibooks/de/8/84/Mengenlehre_schnittmenge.png))

# A traditional view: Definitions give us the necessary and sufficient conditions for a thing, or its «essential» properties / its «essence»

Properties	Entity 1 (HUMAN)	Entity 2 (HUMAN)	Entity 3	Entity 4	Entity 5 (HUMAN)	Entity 6	Entity 7	Entity 8	Entity 9
...	...	...			...			...	
...	...	...			...			...	
animal	animal	animal			animal				
rationale	rationale	rationale			rationale			rationale	
...	...	...			...			...	
...	...	...			...		...		
...	...	...			...				
...	...	...			...				

# Common definitions

- homo = animal + rationale
- woman = animal + rationale + adult + female
- man = animal + rationale + adult + male
- bachelor = animal + rationale + adult + male + able to marry + unmarried
- Water = H<sub>2</sub>O
- Chair = furniture + designed to sit on + ...?
- Student = animal + rationale + ...?
- Game [Spiel] = activity + ...??



Wittgenstein: The unity of a large number of our generic concepts is not given by essences, or by necessary + sufficient conditions, but by «family resemblances»

# Concept behaviour

- Conceptual essence with precise borders, e.g. “FIL217 student”
- Conceptual vagueness, e.g. “heap of sand”: There seems to be an essence, but the borders are fuzzy
- Conceptual polysemy, e.g. “bank” (riverbank; financial institution): There seems to be more than one essence only
- Metaphor, e.g. “head of state”
- Secondary meaning, e.g. “lean”
  - Cf. PI (II) xi where W. says that words, like “lean” have a secondary sense when applied to days of the week and a primary sense when applied, for instance, to human beings.
- Open texture (F. Waismann), e.g. “gold”, “planet” ...: There seems to be an essence (an exact definition), but it can change over time
- ...
- Family resemblance(s) [“Familienähnlichkeit(en)”], e.g. “Spiel”: There seems to be no essence at all, and nevertheless the concept seems to have a unity

# PI §66: There doesn't need to be one defining property in common

66. Consider for example the proceedings that we call "games". I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all?—Don't say: "There *must* be something common, or they would not be called 'games'"—but *look and see whether there is anything common to all.*—For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to *all*, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think, but look!—Look for example at **board-games**, with their multifarious relationships. Now pass to **card-games**; here you find many correspondences with the first group, but many common features drop out, and others appear. When we pass next to **ball-games**, much that is common is retained, but much is lost.—Are they all 'amusing'? Compare chess with noughts and crosses. Or is there always winning and losing, or competition between players? Think of patience. In ball games there is winning and losing; but when a child throws his ball at the wall and catches it again, this feature has disappeared. Look at the parts played by skill and luck; and at the difference between skill in chess and skill in tennis. Think now of **games like ring-a-ring-a-roses**; here is the element of amusement, but how many other characteristic features have disappeared! And we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how similarities crop up and disappear.

**And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail.**

# PI §67: «Family resemblances»

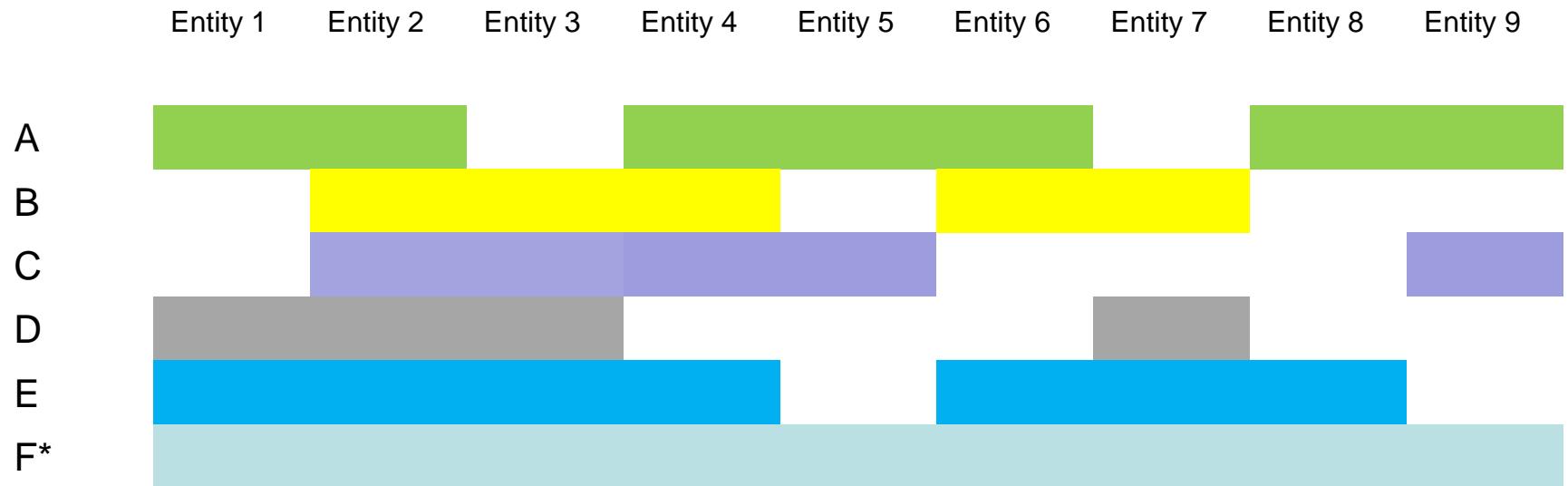
67. I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than "family resemblances"; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way.—And I shall say: 'games' form a family.

And for instance the kinds of number form a family in the same way. Why do we call something a "number"? Well, perhaps because it has a—direct—relationship with several things that have hitherto been called number; and this can be said to give it an indirect relationship to other things we call the same name. And we extend our concept of number as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres.

