

The Necessary Multiplicity¹

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One day, walking in the Zoological Gardens, we² admired the immense variety of flowers, shrubs, trees, and the similar multiplicity of birds, reptiles, animals. Wittgenstein: I have always thought that Darwin was wrong: His theory doesn't account for all this variety of species. It hasn't the necessary multiplicity. (Rhees, 160)

1. Natural inclination to plurality

In 'The Digital Wittgenstein'³, the guess was made that the Tractatus may be read as a meditation on digitality. 'Digitality' names what the digital is as differentiated from the analog. Here the further guess will be essayed that also the later Wittgenstein may be seen as deeply—that is, fundamentally—concerned with the entailments and manifestations of that logical digitality set out in the Tractatus. But, as is fitting, with a fundamental difference.

'Digitality' leads *inherently* beyond the sort of crystalline definition practiced in the Tractatus to the messier sort of multiform observations and remarks comprising the later work. Wittgenstein himself may simply have followed this inherent inclination, or exfoliation, which lies within the digital itself, that "natürliche Neigung (...) nach allen Richtungen"⁴ which he notes in his prefatory remarks to the Philosophische Untersuchungen (= PU). Compare Hegel on the transition from the philosophy of logic to the philosophy of nature: "Die absolute *Freiheit* der Idee aber ist, daß sie (...) sich *entschließt*, das Moment ihrer Besonderheit (...) sich als *Natur* frei *aus sich zu entlassen*." (Hegel, 1840, #244)⁵

The point at stake may be approached in the question: if a fundamental concern for the digital characterizes both Wittgenstein's early and late periods, how was it that it is expressed in such different ways of doing philosophy? Perhaps it was this sort of question he intended to raise when he wrote (again in his prefatory remarks to the PU):

Vor vier Jahren aber hatte ich Veranlassung, mein erstes Buch (die "Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung") wieder zu lesen und seine Gedanken zu erklären. Da schien es mir plötzlich, daß ich jene alten Gedanken und die neuen zusammen veröffentlichen sollte: daß diese nur durch den Gegensatz und auf dem Hintergrund meiner ältern Denkweise ihre rechte Beleuchtung erhalten könnten.⁶

It is the aim of this paper to argue that ‘digitality’ may be the key to what Wittgenstein had in mind with this suggestion and therefore also to the relation between his early and later philosophy. Perhaps this might also throw light on the contested questions concerning his method or methods after 1929. Indeed, since it is the distinctive mark of the digital to display identity via difference, it may be that the only way to preserve a continuity of the early and late Wittgenstein and at the same time to respect the deep differences between the two, is to take up consideration of them within a digital perspective. In this way, the mode of analysis employed in looking *at* Wittgenstein would correspond to that deployed (as I will argue) *by* him. Both would be digital. And perhaps it is just such correspondence (the nature of which remains to be specified) at work in the approach to Wittgenstein that is requisite for entering into his philosophical space:

Willst Du nicht, daß gewisse Menschen in ein Zimmer gehen, so hänge ein Schloß vor, wozu sie keinen Schlüssel haben. Aber es ist sinnlos, darüber mit ihnen zu reden, außer Du willst doch, daß sie das Zimmer von außen bewundern! Anständigerweise, hänge ein Schloß vor die Türe, das nur denen auffällt die es öffnen können, und den andern nicht. (VB, 7-8)⁷

2. Mind the Gap

In his highly interesting ‘Postscript’ to *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, Rush Rhees contrasts Wittgenstein’s way of thinking to that of Otto Weininger:

‘brute’ differences (...) are not important for Weininger. (...) Weininger sees in this only a difference between ‘more complete’ and ‘less complete’, ‘more serious (greater intensity of consciousness)’ and ‘less serious’, ‘more creative of one’s life’ and ‘less creative’. (...) Weininger says often that in a woman there are not even the possibilities of a higher nature. But he has stacked the cards at the outset by speaking as though the difference between one soul or character and another were always a difference of degree (not of nature), a difference of higher or lower on the same scale. (Rhees, 184-185, parenthetical remarks in the original)

By contrast, Rhees describes how:

Wittgenstein would emphasize that one man’s nature and another’s are not the same,

and that what is right (or imperative) for one man may not be right for another. So that in certain cases it would be wrong to think of examples in the lives of other people and put trust in their solutions, or to ask what someone whom I admire would have done in a situation like this. “Don’t take the example of others as your guide, but nature.” (Rhees, 187, parenthetical remark in the original. The passage cited from Wittgenstein is from VB, 41: “Laß Dich nicht von dem Beispiel Anderer führen, sondern von der Natur!”)

