Wittgenstein on Phenomenology and Experience: An Investigation of Wittgenstein's 'Middle Period'

By
James M. Thompson

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The Wittgenstein Archives at the University of Bergen
Unifob Aksis
Allégaten 27
5007 Bergen
Norway
http://wab.aksis.uib.no/

This book is dedicated to my wife Christiane and daughter Eva. I am greatly indebted to their help and inspiration. I also want to thank my family for their unwavering support of my further pursuit of philosophy.

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Contents

Abbreviations

BBB	=	The Blue and Brown Books
BEE	=	Bergen Electronic Edition
BT	=	The Big Typescript
LE	=	Lecture on Ethics
NB	=	Notebooks: 1914-1916
PB	=	Philosophische Bemerkungen [Philosophical Remarks]
PG	=	Philosophische Grammatik [Philosophical Grammar]
PO	=	Philosophical Occasions
PU	=	Philosophische Untersuchungen [Philosophical Investigations]
PUKG	=	Philosophische Untersuchungen: Kritisch-genetische Edition
SRLF	=	Some Remarks on Logical Form
TLP	=	Tractatus logico-philosophicus
VB	=	Vermischte Bemerkungen [Culture and Value]
WA	=	Wiener Ausgabe
WWK	=	Ludwig Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis
Z	=	Zettel

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that Wittgenstein's work is punctuated by a radical shift dividing it into an early and later periods. Nevertheless, while from a doctrinal point of view this division would seem to be undeniable, the possibility remains that Wittgenstein's work reveals the *continuity* of the development of a certain problematic. This could be true whether or not the full problematic itself ever explicitly crystallized in Wittgenstein's own mind. If one could uncover such a strain – whether it is a motif or only a question – it would clearly be of the greatest importance for taking the measure of Wittgenstein's philosophy. Yet despite a rather long historical awareness of the issue, research into this question has been limited, and can be characterized as still being in its infancy.

The very possibility of any continuity at all remains a point of bitter contention. This situation is due undoubtedly in large part to the factionalization of Wittgenstein research. Champions of the later period have little inclination to engage champions of the earlier thought. This chasm extends beyond merely doctrinal disputes. The *style* of philosophizing and the sense of the very meaning of the enterprise between the competing camps diverge so much that little fruitful dialogue seems possible. From the standpoint of sound historical scholarship, this situation is regrettable. It is time that the question of the meaning of the *whole* of Wittgenstein's philosophical trajectory should be given the strongest possible attention. What I undertake here represents an important step toward this end.

In addition to the question of continuity, this project also involves a substantive issue. I contend that the "shifts" in Wittgenstein's thought directly reflect his evolving conception of *experience*. As his understanding of experience shifts, so too its relationship to *language*. Language is eventually broadened to include the whole of human activity. The sudden jumps represent both a "shift of emphasis" concerning what the primary theme of philosophical investigation should be as well as the proper method for approaching the subject of investigation. The shifts stem primarily from an increasingly refined understanding of the relationship between language and experience. This relationship is most clearly visible in his treatments of temporality and spatiality upon his return to philosophy in 1929.

As Wittgenstein began to gravitate away from his ideas in the *Tractatus*, his philosophical interests came to focus primarily on immediate experience. He increasingly addressed issues involving our immediate perceptions of the world and our linguistic attempts to convey them, in an attempt to "correct" the weaknesses that he now recognized in his earlier thought.

The fundamental difficulty with our attempt to determine the logical structure of the world is illustrated by the difference between a strip of film running through a projector and what we as spectators see on the screen. As the film continues to pass in front of the lamp, we can certainly talk about "past," "present," and "future" frames, because the individual frames are linked together or have "neighbors," as Wittgenstein says. However, the same cannot be said for what we experience. The filmstrip is a process unfolding in time, whereas our immediate experience of the image on the screen seems to be outside of time. Thus, the question becomes: How can language, which unfolds in time, describe a realm that does not?

Although not as determinative in his earlier work, it is Wittgenstein's preoccupation with experience that drives his investigations into language, and later our linguistic practices. Thus, after the *Tractatus* one could loosely characterize Wittgenstein's work as a coming to terms with the relationship between language and experience; a relationship which is constantly being reassessed and undergoing revision. My thesis is as follows: When the relationship between language and experience is determined at any given point in his thought, we will be in a better position to understand the state of his investigations, and consequently the continuity (or lack thereof) of his thought.

That Wittgenstein was interested in experience is undeniable. And yet, one of the main difficulties associated with Wittgenstein scholarship is an inadequate understanding of what he means by experience. The vast majority of commentators have focused exclusively upon his notion of language, thus leaving experience relatively unexplored, i.e. often mentioned, but never systematically examined. Rather than becoming the explicit theme of investigation, experience is used as the backdrop for other "philosophic" problems (e.g. the possibility for a private language or knowledge vs. belief regarding sensations), and is itself left uncritically assumed as an unproblematic feature of his thought.

When one considers the important and determinative role experience plays in Wittgenstein's philosophy, its conspicuous absence from the secondary literature becomes all the more remarkable. Certainly the concept of experience has been called into question as a valuable philosophical concept. One problem among others is the vague systematic structure of experience. As Gadamer once pointed out,

it is probably one of the most unclear terms in philosophy. Furthermore, the concept of experience harbors the danger of philosophical naïveté: one is quick to assume authenticity, evidence, and immediacy. A philosophy that is critical and self-critical must give an account of how to conduct an investigation into the concept of experience. So, while most Wittgenstein commentators have not exposed themselves to this challenge, this work attempts to combine the motif of experience with an analytic reading. This is to say that experience is not dogmatically presupposed, but rather the changes in the nuances and overarching connections are to be worked out. In other words, "experience" is used as an analytic tool in order to lay out his working horizons and philosophical preferences. With this approach, I hope not only to elaborate his conceptions of experience in order to assess the question of (dis)continuity, but also to understand Wittgenstein's relationship(s) to his own thinking.

Until recently, a thorough investigation of these issues was not feasible due to a lack of access to key unpublished materials. Only since the publication of the *Nachlaß*, specifically the *Bergen Electronic Edition*, has a systematic examination of Wittgenstein's work been made possible. Other *Nachlaß* publications, including *The Big Typescript*, which contains entire chapters concerning phenomenology, immediate experience, and philosophy as well as the first five volumes of the *Wiener Ausgabe*, consisting of manuscript materials from his "middle" works, allow for a much more in-depth investigation than previously possible.

The first chapter examines the significance of the (dis)continuity question. I will begin by looking at the historical roots of this issue as well as how the problem has evolved over the last five decades, i.e. whether Wittgenstein is essentially one or two (distinct) thinkers. Once the main features of this question have been outlined and its general meaning understood, we will then proceed to the heart of this investigation which involves investigating Wittgenstein's conception of experience with a particular emphasis on his so-called "middle works." In the fifth chapter, I will again raise the question of (dis)continuity against the background of the shifts uncovered in the course of this work as well as certain aspects of Wittgenstein's thought in the *Investigations*. My aim is to call the traditional structure of these two readings of Wittgenstein's philosophy into question.

The second chapter focuses on explicating Wittgenstein's earlier thought in order to establish a basis from which the question of continuity can be developed. Concepts such as language, world, subject, and experience are explicated and their relationships to an uncritical conception of logic, i.e. logical form, examined. Even though the *Tractatus* begins with several ontological claims, these are actually

grounded in his logical atomism.[1] He presupposes the structure of the world and then proceeds to impose this structure upon everything else, including language.

In contrast to atomic facts and states-of-affairs, the realm of ethics, philosophy, aesthetics, religion, and absolutes are said to be not of the world, and thus cannot interact with it. Their configuration neither can be confirmed, nor disconfirmed; thus they remain outside of judgments, and therefore nonsensical. Wittgenstein's earlier conception of experience is one of detachedness from the world of facts, thereby leaving unaddressed the relationship of world, language, and experience. Why cannot language adequately address this realm of experience, which we (according to Wittgenstein) hold to be important? Why is there a division between our experience of the world as actual (and possible) configurations of atomic facts and that of the ethical, the good or the beautiful? What must Wittgenstein presuppose in order for this to be so? These are several of the questions that are taken up in the second chapter.

The third chapter will discuss Wittgenstein's first significant move away from the *Tractatus*. When Wittgenstein returned to Cambridge at the beginning of 1929, he immediately set about explicating his new philosophic direction. In *Some Remarks on Logical Form*, he acknowledges the inadequacy of the approach in the *Tractatus*, and signals a move towards investigating immediate experience. As he held previously, language hides the true structure of the world, but now the focus of his investigation calls for the "logical analysis of actual phenomena" within immediate experience.

While not a complete departure from his earlier position, he does hint at the need for a phenomenological grammar and language capable of completely describing our experience, in order to get at the actual structure of the world. The resolution of philosophical problems would then simply entail looking at the structure of the phenomena in question, thereby bypassing our misleading linguistic conventions.

In addition to examining Wittgenstein's first attempt at phenomenology this chapter also looks at possible origins of Wittgenstein's almost unknown use of the term phenomenology. We will see whether he had direct contact with the works of Husserl and Heidegger or if another source should be considered.

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1. Although Wittgenstein never actually used the term "logical atomism," it has become the established term utilized in the secondary literature. It is also crucial to recognize that Wittgenstein's brand of logical atomism is not the same as Russell's.

The fourth chapter begins with an examination of why Wittgenstein suddenly abandoned phenomenology as well as its replacement. Only several months after having insisted upon the need for a phenomenological language, Wittgenstein suddenly declared that such a form of representation was no longer of importance, and instead concludes that what is now necessary is to ascertain the essential parts of language from the non-essential. As a result the concept of grammar starts to take on a new and radically different role.

In the present analysis it is important to see how this conception of grammar changes with the subject matter of Wittgenstein's investigations, specifically ordinary language. The increasing importance of everyday language for Wittgenstein will enable this analysis to grasp his reconsidered phenomenology. In *The Big Typescript*, he no longer feels the need to distinguish between phenomenology and grammar; phenomenology becomes grammar and an investigation of our grammar is phenomenology.

In a subsequent step, I will present Wittgenstein's understanding of grammar as calculus. Here it will be crucial to show that for Wittgenstein the grammar of a particular activity governs both all of the logically possible "moves" within a particular game as well as the actual movements themselves, i.e. how one is to proceed. This explanation, of course, is tied up with his earlier belief that only a completely determinate sense can have meaning. This reading is primarily focused upon the autonomy and completeness that Wittgenstein assigned to grammar.

The fifth and concluding chapter discusses the last shift in Wittgenstein's thought: the methodological transformation of his approach to the philosophical difficulties encountered in language. After having repeatedly failed to formulate his ideas in a linear and systematic fashion, it eventually occurred to him that the nature of the subject matter required a completely different approach than that commonly employed in philosophy. In this chapter I will recapitulate Wittgenstein's insight that his philosophical progress was hindered primarily because he attempted to present his investigations in the form of a philosophic treatise. Recognizing the correspondence between investigation and the subject matter, I want to examine Wittgenstein's writings in so far as they incorporate the diverse, eclectic, and sometimes even fragmented nature of our experiences and interactions with the world. It will also be necessary to turn toward those concepts that have been granted the status of being "Wittgensteinian," above all that of language-games. However, my engagement with them will be primarily oriented toward the experimental, episodic, and heterogeneous role that they play within these writings. In the final section, I attempt to reclaim a certain experimental and unfinished attitude for Wittgenstein research.

The Significance of the Question Concerning (Dis)continuity

Chapter one

I. Overview of the Question of (Dis)continuity

The significance of the overarching question with which this work is both directly and indirectly concerned is, perhaps, not as obvious or accessible to those outside of Wittgenstein scholarship.[1] After all, does not the question of continuity focus more upon placing Wittgenstein's work within a particular historical context than with the interpretation of particular aspects of his philosophy, and is therefore of secondary philosophical importance? To put it differently, such a project appears, at first glance, to be one step removed from actual philosophizing, and thus amounts to little more than a kind of discussion about the research surrounding Wittgenstein's philosophy, but not directly addressing the ideas and issues themselves.

Granted, since Wittgenstein belongs to a rarefied group of thinkers around whom cottage industries have been built, the danger of getting tangled up in a peripheral discussion is real.[2] However, the discussion involving the (dis)continuity of Wittgenstein's thought is different, and cannot be treated as a secondary issue. Quite the opposite is the case: the issues dealt with in the course of this investigation amply demonstrate the fundamental importance of both recognizing and understanding the different kinds of shifts that have taken place over the years as

1. The present analysis is primarily concerned with investigating Wittgenstein's conception of experience from roughly 1929 – 1936 as well as its respective relationship to language *framed* within the broader context of the continuity question. As such, while Wittgenstein's conception of experience is clearly connected to the question of continuity, the findings related to "experience" and "phenomenology" are not inextricably bound to the broader question.

2. This statement is not intended to be a blanket condemnation of the past and current state of Wittgenstein studies, but rather points toward a long standing tendency. Certainly, there are researchers to whom this claim does not apply, the majority of whom have spent a great deal of time with the recently published *Nachlaß*.

well as their significance in approaching and interpreting Wittgenstein's works. The examination of these shifts not only allows for a more thorough and rich investigation of Wittgenstein's thought, but even more importantly, the shifts provide us with an insight into Wittgenstein's relationship to himself; an insight as to how he regarded and understood his own work as well as how this self-understanding manifests itself in his work.

However, before we can address the question of continuity, we first need to discuss the historical development of Wittgenstein's reception amongst researchers and expositors. Once this has been accomplished and the groundwork for this question prepared, I intend to show how the problem surrounding how we are to understand the entirety of Wittgenstein's thought cannot be separated from the interpretation of his philosophy.

II. The One and the Many: Wittgenstein and his Interpreters

Since Wittgenstein's death over half a century ago, the issue of the continuity of his philosophy usually has been conceived of in a very straightforward manner. Two basic approaches have come to dominate this discussion: one either attempts to show an essential thread running throughout his philosophy or to find an abrupt break with or turning away from his earlier ideas. Historically speaking, the latter position represents the most pervasive view both inside and outside of Wittgenstein studies.

Although the question itself first emerged externally to Wittgenstein's work, it nevertheless points to an actual tension between what has become universally known within philosophy as the "early" and "late" Wittgenstein – a tension which both parties seek to resolve. The terms themselves, "early" and "late," are used on all fronts of the debate, and seem to provide us with a relatively clear cut distinction. However, for those engaged in this discussion, determining what the "early" and "late" are supposed to designate has proven anything but straightforward. Rather, the opposite seems to be true, namely that basically everyone associates something different with this distinction.

Perhaps the most appropriate expression of the issues at hand is to be found in the title of an article recently published by David Stern: *How Many Wittgensteins?*[3]

3. Stern, David G. *How Many Wittgensteins?*, published in *Wittgenstein: The Philosopher and his Works*, Bergen: Wittgenstein Archives at the University of Bergen, 2005.

The article, which to date represents the most comprehensive survey of what is at issue in the (dis)continuity debate, provides a good overview of both the historical development and present situation. Stern's portrayal, although pursuing a different goal, indirectly lends support to several of the points addressed in this investigation. Accordingly, I think it appropriate to begin by outlining the important features and concepts associated with Stern's view of this debate.

According to Stern, there are three main points of contention over which various interpreters of Wittgenstein disagree. The first involves both proponents of what he calls the "two-Wittgensteins" reading and those who hold to a "one-Wittgenstein" approach. The second point of dispute for the "two-Wittgensteins" camp concerns two interrelated questions: (1) At what point does the later Wittgenstein emerge?, and (2) wherein lies the (essential) difference between the "early" and "late" Wittgenstein? The third point of contention is between those interpreters who see Wittgenstein's critique of traditional philosophy as an attempt to bring about a better or proper form of philosophy and those who think he is ultimately trying to bring all philosophy to an end.

Initially, the "two-Wittgensteins" approach seemed to have found a kind of tacit acceptance. This dualistic presentation of his work was reinforced by the all too common practice of interpreters researching and publishing on either the "early" Wittgenstein, i.e. the *Tractatus*, or the "late" Wittgenstein, i.e. the *Philosophical Investigations*, effectively creating a divide within the research. And given the span of time separating the only two philosophical works Wittgenstein ever published,[4] not to mention both the different style and content of the two works, it is not difficult to comprehend how the "two-Wittgensteins" approach came to be.

This view went almost unchallenged into the 1960s when the self-evidence of this dualistic structure was finally called into question. Several philosophers, most prominently Paul Feyerabend[5] and Anthony Kenny,[6] denied the existence of a rad-

4. Of course, as most philosophers familiar with Wittgenstein's work already know, this statement is not entirely accurate. The *Philosophical Investigations* was, in fact, published posthumously. However, I (and many others) consider it among his published works for several reasons. First, he had been working on this manuscript over the course of many years. Second, the majority of the manuscript that was eventually published had undergone the stylistic reworking that one does not see in any of the other manuscripts. For more information see A. Pichler 2007 and D. Stern 2005. Third, and most importantly, it was Wittgenstein's explicit intention to have this work published even if only after his death.

5. Feyerabend, Paul, *Philosophical Review*, Vol. LXIV, p. 449-483 (1955).

ical break within Wittgenstein's philosophy, thereby effectively undermining the assumption upon which the "two-Wittgensteins" view is based. According to the view of Kenny et al., Wittgenstein's "later" work is understood as a continuation or revision of the ideas established in his "earlier" work, and not a reaction to them.

While acknowledging several differences between the works, for example, the use of different terminology and problems, these differences are not seen as arising from a radical break with or shift away from earlier ideas, but rather are linked to the further development of his original ideas. In other words, that which those adhering to the "two-Wittgensteins" view see as arising from both the rejection of his previous philosophy, and consequently the establishment of a new outlook, i.e. the "later" Wittgenstein, is considered by proponents of the "one-Wittgenstein" approach to be part of the further evolution or logical consequence of the same basic ideas and principles as contained within the *Tractatus* and his wartime notebooks.

Another variation on the "one-Wittgenstein" theme can be traced primarily to the work of Cora Diamond and James Conant, in which they put forward interpretations that do not see Wittgenstein's later work as a modification of his earlier ideas, but rather that the "later" Wittgenstein is essentially present in his early work. The entirety of Wittgenstein's thought is characterized as being therapeutic, and thus has always represented an attempt to bring metaphysical speculation to an end. According to this account the "later" Wittgenstein is not said to grow out of the "earlier," but is rather "anticipated" by it.[7] This "New Reading," as it is commonly called, has been gaining influence both inside and outside of Wittgenstein research mainly due to the publication of *The New Wittgenstein* in 2000. When first published, this compilation of articles (including contributions from both Diamond and Conant) re-ignited the continuity debate. One of the explicit intentions of publishing this collection of essays was to break the "two-Wittgensteins" stranglehold not only on Wittgenstein studies, but on the broader philosophic community as well.

While supporters of the "one-Wittgenstein" view – primarily the "New Reading" – have been enjoying much greater recognition than ever before, they are still quite far from reaching their goal.[8] Proponents of the "two-Wittgensteins"

6. Rhees, Rush, Preface to the BBB.

7. See *Foreword* to *The New Wittgenstein*.

reading are, as mentioned above, much more numerous than their rivals, the result of which has meant an even greater diversity with respect to the questions: (1) where is the division between "early" and "later" to be drawn?, and (2) what does the fundamental break consist of? Neither question has proven to be straightforward. About the only thing that the majority of advocates of "two-Wittgensteins" can agree upon is that the break took place sometime between 1929 and 1933 – occasionally referred to as the "middle" Wittgenstein. However, beyond the designation of this time period, no real consensus has been achieved. The following is an outline of several of the more well-known versions attributed to this reading of Wittgenstein.

Merrill and Jaakko Hintikka place the origin of the later Wittgenstein somewhere between September and October of 1929. As we will see in the third chapter, this is when Wittgenstein first begins to doubt the program he set forth in *Some Remarks on Logical Form*. By November of that same year, several manuscript entries, which can also be found in the *Philosophical Remarks*, make it very clear that he had reached a philosophic dead end, eventually coming to deny both the relevance and even possibility of a phenomenological language.[9] For the Hintikkas the essential change exhibited in Wittgenstein's writings involves his rejection of the correspondence between immediate experience and reality, and consequently a form of representation capable of directly conveying the structure of the actual world. This realization, of course, lead to an important feature of his later work, namely the necessity of investigating our own language.

Others, such as Stephen Hilmy, argue that the turning point in Wittgenstein's philosophy is to be located prior to Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge in January of 1929. Although an exact date cannot be determined, Hilmy feels that the manuscripts dating from between 1929-1932 represent the development of ideas Wittgenstein had been contemplating sometime during the late 1920s.[10] In this case, the "later" Wittgenstein emerges as a result of having adopted a new methodology, i.e. trading an *a priori* for an *a posteriori* method of investigating the logical

8. As an illustration of how entrenched the "early/late" model of Wittgenstein has become, Stern recounts an interesting, if not somewhat entertaining discussion concerning the mission statement of the North American Wittgenstein Society, especially the exchange between Cora Diamond and the society's President Merrill Ring.

9. See chapter 3, section V.

10. Hilmy, Stephen, *The Later Wittgenstein: The Emergence of a New Philosophical Method*, 1987.

structure of the world. Unfortunately, as mentioned in the third chapter, the destruction of his papers and notes from this period leave us only with the possibility of speculating as to both what prompted Wittgenstein's return to philosophy and how he came to the idea of a primary/phenomenological language.[11]

Lastly, another point where the line between the early and late Wittgenstein often is drawn is the construction of TS 213, more commonly known as *The Big Typescript* (1933). Peter Hacker is probably the most prominent defender of this view. According to his interpretation, the origin of Wittgenstein's truly mature views lies within the revision process of the manuscripts that eventually culminated in TS 213, especially the chapter dealing with philosophy. The basis for Hacker's claim is the use of specific terminology and ideas that are also found in the *Philosophical Investigations*, e.g. *übersichtliche Darstellung*, *Sprachspiel*, and *Grammatik*. He also is quick to point out that TS 213 was one of the main sources for material when Wittgenstein started writing the *Philosophical Investigations*.

One interpreter who runs against the grain – and actually rejects the "two-Wittgensteins" model – is David Stern, who contends that two major breaks, not one, can be found in Wittgenstein's work. The first break occurs when Wittgenstein abandoned phenomenology and a phenomenological language (late 1929). The second is Wittgenstein's rejection of what Stern refers to as "theoretical holism," where language is characterized by a calculus of rule-governed systems, toward a "practical holism," where language is founded upon human actions and practices (somewhere between 1934-6). In this respect, Stern could be seen as representing a new category, specifically the "three-Wittgensteins" approach. However, despite his past references to the "middle" Wittgenstein, he finds this view equally misleading, and favors a more open approach to Wittgenstein's corpus.[12]

As my investigation of Wittgenstein's concept of experience will demonstrate, the reason for the lack of unity and consistency stems from different interpreters having emphasized one (in Stern's case two) particular feature(s) of his thought. Often these problematically reductive views of Wittgenstein's work stem primarily from minimal or inadequate research of the *Nachlaß*.[13] We can see that in each case

11. Although not technically falling between 1929 and 1933, Hilmy's position is still in accordance with the consensus mentioned above. Since we lack any documentation of Wittgenstein's work prior to his return to Cambridge, it makes sense to group the idea of a phenomenological language with its first expression in his known writings starting in the early part of 1929 (even if those ideas originally stem from an earlier point in time).

12. This issue will be treated in more detail later in this section.

the dates or publications supposedly indicating the exact point at which Wittgenstein broke with his previous beliefs corresponds to one of the shifts uncovered via this investigation.

Ironically, what has apparently gone undetected or at least downplayed by both advocates of the "one- and two-Wittgenstein(s)" readings is their essentialistic thinking; a form of philosophical thinking which Wittgenstein is critical towards both in the *Philosophical Investigations* and his later writings. The irony resides in the fact that although they hold "some deeply un-Wittgensteinian . . . assumptions"[14] regarding the question of (dis)continuity, the majority of those involved in the debate acknowledge the significance of such anti-essentialist language elsewhere in their work.

Before moving on, there is one last point that should be addressed, specifically the kind of language commonly associated with the discourse of the "two-Wittgensteins" reading. When discussing the *Nachlaß* materials generated between 1929 and 1933, one can see just how entrenched the early/late structure has become. A prime example of this kind of language employment is Peter Hacker's characterization of Wittgenstein's work during this period as an "intermediate phase."

Although I have myself utilized similar terminology when referring to this time-frame, we are clearly not speaking about the same thing. While Hacker thinks of this period as being an obvious or necessary stop along the trajectory of Wittgenstein's thought, I feel that talking in these terms leaves out the quality, character, and identity of the work. Certainly, when taking in and attempting to evaluate the whole of Wittgenstein's thought, the period between 1929 and 1933 cannot be said fully to represent either his position in the *Tractatus* or in the *Investigations*, and to this extent one can speak of "middle" works. However, the mere chronological checking off of the variations does not do justice to the reasons for change, the conditions surrounding it (them), nor the struggle – the building up of tension – itself.

Even the term "transition" or "transitional" would be more fitting than intermediate, because the term transition at least conveys the dynamic aspect of these events – it shows both location and *character*, while intermediate simply denotes

13. This last statement, of course, does not apply to Stern.

14. Stern, *How Many Wittgensteins?* p. 164. Here, I have narrowed the scope of this remark. In its original context, it applied to all three of the points of contention.

location. This "middle" or "intermediate" phase is important not because it represents an interesting stop-off or *Zwischenstation* along the path to Wittgenstein's later thought, but because it was during these years that Wittgenstein came into a dialogue with his own philosophical ideas. This part of his life represents the *origin* of those forces which came to constitute the internal tensions that he continued to face long after 1933. Understood in this way, the use of the terms "early," "late," and even "middle" becomes much less problematic.

It is now starting to become clear that how one reads the entirety of Wittgenstein's work is intimately tied to the interpretation of individual writings and texts. The third and final point of disagreement involves the ultimate aim of Wittgenstein's work, and more often than not, the focus of the discussion is the *Philosophical Investigations*. Stern sees the division primarily separating New Wittgensteinians and "two-Wittgensteinians" to be a matter of philosophic method, i.e. whether or not a method is being employed, and if so, to what end?

In, *Wittgenstein*, Robert Fogelin makes the insightful, if not unusual, distinction between Pyrrhonian- and non-Pyrrhonian readers of the *Investigations*. Based upon the skepticism of Sextus Empiricus, Fogelin's distinction asks whether Wittgenstein is practicing something along the same lines in the *Investigations*. Fogelin writes, "The Pyrrhonian sceptic had a practical goal and laid down specific procedures for attaining it. The sceptic's goal was peace of mind. He thought that he could reach this goal by freeing himself of all philosophical anxiety."[15]

Characterized in these terms, there are certainly more than a few passages in the *Investigations* which would seem to fit this description. Usually, one has in mind the passages discussing the psychoanalytic resolution of philosophical problems, the releasing of the fly (philosopher) from the fly-bottle, or even the philosophical disease of generality. Convinced that Wittgenstein's goal is ultimately a therapeutic one, Pyrrhonian Wittgensteinians hold that the intention behind the text is a skeptical one, above all, regarding the task of philosophy. Accordingly, the purpose of the *Investigations* is to expose the source of philosophical thought, which, in turn, then enables me ". . . das Philosophieren abzubrechen, wann ich will. – Die die Philosophie zur Ruhe bringt. . . ."[16]

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15. Fogelin, Robert *Wittgenstein*, p. 227.

16. PU, §133: ". . . then enables me to stop philosophizing when I want. – [The discovery] that brings philosophy to rest." (modified translation)

The non-Pyrrhonian reading, on the other hand, takes the *Investigations* to be a critique of traditional philosophy, thereby opening the possibility for a better form of philosophy – a philosophizing which, by means of a greater understanding of language's complexity and richness, allows us to avoid the linguistic pitfalls into which past philosophers have stumbled. Concepts such as "*Sprachspiel*," "*Familienähnlichkeit*," and "*übersichtliche Darstellung*" are often put forward as proof of this positive or thetic reading. The aim of these concepts and ideas is to gain an "overview" of our language (understood as including our socio-cultural practices and institutions).

In the distinction between Pyrrhonian and non-Pyrrhonian readings, one can clearly identify not only the differences between the thetic and the therapeutic views, but also how the *New Wittgenstein* and "two-Wittgensteins" positions fit into this broader schema. Of course, not all "two-Wittgensteinians" hold to the thetic reading, nor do all "one-Wittgensteinians" adhere to the "New Reading." However, the *New Wittgenstein* reading does entail that one hold a therapeutic view; for this forms the basis of their continuity argument, i.e. that Wittgenstein has always been a therapeutic philosopher. "Two-Wittgensteinians," on the other hand, have a certain flexibility with respect to how they read either the earlier or later works. While it is true that Fogelin's distinction is primarily concerned with a proper reading of the *Investigations*, the question of (dis)continuity is directly connected with understanding the intention behind this work.

However, the story does not end here. To complicate matters, in addition to the Pyrrhonian and non-Pyrrhonian readings, there are two other categories that need to be mentioned in conjunction with readings of the *Investigations*: text-immanent and contextual. The following chart was created by Pichler to illustrate how the four categories (including representatives) relate to one another.[17]

Approach	**Theory**	**Therapy**
Text-immanent	(i) E. von Savigny	(iii) S. Cavell
Contextual	(ii) Early G. Baker	(iv) Late G. Baker

17. Pichler, Alois *The Interpretation of the Philosophical Investigations: Style, Therapy, Nachlass*, 2007, p. 125.

Representatives of the "Theory/Text-immanent" reading (in this case, Eike von Savigny) hold that the *Investigations does* propound a positive philosophy including theories of meaning, mind, etc., and that only this text need be considered. Representatives of the "Theory/Contextual" reading, as Gordon Baker advocated early in his career, also hold that the *Investigations* contains various theories relevant for doing philosophy, but thinks that consultation of the *Nachlaß* is very helpful when trying to unravel Wittgenstein's opaque writing style. The "Therapy/Text-immanent" view states that Wittgenstein's goal was not to do positive philosophy, but rather to bring it to an end. However, unlike Baker's later view, where he abandoned a thetic reading of the *Investigations* but still found the unpublished manuscripts of value, Stanley Cavell believes that the *Nachlaß* is not of the same character, and thus should be excluded from any interpretation of this text.

A final point regarding this therapy/theory debate involves a remark made by Stern. He notes that there is a strong tendency among those who spend a great deal of time investigating the *Nachlaß* to subscribe to the non-Pyrrhonian reading.[18] This situation is most likely attributable to the character of the documents used in the construction of the *Philosophical Investigations*.

When looking through the *Blue and Brown Books* as well as manuscripts originating from 1933 till 1936, one often finds similar ideas, or even entire passages, written in a very positive fashion, which bear more than a passing resemblance, if not direct kinship, to ones found in the *Investigations*.

Of course, this observation has another implication, and that is that those adhering to a Pyrrhonian reading only pay heed to Wittgenstein's two published works, the *Tractatus* and *Investigations*, which is, more often than not, the case. And while both sides feel justified in their choice of texts and approaches, if we are to properly address the question of (dis)continuity, a closer examination of all texts, manuscripts, notes, etc., would seem not only prudent, but necessary.

