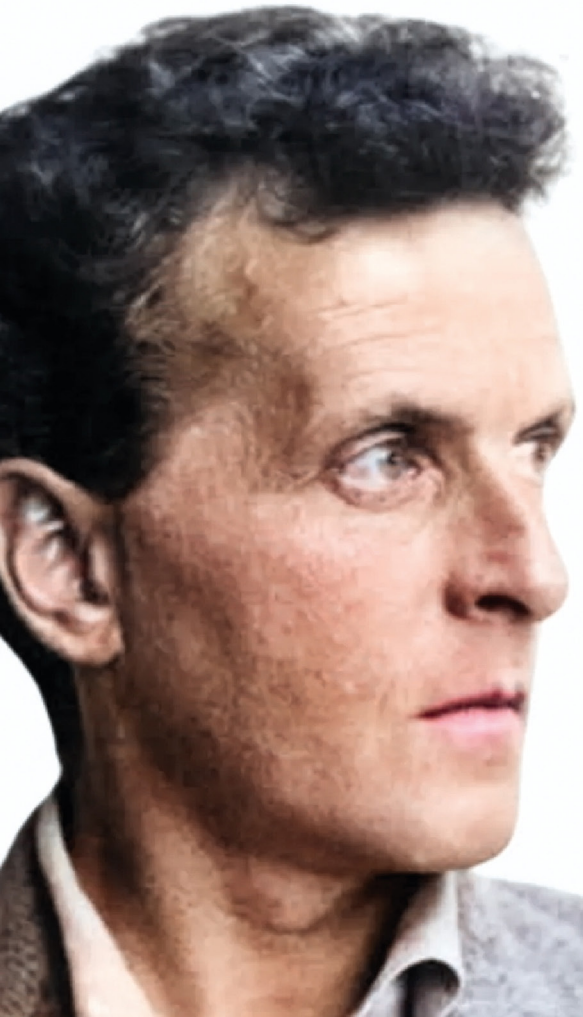
LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN'S
Philosophy in Light of the Diagnosis OF AUTISM



GUSTAVO AUGUSTO
FONSECA SILVA

30 anos
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Ludwig Wittgenstein's Philosophy in Light of the Diagnosis of Autism

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To David Duncan and Ernest Gellner

Acknowledgments

At the beginning of 2013, I decided to write a paper that would show how the main ideas about language attributed to Ludwig Wittgenstein had a series of precursors dating back to Ancient Greece. While researching this work, I discovered that contemporary psychiatrists had posthumously diagnosed Wittgenstein with autism spectrum disorder. This changed my whole conception of Wittgenstein's philosophy, so I decided instead to write a paper that would detail the importance of this diagnosis for the (re) understanding of Wittgenstein's legacy. The first one to encourage me to publish such a paper was the philosopher and journalist João Paulo Cunha. With sadness and surprise, I received the news of his departure in 2022. I am eternally grateful for João Paulo's support and friendship throughout our years of coexistence.

At the end of 2022, I received a sensitive and encouraging email from physicist and philosopher David Duncan regarding my paper on Wittgenstein's philosophy in light of the diagnosis of autism. Dave wrote a Ph.D. dissertation partly on Wittgenstein's philosophy and had been studying autism for decades. So there couldn't have been a better person with whom to discuss my work. Moreover, since our first contact, I have benefited immensely from the abundant material Dave has sent me about philosophy, Wittgenstein, autism and related topics, including his 2010 book *From Object to Life: A Journey Through the Extraordinary Worlds of Autism.* As if all this wasn't enough, I've been learning a lot about autism from his reports on his Aspie view of reality. Without Dave's support and his

careful reading and correction of the English version of my text, the publication of this book would not have been possible. To him, my most sincere thanks for his teachings, generosity and friendship.

I would also like to thank the Eduepb team for publishing this book, in particular Cidoval Morais de Sousa and Leonardo Araujo.

Finally, I thank my friends and family for their constant incentive, especially my parents, Maria Heli (in memoriam) and José Maria, and my most precious friends Andressa, Elisa, Francys, Geórgea, Kely, Leidiane, Luciana, Lílian and Thiago.

[Wittgenstein] was an impressive human being.

*(***Bertrand Russell***, Autobiography)*

Contents

Foreword

David Duncan

Ludwig Wittgenstein! For five decades I've been mulling over Wittgenstein's cryptic remarks and studying the many scholarly books and essays whose authors have tried to puzzle them out. Was he embarrassingly superficial or deeply profound, terribly confused or right on the mark, or something else? Yes, I think – all of these. Were his enthralled followers bewitched by the force of his personality? Sometimes, definitely. Were his critics justified in their impatience with his self-anointed pronouncements – vague and groundless 'universal truths?' Yes. But did his critics miss anything of real value, anything subtle and deep? Yes, I would offer; several things, implicit things. And I would include in this assembly of the blind, Wittgenstein himself and some of his most enthusiastic followers.

How could the legacy of one man be so broad and so narrow, so self-contradictory, so attractive and repulsive, so very puzzling, and in today's academia, so territorial – yet at the same time organically diffuse, generating hundreds of books and thousands of papers tying Wittgenstein's thoughts to everything from quantum theory to poetry, from the impossible color reddish-green to Hindu religion?

This confused and overwhelming situation is why I'm both happy and relieved to introduce Gustavo Fonseca's book, *Ludwig Wittgenstein's Philosophy in Light of the Diagnosis of Autism*. For this

ambitious task, I congratulate Gustavo for consulting not just the relevant philosophical literature, but Wittgenstein's published and unpublished writings, his diary entries and letters, and the letters and other records of the memories and opinions of Wittgenstein's friends, family, colleagues and foes.

No one who knew Wittgenstein knew about his autism – they couldn't have. Diagnostic criteria for autism were introduced by Grunya Sukareva in the 1920s, but her work, far ahead of its time in recognizing tendencies towards solitude, systemization, 'psychic inflexibility' and one-sided conversations, yet also musical and artistic talents in both male *and* female children, was largely confined to Russia. (Review, Ref. 1) The first well-known work on autism was published by Leo Kanner in 1943, and considered only a few children. Hans Asperger's work came a year later, but was popularized only in the 1980s. (Refs. 2, 3).

Even now, most Wittgenstein scholars have disregarded this diagnosis, or are unaware of it. But Wittgenstein's autism deserves a book. His disabilities and talents need to be made explicit and connected to the style, evolution and content of his philosophy(ies). More than *any* cultural or scholarly influences, more even than Vienna, Tolstoy or Kierkegaard, *autism* explains his philosophical and spiritual *motives*, his many false starts, numerous inconclusive endings, and his lifelong struggle to be a better human being.

Wittgenstein studied (among other things) engineering, language, meaning, context, rules, games, solipsism, skepticism, sensations, color, certainty, logic and math – obsessively. He was kind yet tyrannical, sympathetic to silent contemplation, and had trouble with dialogue and reading. Yet autistics are known to be obsessive, often kind, sometimes tyrannical, to have troubles with dialogue, and more generally, difficulties with language, meaning and context. Overgeneralization is a well-known feature of autistic *context blindness*. To the profound autistic, the blinking command "Don't cross" (the street) is timelessly valid – it includes when the street has long been empty. Autistics often assert oversimplified generalizations themselves, and obstinately deny that they are

wrong. Autistics tend to feel most comfortable in the narrowly focused object and rule-based worlds of engineering, math, logic and games, to be solipsistic, to have problems reading (perhaps, like the noted autistic Donna Williams because of a unique color vision), to lack certainty in the reality of their sensations, themselves and the world, and to lack faith. Autistics are often absurdly literal and blind to simple, everyday customs and human relations. (Note to the autistic child, "That thought is beneath you," and she looks down.) And like the far less literal 'very high-functioning' autistics Mozart, Simone Weil and Herman Melville, they often display remarkable insight and creativity.

If Wittgenstein was such a clever autistic, what did he accomplish? Gustavo has concluded, rightly I think, that Wittgenstein accomplished very little in the philosophies of mathematics and language (in the traditional sense of philosophies as theories). What he did in these disciplines, early or late, was either done earlier by others, confused, incredibly restrictive, simplistic or unconsciously stolen. Each chapter in this book details how he was redundant or confused, if one regards him as trying, like other philosophers, to manufacture 'the theoretical (or modeled) truth.'

In the 1920s, when he read poetry to a group of philosophers (and refused to talk philosophy), it was becoming clear that he was trying less and less to explain or model the truth. Instead, he was approaching philosophy as a participant in a 'new philosophy' of attention to language and life – a respected partner in a relationship of trust and faith – a covenant... and not approaching philosophy as a dominant authority figure or intellectual outsider. He was following the example of his soul-mate Jesus, who dined in solidarity with humanity, healing their broken souls, not standing above them, diagnosing them.

The later Wittgenstein refused to stand above language or philosophy, for they were finally recognized, in a sense, as living beings – as parts of our lives. He refused to follow the example of traditional philosophy or science, which tried to explain and build models of reality. He chose to stand with language and philosophy

as a brother – as kin – as a participant and healer, and his constructs of 'language games' and 'forms of life' were not theories, but tools of clarification and respect. Science was legitimately about explaining and domesticating the mechanical, object-like ('autistic,' 'left-hemisphere,' 're-presented map') aspects of the world, not the immediately experienced, 'presented' 'terrain' of life and consciousness. The many attempts to explain and domesticate life and consciousness by philosophers for over 2,500 years had produced only a noble, misguided motley of houses of cards.

Since reading this book, several autism related revelations (possible explanations) have come to me. In particular, more than once, so I've learned, Wittgenstein 'lifted' the work of others with no awareness of his theft. In recent decades, so called 'Chameleon' personalities have been recognized. Chameleon people imitate others. Sometimes they repeat almost verbatim what others have said or written, completely unconscious of doing so. Many are autistic. (Ref. 4) It is hypothesized that they unconsciously *imitate* others to strengthen otherwise weak relationships and survive by 'camouflaging' themselves in a socially dangerous world. This suggests that of the students who spontaneously imitated Wittgenstein's gestures, some may have shared his autistic traits. It also suggests a possible connection to Wittgenstein's obsession for thinking in similes. Perhaps language must be *like* the world or must be *like* a game so they can all be *like* us, and share strong, safe, camouflaged relationships.

Also, Wittgenstein was notorious for not defining his words. Scholars have spilled buckets of ink trying to divine clear meanings of his specialized terms, like 'object,' 'grammar,' 'perspicuous,' 'say' and 'show.' Yet autistics are known to invent their own idiosyncratic meanings, often meanings that are confused and trapped in some 'autistic inner world.' Is the 'imaginary-interlocutor' language of an 'autistic inner world,' in some sense, private? (though Wittgenstein would dispute the phrase 'inner world'). Is autistic language more private than ordinary language? Or is an inner autistic dialogue in some sense, more social, and thus legitimate? There may be no

easy answers, or inner world, but autism offers a likely motive for regarding these questions as central.

I believe, because of his instinctive awareness of his own autistic nature at its worst, that Wittgenstein accomplished a lot, but only in compensation for this painful self-awareness. I believe that he showed us how to fight our philosophical, religious and scientific arrogance when *we* overgeneralize and claim complete understanding. And he showed us how to fight our tendency to objectify and thus dehumanize both ourselves and others, in science and self-domesticated system-culture. And because of another instinctive awareness – of autism at its best, namely its connection with the transcendent, I think he served as a guide to what is best in humanity – *our* connections to the transcendent, and to life. Here is a summary and partial justification of what I mean:

1. He introduced humility to philosophy, science and religion. He placed limits on language, on explanation and thus on our modern penchant for what Kallenberg called 'totalizing control.' (Ref. 5) High-functioning autistics (in general) favor the order and control of well-defined systems. Wittgenstein dismissed science, philosophy and religion (*as* abstract, *hollow* systems, detached from life) when they claimed, like idols, to explain everything. (In contrast, *as* forms of life, they could *all* exceed the limits of explanation (and thus the limits of isolated, detached, traditional, 'autistic' philosophy). *As* forms of life, they could enrich and deepen our shared, wondrous lives as well as our glorious, humble incomprehension, and thus be thoroughly admirable and worthy of devotion.) He saw that only a changed mode of thought and life would cure the hubristic sickness of himself and our age. Kallenberg contended (starting with the fact that Wittgenstein excluded explanations from the *Investigations* and from ethics) that ethics does not come from some top-down system, but grows from a humble, natural, richly integrated form of language and life. And our freedom comes not from choosing what

we crave, but from seeing through the eyes of others, and seeing life as a gift – a miracle (or mystery) that is *not seen as* a scientific riddle, because it is more human and true for us not to be omniscient and omnipotent. It is interesting that Wittgenstein's mature, humble, organic view of language and life is shared by most indigenous peoples. (Ref. 6)

2. He placed limits on autistic literalism, that is, limits on seeing everything as a thing or object. In particular, he upset the apple cart of science by arguing that 'pain' fits the grammar of neither something nor nothing. To Wittgenstein, nothing could be more real than pain (or joy, or hunger…) and yet be less of a 'thing.' Wittgenstein subtracted our sensations from the literal, scientific world of things. Thus, there is, in a sense, an inner life, but no inner world populated by sensation-things. (Ref. 7) To me this subtraction of structure from reality is not a horror or "A hard problem of consciousness," but a contrite step towards a more unified reality, loosely analogous to Einstein's subtraction of mythical absolute structures from both space and time for the deeper unity of a new, more subtle reality: spacetime.