Rhees charges that Weininger “stacked the cards at the outset”. The implication is that more than one “outset” is possible: if stacking the deck is blamable, or at least if Wittgenstein did not do so, or if he did so differently, Weininger’s “outset” must be only one of multiple options. Further, “outset” in this sense must be fundamental or essential: such “differences in nature”, as Rhees notes, are “brute”, “*absolute*”, “irreducible” (Rhees, 184, 185, italics in the original). Otherwise they would not constitute an “outset” at all, but only some sort of continuation, some sort of “higher or lower on the same scale”.

The critique of Weininger’s thinking that is made here in contrast to Wittgenstein’s is therefore that the possibility of “differences in nature” or of “different scales”, each with “a different standard, with different sorts of methods and evidence (...) never occurred to him or had been brushed aside.” (Rhees, 186) “Weininger leaves no room for this.” (Rhees, 187) Wittgenstein makes this same point to Russell in two letters from February and March, 1914. In the first of these he refers to “enormous differences in our natures”, “how totally different our ideas are” and “fundamental differences”.

It would follow that philosophical rigour in Wittgenstein’s sense must exactly leave such room by continually revisiting the possibilities (plural) at first principle and thereby interrogating whether it itself has made its “outset” properly—“*anständig*”, as Wittgenstein would say (a word with overtones in German of “outset”, even while meaning “properly”). Philosophical experience would therefore be distinguished from the non-philosophical by two repetitive motions: a vertical motion by which first principle(s) would continually be revisited and questioned; and an abysmal horizontal motion at first principle by which a new and different “outset” would be taken up from among the competing possibilities at origin.⁸

To “leave room” for this somersault movement of inquiry would therefore require “leaving room” in two further senses. First, “room” would have to be left between experience and its “outset” so that the two might be differentiated, would not ‘run together’. Only so could a vertical motion be made to revisit and question one’s “outset” before or otherwise *aside from*

experience. Second, “room” would have to be left between “outsets”, since only so could “outsets” be distinguishably plural.

Respecting “room” in these multiple senses, or failing to do so, is exactly what is ultimately at stake in the question of digital and analog forms.⁹

3. Singularity and Plurality

Wittgenstein observed about his thought:

Meine Art des Philosophierens ist mir selbst immer noch, und immer wieder, neu, und daher muß ich mich so oft wiederholen. (VB, 1)¹⁰

The combination of repetition (“immer noch”, “immer wieder”, “Wiederholung”) with “neu” is strange and noteworthy. Doesn’t repetition mean exactly not new? These go together only where a repeated retreat to “outset” is ventured such that a fresh beginning is enabled. Wittgenstein suggests that he continually surprised even himself through this somersault action: “*mir selbst immer noch, und immer wieder, neu*”.

On the one hand, such originary, and originating, exploration differentiates philosophy from science and from non-philosophical experience generally. Rhees quotes Wittgenstein as observing:

In fact, nothing is more *conservative* than science. Science lays down railway tracks. And for scientists it is important that their work should move along those tracks. (Rhees, 202, italics in the original)

On the other hand, this sort of somersault in thought (where, as Hegel says in the preface to the *Phänomenologie*, it is necessary to walk for once on one’s head)¹¹, accounts for the peculiarly obscure ways along which, according to Wittgenstein, philosophy arrives at its results. Elsewhere in *Recollections Of Wittgenstein*, Maurice O’Connor Drury cites ‘A Lecture on Ethics’ in which Wittgenstein describes a “difficulty” which characterizes a philosophical exposition:

the hearer is incapable of seeing both the road he is led [along] and the goal which it leads to. That is to say: he either thinks: “I understand all he says, but what on earth is he driving at” or else he thinks “I see what he’s driving at, but how on earth is he going to get there.” All I can do is again to ask you to be patient and to hope that in the end you

may see both the way and where it leads to. (Rhees, 77-78, from LE, 4)