# Family resemblances of the concept of 'game', and of games (PI §66)

Throwing and catching a ball	Patience	Poker	Chess	Soccer	Table tennis	Singing and dancing games
entertainment	single player	card game	multiple players	competition	Entertainment	dancing
skill	card game	winning & loosing	board game	multiple players	ball game	entertainment
single player	winning & loosing	competition	card game	winning & loosing	multiple players	singing
ball game	entertainment	skill	winning & loosing	ball game	competition	multiple players
dancing	luck	luck	competition	skill	skill	skill

# Wittgenstein's suggestion for understanding the nature of some (not all!) universality / generality: Family resemblances



\* Common properties (F) are still possible!

Rather, they are like **ropes** [*Seil, Tau*]  
or **threads** [*Faden*]

... we twist fibre [*Faser*] on  
fibre. And the strength of  
the thread does not reside  
in the fact that some one  
fibre runs through its  
whole length, but in the  
overlapping of many  
fibres.



Which of the concepts below are «family resemblance concepts»?

water, game, tree, chair, number, art, heap of sand, rationality, meaning, animal, language, acting, understanding, reading, thinking, male, female, human being, citizen, Bergenser, stortingsrepresentant, photosynthesis, electricity, modus ponens, diabetes type 2, bachelor, student ...

# Many everyday (generic) concepts (*Allgemeinbegriffe*) are not like «Bezirke» ...

... are not like areas [«Bezirke»] with centers and sharp borders. Our everyday concepts do not work on the basis of essence and exactness (and don't actually presuppose essences and exactness either). They do *not* work «according to definite rules» (PI §81).

71. One might say that the concept 'game' is a concept with blurred edges.— "But is a blurred concept a concept at all?"—Is an indistinct photograph a picture of a person at all? Is it even always an advantage to replace an indistinct picture by a sharp one? Isn't the indistinct one often exactly what we need?

Frege compares a concept to an area [Bezirk] and says that an area [Bezirk] with vague boundaries cannot be called an area at all. ... For any general definition can be misunderstood too. The point is that *this* is how we play the game. (I mean the language-game with the word "game".)

# Summary

- Most of our generic everyday concepts do not have sharp borders, nor do they have an "essence", nor do they need any of the two in order to do their job as generic concepts.
- Instances of a concept do not *need* to have a *defining* feature in common in order to be instances of that concept. (PI §§66-67)
  - There is not *one defining* thing which the instances of game (Bridge, Ludo, Tennis ...) need to have in common in order to be games.

# Family resemblances vs. Definition

- The notion of family resemblances proves illuminating for a wide range of concepts: "game", "number", "language", "proposition", "art", «rule», «rule-following», "understanding", «thinking», «understanding», «reading», ...
- Definition by giving necessary and (collectively) sufficient conditions ("Homo est animal rationale") or putting up a disjunction ("A game is either ... or ... or ...") for the use of a word is often not possible, and where possible, not always helpful, and where helpful, not always true to our *actual* ways of using the concept.
- **However, nothing in Wittgenstein's remarks about family resemblances amounts to the view, that all concepts would be family resemblance concepts, or open to being treated as family resemblance concept, or that definitions would never be required or in place.**

# *It can be difficult to come up with *general definitions* of family resemblance concepts*

....

156. This will become clearer if we interpolate the consideration of another word, namely "**reading**". First I need to remark that I am not counting the understanding of what is read as part of 'reading' for purposes of this investigation: reading is here the activity of rendering out loud what is written or printed; and also of writing from dictation, writing out something printed, playing from a score, and so on.

**The use of this word in the ordinary circumstances of our life is of course extremely familiar to us. But the part the word plays in our life, and therewith the language-game in which we employ it, would be difficult to describe even in rough outline. ....**

... but definitions are often possible, and do also make sense, **where the word does work in a specific context**

132: ... Such a reform for particular practical purposes, an improvement in our terminology designed to prevent misunderstandings in practice, is perfectly possible. **But these are not the cases we have to do with.** The confusions which occupy us arise when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work.

## N.B.

- We must not forget that there exist concepts which are precisely defined – see for example concepts from the sciences, political administration, medicine, pharmacy, or the transportation sector.
- Nothing in Wittgenstein's remarks about family resemblances amounts to the view, that the instances falling under a specific family resemblance concept (e.g. «game») cannot have properties in common. Of course they can – but it is not *the common properties* that make them belong to the same concept.
  - All games are activities (PI §66: "proceedings" ☺) – but it is not the property 'being an activity' that makes a game into a game.

# The need for, and the power of the example

71. ... I do not, however, mean by this that he is supposed to see in those examples that common thing which I—for some reason—was unable to express; but that he is now to employ those examples in a particular way. Here **giving examples** is not an *indirect* means of explaining—in default of a better. For any **general definition** can be misunderstood too. The point is that *this* is how we play the game. (I mean the language-game with the word "game".)

- We learn to understand and master «family resemblance concepts» by being given examples rather than by being given definitions!

# The argumentative locus of discussing family resemblances in the PI

65. ... Denn man könnte mir nun einwenden: "Du machst dir's leicht! Du redest von allen möglichen Sprachspielen, hast aber nirgends gesagt, was denn das Wesentliche des Sprachspiels, und also der Sprache, ist. Was allen diesen Vorgängen gemeinsam ist und sie zur Sprache, oder zu Teilen der Sprache macht. Du schenkst dir also gerade den Teil der Untersuchung, der dir selbst seinerzeit das meiste Kopfzerbrechen gemacht hat, nämlich den, die allgemeine Form des Satzes und der Sprache betreffend.“

Und das ist wahr. – Statt etwas anzugeben, was allem, was wir Sprache nennen, gemeinsam ist, sage ich, es ist diesen Erscheinungen garnicht Eines gemeinsam, weswegen wir für alle das gleiche Wort verwenden, – sondern sie sind mit einander in vielen verschiedenen Weisen verwandt. Und dieser Verwandtschaft, oder dieser Verwandtschaften wegen nennen wir sie alle "Sprachen". Ich will versuchen, dies zu erklären.

65. ... For someone might object against me: "You make things easy for yourself! You talk about all sorts of language-games, but have nowhere said what is essential to a language-game, and so to language: what is common to all these activities, and makes them into language or parts of language. So you let yourself off the very part of the investigation that once gave you the most headache, the part about the general form of the proposition and of language."