18. Stern, *How Many Wittgensteins?* p. 175.

Laying the Groundwork for the Question of (Dis)continuity

Chapter two

I. Overview of the Tractatus

Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* has been extensively analyzed during the last century. These previous examinations do not, however, preclude us from finding something new within it. It might be too much to expect that we will turn up a previously unrecognized secret key to understanding Wittgenstein's treatment of, for example, the problems of representation and language. But something rather more subtle (but not any less significant) might yet be found. Traditional approaches to Wittgenstein's philosophy have emphasized either the earlier or the later work, each almost to the exclusion of the other. A further division of these groups is possible with respect to the issue of continuity of his thought, many saying that there is little to none and the others sensing a stronger continuity. In short, the entire issue is in need of clarification. What I propose to do, with regard to the *Tractatus*, is to read it as the point of departure for what would later follow. This should by no means be a controversial starting point, for, whether one is inclined to admit a continuity or not, the *Tractatus* is most certainly the first (refined) treatment of his philosophical inquiries. And rather than join in the fray about what *exactly* Wittgenstein's *Bildtheorie der Sprache* consists of or whether it accurately represents the phenomenon of language, my intention here is to investigate what precipitated this concept of language, and furthermore how it is related to his world view.[1]

1. My intention in this chapter is neither to engage in the debates of traditional *Tractatus* interpretations, nor those involving the "New Wittgenstein" readings. While I do not wish to downplay the significance, and even innovation of several "New Reading" contributions, I, nevertheless, have definite reservations regarding the interpretations, e.g. offered by Cora Diamond and James Conant. My understanding of the *Tractatus* owes a great deal to the interpretations of David Stern and James Edwards.

Wittgenstein suggests in the *Preface* that the work may be summed up as: "Was sich überhaupt sagen läßt, läßt sich klar sagen; und wovon man nicht reden kann, darüber muß man schweigen."[2] Although these two claims are familiar to anyone acquainted with Wittgenstein's earlier thoughts, what they entail is far from clear.

The first part of the statement relates to the public or visible part of the book, i.e. determining the limits of what can be "said." In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein puts forward a conception of language as *Reportage*, in which language can only serve to "picture" or "model" a particular state-of-affairs [*Sachverhalt*] in the world. These states-of-affairs are complexes of objects in the world that are represented by propositions. This is what Wittgenstein refers to when he remarks at the beginning of the *Tractatus*, "Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge."[3] And while such a statement may, at first, strike one as somewhat peculiar or even backwards, perhaps it loses its strangeness when one thinks of *how* we perceive the world. As Schulte notes, do we not see the pencil *on* the table or the flowers *next to* the window, rather than as individual objects?[4] Are our perceptions not composed of many parts? However, such remarks do not clear up entirely the difficulties with the first claim, and they will be dealt with later in this chapter.

The second claim truly does strike most as being somewhat bizarre. What is it that one cannot speak about? . . . , and why must we remain silent about it? This more mystical claim as well as several other equally seemingly out-of-place statements are interjected into the last few pages, as if to disrupt the previous discussions of language and world which preoccupy Wittgenstein for most of the book. Rather than a disruption, these last few pages are really the outcome of what had gone on before; once we understand the logical form shared by both our world and language, we then realize or *see* that what matters most in life is not a part of the aforementioned world. For Wittgenstein, ethics, aesthetics, religion, etc., are literally not of this world, and thus, according to his theory, cannot be spoken of. The whole text builds towards precisely this "mystical" end. In fact, it even serves to demonstrate *itself as nonsense* once the conclusion has been reached. Even ethical claims, for Wittgenstein, are merely our attempts to express that which is ultimately inexpressible and to distort language in such a way that they appear to have

2. TLP, Preface, p. 3. "What can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence."

3. TLP, #1.1: "The world is the totality of facts, not of things."

4. Schulte, Joachim, *Wittgenstein: Eine Einführung*. p. 67.

sense, because they utilize the structural form of facts or states-of-affairs. And because these claims mimic the logical form of facts, we tend to treat them as such. This mirroring of structure only leads to philosophical confusions and unanswerable questions. The resolution of these kinds of philosophical problems entails bringing philosophy into silence. By clearly confining the limits of representation – thus the limits of language – to the realm of facts, Wittgenstein places the preponderance of matters usually treated by philosophy on the other side of this limit. The only task remaining for philosophy, according to Wittgenstein, is to help uncover the logical structure hidden within the folds of our language; a mirror-image of the structure in the world. Once the true logical structure of language is disclosed and understood, then the "problems" of philosophy will cease to intrude into our lives; for then, according to Wittgenstein, it would be clear that there are no philosophical difficulties left to resolve.

So that we may better understand the motive behind the *Tractatus*, it is instructive to look first at how he goes about drawing this border. If the book has any inherent pedagogical value, then it is precisely to point out this division between sense and nonsense; a division obscured by the complexities of our everyday language and lives. Once the reasons for this division are clear, once language is recognized for what it is, we will then *see*, Wittgenstein contends, why philosophical propositions actually say nothing at all.

II. The Picture Theory of Language

The story that eventually gave rise to the *Bildtheorie* or Picture Theory, as it is often translated, has become famous in certain circles of philosophy. It is mentioned in his wartime notebooks, and is most notably recounted in G. H. von Wright's *A Biographical Sketch*:

> It was the autumn of 1914, on the Eastern Front. Wittgenstein was reading in a magazine about a lawsuit in Paris concerning an automobile accident. At the trial, a miniature model of the accident was presented before the court. The model here served as a proposition, that is, as a description of a possible state of affairs. It had this function owing to a correspondence between the parts of the model (the miniature houses, cars, people) and things (houses, cars, people) in reality. It now occurred to Wittgenstein that one might reverse the analogy and say that a *proposition* serves as a model or *picture*, by virtue of a similar correspondence between *its* parts and the world.[5]

The true depth of this insight, for Wittgenstein, was not merely reserved for language, but applicable to *all* forms of representation, whether they be written or spoken propositions, sketches, musical scores, and so forth. In this sense, his real insight is into the essence of representation, of which linguistic propositions occupy a prominent, but not unique, position.

Propositions, just like models, must be composites made up from more elementary parts. In this case these parts are elementary propositions [*Elementarsätze*]. Elementary propositions represent a grouping or collection of names and assert the existence of a particular arrangement of objects, i.e. states-of-affairs.[6] The particular arrangement of these parts goes to make up the sense [*Sinn*] of the whole proposition. Whether a proposition is sensical or not does not have to do with the actual truth or falsity of the statement; rather a proposition derives its sense from one's *possibility* of judging it so. In other words, a proposition is not said to be *sinnvoll* because it corresponds to the true state-of-affairs or fact, and conversely said to be *Unsinn* or *nonsense*, because it does so falsely. Rather sense can only be attributed to those statements that *can* be true or false, and nonsense to those which cannot. If I were to say, "The glass is on the table," would we want to say that the sentence was nonsense because it is false? Certainly we understand the sentence, and would indeed know what it would mean for this state-of-affairs to be true. The consequences of only true statements having sense would be that truth and falsity would no longer be a meaningful distinction; for statements could not be anything other than true, so there would be no point in talking about false statements. A further term, senseless (*sinnlos*) is reserved for very specific kinds of propositions, namely tautologies and contradictions. Tautological and contradictory propositions comprise a special class, because they act as limiting cases; they are, so to speak, the alpha and omega for a particular truth function. A clearer description of senseless propositions will follow shortly.

Although this intuitive approach appears reasonable, simply understanding a sentence proves inadequate in determining whether a statement has sense or not;

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5. This article is reprinted in Malcolm's *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*, p. 8. As mentioned by the editors of Wittgenstein's wartime notebooks, this report is inaccurate with reference to Wittgenstein's being on the Eastern front when he had this insight. The entry in his notebook is dated 29.9.14, but he was not sent to the front until late March of 1916. Also see B. McGuinness', *Wittgenstein: A Life*, Chapter 7. Here, McGuinness discusses in-depth Wittgenstein's wartime experiences as well as his troubled attempts to reach the front, combat, and salvation.

6. TLP, #4.22 and #4.21.

for we also understand propositions that Wittgenstein classifies as senseless as well as nonsensical. Where does the difference between senselessness and nonsensicality lie? Here we must go back and ask what makes a proposition count as being true or false.

As mentioned earlier, truth and falsity are connected with the judgment of a proposition, and this judgment relies on whether a proposition actually corresponds to a particular state-of-affairs in the world. Here, we encounter the first of several difficulties in Wittgenstein's analysis of language. The determination of this correspondence is itself problematic, in that Wittgenstein refers to it merely as a comparison (#2.223) of the proposition, i.e. a particular configuration of elementary propositions, with the world, i.e. the existent state-of-affairs the proposition is supposed to model. The only other passage that refers to this comparison identifies it with a sense of self-evidence [*das Einleuchten*].[7] His clearly lacking account of what the comparison entails leads most often to the speculation that it must be empirically based – a reading that the Vienna Circle was only too eager to accept and promote. However, as with many aspects of the *Tractatus*, here one must exercise restraint and avoid reading too much into Wittgenstein's thought. Often, he left certain ideas open or unelaborated simply because he was not interested in personally seeing the details through to the end. His attitude and approach to such matters do betray a strong deference to logic. If such and such a move is logically necessitated, then it necessarily exists. The specifics of the matter are not pressing issues: presumably they would become clear with further investigation. Such "open" points in his theory have invited commentators to "fill in" the gaps with speculation that usually has more to do with their own ideas than with Wittgenstein's. As to what he means by "comparison," I think the most responsible course of action, given its weak textual treatment and its secondary importance with respect to the work, is to leave it unresolved; for my research has not uncovered anything that might prove promising. There is simply a textual deficit that no amount of exegesis appears capable of bridging.

In addition to *sinnvoll* and *sinnlos*, there is yet another logical category of propositions. After having secured the meaning of sensical and senseless (although, strictly speaking, senseless statements are not "meaningful"), Wittgenstein includes the further distinction of a proposition being nonsensical or nonsense [*unsinnig oder Unsinn*]. This classification is reserved for those propositions which exceed the

7. TLP, #5.1363.

realm of sense altogether. To illustrate the differences between these three classifications, consider the following examples:

1. The man is standing in the doorway.
2. It is either raining or not raining.
3. desk the plant on is.
4. It is miraculous that the world exists vs. not exists.[8]

The first sentence is said to have sense, again, not because it is true, but because it falls within the domain of true and false judgment. So, even if the man is not standing in the doorway, it would be *possible* for him to be standing there, and thus the proposition is sensical. In contrast to the first sentence, Wittgenstein thinks propositions of the second kind to be senseless, because they are not conditional truth functions; they either include all possibilities or exclude everything. For Wittgenstein, this lack of conditionality means that neither can be propositions about the world, for these propositions cannot represent any possible situation in the world. They are, as he says, "wie der Punkt, von dem zwei Pfeile in entgegengesetzter Richtung auseinandergehen."[9]

The third and fourth propositions, although both technically classified as nonsensical, play very different roles in Wittgenstein's logical system. They are both nonsense in that they do not have referents in the world; thus they are incapable of saying anything about that which can be said – the world. But their common status as nonsense does not mean that they represent the same kind of nonsense. For Wittgenstein, the fourth sentence should be distinguished from the third, because it holds a certain significance that the third sentence does not. To say that "It is miraculous that the world exists vs. not exists" is making an ethical-aesthetic claim, not about some aspect or piece of the world, but about the *world* itself. In contrast to the third example, propositions along the lines of the fourth are significant, because they *attempt* to express that which cannot be expressed (through language or any other means of representation). They are, as he would later describe, our attempts "*to go beyond* the world. . . .[the] running against the walls of our cage."[10]

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8. This sentence is derived from a statement Wittgenstein uses in the *Lecture on Ethics*. See LE, p. 41 in PO.
9. TLP, #4.461: "Like a point from which two arrows go out in opposite directions to one another."
10. LE, p. 44 in PO.

At this point, it is important simply to recognize the distinctions he draws between (regular) nonsense and significant nonsense, the reasons for which will become clear in the next section.

III. The Demand for Determinate Sense

Wittgenstein asks: Since we obviously have language and use it to represent the world, what must be the case for representation to be possible? To put this, for example, in Kantian terms: what are the conditions for the possibility of representation, specifically with respect to language? Starting from language and representation as given, Wittgenstein embarks on what amounts to a transcendental critique of representation, in order to "get clear" about what language is capable of saying. Rather than beginning with empirical observations, Wittgenstein opens with several ontological declarations, and with the first two propositions alone, has determined the nature of the world, its constituents, and, indirectly, the limits of representation.

1 Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist.

1.1 Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge.

1.11 Die Welt ist durch die Tatsachen bestimmt und dadurch, daß es *alle* Tatsachen sind.

1.12 Denn, die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen bestimmt, was der Fall ist und auch, was alles nicht der Fall ist.

1.13 Die Tatsachen im logischen Raum sind die Welt.[11]

The nature of this first section is already striking in that he seems to begin with the end. And indeed this is exactly what he has done.[12] As one progresses through the

11. TLP, p. 6: 1 "The world is all that is the case."
1.1 "The world is the totality of facts, not of things."
1.11 "The world is determined by facts, and by their being *all* the facts."
1.12 "For the totality of facts determines what is the case, and also whatever is not the case."
1.13 "The facts in logical space are the world."

12. This point derives from a seminar given by Donna Summerfield in the fall of 1998 at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Viewed from the argument's structure, she claims that the first, second, and seventh sections contain the conclusions of the *Tractatus*, and (with reference to sections one and two) not the opening arguments.

book, it becomes clear that the seven propositions that comprise section one are the concluding remarks to his theory of representation. However, here Wittgenstein simply proclaims these statements as true without offering any argumentation. In reference to this point, he would later say that the insight inspired by the Parisian traffic court simply struck him as right, and that he simply followed it through to its logical ends. In this way, Wittgenstein works from this insight outward; given the world and language, he must account for the nature of the world, such that representation is possible. As we will see (although an inversion of what he claims is the case), Wittgenstein takes the relationship between the traffic model and the actual accident scene as the paradigm case for that obtaining between language and the world. But what allows one to represent or depict the other, e.g. a proposition to represent an event in the world? "Was jedes Bild, welcher Form immer, mit der Wirklichkeit gemein haben muß, um sie überhaupt – richtig oder falsch – abbilden zu können, ist die logische Form, das ist, die Form der Wirklichkeit."[13] To broaden Wittgenstein's statement slightly, one thing is said to represent another, what they must share or have in common with one another is their logical form. In other words, regardless of whether right or wrong, the representation/picture must have the same logical form as that which is represented, i.e. as things stand in reality.[14] Just like the model of the accident, the world must be divisible into parts, which themselves permit of even further division until one reaches an ultimate level of analysis. These atomic parts or "simple objects" as Wittgenstein refers to them, serve as the basic substance of which all things in the world are but particular arrangements.

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13. TLP, #2.171: "What any picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict – correctly or falsely – in any way at all, is logical form, i.e. the form of reality."

14. Actually, two additional representational forms are discussed in the *Tractatus*: conventional and pictorial. Conventional form deals with those aspects of representation that are more or less arbitrarily chosen, e.g. using black and white to represent events that have already occurred (flashbacks), certain kinds of music to represent a particular emotion, e.g. triumph, sadness, joy, etc. or even as prelude to a future event, e.g. the foreboding music foretelling someone's downfall. Pictorial form deals with the particular aspects of the medium used to represent. For instance, in TLP #2.171, Wittgenstein mentions pictorial form in relation to space and color. Thus, a spatial model can represent anything spatial – a colored model anything to do with color, and so forth. Of course, the connection between pictorial form and logical form is closely related. In fact, logical form is nothing more than the generalized term for various pictorial forms, i.e., that which any representation, regardless of which pictorial form is used, must share with what is to be represented.

Propositions are constellations of elementary propositions, which themselves are configurations of simple objects that make up the substance of the world. Simple objects do not correspond to our common sense usage of the terms "objects" or "things"; they are the logically necessitated building blocks of both the world and the propositions which mirror its structure. Here, we come upon a very controversial aspect of his theory, namely the ontological status of simple objects. Wittgenstein maintained that they are real, but not in the same sense that material things are real. This situation was further complicated by Wittgenstein's initial *reluctance* and later *inability* to provide an example of a simple object. Unlike judgment and comparison, Wittgenstein was, from the beginning, aware of the difficulty associated with simple objects and their origin, and in June of 1915 wrote:

> Es scheint, daß die Idee des EINFACHEN in der des Komplexen und in der Idee der Analyse bereits enthalten liegt, so zwar, daß wir ganz absehend von irgendwelchen Beispielen einfacher Gegenstände oder von Sätzen, in welchen von solchen die Rede ist, zu dieser Idee kommen und die Existenz der einfachen Gegenstände als eine logische Notwendigkeit – a priori – einsehen.[15]

For Wittgenstein, the sense of the world required it to have a fixed and unalterable structure.[16] Without a fixed and definite structure, propositions could not have a *determinate* sense, which Wittgenstein held necessary for representation and language.[17] Here again, we glimpse one of the rigid assumptions the earlier Wittgenstein worked from: "Die Forderung der einfachen Dinge *ist* die Forderung der Bestimmtheit des Sinnes."[18] In order for propositions to have determinate sense (and thus meaning), the world must also have a determinate structure or form. If

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15. NB, p. 60 (14.6.15): "It seems that the idea of the SIMPLE is already to be found contained in that of the complex and in the idea of analysis, and in such a way that we come to this idea quite apart from any examples of simple objects, or of propositions which mention them, and we realize the existence of the simple object – *a priori* – as a logical necessity."

16. NB, p. 62 (17.6.15).

17. This requirement is almost certainly something he carried over from his time with Frege and Russell. Interestingly, the origin of the determinacy is radically different. Sluga notes that, for Russell, the determinacy stems from a Cartesian-like subject, whereas Wittgenstein places the determinacy within language itself. Early on, Wittgenstein criticized Russell concerning his notion of the subject, and his remarks in the notebooks should be read in this light.

18. NB, p. 63 (18.6.15): "The demand for simple things *is* the demand for definiteness of sense." (Also see TLP, #3.23.)

this were not the case, and the form of the world were unstable, then language would not be possible, because that which is being represented in language would not have a corresponding counterpart in the world, and we would be left with an unavoidable and problematic uncertainty in language. This difficulty is not unlike that encountered in the *Cratylus*, where Socrates points out the inherent difficulty concerning reference, when one holds to the "Heraclitian" doctrine.

This uncertainty or ambiguity is precisely what Wittgenstein is trying to avoid; he starts from the obviousness of determinate sense in propositions, and moves to a determinacy of the logical structure of the world. As previously mentioned, the idea of simple objects derives from our pre-philosophical confrontation with the world. In the world, we encounter "things" that are perceived as complexes. It necessarily follows that if something is complex, then it must be composed of more simple or elementary parts. When this line of thinking is followed through to its logical conclusion, eventually we must reach a terminus; thus Wittgenstein concludes *a priori* that there are simple objects.[19] Without this logical terminus – that which is most simple [*das Einfachste*] – the world would contain an irresolvable uncertainty, making representation impossible. Thus, for Wittgenstein, simple objects do, indeed, exist, but only as a transcendental logical restraint or limit of the world.

IV. Confronting the Limits of Language

Although the motive behind the *Tractatus* is not solely the "picture theory" presented therein, this theory does, ultimately, in serving its intended role, assume a central position. Without question Wittgenstein's attempt to understand the underlying logical structure of language is a genuine and irreducible feature of his thought. However, this is far from being the only or even the most important point of his work. Rather, the success of his endeavor lies beyond the "inner limit" that his insight into representation allows us (philosophers) to trace out. By delineating the realms of sense and nonsense, and differentiating between them, Wittgenstein

19. Often when reading the passages related to the origin of the "simple," I sense a certain lack of conviction. It is not necessarily anything that he says, but rather how he says it and how he frames the passages – one could even say that it has an air of humor to it. This is not to say that Wittgenstein does not believe in simple objects (at this point in his development), but that at the time when the question of origin of simples surfaces, perhaps Wittgenstein himself was not completely struck by the obviousness of this claim.

has created a boundary that language cannot breach. He mentions in a letter to Ludwig von Ficker that the more important part of his work lies with that which is *not* written – the ethical part.[20] Moreover, it is not so much that the ethical part of the book was left unwritten, but that it is inexpressible in the first place. As a result of his own theory of representation, the realm of that which can be expressed is strictly limited to what is in the world. Propositions *about* the world taken as a whole, matters of ethics, logic, aesthetics, etc., lie safely on the other side of this boundary – just as Wittgenstein intended. Even the *Tractatus* itself falls prey to the restrictions placed upon language by this division, and the propositions are, in the end, declared nonsensical. In the second to last passage of the text, Wittgenstein equates the propositions to a ladder that once climbed must be discarded; for the ladder is illusory, and therefore can provide no real ground or stability from which to move outside of the world. When reading the *Tractatus* (at least for the first time), it usually does not occur to the reader that what is under discussion are not statements about particular states-of-affairs in the world, but rather statements *about* the world, representation, and their logical form – a task that language, in the characterization of it being adumbrated, is incapable of performing. It would appear that Wittgenstein's analysis is in jeopardy of self-refutation. But, as mentioned earlier, not all nonsense is alike; these "philosophical" propositions, as he sometimes refers to them, do have a certain significance. He writes in #6.522, "Es gibt allerdings Unaussprechliches. Dies *zeigt* sich, es ist das Mystische."[21] The significance of these nonsensical propositions lies not in what is said, but in what they try to point out or "show" us.

When we actually reflect upon what is expressible or sensical, it becomes clear that such speech has a very narrow field of application, given the variety of propositions that we actually use. In #4.11, Wittgenstein affirms that the sensical realm is synonymous with that of the natural sciences, stating that "Die Gesamtheit der wahren Sätze ist . . . die Gesamtheit der Naturwissenschaften."[22] Notably, he excludes philosophy from the (natural) sciences, and thus from treating the sensical realm. The task of philosophy, from Wittgenstein's point of view, should not be to engage in and generate nonsensical (philosophical) propositions, but rather to clarify their logical form – distinctly draw the boundaries. Further down the page he

20. *Briefwechsel mit B. Russell, G.E. Moore, J.M. Keynes, W. Eccles, P. Engelmann und L. von Ficker* p. 96.

21. "There is certainly that which cannot be expressed. It shows itself – it is the mystical." (I have altered the translation).

writes: "Die Philosophie ist keine Lehre, sondern eine Tätigkeit. . . . Sie soll das Denkbare abgenzen und damit das Undenkbare."[23] A more precise statement about the purpose of the *Tractatus*, and what Wittgenstein hopes to accomplish with it, cannot be given. By defining the limits of representation from the "inside," by penetrating the haze of indistinctness of our everyday speech, philosophy indirectly delineates the limits of the inexpressible. This reversal serves two purposes. First, we gain a clearer picture of what can be meaningfully said, i.e. what representation can and cannot do. Second, by circumscribing the sensical realm, we gain insight into that of the inexpressible, the mystical. Again, by thematizing one, we end up indirectly emphasizing the other. This is what Wittgenstein means by "showing." Significant nonsense attempts to point beyond itself; it *shows* itself as the limit – that which makes both the world and representation possible. Ultimately, however, the two are mutually dependent; for although showing cannot be representational, it does require representation as *that which* it exceeds.

But what is the limit? And what is on the other side of the limit? The questions themselves are somewhat suspect in their formulation. The "limit" is not a thing, and thus there is no other side or beyond the limit. Both questions are *ontologically* conceived, whereas the limit is metaphysically oriented. The limit makes the world possible; it is the condition for the possibility of existence and representation. And because the limit is the condition for representation, it itself, cannot be represented – hence, Wittgenstein's insistence upon silence as the proper treatment. But Wittgenstein seems to be in conflict with his own preaching; for he is anything but silent about the matter. What is Wittgenstein trying to get at when he talks of the mystical? To understand the mystical and the limit, we must discuss Wittgenstein's unusual conception of the subject.

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22. "The totality of true propositions is . . . the totality of the natural sciences." (Trans. JT) In the *Prototractatus*, #4.1001, Wittgenstein uses almost the identical formulation, but rather than *Naturwissenschaften* he used the term *Weltbeschreibung*. Although the difference is minimal, his earlier choice of phrasing leaves no doubt as to what he thinks the sciences do: utilizing complex and sophisticated theories, physics, chemistry, biology, etc., are simply putting together a description of the world and nothing more. This also illuminates the remark immediately following: "The word 'philosophy' must mean something whose place is above or below, but does not stand with the natural sciences." (Trans. JT)

23. TLP, #4.112: "Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity." #4.114: "It must set limits to what can be thought; and, in doing so, to what cannot be thought."

V. The Ethical-Aesthetic Subject as Transcendental Limit

Where the world and the mystical, language and the ineffable meet, so to speak, is Wittgenstein's conception of the subject as limit. The subject or "I" and its relation to the world is almost certainly the most elusive and complicated aspect of Wittgenstein's earlier thought. Trying to come to terms with his notion of the subject is all the more difficult because the *Tractatus* itself contains relatively few propositions regarding this theme, and those that it does contain are enigmatic. However, his treatment of the problem of the subject in his wartime notebooks, while by no means comprehensive, does help in discerning his position. Further complicating the matter is the relevant question of influence (above all) by Schopenhauer and Kant upon his work. I grant the importance of this line of questioning, but at the same time, it is not my intention here to offer a thorough and exhaustive account of the secondary literature regarding this topic. Rather, the influence of these two figures, among others, will be addressed as they become relevant to my project.

For Wittgenstein, the problem of the subject is the problem of the relation between the "I" and reality – a problem of limit. As to the question of what a subject is, Wittgenstein's references are negatively oriented. It is not because the subject is simply difficult to describe or define, but rather there is nothing to *re*present; for the "I," according to Wittgenstein, cannot be a *thing*; neither a mental (*res cogitans*), nor material substance (*res extensa*). The reason that the subject cannot be represented is that "Das Subjekt gehört nicht zur Welt, sondern es ist eine Grenze der Welt."[24] For the same reason that "philosophical" propositions are considered nonsensical, the subject too has no referent in the world with which a linguistic symbol could be connected. "I" is not a thing, rather it constitutes, as he says, "a limit of the world." To emphasize his point, Wittgenstein writes:

> Wenn ich ein Buch schriebe „Die Welt, wie ich sie vorfand", so wäre darin auch über meinen Leib zu berichten und zu sagen, welche Glieder meinem Willen unterstehen und welche nicht, etc., dies ist nämlich eine Methode, das Subjekt zu isolieren, oder vielmehr zu zeigen, daß es in einem wichtigen Sinne kein Subjekt gibt: Von ihm allein nämlich könnte in diesem Buch *nicht* die Rede sein. – [25]

24. TLP, #5.632: "The subject does not belong to the world; rather it is a limit of the world." (Trans. JT)

What this reductive method, reaching back to Hume, is supposed to show is that our common sense notion of subject cannot be empirically grounded. If we were to describe exhaustively everything that is, as the passage above suggests, we would never seem to reach the subject itself – an irreducible "I" free from all other components. Claiming that "I" refers to the body only leads us to the problems involving identity, materialism, and behaviorism. In attempting to isolate the subject, we eventually come up empty handed; for there is no corresponding subject or "I" to be uncovered in the material or factual world. Such a book would amount to nothing more than a description of the world, including "my" body, but nevertheless lacking a subject in the "important sense."

The notion of a substantial subject is a view of which Wittgenstein remains critical throughout his life. Later, with Descartes in mind, Wittgenstein writes in *The Blue and Brown Books* that having discarded the idea that the term "I" is used to refer to bodily characteristics, "this creates the illusion that we use this word to refer to something bodiless, which, however, has its seat in our body. In fact *this* seems to be the real ego, the one of which it was said, 'Cogito, ergo sum'."[26] If the subject is not my material body, and therefore not a physical thing, then, Wittgenstein contends, we have been led (at least historically speaking) by language to believe that the "I" must be some non-material, mental thing, which somehow is grounded in and directs "my" body, and through it things in the world. Although this last passage derives from his later work, and to that extent is not to be equated with the views he held in the *Tractatus*, it is relevant insofar that it shows a strain of anti-objectivism regarding the "self" running throughout his philosophic thought. In this respect, his philosophy has always been a critique against the tendency of objectivism, which was most rampant during the 20th century. Although not always for the same reasons, both Wittgenstein's earlier and later works exhibit a mistrust of how philosophical problems have come to be formulated – the difficulties surrounding the self or subject being a paradigm example.

However, it would appear that by pursuing this course, Wittgenstein has completely closed off the possibility of discussing the "I" or subject. And at the risk of

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25. TLP, #5.631: "If I wrote a book called *The World as I found It*, I should have to include a report on my body, and should have to say which parts were subordinate to my will, and which were not, etc., this being a method of isolating the subject, or rather of showing that in an important sense there is no subject; for it alone could *not* be mentioned in that book. – "

26. BBB, p. 69.

sounding contradictory, he says that there is one sense in which it can be spoken of: "Es gibt also wirklich einen Sinn, in welchem in der Philosophie nichtpsychologisch vom Ich die Rede sein kann. Das Ich tritt in die Philosophie dadurch ein, daß 'die Welt meine Welt ist.'"[27] Indeed, this passage appears to contradict what Wittgenstein has spent so much effort struggling against: *sinnvolle Rede* about the subject.

Aware that Wittgenstein is walking a fine line, Hans Sluga warns against careless readings (and interpretations) of this passage.[28] His point is well taken; when reading this passage, one should be aware that Wittgenstein is using the terms in a non-formal manner. This is important in avoiding what he calls making Wittgenstein's position "self-contradictory;" something (according to Sluga) Anscombe's translation of *die Rede* as "mention," or McGuinness' and Pears' as "talk" do not. To support his reading, Sluga points out that the German term *Rede* is derived from the Latin term *ratio.* Thus, Sluga's criticism of Anscombe's, McGuinness', and Pear's respective translations is that they are based on the common usage of the term *Rede* as speech or talk, thereby having missed the originary meaning having to do with rationality and reason. The primordial meaning of *Rede*, as Sluga contends Wittgenstein to be using it here, is still present in the common German phrase "davon kann die Rede sein," which Sluga roughly translates as, "such and such is reasonable." Indeed, the meaning of this phrase with respect to *die Rede* can be translated as "reasonable," but this is also meant by the more standard translation as "talk."

Putting aside the question of whether or not *Rede* is directly derived from the Latin *ratio* or was simply influenced by it, the more relevant matter is if by reaching back to its "primordial" meaning and understanding Wittgenstein's use of the term in the passage as meaning reasonable, Sluga actually accomplishes anything. To say that the "I" is reasonable would indicate that it is sensical, and therefore, is part of the world, something which Wittgenstein explicitly denies. As a result, I think Sluga's criticism is partially misguided here.[29]

But the issue at hand is still open, i.e. how should we understand this statement? What relationship does philosophy have to the "I"? What does Wittgenstein

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27. TLP, #5.641: "Thus there really is a sense in which philosophy can speak of the self (I) in a non-psychological way."

28. See Sluga, Hans, "'*Whose house is that?" Wittgenstein on the Self*" in *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*, 1997.

mean when he says that the "I" or "self" enters philosophy, such that the world is "my world?" Part of the answer lies in the passage directly following: "Das philosophische Ich ist nicht der Mensch, nicht der menschliche Körper, oder die menschliche Seele, von der die Psychologie handelt, sondern das metaphysische Subjekt, die Grenze – nicht ein Teil – der Welt."[30]

As we have already seen, Wittgenstein associates neither the human body nor our modern conception of the soul with the subject. Thus, the sense in which philosophy deals with the subject cannot be as a part of the world. The metaphysical subject is a precondition for the world's existence,[31] therefore we cannot speak of it as either the body or soul. Framed differently (and what I believe to be the fundamental question with which Wittgenstein is occupied) the issue at hand involves the relation between world and subject. Interpreted in this way, the problems of language and representation dealt with in the *Tractatus* are merely manifestations of this more primordial issue. Most likely influenced by the German Idealist tradition, he is grappling with the problem of how the objective world is (necessarily) given to a subjectivity.

To help illustrate the relation between subject and world, Wittgenstein borrows the analogy of the eye from Schopenhauer. To the question, "*Wo in* der Welt ist ein metaphysisches Subjekt zu merken?"[32] Wittgenstein responds:

> Du sagst, es verhält sich hier ganz wie mit Auge und Gesichtsfeld. Aber das Auge siehst du wirklich *nicht*.