Drury then goes on to quote Wittgenstein in conversation as follows:

philosophy is like trying to open a safe with a combination lock: each little adjustment of the dials seems to achieve nothing; only when everything is in place does the door open. (Rhees, 81)

These images of an obscure pathway and of a combination lock suggest that many of the remarks and examples in the later work may tend away from the result to which Wittgenstein would lead, but yet are necessary to its achievement. The difference from the *Tractatus* might be said to be that the TLP provides a ladder which ultimately must be discarded, while the later work provides countless ladders—which must be discarded. This plurality is fundamental. But plurality requires borders and breaks and changes of direction and these must be treated as fundamentally as the plurality they enable: “room” must be left! An all important part of the exercise in the later work therefore consists in showing both the possibility and the resulting necessity of quitting one avenue (or railway track) of inquiry and beginning another, just as the deployment of a combination lock first of all requires knowing how to change the direction of the dial *between* the numbers of the combination. More, the less the numbers of such a lock have to do with one another on the way to the final combination, the better. Indeed, the worst case for a ‘combination’ lock would be to have only a single number and, therefore, only a single direction on the way to it:

Ich habe diese Gedanken alle als Bemerkungen, kurze Absätze, niedergeschrieben. Manchmal in längeren Ketten, über den gleichen Gegenstand, manchmal in raschem Wechsel von einem Gebiet zum andern überspringend. - Meine Absicht war es von Anfang, alles dies einmal in einem Buche zusammenzufassen, von dessen Form ich mir zu verschiedenen Zeiten verschiedene Vorstellungen machte. Wesentlich aber schien es mir, daß darin die Gedanken von einem Gegenstand zum andern in einer natürlichen und lückenlosen Folge fortschreiten sollten. Nach manchen mißglückten Versuchen, meine Ergebnisse zu einem solchen Ganzen zusammenzuschweißen, sah ich ein, daß mir dies nie gelingen würde. Daß das beste, was ich schreiben konnte, immer nur philosophische Bemerkungen bleiben würden; daß meine Gedanken bald erlahmten, wenn ich versuchte, sie, gegen ihre natürliche Neigung, in *einer* Richtung weiterzuzwingen. - Und dies hing freilich mit der Natur der Untersuchung selbst zusammen. Sie nämlich zwingt uns, ein weites Gedankengebiet, kreuz und quer, nach allen Richtungen hin zu durchreisen. (PU, 9)¹²

In this further passage from the prefatory remarks to PU, Wittgenstein again contrasts two different methods or ways of proceeding. One way tends toward singularity: “*einmal* in *einem* Buche zusammenzufassen... in *einer* natürlichen und lückenlosen Folge fortschreiten... zu *einem* solchen Ganzen... in *einer* Richtung”. The other is plural: “zu verschiedenen Zeiten verschiedene Vorstellungen... immer nur philosophische Bemerkungen...ein weites Gedankengebiet, kreuz und quer, nach allen Richtungen hin.” Wittgenstein emphasizes that these are contrasting *standards* (“von Anfang”, “wesentlich”, “das beste”, “Natur der Untersuchung”) which he characterizes in several ways which go beyond vocabulary in the direction of poetry. For example, the standard of singularity is described through a series of infinitives: “zusammenzufassen”, “zusammenzuschweißen”, “weiterzuzwingen”. These at once express an imperative to be followed and illustrate that imperative via the grammatical fusion of the infinitive form of separable verbs in German: so “zusammenzufassen” describes an action, but the word itself is also an image of that action. In contrast, the infinitive form used to characterize the plural standard (“zu durchreisen”) is separated, so that it, too, both describes an action (“nach allen Richtungen hin zu durchreisen”) and is also an image of the plurality which is implicated in that action. Wittgenstein emphasizes this contrast of infinitive forms by ending the passage with the exceptional one. This same contrast between singular and plural forms is also presented in Wittgenstein’s use of two of the same words (in the same order) to describe both standards (namely, “zusammen” and “zwingen”); these are used in *combined* form to describe the singular standard (“zusammenzufassen”, “zusammenzuschweißen”, “weiterzuzwingen”) and in *separate* form to describe the plural standard (“dies hing freilich mit der Natur der Untersuchung selbst *zusammen*. Sie nämlich *zwingt* uns...”).