And this is true. – Instead of pointing out something common to all that we call language, I'm saying that these phenomena have no one thing in common in virtue of which we use the same word for all a but there are many different kinds of affinity between them. And on account of this affinity, or these affinities, we call them all "languages". I'll try to explain this.

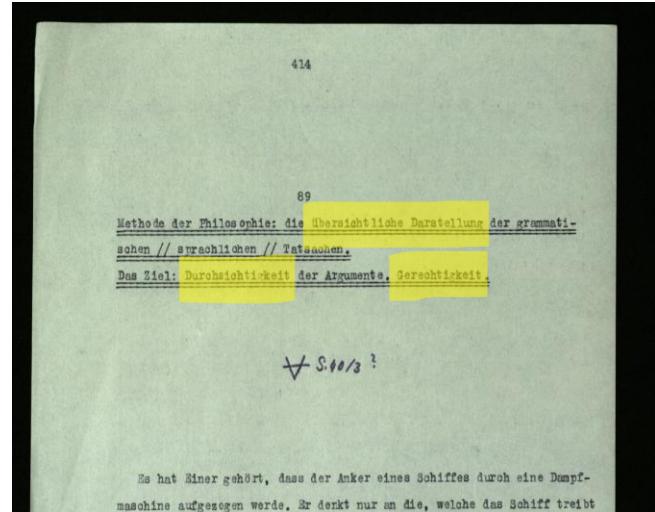
# Übersichtliche Darstellung

(«perspicuous representation» ...)

Ms-110,184 (20.6.1931) [http://www.wittgensteinsource.org/BFE/Ms-110,184\\_f](http://www.wittgensteinsource.org/BFE/Ms-110,184_f)  
and Ts-213,414r [http://www.wittgensteinsource.org/BFE/Ts-213,414r\\_f](http://www.wittgensteinsource.org/BFE/Ts-213,414r_f)

gebaut umzugehen wird.  
Wenn man Buch je verloren hat  
und so muss man seine Tochter die  
Mutter Paul ausstiegen den grammatischen  
Rechtschreibbuch vorde die er schon  
in der Schule abhanden ist und das  
heute noch nicht mehr...  
Was ist es nötig ist frech und  
die anderen.  
Dann ist es kein Korn und M. die

Für um  
der in  
nur die  
Wort  
brauch  
deutlich  
es wo  
der



PI §122: Übersichtliche Darstellung lets us see the connections (as well as gaps and differences) in our concepts, and herewith provides *understanding*

122. Es ist eine Hauptquelle unseres **Unverständnisses**, daß wir den Gebrauch unserer Wörter nicht übersehen. – Unserer Grammatik fehlt es an Übersichtlichkeit. – Die übersichtliche Darstellung vermittelt das **Verständnis, welches eben darin besteht, daß wir die 'Zusammenhänge sehen'**. Daher die Wichtigkeit des Findens und des Erfindens von Zwischengliedern.

Der Begriff der übersichtlichen Darstellung ist für uns von grundlegender Bedeutung. Er bezeichnet unsere Darstellungsform, **die Art, wie wir die Dinge sehen**. (Ist dies eine 'Weltanschauung'?)

122. 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 connexions'**. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate cases*.

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'?)

# One concept – many instantiations without there being **one defining** property in common

	Entity 1: ADEF	Entity 2: BCF	Entity 3: BCDEF	Entity 4: ABCF	Entity 5: ACDF	Entity 6: ABEF	Entity 7: BDEF
Prop. A	A			A	A	A	
Prop. B		B	B	B		B	B
Prop. C		C	C	C	C		
Prop. D	D		D		D		D
Prop. E	E		E			E	E
Prop. F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F

NB: Common properties are still possible! See property F.

# Family resemblances between games: übersichtliche Darstellung in linear and gapless sequence (*Brown Book*, 1934-36)

Game 1      Game 2      Game 3      Game 4      *Intermediate link Game 5*      Game 6

entertainment	card game	winning & loosing	Singing		
skill	entertainment	card game	winning & loosing		
competition	skill	entertainment	card game	winning & loosing	
	competition	skill	Entertainment		winning & loosing
board game		competition	skill		

# Most everyday (general) concepts (Allgemeinbegriffe) are ...

... not like areas [«Bezirke»] with centers and sharp borders, but rather like **ropes** [Seil, Tau] or collections of **threads** [Faden]: ABCD BCDE CDEF DEFA EFAB FABC

... .

game1	game2	game3	game4	game5	game6	game7	game8
green	yellow	purple	orange	light blue	grey	green	yellow
teal	green	yellow	purple	orange	light blue	grey	green
magenta	teal	green	yellow	purple	orange	light blue	grey
grey	magenta	teal	green	yellow	purple	orange	light blue

... Und wir dehnen unseren Begriff der Zahl aus, wie wir beim Spinnen eines Fadens Faser an Faser drehen. Und die Stärke des Fadens liegt nicht darin, daß irgend eine Faser durch seine ganze Länge läuft, sondern darin, daß viele Fasern einander übergreifen. ... (Pl §67)

... And we extend our concept of number as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres. ... (Pl §67)

# N.B. “... in einer natürlichen und lückenlosen Folge fortschreiten”

1. Die Welt ist alles, was der **Fall** ist.
2. Was der **Fall** ist, die **Tatsache**, ist das Bestehen von Sachverhalten.
3. Das **logische Bild** der **Tatsache** ist der **Gedanke**.
4. Der **Gedanke** ist der sinnvolle **Satz**.
5. Der **Satz** ist eine **Wahrheitsfunktion** der Elementarsätze.  
(Der Elementarsatz ist eine Wahrheitsfunktion seiner selbst.)
6. Die allgemeine Form der **Wahrheitsfunktion** ist:  $[\bar{p}, \bar{\xi}, N(\bar{\xi})]$  .  
Dies ist die allgemeine Form des Satzes.
7. Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muß man schweigen.