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29. The problem with Sluga's criticism (while not trying to defend any position held by Anscombe, McGuinness or Pears) is that it is off the mark from the very beginning. Clearly, in this passage, Wittgenstein is not using the terms in their formal sense corresponding to his account in the *Tractatus*. To see this, we need look no further than the passage in its entirety: "Es gibt wirklich eine Art und Weise, wie in der Philosophie in einem nicht psychologischen Sinne vom Ich die Rede sein kann und muß." Both the terms *Sinne* and *Art und Weise* point to the everyday uses of the terms as "way" or "manner." The corresponding passage in the *Tractatus* lends even further support to this interpretation: "Es gibt also wirklich einen Sinn, in welchem in der Philosophie nicht-psychologisch vom Ich die Rede sein kann." (TLP, #5.641) Again, in this passage the terms *Sinn* and *Rede* are being used in their contemporary way: "There really is a sense (way) in which philosophy, non-psychologically, can talk about (speak of) the I."

30. TLP, #5.641: "The philosophical self (I) is not the human being, not the human body, or the human soul, with which psychology deals, but rather the metaphysical subject, the limit of the world – not a part of it."

31. NB, (2.8.16).

32. "Where in the world is a metaphysical subject to be perceived?" (Trans. JT)

> Und nichts *am Gesichtsfeld* läßt darauf schließen, daß es von einem Auge gesehen wird.[33]
>
> Das Gesichtsfeld hat nämlich nicht etwa eine solche Form:[34] [Here follows the "eye"-figure.]

According to the analogy, where the metaphysical subject is akin to the eye, and the world to the visual field, the subject is not actually a part of what is given to it. In the same sense that the visual field does not enclose the eye, the subject is not encompassed by the world. Rather than being an object as other objects inside the field, the eye acts as a limit of our visual field – it gives shape and structure to it, but without being a part of the field itself. And, just like the eye, the metaphysical subject can never become an object of what it itself instantiates, in this case, the world. In line with Kant's conception of the self, the "I" of the *Tractatus* is *unhintergehbar*; it can never become the object of its own consideration.

Since the metaphysical subject does not "belong to the world," then in what sense is "the world, *my* world?" Wittgenstein frames the issue in solipsistic terms:

> Was der Solipsismus nämlich *meint*, ist ganz richtig, nur läßt es sich nicht sagen, sondern es zeigt sich. Daß die Welt *meine* Welt ist, das zeigt sich darin, daß die Grenzen *der* Sprache (der Sprache, die allein ich verstehe) die Grenzen *meiner* Welt bedeuten.[35]

For Wittgenstein, because the world is given to me and no other, it is mine. How I portray the world – whatever the means of representation – constitutes completely its existence. Here, it is important to remember that language (representation) can only depict what is or can be the case; it determines *a priori* both the logical possibilities as well as impossibilities. However, the logical impossibilities are not directly determined, but rather "show themselves" or follow from the determination of what is possible. This is what Wittgenstein means when he talks about "drawing the limit from the inside." Thus, discussion of ethics or aesthetics, for

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33. TLP, #5.633: "You will say that this is exactly like the case of the eye and the visual field. But really you do *not* see the eye. And nothing *in the visual field* allows you to infer that it is seen by an eye."

34. TLP, #5.6331: "For the form of the visual field is surely not like this:"

35. TLP, #5.62: "For what the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said*, but makes itself manifest. The world is *my* world: this is manifest in the fact that the limits of *language* (of that language which alone I understand) mean the limits of *my* world."

instance, would be, according to Wittgenstein, talking about something "higher."[36] Here "higher" simply means outside the realm of the representable world, thus to speak about such issues directly would require language and logic to exceed themselves.

> Die Logik erfüllt die Welt; die Grenzen der Welt sind auch ihre Grenzen. Wir können also in der Logik nicht sagen: Das und das gibt es in der Welt, jenes nicht. Das würde nämlich scheinbar voraussetzen, daß wir gewisse Möglichkeiten ausschließen, und dies kann nicht der Fall sein, da sonst die Logik über die Grenzen der Welt hinaus müßte; wenn sie nämlich diese Grenzen auch von der anderen Seite betrachten könnte.[37]

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein equates language, using Newtonian mechanics as a point of reference, to a kind of (fine) mesh laid over something in order to describe it – a coordinate system. In so doing, science has devised a way or method of description, which it can then apply to various (or all) phenomena. Continuing with the mesh analogy, Wittgenstein points out, "Ich werde auf diese Weise die Beschreibung der Fläche auf eine einheitliche Form gebracht haben."[38] Although the particular configuration (of the mesh) utilized is optional – for one form may provide for a more simplified description – what is important is that the description, hence system of depiction (representation), be uniform. However, if this is indeed the case, what we should notice, and what science has overlooked, is that any picture [*Bild*] derived from this apparatus says nothing about what it actually describes; something, according to Wittgenstein, characteristic of all representations.[39] Of significance, here, is that *this* picture allows for *this* kind of description. To emphasize the curious relationship between what is described (states-of-affairs) and the description (representation in every form) Wittgenstein writes, "*Das* aber charakterisiert das Bild, daß es sich durch ein bestimmtes Netz von *bestimmter* Feinheit *vollständig* beschreiben lässt".[40]

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36. See TLP, #6.42.

37. TLP, #5.61: "Logic pervades the world: the limits of the world are also its limits. So we cannot say in logic, 'The world has this in it, and this, but not that.' For that would appear to presuppose that we were excluding certain possibilities, and this cannot be the case, since it would require that logic should go beyond the limits of the world; for only in that way could it view those limits from the other side as well."

38. TLP, #6.341: "In this way I shall have imposed a unified form on the description of the surface."

39. See TLP, #6.3431.

The point here is that the language of physics and the other natural sciences is unable to address the objects in the world in a direct manner.[41] He says that it should not go unnoticed that such a "description of the world" [*Weltbeschreibung*] is always of the most "general kind." In physics, e.g. "Es ist … nie von *bestimmten* materialen Punkten die Rede, sondern immer nur von *irgend welchen*."[42] The laws of causality, induction, etc., are confined to what exists, i.e. the realm of facts; for the only necessity that exists is logical necessity.

However, the sciences do not recognize the constraints of their logical apparati, nor do they understand the nature of the relationship between representation and world. The nature of this relationship consists of their necessarily shared logical structure. Participation in the logical structure of the world is necessary for representation; for otherwise representation could *not* be said to re-present or model events in the world.

Emphasizing the prominence given to the natural sciences, toward the end of the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein remarks that our modern relationship to the so-called laws of nature is similar to that of "God and Fate" for our forefathers – treating them both as the last authority. He even attributes a certain clarity to the ancients lacking in contemporary epistemology: "Die alten sind allerdings insofern klarer, als sie einen klaren Abschluß anerkennen, während es bei dem neuen System scheinen soll, als sei *alles* erklärt."[43]

A further important implication of this discussion involves the value attributable to statements and states-of-affairs. As we have just seen, language can only provide general descriptions of configurations in the world, and to make ethical or moral statements, for example, would be to talk about something outside the realm of the representation. For these reasons it can be said that every proposition holds the same value, namely none. This also holds true for that which language is to represent, i.e. the world. In #6.41, Wittgenstein claims that what occurs *in* the

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40. TLP, #6.342: "But what *does* characterize the picture is that it can be described *completely* by a particular net with a *particular* size mesh."

41. Actually, this limitation is true for all forms or representation, not just the sciences. Every representation, according to Wittgenstein, comprises a "net" of some sort, and therefore does not deal with the phenomenon directly.

42. TLP, #6.3432: In physics, e.g., "the discussion is never about *particular* material points, but rather it is always about *any given* material point" (Trans. JT).

43. TLP, #6.372: "The view of the ancients is clearer in so far as they have a clear and acknowledged terminus, while the modern system tries to make it look as if *everything* were explained."

world cannot have value because these happenings [*Geschehen*] are contingent. What makes this contingency possible, i.e. the non-accidental condition for its possibility, must itself not be included in the world (thereby exceeding description). "Der Sinn der Welt muß außerhalb ihrer liegen. In der Welt ist alles, wie es ist, und geschieht alles, wie es geschieht; es gibt *in* ihr keinen Wert – und wenn es ihn gäbe, so hätte er keinen Wert."[44] All of the facts that comprise the world are valueless, and moreover, per definition, they could never bear any value.

Here we encounter again an unshakable conviction born of his religious conversion during the First World War. For Wittgenstein, ethical claims cannot carry any contingency; they cannot be dependent on the accidental events in our world. If there is to be an ethics and aesthetics, they must hold universally and for all time. This conviction is confirmed when he writes, "Es ist klar, daß sich die Ethik nicht aussprechen läßt. Die Ethik ist transzendental."[45] Wittgenstein conceives of ethics as another transcendental limit of the world or, more accurately, as another facet of the metaphysical subject.[46]

But, to what extent are ethics and the subject two aspects of the same limit? And if the world is inherently devoid of ethical value, then what possible bearing could such an ethics have for the world? The answer to the first is that ethics is something that only concerns the metaphysical subject – it belongs to the subject. The answer to the second question is somewhat more difficult.

The world is mine in that I am its limit; I give it form, and I am its metaphysical condition for existence.[47] As a non-substantial metaphysical limit, I am unable causally to interact with or in the world. In other words, I cannot change any fact in the world. However, the metaphysical subject is not completely without influence. Although I cannot interact with the world per se, it is possible to alter the kind of world it is by altering its limits.

One must keep in mind what was mentioned in the fourth section, namely that philosophy does not belong to the sciences. As discussed in the preceding sec-

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44. TLP, #6.41: "The sense of the world must lie outside the world. In the world everything is as it is, and everything happens as it does happen: *in* it no value exists – and if it did exist, it would have no value."

45. TLP, #6.421: "It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words. Ethics is transcendental."

46. See NB, (24.07.16): "Die Ethik handelt nicht von der Welt. Die Ethik muß eine Bedingung der Welt sein, wie die Logik."

47. NB, p. 79 (2.8.16).

tion, philosophy's task is to get clear about what language (representation) can and cannot do. Thus, the question becomes: "What is the subject matter of philosophy?" This question cannot be answered easily. Right at the end of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein briefly discusses "die richtige Methode der Philosophie." What he understands by the correct or proper procedure would be:

> Nichts zu sagen, als was sich sagen läßt, also Sätze der Naturwissenschaft – also etwas, was mit Philosophie nichts zu tun hat – , und dann immer, wenn ein anderer etwas Metaphysisches sagen wollte, ihm nachzuweisen, daß er gewissen Zeichen in seinen Sätzen keine Bedeutung gegeben hat....[48]

Upon first inspection, it would appear as though philosophy only deals with sensical propositions or models. Wittgenstein clearly states, however, that philosophy has "nothing to do with [the natural sciences]." I take Wittgenstein to mean here that although philosophy must only make use of sensical propositions, this is not what it specifically treats. Philosophy deals with the metaphysical, e.g. the metaphysical subject . . . "wovon die Rede sein kann und muß;"[49] however, it cannot do so directly. Its task is to distinguish sensical from nonsenical statements, i.e. representational propositions from non-representational ones, in order to draw attention to a non-representational sphere. Philosophy sets limits for the sciences (#4.113), it must mark off the thinkable from the unthinkable (#4.114), and most important, "Sie wird das Unsagbare bedeuten, indem sie das Sagbare klar darstellt" (#4.115).[50] Here, we see that the task of philosophy is not limited to its "proper" method. It is not only about clearing up linguistically derived problems or even prohibiting them; rather philosophy is also our opening to the mystical – the point of connection to the lived world.

> Der Trieb zum Mystischen kommt von der Unbefriedigtheit unserer Wünsche durch die Wissenschaft. Wir *fühlen*, daß selbst wenn alle *möglichen*

48. TLP, #6.53: "The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. propositions of natural science – i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy – and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions . . ."

49. NB, p. 80 (11.8.16): ". . . the metaphysical subject of which we can and must speak." (Trans. JT)

50. TLP, #4.115: "It will signify what cannot be said, by presenting clearly what can be said."

wissenschaftlichen Fragen beantwortet sind, *unser Problem* [*Lebensprobleme*] *noch gar nicht berührt ist*.[51]

In this passage, Wittgenstein draws our attention to the importance of this philosophic task. The problems that we encounter in our actual lives, instead of some theoretically construed one, are not addressed by the sciences (at least the natural sciences). For, as we have already discussed, the natural sciences amount to nothing more than various descriptions of the world's configuration. This situation compels us to look elsewhere for understanding.

From the wording, the first sentence of the above quotation could be read to mean that our drive towards the mystical is somehow *caused* by our dissatisfaction with the subject matter and concluding results of the sciences, and taken in isolation this interpretation is plausible. However, read in context of the entire work, i.e. the nature of the mystical and the metaphysical subject, this interpretation would be misleading. The mystical, according to Wittgenstein, is not the causal result of our collective disappointment; it is not a "feeling" on par with other feelings such as being tired, hungry or depressed. Rather, the mystical and the metaphysical subject are what underlie the world itself; they are its condition for existence.

Thus, our "drive towards the mystical" and "dissatisfaction . . . through the sciences" are not related in terms of a *causa efficiens*, rather the "failure" of the sciences as an absolute explanatory force merely hints at a "deeper" phenomenon; one which the sciences cannot bring under their reductive explanatory method. It is the astonishment [*das Erstaunen*] *that* the world exists or what the Greeks referred to as *thaumázein* of which Wittgenstein speaks. This feeling of *erstaunen*, i.e. that something versus nothing exists, strictly speaking, is unsayable, unrepresentable; for we are attempting to make a statement about the whole of the world, but from a position and utilizing a means that do not permit of non-contingent claims. "Nicht *wie* die Welt ist, ist das Mystische, sondern *daß* sie ist."[52]

The mystical, according to Wittgenstein, involves the *daß-sein* and not the *wie-* or *was-sein* of the world. "Die Anschauung der Welt sub specie aeternis ist ihre Anschauung als – begrenztes – Ganzes. Das Gefühl der Welt als begrenztes Ganzes

51. NB, p. 80 (25.5.15): "The drive toward the mystical comes from the dissatisfaction of our wishes by the sciences. We *feel* that even if all of the *possible* questions of science were answered, *our problem* [*life-problems*] *are still left untouched*." (Trans. JT)

52. TLP, #6.44: "It is not *how* things are in the world that is mystical, but *that* it exists."

ist das Mystische."[53] As Wittgenstein describes it, the mystical experience involves a "taking in" of the whole (world) from a limited perspective, i.e. the metaphysical subject. This is why he borrows Spinoza's concept of *sub specie aeternitatis* to clarify the feeling of "limited whole." However, this notion raises several issues related to the concept of experience in Wittgenstein's thought that require clarification.

The most pertinent question would be: Given Wittgenstein's conception of the metaphysical subject as limit, how can Wittgenstein speak of the mystical as a "feeling" or experience? More precisely formulated, the issue revolves around understanding how Wittgenstein can reconcile a metaphysical subject and a concept of experience, without running into what appears to be an obvious contradiction.

VI. Wittgenstein's Early Treatment of Experience

What does not receive much attention in the secondary literature are the consequences of Wittgenstein's conception of the metaphysical subject as it relates to experience. Here, the difficulties are (generally speaking) two-fold: Given the transcendental status of Wittgenstein's metaphysical subject: (1) Can it be said to "experience" the world? and (2) Is the experience of the mystical really an experience? The first question is deceptive due to its apparent obviousness (including to Wittgenstein himself), while the second has attracted somewhat more attention.

The obviousness of the response to the first question – that we experience the different states-of-affairs in which we participate (just like the model of the traffic accident) – becomes less so when we realize the detached nature of the subject. We are tempted to gloss over the question, because we are operating with another subject-world relationship, i.e. a causal agent interacting with the world. However, Wittgenstein's metaphysical subject does not enjoy such a relation to the world as perhaps Descartes' mysteriously does; this is a consequence of positing the subject as the metaphysical limit of the world. As hinted at in the quoted passage toward the end of the last section, the only thing the metaphysical subject can alter is its attitude or stance to the world; the fundamental shift, hence profound difference, between what he describes as the world of the happy and sad man.

53. TLP, #6.45: "To view the world *sub specie aeterni* is to view it as a whole – a limited whole. Feeling the world as a limited whole – it is this that is mystical."

However, the difficulty reaches beyond the subject's inability to causally act in the world. Attempting to circumvent this problem, one could always claim that the subject's experience of the world consists in its passive observation of the various unfolding events therein. But this position requires that events *do* actually unfold in the world, that states-of-affairs are constantly changing and influencing one another; something apparent in our experiences, unfortunately also directly in conflict with a crucial claim that Wittgenstein makes in his earlier work, namely, "Die Sachverhalte sind von einander unabhängig.[54] Aus dem Bestehen oder Nichtbestehen eines Sachverhaltes kann nicht auf das Bestehen oder Nichtbestehen eines anderen geschlossen werden."[55]

What Wittgenstein means is that a particular state-of-affairs cannot be inferred from or in any way rely on another; they are completely self-contained and lack any causal interaction. While they do stand in a specific relation to one another – thereby opening a determinate realm of possibility – their truth values are independent of each other. Consequently, Wittgenstein's atomic version of the monad leaves us with what I refer to as an "unlived" world; one completely foreign to what we experience as world. Schulte reaches a similar conclusion, stating that "the world of the *Tractatus* is not a world of causal description; not a world in space and time."[56] The conception of world as given in the *Tractatus* is devoid of key aspects of our lived experience, namely causality, space, and time. The main reason for this disparity lies in Wittgenstein's insistence that a fact be completely independent from all other facts (truth-values) – a position he reluctantly gives up upon his return to Cambridge and philosophy at the end of the 1920s. It is unclear if this formidable difficulty simply went unnoticed by Wittgenstein or it was never his intention to account for experience in attempting to trace the limits of representation and language.

The latter position, however, seems extremely unlikely as well as lacking textual evidence. On the contrary, Wittgenstein appears keenly aware of certain aspects of experience, most prominently featured in his work are what he refers to

54. TLP, #2.061: "States-of-affairs are independent of one another."

55. TLP, #2.062: "From the existence or non-existence of one state-of-affairs it is impossible to infer the existence or non-existence of another."

56. Schulte, Joachim *Wittgenstein: Eine Einführung*, p. 69: "Der naheliegende Schluß ist daher, daß die Welt des *Tractatus* nicht eine Welt der Kausalbeschreibung, mithin nicht (...) eine Welt in Raum und Zeit ist." (Trans. JT).

as experiences of the mystical. Since his primary interest is "mystical" experience, it might come as no surprise that his conception of "normal" or "everyday" experiences leaves something to be desired, i.e. that the possibility or accountability of these experiences appear to be taken for granted. Put differently, Wittgenstein almost certainly took the possibility of such "non-mystical" experiences as being obvious, therefore not requiring any particular effort on his part in its clarification (quite similar to the difficulties surrounding his notion of "comparison" [*Vergleich*] as mentioned in the second section of this chapter).

The difficulty in addressing mystical experiences, keeping in mind Wittgenstein's conception of representation and language, is that they really cannot be called "experiences" in any technical sense, thus providing a partial answer to the second question posed at the beginning of this section: "Are mystical experiences really experiences?"

The negative response to this question is a partial one, in that Wittgenstein is inconsistent with his use of the term "experience." Sometimes it means that which we experience in our everyday lives (what we would ordinarily characterize as experience), and at other times it means the attitude I (as metaphysical limit) take towards the world – an "experience" unrelated to the configuration of the world, but one which determines the kind of world we live in.

This kind of change should not be confused with a simple change in perspective as the relationship between subject and object change when one is moved; for the terms relation or relationship, as we normally use them, do not apply here. If they did, then the metaphysical subject would necessarily be in the world, and consequently a fact therein – a conception of the subject Wittgenstein is trying to move away from. Since the subject is the presupposition for the world's possibility, any change of the subject's attitude towards the world would entail an alteration of the world's limits, thus completely altering the world itself:

> Kurz, die Welt muß dann dadurch überhaupt eine andere werden. Sie muß sozusagen als Ganzes abnehmen oder zunehmen . . . Die Welt des Glücklichen ist eine andere als die des Unglücklichen.[57]

Here the influence of Schopenhauer on Wittgenstein's thought is quite clear. The change of the will's attitude towards the world of representation represents an over-

57. TLP, #6.43: "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."

coming of the dichotomy between the world and individual will by recognizing that ultimately there is only will (a world-will). By accepting the world as it is, rather than struggling against it, the will frees itself from the frustrations involved in the inevitable conflict between the two, thus achieving a kind of peace. Wittgenstein's conception, it turns out, is taken almost directly from Schopenhauer.

For Wittgenstein, the metaphysical subject is synonymous with the "will," and the subject's will is constantly at odds with the world.[58] This conflict mostly is due to the fact that its desires are rarely fulfilled by the world. The frustration results because the world is separate from my will, and therefore I cannot change anything or influence anything in the world to suit me.[59] My inability to affect the world stems from the lack of logical connection [*logischer Zusammenhang*] that can only obtain between facts or even more fundamentally between simple objects in the world. By recognizing the independence of the world in this regard, I can come to acknowledge the futility in the will's struggling against the arrangement of the world, and thus make my will coincide with that of the world. When the subject accepts its fate, so to speak, it is no longer tormented, for it wills however the world is. The bringing of the will into accordance with the world is what Wittgenstein holds to be the life of the happy man.

However, we seem to be moving around in a circle. Leading the "happy" life would seem to refer to a lived experience of the world, which, as we have already seen, cannot be accounted for by Wittgenstein's theory or insight into representation. The question is: Is a mystical experience really an experience? And if not, how should we understand the mystical aspect of Wittgenstein's thought in relation to experience?

Among the handful of passages where the term experience even occurs, only once in the *Tractatus* does he directly address its ambiguous use.

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58. NB, (4.11.16): "Das Subjekt ist das wollende Subjekt." "The subject is the willing subject."

59. See TLP, #6.373: "Die Welt ist unabhängig von meinem Willen." "The world is independent of my will." It should also be pointed out that Wittgenstein deviates slightly from Schopenhauer regarding the kind of division between the world and the will. For Schopenhauer, the individual will and the world will are not really separate; rather this division stems from the fracturing of the universal will through representation. However, the universal will is what underlies this splintering of will in the first place. Thus, this division is only an apparent one, which masks the actual unity. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, takes a different view of this separation between world and the will. The world and metaphysical subject are not fundamentally the same. Rather the subject is the condition for the world's possibility, and not the other side of the same coin.

> Die "Erfahrung", die wir zum Verstehen der Logik brauchen, ist nicht die, daß sich etwas so und so verhält, sondern, daß etwas *ist*: aber das ist eben *keine* Erfahrung.
>
> Die Logik ist *vor* jeder Erfahrung – daß etwas *so* ist.
> Sie ist vor dem Wie, nicht vor dem Was.[60]

In the course of trying to define the limits of logic by analyzing propositions (or states-of-affairs), Wittgenstein states that to get clear about logic's role (and consequent limitation), one would need to "recognize" and perhaps even marvel at the brute factuality of existence, i.e. that the world *is*, rather than is not. But, such an "experience," Wittgenstein concedes, really cannot be called one as such. His own account of representation designates experience as necessarily being confined to the world, and therefore determined by the same structures that make up the world, i.e. logical structures existing between objects. In the very same sense that one cannot represent, speak, write, or even think outside the world, neither can we be said to experience beyond its scope.

This passage should be considered one of the most critical for understanding the *Tractatus*, not just because it distinguishes a second mode of experience, but also because it represents the sole clarification of first or "normal" sense of experience as well. Here, what has been alluded to in his other (admittedly few) uses of the term, Wittgenstein makes explicit, specifically, that experiences are confined to states-of-affairs in the world and cannot be *of* the world in general.

And yet, even with Wittgenstein's acknowledgement that the mystical cannot be an experience per se, he repeatedly makes reference to the mystical in experiential terms, i.e. as a "feeling" [*ein Gefühl*], the feeling of the world as a limited-whole or *sub specie aeterni*.[61] The way in which Wittgenstein discusses mystical experience has striking parallels with the ancient Greek notion of *páthos*, which, perhaps, is not as unexpected as one might think given his interest in the Platonic dialogues, with a particular interest in both the *Theatetus* and *Cratylus*.

In the *Theatetus*, the main subject of the conversation between Socrates, Theodorus, and Theatetus is to determine what knowledge is.[62] In attempting to

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60. TLP, #5.552: "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 question 'How?,' not prior to the question 'What?'."

61. See TLP, #6.45.

ascertain the essence of knowledge, Socrates comes to equate Theatetus' own definition of knowledge with that of the well known Sophist Protagoras. Protagoras' thesis that "man is the measure of all things – alike of the being of things that are and of the not-being of things that are not," is understood here as equating knowledge (*episteme*) with perception (*aisthesis*). Here, I am neither trying to imply that Wittgenstein advocates such a position, nor making a point in reference to knowledge and knowing. Rather, the epistemological discussion serves as a relevant point of departure for shedding light on the relationship of Wittgenstein's metaphysical subject and the mystical experience of the world. The ancient Greek notions of perception and experience are quite different from our contemporary conceptions, which are deeply rooted in the modern period.

The question before us is this: How do *páthos*, appearance (*phainesthai*), and perception stand in relation to one another?[63] If we understand Protagoras correctly, then whether, for example, the wind is cool or warm is dependent upon how I experience it. As mentioned in the dialogue, for some the wind is cool and yet for others it may be warm; the truth or appearance of the wind is different for different people, depending on their situation. In restating Protagora's position,[64] Plato makes use of *páthos* (as *paschei*) when describing this form of relativism. In this case, what one takes to be white, heavy, light, etc. are so, because this is what is experienced [*erlitten*]. In German there are two terms with which *páthos* is translated: *erleiden* and *widerfahren*. The first means to suffer something, e.g. a loss or injury – something happens *to* you. The second term, *widerfahren*, has the same characteristics as *erleiden* in that something happens or befalls someone. They derive, as does the English term "affect," from the Latin translation *affectus*. However, the translation of *páthos* as *affectus*, and in turn as affect or *Widerfahrnis*, is an interpretation easily misunderstood.

To the modern ear, the term affect is almost exclusively associated with the causal interactions and relations. For example, billiard ball A strikes billiard ball B, thus moving it from its original position (assuming nothing is preventing its further movement). In striking ball B, ball A causes (affects) ball B to move, thereby chang-

62. Although the dialogue is primarily concerned with an epistemological issue, one should not downplay the other two topics treated, i.e. philosophical existence and the proper course one's life should take (*homoiosis theo*).

63. The following analysis derives from a lecture course given by Prof. Klaus Held, 1998.

64. See *Theatetus*, 178b.

ing the position of ball B (the effect). Understood in terms of cause and effect, the wind would be said to affect the person, i.e. act on the person such as to make him cooler or warmer, thus altering the state of the perceiver. But this would imply the opposite of Protagoras' statement, namely that "man is the measure of all things . . ." If man is truly the measure, then it would seem that it is man's condition [*Zustand*] that determines whether the wind is either cool or warm, the stone heavy or light, etc., and not the wind itself. But here again, we must be careful not to read this as a causal interaction. For then, I, as perceiver, am said to make or *affect* the wind, therefore becoming the cause of its cool- or warmness. Interpreted in this way, I am *doing* something to the wind, an activity on my part, which would certainly not be considered a *páthos* or happening to me.

Although Protagoras does not view this as a causal relation, that the wind for one appears [*erscheint*] cool and for another appears warm, and is nevertheless the same wind, does not mean that they are independent of one another. For the "being-cold" of the wind is, indeed, dependent upon my condition or state, e.g. healthy or sick. Rather than thinking of the wind and the perceiver as two objects that interact or affect one another, my condition is to be understood as the location or place of appearance, where, for example, the being of cold can present itself. That I am cold allows for the cold of the wind to come forth and exhibit itself. It is the immediacy of this unity, the inseparability of the particular *páthos* and appearance that Protagoras draws attention to (describes), and which remains difficult for the modern interpreter.

Thinking the unity of the event does not come easily to us; we usually conceive of the event as involving two distinct entities – in this case, the objective manifestation of the cold acting upon our subjective state of being. The "inner" subjective condition is thought of as separate from the outer "objective" appearance of a phenomenon – along the lines of Descartes' metaphysics.

Clearly, Wittgenstein's metaphysical subject is not equivalent to Protagoras' human being. However, my intention here is to draw certain parallels between the metaphysical subject's mystical experience of the world and the relation of *páthos* and appearance in Protagoras' relativistic conception of knowledge and perception. The metaphysical subject does not experience the world in the same sense as we would contemporarily say, "I experience the wind," i.e. as a thing (the wind) with particular properties (cold) acting upon another thing (my subjective state). By proclaiming the independence of the world from the will, Wittgenstein rules out any causal relationship of the subject with the world. However, the form of independence the world enjoys is limited to causal forms of interaction and should not

be read as making an absolute claim to independence. This becomes apparent when we remind ourselves that the subject is the presupposition for the world's existence.[65] Thus, while the subject or will, as conceived by Wittgenstein, cannot influence anything directly in the world, it is nevertheless dependent upon me (the metaphysical subject) insofar as I am the condition for its possibility.

Second, just as the appearance of the cold is dependent upon my condition or state of being, so too, for Wittgenstein, is the kind of world, i.e. good or evil, dependent upon my "attitude" towards the world. He is quite explicit about the neutrality or amorality of the world itself, and that morality only enters with the metaphysical subject.

Now we are in a position more fully to understand Wittgenstein's statement about the world of the happy or unhappy man. Although the facts of world remain unchanged, he claims that their respective worlds could not be more different from one another. Rather the fundamental difference between these two worlds lies with the alteration of the limit of the world. How the world manifests itself to the metaphysical subject, i.e. as good or evil, depends solely upon the subject's condition or stance. The two are different, not because the world has (physically) changed, but rather because the limits, which make the world possible, have been altered.

A further parallel involves the way the world is experienced. However, in contrast to the multitude of everyday experiences Protagoras is dealing with, Wittgenstein's metaphysical subject is focused within a relatively narrow band, i.e. experiences of the ethical and aesthetic dimension. As has already been pointed out, any talk of causal interaction is not to be considered. I am also unable consciously to will the world to be good or evil as I can change my mind about whether I find someone honest or not. For this kind of intentional projection of will into the world would be an activity or doing [*ein Tun*], and not a suffering [*Erleidnis*] in the sense of a *páthos*. And although the metaphysical subject cannot directly influence the ethical and aesthetic dimensions, the limits of the world are alterable indirectly via a change in my condition. Only in this way, can the ethical-aesthetic gestalt shift manifest itself as a good or evil, happy or sad world.

Perhaps now my reasons for characterizing the mystical "experience" of the world as an ethical-aesthetic attitude are more apparent. Interpreted in this way, the metaphysical subject represents an attitude towards the world which is the condi-

65. See NB, (2.8.16).

tion for its possibility. Furthermore, although the subject does not determine the world, it does influence its manifestation in at least two ways, i.e. ethically and aesthetically. Just as, according to Protagoras, I neither make the wind warm, nor the wind me warm, Wittgenstein's metaphysical subject cannot shape the world ethically or aesthetically, and the world cannot impose itself on me. Rather, the subject's stance or condition is what allows for the ethical and aesthetic to come forward and make themselves present. This is what he means when he says that ethics first enters the world through the subject.[66]

VII. Summary Remarks on Wittgenstein's Conception of Experience

While the role of the metaphysical subject has received little rigorous consideration as it relates to representation and language in the *Tractatus*, my analysis serves to demonstrate its actual significance (whether acknowledged by Wittgenstein or not). While by no means an absolute or definitive illustration of Wittgenstein's concept, analyzing mystical experience in terms of *páthos* proves very insightful in clarifying a crucial aspect of his thought that has unfortunately remained unexamined. This situation has as much to do with Wittgenstein (and the topic) as with his interpreters; for one cannot, without doing harm, simply impart clarity to that which only has an indefinite and opaque structure. This illustration, however, does not propose to resolve any of the difficulties surrounding the metaphysical subject's role in Wittgenstein's early thought. Quite to the contrary, understanding mystical experience along the lines of *páthos* leaves many questions unanswered, and almost certainly raises new issues.