Singularity and plurality considered as standards restate the question of “room” broached above. Singularity refuses such room, therefore refuses the attendant possibilities of a separate ‘space’ of outset and of multiple possibilities ‘there’.¹³ In fundamental contrast, plurality insists on such room and space. The former is analog, the latter, digital.

4. Community: Yes and No

Later in his ‘Postscript’ to Recollections, Rhees describes walking with Wittgenstein in 1945 and telling him of his idea of joining the Trotskyite Revolutionary Communist Party:

Wittgenstein stopped walking at once and grew more serious as he did if you mentioned a problem that he'd thought about. 'Now let's talk about this. We sat down on a park bench. He got up almost at once, because he wanted to illustrate what he said by walking back and forth. His main point was: When you are a member of the party you have to be prepared to act and speak as the party has decided. (...) Perhaps the party line will change. But meanwhile what you say must be what the party has agreed to say. You keep along that road. Whereas in doing philosophy you have got to be ready constantly to change the direction in which you are moving. At some point you see that there must be something wrong with the whole way you have been tackling the difficulty. You have to be able to give up those central notions which have seemed to be what you must keep if you are to think at all. Go back and start from scratch. (Rhees, 208)¹⁴

Rhees then cites Wittgenstein from Zettel:

In 1931 he wrote in parenthesis: "(The philosopher is not a citizen of any community of ideas. That is what makes him into a philosopher.)" (Rhees, 208)¹⁵

The parenthesis expresses Husserlian 'bracketing' and illustrates the remove of the philosopher from any "party line".

This second recollection of Rhees again shows Wittgenstein contrasting two fundamentally different modes of experience and existence. There is that of the "party line" where "you keep along that [single] road". And there is that of philosophy where "you have got to be ready constantly to change the direction in which you are moving." Underlying these contrasting modes of orientation are essentially different acceptances regarding first principle—or first principles. Wittgenstein speaks of "the *whole* way you have been tackling the difficulty", of "*central* notions which have seemed to be *what you must keep if you are to think at all*", of the possibility and resulting imperative to "go back and *start from scratch*." What is at stake here are standards or forms or first principles. Non-philosophical orientation rests on a conception of first principle which is essentially—fundamentally—singular. Whereas the constantly changing ways of the philosopher correspond to—respond to—a plurality of possibilities for "outset" at origin.

It might therefore be said, in order to be in community with the community of original possibilities, it is requisite that "the philosopher is not a citizen of any community of ideas".

5. Crossing Over

In the first of the two recollections discussed here from Rhees in his ‘Post-script’, Wittgenstein is said to differ from Weininger by allowing for “brute” or “*absolute*” differences, “differences in nature”, and thereby refusing the notion of a single scale with only degrees of difference. In the second, he is again pictured as arguing against a single scale (“the party line”) and for that original plurality which is required if among multiple “central notions” it is possible to “start [again] from scratch”.

A number of questions emerge concerning the vertical and then horizontal movement of the philosopher whereby she retreats to multiform origin and there is able to “start from scratch” with a new “outset”. How is such (so to say) *crossing over* possible? *Crossing back* to multiform origin and *crossing across* at origin to other possibilities of “outset”? To repeat:

in doing philosophy you have got to be ready constantly to change the direction in which you are moving. At some point you see that there must be something wrong with the whole way you have been tackling the difficulty. You have to be able to give up those central notions which have seemed to be what you must keep if you are to think at all. Go back and start from scratch.

Digital systematicity is the answer to these questions. For *crossing back and forth* is fundamental to the digital, it is “natural”, “brute”, even “*absolute*” to it. Digital systematicity *is* such ‘crossing over’: Wittgenstein’s “kreuz und quer”.