# Family resemblances of language: übersichtliche Darstellung as, amap., linear and gapless sequence (*Brown Book*, 1934-36)

Language game 1	Language game 2	Language game 3	Language game 4	Language game 5	Language game 6	Language game 7	...	Language game 33
Noun (generic name) Demonstrative teaching and learning	Noun (generic name) Demonstrative teaching and learning'	Noun (generic name) Demonstrative teaching and learning"	Noun (generic name) Demonstrative teaching and learning""	Noun (generic name) -	-	-	-	-
Ordering and fulfilling the order	Ordering and fulfilling the order	Ordering and fulfilling the order	Ordering and fulfilling the order	-	-	Demonstrative teaching and learning""	-	-
-	Counting	-	-	Asking and answering 'How many?'	Asking and answering about a name	Ordering and fulfilling the order with a table Working with a table	-	-
	Numeral	Proper name	Indexical "there"	-	Proper name	Proper name	-	Moving according to a table / rules

If there is no bridge from one instantiation to the next, we should try to find or create a „mediating link”, an «intermediate case»

- $G(\text{ame})_1\text{-a-}G_2\text{-b-}G_3\text{-a-}G_4\text{-c-}G_5\text{-c-}G_6\text{-a-}G_7\text{-b-}G_8 \dots$

«Übersichtliche Darstellung» is to find the «intermediate links» (PI §122) that connect one instantiation of the concept with the next.

# Achieving surveyability

PI §411:

- 1) “Are these books *my* books?”
- 2) “Is this foot *my* foot?”
- 3) “Is this body *my* body?”
- 4) “Is this sensation *my* sensation?”

PI §422:

422. What am I believing in when I **believe that men have souls?** What am I believing in, when I **believe that this substance contains two carbon rings?** In both cases there is a picture in the foreground, but the sense lies far in the background; that is, the application of the picture is **not easy to survey.**

# Other passages about «Übersicht» and «übersichtliche Darstellung»

<p>5. Wenn man das Beispiel im §1 betrachtet, so ahnt man vielleicht, inwiefern der allgemeine Begriff der Bedeutung der Worte das Funktionieren der Sprache mit einem Dunst umgibt, der <b>das klare Sehen</b> unmöglich macht. – Es zerstreut den Nebel, wenn wir die Erscheinungen der Sprache an primitiven Arten ihrer Verwendung studieren, in denen man den Zweck und das Funktionieren der Wörter <b>klar übersehen</b> kann.</p> <p>Solche primitive Formen der Sprache verwendet das Kind, wenn es sprechen lernt. Das Lehren der Sprache ist hier kein Erklären, sondern ein Abrichten.</p>	<p>5. If we look at the example in §1, we may perhaps get an inkling how much this general notion of the meaning of a word surrounds the working of language with a haze which makes <b>clear vision</b> impossible. It disperses the fog to study the phenomena of language in primitive kinds of application in which one can <b>command a clear view</b> of the aim and functioning of the words.</p> <p>A child uses such primitive forms of language when it learns to talk. Here the teaching of language is not explanation, but training.</p>
<p>92. Dies drückt sich aus in der <b>Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache</b>, des Satzes, des Denkens. – Denn wenn wir auch in unsren Untersuchungen das Wesen der Sprache – ihre Funktion, ihren Bau – zu verstehen trachten, so ist es doch nicht <i>das</i>, was diese Frage im Auge hat. Denn sie <b>sieht in dem Wesen nicht etwas, was schon offen zutage liegt und was durch Ordnen übersichtlich wird</b>. Sondern etwas, was <i>unter</i> der Oberfläche liegt. Etwas, was im Innern liegt, was wir sehen, wenn wir die Sache durchschauen, und was eine Analyse hervorgraben soll....</p>	<p>92. This finds expression in <b>questions as to the essence of language</b>, of propositions, of thought.—For if we too in these investigations are trying to understand the essence of language—its function, its structure,—yet <i>this</i> is not what those questions have in view. For they <b>see in the essence, not something that already lies open to view and that becomes surveyable by a rearrangement</b>, but something that lies <i>beneath</i> the surface. Something that lies within, which we see when we look <i>into</i> the thing, and which an analysis digs out.</p>

# (cont.)

<p>125. Es ist nicht Sache der Philosophie, den Widerspruch durch eine mathematische, logisch-mathematische, Entdeckung zu lösen. Sondern den Zustand der Mathematik, der uns beunruhigt, den Zustand vor der Lösung des Widerspruchs, übersehbar zu machen. (Und damit geht man nicht etwa einer Schwierigkeit aus dem Wege.)</p> <p>Die fundamentale Tatsache ist hier: daß wir Regeln, eine Technik, für ein Spiel festlegen, und daß es dann, wenn wir den Regeln folgen, nicht so geht, wie wir angenommen hatten. Daß wir uns also gleichsam in unsren eigenen Regeln verfangen.</p> <p><b>Dieses Verfangen in unsren Regeln ist, was wir verstehen, d.h. übersehen wollen. ...</b></p>	<p>125. It is the business of philosophy, not to resolve a contradiction by means of a mathematical or logico-mathematical discovery, but to make it possible for us to get a clear view of the state of mathematics that troubles us: the state of affairs <i>before</i> the contradiction is resolved. (And this does not mean that one is sidestepping a difficulty.)</p> <p>The fundamental fact here is that we lay down rules, a technique, for a game, and that then when we follow the rules, things do not turn out as we had assumed. That we are therefore as it were entangled in our own rules.</p> <p><b>This entanglement in our rules is what we want to understand (i.e. get a clear view of). ...</b></p>
<p>132. Wir wollen in unserm Wissen vom Gebrauch der Sprache eine Ordnung herstellen: eine Ordnung zu einem bestimmten Zweck; eine von vielen möglichen Ordnungen; nicht <i>die</i> Ordnung. Wir werden zu diesem Zweck immer wieder Unterscheidungen hervorheben, die unsre gewöhnlichen Sprachformen leicht übersehen lassen. Dadurch kann es den Anschein gewinnen, als sähen wir es als unsre Aufgabe an, die Sprache zu reformieren.</p>	<p>132. We want to establish an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order with a particular end in view; one out of many possible orders; not <i>the</i> order. To this end we shall constantly be giving prominence to distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily make us overlook. This may make it look as if we saw it as our task to reform language.</p>
<p>422. Woran glaube ich, wenn ich an eine Seele im Menschen glaube? Woran glaube ich, wenn ich glaube, diese Substanz enthalte zwei Ringe von Kohlenstoffatomen? In beiden Fällen ist ein Bild im Vordergrund, der Sinn aber weit im Hintergrund; d.h., <b>die Anwendung des Bildes nicht leicht zu übersehen.</b></p>	<p>422. What am I believing in when I believe that men have souls? What am I believing in, when I believe that this substance contains two carbon rings? In both cases there is a picture in the foreground, but the sense lies far in the background; that is, <b>the application of the picture is not easy to survey.</b></p>