My point here was mainly to highlight an issue that, although ultimately serving a vital role in his work, has been all but ignored in the secondary literature and research. But, any major advancement in understanding the metaphysical subject is unlikely to be made directly from Wittgenstein's own writings. As I have previously indicated, whether Wittgenstein himself was aware of the metaphysical subject's significance is not entirely clear. Certainly, it was an issue for him, for he discusses it in both his wartime notebooks and (to a lesser extent) in the *Tractatus*. However, his treatment of the subject is a decidedly negative determination. This

66. For more information regarding the equation of ethics with aesthetics as well as the non-judgmental nature of the two see TLP, #6.42-6.43 and NB, p. 78.

negative determination, in conjunction with the lack of materials that might further clarify Wittgenstein's thoughts on the matter, leave little chance for progress, other than clues as to other thinkers who might have influenced him.

What is certain is that although his early conception of experience is notably underdeveloped, at some point during the ten year break from philosophy, experience became the focus of his rekindled interest in the subject, eventually leading him back to Cambridge.

DIE KEHRE

CHAPTER THREE

I. The Decade In-between[1]

Despite Wittgenstein's conviction that he had effectively found the "final solution of the problems [of philosophy]," publishing the *Tractatus* proved an especially difficult and frustrating task. Only once Bertrand Russell had agreed to write an introduction was the work finally printed in *Annalen der Naturphilosophie* – and a year later in book form (1922).

By this time, however, Wittgenstein had long since ceased doing philosophy (having said all that there was to be said), and had decided to take up "more meaningful" work. Ironically, the father's decision to invest the family fortune abroad prior to the outbreak of the war meant that Wittgenstein need never work again. After the First World War came to an end, and Wittgenstein's release from his incarceration as a prisoner of war, he found himself one of the heirs to the family's significant fortune;[2] a fortune which he promptly dispersed amongst his siblings and even several now well-known artists and writers, e.g. Gustav Klimt and Rainer Maria Rilke. During this time, Wittgenstein underwent training to become a grade school teacher.

The most well-known of his many forays into the non-academic working world is the time he spent as a school teacher in Trattenbach, Austria. Amidst the many stories of the strict and sometimes even brutal (by our standards) treatment of the students by Wittgenstein, he seemed to have found a degree of peace there in rural Austria. Although the relationship between the townspeople and the school master was an uneasy one, there was also a degree of awe on the part of the villag-

1. In "*How Many Wittgensteins?*" Stern, in an attempt to summarize the question of continuity, makes use of the concept "*Kehre*." I think this is a more than appropriate heading for the radical changes that Wittgenstein's thought undergoes during this time period, especially given the application of the term to Heidegger's intellectual development.

2. This financial move on the part of Karl Wittgenstein not only prevented the loss of the family's fortune, but actually served to increase it.

ers.[3] Unfortunately for Wittgenstein, the position in Trattenbach was not meant to last, and after several transfers (each presenting its own difficulties) he eventually decided to leave the profession altogether.

Some time later, he was commissioned by his elder sister Margarete to design as well as carry out the construction of a residence.[4] Reflecting the aesthetic influence of Adolf Loos, the residence was designed to embody the purity of logic as treated in the *Tractatus*. I have intentionally avoided using the term "house" because in its original state[5] it was devoid of the life that makes a "home" possible.

The commissioning of the residence played an indirect role in the re-emergence of Wittgenstein's philosophical interest. During his time as a teacher Wittgenstein had been visited several times by Ramsey (to discuss the *Tractatus*), and even Moritz Schlick had planned a visit.[6] However, despite fairly regular contact with philosophical discourse (via Ramsey's visits and letter correspondence with various people), Wittgenstein showed no real signs of interest, and often failed to see the point of such exchanges. At this point in his life, it is fair to say that he felt

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3. Although most of the villagers considered Wittgenstein *fremd* [foreign], in the sense of his not being from the area as well as his general peculiarity, this generally negative disposition was also accompanied by a certain awe. One story involved a broken steam engine at a local factory. Word of the problem eventually got around to Wittgenstein, and he asked if he might examine the engine. By this time, several engineers, who had been working on the problem, were unable to get the engine started again. As Wittgenstein entered the engine room, he simply walked around the engine without saying anything. Finally, he asked for four men to assist him, and proceed to give them each a hammer, a number, and a place around the engine. When Wittgenstein called out a particular number that person was supposed to strike the engine with his hammer – in this way the engine became fully functional. This episode can be found in its entirety in Monk's *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius.*

4. At first, Paul Engelmann was commissioned to design the house, and Wittgenstein originally brought in as project manager. However, Wittgenstein had shown great interest in the original design plans. As a result of his design improvements and obvious enthusiasm, Engelmann invited Wittgenstein to become his partner.

5. Sometime after the end of WWII, Margarete moved back into the residence, a monument which seemed to match her personality. Upon her death in 1958, the residence fell to her son Thomas Stoneborough. The issue of its fitness for occupancy being uncertain, it sat unused until it was eventually sold in 1971 to be torn down for a newer structure. Only at the last minute was the residence declared a national monument, and has since then served as the Bulgarian Embassy. See Monk's *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*, p. 237-238.

6. At one point, Schlick and several students actually journeyed to Otterthal in order to meet with Wittgenstein. Unfortunately, upon their arrival they found out that Wittgenstein had resigned the position, and had quit the profession. See Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*, p. 241-244.

the need to live out the consequences he thought the *Tractatus* necessarily implied – a return to the world devoid of pretense and ornamentation.

However, Wittgenstein's return to Vienna provided Margarete with the opportunity to reintegrate her brother into the Viennese culture. It was mainly due to her efforts that Wittgenstein finally met with Moritz Schlick.[7] At first they met privately to discuss the contents of the *Tractatus*; a text that Schlick clearly considered to be a major philosophic achievement. As time went on, and by agreeing to unusual conditions, Schlick was able to convince Wittgenstein to meet with fellow admirers in the Vienna Circle. One such peculiar condition was that Wittgenstein could, uninterrupted, discuss any topic of his choosing. This led, among other things, to Wittgenstein having on several occasions read poetry with his back to the audience – apparently an attempt to *show* that the significance of the *Tractatus* lay in what was not written.

Eventually, Wittgenstein's engagement with the Vienna Circle (of which he was never an official member) became more direct and interactive. Several of the later discussions (which took place up until the early 1930s) were documented by Waismann, and can be found in the third volume of the collected works entitled *Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis*. Several of the sessions relevant to the shift of Wittgenstein's philosophic outlook are discussed in the third section of this chapter.

Even though such meetings had brought Wittgenstein unquestionably closer to philosophic matters, he nevertheless held certain reservations about the point of these discussions. Whether or not he secretly harbored a desire to participate, his convictions concerning the possibility of doing philosophy after the *Tractatus* (as mentioned above) seemed to preclude the fruitfulness of such matters, and therefore would certainly account for his reluctance to join in.

Then, in 1928, the intuitionist mathematician L. E. J. Brouwer held a lecture in Vienna entitled *Mathematik, Wissenschaft und Sprache.* After much convincing on the part of Friedrich Waismann and Herbert Feigl to attend, Feigl noted a prominent change in Wittgenstein's disposition, and that he immediately and enthusiastically engaged in philosophic discussions.

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7. Schlick had been trying to get into contact with Wittgenstein in order to arrange for a meeting as early as 1924. Although at first reluctant to meet with Schlick and several students – proclaiming all the while the worthlessness of such a discussion – Wittgenstein eventually conceded to a meeting. Unfortunately for Schlick, their first meeting took place several years later (due mostly, although not exclusively, to Wittgenstein's postponement of the appointment).

Although the influence of Brouwer's ideas upon Wittgenstein leaves, like most things until his return to Cambridge, room only for speculation, it is clear that the lecture served to rekindle his appetite for philosophic issues. However, what can be said, as Monk points out, is that the effect was not due to Wittgenstein's agreement with Brouwer's intuitionalist views, but rather that they shared a movement away from the ideas maintained by the likes of Ramsey and Russell, e.g. that logic must serve as the ground for mathematics or that mathematics is independent of human thought and practices.[8] Maintaining a similar position with regard to the lecture's influence, Hacker goes on to point to Wittgenstein's comments regarding the misguidedness of intuitionism – referring to it as "eine unnötige Ausrede."[9]

He claims that while Wittgenstein might have been attracted to the Schopenhauerian emphasis of the will, his rampant psychologism would have met with strong disapproval.[10]

The completion of Margarete's residence in the fall of 1928 coincided nicely with Wittgenstein's new found motivation. Having several times entertained the idea of visiting England, Wittgenstein decided to finally return to Cambridge for a short stay. Not long thereafter, his short stay turned into a permanent arrangement, and thus marked his official re-entry into philosophy. Within only days of his arrival Wittgenstein quickly set about treating matters of immediate experience, primarily time and visual space, and which over the course of several years served as the breeding ground for many changes in his philosophic approach and outlook.

II. Moving Beyond the Tractatus

The paper, "*Some Remarks on Logical Form*," represents the first (intended) public declaration of Wittgenstein's move away from several key features of his thought in the *Tractatus*.[11] I use the less sensationalistic phrasing "move away from" instead of "break away" or "rejection of," because they would distort or overlook the transitional quality of Wittgenstein's thought in this work. The "visible" side of the *Trac-*

8. See Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*, p. 249-251.

9. See PU, §213: ". . . an unnecessary excuse".

10. Hacker, Ian *Insight and Illusion: Themes in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, p. 124.

11. Originally, Wittgenstein was to present this paper at a joint meeting of the Aristotelian Society and Mind Association, to which he had been invited to speak. According to the editors of PO, although the paper was submitted prior to the meeting for publication, Wittgenstein alternatively decided to discuss the topic of infinity and mathematics.

tatus was very much alive and well, however, certain difficulties with his previous effort had forced a re-evaluation of its viability. At this point, he was still convinced that the structure of everyday language hides the true logical structure of the state-of-affairs, and our task is to develop a form of representation which remains faithful to the logical structure of the world. The form of notation that Wittgenstein calls for in this paper is one that does not permit of any ambiguity; it would designate to every function and meaning its own specific denotation, so that confusions, e.g. arising from one word having more than one meaning, are avoided. The clarity gained by such an "appropriate symbolism," as he refers to it, would not only allow us to easily discern sensical from non-sensical as well as senseless propositions, but actually to *exclude* pseudo-propositions, thus keeping us (i.e. philosophers) from falling prey to false problems. Aside from lacking any mention of the mystical[12] and a subtle shift in wording, which betrays the beginning of the attempt for a "perfect" system of representation, much of his thought remains in line with that of the *Tractatus*. However, the deviations are unmistakable, as are their consequences for his future work.

The paper begins by pointing out the inadequacy of ordinary language syntax, in so far as it does not prohibit, in Wittgenstein's own words, "the construction of nonsensical pseudo-propositions . . . ."[13] And just as before, he believes the task of philosophy (understood here primarily as an epistemological endeavor), is to discern the actual underlying structure of language. In order to avoid the "pseudo-propositions" that Wittgenstein feels lead us into philosophical confusions, we must understand what language can and cannot meaningfully say. However, this undertaking takes on a new productive dimension when compared to the *Tractatus*. Here, Wittgenstein talks of the need for creating a new system of representation that avoids the shortcomings of our ordinary syntax; one that allows for the straightforward depiction of the logical structure. More interesting than a new emphasis on the formulation of a substitute symbolism, however, is how this system is to be carried out.

12. Although the mystical, ethical, and aesthetic are not treated in SRLF it does not mean that they are of no further interest to Wittgenstein. Quite to the contrary, these topics occupy a prominent role in the constellation of his thought. His interests are clearly stated in a lecture he presented to "The Heretics Society," *A Lecture on Ethics*. As a side note, the editors of PO point out that the typescript (TS 207) Wittgenstein presented for the lecture bore no title.

13. SRLF, p. 29 (in PO).

Whereas in the *Tractatus*, in order to determine all possible configurations of a given state-of-affairs as well as the characteristics and features of the objects involved, one need only look to the logical structure of the proposition. Here Wittgenstein is proposing a radically different method of investigation. What is required to accurately map out the actual logical structure of possible states-of-affairs is to look at the phenomena in question. In what amounts to a complete reversal of his prior approach, Wittgenstein calls for "the logical investigation of the phenomena themselves, *i.e.*, in a certain sense *a posteriori*, and not by conjecturing about *a priori* possibilities."[14]

Critical of his approach in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein now wishes to bypass the temptation of an *a priori* analysis of logical concepts and truth functions by directly investigating the phenomena themselves. By doing so, we cannot be led astray by language into thinking that the structure of atomic propositions is of the form "subject-predicate." Behind this new strategy lies the belief that atomic or simple objects cannot be surmised by analyzing other arrangements of atomic objects. In other words, if we are to understand the multiplicity of structures, then we must look to the actual occurring structures. To illustrate the problem associated with analyzing ordinary language in order to derive the logical structure beneath, Wittgenstein makes use of a simile.

According to this simile, we are to imagine two parallel planes: plane I represents reality, i.e. the phenomena as manifest in the world, and plane II represents our ordinary language(s). Representation, in all of its forms, would be equivalent to the method used to project the various figures from plane I onto plane II. The problem is, of course, we cannot infer the exact original form of the objects on plane I from the projected forms given to us on plane II without knowledge of the method or law utilized. For example, lacking the method employed, I would not be able to say with certainty whether a particular figure is a circle or ellipse on plane I, likewise a square or rectangle. The best one could hope for would be inexact guesses. Wittgenstein finds the relationship of language to the logical structure of the world to be analogous:

> If the facts of reality are the ellipses and rectangles on plane I the subject-predicate and relational forms correspond to the circles and squares in plane II. These forms are the norms of our particular language into which

14. SRLF, p. 30.

> we project in *ever so many different* ways *ever so many different* logical forms. And for this very reason we can draw no conclusions – except very vague ones – from the use of these norms as to the actual logical form of the phenomena described.[15]

Ordinary language tempts us to interpret the logical structure of the world as correlating to the subject-predicate form of our particular language. Thus, sentences such as, "The dog is hyperactive," "I am fine," "The painting is beautiful," appear to have a common structure, yet as Wittgenstein points out, these sentences are quite different with regard to their logical forms. The subject-predicate structure inherent in our ordinary language contains a vast multiplicity of different logical forms. In response to this distortion, Wittgenstein proposes that in order accurately to describe their logical forms, a logical analysis of the phenomena is required, rather than examining the forms encountered in language.

A second and related point concerns the relationship existing between states-of-affairs. Previously, Wittgenstein adamantly held states-of-affairs to be completely independent of one another (the same holds true for elementary propositions and simple objects); from the truth condition of one state-of-affairs the truth of another cannot be derived.[16] However, during the decade separating the two works, Wittgenstein came to view his earlier effort in the *Tractatus* as deficient. The absolute independence of state-of-affairs, as previously held, prohibits the possibility of a complete description, something which his new method or symbolism hopes to accomplish. Referring to his oversight of this point in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein writes:

> Ich hatte damals noch nicht gesehen, daß ein Schluß auch die Form haben kann: Ein Mensch ist 2m groß, also ist er nicht 3m groß. Das hängt damit zusammen, dass ich glaubte, die Elementarsätze müßten unabhängig sein; aus dem Bestehen eines Sachverhaltes könne man nicht auf das Nicht-Bestehen eines andern schließen. Wenn aber meine jetzige Auffassung mit dem Satzsystem richtig ist, ist es sogar die Regel, daß man aus dem Bestehen eines Sachverhaltes auf das Nicht-Bestehen aller übrigen schließen kann, die durch das Satzsystem beschrieben werden.[17]

15. SRLF, p. 30-31.

16. TLP, #2.061 and #2.062. Cf. #5.135.

While the passage clearly states that Wittgenstein no longer holds that states-of-affairs are completely independent, this does not mean that they are now connected such that the truth functions of all other states-of-affairs, etc. could be analyzed. Rather, Wittgenstein envisions the relationship between states-of-affairs and simple objects as linked in a negative fashion. This means that although the truth of a particular state-of-affairs still cannot be foreseen, it does not preclude the elimination of certain (im)possibilities.

The importance of this alteration for his new method is that it excludes certain "symbolic logical possibilities," thus retaining only the "actual" logical possibilities. Although Wittgenstein makes a related point regarding logical impossibilities in the *Tractatus* (#6.3751), the desire to exclude such impossibilities nevertheless represents a notable and significant change. Without this revision, i.e. this excluding or limiting element, an exact and complete depiction of reality called for by the Picture Theory could not be realized. In order to illustrate his point, Wittgenstein picks a straightforward example involving color, time, and place.

If one proposition asserts that color "R" is at a particular place "P" at a particular time "T" (RPT), and another that BPT, then the statement RPT & BPT would, traditionally speaking, entail a logical contradiction; for when we reflect upon our everyday experiences, according to Wittgenstein, it cannot be said that two colors are in the same place at the same time. Thus: RPT (True) & BPT (True): False correctly demonstrates that both cannot be true at the same time. However, Wittgenstein takes issue with how this form or representation depicts the actual events in the world. According to this view, the first line of the table should not even be present, because it portrays a state-of-affairs that cannot actually be the case, e.g. a vase being red and blue at this exact time and this exact place.

A more accurate symbolism, one taking into account our actual experiences, rather than purely a priori analysis, would have prevented or excluded this possibility. As Wittgenstein says, "That which corresponds in reality to the function '( ) P T' leaves room for one entity – in the same sense . . . in which we say that there is room for one person only in a chair." The claim: RPT (True) & BPT (True) is

17. WWK, p. 64: "I hadn't seen then that an inference can also have the form: A man is 2m. tall, therefore he isn't 3m. This is bound up with my then believing that elementary propositions had to be independent of one another: from the fact that one state of affairs obtained you couldn't infer another did not. But if my present conception of a system of propositions is right, it's actually the rule that from the fact that one state of affairs obtains we can infer that all others that are described by the system of propositions do not."

not, technically speaking, false; rather it is a non-possibility or nonsense.[18] A list of actual possibilities, as he contends in SRLF, would exclude this configuration.

Again, what is interesting about the lecture on logical foundation is not so much Wittgenstein's desire for an accurate and complete representation of reality (an endeavor with its roots already in the *Tractatus*), but rather the move away from disconnected *a priori* theorizations, and towards ordinary experience. If we are truly to ascertain the logical structure of reality, as Wittgenstein intends, then we cannot rely on blind speculation but must direct our attention to the phenomena themselves. Only then, only by inspecting our experiences, could his brief quest to formulate a "perfect" syntax, and corresponding symbolism, be realized. This "logical investigation" of phenomena as portrayed was to serve as the point of departure for Wittgenstein's new, but apparently short lived, approach, namely phenomenology.

III. The Origins of Wittgenstein's Phenomenology[19]

The manuscripts comprising Wittgenstein's "middle" phase receive little, if any, attention outside the circle of Wittgensteinian studies. Even within those ranks, mention of Wittgenstein's phenomenology was, until recently, rather scarce. The reason(s) for this glaring lack of investigation and research are not fully clear, and probably involve several, more or less, related factors. However, that which was apparently neither of (any significant) interest to the trustees of Wittgenstein's literary estate, nor the majority of his interpreters, was eagerly taken up by several thinkers associated with the phenomenological tradition.

Although not the first[20] to take note of Wittgenstein's use of the term "phenomenology" and "phenomenological grammar," Herbert Spiegelberg's initial article *The Puzzle of Wittgenstein's Phänomenologie (1929–?)*, marks the most impor-

18. See the difference between "exclusion" and "contradiction" in SRLF.

19. Parts of this section have been published in a paper entitled: "*Wittgenstein's Phenomenology: Reconsidering the Relationship of Experience and Language*," in *Time and History*, 2005.

20. According to my research, van Peursen's article "*Edmund Husserl and Ludwig Wittgenstein*," is the first to introduce a connection between Wittgenstein and (Husserl's) phenomenology. This, of course, does not mean that no one knew of Wittgenstein's use of the term; those attending his lectures in Cambridge at this time, noted with great frequency the use of these terms in discussions, most prominently among them G.E. Moore. Interestingly enough, Wittgenstein's association of grammar with phenomenology was a source of great frustration for Moore as recorded in both his own notes as well as those of attending students.

tant, by being the first serious attempt to unravel the mystery. The "puzzle" began with the publication of the *Philosophical Remarks* in the original German. With this work, as Spiegelberg relates, came the "unexpectedly rich confirmation" to various allusions about a phenomenological theory and language that Wittgenstein had briefly entertained in 1929. Unfortunately, due to the lack of access to the unpublished manuscripts belonging to this period, Spiegelberg was not in a position to solve this riddle. However, his initial research and speculative efforts have significantly influenced later research regarding this topic, including the present one.

What Wittgenstein meant by the term "phenomenology" is certainly linked to the question of its origin. Although his use of the term is not entirely dependent upon its originary source, clearly, such information would be of great assistance in understanding what he wanted to associate himself with as well as distance himself from.

The most obvious question is whether or not Wittgenstein acquired the term from Edmund Husserl, either directly through his writings or indirectly via secondary discussions, articles, and the like. Complicating the matter further, no comprehensive record of Wittgenstein's personal library exists. Aside from authors Wittgenstein himself mentions, we have only second hand reports from friends and colleagues, regarding this or that text Wittgenstein had obviously been reading, for instance William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* lying open on his nightstand.[21]

Even though we do not have any direct evidence of Wittgenstein having read Husserl, there are several anecdotes that prevent us from completely closing off this possibility or dismissing it out of hand.[22] The first reference stems from notes taken during Wittgenstein's visits to the Vienna Circle between 1929 and 1930 as well as recordings made by Waismann. During the course of their conversation on December 25th 1929, the topic of *Phänomenologie* unexpectedly makes an appearance under the title *Physik und Phänomenologie*.[23] Paralleling comments in the *Philo-*

21. The majority of these reports involve visits to Wittgenstein's usually quite spartan living quarters, where one noticed several books on his desk or nightstand that had signs of heavy use.

22. Much of the material presented here regarding the origin of "*Phänomenologie*" in Wittgenstein's work stems from the analyses of Herbert Spiegelberg ("*The Puzzle of Wittgenstein's 'Phänomenologie' (1929–?)*") and Nicholas F. Gier (*Wittgenstein and Phenomenology: A Comparative Study of the Later Wittgenstein, Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty*). But rather than a mere re-statement, the views presented here simply use their research as a point of departure.

23. WWK, p. 63: "Physics and Phenomenology."

sophical Remarks, here, Wittgenstein distinguishes his project – the logical investigation of phenomena in order to determine the structure of what is possible – from that of physics – which is only interested in establishing regularities. Toward the end of their discussion, in a section entitled *Anti-Husserl*,[24] Moritz Schlick poses the question to Wittgenstein: "Was kann man einem Philosophen erwidern, der meint, daß die Aussagen der Phänomenologie synthetische Urteile a priori sind?"[25] Although Wittgenstein's response is rather condemning, as Spiegelberg points out, it is unclear whether or not Wittgenstein is rejecting this position with actual knowledge of Husserl or simply the position presented by Schlick. If the latter, we can hardly attribute an accurate and unbiased portrayal of Husserl's work by Schlick considering their on-going debate at that time.

Although not a member himself, Wittgenstein was well acquainted with several of its most influential patrons. Could any of the other members perhaps have brought Wittgenstein into contact with phenomenology? Felix Kaufmann represents an intriguing possibility, except there is no evidence that the two had anything to do with one another. Waismann, although much closer to Wittgenstein, could hardly come into question, considering his disdain for Husserl was equal to that of Schlick.[26]

If we are to hypothesize that Wittgenstein's sudden use of the term phenomenology is traceable to the Vienna Circle, then the most likely person to have influenced him would have been Rudolf Carnap. In his work, *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* (1928), Carnap's conception of phenomenology reflects a certain influence of Husserl. This influence is almost certainly attributable to his geographical proximity to Husserl as Carnap was working on the first draft of his book. He had been staying in nearby Buchenbach between 1922 and 1925, and had attended several of Husserl's seminars in Freiburg (summer semester 1924 until summer semester 1925).[27] By no means was Carnap convinced of Husserl's position, however, his

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24. WWK, p. 67. It should be noted that all section titles presented in WWK are to be attributed to Waismann, and not Wittgenstein.

25. WWK, p. 67. "What could one reply to a philosopher, who thinks the statements of phenomenology are synthetic *a priori* judgments?" (Trans. JT).

26. According to Monk, Schlick was surprised by the change in Wittgenstein's thought, and with Husserl in mind he posed the question regarding the "statements of phenomenology" to Wittgenstein. (p. 286).

27. See Spiegelberg, *The Puzzle of Wittgenstein's 'Phänomenologie' (1929–?)*.

text does contain several non-critical references to the *Logical Investigations* as well as *Ideas I & II*, not to mention the adoption of Husserl's *epoché*.[28] There are, however, two good reasons for doubting Carnap as a source for Wittgenstein's sudden use of the term phenomenology: First, their accounts of phenomenology are not very similar (although, as Spiegelberg points out, they are closer to each other's position than either is to Husserl's). This alone does not rule Carnap out, but in conjunction with Carnap's own admission that his relationship to Wittgenstein was quite strained during this time, the possibility of influence becomes less likely.

Another incident which seems to lend circumstantial support for Wittgenstein's acquaintance with Husserl's work, involves a chance meeting between Wittgenstein and J. N. Findlay in 1939. Findlay mentioned to Wittgenstein that he was working on a translation of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*, to which Wittgenstein "expressed some astonishment that he (Findlay) was still interested in this old text."[29] While it is far from definitive proof, this anecdote keeps the possibility of Wittgenstein's first-hand knowledge of Husserl's phenomenology open.

Heidegger is another figure who should not escape consideration. Over the course of several years, Wittgenstein makes at least two references to his work. The first stems from a discussion with Waismann and Schlick, where Wittgenstein appears to make an unsolicited remark regarding *Sein und Zeit* and the concept of *Angst*:

> Ich kann mir wohl denken, was Heidegger mit Sein und Angst meint. Der Mensch hat den Trieb, gegen die Grenzen der Sprache anzurennen. Denken Sie z.B. an das Erstaunen, daß etwas existiert. Das Erstaunen kann nicht in Form einer Frage ausgedrückt werden, und es gibt auch gar keine Antwort.[30]

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28. See Carnap, Rudolf *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, p. 64. The other references to Husserl can be found on pages 3, 65, and 164.

29. This anecdote stems from a conversation between Findlay and Spiegelberg. See "*The Puzzle of Wittgestein's 'Phänomenologie' (1929–?)*."

30. WWK, p. 68: "I have a pretty good idea of what Heidegger meant by Being and angst. Man has the urge to run up against the limits of language. Think, for example, of the wonder that something exists. This wonder cannot be expressed in the form of a question, and there is also answer." The editors have reproduced the relevant passages from *Sein und Zeit*: "*Das Wovor der Angst ist das In-der-Welt-sein als solches*. Wie unterscheidet sich phänomenal das, wovor die Angst sich ängstet, von dem, wovor die Furcht sich befürchtet? Das Wovor der Angst ist kein innerweltliches Seiendes. (…) *Das Wovor der Angst ist die Welt als solche*."

In the passage, Wittgenstein continues to develop the connections between his notions of "wonder" [*Erstaunen*] and "the ethical" with those of Heidegger and Kierkegaard. This admission on the part of Wittgenstein that certain aspects of his early thought, i.e. the mystical experience of the world and the ethical, are moving in the same direction certainly indicates at least a partial familiarity with Heidegger's work.

Wittgenstein's second encounter with Heidegger is not as obvious as the first. During an early explication of language-games and the grammar of word usage, Wittgenstein is concerned with preventing "the philosopher" from "straying down hopelessly wrong paths." He then provides an example of just such a dangerous and misleading path present in language:

> Wenn wir einen Satz wie den "Das Nichts nichtet" oder die Frage "was ist früher, das Nichts oder die Verneinung?" behandeln wollen, so fragen wir uns, ihm gerecht zu werden: was hat dem Autor bei diesem Satz vorgeschwebt? Woher hat er diesen Satz genommen? (…) Wer etwa vom Gegensatz des Seins und des Nichts spricht und vom Nichts als etwas gegenüber der Verneinung Primärem, der denkt, glaube ich, etwa an eine Insel des Seins umspült vom unendlichen Meer des Nichts.[31]

Although not named as such, the passage (and the accompanying pages) clearly points to Heidegger's lecture *What is Metaphysics*,[32] in which the relationship of *Dasein* to "the Nothing" is treated. While Wittgenstein's attitude towards language such as "the Nothing nothings" is, indeed, critical, the passages do certainly suggest the provocative idea that Wittgenstein had first hand knowledge of Heidegger's work, even if the latter passage betrays a lack of understanding regarding Heidegger's point concerning "the Nothing" as a positive aspect of Being – and not as a mere negation of beings. When taken together, the two passages do seem to make Heidegger a promising candidate.

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31. BEE, Item 302, p. 28 (1.1.32): "If we want to deal with a sentence like 'the Nothing nothings' or the question 'what was earlier, the Nothing or the negation?' to be fair we must ask ourselves: what was the author thinking regarding this sentence? From where did he take this sentence? . . . He who speaks about the opposite of Being and the Nothing as well as the Nothing as having priority over the negation, he thinks of – I believe – an island of Being surrounded by the endless sea of the Nothing." (Trans. JT)

32. Heidegger, Martin *Was ist Metaphysik?*, Frankfurt A.M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1992. The relevant passages are on p. 34-36.

However, the purpose of this section is not merely to establish points of contact, but rather to investigate the origin of Wittgenstein's use of the term "phenomenology". Or more precisely, was Wittgenstein's initial use of the term and corresponding project of a phenomenological language directly influenced by other phenomenologists? Keeping this distinction in mind, and given the time frame of these two references, the possibility that Wittgenstein was initially *influenced* by Heidegger begins to dwindle.

The first passage stems from the end of December 1929, and although that does not exclude the possibility that Wittgenstein had read *Being and Time* prior to his return to Cambridge, thus prior to his introduction of the term phenomenology, the comment alone is inconclusive. The second passage stems from the beginning of January 1932. Given that the lecture *What is Metaphysics?* was not even held until July 24th, 1929, and published later that same year, it cannot have been the impetus for Wittgenstein's phenomenology. Thus, while the possibility remains open whether or not Heidegger had any direct influence on Wittgenstein,[33] the search for the source of his phenomenological project in all likelihood lies elsewhere.

As intriguing and provocative as these possibilities might seem, there are certainly other potential sources for Wittgenstein's use of phenomenological language, which may have little or no real connection to Husserl or Heidegger. Although now most prominently associated with the term phenomenology, Husserl by no means has special rights to it. Many individuals, prior to and even after the turn of the century, laid claim to the term phenomenology, among them: Hegel, Goethe, Mach,[34] Mauthner, and others. While Wittgenstein had read the work of the latter three authors we do not find any real matches with Wittgenstein's "new" form of philosophizing.[35]

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33. A potential source for Wittgenstein's contact with Heidegger's "*Was ist Metaphysik*" is Rudolf Carnap. At one point in his article "*Überwindung der Metaphysik durch logische Analyse der Sprache",* Carnap takes direct aim at Heidegger in a section entitled *metaphysische Scheinsätze.* It is very possible that Wittgenstein had at least read the article, and although unlikely (for the same reasons mentioned earlier), perhaps even discussed the topic with him. However, it is interesting to note that the text passages Wittgenstein references do not completely match those cited by Carnap. It would then seem to follow that Wittgenstein, perhaps spurred on by Carnap's article, then proceeded to read Heidegger himself. As I have already mentioned in the above text, even if this is true, it does not change much – neither with respect to the origin of Wittgenstein's phenomenology, nor with respect to its further development.