Now in the Tractatus, Wittgenstein set out what might jokingly be called ‘the logical structure of the world’ in terms of the digital. Famously, he thought at the time that this completed what philosophy had to accomplish and thereby showed how insignificant this was. During the 1920’s, further consideration of the matter (including his reading of Spengler, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and Plato), and doubtless augmented by the experience of teaching in the Volksschule (where different children would have learned in different ways at different speeds), seems to have revealed to him, however, that the Tractatus was not after all the last word and that philosophy might indeed have a vocation, or vocations, which he had not previously recognized.

6. The Turning Point

There are many reasons to guess that the fulcrum on which Wittgenstein's life and thinking turned at this time (and continued to do so until his death twenty years later) was the question of essential plurality or "necessary multiplicity". This is the signature difference of the digital from the analog, the former being plural at origin, the latter singular—but just how does such digitality function and just what does it entail? What follows from "necessary multiplicity"?

Wittgenstein had long recognized that the logical structure of the digital (and the digital structure of logic) has an ethical dimension. Even before the war he had written to Russell of his desire "ein anderer Mensch [zu] werden"; he wanted to become a "different" person with a "different" relation to others (perhaps especially to those who struck him as unthinking). His decision to become a Volksschule teacher served both these demands. He might become "different" by taking up a "different" relation—one of service—to ordinary people¹⁶. In this way, Wittgenstein drew both personal and social consequences from the logic of digitality described in the *Tractatus*. Exactly because "difference" is fundamental to digitality, and because digitality constitutes the logical structure of the world, it was both possible and necessary for the individual to *be* "different" (to become different and to live differently).

By the end of the 1920's, Wittgenstein's attempt to *live digitally* may have rebounded on his conception of philosophy. For if everything turns on original difference and multiplicity, how could the digital *alone* be true? How could philosophy have only *one* method with only *one* formulation? How could it ever be, as Wittgenstein wrote of the *Tractatus* in his prefatory remarks, "unantastbar und definitiv"? How could it not have the essential possibility of difference which is the very signature of digitality?

Wittgenstein's desire *to be* different in accord with original difference may have found a new impetus in this way. Implicated in this impetus was the insight that the strength of the analog (a strength manifested, as he recognized, throughout modern civilization) was not some accident or trick or inexplicable fate, but the expression of the fundamental place of the analog in comprising, *with* the digital, original difference and "necessary multiplicity". Only so could origin have a "multiplicity" which would be fundamental or "necessary". Only so could the relation between the analog and the digital itself be digital.

Essential plurality, or digitality, demands fundamental difference at first principle. The implication, as Hegel saw, is that the analog is necessary to

the digital *in order for the digital to be digital*. The digital must *tolerate* the analog both at first principle and throughout experience as its distinctive way of being itself, “*ohne den er das leblose Einsame wäre*”.¹⁷

For Wittgenstein’s philosophical work, the guess may be made that he would now turn to methods, plural, including analog methods, as ways of communicating and teaching insight into that original difference to which he had, always, found himself called to respond.

7. A Guess at the Riddle¹⁸

This paper is offered as a kind of thought experiment since its author is certainly no expert on Wittgenstein. Its suggestions, which remain to be tested against the full gamut of his texts, are these:

- in accord with one strand (and the most important strand) of the German tradition at least since Kant, Wittgenstein held that human beings are exposed to discrete first principles which are plural in number and which are mutually exclusive (except insofar—and this ‘insofar’ is monumental—as they are equally present at origin);
- these first principles are various modes of identity (therefore also of difference) which have competing universal claim and application (a remarkable notion which has been present in philosophy at least since Plato’s *gigantomachia*¹⁹);
- These principles govern *relations* holding everywhere, between (eg) the “outset” of human experience and its manifestation, between logic and the *Realwissenschaften*, between one human being (culture, time) to another human being (culture, time), between humans and the natural world, between individuals and God (and so on): such is the *universal* claim made by *each* of them;
- the contest of these competing principles therefore poses ontological, epistemological and ethical puzzles at the “outset” of human experience, to which a peculiar kind of “Schritt zurück”²⁰ must be attempted to that space of “outset” where, alone, the competing universal claims can be ‘decided’ a priori;