   There is an ethical side to this de-literalizing re-enchantment of the world. Rupert Read has argued that by denying our inner life as being a collection of things (or even physical processes), Wittgenstein strengthened the case for treating human beings as human beings rather than as objects, as was common in the 1930s in "Nazism and its ilk." (Ref. 8) Besides, as Read emphasizes, if a scientifically advanced human could acknowledge our pain *only* by the criterion of viewing in us some brain state or process, our relationships would lose their essential fragility. Even the ancients knew that selfless love, faith and friendship require fragility to be what they truly are. Well – this is a delicate and controversial matter. Imagine a scientist looking deep into your dog's microtubules and saying, "He doesn't really love you." You might reply, "It only seems so to you. Perhaps my dog ate a sour apple last night."

The last thing an autistic wants, struggling to survive in a disconnected, chaotic personal world, is to be fragile and vulnerable. He wants to survive inside psychologically safe castle walls. Wittgenstein eventually understood the terrible price of this eternal isolation from love, faith and friendship. And what would the dynamics of some neurons tell us about the taste of an apple that we don't already know? Nothing directly, for, to quote Wittgenstein, "Nothing is hidden."

Still, indirect, structural information could be very useful. If one group of vibrating atoms in the brain responded when tasting an apple, what if this qualitative taste depended on a physical context – on music being played, or a history of eating other sorts of apples? That might tell us something about the comprehensiveness of quantum mechanics, or even better, it might tell us something about ourselves – our hidden sensitivities and instincts – our broken or healed souls – the relational embeddedness hidden in the 'depth grammar' of our aesthetic and moral lives. These qualitative relations, requiring participations by us and with us, participations for which there is no possibility of modeled 'aboutness,' correlated with a vast number of contextual quantitative observations, would themselves be vast.

William Brenner argued for another ethical motive for de-literalizing the world – that Wittgenstein would not consider answering the traditional question of whether we have free will by using science, for the meaning of the term 'free-will' comes from our form of life, not from observations and discoveries about deterministic or statistical processes in our brains. (Ref. 9)

3. Wittgenstein was a mystic. (Ref. 10) So was the autistic Simone Weil. So was the noted autistic author, Donna Williams. Is there a genuine link between autism and mysticism? I wrote a book that addressed this question. (Ref. 11) High-functioning autistics (children with Asperger's syndrome) were first characterized as being detached. Yet Meister Eckhart and

various ancient Middle Eastern and Far Eastern mystics praised detachment. Even Thomas Merton. And autistics and mystics all embrace silent contemplation, detached from language and the world. The 13th century mystic St. Clare of Assisi based her life on silence, detachment from the world and the contemplative imitation of Jesus Christ, by means of something she described as 'greater than heaven' – a faithful soul (something Wittgenstein craved).

As a young autistic myself, I once perceived part of the world in parallel (seeing, e.g., certain familiar high-school girls as young, middle-aged and old at the same time). I ignored this parallel perception until reading about a young autistic girl with the same skill, and how a Sufi master and Meister Eckhart independently praised parallel ways of seeing. Could there exist an autistic, somewhere, who could actually see reddish-green? I don't know. Wittgenstein, in his last years, asked himself, in effect: If someone could see reddish-green, how could anyone tell?

Were any mystics especially literal? St. Augustine wrote that he was (for a time) terribly confused by good and evil, for he saw them as substances. He also wrote:

...when I wished to think on my God, I knew not what to think of, but a mass of bodies...

...I could not conceive of mind unless as a subtle body...

...But I, conceiving of things corporeal only, was mainly held down, vehemently oppressed and in a manner suffocated by those 'masses'... (Ref. 12)

4. It is easy to be perplexed by the beginning of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, where he inquires into the nature of meaning. To the reader, there seems to be no importance to a question like, "What is the meaning of the word 'farm?'" I doubt that Wittgenstein fully understood why he asked thousands of such ostensibly silly questions.

> Imagine trying to *fully* define the meaning of 'farm.' An autistic, lacking an intuitive, implicit understanding of the meaning of 'farm,' might crave the fantasy of a fully explicit, complete answer, without knowing why.
>
> Let's try to generate a full answer: A farm is a property with cultivated land, animals like cows and horses and usually a barn and a house. Perhaps a silo. Of course, the meaning of 'farm' will be very different to a youngster raised in a city and to an elderly farmer. The farmer will have a rich assortment of memories, perhaps of his parents or grandparents or children, of storms and crop failures, of good years, of bad years, of sights and tastes and smells – of his favorite horse and dog. To encompass the full meaning and significance of the word 'farm,' he would have to write a book, or maybe a collection of poems, or a song. And even that would not suffice, for so much cannot be put into words, or melody. So much can only be directly shared – you had to be there. You had to have lived his life and grown up with him, or better, as him. The *full* meaning of 'farm' is a life…and countless other lives – not a definition, not an object, not an abstraction, not a concept or idea or some neural brain-process thing. And not a Wittgensteinian use or physiognomy, unless both are meant in their full senses, including not just information, but significance and life. So the ancient philosophical quests for meanings of terms like 'courage,' 'virtue' or 'meaning,' (and even 'farm') are not silly at all for those who must seek life by defeating language's isolated, 'autistic,' dead-end, static, dictionary definitions, and embracing a dynamic, boundlessly rich language, by sharing and living it.

There are terrible tensions in Wittgenstein: Working to reduce all that is implicit to the explicit, then feverishly working against this temptation. Seeing abstract (rigid and static) systems like math or logic as fundamental – but no – life is fundamental; fluid, contextual and indefinable. I am fundamental (solipsism) – but no

– we are fundamental (in the 2nd person, not the effectively dead, scientific 3rd person), for we are intimately connected humans who can feel each other's pains and enthusiasms (See my mention of Rupert Read below.) Philosophical accounts are fundamental – no – they are only objects of comparison to drive away error. Language is fundamental – no, ethics and aesthetics, that which cannot be spoken…and on and on.

Understanding Wittgenstein's struggles with this quilt of autistic tensions is worth it, for wrestling with these tensions, we can learn much about ourselves and our cultures. In particular, we can learn about our many hidden bewitchments and blindnesses, such as the 'language game blindness' of politics, where the richness of life and humanity is reduced to trading one-dimensional slogans, 'instinct blindness' to our most primitive instincts, and perhaps worst of all, 'blindness to our blindness' (common in autism, but also present in non-autistics) so that the accusation of being rude, say, (as Wittgenstein sometimes was) to the autistic (or any of us), appears to be totally unjust – a 'Kafka trap,' in which the crime (or sin), if it exists, is completely unseen by the accused.

I recommend four works in this regard: First, Sass's *Paradoxes of Delusion*, (Ref. 13), especially pgs. 74-75, where the thoroughly analyzed incoherence of solipsism (its dubious grammar or philosophy) is powerless to defeat the *lived* 'mood, intuition and mode of existence' of solipsism. Second, Rupert Read's book *Wittgenstein's Liberatory Philosophy*, (Ref. 14), which details Wittgenstein's attempts to deeply connect humanity and thus make us responsible, ethical, free yet non-individual agents. (According to Read, this is akin to Buddhist teachings in which we are more free as 'inter-beings' than as *isolated* independent individuals because, as interconnected beings, we have larger identities, and are thus liberated to lead richer lives, lives in which we can truly make mistakes, forgive, confess, listen and take responsibility. 'Inter-being' is a Buddhist relational term, somewhat like 'covenantal,' 'communal,' or 'whole' in Christian works, or 'participatory' in colloquial English. The (trans-object world) sharing of feelings *and*

simple thoughts, is currently a popular item on the web, where some mothers claim to be in contact with their non-verbal but telepathic autistic children. This is yet to be rigorously tested.) Third, McGilchrist's *The Matter with Things*, (Ref. 15) which frames autistic tensions in terms of left brain (static, category, object, acontextual) and right brain (fluid, lived, momentary, contextual) ways of seeing. Fourth, Gustavo's illuminating book.

Gustavo Fonseca has detailed Wittgenstein's autistic traits, honestly and without any comforting filters. Reading this book will do more than save us from wasting our time with Wittgenstein's Mountain of wasted remarks. When we read how often Wittgenstein instinctively tried to grasp and control everything, an uncomfortable light shines down upon us all. When we read how Wittgenstein later attempted to be more modest and true (feverishly and obsessively, but in a way still bound by over-simple category thought and thus often poorly), we see some hope. Many scholars today see hope in Wittgenstein's intellect. After reading this book, I find hope more in Wittgenstein's spirit – in his unwavering sincerity and tenacity to be good. In the pages that follow, a young and sincere Brazilian scholar shines a light on Wittgenstein's personal 'sins' and ours, and (at least for me) he illuminates what is glorious and possible for us all. One can only wonder, what would Wittgenstein think?

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Introduction

> *Working in philosophy [...] is really more a working on oneself. On one's own interpretation. On one's way of seeing things. (And what one expects of them.)* (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*)

Two features of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* have always perplexed me. The first is the triviality of the linguistic ideas presented in the book, such as the explanation that not every word denotes an object – something that is more than evident in view of words such as verbs, adjectives and adverbs. The second, directly related to the first, is the fact that Wittgenstein attributed to an imaginary interlocutor errors that were supposedly corrected in his work, but it is difficult to think that anyone would make these mistakes. In § 27, for example, Wittgenstein states:

> [...] we do the most various things with our sentences. Think just of exclamations, with their completely different functions.
> Water!
> Away!
> Ow!
> Help!
> Splendid!

> No!
> Are you still inclined to call these words "names of objects"?

But has someone *ever* been inclined to call these words "names of objects"?

In fact, as philosopher Robert Fogelin observes, the author of the *Philosophical Investigations* 'expends enormous energy exorcising philosophical commitments which – as it seems – no one has held.' In the *Blue Book*, for example, Wittgenstein claims:

> The questions, "What is length?", "What is meaning?", "What is the number one?" etc., produce in us a mental cramp. We feel that we can't point to anything in reply to them and yet ought to point to something. (We are up against one of the great sources of philosophical bewilderment: we try to find a substance for a substantive.)
>
> [...] Studying the grammar of the expression "explanation of meaning" will teach you something about the grammar of the word "meaning" and will cure you of the temptation to look about you for something which you might call the "meaning". [...]
>
> One difficulty which strikes us is that for many words in our language there do not seem to be ostensive definitions; e.g. for such words as "one", "number", "not", etc.

But are we up against one of the great sources of philosophical bewilderment: do we try to find a substance for a substantive? Have you ever felt the temptation to look about you for something which you might call the "meaning"? And are we struck by the difficulty that for many words in our language there do not seem to be ostensive definitions; e.g. for such words as "one", "number", "not", etc.?

Perplexed by the fact that Wittgenstein recurrently attributed to an imaginary interlocutor errors that no one had committed, for years I had intended to write a paper in which I would show that Wittgenstein "dissolved" in his second philosophy, especially in the *Philosophical Investigations*, problems that are not problems for anyone, by making use of basic linguistic and philosophical knowledge accumulated in the West since Ancient Greece, that he had ignored in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, the book of his first philosophy. However, about three months after I finally began that work, I came across a piece of information that completely changed not only the way I viewed Wittgenstein's philosophy but above all Wittgenstein himself: the posthumous diagnosis made by the psychiatrists Christopher Gillberg, Michael Fitzgerald, and Yoshiki Ishisaka that he had autism.

When I learned about the opinion shared by these experts in autism spectrum disorder, I immediately realized that Wittgenstein was philosophizing about his behavioral and cognitive difficulties, including those related to language. Thus, with the diagnosis that Wittgenstein had autism, it became clear to me that in his philosophy Wittgenstein revealed his own interpretation, his way of seeing things (and what he expected of them). The central objective of this book is to explicate this fact, detailing how both Wittgenstein's "mental cramps" and his behavioral idiosyncrasies are reflected in his philosophy.

Given the nature of this book, I was compelled to make some choices that need to be justified. The first of these, often made by Wittgensteinians, was to quote Wittgenstein directly much more than usual, rather than try to summarize his ideas. This was due to his *sui generis* writing. Another decision I made was to write this book not for Wittgensteinians in particular but for a wider audience, including psychologists and psychiatrists, sociologists and anthropologists, linguists and speech-language pathologists, mathematicians and philosophers not specialized in Wittgenstein. In this way, many specificities – and controversies – about Wittgenstein's philosophy ended up being set aside in favor of a

more accessible text. Finally, I would like to clarify why I have often used secondary sources even though I have had access to primary sources. The main reason was in order to take advantage of the valuable comments of the authors of these works on the quoted passages. Among these authors, I must single out Professor Ray Monk, whose biography of Wittgenstein has the merit of explaining like no other book 'what his work has to do with *him*.' This explanation, however, changes aspect in light of the diagnosis that Wittgenstein had autism – just like Joseph Jastrow's duck-rabbit, which Wittgenstein investigated for many years.