Lastly, I would mention a theory that is neither glamorous, nor really even a theory, but more of an educated guess. On the one hand, the "theory" implies the least "causal" interaction, but, on the other, by ridding ourselves of the need for a "smoking gun" agent of change, we are probably closer to the truth of the matter. The theory contends that the term "phenomenology" was a part of the Viennese cultural landscape; that the term was simply floating freely within this uniquely charged and fertile atmosphere. Having been born and raised in Vienna to one of the wealthiest families in Europe, young Ludwig was certainly in a position to absorb the vibrant cultural atmosphere existing at this time.[36]

Continuing with the theme of a more general influence, it is even possible (although quite remote) that his sister Margarete had a hand in the introduction of the term. She was the one who introduced the adolescent Ludwig to Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation*, and thus to philosophy. Within the family, she was considered the most academically and culturally astute, and with her wealth she was able fully to immerse herself in the culture of that time. Margarete would certainly have been in a position to have discussed such topics with him as well as provide him access to a great deal of philosophical literature. Perhaps, after his return to Cambridge (from Vienna), in order to distinguish his present phenomena-logical investigations from his earlier work, he simply adopted a familiar term without any concrete source in mind.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the section, the question regarding the origin of the term "phenomenology" in Wittgenstein's work will probably never be definitively answered. None of his known writings or notes mentions anyone spe-

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34. During a lively discussion of this material at the *31st International Wittgenstein Symposium* in Kirchberg, J. Hintikka claimed that Wittgenstein's use of the term "phenomenology" stems from Ernst Mach. According to Hintikka, although Wittgenstein initally "wanted nothing to do" with Mach's conception, this did not stop him from later appropriating the term. Hintikka, however, did add that he could neither substantiate his claim, nor explain Wittgenstein's sudden change of mind.

35. In his article *Chor und Gesetz: Zur "morphologischen Methode" bei Goethe und Wittgenstein*, Schulte draws several interesting connections between Wittgenstein's later investigational approach and Goethe's morphological method. And while Goethe's writings most certainly exerted an influence on Wittgenstein, they do not appear to have been a factor during this period in general, nor directly contributed toward the development of a phenomenology.

36. During Wittgenstein's childhood, it was commonplace for various well-known musicians, composers, painters, etc., as well as the emperor, to be present at dinners and social events held at the Wittgenstein estate. The list of regular guests in the Wittgenstein household was virtually a "who's who" of their day.

cifically, and portions of his *Nachlaß* from around this time, which might have shed some light on the issue, were later burned per Wittgenstein's instructions. That having been said, I would like to elaborate further my contribution to this speculative endeavor.

When one considers the kind of thinker Wittgenstein was, I would contend that the notion of any *specific* influence quickly evaporates. As Spiegelberg writes, "'influence' [is] a very complicated affair… [and in Wittgenstein's case] could hardly ever amount to anything more than a stimulant and a trigger for his own thinking."[37] With the notable exceptions of Schopenhauer, Frege, Russell and possibly Mauthner, talk of traceable influence in Wittgenstein's writings would be, at best, an uphill fight.

Here, the problem of origin is analogous. Wittgenstein's thought is so tightly wound around or within itself that to speak of an origin for his use of "phenomenology," more likely than not, only misleadingly complicates the issue. By this, I am not proposing that Wittgenstein's thought developed sealed up in some hermetic chamber; for obviously, Wittgenstein has been "influenced" by different thinkers and writers, even by his own admission. On several occasions, he even characterizes his own thought derogatorily as "reproductive" rather than creative or original.[38] However, the point is not whether Wittgenstein has been influenced by others, but rather how do these influences manifest themselves in his work, or, concerning the question of origin, to what extent can something be regarded as being the source?

A characteristic of Wittgenstein's work is the degree to which he has internalized the various voices presented.[39] This is most apparent in his later works, but is actually present at every stage of his development. What this means is that Wittgenstein rarely engages in a discussion with another thinker; rather he has either so thoroughly taken over a particular viewpoint or abstracted the main tenets of a position (and continued their development) that notions of authorship begin to

37. Spiegelberg, *The Puzzle of Wittgenstein's 'Phänomenologie' (1929–?).*

38. VB, 1931, p. 43.

39. The different "voices" or interlocutors remain a considerable problem for those lacking experience with Wittgenstein's style. Even among readers with more experience, a common assumption is made that one of the voices belongs to Wittgenstein or represents his actual position. Although this topic will be addressed more fully later, at this point, I would simply point out that all of the voices are, indeed, those of Wittgenstein, but they represent different times along the course of his development.

blur. The various positions encountered in his texts and notes are usually his own. In other words, he has personalized them to such a degree that it is not, for example, Descartes' dualism against which Wittgenstein is arguing, but Wittgenstein himself representing this dualism – Wittgenstein contra Wittgenstein. An example of this aspect of his thought can be seen in his later critique of philosophy in the *Investigations*. While the critique is directed towards the philosophic tradition, in going about his task, Wittgenstein actually criticizes his own earlier views (mostly those contained in the *Tractatus*). Here, the faults and weakness of philosophy, he believes to be embodied in his earlier thought. Thus, by critiquing the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein understands himself to be affecting a critique of philosophy as a whole.

In closing, I would point out that even if he acquired the term "phenomenology" in a more open and non-specific way, similar to what I have suggested above, it would be incorrect to conclude or simply insinuate that the term held no special significance for him. Quite to the contrary, had he been neutral with respect to calling his project "phenomenology," it would never have survived the continued open hostility and disdain by certain members of the Vienna Circle, nor Moore's repeated criticism of the term during Wittgenstein's lectures.

IV. The Categorical Confusion of Physical Space and Visual Space[40]

Wittgenstein's distinction of visual and physical space goes back to his earliest entries after returning to Cambridge at the beginning of 1929. As he was first entertaining thoughts of a phenomenology, Wittgenstein had determined that physics could not, as Russell had believed, be phenomenology, because the former dealt with establishing the truth of actual events, whereas the latter concerned itself with possibilities.[41] Furthermore, these two spheres – physical space and unmediated experience – were incommensurable.

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40. Normally, one would translate "Gesichtsraum" with the English term "visual field." However, in this case, I have chosen the more literal "visual space" in order to preserve sense of the German term "*Raum*" in Wittgenstein's examples.

41. See Russell's essay *The Relation of Sense Data to Physics*. I do not wish to imply that Russell wanted to create a phenomenology, but rather that he felt that physics was in a position to represent sense-perceptions.

One of the philosophic confusions that Wittgenstein attempts to resolve is the misapplication of physicalistic terms and language when describing our immediate visual perceptions. In fact, visual space is a subject that receives a great deal of attention throughout the early 1930s.

One of the best illustrations of the kind of confusion that Wittgenstein has in mind is the sketch Mach made of his own visual field.[42]

As we can see, Mach has attempted to reproduce the world from his perspective, i.e. how he views the world around him. We see his body stretched out on a chair in some room with windows directly in front of him, a cigar in his right hand, bookshelves to the left, and part of his brow and nose. The image appears, more or

42. Mach, Ernst. *The Analysis of Sensations and the Relation of the Physical to the Psychial*. New York: Dover, 1959.

less, to be a fairly accurate representation of how each of us sees the world – even the edges have been blurred in order to recreate the unsharp boundary of the visual field as one moves off from the center.

The difficulty Wittgenstein has with the depiction of the visual space is that it represents a categorical confusion of the physical and phenomenological space.[43] The sketch purports to be a true model of our visual experience. However, in what sense is Mach's sketch misleading? After all, when seeing or looking around, one does, indeed, notice a blurriness surrounding the visual space, and sometimes I even become aware of my own nose and brow ridge. But, therein lies precisely the problem with this depiction. Both the sketch and the terms in which we discuss and describe it are anchored in physical space. Wittgenstein clarifies the categorical error in §213 of the *Philosophical Remarks*, where he states that the blurriness [*Verschwommenheit*] of our visual space and its depiction in the sketch are of a fundamentally different kind. The blurriness of the visual space is part of *how* the world is given to us, and cannot be otherwise. The blurriness we find in the sketch, on the other hand, belongs to the world of objects and things – where a sharper depiction is always possible.

One could object that a two-dimensional sketch cannot be said to truly model our visual space. Accordingly, Wittgenstein elects to develop the example further. He proposes that we create a three-dimensional model designed so that it "reproduces" the visual sense impressions from a given perspective.[44] Additionally, the model could be attached to a hand crank which would allow the model to turn, thereby allowing the viewer to change the objects entering into and going out of the field view. But could such an elaborate model be said to reproduce what another sees? Would I see what another sees? Wittgenstein responds:

> Wenn wir vom Gesichtsraum reden, so werden wir leicht zu der Vorstellung verführt als wäre er eine Art von Guckkasten, den jeder mit (vor) sich herumtrüge. D. h. wir verwenden dann das Wort „Raum" ähnlich wie wenn wir ein Zimmer einen Raum nennen. In Wirklichkeit aber bezieht sich doch das Wort „Gesichtsraum" nur auf eine Geometrie, ich meine, auf einen Abschnitt der Grammatik unserer Sprache. In diesem Sinne gibt es keine „Gesichtsräume" die jeder seinen Besitzer hätten.[45]

43. BT, §98, 467, p. 313.

44. BEE, Item 113, p. 123r (Band IX: *Philosophische Grammatik*).

The difficulty confronting us is our tendency to focus on one meaning of a concept to the exclusion of all others – in this case, we use "space" in physical terms. The implication here, as Wittgenstein points out, is that our unmediated visual sensations are understood as a kind of physical space; an anonymous and universal space capable of being occupied by anyone or anything. We are caught, he says, in a "linguistic trap," and no longer understand the logic of the language.[46]

The temptation to say something along the lines of Wittgenstein's nameless interlocutor is obvious and seemingly harmless enough: "Aber kann nicht ich in meinem Gesichtsraum eine Landschaft & Du in dem Deinen ein Zimmer sehen?" – Nein, 'ich sehe in meinem Gesichtsraum' ist Unsinn. Es muß heißen, "ich sehe eine Landschaft & Du etc."[47] However, the interlocutor's apparently harmless assertion that we see things "in" our visual space only serves to highlight the inherent danger in thinking of my visual experiences as unfolding in physical space, and that this space is equivalent to that of a room which I and others can enter and exit.[48]

The most misleading aspect regarding the above illustration is not that a comparison is drawn, for it would not be inappropriate to say that "my visual field is similar to a cone." Rather the danger resides in the careless employment of such similes – in this case, one that allows for the visual representation of a visual picture,[49] and thus leads to a problematic understanding of visual space and sense-impressions. However, if I state "my visual field has similarities to a cone," what I am pointing out is that the cone structure stands for a particular geometric rela-

45. BEE, Item 113, p. 124r: "When we talk about the visual space, we are easily seduced by the idea that it is a kind of viewing box that each of us carries around in front of us. This means that we use the word 'space' in a similar way as when we call a room a space. In reality the word 'visual space' is related to a geometry; I mean to a segment of the grammar of our language. In this sense this are no 'visual spaces' that each of us possesses." (Trans. JT)

46. BEE, Item 178b, p. 7.

47. BEE, Item 113, p. 124r: "'But, can I not see a landscape in my visual space & you see a room in yours?' – No, 'I see in my visual space' is nonsense. It must go, "I see a landscape & you, etc." (Trans. JT)

48. Actually, the self or "I" is that which cannot enter this space. Certainly the majority of my body could and does occupy the space before me, however, the experiential 'I' – the viewing 'I'– is condemned to observing this space, thus incapable of any real participation. Wittgenstein emphasizes this point when he mentions that if we think of visual space as belonging to physical space, then it would be something that everyone carries around – in this case as a kind of box which we are looking into.

49. BEE, Item 113, p. 124r, 1932.

tionship, and not that this form actually belongs to physical space occupied by objects.

Interestingly, upon closer examination, the interlocutor's position reveals more than a passing resemblance to the relationship between the metaphysical subject and world understood as paralleling that of the eye and its visual field. Here again, the "seeing eye" is incapable of seeing itself and was not a part of the visual space, but merely represented a boundary.

Furthermore, Wittgenstein feels that conceiving of our visual space in terms of physical space is just one symptom of an even greater temptation to which the philosopher is inexplicably drawn.

> Die Verschwommenheit, Unbestimmtheit unserer Sinneseindrücke ist nicht etwas, dem sich abhelfen läßt, eine Verschwommenheit, der auch völlige Schärfe entspricht (oder entgegensteht). Vielmehr ist diese allgemeine Unbestimmtheit, Ungreifbarkeit, dieses Schwimmen der Sinneseindrücke, das, was mit dem Worte „alles fließt" bezeichnet worden ist.[50]

Although Wittgenstein's return to philosophy early in 1929 certainly shows a definite departure from the Tractarian conception of language, his views regarding the inexpressibility of experience had remained basically intact. Early on, this belief manifested itself in a call to silence. However, as Wittgenstein began to focus his efforts on an examination of immediate experience and represent its logical structure, the call has transformed into an outright ban. For I still cannot *say* what belongs to the essence of the world, but "cannot say" now means something very different.

V. The Language of Immediate Experience Conceived as Phenomenology

At the end of the discussion in section two of this chapter, where the "new" direction in Wittgenstein's thought is taken up, I mentioned that this call for "the logical investigation of phenomena" would eventually be christened phenomenology. As the discussion in the previous section points out, we cannot hope to gain any

50. BT, §96, 448, p. 302: 'The blurriness, indeterminacy of our sensory perceptions is not something that can be corrected; a blurriness which could correspond to a complete sharpness (or stand in opposition to it). Rather, the general indeterminancy, ungraspability, swimming of sensory impressions is that which is characterized by the words "everything flows."' (Trans. JT)

specific insight into Wittgenstein's use of the term by looking at the work of others. Thus, the search for an origin and meaning of phenomenology must begin with Wittgenstein himself.

The period spanning from his return to Cambridge (1929) to his lectures in 1933 represents a highly volatile phase in Wittgenstein's philosophical development. The majority of the material belonging to this middle or transitional period is comprised of aphoristic notes, many of which have been reworked corresponding to the movement of his shifting thought. This rapid evolution of thought makes understanding its timeline rather difficult, as does Wittgenstein's carrying over of terms. The situation is even further complicated by the trustees' selection of manuscript fragments for the publication of the *Philosophical Grammar*, not to mention the imposed organizational structure of the *Philosophical Remarks*.[51]

Reading the *Philosophical Remarks*, one gets the impression that Wittgenstein holds inconsistent or even contradictory views concerning his phenomenology. Illustrating this difficulty, the first page of the text contains the following two passages in their respective order:

> Die phänomenologische Sprache oder "primäre Sprache", wie ich sie nannte, schwebt mir jetzt nicht als Ziel vor; ich halte sie jetzt nicht mehr für nötig. Alles was möglich und nötig ist, ist das Wesentliche *unserer* Sprache von ihrem Unwesentlichen zu sondern.
>
> (…) Eine Erkenntnis dessen, was unserer Sprache wesentlich und was ihr zur Darstellung unwesentlich ist, eine Erkenntnis, welche Teile unserer Sprache leerlaufende Räder sind, kommt auf die Konstruktion einer phänomenologischen Sprache hinaus.[52]

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51. Although I am critical of the material chosen for the *Philosophical Grammar*, or more precisely, what was left out and why, I freely acknowledge the difficulty of the editor's task. However, having said that, the exclusion of such chapters as "*Philosophie*" and "*Phänomenologie*" certainly warrants an explanation. And although the motives behind Rush Rhees' selection will probably remain controversial, now that the *Wiener Ausgabe* and *Bergen Electronic Edition* have been published, the exclusion of key materials from *The Big Typescript* has been rendered an issue for the history of philosophic and academic politics.

52. PB, Section I, §1: "I do not now have the phenomenological language or 'primary language' as I used to call it, in mind as my goal. I no longer hold it to be necessary. All that is possible and necessary is to separate what is essential from what is inessential in *our* language. . . . A recognition of what is essential and what inessential in our language if it is to represent, a recognition of which parts of our language are wheels turning idly, amounts to the construction of a phenomenological language."

The *Philosophical Remarks*[53] represents the first publication from Wittgenstein's "middle phase," and is composed of manuscript fragments from the entire period mentioned above. Unfortunately, the editor's attempt to give the work a more "book like" structure only leads to greater confusion. Stripped of their context, the passages above seem at odds with one another, when in fact they are two expressions belonging to the same rejection of Wittgenstein's initial phenomenology.

Adding to the fragmented understanding of this period is the omission of certain material in the *Philosophical Grammar*. Several important chapters of the manuscript now commonly known as *The Big Typescript* were left out. Fortunately, the publication of *Wiener Ausgabe* as well as the *Bergen Electronic Edition* allow for a thorough, chronological, and undistorted examination of the issues Wittgenstein treated during this time, above all his phenomenology.

What does phenomenology mean for Wittgenstein? As we have already seen, phenomenology is initially the name given to an *a posteriori* method of logical investigation of phenomena capable of rendering complete descriptions of both the world and experience. As mentioned in the second section of this chapter, Wittgenstein was attempting to find a way of rehabilitating his earlier "Picture Theory." Realizing that the Tractarian model of representation could only depict a rather limited sphere of our experiences of the world, he set about finding a way to compensate for this incompleteness.[54] At the time, Wittgenstein believed that the answer he sought lay in the phenomenological analysis of our immediate perception of the world. In one of the earliest known passages explicitly referring to phenomenology, Wittgenstein makes it clear that the phenomenal world is not ultimately reducible to the physical.

> Die Physik unterscheidet sich von der Phänomenologie dadurch, dass sie Gesetze feststellen will. Die Phänomenologie stellt nur die Möglichkeit fest. Dann wäre also die Phänomenologie die Grammatik der Beschreibung derjenigen Tatsachen, auf denen die Physik ihre Theorien aufbaut.[55]

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53. Werkausgabe Band 2.

54. This limitation became evident to Wittgenstein when he realized that the world could not be *completely* described in terms of truth-functions. This fact is most clearly and effectively illustrated by the example Wittgenstein gives in SRLF involving two different colors occupying the same space at the same time. See Section 2 of this chapter.

Our first encounter with phenomenology is juxtaposed to that of physics. More accurately stated: phenomenology is portrayed as that which underlies physics and its theories – it represents the most fundamental level. This unusual distinction is a response (specifically) to Russell, and (more generally) to the question of which form of representation is most appropriate in the depiction of our unmediated experience of the world. In Russell's essay, "*The Relation of Sense Data to Physics*," he advocates that physics would naturally be the best method for representing our sense perceptions. However, Wittgenstein does not share this view with regard to the suitability of physics.

The difficulty here, as Wittgenstein understands it, is the gap between immediate experience and representation. Representation, as understood in the *Tractatus*, deals with factual situations or configurations in the world, and therefore cannot address what Wittgenstein often refers to as the "specious present." In this case, the example of immediate experience which Wittgenstein feels most appropriate as an illustration is that of our visual space [*Gesichtsraum*].[56] If we should endeavor to depict our visual field, then, according to this first line of thought, perhaps physics would be the most appropriate considering its familiarity with such things as the mathematical determination of "fields" or "space" and the objects within them. And if this were the case, if our visual field were, indeed, just one field among others, then, Wittgenstein writes, physics would be considered the "the true phenomenology."

However, Wittgenstein finds fault with the equivocation of physics and phenomenology. He remarks that one important difference lies in the end goal of the respective activities. Wittgenstein understands physics to be primarily occupied with truth, i.e. establishing the *actual* conditions in order to generate correct predictions of future events. This positivistic conception of truth and future oriented thinking is said to lie at the heart of physics. Phenomenology, on the other hand, does not strive towards truth; rather, according to Wittgenstein, it strives towards sense [*Sinn*].[57]

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55. BEE, Item 105, p. 3 (15.2.29): "Physics differentiates itself from phenomenology in that it wants determinate laws. Phenomenology only determines the possibilities. Then phenomenology would be the grammar of the description of the facts upon which physics constructs its theories" (Trans. JT). Also see PB, p. 51.

56. See footnote 41 in "The Confusion of Physical and Visual Space."

57. See WA, I, 3, p. 4.

Phenomenology underlies physics insofar as it seeks to describe, and thus lay out the structure of possibilities. It does not concern itself with whether or not – to use the language of the *Tractatus* – a particular state-of-affairs is true or false, but with the possibility of *this* state-of-affairs. Departing from his earlier work Wittgenstein emphasizes, here, the need for looking to the phenomenon itself, rather than simply deducing its structure from uncritical logical presuppositions. Thus, as mentioned in section two of this chapter, we cannot accurately predict all possible structures of experience; rather experience must be interrogated in order to tease out these structures. Insofar as the subject matter of phenomenology is the structure of experience – more specifically, the possible structures of immediate experience – physics cannot be considered phenomenology; for physics, at least according to Wittgenstein, deals with the generation of true statements, and not the structural ground underlying them.

However, this objection points toward an even more fundamental critique of physics as phenomenology proper: The "field" or "space" of immediate experience does not correspond to the realm that physics studies. In other words, physics cannot and could never be phenomenology, because what it treats is completely unlike that which I experience (for example) when seeing. Talk of my visual field, according to Wittgenstein, should not be confused with agricultural fields, electromagnetic fields, etc., simply because they share the common designation "field"; to suppose that this term represents a general category applicable to all types of fields or spaces (even visual spaces) would constitute, according to Wittgenstein, a return to his previous *a priori* derivative approach. Furthermore, it would amount to the misapplication of our physical categories and distinctions to that of the phenomenal realm; an unintentional attempt to grasp something utilizing the only means of representation available – everyday language.

In line with his statements in SRLF, Wittgenstein is looking for a way of describing immediate experience. Although he obviously sees the solution to certain deficiencies residing in immediate experience, what is not clear is why this is the case. The very first (existing) reference concerning the need for an investigation of phenomena is framed as follows:

> Aber von welcher Wichtigkeit kann denn diese Beschreibung des gegenwärtigen Phänomens sein? Es scheint als wäre die Beschäftigung mit dieser Frage geradezu kindisch und wir „ich" (sic) in eine Sackgasse hineingeraten. Und doch ist es eine bedeutungsvolle Sackgasse, denn in sie lockt es Alle zu gehen, als wäre dort die letzte Lösung des philosophischen Problems zu suchen.[58]

Here, Wittgenstein is still very much driven by the possibility of a "final solution" to philosophical problems. He portrays his situation as if the path through immediate experience were the only one; as if this "dead-end" were a necessary next step along the path to closure.

On the other hand, the tone of the last sentence lacks the resoluteness that, perhaps, one would expect from his preceding statements. However, doubt as to the task before him is quickly put to rest when reading the remarks made on the same day. He immediately launches into an analysis of our visual field [*Gesichtsraum*], sense [*Sinn*], time [*Zeit*], and representation [*Darstellung*] that betrays a refined treatment of the topic. In other words, given that the passage above was written within two weeks of arriving back in Cambridge and the way in which he approaches, e.g. the phenomena of visual space, taken together they strongly point toward a previous engagement with the topic, thereby pushing the starting point of his phenomenological considerations prior to his arrival in Cambridge, i.e. when he was still living in Vienna. Assuming my contention is correct, it would also indirectly confirm Spiegelberg's contention that relevant information concerning the genesis and very earliest development of this new movement in Wittgenstein's thought will remain forever unresolved in light of the destruction of papers including this period.[59]

Toward the end of the manuscript entries on the same day we find a critical passage that sheds light on the importance of the turn in Wittgenstein's philosophic investigations:

> Die unmittelbare Erfahrung kann keinen Widerspruch enthalten. Ist sie jenseits von allem Sprechen und Widersprechen (sic) dann kann auch kein Erklärungsbedürfnis auftreten, das Gefühl (sic) daß sich der Vorgang erklären lassen muß (sic) weil sonst etwas nicht stimmen würde.[60]

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58. BEE, Item 105, p. 118 (6.2.29): "However, of what importance, then, can the description of unmediated phenomenon be? It appears as though the engagement with this question would be childlike and we "I" (*sic*) are led into a dead-end. And nevertheless, it is a meaningful dead-end; for it tempts everyone to go in, as if the final solution to philosophical problems were to be searched for there" (Trans. JT).

59. See "Editors' Preface" to *Notebooks, 1914-1916.*

60. BEE Item 105, p. 134 (6.2.29): "Immediate experience cannot contain any contradiction. If it is beyond every (kind of) speaking for and against, then a need for explanation cannot arise either; a feeling that an event must be explained, otherwise something would be out of sorts." (Trans. JT)

Unlike ordinary language, which covers over the logical structure of the world, our unmediated perception is of this structure, and hence free from the possibility of error or contradiction. If we could tap into this primacy and carefully analyze its structure, then, according to Wittgenstein, we would be in the position to construct a form of representation that would simply bypass the "dangers" hidden in language. Thus, what Wittgenstein sees in immediate experience is a direct and "undistorted" mode by which to grasp the structure of the world; a form of representation so immediately linked to the logical structure of the world that the need for explanation has no place to present itself.

Over the next several months the idea of a more "appropriate symbolism" would be further worked out until Wittgenstein arrives at the conclusion that what is called for is the construction of a "primary" or "phenomenological" language. This language is to be distinguished from our ordinary or "secondary" language in that it deals directly with our immediate perceptions and experiences. Such a language would be constructed or formed from the phenomena themselves and aims to describe them such that ambiguity and unclarity are eliminated.

The "secondary" language, which Wittgenstein refers to, is *our* language; the mundane language of our daily interactions and exchanges, and is as extended in time as we are. A word of caution is warranted, here, with respect to the terms "primary" and "secondary." As Wittgenstein uses them (at this point), no special priority is granted to one over the other, i.e. in the sense of a more originary or primordial language. Rather, "primary" and "secondary" characterize the clarity or directness of the means of representation for describing the phenomenon in question. Whereas the primary language would directly map out the structure of immediate experience, our secondary or everyday language has, over time, evolved into an increasingly complex tangle, whose point of contact to the structure of the world lies hidden to us. "Hidden," here, does not mean insurmountable.

Throughout the manuscripts of this period Wittgenstein makes it clear that the secondary language does not suffer a disconnection from the originary or primordial phenomena; for if there were no point of contact between the two, then representation of this phenomenal realm would not be possible. Instead, as a mode of representation, our secondary language lacks the transparency required for making exact claims regarding the structures it depicts. Put in terms of the simile used in SRLF, the primary language would allow for an exact determination of the method used in projecting figures from the first plane onto the second, because it is constructed with just this relationship in mind (i.e. the elimination of ambiguity, and thus nonsense). Because our everyday or secondary language has evolved over

a great period of time, its method of projection remains ambiguous and unclear. Thus, the advantage of a form of representation derived from an investigation of immediate experience would allow for a complete understanding of this so-called "projection process."

Quite early in his phenomenological reflections, Wittgenstein remarks that, in a way, our ordinary language is also phenomenological, but just not in the same way as the form of representation he proposes to undertake; its relationship is more complex, and therefore less appropriate for the task set forth by Wittgenstein. So, while both forms of representation are, indeed, related to the phenomena of our immediate experience, Wittgenstein contends that the construction of a phenomenological language would more adequately depict the actual logical structures of that which it intends to represent.

However, by September of 1929, the conviction with which he pursued this path started to weaken, and signs of doubt and concern began to take shape. Ironically, the illustration intended to reinforce the need for a phenomenological language (alongside our secondary language), eventually points to its downfall. When attempting to demonstrate the categorical confusion of assigning our physical language the task of grasping the phenomenological, Wittgenstein would often invoke the *laterna magica* simile.[61]

He would speak of the film running through the projector, one frame after another. The "present" consists of the frame lying before the projector lamp, the future is awaiting its turn on the feeder reel, while the past has already moved onto the catch reel. As theater spectators, however, we are presented only with that which is projected onto the screen. It has neither a future, nor a past; there is only that which is present before us.

The reason for the construction of a phenomenological language is presented as such: while the picture before the projection lamp is said to have "neighbors" (for it is only one of a sequence of pictures or frames), the picture on the screen does not. However, in going about the purely descriptive task Wittgenstein proposes, terms like sequence, past, present or future are not just to be avoided, rather they *cannot* be used.

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61. It has been suggested by Randall Auxier that Wittgenstein's description of the *laterna magica* might have been influenced by Bergson's work *Creative Evolution*, specifically the fourth chapter entitled "Cinematographical Mechanism of Thought and the Mechanistic Illusion." Although similarities do exist, it remains unclear if Wittgenstein had read Bergson.

Although we intuitively reach for such language when trying to convey such phenomena, this would constitute a categorical error that can only lead to philosophical confusion. The terms and their corresponding logical structures we employ in ordinary language are extended in time and space. Our unmediated experience of the world, on the other hand, has an essentially different character; one which seems to lack the "extension" we find in the lived world. For Wittgenstein the two resided on different levels: language as unfolding in the physical world and the phenomena as an atemporal immediacy.

Framing the problem differently, Wittgenstein says "Wir befinden uns mit unserer Sprache sozusagen nicht im Bereich des projizierten Bildes, sondern im Bereich des Films."[62] And yet, if we are truly to represent immediate experience without any "hypothetical additions," according to Wittgenstein, then we must address that which is on the screen and nothing else. Thus, the question becomes: How can language, which unfolds in time, describe a realm not in time?

Wittgenstein's answer is that, for all practical purposes, it cannot. Primarily, the simile is intended to show the fundamental chasm between our lived world extended both in space and time and the underlying phenomenal realm. By pointing out the practical incommensurability of our language resulting from this split, Wittgenstein feels that he has legitimated the need for a "primary language" that directly corresponds to the character of the phenomena themselves. Using our "secondary" language would constitute the projection of incompatible structures into a realm where they do not apply, and therefore only lead us down false paths and into dead-ends.

The elegance and simplicity of this solution, David Stern remarks, must have held great appeal for Wittgenstein.[63] His point is well taken. The directness and definite character of this new project certainly resonate with particular thoughts presented in the *Tractatus*. However, his tendency to become blinded by the "crystalline purity," as he later refers to it in the *Investigations*, did not prevent him from eventually recognizing other difficulties associated with this solution.

Only several months after having declared his new philosophical direction, Wittgenstein's writings show signs of a building scepticism. Between September and October of 1929, fundamental uncertainties regarding the direction and

62. PB, Section VII, §70: "We find ourselves, with our language so to speak, not in the domain of the projected picture but in the domain of the film." (Trans. JT)

63. Stern, David *Wittgenstein on Mind and Language,* p. 134.

soundness of his project start surfacing in his manuscripts with increasing frequency. Not even two months later, towards the end of November, Wittgenstein declares the goal of a phenomenological language unrealizable.

> Die phänomenologische Sprache oder "primäre Sprache", wie ich sie nannte, schwebt mir jetzt nicht als Ziel vor; ich halte sie jetzt nicht mehr für möglich. Alles was möglich und nötig ist, ist das Wesentliche *unserer* Sprache von ihrem Unwesentlichen zu sondern.[64]

Why the relatively sudden change of view? As mentioned above, the *laterna magica* simile cuts both ways. Initially, Wittgenstein felt the illustration to be a compelling representation of the split between two radically different realms. It originally served to legitimate his proposed *approach* concerning the project of analyzing the logical structure of the world. I emphasise the term "approach" to the project, because the project itself, at this point, has not been abandoned; rather the approach has been re-evaluated.

As the first sentence clearly points out, it is a "primary language" that Wittgenstein no longer wishes to pursue. However, this change entails more than a mere change of mind. The proposed representational form of our immediacies is not just problematic; rather it is something that could never be realized. The impossibility of the originally proposed form of representation is, again, to be found in the film analogy.

If the two realms – that of the screen and that of the filmstrip – are so radically different from one another (such that only the film unfolds in both space and time), then what prevents us from speaking of the non-representability of immediate perception? Fixated by both the film and projection analogies, Wittgenstein did not previously consider the implication such a radical split might entail. Quite to the contrary, the purpose of the substitute symbolism *relied* on the division of these two spheres. However, the representability of immediate experience was never really called into question.

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64. BEE, Item 107, p. 205 (25.11.29): The phenomenological language or "primary language" as I referred to it, is no longer my goal; I no longer think it possible. All that is possible and necessary is to distinguish the essential from the non-essential in *our* language. (Trans. JT). A slightly modified version can be found in PB, Section I, §1. Worth noting is the change in the first sentence of "möglich" (BEE) to "nötig" (PB). I also take issue with the translation in PB of the term "*sondern*" as "to separate." I have translated the term as "to differentiate/distinguish" because it does not so readily suggest an isolation or removal of the essential for the non-essential, which I contend is more in line with Wittgenstein's thought here.