- the most important affirmation of this tradition is that the finite and the infinite do not contradict one another (as they do for analog experience on account of its basis in undifferentiated unity), but instead implicate each other—“Das Unendliche - wie gesagt - konkurriert mit dem Endlichen nicht. Es ist das, was wesentlich kein Endliches ausschließt.”²¹
- since the 2 basic types of these principles have become familiar outside of philosophy over the last half-century as analog and digital processes, and since the nihilism which is engulfing the world is anchored in analog presupposition, the time may be at hand when a principal solution to nihilism in digital experience may become generally available (instead of occurring only to isolated individuals with no means of communicating it to the culture at large);
- this would then meet Wittgenstein’s hope for a different sort of civilization or Lebensform, one where his work would be understood, since, on the one hand, it is analog presupposition which characterizes modernity (“Unsere Zivilisation ist durch das Wort ‚Fortschritt‘ charakterisiert. Der Fortschritt ist ihre Form”)²² and, on the other hand, language is anchored in Lebensform (“Und eine Sprache vorstellen, heißt eine Lebensform vorstellen”²³);
- as is appropriate to a *gigantomachia*, however, the opposing power of the analog is just as fundamental as the digital and just as little liable to final subjugation: no rapture is to be awaited.²⁴

8. Wittgenstein on Weininger

In a letter to G. E. Moore (August 23, 1931), Wittgenstein commented on Weininger as follows:

I can quite imagine that you don't admire Weininger very much, what with that beastly translation & the fact that W. must feel very foreign to you. It is true that he is fantastic but he is great & fantastic. It isn't necessary or rather not possible to agree with him but the greatness lies in that with which we disagree. It is his enormous mistake which is great. I.e. roughly speaking if you just add a “~” to the whole book it says an important truth.²⁵

In the context of the *gigantomachia* of the digital and analog forms set out here, Wittgenstein's comments may be understood as situating Weininger on the analog side²⁶ of the battle of “outsets”. This battle (*machia*) is “great” (*giganto*), “enormous”, because it concerns *fundamental* forms in, as Plato says, their “quarrel about reality” (γίγαντομαχία περὶ τῆς οὐσίας)²⁷. It is “foreign” and “fantastic” because this battle takes place apriori, *before* experience, in what Hegel therefore characterizes as a realm of shadows:

Das System der Logik ist das Reich der *Schatten*, die Welt der einfachen Wesenheiten, von aller sinnlichen Konkretion befreit. Das Studium dieser Wissenschaft, der Aufenthalt und die Arbeit in diesem *Schattenreich* ist die absolute Bildung und Zucht des Bewußtseins.²⁸

In this *Schattenreich*, says Plato, “an *interminable* battle is always going on *between* the opposing camps (εν μέσῳ δε περι ταυτα απλετος αμφοτέρων μάχη τις [...] αει συνέστηκεν)²⁹. The battle is “interminable” because it is waged by *ontological* forms whose reality is absolute and whose *right to be* is therefore not subject to diminution: no final victory is possible for either side in a battle between forms of the real. There is yet something *between* (εν μέσῳ δε) these gigantic forms which holds them together at origin in a contested sort of peace despite their gigantic differences. Plato sees the vocation of the philosopher as consisting in the recognition and response to this original “between”:

It seems that only one course is open to the philosopher who values knowledge and truth above all else. He must refuse to accept from the champions of the forms the doctrine that all reality is changeless, and he must turn a deaf ear to the other party who represent reality as everywhere changing. Like a child begging for ‘both’, he must declare that

reality or the sum of things is *both at once* [το ὄν τε και το παν συναμφοτερα] (*Sophist* 249d)

Wittgenstein is following Plato's view here when he asserts that Weininger's "greatness lies in that with which we disagree. It is his enormous mistake which is great." Only through acknowledgement and appreciation of what is fundamentally different at origin is it possible to valorize what binds them together 'there'. This is an "unspeakable" power that is even more shadowy than the shadow-forms it both separates and holds together, but it is a power which nonetheless is able to exercise its sway with them and, therefore, with differences wherever they appear. If with the great, how not with the small?