1. Wittgenstein's extraordinariness

Nearly all my writings are private conversations with myself. Things that I say to myself tete-a-tete. (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*)

My own problems appear in what I write in philosophy. (Wittgenstein)

The joy of my thoughts is the joy of my own strange life. (Wittgenstein)

1.1 A curious, touchy and eccentric figure

On January 27, 1937, while traveling to Skjolden, a Norwegian village on the edge of the Sogne Fjord, where in 1913 he had built a hut for secluded living, Wittgenstein noted in his diary: 'I am of course in many ways extraordinary & therefore many people are ordinary compared to me; but in what does my extraordinariness consist?' As stated before, to contemporary psychiatrists, Wittgenstein's extraordinariness in many ways stemmed from the fact that he had autism. According to these experts, the following are evidence of this situation:

1. The fact that Wittgenstein did not talk until he was four years old.

2. His limited facial expression and stiff gaze, his limited facial expressions and his fixed gaze, which are noticeable in his photographs.
3. His peculiar voice, with a pitch somewhat higher than that of a normal male voice, according to Norman Malcolm.
4. His failure to develop peer relationships – 'He was a curious, touchy and eccentric figure, with un-English habits of dress and social opinions,' said Stephen Toulmin, a student of Wittgenstein in 1941 and in 1946–47. 'I cannot think of another person anything like so irascible,' confessed Fania Pascal, who was Wittgenstein's friend and teacher of Russian. 'He was an aggressive and explosive man, but this too in a very peculiar, naïve way of his own.'
5. His lack of social and emotional reciprocity – 'He never saw himself through the eyes of others, and he had no other standards than his own,' said Pascal. 'He had all the characteristics of a prophet, but none of a disciple,' mocked Max Bieler, who met Wittgenstein during World War I.
6. His stereotyped and repetitive motor movements – There are many records that Wittgenstein's most ardent disciples even imitated his gestures and his way of speaking.
7. His obsessive insistence on the preservation of sameness – 'He was very demanding and exacting although his tastes were very simple,' said Joan Bevan, who hosted Wittgenstein in her home for the last weeks of the philosopher's life. 'It was *understood* that his bath would be ready, his meals on time and that the events of the day would run to a regular pattern.'
8. His difficulties forming social relationships and being acutely aware of other people – 'He was not always easy to fit into a social occasion', wrote Bertrand Russell. 'Whitehead described to me the first time that Wittgenstein came to see him. He was shown into the drawing-room during afternoon tea. He appeared scarcely aware of the presence of Mrs Whitehead, but marched up and down the room for some time in silence,

and at last said explosively: 'A proposition has two poles. It is *apb*.' Whitehead, in telling me, said: 'I naturally asked what are *a* and *b*, but I found that I had said quite the wrong thing. "*a* and *b* are indefinable," Wittgenstein answered in a voice of thunder.'

9. His extreme social isolation – 'Being alone here [Skjolden] does me no end of good and I do not think I could now bear life among people,' admitted Wittgenstein in a letter to Russell in 1913. Wittgenstein's co-worker at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle during World War II, secretary Helen Andrews, said that Wittgenstein 'did not easily fit in' and preferred to be alone in his room rather than join the roommates he was staying with. 'He was reserved & rather withdrawn,' attested Dr E. G. Bywaters. 'I remember him as an enigmatic, non-communicating, perhaps rather depressed person who preferred the deck chair in his room to any social encounters.'

Similar accounts of Wittgenstein, which led contemporary psychiatrists to diagnose autism, multiply in their biographies and in the memorials of those who lived with him. More important, however, than compiling testimonies of Wittgenstein's 'strange life,' is making explicit the fact that for years he devoted himself to trying to understand and overcome his behavioral and cognitive difficulties – believing that everyone else suffered from the latter ones too.

1.2 Inner process, outward criteria

According to psychologist Chris Williams and psychiatrist Barry Wright, authors of the book *How to Live with Autism and Asperger Syndrome*, people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) present behavioral features such as difficulty understanding social norms and conventions; lack of flexibility in social interaction; a poor understanding of the needs of others in conversation;

tendency to think about the world entirely from their own personal perspective, indicating egocentrism; necessity of being in control; difficulty calming down when frustrated. Beyond that, still according to Williams and Wright, individuals with ASD have great difficulty understanding the point of view or the thoughts or feelings of someone else due to their mindblindness. That is to say, people with ASD, having difficulty interpreting gestures and facial expressions, have a poor understanding of the mind of others. Some researchers have called this a poor "Theory of Mind." Theory of Mind (ToM) refers to our ability to make accurate guesses about what people might be thinking, feeling, or willing to do. Needless to say, this is a crucial skill for being able to get on socially.

When it comes to Wittgenstein, there is much documentation not only of his mindblindness, but also of his reflections on his own difficulties understanding the points of view, thoughts and feelings of other people. In the 1930s, for example, Wittgenstein wrote in his diary concerning his friendship with G. E. Moore:

> I have occasionally thought about my strange relationship with Moore. I respect him greatly & have a certain, not inconsiderable affection for him. [...] he is friendly to me, as to everyone & if he is different in this regard with different people, then I don't notice this difference because I do not understand just this nuance. [...] This leads to the awkward situation that one feels as if one had imposed oneself upon people without wanting to or being aware of it. Suddenly it hits one that the relation to them is not as one assumed because they do not reciprocate the feelings one bears toward them; but one hadn't noticed it since the difference of roles in these interactions at any rate is so great that the nuances of like & dislike can easily hide behind them.

Without understanding Moore's nuances of like and dislike, Wittgenstein time and again imposed himself upon Moore without wanting to or being aware of it. In 1939, for example, Moore read a text at the Moral Science Club at the University of Cambridge that was later harshly criticized at home by Wittgenstein. According to Malcolm, Wittgenstein spoke 'rapidly and forcefully' for at least two hours, never giving Moore a chance to answer his questions. After a few days, however, when Yorick Smythies told Wittgenstein that he had been rude to Moore, Wittgenstein dismissed his comment as absurd. Despite this, as soon as he met Moore, Wittgenstein asked him if he had indeed been rude to him in his home. On Moore's confirmation, Wittgenstein apologized, albeit reluctantly.

At another meeting of the Moral Science Club that year, Malcolm himself was the target of Wittgenstein after telling him that his criticism of Moore's presentation did not seem fair to him. 'After the meeting ended', Malcolm remembered, 'and while people were still standing about, Wittgenstein walked up to me and said, eyes blazing with anger, "If you knew anything at all, you would know that I am never unfair to anyone. This proves that you have understood absolutely nothing of my lectures." He turned and walked away. I was thunderstruck.' Later, after Smythies told Wittgenstein that he had also been rude to Malcolm, Wittgenstein would once again apologize for what had happened: 'Smythies thinks that I misunderstood what you meant and if that is so I am sorry.'

Familiar with the 'uncivilized savagery of Wittgenstein's domineering, argumentative style,' as defined by Monk, Mrs Moore had to control his visits in 1944 in order to spare her elderly and sick husband the exhausting 'discussions' with Wittgenstein ('*he* discusses,' Moore wrote in his diary when he was visiting Wittgenstein in Norway before the World War I). However, without wanting to or being aware of it, Wittgenstein imposed himself upon Moore again: 'Moore is as nice as always. I couldn't see him for long as we were interrupted by Mrs Moore,' Wittgenstein wrote to Rush Rhees. 'She told me later that Moore wasn't really

as well as he seemed & that he mustn't have long conversations. I have good reason for believing that this, on the whole, is baloney.' Moore had suffered a stroke in America, and his wife was acting on instructions from his doctor to forbid any kind of excitement or fatigue. She therefore limited his philosophical discussions to one and a half hours. Wittgenstein, due to his 'childlike innocence,' as Pascal characterized it, was the only one who resented this. 'He did not realise how exhausting he could be, so much so that at least on one occasion Moore said to me beforehand "Don't let him stay too long,"' said Mrs Moore.

Due to his mindblindess, Wittgenstein did not understand nuances of like and dislike of people he fell in love with. So, in 1929, Wittgenstein also imposed himself upon Marguerite Respinger, whom he wanted to marry, without wanting to or being aware of it. According to Monk, Wittgenstein did not take the hint when she announced that she no longer wished to kiss him. Besides, Monk observes, in his diary notes Wittgenstein does not pause to reflect on her feelings, but dwells, rather, on his own. Years later, in 1941, after the death of his partner Francis Skinner, Wittgenstein would manifest once again his difficulties understanding the points of view, thoughts and feelings of other people. In that period, Wittgenstein wrote to Rowland Hutt telling him that in his opinion Skinner had 'one of the happiest lives' he had known anyone to have, being clearly unable to realize, or to consider, how Skinner suffered in the manual labor he had undertaken under his influence, and how he was unhappy being apart from his presence and deprived of his affection. In fact, Wittgenstein did not care what his loved one thought or felt, as Monk points out when commenting on his passion for David Pinsent, for Marguerite Respinger, and especially for Keith Kirk, a young man who had been introduced to him by Skinner himself:

> What the coded remarks [of Wittgenstein's diaries] [...] reveal is the extraordinary extent to which Wittgenstein's love life and his sexual

> life went on only in his imagination. This is most striking in the case of Keith Kirk [...], but it is also evident in almost all of Wittgenstein's intimate relationships. Wittgenstein's perception of a relationship would often bear no relation at all to the perception of it held by the other person. If I had not met Keith Kirk, I would have been almost certain, from what I had read in the coded remarks, that he and Wittgenstein had had some kind of 'affair'. Having met Kirk, I am certain that whatever affair there was existed only in Wittgenstein's mind.

In light of the diagnosis of autism, there is a change of aspect in Monk's observations on Wittgenstein's and Kirk's 'affair', as in his statement that 'the philosophical solipsism to which [Wittgenstein] had at one time been attracted, and against which much of his later work is addressed [...], has its parallel in the emotional solipsism in which his romantic attachments were conducted.' There is a change of aspect too, in light of the diagnosis of autism, in Pascal's assertion that one could not imagine Wittgenstein 'needing the normal physical expressions of affection' – something that Wittgenstein himself acknowledged: 'Although I cannot give affection, I have a great *need* for it,' he said in certain occasion. Furthermore, in light of the diagnosis of autism, there is a change of aspect in the fact that Wittgenstein reflected for years on people's eyes and gazes, about which he wrote, for example:

> I interpret words; yes – but do I also interpret looks? Do I interpret a facial expression as threatening or kind? That *may* happen.
>
> Suppose I said: "It is not enough to perceive the threatening face, I have to interpret it. – Someone whips out a knife at me and I say "I conceive that as a threat."

> Get a human being to give angry, proud, ironical looks; and now veil the face so that only the eyes remain uncovered – in which the whole expression seemed concentrated: their expression is now surprisingly *ambiguous*.

In light of the diagnosis of autism, there is indeed a change of aspect in the fact that Wittgenstein has reflected so much on tones of voice, gestures, and facial expressions, being aware of the fact that 'an "inner process" stands in need of outward criteria':

> Consciousness in another's face. Look into someone else's face and see the consciousness in it, and a particular *shade* of consciousness. You see on it, in it, joy, indifference, interest, excitement, torpor and so on. The light in other people's faces.
>
> Do you look into *yourself* in order to recognise the fury in *his* face? It is there as clearly as in your own breast.
>
> "Consciousness is as clear in his face and behaviour, as in myself."
>
> One speaks of a feeling of conviction because there is a *tone* of conviction. For the characteristic mark of all 'feelings' is that there is expression of them, i.e. facial expression, gestures, of feeling.

And, when reflecting on outward criteria of an 'inner process,' having as a model the starets Zosima, a character in *The Brothers Karamazov* who just by seeing the faces of the people who came to him already knew what tormented them, Wittgenstein privileged pain over other feelings and sensations because, 'if I see someone writhing in pain with evident cause, I do not think: all the same, his feelings are hidden from me.' 'Indeed,' says philosopher A. J. Ayer,

'Wittgenstein's preference for pain as an example is no doubt due to the fact that it is characteristically associated with a fairly limited set of outward expressions; something which is not true of all sensations, let alone thoughts and images.' Not to mention people's nuances of like and dislike.

1.3 A maladroit style

Another particularity of people with ASD, according to Williams and Wright, is their enormous difficulty in drawing together lots of information from a situation in order to make sense of it. If we heard church bells and saw a large group of people dressed up in fine clothes, throwing confetti at a couple outside a church, Williams and Wright say by way of example, we might guess that this was a wedding. A person with ASD might focus on the church bells, or something else, and fail to recognize the event as a wedding. This difficulty, Williams and Wright observe, applies to the use of language, to the understanding of pictures, stories, events and objects. Concerning language specifically, people with ASD struggle to understand the essence of a situation because they fail to understand the meaning of words within the correct context.

> A mother commented: 'Oh dear, my foot is wet. There must be a leak in my boot.' Her daughter insisted that she should take off her boot and take the leek out. In this instance the child failed to use the context to appreciate that the leak her mother was talking about was the type of leak that lets water in, rather than the vegetable.
>
> A grandmother related how she told her granddaughter that she liked to soak her 'bare feet' in a bath of warm water. Her granddaughter became frightened and distressed, insisting on checking that her grandmother had not suddenly grown feet like the bears in her story book.

And Monk related that when Wittgenstein was a war prisoner in Cassino, Italy, in 1919, a relative with connections in the Vatican tried to get him released by the Italians. Wittgenstein was to be examined by a doctor and declared medically unfit to stand prolonged confinement. However, at the examination, Wittgenstein rejected such privileged treatment, insisting vehemently that he was in perfect health. That way, Wittgenstein most probably did not understand the real doctor's intentions.

Philosopher John Mabbott, in turn, related that when he arrived in Nottingham to attend a philosophical conference, he met at the student hostel a youngish man with a rucksack, shorts and open-neck shirt. That was Wittgenstein, but Mabbott assumed that he was a student on vacation who did not know his hostel had been given over to those attending the conference. 'I'm afraid there is a gathering of philosophers going on in here', Mabbott said. 'I too', Wittgenstein replied. And I'm afraid that Wittgenstein, in his 'naïvety,' which was repeatedly underscored by Pascal, did not realize the assumption that Mabbott had made.