As can be seen in the orthographic projection analogy, the connection between the world and our language was simply taken for granted. The possibility that the two might be completely incommensurable had not crossed his mind. Instead of, "How can immediate experience be represented?" the question became "Is this realm at all representable?"

Having reconsidered the issue, Wittgenstein's response is that immediate experience cannot be depicted, at least not to the degree he had wished, i.e. without the inclusion of "hypothetical additions." The dream of constructing a phenomenological language capable of representing our immediate experiences, i.e. the depiction of our experiences without forsaking complexity and detail, has fallen victim to its own uncritical pursuit of clarity. The once difficult but surmountable rift between the lived world and the world of experience threatens to become an unbridgeable gulf; for as previously quoted, yet, equally appropriate, "we find ourselves, with our language so to speak, not in the domain of the projected picture but in the domain of the film."[65] As we have seen, the same illustration of this division has proven decisive in both the inception and eventual rejection of Wittgenstein's first attempt at phenomenology.

65. See Footnote #62.

Essence, Autonomy, and Games

Chapter four

I. Discerning the Essence of Language

Although Wittgenstein quickly abandoned the project of constructing a phenomenological language that directly corresponded to the phenomenal world of immediate experience, he had not given up on the idea of phenomenology. The period between 1930 and 1933 involves another volatile phase of philosophical thought, in which Wittgenstein's conceptions of phenomenology and experience undergo several more transformations. Not wanting to give the impression that this claim is at odds with the title of this section (which suggests a singular change), my contention is that we are dealing with one major shift in his thought which is comprised of three smaller sub-transformations. In other words, even though these transformations are in certain respects quite different from one another, all originate from the same basic philosophical insight, and as such belong to the broader response to his first attempt at phenomenology.

In the first of these transformations Wittgenstein invokes the notion of essence in an attempt to separate the meaningful applications of language from those resulting from its mis-application. The second transformation talks of language as the performance of a calculus consisting of grammatical rules. Lastly, the third transition, while still involving a system of grammatical rules, emphasizes not only the rigidity, but also their indeterminacy. It is important to keep in mind that the division of these transformations into three distinct groups is somewhat misleading. It might be more correct to speak of the accentuation of three different currents within a particular span of time, each tending to blend into and overlapping with the other.

On the surface, this change (broadly speaking) is not easily distinguishable from his previous effort, for there is still talk of a phenomenological language, the representation of immediate experience as well as the clarification of logical structures. However, whereas the subject of his previous effort was an artificially constructed "primary language," his present undertaking takes the rejection of this distinction as its point of departure. As if having reached an epiphany and wishing to make a

clean break, on the eve of the new decade, Wittgenstein remarks: "Wie seltsam, wenn sich die Logik mit einer 'idealen' Sprache befaßte, und nicht mit *unserer!*"[1]

This unusual statement marks yet another pivotal moment along the path of his thought, apparently pointing in two directions at once. While serving as an acknowledgement of the naïve approach he took with respect to analyzing immediate experience via an idealized logical construct, it, at the same time, signals the direction of his future investigations. Wittgenstein's sights are now set on ordinary language or what he previously referred to as "secondary language." He recognizes that the primacy of the phenomena he had hoped to reach by creating an artificial form of representation is to be found in the language of our everyday interaction. Thus, Wittgenstein's reconsidered phenomenological investigation (necessarily) concerns itself with *our* language as it unfolds in the lived world. However, we must ask, aside from shifting the focus of logical investigation away from an idealized form of representation to that of our everyday linguistic exchanges, how is his reconceived phenomenology different from the earlier version?

Again, on the surface, the two would seem to have much in common; for, indeed, there is significant overlap with respect to their vocabularies. As already hinted at, the distinction lies in the relationship between experience and language. Wittgenstein's original phenomenological analysis primarily dealt with unraveling the logical structure of immediate experience, i.e. the logical structure of the world, via the construction of a "phenomenological language" that directly corresponds and depicts this structure (in all of its complexity). His present conception of phenomenology involves an analysis of the "unmediated" experiences insofar as they manifest themselves in our language. In other words, his present phenomenology does not purport to deal directly with the phenomena themselves; rather it attempts to grasp immediate experience in its possibility, i.e. being able to grasp its (their) *essence(s)*.

When revisiting the subject in a second article, Spiegelberg notes that this revised form of phenomenology is much less ambitious than the original conception, and there is certainly some truth to this claim; for, in fact, the grandeur of attempting to 'grasp the things themselves' rather than their mediated representations, certainly appears to be a more formidable task.[2] However, such a statement (and I do not think Spiegelberg would be in disagreement), does not do justice to

1. BEE, Item 108, p. 52 (31.12.29): "How strange if logic were concerned with an 'ideal' language, and not *ours!*" (Trans. JT) Also see PB, p. 1.

the significance of Wittgenstein's insight concerning the connection between language and experience – an insight which ultimately lays the groundwork for all of his future philosophical considerations.

Phenomenology as he presently conceives it represents much more than a slight alteration of his prior view; rather Wittgenstein came to re-think phenomenology as a whole, i.e. what it means to do phenomenology. He recognized that a logical investigation of the phenomena themselves, of our unmediated experiences, could be nothing more than a tempting illusion. The idea that we could directly grasp and analyze our immediate experiences, although very enticing, ignores or is blind to the role language plays in experience.

The realization that language would always represent a stumbling block in understanding its relationship to experience has now become a prominent feature in Wittgenstein's thought; for in conceiving of the two as belonging to distinct realms, language would form a boundary that, then, could never be truly breeched. In other words, an investigation of immediate experience which *does not* take into consideration the *means* of the investigation, i.e. language, only serves to delude itself with regards to the 'purity' or 'fundamentality' of its findings. And it is from this awareness of the exertion of language's influence upon us that Wittgenstein's present phenomenological analysis derives its significance.[3] As such, Wittgenstein's investigation is no longer a description of immediate experience free from all possible (theoretical, external, etc.) influences, but rather a description of their manifestation in ordinary language. Put differently, if we are to "get at the things themselves," so to speak, then we *must* go "through" language. Considered in this way, what he is proposing is a phenomenology of language itself (the only phenomenological analysis possible according to Wittgenstein).

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2. Following Spiegelberg's lead, Don Ihde, Christian Bermes, David Stern, among others, make a similar appraisal of the change in Wittgenstein's phenomenological analysis. In each case, Wittgenstein's new direction is portrayed as a "downsized" or "weaker" version of the original endeavor. I think such characterizations are misleading as to the kind or perhaps extent of the change in his viewpoint during the closing months of 1929.

3. Wittgenstein recognized that the absolute status of the world as external and independent, which he had maintained in his two previous efforts, was an uncritical presupposition. To appropriate Wittgenstein's own words, he found himself 'constantly running up against the walls of [his] cage' – in this case a separation of the world from immediate experience, and language as somewhere and something in-between. After having rattled the cage long enough, and eventually determined that the problem resides in his understanding of the situation, he was finally able to turn around and see that the cage only had three sides.

As mentioned in the quote closing out the last section, the task of this descriptive phenomenology "is to differentiate the essential from the non-essential in *our* language."[4] However, it is not clear what is meant, here, by essential and non-essential. The second issue involves determining what their differentiation [*sondern*][5] would entail, and to what end?

In the period immediately following this shift, Wittgenstein associates "essential" with the determination of language that is said to perform a function or task. "D. h. Wenn man quasi die Klasse der Sprachen beschreibt (sic) die ihren Zweck erfüllen (sic) dann hat man damit ihr Wesentliches gezeigt und damit die unmittelbare Erfahrung unmittelbar dargestellt."[6]

Correspondingly, those parts of our language that do not serve a purpose are to be considered non-essential. However, as Wittgenstein is using the terms essential and non-essential, they do not refer to an absolute distinction. The idea behind this division is to find a way of keeping different categories of language from becoming entangled with one another. By grounding the use of a term or concept in our actual practices and dealings, we prevent an unwarranted connection from being treated as if it did have a legitimate place (function) in language. A word could actually "do work" in one sense (being essential to representation), but still end up being misused in another. Therefore, in this context, its usage would be considered non-essential; for it (this specific use) does not belong to language. This use does not have, as one would say in German, *eine tragende Funktion*.

The second part of the first statement appears somewhat out of place considering that Wittgenstein, in the paragraph preceding it, declared the task of directly representing immediate experience neither necessary nor even *possible*. The terminology, here, is somewhat misleading, and results from Wittgenstein's frequent use

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4. BEE, Item 107, p. 205 (25.11.29).

5. In the English edition of the *Philosophical Remarks* "*sondern*" is translated as "to separate." While this choice is understandable, in this context it is simply too strong, and as such misleading. What Wittgenstein is proposing is not an actual separation of the two, but rather the marking out or emphasis of the warranted uses of terms in order to avoid problems generated when we mistake talk of the inessential for that of the essential. Again, Wittgenstein does not intend to exclude one in favor of the other within everyday speech, but simply to create a map of sorts that keeps us from straying off the path. I have chosen to translate the term "*sondern*" as "to differentiate," because it better captures this notion of accentuation.

6. BEE, Item 107, p. 205 (25.11.29): "That is, if one roughly described the class of languages that serve their purpose, then in so doing we have shown what is essential to them and thereby represented immediate experience directly." (Trans. JT)

of overlapping concepts. In this instance "direct representation of immediate experience" refers to an emerging conception of experience and language, where the two are much more intertwined than previously, rather than clarifying the separation that a "primary language" should attempt to bridge. As mentioned above, if we wish to talk of immediate experience in its immediacy, then we must resist the temptation to view language as something "in-between"; for this would lead to similar confusions that Wittgenstein encountered during his first attempt at phenomenology.

However, the meaning of essential and non-essential as Wittgenstein uses the terms is still vague. Does this distinction apply just to language or is it valid for all forms of representation? Wittgenstein writes: "Jedesmal wenn ich sage die und die Darstellung könnte man auch durch diese andere ersetzen, machen wir einen Schritt weiter zu dem Ziele das Wesen des Dargestellten zu erfassen."[7]

Early on, Wittgenstein thinks that by examining the various ways in which we actually depict something, we can eventually grasp the essence of that which is being represented. This simple reductive process equates to the paring away of all the extraneous artifacts of representation until we are left with only those "bare" aspects of the represented that cannot be reduced any further without destroying it. Once this point has been reached, all of the word's relevant logical connections within language lay open, and allow for a determination of the warranted (and indirectly the unwarranted) uses of a given term or concept.

One of the first to fall casualty to this reduction is the use of the term "I." At first glance, the self-referential "I" would appear to belong to those terms and concepts indispensable to our language. However, it is precisely this self-referential character of the concept that Wittgenstein finds misleading. The "I" cannot perform its referential function, because there is no subject or self to which it can refer; neither a physical body, nor a mental entity invested with powers of thought.

Certain aspects of the present discussion share similarities to the problem of the self as we encountered in the *Tractatus*. Just as before, Wittgenstein deems the notion of a knowing or representing subject faulty, and the result of linguistic confusions. However, the same cannot be said with regard to the metaphysical subject. Although not explicitly mentioned, it is extremely unlikely that he could still

7. BEE, Item 107, p. 206 (25.11.29): "Every time when I say this or that representation could be substituted by another, we take a further step towards the goal of grasping the essence of that which is represented." (Trans. JT)

maintain such a notion given the fundamental shift in the course of his thought. In other words, the questions he presently entertains are not those with which he had previously dealt. Whereas in the *Tractatus*, the problem involved the subject's relationship to the world as a condition for its possibility, here, what is at issue is the essence of representation as such. And although at no point could one speak of Wittgenstein having ever endorsed the concept of the subject, it is worth mentioning that after 1929 the status of the subject was intentionally left open and indeterminate.

Clearly the *Tractatus* is a work dealing with the question of representation. But neither its role, nor its emphasis within the entirety of his thought correspond to what he is currently proposing. As discussed in the second chapter, Wittgenstein's attempt to ascertain the limits of representation served as a preliminary step toward a greater goal, i.e. delineating the realm of the ineffable. By clarifying what representation is capable of, in the same move, he emphasizes its boundaries, and thereby what it *cannot* do. In so doing, Wittgenstein believed that he had successfully accomplished the true goal of this work, i.e. the carving out of a space for the ethical, the aesthetic, and the mystical.

What appears to be the reemergence of the same problem as dealt with in the *Tractatus* is, in fact, a related problem that happens to involve, if you will, many of the same "participants." When we put the structural differences of the questions aside, the later conclusion almost mirrors that of his earlier work, i.e. Wittgenstein denies the subject a necessary place in language. However, the reasons for doing so are entirely different.

To be more explicit, in the *Tractatus* the metaphysical subject could not, according to Wittgenstein, be included among the entities *in* the world, and therefore was beyond the possibility of representation. However, Wittgenstein's present exclusion of the subject or "I" from language is not based on the same reasoning as before. Instead, we are confronted with a similar conclusion stemming from two different understandings of the subject. In the first, the metaphysical subject is construed as the presupposition for the possibility of the world, and thus representation as well. Because it is what makes representation (language) possible, it itself cannot be depicted or represented. The later understanding, concerning the essence of that which is represented, is not problematic as a direct result of its metaphysical role, but rather because it no longer has one.[8]

But if the "I" is not essential to language, i.e. does not serve an indispensable purpose, then what is it? According to Wittgenstein, the "I" or "self" is nothing more than a convenient logical construct suggested by the grammar of our lan-

guage. Consequently, the subject cannot properly be said to belong to the essence of language, because it is a fictitious entity acting as a logical placeholder.[9] Since the term is misleading with regard to its function, his solution, in line with his reductive method, is to simply make do without it.

> Man könnte folgende Darstellung adoptieren:
>
> Wenn ich, L.W., Zahnschmerzen habe, so wird das durch den Satz 'es gibt Zahnschmerzen' ausgedrückt. Ist aber das der Fall, was jetzt durch den Satz ‚A hat Zahnschmerzen', ausgedrückt wird, so wird gesagt: ‚A benimmt sich wie L.W. wenn es Zahnschmerzen gibt'. Analog wird gesagt ‚es denkt', und ‚A benimmt sich wie L.W. wenn es denkt'.[10]

When someone exclaims, "I have a toothache," the question is what aspects of this statement essentially belong to the phenomenon and which do not. Since the subject, as Wittgenstein has on many occasions made clear, does not correspond to our bodies, the reference of the term "I" lends itself to misunderstanding. It is also worth noting that the following, in many ways, represents a proto-engagement with the solipsistic position that eventually becomes more explicit as he works towards the *Philosophical Investigations*.

Firstly, we would not normally say that my body has a toothache or experiences pain; rather *I* am the one who has the pain, i.e. the subject of the experience. Analyzing the sentence structure brings us to the same conclusion, namely that the "I" represents the subject to which the predicate "toothache" applies. But this is exactly what Wittgenstein warns against – confusing the grammatical structure of a proposition with the reality of the situation. In this case, the subject-predicate

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8. Whereas in his earlier writings talk of an "I" or "self were usually misleading, there was still at least one legitimate sense of the term. As he construes it here, no form or sense of the term(s) is warranted.

9. It should be noted that many of the remarks Wittgenstein made with respect to the "I" or "self" in the *Tractatus* would equally hold here, for example, the "I" is nowhere to be found in the world and cannot be attributed any truly coherent status. An incoherent understanding of the subject is one of the few things that remains unchanged throughout this thought.

10. PB, §58: "We could adopt the following way of representing matters. If I, L.W., have a toothache, then that is expressed by means of the proposition 'There is toothache.' But if that is so, what we now express by the proposition "A has a toothache" is put as follows: "A is behaving as L.W. does when there is toothache." Similarly we shall say "It is thinking" and "A is behaving as L.W. does when it is thinking."

structure of the proposition misleads us into positing the existence of a metaphysical subject that is then said to be in pain.

Secondly, even if we were to put aside the issue of a metaphysical subject of experience, the referential aspect of the term in the sentence represents a redundancy, which alone would be grounds for excluding it from being an essential aspect of language. When I say that I have a pain in my arm, it is clear that *I* am the one with the pain. Even under extreme circumstances, if I utter "there is pain" or "there is toothache," then it is, according to Wittgenstein, unmistakably clear to whom the pain should be attributed. He is convinced that with the adoption of what has become referred to as the "I-less" language, we will have taken a giant step towards recognizing a danger hidden in the syntax structure. Conversely, that we can successfully navigate our daily lives without the "I-subject structure" serves to demonstrate its superfluous, hence non-essential role in our language.

However, there is something more to this talk of essential and non-essential; an additional aspect that has not yet been brought to the fore. Intimately tied to Wittgenstein's essentialist reduction is an impartiality with respect to the various functions and tasks that language performs. Towards the end of his transitory phase, Wittgenstein emphasizes not only the fault of his first attempt at phenomenology, but the need for a completely unbiased treatment of phenomena, and therefore of language:

> Es gibt nicht – wie ich früher glaubte – eine primäre Sprache im Gegensatz zu unserer gewöhnlichen, der „sekundären." Aber insofern könnte man im Gegensatz zu unserer Sprache von einer primären reden, als in dieser keine Bevorzugung gewisser Phänomene vor anderen ausgedrückt sein dürfte; sie müsste sozusagen absolut *sachlich* sein.[11]

On the one hand, Wittgenstein acknowledges the impossibility of a language capable of expressing immediate experience in an unmediated fashion – of directly expressing what we feel and perceive. On the other hand, his drive towards achieving clarity in language in order to avoid certain misinterpretations of linguistic structures still exerts a strong influence on his thought. Clearly, the form of clarity

11. BT, §101, 488, p. 327: "There is not, as I previously believed, a primary language in contrast to our usual "secondary." However, in comparison to our language, one could speak of a primary one, insofar as no priority is allotted certain phenomena over others; it must be, so to speak, absolutely factual." (Trans JT)

Wittgenstein is striving for, here, does not correspond to that of the *Tractatus*, nor that of his earlier phenomenology.

Again, in the *Tractatus*, the task of language (the only task it was capable of) was that of reporting actual or potential states-of-affairs in the world; any other use of language could only result in the generation of nonsense [*Unsinn*]; for any such attempt is an attempt to exceed the world, and thus the realm of the representable. At this time, Wittgenstein held that the confusion regarding language involved our inability to readily discern the true logical structure of the world. He likened language to clothing that hides or distorts the actual features and form of what lies underneath.

However, at this later stage in the development of his thought, language understood only as *Reportage* (the description of events *in* the world) had long since been deemed in error. Although the quote clearly demonstrates Wittgenstein's rejection of an actual primary language, the primary/secondary structure itself still seems to have held a certain appeal for him, and this is as obvious as his rejection of its first incarnation.

The primary/secondary structure is visible on at least two levels: firstly, and most obvious, it appears in the form of the distinction between essential and non-essential, and secondly, as an approach to language that does not give priority to the expression of any given phenomenon within language – a leveling of the phenomenal playing field, if you will.

The demands that phenomena be handled equally, and that only their "factual" aspects be given consideration, signify his attempt to purge language of its misleading character (or more specifically, an artificial attempt to keep the philosopher's tendency to misconstrue language in check).[12] Although at first this requirement seems to stand in opposition to his later views (due to the artificial treatment of language), within it lay the seeds of how philosophy, according to Wittgenstein in the *Investigations*, should be carried out, i.e. leaving language just as it is, without any interference on the part of the philosopher.[13]

The danger Wittgenstein sees in giving certain phenomena priority over others is the possible misuse of language.[14] When the philosopher claims, e.g. that "I" in the sentence "I think, therefore I am" refers to the self (a predicable substance to

12. Notice the subtle shift in the use of his language. Previously, natural language was regarded as hiding, covering or distorting the true structure of the world. Now, language has a misleading [*irreführend*] character – it no longer distorts, but rather is conducive to misinterpretation.

which both "thinking" and "existence" are attributed) or that the statement "only the present moment is real" is taken for an insight into the true nature (or at least an aspect) of the world, he has committed just such an error. For Wittgenstein, the lack of a critical engagement with language represents a serious obstacle for both the Cartesian and solipsistic positions. In each case the surface grammar of the respective statements has been taken for an expression of reality and granted an absolute status. For Descartes this meant that language was nothing more than the linguistic and propositional encapsulation of the mental – a vessel for carrying our thoughts beyond the grasp of metaphysical doubt.[15] For the Solipsist it represents the emphasis and elevation of particular grammatical structures, namely "I" and "present." Language, according to this view, is simply taken for granted as a form of inner voice capable of moderating the moment.

The history of philosophy is, according to Wittgenstein, littered with such examples – instances where an inadequate understanding of the role of language in experience has led to philosophical paradoxes and unanswerable questions:

> Man hört immer wieder die *Bemerkung*, daß die Philosophie eigentlich keinen Fortschritt mache, daß die gleichen philosophischen Probleme, die schon die Griechen beschäftigten, uns noch beschäftigen. Die das aber *sagen*, verstehen nicht den Grund, warum es so ist/sein muß/. Der ist aber, daß unsere Sprache sich gleich geblieben ist und uns immer wieder zu denselben Fragen verführt. Solange es ein Verbum ‚sein' geben wird, das zu

13. I contend that Wittgenstein's insistence here toward phenomena and that of his later position regarding philosophy's stance toward language and grammar share a common motive, namely the avoidance of philosophical error. While in his later work, Wittgenstein came to realize that phenomena do actually hold different significance for us (and legitimately so), at this time, he is primarily concerned with cutting off potentially misleading avenues. However, both views insist upon a more passive and critical stance toward the phenomena and the role of language therein.

14. While the resemblance of the present position to that of his later critique of philosophy in the *Investigations* is unmistakable, one should be careful not to confuse the two. His later position lacks the *imposed* equalization of phenomena when treating philosophic difficulties. Perhaps appearing to be an insignificant point, both the level playing field and more direct approach (above all in *The Big Typescript* and *The Blue and Brown Books*) lack the refinement of his later thought as well as his indirect method. Following up on this theme, Alois Pichler (2007) warns of the danger in how one approaches Wittgenstein's *Nachlaß*. He sees two editing highpoints in Wittgenstein's work. I will come back to this point in the next chapter.

15. Wittgenstein later criticizes Descartes' procedure of systematic doubt in the *Mediations* precisely because language somehow escaped this doubt, i.e. he never called the words he used to convey his thoughts into question.

funktionieren scheint wie ‚essen' und ‚trinken', solange es Adjektive ‚identisch', ‚wahr', ‚falsch', ‚möglich' geben wird, solange von einem Fluß der Zeit und von einer Ausdehnung des Raumes die Rede sein wird, u.s.w., u.s.w., solange werden die Menschen immer wieder an die gleichen *rätselhaften Schwierigkeiten* stoßen, und auf etwas starren, was keine Erklärung scheint wegheben zu können.[16]

We are plagued by particular philosophic problems and riddles, according to Wittgenstein, not because they are somehow grounded in an absolute and eternal truth, but because the grammar of our language(s) presents us with particular models of understanding. The timeless questions of philosophy, in Wittgenstein's view, arose and continue to be *perpetuated* by our language. We are till this day still occupied with many of the same problems first posited by the ancient Greeks, because these problems have been handed down to us via particular grammatical structures (representational forms) that have remained intact throughout the ages, and these, in turn, have been fostered by the philosophic tradition.[17]

In the passage immediately following he continues this line of thought:

Ich lese „…philosophers are no nearer to the meaning of ‚Reality' than Plato got,…." Welche seltsame Sachlage. Wie sonderbar, daß Plato dann überhaupt so weit kommen konnte! Oder, daß wir dann nicht weiter kommen konnten! War es, weil Plato *so* gescheit war?[18]

16. BT, §90, 424, p. 286: "You always hear people say that philosophy makes no progress and that the same philosophical problems which were already preoccupying the Greeks are still troubling us today. But people who say that do not understand the reason why it has to be so. The reason is that our language has remained the same and always introduces us to the same questions. As long as there is a verb 'be' which seems to work like 'eat' and 'drink', as long as there are adjectives like 'identical,' 'true,' 'false,' 'possible,' as longs as people speak of the passage of time and of the extent of space, and so on; as long as this happens people will always run up against the same teasing difficulties and will stare at something which no explanation seems able to remove" (Kenny translation in *Wittgenstein on the Nature of Philosophy*).

17. Here, Wittgenstein is not claiming that language does not and has not changed, for this is plainly false. Instead, his point involves the persistence of certain models of thought over the millennia – their reoccurrence within the various languages points to the historical character of philosophy as an institution.

18. BT, §90, 424, p. 286: "I read '…philosophers are no nearer to the meaning of "reality" than Plato got…' What an extraordinary thing! How remarkable that Plato could get so far! Or that we have not been able to get any further! Was it because Plato was *so* clever?" (Kenny translation).

What both of these paragraphs (sarcastically) highlight is the unacknowledged role which language has played (and continues to play) not only within philosophy, but our everyday lives as well. The main difference, Wittgenstein contends, is that in our daily activities we are not usually disturbed and perplexed by such things. Although equally ignorant regarding the role of language, only the philosopher (poet, thinker, writer, etc.) feels himself inclined to accentuate a particular grammatical structure (i.e. *ein Maßstab oder Vergleichsobjekt*),[19] and treat it in unconventional ways which then seemingly represent actual philosophical difficulties. In such passages as those above, one can clearly see that the roots of Wittgenstein's "later" critique of philosophy lie here.

It is the philosopher's mis-relation to language, his propensity for misinterpreting the role of language in experience, of projecting the structures of one system onto that of another incompatible one that has placed philosophy on its current course. Why have we not, as claimed in the quote, made any progress concerning the problems reaching back to the Greeks? Why has Plato's benchmark yet to be surpassed? Wittgenstein's short answer is that a particular model of representation has come to dominate our understanding. It does not suffice merely to point out to others who do not share or even criticize Plato's view, for the point of departure from which the problems of reality or Being move outward can be traced back to a model of understanding (grammatical framework) established in Platonic thought (and correspondingly to the ancient Greek language).

However, this mis-relation involves more than reading the surface structures of language into reality. Another aspect, which we have not yet addressed – and perhaps the more grave error – is the philosopher's tendency toward oversimplification.

> Die Gefahr, die darin liegt, Dinge einfacher sehen zu wollen, als sie in Wirklichkeit sind, wird heute oft sehr überschätzt. Diese Gefahr besteht aber tatsächlich im höchsten Grade in der phänomenologischen Untersuchung der Sinneseindrücke. Diese werden immer für *viel* einfacher gehalten, als sie sind.[20]

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19. "A measure or object of comparison."

20. BT, §98, 467, p. 313: "The danger that lies within wanting to see things more simply than they are in reality is nowadays very often overestimated. The danger actually exists at the highest degree in the phenomenological investigation of sensory impressions. They are always considered *much* more simply than they are." (Trans. JT)

The importance of the *übersichtliche Darstellung* is thus, for Wittgenstein, twofold: First, it allows us to recognize the structures to which we have contact and with which we operate on a daily basis. Second, it serves to keep our "tendency towards generalization," as Wittgenstein would later refer to it in the *Investigations*, in check – a constant reminder of the complexity of various phenomena as well as our practices.

At this point, it becomes clear why Wittgenstein holds such phenomenological (grammatical) investigations to be of utmost relevance for philosophy. In response to his own question: "Warum empfinden wir die Untersuchung der Grammatik als fundamental?," Wittgenstein cryptically answers: "Die Untersuchung der Grammatik ist im selben Sinne fundamental, wie wir die Sprache fundamental – etwa ihr eigenes Fundament – nennen können."[21]

The sense in which both language and grammar are fundamental, as Wittgenstein says above, is that they are their own ground. Phrased differently, the two represent what Wittgenstein refers to in the *Philosophical Investigations* as "primordial phenomena" [*Urphänomene*], and as such constitute their own ground. The salient point here is that to investigate the grammar of our language is to explore the language itself, rather than attempting to uncover something lying behind it.

A grammatical investigation of language as Wittgenstein currently proposes would not search for the connection(s) between language and our practices (understood as some invisible or yet to be discovered point of contact), but rather acknowledges that language is grounded in our practices and institutions. Yet, what it means to be "grounded in" remains unclear, and subject to misinterpretation. Our practices and institutions are not behind language as something hidden or to be revealed. Instead, for the first time, Wittgenstein begins to conceive of language as an extension of these practices and way of life. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the division between world and language begins to fall away. The idea that language and our practices are self-grounding becomes a fundamental insight for Wittgenstein; one that he would continue to hold until the very end.

21. BT, §88, 412-3, p. 278-9: "Why do we feel the investigation of grammar as being fundamental? . . . The investigation of grammar is fundamental in the same sense in which we could call language fundamental – basically its own foundation." (Trans. JT)

II. Phenomenology as Grammar

Wittgenstein's TS 213, also known as *The Big Typescript*, is said to represent both the high point and final remarks of his phenomenological reflections. Indeed, by the time Wittgenstein starts dictating what are commonly referred to as *The Blue and Brown Books* to several of his students, the term "phenomenology" is nowhere to be found. This was taken by many as a sign that he had once and for all abandoned the project. However, not only is such a conclusion presumptuous, but contradicts the overabundance of textual evidence as well as the obvious continuity between his works both prior to and after *The Blue and Brown Books*.

Yet, for reasons not entirely clear, Wittgenstein did, in fact, quite abruptly stop using the term "phenomenology." But rather than meaning the end of his project of a descriptive phenomenology of language, what we see is an exchange of terms. To put it differently, "phenomenology" never really went away, but rather went underground.[22] At the time Wittgenstein started putting together *The Big Typescript* for publication (1933), he began to draw an ever tighter connection between his phenomenological project and the concept of grammar.

The term "grammar" is nothing new to Wittgenstein's vocabulary. Even at the outset of his final break with the Tractarian system (late 1929 – early 1930), one can already see the very close association of grammar and the phenomenological description of language. However, as his new view starts to take shape the term grammar begins to figure more prominently in his discussions, eventually culminating in their complete interchangeability.

In his chapter on phenomenology contained in *The Big Typescript*, Wittgenstein's investigation is primarily concerned with the phenomena of color and form. Quite striking is his discussion of the color-octahedron in the subsection entitled *Phänomenologie ist Grammatik*. Here, he begins the section explaining why he is investigating the "rules of use of our language" as well as the importance of forming a perspicuous representation [*übersichtliche Darstellung*] thereof. He again refers to the inherent danger and confusion that accompanies an incorrect or more accurately unwarranted use of language, e.g. applying such expressions as "objects" or "things" to our sensory perceptions, i.e. understanding them in terms of objects in

22. One can only speculate as to the reasons Wittgenstein felt the term no longer necessary, adequate, or even possibly an impediment (due to either the implications of the term not associated with his work or his previous use of the term in 1929).

our visual field. Much as he later does in the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein then proceeds to show the differences present in our use of certain words and concepts.

To counter our tendency of overlooking the variety in language, Wittgenstein points to the need for an easily surveyable representation [*übersichtliche Darstellung*] of the structure of the rules governing our use of language.[23] Description is to replace explanation, for explanation is incapable of alleviating what he designates "our discontentment." What we find "unsettling," he says, is the lack of clarity regarding the grammar of particular propositions in a specific context.[24] In other words, the only way to rid ourselves of the philosophic discontentment that we are plagued by, is first to recognize the structures of thought in their complexity, i.e. how we think about and approach situations in the world. One such structure is the color-octahedron.