So it is that Wittgenstein observes in regard to Weininger: "roughly speaking if you just add a "~" to the whole book it says an important truth". This is a negative sign *at origin* and is therefore *fundamentally* different from a negative sign belonging to a "single scale". At origin, the negative expresses an exfoliation which is *essential*. Its study in differences throughout experience is therefore an act both of mindfulness and of piety.

9. Beyond the Dreams of Philosophy

After Drury became a doctor specializing in psychiatry, Wittgenstein said to him: "I wouldn't be altogether surprised if this work in psychiatry turned out to be the right thing for you. You at least know that 'There are more things in heaven and earth' etc." (Rhees, 152)³⁰ Drury notes that the appeal to such variety and "necessary multiplicity" beyond the grasp of philosophy was not unusual for Wittgenstein. He recalls that Wittgenstein:

was fond of quoting the proverb: 'It takes many sorts to make a world', adding, 'That is a very beautiful and kindly saying.' (Rhees, 148)

Endnotes

- ¹ This is part 2 of an extended project concerning ‘the digital Wittgenstein’.
- ² “We”, that is, Wittgenstein and Drury.
- ³ http://wab.aksis.uib.no/wab_contrib-mec.page
- ⁴ “natural inclination (...) towards all different directions”.
- ⁵ Wallace translates: “Enjoying however an absolute liberty, the Idea (...) resolves to let the ‘moment’ of its particularity (...) go forth freely as Nature.” From the IntelLex Hegel in translation database: <http://www.nlx.com/titles/titlhegt.htm>
- ⁶ “Four years ago I had occasion to re-read my first book (the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*) and to explain its ideas to someone. It suddenly seemed to me that I should publish those old thoughts and the new ones together: that the latter could be seen in the right light only by contrast with and against the background of my old way of thinking.” This and the remaining Wittgenstein texts in the footnotes are taken from the Blackwell editions available in the IntelLex ‘Collected Works’ database: <http://www.nlx.com/titles/titllwtr.htm>
- ⁷ “If you do not want certain people to get into a room, put a lock on it for which they do not have the key. But it is senseless to talk with them about it, unless you want them all the same to admire the room from outside! The decent thing to do is: put a lock on the doors that attracts only those who are able to open it & is not noticed by the rest.”
- ⁸ Cf, McGuinness, 18: “It seemed to her [Hermine Wittgenstein in Familienerinnerungen] that all the pictures [in the Wittgenstein art collection], curiously enough, were characterized by (...) a stressing of the verticals and horizontals which she wanted to call ‘ethical’.”
- ⁹ “To leave room” is used here in the passive sense of “to respect existing room”: for such “room” enables what we do, is not enabled by us.
- ¹⁰ “I myself still find my way of philosophizing new, & it keeps striking me so afresh, & that is why I have to repeat myself so often.”
- ¹¹ See Dante, Purg 4: *Vassi in Sanleo e discendesì in Noli, montasi su in Bismantova ‘n Cacume con esso i piè; ma qui convien ch’om voli...*
- ¹² “I have written down all these thoughts as *remarks*, short paragraphs, of which there is sometimes a fairly long chain about the same subject, while I sometimes make a sudden change, jumping from one topic to another.--It was my intention at first to bring all this together in a book whose form I pictured differently at different times. But the essential thing was that the thoughts should proceed from one subject to another in a natural order and without breaks. After several unsuccessful attempts to weld my results together into such a whole, I realized that I should never succeed. The best that I could write would never be more than philosophical remarks; my thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them on in any single direction against their natural inclina-

tion.--And this was, of course, connected with the very nature of the investigation. For this compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction.”