Doctor Edward Bevan's wife, Mrs Bevan related that she was warned by her husband that Wittgenstein was not one for small talk and that she should be careful not to say anything thoughtless. So, when Wittgenstein first came to their home, she remained silent throughout most of the evening. But when Wittgenstein mentioned his visit to Ithaca, US, she said: 'How lucky for you to go to America!'. Wittgenstein fixed her with an intent stare: 'What do you mean, *lucky*?,' clearly unable to make sense of the situation. Mrs Bevan also related that, on his sixty-second birthday, she presented Wittgenstein with an electric blanket, saying as she gave it to him: 'Many happy returns.' Wittgenstein, having terminal cancer, stared hard at her and replied: 'There will be no returns.'

In view of accounts such as those of Mrs. Bevan, David Edmonds and John Eidinow concluded: 'Here was no simple lack of manners or unfortunately maladroit style. Wittgenstein was not in the world of polite conversation and social chitchat. Clarity of meaning was all, and he went straight to it – no matter what.' Or rather, in light of

the diagnosis of autism: due to his 'pragmatic language difficulties,' which are typical of people with ASD according to Williams and Wright, Wittgenstein was not able to be in the world of polite conversation and social chitchat, as detailed by philosopher and writer Iris Murdoch, who attended some of his classes at the University of Cambridge:

> His extraordinary directness of approach and the absence of any sort of paraphernalia were the things that unnerved people … with most people, you meet them in a framework, and there are certain conventions about how you talk to them and so on. There isn't a naked confrontation of personalities. But Wittgenstein always imposed this confrontation on all his relationships. I met him only twice and I didn't know him well and perhaps that's why I always thought of him, as a person, with awe and alarm.

Painfully aware of the fact that his extraordinary directness of approach and his absence of any sort of paraphernalia unnerved people, Wittgenstein wrote in his diary in 1930:

> When talking with people who don't really understand one, one always feels that one has made a fool of oneself, at least I do. And here [Cambridge] this happens to me again and again. One has the choice between remaining a <u>complete</u> stranger & this unpleasant experience. And of course I could say: Here too, I have this or that person, after all, with whom I can talk without danger of this; & why don't I whithdraw altogether from the others? But that's difficult and unnatural for me. The difficulty is how to speak in a friendly way with someone & not touch upon points on which we cannot understand each other.

> To speak seriously & so that one does not touch upon anything inessential which must lead to misunderstandings. This is just about impossible for me.

At the same period, Wittgenstein also wrote in his diary: 'I have to live with people to whom I cannot make myself understood. – That is a thought that I actually do have often. At the same time with the feeling that it is my own fault.' Thus, on the one hand, Wittgenstein had to live with people to whom he could not make himself understood, with the feeling that it was his own fault. On the other hand, people who interacted with him always thought of him, as a person, with awe and alarm. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable that Wittgenstein usually complained about being misunderstood. It is also reasonable that Wittgenstein wrote in the 1940's: 'In a conversation: One person throws a ball; the other does not know whether he is supposed to throw it back, or throw it to a third person, or leave it on the ground, or pick it up and put it in his pocket, etc.'

1.4 A way of looking at the world

As Williams and Wright inform us, people with ASD have problems with imagination. Consequently, their sense of humour may be affected since much humour involves imagination (except slapstick). A simple joke like 'Why did the chicken cross the road,' Williams and Wright say by way of example, has us thinking of all sorts of possibilities before the joke teller says 'To get to the other side,' which is the obvious answer. Our imaginations seek all sorts of alternatives before being returned by the joke teller to the obvious answer, and that is why we think it is funny. People with ASD don't find it funny because imagination doesn't lead them through this process. 'To get to the other side? Of course! What is so funny about it?'

Regarding Wittgenstein, there are lots of reports on his 'trivia and feeble humour,' as defined by Frances Partridge, basically restricted to what Wittgenstein himself named *nonsense*. 'If by a sense of humour we mean the capacity to see ourselves in the very act of dealing with others,' said Pascal, 'then Wittgenstein lacked it entirely.' In fact, according to Monk, Wittgenstein loved to 'talk nonsense to by the yard' and, in the 1930s, found in Gilbert Pattisson the right partner to do it. Not by coincidence, some of the jokes contained in Wittgenstein's letters to Pattisson are, in Monk's opinion, 'astonishingly feeble.' In nearly every letter, Monk observes, Wittgenstein makes some use of the adjective 'bloody,' which, for some reason, he found inexhaustibly funny. We can find the same adjective in Wittgenstein's letters to other friends, such as Roy Fouracre, to whom he wrote: 'Sorry you don't get post regularly, & particularly my letters which are full of content. I mean, paper, ink, & air. – The mosquitos don't bite you because you're so nice – because you aren't – but because you're so bloody awful & its the blood they want.'

Considering Wittgenstein's 'heavy' sense of humour, as characterized by David Pinsent, and his preference for nonsense, it is not surprising that he disliked socratic irony: 'Why can't a man be forthright and say what's on his mind?' Nor is it surprising that Wittgenstein thought so much about humor and the way people interact, as these examples illustrate:

> Humour is not a mood but a way of looking at the world.
>
> Two people are laughing together, say at a joke. One of them has used certain somewhat unusual words and now they both break out into a sort of bleating. That might appear *very* extraordinary to a visitor coming from quite a different environment. Whereas we find it completely *reasonable*.

> (I recently witnessed this scene on a bus and was able to think myself into the position of someone to whom this would be unfamiliar. From that point of view it struck me as quite irrational, like the responses of an outlandish *animal*.)
>
> What is it like for people not to have the same sense of humour? They do not react properly to each other. It's as though there were a custom amongst certain people for one person to throw another a ball which he is supposed to catch and throw back; but some people, instead of throwing it back, put it in their pocket.

Due to his problems with imagination, Wittgenstein did not have the same sense of humor as other people and did not react to them properly, as revealed by O. K. Bouwsma in yet another episode of Wittgenstein in which there is a change of aspect considering the autism diagnosis:

> I walked down the street to meet him and soon he appeared at the corner with his cane and a rather ungainly, stiff and yet fairly vigorous walk. I greeted him, saying that he seemed to be a good walker; curiously such pleasantries he treats seriously. Oh, no. He was not a good walker at all, etc.

In the introduction to Bouwsma's book *Conversations with Wittgenstein*, J. L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit comment:

> Wittgenstein's mind is always working, and working hard – even in small matters. To Bouwsma's remark that Wittgenstein is a good walker, he replies that he is not a good walker at all. But it is not as if he is deliberately trying to be difficult; he is, rather, simply taking Bouwsma's small talk seriously.

Or rather, in light of the diagnosis of autism: the episode proves that 'an absence of imagination in thinking' had left Wittgenstein with 'predominantly logical, fixed, concrete, literal ways of talking and thinking,' as is typical in people with ASD, according to Williams and Wright.

1.5 A literal understanding

Due to their absence of imagination in thinking and their predominantly logical, fixed, concrete, literal ways of talking and thinking, people with ASD also tend to have a literal understanding of metaphors, analogies and idiomatic expressions, Williams and Wright observe. When his teacher said 'The red table can sit down,' Williams and Wright say by way of example, a kid with ASD commented on how this would not be possible. In another occasion, one of the authors said to a girl with Asperger Syndrome: 'I want you to take your vitamin tablet in the morning.' She replied: 'Where shall I take it to?'

Apparently, Wittgenstein also had difficulties with figurative language and a propensity to literally interpret metaphors, analogies and idiomatic expressions. It is not by chance that he liked Paul Ernst's afterwords in his edition of the *Grimms' Fairy Tales* because in that text, according to Wittgenstein's misreading, Ernst indicates how language misleads us through graphic modes of expression and metaphors being taken literally. It is not by chance either that, during World War I, Wittgenstein preferred to develop metaphors with Max Bieler rather than developing them by himself. Years later, Wittgenstein would warn in the *Philosophical Investigations*: '[...] the figurative use of the word can't come into conflict with the original one.' However, Wittgenstein himself, for reasons we can now understand, frequently interpreted literally the figurative use of a word or of an expression, as revealed by this report made by Pascal:

> I had my tonsils out and was in the Evelyn Nursing Home feeling sorry for myself. Wittgenstein called. I croaked: I feel just like a

> dog that has been run over. He was disgusted: "You don't know what a dog that has been run over feels like."

According to philosopher Rebecca Goldstein, this episode proves that Wittgenstein's logical austerity was 'attached to his person as well, as if the purity of formal logic had been embodied in the man, its standards of absolute truth imposed on human behavior.' Or rather, in light of the diagnosis of autism: the episode confirms that an absence of imagination due to ASD had left Wittgenstein with predominantly logical, fixed, concrete, literal ways of talking and thinking. And as would be expected, Wittgenstein's reflections on language were manifestly shaped by this way of talking and thinking.

2. Wittgenstein's grammatical inquiries

> *Philosophy is a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding by the resources of our language.* (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*)
>
> *Philosophy, as we use the word, is a fight against the fascination which forms of expression exert upon us.* (Wittgenstein, *The Blue Book*)
>
> *Philosophy points out the misleading analogies in the use of our language.* (Wittgenstein, *The Big Typescript*)

2.1 Deformities of thinking

Despite his 'pride of Lucifer,' as Russell termed it, Wittgenstein admitted in a notebook:

> I think there is some truth in my idea that I am really only reproductive in my thinking. I think I have never *invented* a line of thinking but that it was always provided for me by someone else & I have done no more than passionately take it up for my work of clarification. That is how Boltzmann Hertz Schopenhauer Frege, Russell, Kraus, Loos Weininger Spengler, Sraffa have influenced me.

There is certainly some truth in Wittgenstein's idea that he was really only reproductive in his thinking. In the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, by stating that the method of formulating the problems of philosophy 'rests on the misunderstanding of the logic of our language' and that 'the object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts,' Wittgenstein essentially reproduced Russell's idea that 'every philosophical problem, when it is subjected to the necessary analysis and purification, is found either to be not really philosophical at all, or else to be, in the sense in which we are using the word, logical.' Later, between the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, after acknowledging that the 'method of logical analysis in philosophy' had not really led him to solve philosophical problems, as he had stated in the preface to the *Tractatus*, that is, after acknowledging that 'the truth of the thoughts' communicated in the *Tractatus* was not in fact 'unassailable and definitive,' as he had also stated in the book's preface, Wittgenstein would exchange logic for "grammar" and go on to defend the idea that every philosophical problem is, in the sense in which he was using the word, grammatical. Thus, being convinced that 'philosophical problems arise when language *goes on holiday*,' Wittgenstein is again categorical:

> Our inquiry is [...] a grammatical one. And this inquiry sheds light on our problem by clearing misunderstandings away. Misunderstandings concerning the use of words, brought about, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of our language [...].

Wittgenstein's inquiry is a grammatical one. But does his inquiry indeed shed light on our problem by clearing misunderstandings away? And are Wittgenstein's misunderstandings concerning the use of words our misunderstandings? In the *Blue Book*, for instance, Wittgenstein states: 'When words in our ordinary language have

prima facie analogous grammars we are inclined to try to interpret them analogously; i.e. we try to make the analogy hold throughout.' In the same work, Wittgenstein gives illuminating examples of words in our ordinary language that are supposedly interpreted analogously by mathematicians because they supposedly have prima facie analogous grammars:

> [...] we may say of some philosophizing mathematicians that they are obviously not aware of the difference between the many different usages of the word "proof"; and that they are not clear about the difference between the uses of the word "kind", when they talk of kinds of numbers, kinds of proofs, as though the word "kind" here meant the same thing as in the context, "kinds of apples". Or, we may say, they are not aware of the different *meanings* of the word "discovery", when in one case we talk of the discovery of the construction of the pentagon and in the other case of the discovery of the South Pole.

We may say of Wittgenstein that he extended to mathematicians his own misunderstandings concerning the use of words, brought about, among other things, by certain analogies between concrete and abstract forms of expression. He believed that mathematicians were not aware of the difference between the usages of the words "proof" and "kind," when they talk of kinds of numbers and kinds of proofs (abstract regions), and "kinds of apples" (concrete region). And also that they were not aware of the different *meanings* of the word "discovery,", when in one case we talk of the discovery of the construction of the geometric pentagon (abstract region) and in the other case of the discovery of the South Pole (concrete region). The latter is certainly a grammatical inquiry concerning the old analogy made by mathematicians between a mathematical discovery and the discovery of a continent.

This analogy was recently made in the first episode of the TV series *The History of Mathematics*, produced by the BBC a few years ago, in reference to the discovery by the Pythagoreans of irrational numbers: 'The discovery of this new number and others like it is akin to an explorer discovering a new continent or a naturalist finding a new species,' said Oxford mathematician Professor Du Sautoy. Not coincidentally, the same analogy was made by mathematician Wu Yi Hsiang in his book *A Concise Introduction to Calculus*: 'Hippasus's discovery of non-commensurable pairs of intervals demonstrates the existence of irrational numbers which can be compared to the discovery of a new continent in mathematics.'