> Der Farbenraum wird *beiläufig* dargestellt durch das Oktaeder, mit den reinen Farben an den Eckpunkten und diese Darstellung ist eine grammatische, keine psychologische. Zu sagen, daß unter den und den Umständen – etwa – ein rotes Nachbild sichtbar wird, ist dagegen Psychologie (das kann sein, oder auch nicht, das andere ist a priori; das Eine kann durch Experimente festgestellt werden, das Andere nicht.)[25]

23. Ironically, the concept of *übersichtliche Darstellung* is clouded by a degree of uncertainty. A brief or even casual encounter leaves one with a very straight forward impression of the concept. However, like many of Wittgenstein's philosophic contributions, once one begins to dig a little deeper, the confidence one initially felt quickly begins to fade. I have often intentionally left the concept in the original German, because it is notoriously difficult to translate. To be more specific, within the English speaking secondary literature there has been an ongoing debate as to the appropriate expression of the concept as well as its derivatives, e.g. *Übersicht* and *Übersichtlichkeit*. The most widely accepted translation (although not necessarily the best), is Anscombe's use of "perspicuous representation" in the *Philosophical Investigations*. However, other translations include "birds-eye view," "synoptic account," and "overview." This topic is discussed in more detail in Hacker's *Insight and Illusion*.

24. See BT, §94, 438, p. 295.

25. BT, §94, 441, p. 297: "Color-space is approximately represented by the color-octadron – with the pure colors at the corners, and this representation is grammatical, not psychological. To say that under this and this circumstance – something – a red afterimage will become visible is psychology (that can be or not, the other is a priori; the one can be determined through experiments, the other not)." (Trans. JT)

For Wittgenstein, the color-octahedron[26] represents more than just *a* model of color-space. Rather, it is *our* model – the one that informs both our thoughts and actions involving color. It is important to recognize here that the *übersichtliche Darstellung* is not intended as a representation of color-phenomena, but as a model of our operations involving color, i.e. our color practices so to speak. The construction of such a model of our color-space allows for an understanding of how we use color – in terms of what is both possible and impossible. In this respect, "[d]as Farbenoktaeder ist Grammatik, denn es sagt, daß wir von einem rötlichen Blau, aber nicht von einem rötlichen Grün reden können, etc."[27]

If this characterization sounds somewhat familiar, then it is because it echoes the language used in *Some Remarks on Logical Form*. There, it was Wittgenstein's desire to devise a primary or phenomenological language; one capable not just of saying what is possible to say about a concept, but more importantly also prohibiting, so to speak, illegitimate moves within language (due to the language standing in direct contact with reality).

Wittgenstein's reasons for not pursuing such a primary language have already been discussed at length, and thus do not need repeating here. However, the idea motivating his earlier phenomenology was never truly extinguished. Wittgenstein himself concedes the point at the beginning of the *Phänomenologie* chapter when he states:

> Die Untersuchung der Regeln des Gebrauchs unserer Sprache, die Erkenntnis dieser Regeln und übersichtliche Darstellung (…) leistet dasselbe, was man oft durch die Konstruktion einer phänomenologischen Sprache leisten/erzielen/will.[28]

The importance of his grammatical investigations involves not only understanding how the rules are used, but also that we become aware of such rules in the first place. This recognition of language's complexity is necessary, in Wittgenstein's view, in order to combat overly simplistic notions of language that are widely held. The passage attributed to Augustine opening the *Philosophical Investigations* is sup-

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26. PB, § 221, p. 278.

27. BT, §94, 441, p. 297: "The color-octahedron is grammar, for it says that we can speak of a reddish blue, but not of a reddish green, etc." (Trans. JT)

28. BT, §94, 437, p. 295: "The investigation of the rules of our use of language, the knowledge of the rules and perspicuous representation perform the same thing that one often performs/aims at/wants via the construction of a phenomenological language." (Trans. JT)

posed to represent just such a naïve view of language, where language and its acquisition involve nothing more than the association of sounds (words) with objects via ostensive definition.[29]

It is here appropriate to mention another important difference to the kind of phenomenology first proposed, namely that the "results" of such grammatical investigations (including both Wittgenstein's present and future attempts) have no universal and ultimate claim to validity and truth. The reasoning behind this statement is threefold: first, the aim of the investigations is not to map out language in its entirety, but rather just the areas that have proven especially misleading to philosophers, i.e. have been the source of irresolvable philosophic problems. Second, language and our activities have a historical dimension – they are constantly undergoing change. Thus, given a particular state of language today, it does not follow (and history has repeatedly shown the opposite) that it will be the same in the future. Lastly (and underpinning the second point), a phenomenological investigation of grammar does not fall under the jurisdiction of truth and universality. Quite to the contrary, it is the grammatical structure or model which lays the groundwork for talk of truth, reality, etc. This is all, as mentioned in the previous section, tied into the fundamental nature of his investigations.

But what does one hope to accomplish with the construction of a phenomenological language? Whereas Wittgenstein's first effort at phenomenology sought to achieve clarity and exactness via a primary language directly connected to our unmediated sense perceptions (for it was assumed that contradiction here would be impossible), his second attempt focuses on a form of clarity with respect to understanding a system of grammatical rules that act as the foundation for our actions and thoughts. This means, among other things, that there are limits to the explanations we can give as to the meaning of a word or sentence, to the reasons for having made a decision, to the justification of a particular way of doing things and acting, etc.

Earlier in section 88 of TS 213, Wittgenstein provides an example of this fundamental level, where analysis begins to break down.

> Man kann einen Gedanken aus anderen begründen, aber nicht das Denken. Das, glaube ich, ist es, was unsere Untersuchung rein beschreibend macht.

29. PU, §1.

Es läßt sich kein rationaler Grund angeben, weshalb wir denken sollten/müßten/.[30]

The remark draws our attention to the point where further questioning only leads us to see a difficulty where one (in our daily practices) does not actually exist. He accuses philosophers of wanting to go beyond the realm of intelligible investigation by searching for such things as ultimate foundations, causes, and in this case, the justification or reason for thought itself – a search for an "unmoved mover." However, when we ask the question, "why do we think?" we quickly find ourselves at a dead-end, for thinking seems to be a constituent of who we are and our interactions with others in the world – it is simply what we do. We are confronted with a particular phenomenon and wish to get to the bottom of it, i.e. to uncover the purpose behind it. Yet, there is a point, according to Wittgenstein, where no further answers can be given, no further discovery is possible, and thus no question to be answered.

A human being is not, as philosophy has traditionally held, a *zoon logon echon* or *animal rationale* – language is not a property or characteristic which can be applied to or inhere in humans. The other aspect which Wittgenstein believes that this view neglects is the embeddedness of thought; that thinking is only of significance within the living flow, the carrying out of a language-game embedded within a form-of-life. Without the participatory aspect, language amounts to nothing more than lifeless symbols without meaning. As he says in the *Investigations*, only within the activity of a language-game can word or sentence ever have meaning.

A consequence of this view is that we cannot perform an analysis of language in the same way that the pathologist autopsies a lifeless body. The rules of a language-game can neither be unearthed nor given a rational justification for their existence and "correctness." For Wittgenstein, there is a facticity of our lives and practices that cannot and should not be ignored. Thus, if one tries to go beyond this facticity, usually by insisting on asking "why" – effectively exceeding the functions of language – then one has not uncovered some essential truth about the world, but only succeeded in creating confusion.

An important point that should not be overlooked here is that any one of our actions is always situated within a larger context; a complex web of practices with

30. BT, §55, 299 p. 160: "One can justify a thought via others, but not thinking. That, I believe, is what makes our investigation purely descriptive….No rational reason can be given for why we should/must think." (Trans. JT)

varying degrees of interrelation. "Wenn man nun nach dem Grund einer einzelnen Denkhandlung (Kalkülhandlung) fragt, so erhält man als Antwort die Auseinandersetzung eines Systems dem die Handlung angehört."[31] The attempt to get at the 'reason' behind an individual action by means of separating it from its broader context – a well established strategy often employed in the natural sciences – is misguided. This is a point that Wittgenstein carried over into his later works, and is featured prominently in the *Investigations*.

Before moving on to the next section, one more point should be addressed: the status of grammar. As mentioned toward the beginning of the last section, the division between primary and secondary, language and world, reality and immediate experience has fallen away, thus leaving the concept of grammar in limbo. At various points starting in 1932 and continuing up until his death in 1951, Wittgenstein came to characterize this unusual status in the following way: "Wie alles Metaphysische ist die Harmonie zwischen Gedanken und Wirklichkeit in der Grammatik der Sprache aufzufinden."[32]

As I have mentioned before, grammar is the point where experience and the world, so to speak, touch – it is an indeterminate place. When speaking of truth, we often appeal to what is the case, i.e. to the immutable truth of reality. The truth of a proposition, action or event is very often (in both our everyday and philosophical lives) justified by comparison with the actual matter.

According to this view, a correspondence exists between the object and/or event and its representation as *re*produced and expressed via my subjective perception. However, Wittgenstein finds fault with this way of thinking about the matter. An appeal to "reality" as the absolute authority regarding a statement or concept is (to a degree) to put the cart before the horse. This is not to say that a correspondence theory of truth is completely wrongheaded, but as he says of Augustine's conception of language, it is not the whole story.

The representations that we use, how we understand, and consequently act in the world, are constituted by the grammar of our language. These representations are not something which we can dispense with in order to behold the "real" world

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31. BT, §55, 231 p. 161: "Now when one asks about the reason behind a singular action of thought (act of calculating) then as an answer one receives the critical engagement with the system to which the action belongs." (Trans. JT)

32. BT, §43, 189, p. 134: "Like everything metaphysical, the harmony between thought and reality is to be found in the grammar of language." (Trans. JT) Also see Z 1, Item 233a, p. 9 and p. 162.

– the world behind the curtains. Grammar, as Wittgenstein understands it, is not an object or structure *in* and *of* the world. It is something altogether different; the place where, as he says, thought and reality come together. Note the careful choice of wording Wittgenstein uses here: ". . . the harmony between thought and reality is *to be found* in the grammar of language" (my emphasis). The use of the verb "to find" here hints at the autonomy of grammar.

While the grammar representing the harmony of thought and reality is present in language, it does not mean that the mere language of words is its origin or the source of reality. This statement hints at the unusual 'status' of grammar; it is neither a thing, nor a non-thing [*Unding*]. We must remember the dimensions that the concept of language takes on in his later works. This is perhaps most visible in the *Investigations*, where language has been expanded to include all of our actions, emotions, institutions, etc. – or more succinctly put, our lives.

Often, philosophers of language have isolated language, and then attempted to dissect it in the hopes of uncovering, and consequently understanding the mechanical inner workings of the device (a tool exclusively designed for expressing thought and describing the world). A fundamental aspect of Wittgenstein's later thought is that this isolation of language does not serve to help, but rather hinder our understanding of language and world. Furthermore, attempts to dissect language often overlook that both the blade and wielding of critical analysis is only as sharp as language itself. Rather than falling into the nominalist trap, Wittgenstein's grammatical investigations signal the interconnectedness of language, our actions, and the world. So while language is neither the source of reality, nor reality itself, it does play a fundamental role in its constitution.

With so many similarities it is tempting to think that the kind of philosophy that Wittgenstein is doing between 1929 and 1933 is basically the same as that found in the *Philosophical Investigations* as the Hintikkas have claimed.[33] And while I acknowledge their close kinship, there are, indeed, several fundamental differences.

What I consider to be the most fundamental difference lies in what I refer to as the "completeness of grammar." As I have discussed previously, at this stage Wittgenstein had both an engineer's and logician's affinity for precision and completeness (an impulse that was only consistently brought into check during the second half of 1930s). For Wittgenstein, although the logical structures of immediate experience cannot be discerned via mere reflection (*Tractatus*), and therefore

33. See Hintikka, Jaako and Merrill, *Untersuchungen zu Wittgenstein*.

require the actual investigation of phenomena (his original attempt to do phenomenology), he still understands them to be a form of regulative rules (albeit extremely complex). Such a description is very reminiscent of what he says in the *Tractatus* with respect to the logical possibilities of objects within a particular state-of-affairs, i.e. that their internal relations are fixed from the beginning, and that no new combinations could ever come to be.[34]

However, by the second half of 1933 Wittgenstein begins to doubt whether language should be thought in terms of a rule-governed system. This doubt eventually culminates not in the banishing of rules from grammar, but in a reassessment of the relationship between rules and grammar. Even if some areas of our language appear to be governed by such a rigid system of rules, Wittgenstein later concludes that language is not a calculus. Although this point will be dealt with more thoroughly in the next section, I would still like to point out that Wittgenstein's more mature concept of grammar emphasizes not only its rigidity, but more importantly its open and indeterminate aspects.

III. From Calculus to Language-game

Shortly after his emphasis upon discerning the essence of language, another notion Wittgenstein had been contemplating finally moved to the foreground of his thought, namely he began to think of language in terms of a calculus. As I have already indicated, this change is more of a shift of emphasis, rather than a further development of his earlier ideas, because these are ideas that he had been entertaining prior to 1930, but which now possess a different meaning for his work. By the beginning of 1932, what he had previously seen as a likeness in the functional performance of language and the carrying out of mathematical operations, Wittgenstein now felt that an even closer association was warranted.

> Ich betrachte die Sprache und Grammatik unter dem Gesichtpunkt des Kalküls // unter der Form des Kalküls // *als* Kalkül//, d.h. des Operierens nach festgelegten Regeln. // d.h. als Vorgang nach festgelegten Regeln.//[35]

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34. See TLP, #2.0123 – 2.0124.

35. BEE, Item 212, p. 740 (01.01.1932): "I look upon language and grammar under the perspective of a calculus//under the form of a calculus//*as* calculus//, and that means as the operating according to rigidly determined rules//that is as a process according to rigidly determined rules.//" (Trans. JT)

In this very early passage stemming from his *Nachlaß*, we see that Wittgenstein now views language as a form of calculus or system of rigidly set rules. I have chosen this passage over the edited version in the *Philosophical Grammar* (where only "*als* Kalkül" remains), because in his attempt to find the right expression one can still see a sense of hesitation. In the months leading up to this passage, the extent of the similarity between language and a calculus was unclear.

Of course, his previous efforts also exhibited an affinity for the clarity and rigid nature of logic, but it was only in the earlier 1930s that he actually began to draw a comparison between the two. Even in some of the manuscripts leading up to *The Big Typescript*, one can see that Wittgenstein is drawn to the analogy, but is still not willing to fully commit himself to the view. However, as he begins to rethink his concept of language-games the uncertainly quickly falls away to reveal a conception of language that is no longer merely *like* a calculus, but, in fact, *is* one.

This view of language is, of course, tied up with the functionality of language applications as a result of his quest to ascertain language's essence. At first, the similarities between the various functions of language and different calculi are quite striking. When asking for assistance, answering a question, giving or following an order, etc., we are, as Wittgenstein sees it, performing a specific task with specific results. In order to execute the task or function successfully, we must act in accordance with a particular grammatical rule, i.e. follow a definite procedure. This means that language use entails the carrying out of particular logical operations – the manipulation of symbols – which is essentially the same as performing the mathematical functions of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Indeed, in the *Philosophical Grammar* the mastery of such "grammatical operations" is equated with our ability, for example, to perform multiplication.[36] And in the same manner as the mathematical functions listed above, our ability to operate language rests upon an understanding or awareness of the rules.

While the grammatical rules, in an important sense, govern our use of language, we must, nevertheless, guard against the idea that they actually "stand behind" or "underlie" language. In order to understand the inherent danger in positing rules which "underlie" language, we need look no further than Wittgenstein's own rejection of primary and secondary languages. Earlier in the third chapter, we saw that Wittgenstein eventually came to reject this distinction, because as the product of a grammatical presupposition, it created a rift between language and

36. PG, p. 50. In the original German Wittgenstein writes ". . . multiplizieren *können*."

reality (as encountered in immediate experience) which could never be resolved. In other words, his rejection of primary and secondary languages was a rejection of a particular grammatical model that had come to dominate his way of looking at language.[37] Thus, if we say that grammatical rules underlie language, we would be introducing the same basic rift or dichotomy into the present conception of language.

This view departs from the question of spelling out the essence of language in that the autonomy of language and diversity of language-games are at the forefront of his thought. At this point in time, language-game means something else to Wittgenstein. Whereas in the *Investigations* and *The Blue and Brown Books*, language-games are used in order to emphasize our use of language as an activity [*spielen*] as well as their open nature, here he uses the term to distinguish one rule-governed activity from another. The latter represents the view he held between roughly 1931-32, where language-games serve only to distinguish the individual and self-contained logical systems, which together comprise a complex set of operational calculi. Our daily activities and interactions with others are, as spelled out in the passage at the beginning of this section, nothing more than "processes" or "procedures" which we carry out according to determinate and rigid rules.

Taken together, the totality of these grammatical rules forms a calculus, and it is this calculus which determines not only all of the significant uses of language, but practices as well. "Die Sprache ist für uns ein Kalkül; sie ist durch die Sprachhandlungen charakterisiert."[38] All of our actions and practices are not only based upon these grammatical rules, but are in fact, the manifestation of the entire calculus.

While the calculus view of language would seem to represent a further development of the ideas associated with Wittgenstein's reconsidered phenomenology, which was characterized by determining the essence of language, the implications and differences of the calculus are further reaching than it at first might appear. The inclusion of our practices, his emphasis upon the autonomy of the rule-governed systems marks an important break with one of the central tenets of his previ-

37. In the *Philosophical Investigations* this theme is described as "the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language" [*die Verhexung unsres Verstandes durch die Mittel der Sprache*] (PU, §109).

38. BEE, Item 114, p. 172. (*Philosophische Grammatik*): "Language is for us a calculus; it is characterized via the *language-act*." (Trans. JT)

ous thought, i.e. the solipsistic conception of language and experience understood in terms of immediate experience.

Up till and including *The Big Typescript*, an unmistakable feature of Wittgenstein's investigations was his focus upon our immediate perception of the world. Yet, as Wittgenstein becomes more preoccupied with the idea of language understood as the performance of rule-governed functions, the need for investigating our unmediated access to the world no longer accords with the direction his philosophic thoughts have begun to take. On the contrary, how we directly experience the world is dependent upon or, as he says above, is an expression of these rules, and not the other way around.

Although the shift to language as calculus was a relatively gradual process, and represented a major breakthrough regarding the autonomy of language-games, once the fullest sense of its development was reached it quickly fell into disfavor. Indeed, in the Fall and Spring terms of 1933-34 (the period from which the *Blue Book* originates), Wittgenstein came to the decisive conclusion that such a view, though holding a certain appeal, was nevertheless seriously misguided.

> [R]emember that in general we don't use language according to strict rules – it hasn't been taught us by means of strict rules, either. *We*, in our discussions on the other hand, constantly compare language with a calculus proceeding according to exact rules.
>
> This is a very one-sided way of looking at language. In practice we very rarely use language as such a calculus.[39]

The question that Wittgenstein puts to himself is quite simple: Do we actually use language according to rigid rules? His answer is now clearly "no."[40] Here, he draws an important distinction between our actual use of language and how we [philosophers] often come to think about language. The philosopher is struck by the brilliance of the analogy so much so that he, blindly overlooking the dissimilarities, goes on to equate one with the other.

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39. BBB, p. 25.

40. At this point, one can see a certain similarity between his critique of "language as calculus" and his critique of the *Tractatus*, where he attributes the failing of the truth-function model of sensical language to a naïve inductive approach to investigating the logical structure of the world. In both cases, Wittgenstein states that he was struck by a particular and uncritical way of viewing the world. The calculus view is just one example of a more general tendency of the philosopher to oversimplify a subject matter or situation.

Interestingly enough, a careful reading of the passage shows that the analogy is not completely unwarranted, and that in fact some aspects of language are calculus-like. But regardless of whether or not some of our uses of language are carried out in accordance with strict rules embedded in the grammar, it does not seem to be an essential aspect of our interactions involving language:

> For not only do we not think of the rules of usage – of definitions, etc. – while using language, but when we are asked to give such rules, in most cases we aren't able to do so. We are unable to clearly circumscribe the concepts we use; not because we don't know their real definition, but because there is no real 'definition' to them. To suppose that there must be would be like supposing that whenever children play with a ball they play a game according to strict rules.[41]

Even if such rules did exist, which basically govern every aspect of our lives, we certainly are not aware of them – neither in using language nor learning it. And if we are not conscious of the grammatical rules, then how did we ever come to learn them, i.e. to correctly perform the operations that we apparently do so day in and day out? Wittgenstein rejects this idea because this view of language has more to do with our captivation by a particular picture or model [*Bild*] of language than with our actual experiences with it.

The other difficulty with this position involves the possibility of following a rule. A rule by itself, according to Wittgenstein, is not capable of telling me how to follow it correctly, i.e. there is no way of insuring that I do not deviate. Wittgenstein's example of the child who insists that he is following the rule of counting by twos is a helpful illustration of this point.

We are to imagine that the child successfully reaches 1,000 by continuing to add two to the sum of the previous result, just as he was instructed. Thereafter, however, he begins to count 1,004, 1,008, 1,012, etc., all the while maintaining that he is counting in the same way as before, even after the teacher has repeatedly attempted to demonstrate the correct counting procedure. One of the points that Wittgenstein is trying to make is that a rule is never closed off, and thus is always left open for different interpretations. Neither the rule itself, nor the examples of its application can ensure that future use or uses that go beyond the illustrations will comply with the rule.

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41. BBB, p. 25.

Wittgenstein is not claiming that language is devoid of rules, but rather that the rules present in our language do not determine every aspect of a language-game (at least not the overwhelming majority of them). The last sentence of the passage quoted above invites us to examine one of the consequences entailed by the calculus view. However, for anyone who has watched young children at play it is difficult to imagine that their actions could be completely determined by rules; that their running with, passing, bouncing, and kicking of the ball are the result of their acting in accordance with or following a set of rules.

Yet, if both of these difficulties are related to "one-sided" and often overly simplistic understandings of language, how should we approach language? To combat this – to use language reminiscent of the *Investigations* – general tendency of the philosopher, Wittgenstein says that one of our aims is to get clear about the various conceptual models that we use. The concept of perspicuous representation [*übersichtliche Darstellung*], first used in TS 213, is once again pressed into serve. In the *Frühfassung* of the *Investigations* (TS 220), Wittgenstein writes:

> Nur so nämlich können wir der Ungerechtigkeit, oder Leere unserer Behauptungen entgehen, indem wir das Vorbild als das, was es ist, als Vergleichsobjekt – sozusagen als Massstab – hinstellen; und nicht als das Vorurteil, dem die Wirklichkeit entsprechen m ü s s e. (Ich denke an die Betrachtungsweise Spenglers.) Hierin nämlich liegt der Dogmatismus, in den unsre Philosophie so leicht verfallen kann.[42]

By searching for and in some cases inventing different conceptual models – a surveying of the linguistic landscape so to speak – we begin to piece together a broader picture of how different situations (language-games) interact with respect to their similarities and (often more importantly) their dissimilarities. As indicated in the above passage, the steadfast holding of a particular view is equated with the dogmatic attitude. Our conception turns into a prejudice – a preconception of the way things are – to which reality must conform.

Yet, what is necessary, according to the quote, is the recognition (by means of *übersichtliche Darstellung*) that each of these conceptions is nothing more than an archetype or object of comparison. We use them as a kind of pattern or exemplar

42. PUKG, *Frühfassung* §107, p. 286.: "Only by showing the archetype for what it is, as an object of comparison – as a measure so to speak; and not as the prejudice to which reality *must* correspond, can we avert the inequity, the emptiness of our assumptions." (Trans. JT) Also see PU, §131 (slightly altered version).

by means of which we uncover the intricate network of (dis)similarities. Problems arise, however, when instead of being viewed as an object against which to compare others they are used as idealizations to which the others must strive.

The shift from the view of language as a calculus – with its rule-governed operational grammar – to language conceived as an indeterminate number of language-games based upon shared social practices represents the permanent release of language from the grip of an externally imposed logical structure – a shift that Stern characterizes as the move from "logical holism" to a "practical holism." Whereas the term "logical holism" is supposed to denote the autonomy of the complex system of rigidly determined and logically coherent set of rule-govern language-games, "practical holism," on the other hand, points to the shared set of beliefs, ways of acting, of judging, etc. that constitute a common background. As the title of this section indicates, the shift from the calculus- to the language-game view signals a move away from understanding our use of language in terms of the performance of an operation (isolation from a context) by an individual toward one where language inherently involves activities performed within a community – practices inseparable from the world. And it is the performative and social dimensions of our practices and language that Wittgenstein wishes to emphasise by employing the term *Sprachspiel*.

The Indeterminacy of Language

Chapter five

I. The Path to the Philosophical Investigations

Once again having left Cambridge to seek refuge in his cabin at the end of a fjord in Norway, Wittgenstein set about both revising and translating the *Brown Book* into German. While the *Blue and Brown Books* both started off as lecture notes spanning over a two year period (1933-35), their respective characters are quite different. Whereas the *Blue Book* is, in Wittgenstein's own words, just "some notes [dictated to students] so that they have something to carry home with them, in their hands if not in their brains,"[1] the *Brown Book* represented the basis of a draft that Wittgenstein may have initially considered for publication.[2]

With the possible exception of *The Big Typescript*, the edited version of these notes is far and away the most book-like work Wittgenstein had yet produced. Although still lacking a traditional structure, including chapters and section headings, the books (especially the *Brown Book*) lack the fragmented and disjointed style usually found in Wittgenstein's manuscripts, notebooks, and published works. Instead, the reader finds paragraphs, lengthier treatments of topics, and an unusually positive expression of the ideas he had been working on over the course of the last several years.

Despite having found the seclusion and sanctuary that he had come to associate with his spartan Norwegian hideaway, Wittgenstein was quickly becoming more and more frustrated with his efforts. About two-thirds of the way into the German translation, he abandoned the text altogether, and promptly concentrated his energies toward the creation of a new text, one which he provisionally entitled *Philosophical Investigations*.

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1. BBB, *Preface*, vii. This fragment originally stems from a letter written to Bertrand Russell explaining the document accompanying the letter, i.e. a copy of the *Blue Book*.

2. See Pichler, *Wittgensteins Philosophische Untersuchungen: Vom Buch zum Album,* p.130.

His frustration and dissatisfaction came to a head on August 25th, 1936, when, while re-working the *Brown Book*, he broke down and wrote in bold letters: "Dieser ganze 'Versuch einer Umarbeitung' von Seite 118 bis hierher ist nichts wert."[3] Rush Rhees also notes in the *Preface* to the *Blue and Brown Books* that the move from the *Brown Book* to the *Investigations*, was accompanied by a change of method. As the quote clearly indicates, Wittgenstein felt that he was not getting anywhere with his revisions – that his efforts up till then were, in fact, "worthless." However, at this point, he neither mentions the reasons for his dissatisfaction, nor why he felt, as conveyed both to friends and in his writings, the need to start over and approach the matter differently.

In the *Foreword* of an early draft of the *Investigations*, we find a passage which sheds some light upon the reasons for the sudden change of direction.

> Vor etwa 4 Jahren machte ich den ersten Versuch einer Zusammenfassung. Das Ergebnis war ein unbefriedigendes, und ich machte weitere Versuche. Bis ich endlich (einige Jahre später) zur Überzeugung gelangte, dass es vergebens sei; und ich alle solche Versuche aufzugeben hätte. Es zeigte sich mir, 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, e i n e m Gleise entlang weiterzuzwingen. Dies hing allerdings auch mit der Natur des Gegenstands selbst zusammen. Dieser Gegenstand zwingt uns, das Gedankengebiet kreuz und quer, nach allen Richtungen hin zu durchreisen.[4]

Here, Wittgenstein vividly describes the reasons for giving up on the idea of revising the *Brown Book* as well as the character of the effort that he feels must now be undertaken. Over the course of several years, he had attempted to forge his ideas into a coherent and straightforward text. Yet, having failed repeatedly, he eventually came to recognize the futility of the task he had set himself. In the last sen-

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3. BEE, Item 115, p. 292: "The whole 'attempt at a revision' from page 118 up to this point is worthless." (Trans. JT) Also see, BBB, Preface, viii (slightly different version).

4. BEE, Item 225, p. 1-2., (08.01.1938): "About 4 years ago I began my first attempt at a summarization. The result was unsatisfying, and I made further attempts, until I finally (some years later) became convinced that it was all in vain, and that I should give up all attempts. I realized that the best I could write would always remain only philosophical remarks. My thoughts quickly bogged down when I tried to force them along *one* track – against their natural tendency. This, of course, was also connected with the nature of the subject matter itself. This subject compels us to criss-cross the field of thought – to travel in every direction." (Trans. JT)

tence, which closely resembles part of the *Foreword* from the published version of the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein remarks that this failure is not solely attributable to his own inability, but also "hangs together with the nature of the subject matter." In other words, while acknowledging his own weakness as an author, the main point is that the kind of investigations he must pursue could never be given a systematic form or structure. Both the subject matter and investigations call for a radically different approach than that usually practiced in philosophy. Thus, the impetus for a completely new approach is not to be attributed to the author, but to the nature of the task at hand.

Later in the same *Foreword*, Wittgenstein briefly describes how he now wishes to proceed with the new text, and the hope that his present effort allows others to grasp the method behind this approach.

> Ich beginne diese Veröffentlichung mit dem Fragment meines letzen Versuchs, meine philosophischen Gedanken in eine Reihe zu ordnen. Dies Fragment hat vielleicht den Vorzug, verhältnismäßig leicht einen Begriff von meiner Methode vermitteln zu können. Diesem Fragment will ich eine Masse von Bemerkungen in mehr oder weniger loser Anordnung folgen lassen.[5]

In this passage Wittgenstein mentions that he wishes to begin his present effort with a fragment from the *Brown Book*. The fragment to which he is referring begins with a quote from Augustine – the same used to open the *Philosophical Investigations* – in which he describes the process by which he learned language. The remaining part of the fragment examines the "correctness" of the process as Augustine has related, and then proceeds to construct "primitive" language-games, so that we can more closely examine the various functions in language. However, the last part of the quote above is the most interesting for our current purposes.

Wittgenstein claims that the advantage of using the fragment lies in that it gives us an insight into his method: "a great number of remarks that follow a more or less loose arrangement." As described in the preceding passage, the necessity of such an unusual arrangement of aphorisms is directly connected to the investigations itself. In order to gain an overview [*Übersicht*] of the linguistic landscape that

5. BEE, Item 225, p. 2, (08.01.1938): "I begin this publication with the fragment from my last attempt to place my philosophical thoughts in an order. This fragment has perhaps the advantage of (relatively easily) conveying a concept of my method. To this fragment I would like to add a great number of more or less loosely arranged remarks." (Trans. JT)

seems to present a particular difficulty with philosophical implications, we must traverse the entire area, approach the same place from different directions not to mention view it from various points. Only then, he says, will we gain the kind of perspective over the difficulty that allows us to understand not just the ways the various terrains are similar and different, but also the ways in which they join together, if at all.

This methodological change – from the linear and systematic attempt to express his thoughts to a more loosely connected collection of remarks – was of fundamental importance for the further development of Wittgenstein's thought.[6] We find similar if not identical descriptions in every draft of the *Foreword* including the version published in the *Philosophical Investigations*. However, that does not mean that arrangement of the remarks in the *Investigations* was unimportant to Wittgenstein. In fact, quite the opposite is true. The main reason for the delayed, and ultimately posthumous, publication of the text was Wittgenstein's constant revision of the structure and arrangement of the remarks. One of the most interesting features of the critical-genetic edition of the *Philosophical Investigations* is that one can see first hand the various arrangements and transformations made to the text, and their relationship to the final version.

Surprisingly, the significance of this shift is rarely perceived or simply overlooked by even established interpreters of Wittgenstein. All too often the differences between the *Brown Book* and the *Investigations* are thought to be purely cosmetic and the *Investigations* to be basically a more obscure version of the earlier text. In other words, the methodological and stylistic changes have ultimately little if any effect upon the meaning of the ideas presented. Even the second title to the *Blue and Brown Books* invented by Rhees – "Preliminary Studies for the 'Philosophical Investigations'" – draws a misleading connection between the two texts.