- ¹³ ‘Room’ and ‘space’ as used here are mutually implicating: both might be ‘Raum’ in German. Regarding ‘there’, Heidegger takes the “da” in “Dasein” to indicate how humans fundamentally belong to this “eigentümlichen Bereich” of ‘outset’.
- ¹⁴ Compare Karl Wittgenstein, Ludwig’s father, writing in 1898: “an industrialist must take risks: when the moment demands it, he must be prepared to place everything on a single card, even at the danger of (...) losing his initial stake, and having to start again from the beginning.” (Quoted in McGuinness, 14) These words will have impressed Ludwig on account of his age (he was 9) and on account of the fundamental change of direction undertaken by Karl at just this time, when he gave up the various directorships which made him the single most powerful industrialist in Austria and simply withdrew into private life. This astonishing change at the young age of 50 must have given Ludwig striking illustration and emphasis to Karl’s prescription of the need to be ready “to start again from the beginning”.
- ¹⁵ Z #445: “(Der Philosoph ist nicht Bürger einer Denkgemeinde. Das ist was ihn zum Philosophen macht.)”
- ¹⁶ That Wittgenstein never gave up this idea may be seen, not only in his hospital service during WW2, but also in his repeated ambition to quit philosophy to study medicine and in his advice to friends that they they should take up some such social employment .
- ¹⁷ “Without which he would be lifelessly alone”. Hegel’s Phänomenologie ends as follows (italics have been added): “*beide zusammen*, die begriffene Geschichte [that is, the logical system and the messy realm of the finite] bilden die Erinnerung und die Schädelstätte des absoluten Geistes, die Wirklichkeit, Wahrheit und Gewißheit seines Throns, ohne den er das leblose Einsame wäre; nur - ‘aus dem Kelche dieses [endlichen] Geisterreiches / schäumt ihm seine Unendlichkeit’.” Wittgenstein’s use of the word ‘nur’ in the preface to PU (“nur philosophische Bemerkungen”, “nur ein Album”) should be considered in this context where exactly *limitation*, the discrete as marked by the word “nur”, is accorded *fundamental* importance. As Heidegger observes in Identität und Differenz (18): “Nur” – dies meint keine Beschränkung, sondern ein Übermaß. (“Only”—this does not indicate restriction, but exorbitance.)
- ¹⁸ This title is taken from a C. S. Peirce paper which remained unfinished and unpublished in his lifetime. See: <http://www.cspeirce.com/menu/library/bycsp/guess/guess.htm>
- ¹⁹ Sophist 246a-249c
- ²⁰ A “Schritt zurück” is required since there is no human experience where such a decision has not ‘always already’ been made and from which it is therefore necessary to be liberated (as Schiller notes in the citation below) if a “new” and free—a priori—decision is to be made. The phrase “Schritt zurück” appears frequently in Heidegger. He

seems to have taken it from Schiller's 20. Brief über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen: "Der Mensch kann nicht unmittelbar vom Empfinden zum Denken übergehen; er muß einen Schritt zurücktun, weil nur, indem eine Determination wieder aufgehoben wird, die entgegengesetzte eintreten kann." Also the concluding lines of Hegel's *Phänomenologie*, following "nur", are, of course, taken from Schiller ("Die Freundschaft").

²¹ PB, 157: "As I've said, the infinite doesn't rival the finite. The infinite is that whose essence is to exclude nothing finite." Compare the end of Hegel's *Phänomenologie* given in note 17 above.

²² VB, 7: "Our civilization is characterized by the word progress. Progress is its form..."

²³ PU, #19: "And to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life."

²⁴ Indeed, since rapture would obviate "the necessary multiplicity", such a hope (or fear) is itself analog.

²⁵ Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Gesamtbriefwechsel/Complete Correspondence*, The Innsbruck Electronic Edition – <http://www.nlx.com/titles/titllwgb.htm>

²⁶ As described in 'The Digital Wittgenstein', there is not one analog side to the *gigantomachia*, but two. The digital constitutes a *third* side to the battle and also the overall form of the battle itself.

²⁷ Sophist 246. Cf Monk, 3-4 with added emphasis: "This [Wittgenstein's "very sense of being a philosopher"] points not to a change of opinion, but to a change of character – the first of many in a life that is marked by a series of such transformations, undertaken at moments of crisis and pursued with a conviction that the source of the crisis was himself. It is as though his life was a *battle* with his own nature."

²⁸ *Die Wissenschaft der Logik, Erster Teil – Die objektive Logik, Einleitung: Allgemeiner Begriff der Logik*. Miller translates: "The system of logic is the realm of shadows, the world of simple essentialities freed from all sensuous concreteness. The study of this science, to dwell and labour in this shadowy realm, is the absolute culture and discipline of consciousness."

²⁹ Sophist 246

³⁰ There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. Hamlet 1.5

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