The old analogy made by mathematicians between a mathematical discovery and the discovery of a continent may have led Wittgenstein to explain the different meanings of the word "discovery" and to criticize with the philosopher Friedrich Waismann the conception that the logician Gottlob Frege had of numbers: 'He thinks that numbers are already there somehow, so that the discovery of imaginary numbers is comparable, let us say, to the discovery of an unknown continent.' Frege indeed thought that numbers are already there somehow, and that the mathematicians discover rather than invent them, as he wrote in § 96 of his *Foundations of Arithmetic*: '[...] the mathematician cannot create things at will, any more than the geographer can; he too can only discover what is there and give it a name.' Russell as well thought that numbers are already there somehow, and that the mathematicians discover rather than invent them, as he argued in § 427 of the *Principles of Mathematics*, the reading of which attracted Wittgenstein to philosophy: '[...] Arithmetic must be discovered in just the same sense in which Columbus discovered the West Indies, and we no more create numbers than he created the Indians.'

Many centuries before Frege and Russell, the Platonist Augustine thought that numbers are already there somehow, and that the mathematicians discover them rather than invent them. For example, chapter 38 of the second book of his treatise *On Christian*

Doctrine is entitled "The science of numbers not created, but only discovered, by man." Augustine says:

> Coming now to the science of number, it is clear to the dullest apprehension that this was not created by man, but was discovered by investigation. For, though Virgil could at his own pleasure make the first syllable of Italia long, while the ancients pronounced it short, it is not in any man's power to determine at his pleasure that three times three are not nine, or do not make a square, or are not the triple of three, nor one and a half times the number six, or that it is not true that they are not the double of any number because odd numbers have no half. Whether, then, numbers are considered in themselves, or as applied to the laws of figures, or of sounds, or of other motions, they have fixed laws which were not made by man, but which the acuteness of ingenious men brought to light.

But the fact that Augustine, Frege, and Russell thought, like so many other philosophers and mathematicians, that numbers are already there somehow, and that mathematicians discover rather than invent them, does not mean that they were not aware of the different *meanings* of the word "discovery," when in one case we talk of a mathematical discovery and in the other case of a geographical discovery. Proof of this is that in the preface to *Introduction to Mathematical Thinking*, the book in which Wittgenstein's and Waismann's criticism of Frege is reproduced, Waismann resorts precisely to the analogy between a mathematical discovery and a geographical discovery – without, of course, any misunderstanding:

> Proceeding from intuitive points of view, Leibniz and Newton created differential and integral calculus. In the eighteenth century, these investigations soared extraordinarily,

> one brilliant discovery following another in the sphere of pure analysis as well as in the domain of their applications. This period of mathematics has been compared, not unjustly, with the period of the great discoverers and the heroes of the sea. The mathematicians of that age had the feeling of stepping into a new intellectual world, eager to explore the contours of the continent that sprang up before them out of the mist.

In fact, the analogy between a mathematical discovery and a geographical discovery has been made for centuries in order to express the idea that revolutionary mathematical investigations open up new fields (or new continents, if you prefer) of research to be explored. The same analogy also refers to the realist conception of mathematics, according to which mathematical objects exist in some way independently of human nature, and it is up to mathematicians to discover them, not invent them. Thus, there is no misunderstanding in the use of this analogy. However, for reasons we now understand, an analogy between the forms of expression in different regions of our language led Wittgenstein to find it important to make explicit the different meanings of a word, as he did in a class in the early 1930s:

> "To look for" has two different meanings in the phrases "to look for something at the North Pole", "to look for a solution to a problem". One difference between an expedition of discovery to the North Pole and an attempt to find a mathematical solution is that with the former it is possible to describe beforehand what is looked for, whereas in mathematics when you describe the solution you have made the expedition and have found what you looked for. The description of the proof is the proof itself, whereas to find the thing at the North Pole [it is not enough to describe it]. You must make the expedition.

But does this grammatical inquiry about an abstract meaning of the expression "to look for" ("to look for a solution to a problem") in analogy with a concrete meaning of the same expression ("to look for something at the North Pole") shed light on any problem of the mathematicians? Does this grammatical inquiry shed light on any problem of ours?

In another lecture in the early 1930s, Wittgenstein told the students, in yet another grammatical inquiry concerning an abstract meaning of "looking" in analogy with a concrete meaning of the same verb:

> [...] there are lots of different processes we call "looking in our memory". The latter phrase is a simile taken from "looking in a room". Obviously looking in a room is different from looking in memory. There is a possibility of covering the area in the case of the former so that if what is sought is there one will find it. Also, we can say of looking in a room that the thing sought is either there or not. But this cannot be said of memory. Looking in memory is comparable to depending on a mechanism which either does or does not work, like pushing a row of bottons, none of which may ring the bell.

But to whom would it be necessary to shed light on the fact that looking in a room (concrete region) is different from looking in memory (abstract region)? To whom would all this grammatical inquiry be necessary? 'I ought to be no more than a mirror, in which my reader can see his own thinking with all its deformities so that, helped in this way, he can put it right,' Wittgenstein wrote in 1931. But are the deformities of Wittgenstein's thinking the deformities of his reader's thinking?

2.2 A superficial interpretation of the forms of our everyday language

In addition to extending to others his misunderstandings concerning the use of words, Wittgenstein attributed to mathematical logic a superficial interpretation of language. In the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, for example, he states:

> "Mathematical logic" has completely distorted the thinking of mathematicians and philosophers by declaring a superficial interpretation of the forms of our everyday language to be an analysis of the structures of facts. In this, of course, it has only continued to build on the Aristotelian logic.

But to whom could mathematical logic seem to have declared a superficial interpretation of the forms of our everyday language? Suggestively, Wittgenstein argues in *Philosophical Grammar*:

> The real difficulty lies in the concept of "(∃n)" and in general of "(∃x)". The original source of this notation is the expression of our word-language: "There is a... with such and such properties". And here what replaces the dots is something like "book from my library" or "thing (body) in this room", "word in this letter", etc. We think of objects that we can go through one after the other. As so often happens a process of sublimation turned this form into "there is an object such that..." and here too people imagined originally the objects of the world as like 'objects' in the room (the tables, chairs, books, etc.), although it is clear that in many cases the grammar of this "(∃x), etc." is not at all the same as the grammar of the primitive case which serves as a paradigm.

> The discrepancy between the original picture and the one to which the notation is now applied becomes particularly palpable when a proposition like "there are two circles in this square" is rendered as "there is no object that has the property of being a circle in this square without being the circle a or the circle b or "there are not three objects that have the property of being a circle in this square". The proposition "there are only two things that are circles in this square" (construed on the model of the proposition "there are only two men who have climbed this mountain") sounds crazy, with good reason. That is to say, nothing is gained by forcing the proposition "there are two circles in this square" into that form; it only helps to conceal that we haven't cleared up the grammar of the proposition. But at the same time the Russellian notation here gives an appearance of exactitude which makes people believe the problems are solved by putting the proposition into the Russellian form. [...]
>
> "One of the four legs of this table doesn't hold", "There are Englishmen with black hair", "There is a speck on this wall", "The two pots have the same weight", "There are the same number of words on each of the two pages". In all these cases in the Russellian notation the "(∃...)..." is used, and each time with a different grammar. The point I want to make is that nothing much is gained by translating such a sentence from word-language into Russellian notation.

And the point I want to make is that nothing much is gained by Wittgenstein's gramatical inquiries, since he extended to other people his own misunderstandings concerning the use of words, brought about, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of our language.

Another point I want to make is that philosopher Geoffrey Warnock, who was a disciple of Wittgenstein, made similar criticisms of Russell's notation before the posthumous publication of the *Philosophical Grammar*, which were duly refuted by Russell in the book *My Philosophical Development* with the aid of a fable about the "Isidians." According to Russell, the language of the Isidians contained the words 'minnow,' 'trout,' 'perch,' and 'pike' but did not contain the word 'fish.' Someday a group of the tribe caught what we call a salmon. By not having a name to call that animal, those Isidians debated furiously about how they should call it. A stranger arrived and said that in his tribe they have the word 'fish,' which applies equally to minnows, trout, perch and pike, and also to that creature which was causing so much debate. But the Isidians regarded the word 'fish' as a piece of useless pedantry. 'Mr Warnock says that the existential quantifier confuses things that common speech distinguishes,' Russell observes. 'This is exactly as if the Isidians had complained that a man who uses the word "fish" confuses minnows with pike.'[1]

Believing that Russellian notation confuses things that common speech distinguishes, Wittgenstein presented some grammatical inquiries similar to those of *Philosophical Grammar* in a 1939 philosophy of mathematics class and concluded:

> These discussions have had one point: to show the essential difference between the uses of mathematical propositions and the uses of non-mathematical propositions which seem to be exactly analogous to them.
>
> Mathematical propositions are first of all English sentences; not only English sentences, but each mathematical proposition has a

1 The discussion of how Wittgenstein distorted logicians' search for a perfect logical language by attributing to them errors and confusions about ordinary language that they never made, is taken up again in chapter 8.

> resemblance to certain non-mathematical propositions. – Mathematicians, when they begin to philosophize, always make the mistake of overlooking the difference in function between mathematical propositions and non-mathematical propositions.

But which mathematicians, when they begin to philosophize, always make the mistake of overlooking the difference in function between mathematical propositions and non-mathematical propositions? Moreover, to whom might mathematical propositions seem to be exactly analogous to the uses of non-mathematical propositions? And to whom might it seem relevant to clarify, as Wittgenstein did, that 'statements of number *within* mathematics (e.g. "The equation $x^2 = 1$ has 2 roots") are [...] quite a different kind of thing from statements of number outside mathematics ("There are 2 apples on the table")'? 'All the errors that have been made in this chapter of the philosophy of mathematics are based on the confusion between internal properties of a form (a rule as one among a list of rules) and what we call "properties" in everyday life (red as a property of this book),' Wittgenstein added. 'We might also say: the contradictions and unclarities are brought about by people using a single word, e.g., "number", to mean at one time a definite set of rules, and at another time a variable set, like meaning by "chess" on one occasion the definite game we play today, and on another occasion the substratum of a particular historical development.'

For reasons we now understand, all the errors that were made by Wittgenstein in this chapter of his philosophy of mathematics were, in his awkward terminology, based on the confusion between internal properties of a form (a rule as one among a list of rules) and what he called "properties" in everyday life. We might better say: his contradictions and unclarities were brought about by people using a single word in different regions of our language – errors, contradictions and unclarities (blindness to different contexts) that Wittgenstein falsely imputed to mathematicians and to other philosophers.

2.3 An utterance of mental discomfort

At the same time that he wrote the *Philosophical Grammar*, Wittgenstein told his students: 'The use of a word is what is defined by the rules, just as the use of the king of chess is defined by the rules.' And he observed:

> We shall compare the use of language to playing a game according to exact rules, because all philosophical troubles arise from making up too simple a system of rules. Philosophers try to tabulate the rules, and because there are so many things to misled them, for instance, analogies, they lay down the rules wrongly.

But do all philosophical troubles really arise from making up too simple a system of rules? Of course not. Besides, which philosophers have been misled by the analogies that Wittgenstein investigated for so many years, such as the analogy between time and a river? 'We talk of the flow of time and consider it sensible to talk of its flow, after the analogy of rivers,' Wittgenstein warned in another lecture from the early 1930s. But to whom might it seem insensible to talk about the flow of time (abstract region) after the old analogy of rivers (concrete region)? Symptomatically, Wittgenstein proposed to the students to imagine a river in which numbered logs were floating, so that it would be possible to describe events on land with reference to them: '*When* the 105th log passed, I ate dinner,' he said by way of example. Based on this image of numbered logs floating in a river, Wittgenstein observed:

> Suppose that the passing logs seem to be equal distances apart. We have an experience of what might be called the velocity of these (though not what is measured by a clock). Let us say the river moves uniformly in this sense. But if we say *time* passed more quickly between logs 1

> and 100 than between logs 100 and 200, this is only an analogy, really nothing has passed more quickly. To say time passes more quickly, or that time flows, is to imagine *something* flowing. We then extend the simile and talk about the direction of time. When people talk of the direction of time, precisely the analogy of a river is before them. Of course a river can change its direction of flow, but one has a feeling of giddiness when one talks of time being reversed. The reason is that the notion of flowing, of *something*, and of the direction of the flow is embodied in our language.

But when people talk of the direction of time (abstract region), is the analogy of a river (concrete region) necessarily before them? Of course not. Moreover, it is true that a river can change its direction of flow, unlike time, which cannot be reversed. But who could have a feeling of giddiness when one talks of time being reversed? To whom could the notion of flowing, of *something*, and of the direction of the flow cause a feeling of giddiness for being embodied in our language? And who could believe that the philosophical problems concerning time arise when language *goes on holiday*?

> Can time go on apart from events? What is the criterion for time involved in "Events began 100 years ago and time began 200 years ago"? Has time been created, or was the world created in time? These questions are asked after the analogy of "Has this chair been made?", and are like asking whether order has been created (a "before" and "after"). "Time" as a substantive is terribly misleading. We have got to make the rules of the game before we play it. Discussion of "the flow of time" shows how philosophical problems arise. Philosophical troubles are caused by not using language practically but by extending it on looking at it. We form sentences

> and then wonder what they can mean. Once conscious of "time" as a substantive, we ask then about the creation of time.

And once conscious of Wittgenstein's grammatical inquiry about the substantive "time," has any misunderstanding, any mistake of ours been cleared away? After all, to whom could the noun "time" seem terribly misleading? To whom could "the flow of time" be so problematic? And to whom might it be confusing, as pointed out by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, that 'most of our understanding of time is a metaphorical version of our understanding of motion?'