# First uses of the expression

- The decimal numbering of the *Tractatus* gives the work ‘perspicuity and clarity’ (ICE: To von Ficker 5.12.1919)
- 20.11.1931: Nebenbei: alles oder doch das meiste was "Elementarsätze" & "Gegenstände" betrifft hat sich nun als fehlerhaft erwiesen, & mußte gänzlich umgearbeitet werden. – Es schmerzt mich Ihnen nicht besser an die Hand gehen zu können. Aber es kann nicht sein. Ich hoffe bis zu Ihrer Rückkunft zu leben, Sie dann zu sehen & manches erklären zu können. Ich konnte in der letzten Zeit ziemlich viel arbeiten & hatte dazu die Zeit, da ich nur 2 Stunden der Woche unterrichte. – Wie gesagt: Ich hoffe zu Gott Sie noch sehen & dann meine Arbeit auseinandersetzen zu können. **Nur eine Bemerkung möchte ich machen, obwohl ich nicht weiß, ob sie Ihnen helfen kann:** vielleicht den Hauptunterschied zwischen der Auffassung des Buches & meiner jetzigen ist, daß ich einsah, daß die Analyse des Satzes nicht im Auffinden verborgener Dinge liegt, sondern im Tabulieren, in der übersichtlichen Darstellung, der Grammatik, d. h. des grammatischen Gebrauchs, der Wörter. Damit fällt alles Dogmatische, was ich über "Gegenstand", "Elementarsatz" etc. gesagt habe. Will man z.B. das Wort "Gegenstand" verstehen, so sehe man nach wie es tatsächlich gebraucht wird.

**Letter 37 in: Iven, M. (2015) Er ist eine Künstlernatur von hinreissender Genialität. Die Korrespondenz zwischen Ludwig Wittgenstein und Moritz Schlick sowie ausgewählte Briefe von und an Friedrich Waismann, Rudolf Carnap, Frank P. Ramsey, Ludwig Hänsel und Margaret Stonborough. Wittgenstein-Studien 6:1, 83–174**

[Cambridge] 20.11.31

Lieber Herr Professor Schlick!

Ich kann Ihnen in der Waismann-Sache nicht anders beistehen, als daß ich Waismann einen Auszug aus Ihrem Brief<sup>120</sup> an mich & mit einigen Bemerkungen von mir schicke. Meine ganze Beredsamkeit in dieser Sache kann ich nämlich nur daher nehmen, daß es unanständig ist, Sie so lange warten zu lassen & ein wiederholt gegebenes | Versprechen noch nicht eingelöst zu haben. Für die Sache selbst kann ich mich ja nicht begeistern. Ich bin ja überzeugt daß W. sehr vieles ganz anders darstellen würde als ich es für richtig halte. Und das bringt mich auf Ihre Bemerkung über einen [?] Teil der „Abhandlung“: Ich bin mit sehr, sehr vielen Formulierungen des Buches heute nicht einverstanden. Dennoch kann ich jetzt weiter gar nichts tun, als ruhig an andern Formulierungen weiterzuarbeiten. D.h.: auch ich kann mein Versprechen – wenn es ein's war – Ihnen lieber H. Professore[sic!] einen vernünftigen, oder verständlichen, Auszug aus meinen Manuskripten zu schicken, nicht halten. [?] Nebenbei: alles \oder doch das meiste/ was „Elementarsätze“ & „Gegenstände“ betrifft hat sich mir als fehlerhaft gezeigt\erwiesen/ & mußte gänzlich umgearbeitet werden. – Es schmerzt mich Ihnen nicht besser an die Hand | gehen zu können. Aber es kann nicht sein. Ich hoffe bis zu Ihrer Rückkunft zu leben. Sie dann zu sehen & manches erklären zu können. Ich konnte in der letzten Zeit ziemlich viel arbeiten & hatte dazu die Zeit, da ich nur 2 Stunden der Woche unterrichte. – Wie gesagt: Ich hoffe zu Gott Sie noch sehen ~~zu können~~ & dann meine Arbeit auseinandersetzen zu können. Nur eine Bemerkung möchte ich machen, obwohl ich nicht weiß, ob sie Ihnen | helfen kann: Vielleicht der Hauptunterschied zwischen der Auffassung des Buches & meiner jetzigen ist, daß ich einsah, daß die Analyse des Satzes nicht im Aufinden verborgener Dinge liegt, sondern im Tabulieren, in der übersichtlichen Darstellung, der Grammatik, d.h. des grammatischen Gebrauchs, der Wörter. Damit fällt alles Dogmatische, was ich über „Gegenstand“, „Elementarsätze“ etc. gesagt habe. Will man z.B. das Wort „Gegenstand“ | verstehen, so sehe man nach wie es tatsächlich gebraucht wird. – Aber genug. Es nützt ja doch nichts, zwei Worte zu sagen, wo kaum ein Buch die Sache klarmachen kann \wird/. – Bitte bleiben Sie mir trotz allem gut gesinnt.

Ihr dankbarer

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Grüßen Sie bitte Ihren Sohn.