In the *Introduction* to the critical-genetic edition of the *Philosophical Investigations* Joachim Schulte points out that while the *Brown Book* certainly played an important role in the genesis of the *Philosophical Investigations*, they are not essentially the same text. Wittgenstein's ideas continued to evolve and mature as he embarked upon his new investigations into language. This view is further supported by the fact that the *Investigations* took on at least six different forms before reaching the appearance that we are all familiar with[7]: *Urfassung* (MS 142), *Frühfas-*

6. Pichler describes this change of approach as a move "from book to album." See: *Wittgenstein's Philosophische Untersuchungen: Vom Buch zum Album.*

sung (TS 225, TS 220, and TS 221), *Bearbeitete Frühfassung* (TS 239), *Zwischenfassung* (includes part of TS 242), *Spätfassung* (TS 227) and lastly *Teil II* (MS 144).[8]

Another reason that the method and style of the *Investigations* is often overlooked is that §1-188 remained basically intact from the *Urfassung* until their final arrangement in the *Investigations*. However, as Pichler notes, this statement does not tell the whole story.

While it is true that Wittgenstein only made slight revisions regarding both the inclusion of new materials and excluding others, this claim completely ignores the re-arrangement of those passages. Pichler's research into the genesis and subsequent evolution of the first 188 passages has shown that the editing and re-arrangement process that resulted in the various earlier versions of the text listed above endows each with substantially different feel and sense of purpose. Instructive is also Pichler's observation that many of the interpreters who see Wittgenstein as positing what is essentially a positive philosophical doctrine including such topics as meaning, experience, mind, etc. are also the ones placing the most emphasis upon the *Blue and Brown Books* for the validity of their interpretations.

The most striking feature when reading the *Philosophical Investigations* is Wittgenstein's aphoristic style. The reader is immediately confronted with exactly what he describes in the *Preface*, namely a mass of (seemingly) disjointed remarks ranging over a wide variety of topics. "Die gleichen Punkte, oder beinahe die gleichen, wurden stets von neuem von verschiedenen Richtungen her berührt und immer neue Bilder entworfen."[9] The results of these investigations, he says, were a collection of rough sketches that were assembled into an album.

Analogous to Nietzsche, the fragmentary form resists notions of coherence and authorship. Rather than being a philosophically elaborative analysis, it acts as a splinter in or disruption of thought. Furthermore, the aphoristic style bears an experimental dimension in the same sense as Lichtenberg proposed. In an apho-

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7. It should be noted that the structure of the published version of the *Philosophical Investigations* is still a controversial topic. The publication of the *Nachlaß* has only served to cast doubt upon the claim made by the editors of the *Investigations*, i.e. "If Wittgenstein had published his work himself, he would have suppressed a good deal of what is in the last thirty pages or so of Part I and worked what is in Part II, with further material, into its place" (*Editors' Note*).

8. For a more in-depth treatment of the topic see *Philosophische Untersuchungen: Kritisch-genetische Edition*.

9. PU, *Preface*: "The same or almost the same points were always being approached afresh from different directions, and new sketches made."

rism, a greater space within which to maneuver is freed up, because one is no longer bound to discursive forms of argumentation. An aphorism is, in end effect, nothing more and nothing less, than an attempt. This experimental structure unburdens the readers, so to speak, in that Wittgenstein does not force them into agreement, and in some sense even spares them the consequences of their own views and opinions.

At the same time, the first object of the aphorism is a concrete phenomenon – e.g. a pain sensation – and not a philosophical problem. For Wittgenstein, philosophical investigations can only take place at the phenomenal (or experiential) level. The concrete analysis demonstrates to what extent philosophical doctrines are inadequate, as a result of their unwarranted generalizations. The shift from book to album is above all not about conveying a specific doctrine, but rather the provocation to act, to search, and to think.

The method employed not only serves to dispel or break the hold a particular way of *seeing* has upon us, but is also directly connected with experience. Indirectly, allusion is made to the heterogeneity of experience, the situatedness of its significance, as well as the relationship of language to experience. Even the concepts of "family resemblance," "language-game," and "form-of-life" reflect and emphasize the varieties of human experience.

II. Reconsidering the Question of (Dis)continunity

After having surveyed various figures and issues involved in this debate in the first chapter, and having undertaken an investigation of the changing conception of experience and its relationship to language, it is now possible to ask whether the question of continuity, posed in the form of either one or two Wittgenstein(s), makes any sense. Is Stern not justified in pointing out that the motives underlying the question of 'how many Wittgensteins' is in conflict with what he says in the *Investigations*? Are we not, to use Wittgenstein's words, attempting to ascertain 'the essence of Wittgenstein's philosophy – to answer this question for once and all time?'[10]

As I have mentioned earlier, it is insufficient simply to list the empirical variations we find in his work or say that we should approach this question in an open manner. Rather, the task lies in both identifying and understanding the signifi-

10. See PU, §92.

cance of these shifts for Wittgenstein, and how they influenced his subsequent thought. Only then can we, perhaps, come to terms with the tensions that developed as a result of his struggle with himself and his ideas.

When we insist in claiming that Wittgenstein was one or two thinker(s) or upon the (dis)continuity of his thought, we have already placed him into a determinate structure of interpretation, effectively blocking off alternative engagements with the texts. We maintain that there must be something common to the early and late Wittgenstein. While in the case of the "one-Wittgenstein" view this means that he is essentially one philosopher, those adhering to the "two-Wittgenstein" view see the common bond in the division into early and late. Although a somewhat paradoxical characterization, the idea is more obvious than it appears. The connection between the two thinkers is seen in the later Wittgenstein's rejection of the earlier, resulting in a radical break or shift in his thought. The later work is understood as a response and critique to the ideas that culminated in the *Tractatus*.

While I grant that it is unfair to attribute a common view to the contributing authors of *The New Wittgenstein*, it is still legitimate to take issue with the general intention of the book's editors and several of its contributors, which has manifested itself as the "New Reading." As such, my contention that the fundamental claim of the "New Reading" is untenable is directed at the more general intention behind this book, than at specific contributors. Not only is the contention of a "one-Wittgenstein" reading in conflict with the results of this work, but it also goes against Wittgenstein's own assessment of his thought. In the *Preface* to the *Frühfassung* of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein writes: "Ich habe, seit ich vor 10 Jahren wieder mich mit Philosophie zu beschäftigen anfing, schwere Irrtümer in d e m einsehen müssen, was ich seinerzeit in der ‚Logisch-Philosophischen Abhandlung' niedergelegt hatte."[11] This same passage (with slight modifications) can be found in every single draft of the *Preface* including the published version. With the overwhelming majority of textual, biographical, and autobiographical evidence demonstrating the existence of both radical and more moderate changes that occur throughout the body of Wittgenstein's work it is more than suspect to think that there is a common thread running through everything.

11. BEE, Item 225, p. 3: "10 years ago, as I began to once again busy myself with philosophy, I recognized serious mistakes in what I had written down in the 'Logical-Philosophical Treatise.'"

An additional commonality associated with the "two-Wittgenstein" reading is that Wittgenstein was, in fact, two different thinkers (thus essentially making it a variation of the "one-Wittgenstein" view). Despite the obvious variation in identifying where the early ends and the late begins, the "two-Wittgenstein" camp continues to hold firmly to this dualistic structure. It seems that regardless of where the line is drawn, the Wittgenstein of the *Investigations* and of the *Tractatus* represent the two poles to which the work on either side of the line are polarized or aligned. In this respect they are susceptible to the same basic critique as the "one-Wittgenstein" view, i.e. essentialist thinking.

> Was ist allen gemeinsam?–Sag nicht: "Es *muß* ihnen etwas gemeinsam sein (…)" sondern *schau*, ob ihnen allen etwas gemeinsam ist. – Denn, wenn du sie anschaust, wirst du zwar nicht etwas sehen, was *allen* gemeinsam wäre, aber du wirst Ähnlichkeiten, Verwandtschaften, sehen, und zwar eine ganze Reihe. Wie gesagt: denk nicht, sondern schau![12]

In assuming that something common exists, a thread running through either the entirety of his philosophy or two threads, both views commit the same kind of error as described in the passage above. In both cases an assumption concerning Wittgenstein's work has been made and dogmatically held. Of course, lack of access to the *Nachlaß* does explain part of the situation. However, even those who had access to the literary estate were trapped within this structure. And even with the publication of the *Nachlaß* in the late 1990s till this day the quest to find either the underlying unity or essential difference completely and utterly dominates the field of research.

Would it not be better, taking Wittgenstein's lead, to seriously consider Stern's point that Wittgenstein's writings are connected to one another in a variety of ways, and that a more fruitful endeavor would entail a more detailed examination of these relationships? On these two points I am in full agreement with Stern's assessment, above all concerning the course of future research. However, Stern's position does not go far enough.

Although Stern's use of Wittgenstein's own words and ideas is not misplaced, it is also equally apparent that more is required. If the words are to mean anything,

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12. PU, §66: "What is common to them all?–Don't say: 'There *must* be something common to . . . ,' 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!"

"to do work" as Wittgenstein often said, we cannot content ourselves with the idea that Wittgenstein's philosophic thought, for example, *might* be a family resemblance concept.

One area where Stern falls short concerns Wittgenstein's point about *schauen*. As stated in the passage above, rather than simply taking it for granted we should "*look and see* whether there is anything common to all."[13] Stern is certainly not alone in neglecting this point; for it is common practice to use passages (usually from the *Investigations*) as a kind of terminus to a discussion. In this case, Stern is satisfied to make his point, and leave it at that.

Certainly Wittgenstein's aphoristic style is partially to blame for this situation, for it lends itself to misappropriation and what Hans-Johann Glock refers to as "passage hunting." The result is that his insights tend to be placed upon a pedestal, and invoked to prove a particular point, even without having closely scrutinized the issue. The deficiency of this practice is that in so doing we are generalizing his ideas, and thus granting them universal status – something which Wittgenstein went to great lengths to avoid. The idea of family resemblance does not apply to all concepts, nor must every word have multiple meanings or lack a common thread. What is often lacking is the actual following-through with the investigation – *schauen, ob es der Fall ist oder nicht.* It should be mentioned here that concepts such as "language-game" and "form-of-life" have, along the same lines, been extracted from their contexts, and clumsily forced into service.

An important aspect of this investigation is that it involves more than proposing one or two supposed breaks (or lack thereof) within Wittgenstein's published und unpublished texts. Instead I delve into his writings and manuscripts, by means of the concept of experience, in order to describe the movement of Wittgenstein's philosophical thought. This description has proven extremely useful in discerning what I call "shifts" in his ideas and approach.

One consequence of this statement is that my position is at odds with the "New Reading". The claim that Wittgenstein's thought was essentially therapeutic does not hold up against the finding of the present investigation. To say that the early Wittgenstein prefigures the later *diminishes* the internal struggles as well as the

13. PU, §66. On a related note, if we replace the term "common" with "different" in the passage quoted above, the relationship between the one and two-Wittgensteins positions becomes much more evident: "Don't say: 'There must be something different . . . ,' but look and see whether there is anything different."

significance of the resulting insights. This does not mean, however, that I advocate a "two-Wittgenstein" view. As mentioned earlier in this section, the two-Wittgenstein reading is simply the other side of the same essentialist coin, and is therefore equally problematic.

Not unlike Stern, I believe that the question of continuity itself has been problematically formulated, and needs to be approached differently than it has up till now. Instead of asking whether there are one, two, or even three Wittgensteins, a more careful and thorough investigation of the *Nachlaß* materials, unburdened by an overarching structure, would be the appropriate direction for Wittgenstein research.

Each of the shifts uncovered during the course of this investigation has a unique character, and had a very different influence upon the ideas and concepts that came thereafter. In the following I will summarize the reasons for and effects of each shift.

Within the first shift, we can identify four important changes: (1) a shift in Wittgenstein's methodological approach, (2) a shift in the subject matter of the investigation, (3) the interconnectedness of states-of-affairs, and thus propositions, and (4) the necessity of creating an appropriate form of phenomenological representation. Having conceded the inadequacies of the ideas contained in the *Tractatus*, foremost, the idea that sensical language – more specifically representation – could be understood in terms of truth-functions, Wittgenstein adopted a radically different approach to the problem of uncovering the structure of reality. Instead of an *a priori* attempt to ascertain the logical structure of the world via an analysis of language, in the first half of 1929 he called for "a logical investigation of the phenomena." The significance of this methodological shift is an acknowledgment that his previous approach was incapable of accounting for the multiplicity exhibited in language and thus in the world. In other words, the variety and complexity present in language could not be deduced or predicted from several logical assumptions, effectively jeopardizing the Tractarian view of representation. Instead, if we wish to determine the world's structure, we must look to the world itself. Wittgenstein became convinced that only by interrogating the phenomena themselves will we be truly capable of ascertaining the world's logical structure.

The shift of subject matter to immediate experience is closely tied to the change in his methodological approach. Although at first not self-evident, Wittgenstein's focus on immediate experience does become understandable, once we realize that for him, our immediate experiences are directly connected to the world itself. Our immediate experience of the world – an unmediated access to its

logical structure – is incapable of containing contradictions. Thus, the only way, according to Wittgenstein, to salvage the Tractatarian view is to investigate the logical structure of the phenomena we experience.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein had adamantly maintained that the truth of a particular state-of-affairs is independent of any other state-of-affairs. Thus, I cannot deduce or conclude something about one proposition by looking at the truth or falsity of another. Wittgenstein later considered the necessity for independence of different states-of-affairs the second major flaw of his earlier view. Eventually, he reversed his view and came to see that states-of-affairs (and propositions) are, indeed, connected to one another. As discussed at the beginning of the third chapter, Wittgenstein believed that if we use a ruler to measure, for example, a piece of wood, and the end measures 60 centimeters, it is also clear that it is neither 59 nor 61 centimeters. By placing the ruler against the piece of wood (or against the world as Wittgenstein often said), we can say both what is the case, and therefore what is not. We are, indeed, able to say something (indirectly) about the world.

The last change concerns what Wittgenstein describes in *Some Remarks on Logical Form* as the need for an "appropriate symbolism." The importance of the creation of this symbolism lies in his attempt to find a way of eliminating pseudo- or nonsensical propositions, which Wittgenstein sees as inherent in philosophical questions. This phenomenological or primary language would provide an undistorted representation of the structure underlying our immediate experience, and thus the world. Such a form of representation would be capable not only of depicting the complicated logical structure of phenomena, but also prevent illegitimate moves, so to speak.[14] This is not a prohibition of certain uses of language, but rather by assigning each possibility a logical notation, one would simply see what is possible and what is not, thus preventing nonsensical formulations which end in philosophic confusion.

The second major shift in Wittgenstein's thought involves his replacement of phenomenology – understood as the quest to create a primary language directly connected to the logical structure of the world – with a completely reformed version. Initially, he claimed to have abandoned the project of phenomenology, but it quickly became apparent what he was proposing was a thoroughly revised version. The basic approach – the logical investigation of phenomena – remains intact. However, the object of the investigation has changed.

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14. See Section 2 of SRLF.

Immediate experience still figures prominently into his work, but his understanding of experience has now become intertwined with the grammar of our language. Here, he slowly begins to realize that language and experience belong to each other; that language and meaning do not take place in isolation, but rather within a nexus of interrelations. We can no longer view language and experience as composed of "simples" or "atoms," and attempt to speak sensibly of this situation as disconnected from others or in terms of truth-functions. He begins to grasp language as a whole or complex, where that which is fundamental is understood as a primordial constellation [*Ur-konstellation*], a groundless ground in the sense that we cannot get behind or beneath it [*unhintergehbar*]. However, at this point, Wittgenstein considers language to consist of a system of grammatical rules that govern its use. And these rules are what determine the sensical uses of our language in its multiplicity.

As mentioned above, the object of investigation has now shifted from unmediated experience to the grammar. Realizing that he had succumbed to a particular way of thinking about language and world, and that the primary/secondary distinction he had previously held was mistaken, the goal of phenomenology is to examine *our* language. To be more specific, what is needed, according to Wittgenstein, is an analysis of our grammar. Thus, what he is ultimately proposing is a phenomenology of language.

The goal of this linguistic phenomenology, Wittgenstein is convinced, should be to determine what is essential to language, thereby indirectly showing what does not belong to it – an approach reminiscent of that employed in the *Tractatus*. Here, essential is equated with having a function, i.e. doing work within a language. This is a significant move, partially because Wittgenstein moves away from solipsism to a collection of various grammatical rules, which incidentally is the first time he uses the term language-game.

While not strictly a shift, the third change represents more the further development or emphasis of an idea Wittgenstein had already been playing with. As a result, the bulk of what has been said of the second shift also applies here. But whereas early on in the move from Wittgenstein's initial phenomenology to his reconsidered version an analogy was drawn between language and a mathematical calculus, now they are seen as one and the same. Previously, he had used the analogy of a calculus to describe the structure of language. However, over the course of roughly one and a half years, he came actually to think of language as a form of calculus.

The fourth shift is from what Stern refers to as "logical holism" to "practical holism." Here, Wittgenstein drops the notion of language as a calculus in favor of language as a community of different language-games, i.e. practices with varying degrees of commensurability. As in the third shift (language as calculus), the various language-games are considered to be internally coherent, autonomous, and thus require no external ground or justification. He also notes that although the practices appear to be rule-governed, the majority are not. What this means is that while performing an activity, for example, counting, I am not actually following any particular logical rule or grammatical structure that tells me how to proceed. Rather, I have been raised in a particular place, at a particular time in history, and within a particular culture. My actions have grown out of a complex web of socio-cultural interactions. The point is as follows: I do not know how to, for example, greet someone because I perform some kind of calculus, but because I have learned to interact with others. Our actions and practices belong to and take place within a social sphere, and not as an isolated act of calculation.

The last major shift involves yet another change in Wittgenstein's methodological approach. However, in this case it is not the object of investigation that has changed, but rather the structure of the investigations' presentation, i.e. the move from book to album. As Pichler has pointed out, Wittgenstein's abandonment of the *Brown Book* in favor of starting the *Philosophical Investigations* involved much more than a revision of his previous efforts. Rather, as he worked on the *Brown Book* Wittgenstein felt hindered by the systematic and linear structure expected of a traditional text. Such a structure, to paraphrase Wittgenstein "went against the nature of the investigation itself."

In addition to the differences highlighted above this period also shares some important features with the last shift. In both cases there is a strong emphasis upon the primacy of praxis and the autonomy of language-games. In the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein proclaims that language-games should be viewed as *Urphänomene*[15]; they occupy a unique and originary place within our *Weltanschauung*. He writes two passages later: "Sieh auf das Sprachspiel als das Primäre!"[16] Thus, language has a privileged position in his investigations, not because language has some form of ontological priority over experience, but rather because language is our investiga-

15. PU, §654.

16. PU, §656: "Look on the language-game as the *primary* thing."

tive mode of access. Here, language serves the curious role of both theme *and* method of inquiry.[17]

The concept of family resemblance [*Familienähnlichkeiten*] has also been carried over from the *Blue and Brown Books*. However, the change of method that accompanied the formation of the *Investigations* has served to reinforce the significance of the concept. The concept itself has not been altered, for it still represents a redefinition of the Platonic conception of essence [*eidos*]. But the statement in the *Preface* to the *Investigations* that we are compelled to "travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction . . . . [and that] this was, of course, connected with the very nature of the investigation," represents more than a stylistic change.

Wittgenstein's approach to language is not simply an advantageous method for dealing with philosophic problems, but is an expression of the difficulties inherent in the situations themselves. Our experiences and activities are as varied as they are interwoven. A linear and systematic presentation of such themes is not possible, because how we experience and interact with the world is not linear and systematic. On the contrary, our practices, institutions, and traditions show great variation, and can at times be quite chaotic.

A careful reading of the *Investigations* also reveals a text devoid of conclusions. Not unlike in the early Platonic dialogues, a question is posed, a discussion ensues, but no conclusion is reached. This unfinished character to the investigation is also significant to Wittgenstein's method, for it shows the open-endedness and indeterminate nature of our language and practices. We are left hanging, and this unresolved status or aporetic end acts as an irritation, a kind of stimulus to continue with our own investigations.

The last important point of contact between the two periods regards the lack of restrictions placed upon language. A significant and prominent feature of Wittgenstein's philosophic efforts up till this point focused on distinguishing sensical from nonsensical language – the latter often equated with talk of ethics, religion, aesthetics, etc. Later, the task was construed as the differentiation of the essential from the non-essential in language.

Certainly, one can find the remnants of these views in his critique of philosophy in the *Investigations*, but it no longer serves a restrictive function. He does not attempt to forbid or prohibit certain uses of language. Rather, the aim is to gain an

17. See Thompson, "*Wittgenstein's Phenomenology: Reconsidering the Relationship of Experience and Language*."

overview [*übersichtliche Darstellung*] of language such that one is not tempted to mistake these problems for genuine metaphysical problems. Another way of phrasing it would be to say that once an overview has been achieved, one is in a position to recognize and understand how different concepts and language-games are related and not related, thereby dissolving the problems that both entangled and plagued the philosopher. While this neither frees us from all future temptations, nor spares us further investigations of language – for the investigations never come to a definite conclusion – such an overview, nevertheless, represents both a valuable insight into and reminder that phenomena, experience, and language are inextricably interwoven.

III. Concluding Remarks

On the surface there would certainly seem to be something peculiar in the attempt to trace Wittgenstein's conception of experience when he, in fact, never explicitly thematized a concept of experience. As my analysis has shown, however, the dearth of explicit thematic reflection on the matter does not represent a sense of irrelevance or disinterest on Wittgenstein's part, but rather reflects something about the nature of experience itself. Experience has an elusive quality; it is at once that which is closest to us and at the same time that which always seems to keep a certain distance. Over the course of this investigation we have uncovered the various shifts in Wittgenstein's thought as they relate to his changing conceptions of experience. By tracing the concept of experience throughout the *Nachlaß*, a critical examination of the (dis)continuity question has for the first time been made possible.

Initially, Wittgenstein had an essentially immanent conception of experience. As we saw in the second chapter the term 'experience' only appeared a handful of times. However, Wittgenstein's failure explicitly to treat experience was intimately connected with his aim at that time. In a move reminiscent of Kant and his treatment of pure reason, Wittgenstein intended to clarify (once and for all – or so he thought), what representation can and cannot do, or, more specifically, what *can* and *cannot* be 'said.'

From the point of view gained in his earlier analysis, an invisible realm opens up beyond the visible; this "mystical dimension" serves as the transcendental limit of the world. It never seemed to have occurred to Wittgenstein to say that this dimension could not or would not be indwelled. Accordingly, experience becomes additionally significant as mystical experience or an experience of the limit. The most interesting result of the analysis in this context is that the realm of significant experience is, contrary to a commonly held view, not that of the world or things

in the world, but rather of the ethical-aesthetic limit, i.e. of the mystical. This is what is meant when Wittgenstein talks about the world of the "happy" and "sad" individual, the mystical experience of viewing the world *sub specie aeternitatis*, and lastly the wonder (*thaumázein*) at the world's very existence.

When Wittgenstein returns from his ten year self-imposed exile from philosophy, he is suddenly fixated upon that which he gave so little attention to in the *Tractatus*, namely our immediate perception of the world or immediate experience. This shift comes about from a multitude of factors resulting from the shortcomings that he now sees in his earlier writing: The "immediate experience" of the world requires an "appropriate symbolism" capable of conveying its logical structure in an undistorted fashion. This form of symbolism is what Wittgenstein refers to as a phenomenological language, and the logical investigation of phenomena is understood to be phenomenology. Here, the *Nachlaß* has proven valuable in delineating the phenomenological scope of Wittgenstein's work.

With Wittgenstein's rejection of a primary form of representation or the phenomenological language toward the end of 1929, experience is no longer thought of in terms of immediacy. Rather, experience and language merge in the concept of grammar, thus no longer belonging to two irreconcilable spheres. Grammar here refers to the "essence" of language as those uses of language which perform a specific function within our ordinary language. For Wittgenstein phenomenology changes from a phenomenology of the logical structure of the world to a phenomenology of ordinary language.

In *The Big Typescript*, the identity of grammar and phenomenology is taken itself as the point of departure for his future investigations. Thus, the ramifications of the merging of language and experience become itself the prominent *leitmotiv.* This idea fades into the background as Wittgenstein becomes briefly seduced by a particular view of language, namely as a calculus. As soon as grammar is understood as a determinate and rigid set of relations, experience too becomes rigidly governed by the rules of grammar. It is here that grammar gradually becomes the self-grounding focal point of his investigations.

With the *Blue and Brown Books* the focus shifts from the notion of autonomy to the primacy of practices. Experience is no longer strictly governed by the grammatical rules; rather there is a constitutive relationship between experience and language-games. This means that experience contributes to the boundaries of the language-games.

It is only after the fact that Wittgenstein notices that his methodological approach in the *Brown Book* is inadequate regarding the subject matters treated. He

abandons linearity and stringency in his thought in favor of a "criss-crossing of the landscape." Once having given up the regularity and order of philosophical enterprises, Wittgenstein opens himself to the more chaotic and fragmentary aspects of linguistic practice. Correspondingly, the experimental character of experience comes into play in two respects. On the one hand, Wittgenstein conceives of his enterprise as a *Spielraum* in that one can see how far certain experiences can take us. The reader is explicitly requested to have his or her own experiences. On the other hand, experience is precisely the point of connection between the givenness and the situatedness of language.

This analysis has particularly placed an emphasis upon Wittgenstein's view that language is not something we merely use, something we "handle" or which expresses the various complex relations that make up our activities and interactions with others and the world. Language is not a tool we wield (as if a separate element of the act), but is the act itself. As a result the still widely held "use theory of language" is confronted with its own shortcomings. Similarly it has alike proven problematic to speak of an overarching Wittgensteinian philosophy or of stand-alone Wittgensteinian concepts. Instead of components that would be significant in and of themselves, or a system that renders its various components distinctly meaningful, Wittgenstein's work represents sets of constellations, and only within these constellations, i.e. in the flow of life, is meaning possible.

Having exposed the moment of contingency and the transformative quality of Wittgenstein's work, the question finally arises whether the aim of tracing his thought via the concept of experience bears problematically essentialist tendencies. Wherein lies the importance of identifying different periods of Wittgenstein's work in relation to one another? While this investigation has followed the historical sequence of Wittgenstein's work, the attempt has not been to *determine* the different periods in relation to one another. The concept of family resemblance has proven to be valuable as part of an effort to grasp the overarching logic of this analysis: the concept of experience puts into relief different motifs that do not exhaust Wittgenstein's thought. Thus, a view is offered beyond the (dis)continuity discussion within Wittgenstein studies.

Another potential difficulty of this work has been Wittgenstein's indecisive relationship to the philosophical tradition. It is probably not wrong to say that there are too many and yet too few references to other philosophical thinkers: For Wittgenstein, his engagement with the philosophical tradition ranges from clear misappropriation to creative internalization, to productive reapplication. This forces every interpreter to take a stand regarding Wittgenstein's relationship to the

philosophical tradition. Thus, the scope of a possible interpretation of Wittgenstein's own efforts is from the very beginning limited by philosophical themes which the tradition has understood to be central, for example, the idea of the transcendental. In the present work, the references to the philosophical tradition have been minimized in favor of remaining within the framework of Wittgenstein's own thought. Beyond this, it seemed inappropriate to overburden our experimental interpretation of Wittgenstein with traditional criteria of philosophizing which do more to obscure than clarify the course of his thought, and in any case are for the most part alien to his central concerns.

Wittgenstein's reference to phenomenology has particularly been challenging to this analysis. Spiegelberg probably provided the most elaborate and insightful treatment of this topic. It is interesting to see that Spiegelberg is cautious in associating Wittgenstein with (other) phenomenological thinkers. Rather, he is occupied with a comparison "at a distance." Instead of identifying certain concepts and methodological principles, he concentrated on those motifs in Wittgenstein that incorporated a "phenomenological spirit."

When Husserl speaks of "returning to the things themselves," he configures phenomenology as something not bound to a school or doctrine, but rather as compelled to bracket the tradition and the established theories. Wittgenstein was at first intrigued by the aura of a new beginning that the concept of phenomenology radiates. It allowed him to bring into view the immediacy of experience. Soon, however, the phenomenological perspective would force him to shift his viewpoint from a remote and logically oriented investigation to the givenness of language. In contrast to Husserl this givenness is not approached through a constitutive consciousness or the complex relationship between subject and object, but through language as self-grounding and self-referential. For Wittgenstein, language is the place where he finds the social reality, on the one hand, and the opacity and withdrawal from meaning, on the other. In this context it has been said that Heidegger's characteristically laconic remark "language speaks" is more fitting in Wittgenstein's case. But to have ventured too deeply into an encounter with Heidegger would have been to risk elucidating one set of obscurities with another.

This analysis has been committed to what Adorno once portrayed in his aesthetics as the impossibility to fully exhaust or ascertain meaning. There is an indeterminability in all philosophical enterprises, and, acutely aware of this, Wittgenstein always exposed himself to the risks of nullifying his own accomplishments. For Wittgenstein research, it is indispensable to open oneself to the experimental

features of Wittgenstein's work. The recently published *Nachlaß* offers the opportunity to do so.

One avenue of research where this analysis might open new possibilities is in relating Wittgenstein's work to other traditions such as phenomenology and pragmatism, specifically concerning the concepts of life-world, normativity, and certainty. Our efforts have been directed to the initial task of opening the door. If we were to proceed further along these lines, the analysis of Wittgenstein's treatment of color offers promise for building upon our results, above all with respect to his remark regarding phenomenological problems.

Let us close with a last thought from Wittgenstein himself: "Language, I want to say, is a refinement – 'in the beginning was the deed.'"[18] To reflect upon this deed would require of us a new beginning, and would lead us to an ending that cannot now be anticipated.

18. VB, p. 65 (1937).

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Name index

Wittgenstein titles index

About the author

James M. Thompson has been teaching at the Martin-Luther-University, Halle-Wittenberg since 2004. He has written several articles on Wittgenstein and continues to work on the connections to such figures as Heidegger, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Kierkegaard, Plato, and Dewey. He received his B.A. in Philosophy from California State University, Sacramento, his M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and studied Phenomenology and Ancient Philosophy at the University of Wuppertal. His research interests include the Philosophy of Language, Phenomenology, American Pragmatism, and Ethical Theory.

Abstract

One of the most significant areas within Wittgenstein research involves the question of (dis)continuity. It has long been a point of bitter contention, whether or not a particular line of thought or even general idea runs through all of Wittgenstein's works. However, the publication of the *Nachlass* materials within the last decade has opened up new avenues of investigation as well as allowed for a more comprehensive and critical treatment of this issue. This book approaches the (dis)continuity question by examining Wittgenstein's concept of experience from the *Tractatus* through until the *Philosophical Investigations*. One of the fundamental claims of the book is that by tracing his conception of experience as it relates to language, one is able to account for the so-called "shifts" in his thought – the most extraordinary of which is Wittgenstein's development of a phenomenology upon his return to Cambridge in 1929.

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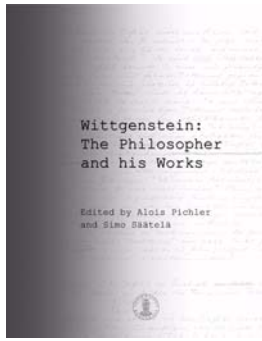

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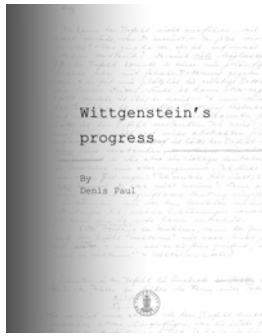

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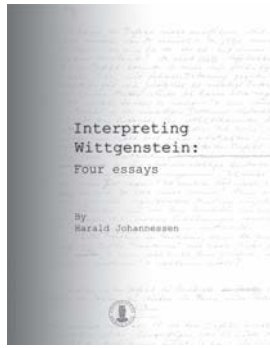

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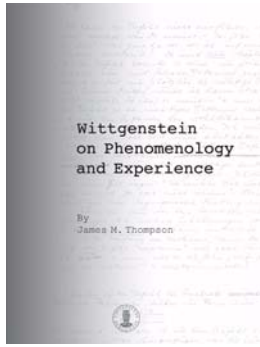

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