Still concerned with questions of time, Wittgenstein suggested in the *Philosophical Grammar*:

> Let us consider a particular philosophical problem, such as "How is it possible to measure a period of time, since the past and the future aren't present and the present is only a point?" The characteristic feature of this is that a confusion is expressed in the form of a question that doesn't acknowledge the confusion, and that what *releases* the questioner from his problem is a particular alteration of his method of expression.

In the *Blue Book*, Wittgenstein resumes the discussion about time and how it is possible to measure it, attributing to St. Augustine a confusion that he never had:

> Consider as an example the question "What is time?" as Saint Augustine and others have asked it. [...] it is the grammar of the word "time" which puzzles us. We are only expressing this puzzlement by asking a slightly misleading question, the question: "What is ... ?" This question is an utterance of unclarity,

> of mental discomfort; and it is comparable with the question "Why?" as children so often ask it. [...] Now the puzzlement about the grammar of the word "time" arises from what one might call apparent contradictions in that grammar.
>
> It was such a "contradiction" which puzzled Saint Augustine when he argued: How is it possible that one should measure time? For the past can't be measured, as it is gone by; and the future can't be measured because it has not yet come. And the present can't be measured because it has no extension.
>
> The contradiction which here seems to arise could be called a conflict between two different usages of a word, in this case the word "measure". Augustine, we might say, thinks of the process of measuring a *length*: say, the distance between two marks on a travelling band which passes us, and of which we can only see a tiny bit (the present) in front of us. Solving this puzzle will consist in comparing what we mean by "measurement" (the grammar of the word "measurement") when applied to a distance on a travelling band with the grammar of that word when applied to time. The problem may seem simple, but its extreme difficulty is due to the fascination which the analogy between two similar structures in our language can exert on us.

For Wittgenstein, therefore, it is the grammar of the word "time" which puzzles us and the extreme difficulty of the problem is due to the fascination which the analogy between two similar structures in our language can exert on us. But is there really such a "fascination"? Without any fascination, St. Augustine asks himself in the *Confessions*: 'But what do we measure, unless it is a time of some length? For we cannot speak of single, and double, and triple, and equal, and all the other ways in which we speak

of time, except in terms of the length of the periods of time.' Nor is there any fascination or a conflict between the usages of the word "measure," when applied to a distance on a travelling band (concrete region) and when applied to time (abstract region), in the other few philosophers Wittgenstein studied. Nor in Aristotle, whose texts Wittgenstein claimed proudly never to have read.[2] In the *Categories*, Aristotle states:

> Space and time also belong to this class of quantities [i.e, they are continuous]. Time, past, present, and future, forms a continuous whole. Space, likewise, is a continuous quantity; for the parts of a solid occupy a certain space, and these have a common boundary; it follows that the parts of space also, which are occupied by the parts of the solid, have the same common boundary as the parts of the solid. Thus, not only time, but space also, is a continuous quantity, for its parts have a common boundary.

Since time and space are continuous, we apply the word "measure" to both, without any conflict between two different usages of the word. Furthermore, the question "What is time?" is not a slightly misleading question, neither an utterance of unclarity, of mental discomfort. Saint Augustine himself questions in his *Confessions* what is time due to his believing that an eternal being has created us. In other words, Augustine reflects on time in the face of the difficulty of understanding how this entire finite world, inhabited by finite beings, was created by an eternal being, whose existence would precede the creation of time itself. Hence,

2 Wittgenstein used to show pride for not having studied philosophy properly and for having read just a few philosophers. It is possible that this was just a defense mechanism since there is evidence and testimony from Wittgenstein himself that he had difficulties reading and writing. For a discussion of this topic in light of the diagnosis of autism, see Appendix I.

Augustine's puzzlement about the question regarding time does not arise from what one might call apparent contradictions in the grammar of that word, as Wittgenstein claimed. For this reason, Augustine would not be released from the question "what is time?" and of the question about how it is possible to measure it, if he altered his method of expression, because it is not a confusion that is expressed in the form of a question that doesn't acknowledge the confusion.[3]

2.4 A sure means of remaining stuck in confusion

Being persuaded that 'an inappropriate expression is a sure means of remaining stuck in confusion,' Wittgenstein intended to solve philosophical problems with his grammatical inquiries. According to him, philosophy 'is simply a course in thinking – clearing away confusions' and 'once these are cleared away one is prepared for other work.' However, the confusions can never be fully cleared away because, as Russell said in the introduction to the *Tractatus*, 'in practice, language is always more or less vague, so that what we assert is never quite precise.' To make matters worse, individual and cultural differences between people cause the same words and expressions to have different meanings to them. Consequently, there is always the possibility of confusions and misunderstandings between them.

Wittgenstein himself, as might be predicted, gives abundant testimonies of confusions in his personal relations that have never been cleared away. In the early 1930s, for example, Wittgenstein noted in his diary: 'It is strange when two different worlds can live in two rooms one beneath the other. This happens when I live below the two students who make noise above me. These are really two worlds & no communication is possible.' By then a prestigious

3 For other examples of Wittgenstein's grammatical inquiries, see sections 6.6 and 7.2 and Appendix III.

philosopher in his 40s and a war veteran of the shattered Austro-Hungarian Empire, Wittgenstein was not exaggerating when he said that his world was not the world of his student neighbors. However, Wittgenstein's world was also not the world of his comrades in uniform in the First World War, whom he called 'a bunch of delinquents' that had 'no enthusiasm for anything, unbelievably crude, stupid and malicious,' individuals 'so much mean as *appallingly* limited,' so that it was 'almost impossible to work with them,' because they forever misunderstood. As a teenager at school in Linz, where he had only one close friend and was harassed by most of the students, Wittgenstein also did not get along with his classmates, whom he described as *'Mist'* ('muck').

In milder circumstances, Wittgenstein would also find worlds completely different from his own, in which no understanding would be possible. In the mid-1940s, for example, Wittgenstein lived for a time in the home of a Methodist minister, the Reverend Wynford Morgan. When asked if he believed in God, Wittgenstein was categorical: 'Yes I do, but the difference between what you believe and what I believe may be infinite.' May be infinite as well the difference between what Reverend Morgan believed, what Wittgenstein believed, and what Russell believed: 'What you call God is very much what I call infinity,' Russell wrote to Ottoline Morrell in 1911.

In view of differences such as these between Wittgenstein, Reverend Morgan, and Russell regarding what they meant by God, it is understandable that Wittgenstein wondered: 'How do I know that two people mean the same thing when each says he believes in God?' Wittgenstein offers an answer: 'Practice gives the words their sense.' Indeed, practice gives the words their sense. However, as Frege notes in the paper "On Sense and Reference," 'it is to be noted that, on account of the uncertain connexion of ideas with words, a difference may hold for one person, which another does not find.' And this, more than any other, is a sure means of remaining stuck in confusion. But, apparently ignoring this fact, Wittgenstein would go on to try to solve philosophical problems with his grammatical

inquiries. To complicate matters, Wittgenstein would do so by thinking that 'the philosopher is someone who has to cure many diseases of the understanding in himself, before he can arrive at the notions of common sense.'

2.5 Beyond the common perception of the world: the philosophical perplexity

Starting from the assumption that the philosopher suffers from many diseases of the understanding that do not torment the ordinary man, Wittgenstein told his students in a 1936 lecture:

> We have the feeling that the ordinary man, if he talks of 'good', of 'number' etc., does not really understand what he is talking about. I see something queer about perception and he talks about it as if it were not queer at all. Should we say he knows what he is talking about or not? You can say both. Suppose people are playing chess. I see queer problems when I look into the rules and scrutinise them. But Smith and Brown play chess with no difficulty. Do they understand the game? Well, they play it.

In the lectures of that year, Wittgenstein recurrently defended, against the philosophers, the common perception of the world. 'When a philosopher raises doubts, about time or about mental states, that do not occur to the ordinary man, this is not because the philosopher has more insight than the ordinary man,' Monk explains Wittgenstein's position, 'but because, in a way, he has less; he is subject to temptations to misunderstand that do not occur to the non-philosopher.' It is true that the philosopher is subject to temptations to misunderstand that do not occur to the non-philosopher, because the philosopher sees queer problems when he looks into the rules and scrutinise them. Martin Heidegger, for

example, unlike the ordinary man, sees queer problems regarding the concept of being and therefore wonders about its meaning:

> [...] it is held that 'Being' is of all concepts the one that is self evident. Whenever one cognizes anything or makes an assertion, whenever one comports oneself towards entities, even towards oneself, some use is made of 'Being'; and this expression is held to be intelligible 'without further ado', just as everyone understands 'The sky *is* blue', 'I *am* merry', and the like. But here we have an average kind of intelligibility, which merely demonstrates that this is unintelligible.

Aware that an average kind of intelligibility merely demonstrates unintelligibility (i.e., aware that 'within the range of basic philosophical concepts – especially when we come to the concept of 'Being' – it is a dubious procedure to invoke self-evidence, even if the "self-evident" [...] is to become the sole explicit and abiding theme for one's analytic – 'the business of philosophers'), Heidegger points out that the question of the meaning of being must be raised again in order to overcome the vague average understanding of this concept.

Like Heidegger, Leo Tolstoy could see queer problems when he looked into the rules and scrutinised them. For this reason, he raised again the question regarding the meaning of art in order to overcome the vague average understanding of this concept:

> What is art? Why even ask such a question? Art is architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry in all its forms – that is the usual answer of the average man, of the art lover, and even of the artist himself, who assumes that what he is talking about is understood quite clearly and in the same way by all people. But in architecture,

> one may object, there are simple buildings that are not works of art, and buildings that claim to be works of art, but are unsuccessful, ugly, and which therefore cannot be regarded as works of art. What, then, is the sign of a work of art?

For the average man, Tolstoy observes, the sign of a work of art is beauty, not including, however, activities such as that of the tailor, the hairdresser, the costume-maker and the chef. But experts such as Renan, Kralik, and Guyau, with whom Tolstoy agreed, include these activities among artistic activities. Moreover, aware that 'the more vague and confused the concept conveyed by a word, the greater is the aplomb and assurance with which people use the word, pretending that what is understood by this word is so simple and clear that it is not even worth talking about what it actually means,' Tolstoy warns about the concept of beauty: 'After thousands of learned men have discussed it for one hundred and fifty years, the meaning of the word beauty has remained a riddle.' Having seen this queer problem, Tolstoy raised again the question regarding the meaning of beauty in order to overcome the vague average understanding of this concept:

> What [...] is this strange concept of beauty, which seems so comprehensible to those who do not think about what they are saying, while for one hundred and fty years, philosophers of various nations and of the most various trends have been unable to agree on its denition? What is this concept of beauty, upon which the reigning doctrine of art is based?

Not coincidentally, in his question about the meaning of beauty, Tolstoy expresses the same perplexity as St. Augustine in his famous question about the meaning of time, which Wittgenstein quotes in § 89 of the *Philosophical Investigations*: 'Quid est ergo tempus? si nemo ex me quaerat scio; si quaerenti explicare velim,

nescio.' (What then is time? If no one asks me, I know, if I want to explain it to someone who asks, I do not know.) Nor coincidentally, in his question about the meaning of being, Heidegger expresses the same perplexity as Tolstoy in his question about the sense of beauty and the same perplexity as Augustine in his question about the sense of time, attesting to the truth underlined by Plato that for philosophy there is only one beginning: perplexity.

2.6 The essence and core of all things

Being perplexed, philosophers question what seems self-evident to the ordinary man in search of the 'greatest knowledge of all, the knowledge of the essence and core of all things,' as Friedrich Nietzsche states. Unaware, however, of the fact pointed out by Aristotle that 'it was natural that Socrates should be seeking the essence, for he was seeking to syllogize,' and '"what a thing is" is the starting-point of syllogisms,' Wittgenstein thought that this philosophical search originated under the influence of the scientific method:

> Our craving for generality has another main source: our preoccupation with the method of science. I mean the method of reducing the explanation of natural phenomena to the smallest possible number of primitive natural laws; and, in mathematics, of unifying the treatment of different topics by using a generalization. Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does. This tendency is the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness.

For Wittgenstein, the search for essences is an example of the 'craving for generality' that arises as a result of our preoccupation with the method of science. This is, of course, an expected mistake from someone who knew so little about the history of philosophy and who was ignorant of Aristotle's teaching that 'two things may be fairly ascribed to Socrates – inductive arguments and universal definition, both of which are concerned with the starting-point of science [*archēn epistēmēs*]'. Thus, the search for essences in philosophy did not originate under the influence of science. On the contrary, it is the search for essences in science that originated under the influence of philosophy.

Indeed, as Heidegger states in his *Introduction to Philosophy*, philosophy is in fact the origin of science, and in antiquity, philosophy does not fall into the genus of sciences. On the contrary, it is the sciences that are 'philosophies' of a particular type. Familiar with all this, Nietzsche argues not only that natural science is 'the youngest of all philosophical methods,' but also states that Socrates is the father of scientific knowledge. In this way, the search for essences, the 'craving for generality,' does not arise as a result of our preoccupation with the method of science, because it is prior to science itself, as emphasized by Nietzsche and Heidegger in accordance with Aristotle, who points out that 'there is knowledge of each thing only when we know its essence.' Wittgenstein, however, never understood the philosophical search for the greatest knowledge of all. Much less the maieutic art, which he came to distort:

> The idea that in order to get clear about the meaning of a general term one had to find the common element in all its applications, has shackled philosophical investigation; for it has not only led to no result, but also made the philosopher dismiss as irrelevant the concrete cases, which alone could have helped him to understand the usage of the general term. When Socrates asks the question, "what

> is knowledge?" he does not even regard it as a *preliminary* answer to enumerate cases of knowledge.