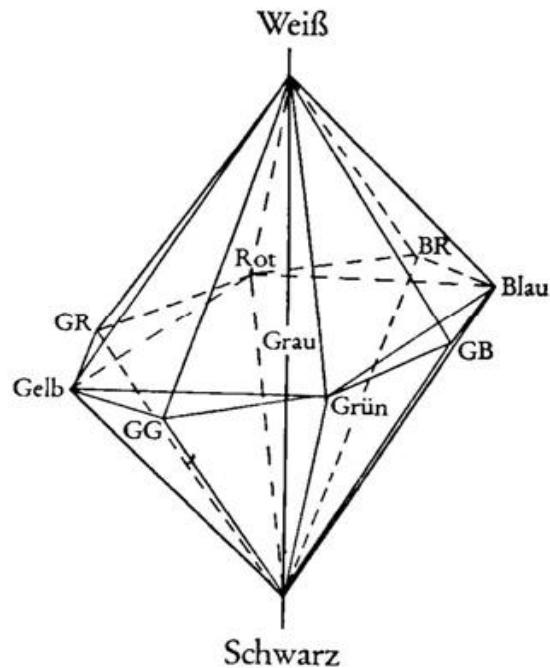
Frohe Weihnachten!!!

Ein Brief an W. ist abgegangen<sup>121</sup>

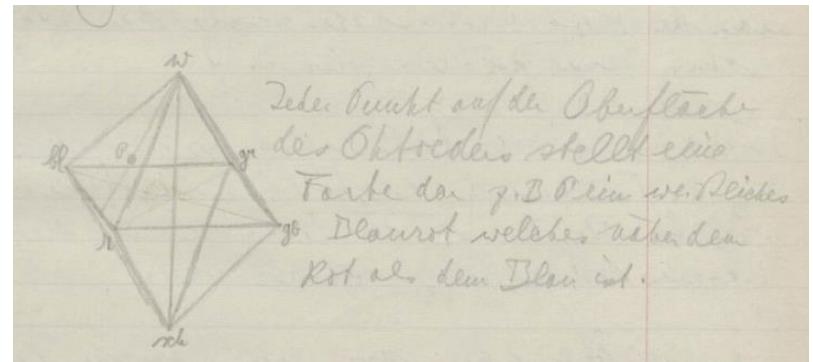
## Draft translation, A.P.

... By the way: everything or at least most of what concerns ‘elementary propositions’ and ‘objects’ has now proven to be faulty and had to be completely reworked. [...] Perhaps the principal difference between the view of the book and my current one is that I realized that the analysis of the proposition does not lie in finding hidden things, but in tabulating, in the perspicuous representation [übersichtlichen Darstellung], of the grammar, i.e., the grammatical use, of words. With this, everything dogmatic that I said about ‘object’, ‘elementary proposition’, etc., falls apart. For example, if one wants to understand the word ‘object’, one should look at how it is actually used. ...