Contradicting Wittgenstein, Socrates considers in the *Theaetetus* as a preliminary answer to the question "what is knowledge?" the enumeration of such cases of knowledge as geometry, astronomy, music, arithmetic, shoemaking, and other arts of craftsmanship and carpentry. But Socrates doesn't just want a preliminary answer, but the knowledge of the essence and core of the concept of knowledge. Because Wittgenstein never understood the philosophical search for the greatest knowledge of all, nor the maieutic art, it is no wonder that when he read the Socratic dialogues, he had the feeling of 'a frightful waste of time.' 'What's the point of these arguments that prove nothing & clarify nothing?' Nor is it any wonder that Wittgenstein failed to appreciate Plato:

> Plato's arguments! His pertence of discussion! The Socratic irony! The Socratic method! The arguments were bad, the pertence of discussion too obvious, the Socratic irony distasteful [...]. As for the Socratic methods in the dialogues, it simply isn't there. The interlocutors are ninnies, never have any arguments of their own, say "Yes" and "No" as Socrates pleases they should.

Nor is it any wonder that Wittgenstein never understood the greatness of Socrates, 'the grand master of all ironists' in Søren Kierkegaard's estimation:

> It has puzzled me why Socrates is regarded as a great philosopher. Because when Socrates asks for the meaning of a word and people give him examples of how that word is used, he isn't satisfied but wants a unique definition. Now

> if someone shows me how a word is used and its different meanings, that is just the sort of answer I want.

Unsurprisingly, Wittgenstein also did not understand Friedrich Hegel – whom he, by the way, never read – in his search for the greatest knowledge of all: 'Hegel seems to me to be always wanting to say that things which look different are really the same. Whereas my interest is in showing that things which look the same are really different.' And Wittgenstein seems to me to be always wanting to say something trivial: that things which look different are really different. This impression is confirmed by the fact that Wittgenstein considered using Bishop Joseph Butler's phrase "Everything is what it is, and not another thing" as a motto for *Philosophical Investigations*. Now, it is obvious that everything is what it is, and not another thing, but what is necessary, Arthur Schopenhauer sums up, is 'recognizing and thinking different things just as different (despite their partial similarity), and also thinking identical things just as identical (despite their partial difference); and all in accordance with the aim and viewpoint that prevails on each occasion: all this is achieved by *judgement*.' That is, completes Schopenhauer, 'as Plato has so often remarked, recognizing the identical in different appearances and the different in similar appearances is the precondition for philosophy.' Averse to this, Wittgenstein once said that his method could be summed up by saying that it was the exact opposite of that of Socrates.

In order to synthesize his position, Wittgenstein also considered using *King Lear*'s phrase as the epigraph of the *Philosophical Investigations*: "I'll teach you differences." Teaching differences might seem important to Wittgenstein, but philosophically it would have been a dubious procedure. After all, it was obvious to Socrates that geometry, astronomy, music, arithmetic, shoemaking, and other arts of craftsmanship and carpentry are different activities. It was not at all obvious to him, however, what is the common feature whose recognition allows us to address all these phenomena,

which differ so much, by the same name: knowledge. It was also obvious to Socrates that hunger and thirst and many other things of this sort are desires, but it was not at all obvious to him what the common feature is whose recognition allows us to address all these phenomena, which differ so much, by the same name, as he argued with Protarcus, without proving anything and clarifying anything to Wittgenstein:

> *Socrates* – Are we agreed now that hunger and thirst and many other things of this sort are desires?
>
> *Protarchus* – Quite in agreement.
>
> *Socrates* – But what is the common feature whose recognition allows us to address all these phenomena, which differ so much, by the same name?
>
> *Protarchus* – Heavens, that is perhaps not an easy thing to determine, Socrates, but it must be done nevertheless.

Aware that it is not an easy thing to determine what the common feature is whose recognition allows us to address phenomena that differ so much by the same name, a task that nevertheless must be done, philosophers want to know 'if definition is possible, or in other words, if essential form is knowable,' as Aristotle observed. Moreover, being aware like Nietzsche that 'every concept arises from the equation of unequal things,' philosophers recall Aristotle's lesson that 'argument about definitions is mostly concerned with questions of sameness and difference.' Thus, when we argue about the definition of a concept as art, we are mostly concerned with questions of sameness and difference – i.e., we argue about, for example, whether the activities of the tailor, the hairdresser, the costume-maker and the chef are equal to the activities of the architect, the sculptor, the painter, the musician, and the poet. In other words, we argue about whether all these unequal activities

can be equated under the concept of art, as Renan, Kralik, Guyau and Tolstoy defended, or not.

2.7 Clearing up the muddle

Having never understood philosophers' search for the essence and core of all things, Wittgenstein wondered:

> What is philosophy? An enquiry into the essence of the world? We want a final answer, or some description of the world, whether verifiable or not.
>
> What we are in fact doing is to tidy up our notions, to make clear what *can* be said about the world. We are in a muddle about what can be said, and are trying to clear up that muddle.
>
> This activity of clearing up is philosophy.

What is philosophy? Wittgenstein wanted a final answer, just as he wanted a final philosophical method that would solve these problems once and for all. By doing so, Wittgenstein was ignoring the truth highlighted by Heidegger that 'philosophical questions are in principle never settled as if some day one could set them aside.' In fact, Wittgenstein longed to solve philosophical problems once and for all without realizing the fact pointed out by Heidegger in his *Introduction to Philosophy* that science is always inconclusive, open, and therefore there is progress and development in it, there are results, that is, something that can become obsolete. In philosophy, on the other hand, no results can be recorded, and therefore it can never become obsolete. Thus, Heidegger emphasizes, we must repeat the old problems in the philosophical tradition.[4] Assuming,

4 This seems to be the fundamental difference between Wittgenstein and Heidegger, which has not been captured by researchers who have compared the work of the

however, that philosophical problems stem from misunderstandings concerning the use of words and that 'language sets everyone the same traps,' Wittgenstein thought that we are still occupied with the same philosophical problems because our language has remained the same and keeps seducing us into asking the same questions:

> People say again and again that that philosophy doesn't really progress, that we are still occupied with the same philosophical problems as were the Greeks. But the people who say this don't understand why it has to be so. It is because our language has remained the same and keeps seducing us into asking the same questions. As long as there continues to be a verb 'to be' that looks as if it functions in the same way as 'to eat' and 'to drink', as long as we still have the adjectives 'identical', 'true', 'false', 'possible', as long as we continue to talk of a river of time, of an expanse of space, etc., etc., people will keep stumbling over the same puzzling difficulties and find themselves staring at something which no explanation seems capable of clearing up.

In fact, people say again and again that that philosophy doesn't really progress, that we are still occupied with the same philosophical problems as were the Greeks, because Western philosophy is essentially Greek philosophy. Besides, in philosophy, as is well known, the important thing is not so much the answers, but the questions. So, those who say that philosophy doesn't really progress because our language has remained the same and keeps

two philosophers, such as Stephen Mulhall (1993), Lee Braver (2012) and José Arthur Giannotti (2020). While Wittgenstein intended to solve philosophical problems once and for all, Heidegger knew that every answer to such problems is provisional; that the investigation is always 'on the way' and that 'the lasting element in thinking is the way.'

seducing us into asking the same questions, don't understand Aristotle's remarks that 'all men by nature desire to know' and that 'for it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophize; they wondered originally at the obvious difficulties, then advanced little by little and stated difficulties about the greater matters, e.g. about the phenomena of the moon and those of the sun and of the stars, and about the genesis of the universe.' For it is owing to their wonder that men also raise questions concerning how to live, because, as Plato taught, 'the most important thing is not life, but the good life.'

Given, therefore, that philosophical problems arise owing to the wonder of men, not when language *goes on holiday*, it is not surprising that Wittgenstein himself never drew on his grammatical inquiries searching for answers to 'the spiritual and ethical preoccupations that dominate his life,' as characterized by Monk.[5] Nor is it surprising that Wittgenstein's grammatical inquiries did not actually guarantee him 'a real resting place,' as he claimed to have found in the early 1930s. 'You know I said I can stop doing philosophy when I like,' Wittgenstein confessed to Rhees years later. 'That is a lie! I *can't*.'

5 'Why should one tell the truth if it's to one's advantage to tell a lie?,' Wittgenstein asked himself at the age of 8 or 9. This was possibly his first philosophical question, which, of course, did not arise when language *went on holiday*.

3. Wittgenstein's method by examples

> *My method throughout is to point out mistakes in language. I am going to use the word "philosophy" for the activity of pointing out such mistakes.* (Wittgenstein, *Lectures: Cambridge, 1932–1935*)
>
> *Now you may question whether my constantly giving examples and speaking in similes is profitable.* (Wittgenstein, *Lectures: Cambridge, 1932–1935*)

3.1 A method that does not eliminate the difficulties

As discussed in the previous chapter, in the early 1930s Wittgenstein switched from logic to "grammar" and came to defend the idea that every philosophical problem is essentially a grammatical problem. In this same period, Wittgenstein also came to believe that instead of teaching doctrines and developing theories, as he had done in the *Tractatus*, it would be up to the philosopher to demonstrate a technique, a method of achieving clarity. In fact, having returned to Cambridge in January 1929 with the intention of effectively solving philosophical problems once and for all, as early as October 1930 Wittgenstein declared that he had arrived at a clear conception of the correct method in philosophy: 'The nimbus of philosophy has been lost. For we now have a method of doing philosophy, and can speak of skilful philosophers.

Compare the difference between alchemy and chemistry: chemistry has a method and we can speak of skilful chemists.' Wittgenstein's method of doing philosophy, which is based on the presupposition that philosophical problems arise when language *goes on holiday*, is his method by examples:

> [...] the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed *complete* clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear.
>
> The real discovery is the one that enables me to break off philosophizing when I want to. – The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring *itself* in question. – Instead, a method is now demonstrated by examples, and the series of examples can be broken off. – Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a *single* problem.

Wittgenstein was convinced that his method of doing philosophy was a turning point in the development of human thought comparable to Galileo's revolution in science. In fact, Wittgenstein thought that his method would lead to *complete* clarity, and with which philosophical problems would disappear *completely*. But it is clear that the method by examples would never solve philosophical problems once and for all, because these do not arise when language *goes on holiday*. In addition, different people give different examples, without there being anyone who can objectively decide who is right and who is wrong.

When reflecting on questions of good and evil, Tolstoy observes that 'no human definitions can succeed in making what some regard as evil be accepted as such by others' and 'there is, and can be, no external definition of evil binding upon all.' The same difficulty arises in the method by examples of Wittgenstein, since there is,

and can be, no external example of evil, as well as other concepts, binding upon all. This contrariety to the method by examples was pointed out in a 1938 lecture by Rhees to Wittgenstein, who dismissed it as unimportant:

> [Rhees asked Wittgenstein some question about his 'theory' of deterioration.]
>
> Do you think I have a theory? Do you think I'm saying what deterioration is? What I do is describe different things called deterioration. I might approve deterioration. – 'All very well your fine musical culture; I'm very glad children don't learn harmony now.' [Rhees: Doesn't what you say imply a preference for using 'deterioration' in certain ways?] All right, if you like, but this by the way – no, it is no matter. My example of deterioration is an example of something I know, perhaps something I dislike – I don't know. 'Deterioration' applies to a tiny bit I may know.

What Wittgenstein said implied a preference for using 'deterioration' in certain ways and of course it matters. Wittgenstein's example of deterioration is an example of something he knew, perhaps something he disliked – I don't know. 'Deterioration' applied to a tiny bit he may have known. But it is also possible that he didn't know. However, without ever seeing himself through the eyes of others and having no other standards than his own, Wittgenstein disregarded this fact both in elaborating his method by examples and in reflecting on following rules.

3.2 The trainer Wittgenstein

As Wittgenstein put it in the early 1930s, 'our use of language is like playing a game according to the rules.' It is obvious, however, as David Pears has pointed out, that the rules always allow divergent interpretations – in particular, it should be added, the rules of the use of language. Apparently unaware of this, Wittgenstein pondered: '[...] we say that it [the game] is played according to such-and-such rules because an observer can read these rules off from the way the game is played [...]. – But how does the observer distinguish in this case between players' mistakes and correct play? – There are characteristic signs of it in the players' behaviour.' But how does the observer distinguish, in the use of the word 'deterioration,' between a mistake on the part of the speaker and a correct usage? Are there characteristic signs in the behavior of the speakers? Besides, who could distinguish, in the use of this word, who is right and who is wrong? And who could teach people the correct use of the word 'deterioration' while aiming at *complete* clarity? 'For doesn't the technique (the possibility) of training someone else in following it belong to the following of a rule?,' Wittgenstein asked himself. 'To be sure, by means of examples. And the criterion of his understanding must be the agreement of their individual actions.' Therefore, anyone who used the word 'deterioration' without coinciding with the trainer Wittgenstein would not have understood the rule? Would anyone who used the word 'deterioration' without agreement to the trainer Wittgenstein make a mistake?