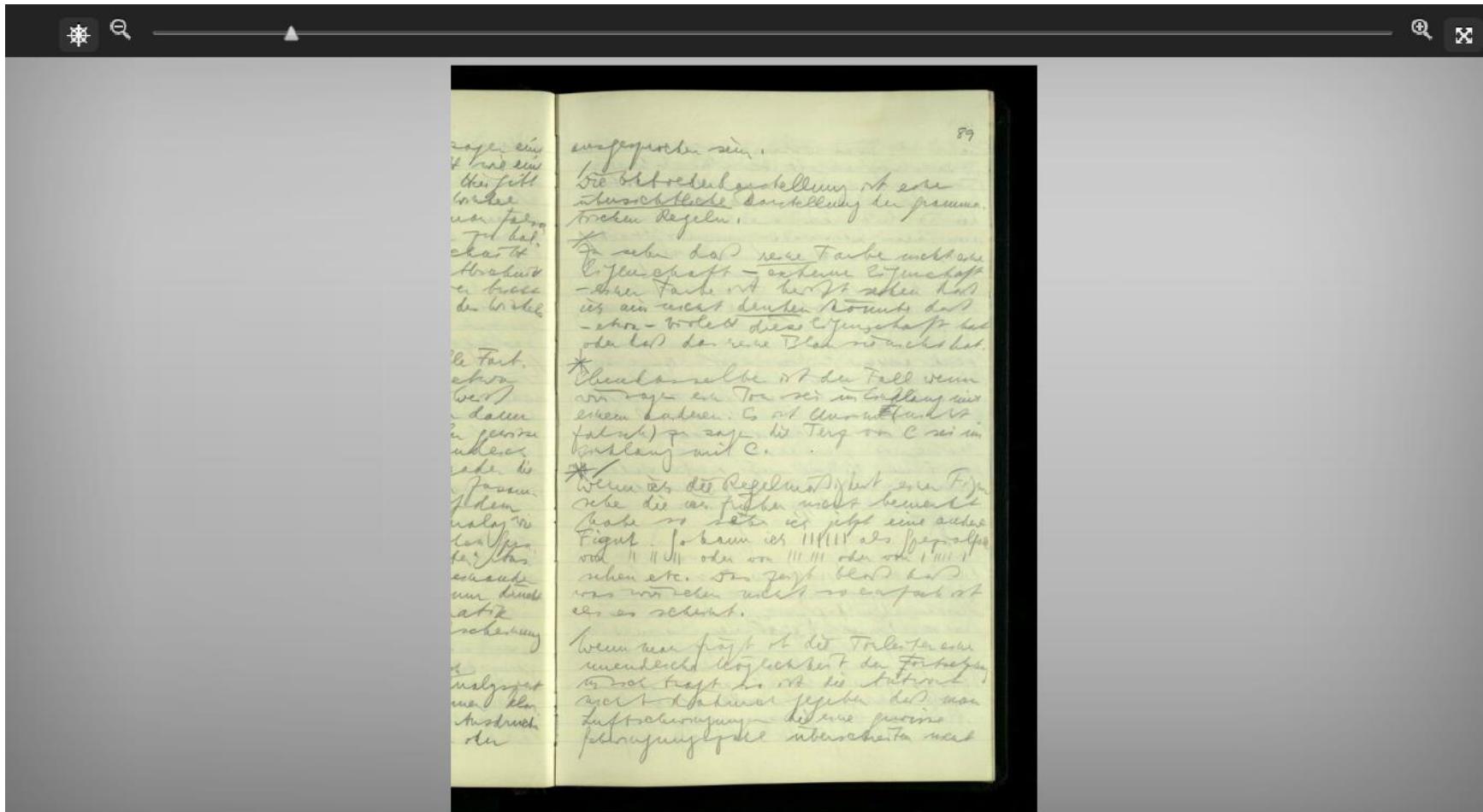
# Context 1: Colour-octahedron



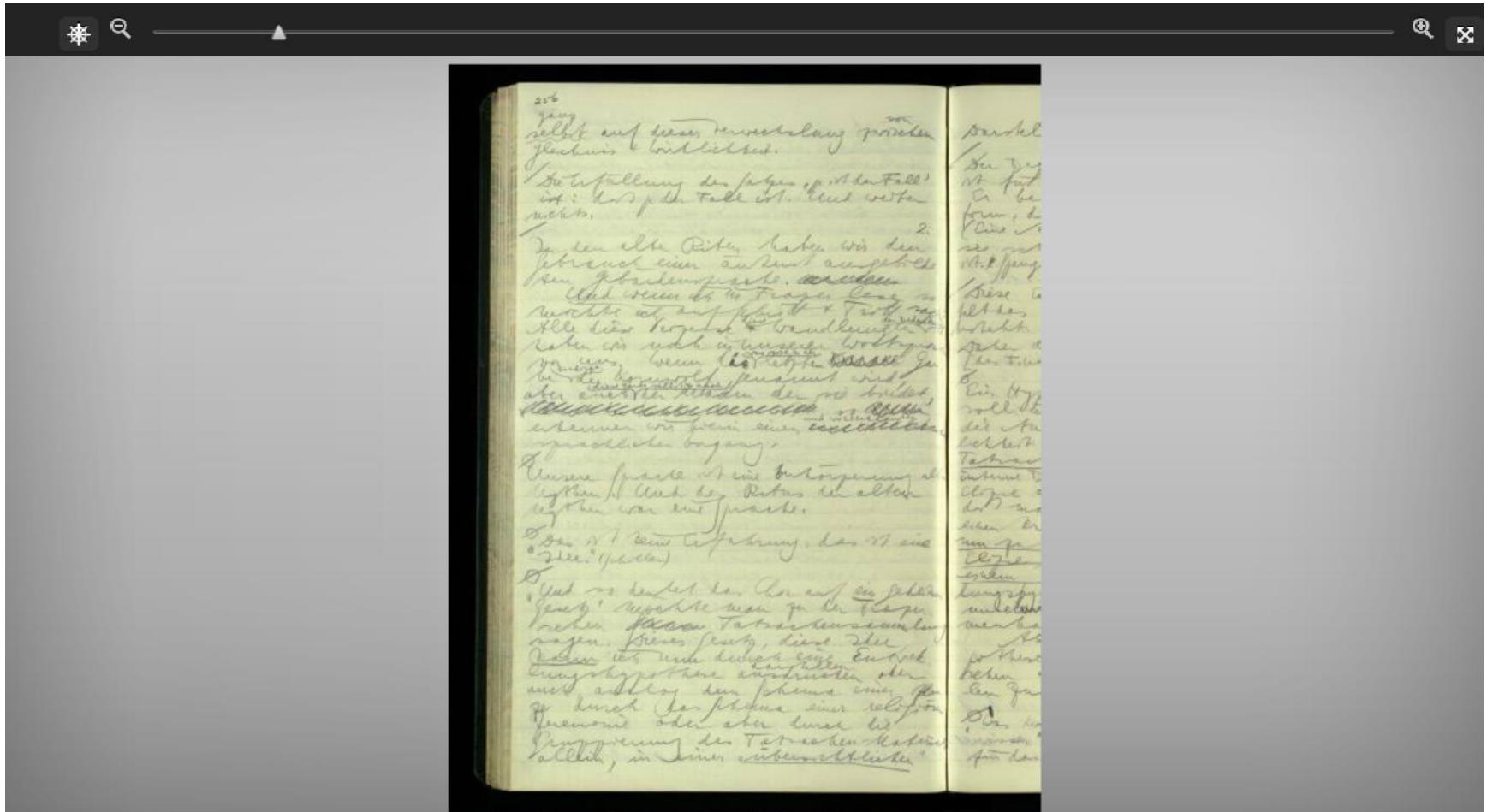
Colour-octahedron from *Philosophical Remarks* §221; cf. **Ms-105,98**



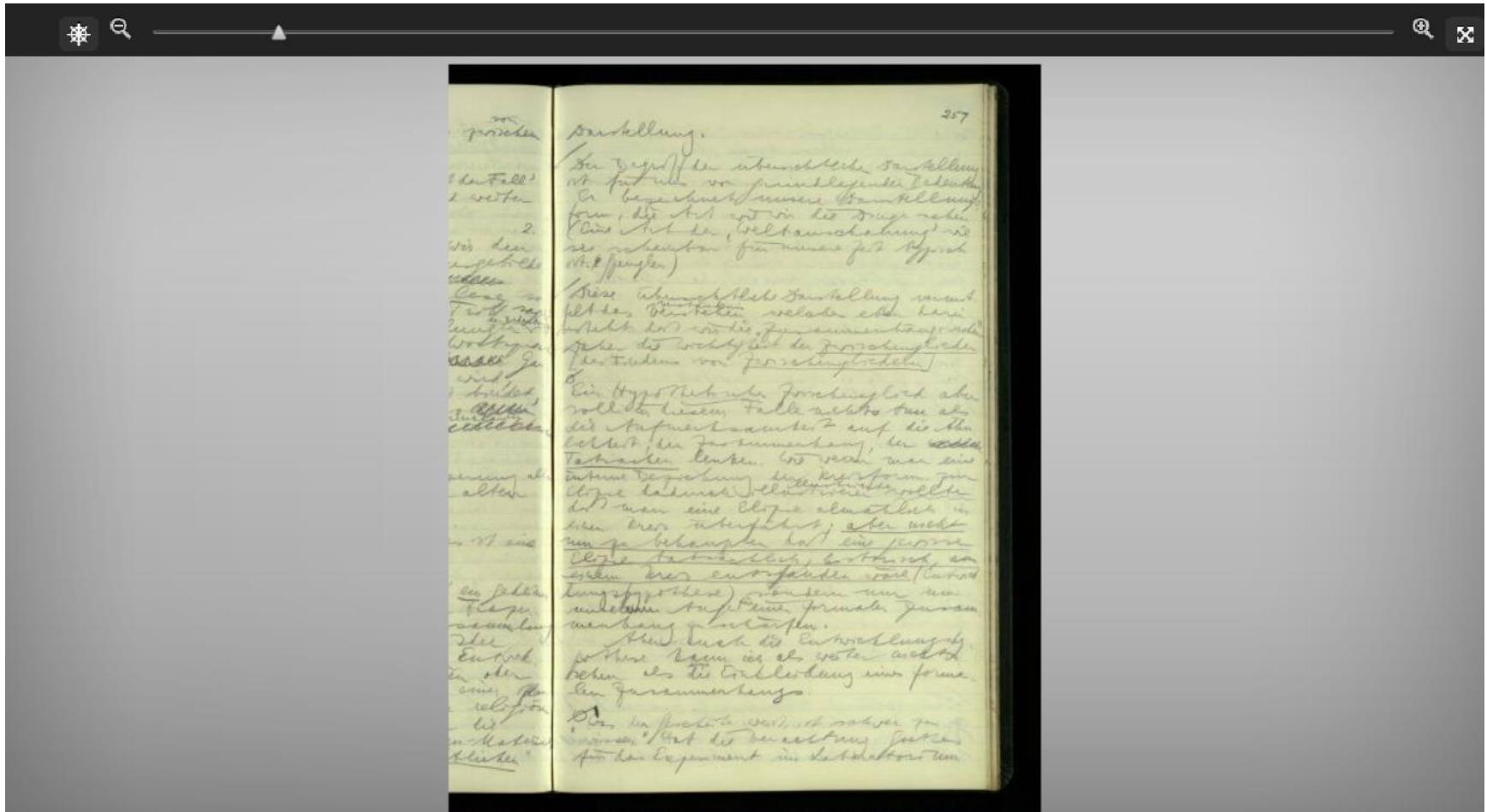
# Ms-108,89 (1930): Discussing the colour-octahedron



# Context 2: Discussing Frazer discussing «primitive» rituals (Ms-110,256f, 1931)



(cont.)



# Context 2: J.G. Frazer

W. pace J.G. Frazer: In order to achieve an *understanding* of the rituals and beliefs of other cultures, we need – rather than causal explanations and descriptions of these rituals and beliefs with the scientific world view of our own culture as golden standard – an "übersichtliche Darstellung" which permits to see both the connections within *their* acting and believing (Language game! Form of life!), and the connections between *their* acting and believing and *our* acting and believing.

I believe that the attempt to explain is already therefore wrong, because **one must only correctly piece together what one knows**, without adding anything, and the satisfaction being sought through the explanation follows of itself. ...

Here one can **only describe** and say: this is what human life is like. ...

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 and to embrace them in a general picture without putting it in the form of an hypothesis about temporal development.** ...

(cont.)

# Context 2: J.G. Frazer (cont.)

"And so the chorus points to a secret law" one feels like saying to Frazer's collection of facts. I can represent this law, this idea, by means of an evolutionary hypothesis, or also, analogously to the schema of a plant, by means of the schema of a religious ceremony, but also **by means of the arrangement of its factual content alone, in a 'perspicuous' representation.**

**The concept of perspicuous representation is of fundamental importance for us. It denotes the form of our representation, the way we see things.** (A kind of 'World-view' as it is apparently typical of our time. Spengler.)

**This perspicuous representation brings about the understanding which consists precisely in the fact that we "see the connections". Hence the importance of finding *connecting links*. ...**

But I can also see the evolutionary hypothesis as nothing more, as the clothing of a formal connection.

(Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough, cited after PO pp. 121, 131, 133)

# Context 3: The Goethe connection

- In his *The Metamorphosis of Plants*, Goethe stated that there is a “derivative” connection between the leaf and the flower of a plant: that all parts of (the above-ground) part of a plant, including the flower, are modifications of the leaf. Goethe showed through “morphologisches Ableiten” **the connections between the archetypal form of the leaf and its variations:**
  - “Dieses Ableiten, so wollen wir vorwegnehmend andeuten, ist weder ein deduktives noch ein induktives Verfahren, sondern **ein schrittweises Übergehen von einem Element zum anderen in einer konstruierten oder durch Ordnen hergestellten Reihe von Phänomenen** [a step-by-step transition from one element to another in a constructed or ordered series of phenomena]. (...) Auf diese Weise gelangen wir dahin, im Blumenblatt z.B. sowohl die ausgebildete Pflanze wie auch das Staubwerkzeug zu erkennen, doch diese Möglichkeit beruht nicht nur auf bloßer unmittelbarer Sinneserfahrung plus Einbildungskraft; sie **setzt voraus, dass die Erfahrungen in der richtigen Ordnung gemacht werden, dass sie übersichtlich und der Reihe nach dargestellt werden, so dass die Gestalten gleichsam auseinander hervorgehen und durch die Leistung der Einbildungskraft in eine zusammenhängende Kette und damit letztlich in ein Bild projiziert werden können.**“ (Schulte 1990: p.15,23)
- Cf. Brown Book’s gapless-linear series of language games!

# Some issues

- A good translation, please?
  - Perspicuous representation, perspicuous presentation, clear view, overview, survey, surveyability, synopsis ...
- Is übersichtliche Darstellung sufficient for dissolving philosophical problems and *producing the philosophical understanding*? Is it necessary?
  - Depends on what is meant by it. But cf. PI §133 – Many methods are needed: aspect change, change of the will, übersichtliche Darstellung, argument, ...
  - Also see the „difficulty of the will“:

Philosophie.

86) Schwierigkeit der Philosophie, nicht die intellektuelle Schwierigkeit der Wissenschaften, sondern die Schwierigkeit einer Umstellung.  
Widerstände des Willens sind zu überwinden. (S.406)