Indifferent to obstacles of this nature, Wittgenstein stated: 'When I follow the rule, I do not choose. I follow the rule *blindly*.' In fact, when I follow the rule of a game, I do not choose. I follow the rule *blindly*. But what rule to follow blindly in the use of the word 'deterioration'? And what rule to follow blindly in the use of other words? What rule should one follow blindly in the use of the word 'good,' for example? '"It is good because God commanded it" is the right expression for the lack of reason,' Wittgenstein noted in his diary in the early 1930s. Atheists like Nietzsche and Russell would

never follow the same rule in their use of the word 'good' – let alone blindly. Would they therefore make a mistake?

Without taking into account that there is, and can be, no external authority that gives examples of concepts that bind all, and that the rules of the use of language always allow divergent interpretations, Wittgenstein applies § 66 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, resorting to the tradition (not original to Wittgenstein) of pointing out the varied and overlapping characteristics of examples of a concept (what he calls 'family resemblance'):[6]

> Consider, for example, the activities that we call "games". I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, athletic games, and so on. What is common to them all? a Don't say: "They must have something in common, or they would not be called 'games'" – but look and see whether there is anything common to all. – For if you look at them, you won't see something that is common to all, but similarities, affinities, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think, but look! – Look, for example, at board-games, with their various affinities. Now pass to card-games; here you find many correspondences with the first group, but many common features drop out, and others appear. When we pass next to ball-games, much that is common is retained, but much is lost. – Are they all '*entertaining*'? Compare chess with noughts and crosses. Or is there always winning and losing, or competition between players? Think of patience. In ball-games, there is winning and losing; but when a child throws his ball at the wall and catches it again, this feature has disappeared. Look at the parts played by skill and luck, and at the difference between skill in chess and skill in tennis. Think now of

6 For a discussion of this topic, see Appendix II.

> singing and dancing games; here we have the element of entertainment, but how many other characteristic features have disappeared! And we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way, can see how similarities crop up and disappear.

Consider now the activities that we call "sciences." In his *Introduction to Philosophy*, Heidegger investigates the varied and overlapping characteristics of examples of the concept of science, including the natural sciences and humanities. Nevertheless, Heidegger doesn't just want a preliminary answer, but the knowledge of the essence and core of the concept of science. For this reason, he raised again the question regarding the meaning of science in order to overcome the vague average understanding of this concept. In his reflection, Heidegger concludes that mathematics, with universally valid results, is the example of science par excellence. However, following different rules from Heidegger's, Wittgenstein did not consider mathematics a science, but a series of techniques, with no truths to discover. But is mathematics a science or not? What about humanities? To answer these questions, it is necessary to answer the fundamental question: what is science? This question is untouched by the method by examples. Besides, this question, as Heidegger points out, is an old question, that is, an ever-new question. It is one of those questions that does not settle down when we already have a definition at hand. Moreover, it is one of those questions that does not settle down when we only have examples at hand.

Oblivious to this, Wittgenstein asks himself in § 69 of the *Philosophical Investigations*:

> How would we explain to someone what a game is? I think that we'd describe *games* to him, and we might add to the description: "*This and similar things* are called 'games'." And do we know any more ourselves? Is it just that

> we can't tell others exactly what a game is? – But this is not ignorance. We don't know the boundaries because none have been drawn.

And how would we explain to someone what science is? I think that, following Wittgenstein's method, we'd describe examples of sciences to him, and we might add to the description: "This and similar things are called 'sciences.'" But should we include mathematics or not? What about humanities? Without facing this kind of problem, in § 71 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein takes up the question of how to explain what a game is and states:

> And this is just how one might explain what a game is. One gives examples and intends them to be taken in a particular way. – I do not mean by this expression, however, that he is supposed to see in those examples that common feature which I – for some reason – was unable to formulate, but that he is now to employ those examples in a particular way. Here giving examples is not an *indirect* way of explaining – in default of a better one. For any general explanation may be misunderstood too. *This*, after all, is how we play the game. (I mean the language-game with the word "game".)

According to Wittgenstein, this is just how one might explain what science is. One gives examples and intends them to be taken in a particular way and that he is now to employ those examples in a particular way. Wittgenstein, however, overlooked the fact that different people give different examples and employ them in a particular way, without there being a trainer to distinguish between a wrong example and a right example. *This*, after all, is how we play the game. (I mean the language-game with the word "science".)

3.3 Wittgenstein's aesthetics rules

Ignoring the difficulties pointed out above with his method by examples, Wittgenstein would, in the 1930s, extend it to aesthetics. Thus, he went on to argue that, instead of teaching doctrines and developing theories about beauty, it would be up to the philosopher to explain the beauty of a work of art by explaining it: 'You might think Aesthetics is a science telling us what's beautiful – almost too ridiculous for words. I suppose it ought to include also what sort of coffee tastes well.' For Wittgenstein, instead of theories, 'you have to give the explanation that is accepted. This is the whole point of the explanation.' But who could explain the beauty of a work of art by explaining it? Who could give an explanation that would be accepted? Julian Bell, who was a student at Cambridge in the 1930s, would not have the slightest doubt about who Wittgenstein had in mind, as he ironically wrote in this sarcastic poem – which, of course, changes its aspect considering the diagnosis that Wittgenstein suffered from autism spectrum disorder:

> For he [Wittgenstein] talks nonsense, numerous statements makes,/Forever his own vow of silence breaks:/ Ethics, aesthetics, talks of day and night,/ And calls things good or bad, and wrong or right./… who, on any issue, ever saw/ Ludwig refrain from laying down the law?/ In every company he shouts us down,/ And stops our sentence stuttering his own;/ Unceasing argues, harsh, irate and loud,/ Sure that he's right, and of his rightness proud,/ Such faults are common, shared by all in part,/ But Wittgenstein pontificates on Art.

Sure that he would be the right person to give an explanation that would be accepted, Wittgenstein disregarded in aesthetics the fact that to make explicit the beauty of a work of art implies a preference and of course it matters. Musically, for example,

Wittgenstein's preference was restricted to six composers: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, and Labor. Obviously, to believe that some explanation of the music of composers that Wittgenstein detested, such as Mahler and Schönberg, could be accepted by him is almost too ridiculous for words. It is also almost too ridiculous for words to believe that an explanation of Shakespeare's texts could be accepted by Wittgenstein, who confessed: 'I am deeply suspicious of most of Shakespeare's admirers.' In fact, Wittgenstein – whose interest in literature had remained rudimentary, in the opinion of the literary critic F. R. Leavis – was deeply suspicious of the admirers of many of the most prestigious writers of his time, such as Rainer Maria Rilke and T. S. Eliot. More than that: Wittgenstein had a deep suspicion of cultures other than his own, the Germanic – in particular, the English culture: 'An English architect or musician (perhaps any artist at all), one can be almost certain that he is a humbug!,' Wittgenstein pontificated. Worse, even though he made certain exceptions, such as the Russian writers Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, whom he appreciated so much, Wittgenstein basically despised what was not his culture:

> Through education (the acquisition of culture) the one simply comes into his own. He thereby gets to know as it were his paternal heritage. While the other acquires through this forms that are alien to his nature. And there it would have been better if he had remained uncultured no matter how awful & unpolished.

Wittgenstein's contempt for an education, for a culture other than his own, underpins his method by examples, designed to explain concepts and make judgments always from *his* point of view, from *his* culture, never from the point of view of the other, from the culture of the other. 'It is like saying: "I classify works of Art in this way: at some I look up and at some I look down." This way of classifying might be interesting.' Yes, this way of classifying

might be interesting for someone whose 'opinions on most matters were absolute, allowing of no argument,' as Pascal recalled, but it does not eliminate the difficulties.

3.4 Wittgenstein's ethics rules

Although he did not exactly extend the method by examples to ethics, Wittgenstein did not shy away from the role of moral judge of those around him, being feared by his friends not only for his 'quite unfamiliar moral earnestness and intensity,' as Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin called it, but mainly for being 'merciless' in judging others, as Bouwsma pointed out. To make matters worse, Bouwsma adds, Wittgenstein was 'sensitive to all shoddiness and cheating' and had an 'unrelenting severity in respect to all who have pretensions' – most notably, philosophers who wrote about ethics: 'He did speak of all the harm philosophers do in ethics. When a man is in deep earnest about what he ought to do then one can see how fantastic what philosophers do, is.' Also according to Bouwsma, Wittgenstein found it impossible to teach ethics:

> Impossible [teaching ethics]! He regards ethics as telling someone what he should do. But how can anyone counsel another? Imagine someone advising another who was in love and about to marry, and pointing out to him all the things he cannot do if he marries. The idiot! How can one know how these things are in another man's life?

Pretentiously, however, Wittgenstein asked John King when he told him he was about to get married: 'Haven't you got enough worries and problems to cope with without that?' On another occasion, Wittgenstein pretentiously counseled his friend Marguerite Respinger, with whom he was in love, not to marry Talle Sjögren, having warned her of the dangers of her decision: 'You are

taking a boat, the sea will be rough, remain always attached to me so that you don't capsize,' Wittgenstein counseled her. But Marguerite did not remain attached to Wittgenstein; she married Sjögren.

Like Bouwsma, young Cambridge students in the 1930s and 1940s had complete confidence in Wittgenstein's ability to judge and counsel, and remained always attached to him. Maurice Drury, for example, who according to Monk would maintain for years an 'unquestioning attitude towards Wittgenstein,' would make virtually all the major decisions of his life under his influence. 'Don't think I ridicule this for one minute, but I can't approve; no, I can't approve. I would be afraid that one day that collar would choke you,' Wittgenstein told Drury when he learned of his plan to be ordained an Anglican priest. 'Just think, Drury,' Wittgenstein counseled him, 'what it would mean to have to preach a sermon every week; you couldn't do it.' This happened the second or third time the two met. Obsequiously, Drury would follow Wittgenstein's counsel and, encouraged by him, get a job among 'ordinary people' – a counsel that Wittgenstein would give to all his disciples, at the expense of an academic life. A few years later, however, Drury would decide to study medicine, which Wittgenstein could approve of: 'Now there is to be no more argument about this: it has all been settled already, you are to start work as a medical student at once,' Wittgenstein told him.

In addition to being pretentious, 'Wittgenstein's personal moral outlook was egocentric and contemplative,' as Hans-Johann Glock characterized it. Despite this, in Pascal's opinion, 'if you had committed a murder, if your marriage was breaking up, or if you were about to change your faith, he would be the best man to consult.' 'But', she warned, 'if you suffered from fears, insecurity, were badly adjusted, he would be a dangerous man, and one to be kept away from. He would not be sympathetic to common troubles, and his remedies would be all too drastic, surgical. He would treat you for original sin.'

3.5 Lack of clarity in philosophy

In his desire to solve philosophical problems once and for all, Wittgenstein would also prescribe drastic, surgical remedies: 'I wish to God that I were more intelligent and everything would finally become clear to me – or else that I needn't live much longer!,' Wittgenstein wrote to Russell of Norway in December 1913. 'Complete clarity, or death – there was no middle way,' sums up Monk. 'If he could not solve: 'the question [that] is fundamental to the whole of logic', he had no right – or, at any rate, no desire – to live. There was to be no compromise.' In fact, when Wittgenstein decided to live in an isolated fjord in Norway before World War I, he intended to live there until he solved all the fundamental problems of logic. Years later, when he returned to Cambridge, after having recognized that he had not solved the philosophical problems once and for all with the logical-analytic method of the *Tractatus* and replacing it with 'quiet weighing of linguistic facts,' Wittgenstein would seek the solution of all the fundamental problems of language. As always, complete clarity, or death – there was no middle way.

Tellingly, Wittgenstein wrote in one of his notebooks at the end of his life: 'Here I would like to make a general observation concerning the nature of philosophical problems. Lack of clarity in philosophy is tormenting. It is felt as shameful.' In fact, Wittgenstein's feelings of shame and torment about problems were not confined to the philosophical realm, nor did they arise in his maturity. According to Jim Bamber, a colleague of the young Wittgenstein in engineering studies at the University of Manchester, his 'nervous temperament' made him the last person to undertake research in aeronautical engineering, 'for when things went wrong, which often occurred, he would throw his arms about, stamp around and swear volubly in German.' Thus, it seems, the lack of definitive solutions to the problems of aeronautical engineering was already tormenting to Wittgenstein and felt by him as shameful. The same torment, the same shame would later mark his research into what Nietzsche

defined as 'those most difficult, abstruse, scarcely attainable goals of thinking that it is philosophy's task to express.'

3.6 A claim that could be disputed

In his search for definitive solutions to philosophical problems, Wittgenstein aimed for a complete clarity with which, in his mind, philosophical problems would completely disappear. In fact, even before writing the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein had already revealed this aspiration, being convinced that by attaining complete, ultimate clarity, difficulties would be eliminated:

> If there were theses in philosophy, they would have to be such that they do not give rise to disputes. For they would have to be put in such a way that everyone would say, Oh yes, that is of course obvious. As long as there is a possibility of having different opinions and disputing about a question, this indicates that things have not yet been expressed clearly enough. Once a perfectly clear formulation – ultimate clarity – has been reached, there can be no second thoughts or reluctance any more, for these always arise from the feeling that something has now been asserted, and I do not yet know whether I should admit it or not. If, however, you make the grammar clear to yourself, if you proceed by very short steps in such a way that every single step becomes perfectly obvious and natural, no dispute whatsoever can arise. Controversy always arises through leaving out or failing to state clearly certain steps, so that the impression is given that a claim has been made that could be disputed.

In § 128 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein adds: 'If someone were to advance *theses* in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them.' However, as Glock points out, if Wittgenstein's observations conform to his 'non-opinion' methodology, then they cannot amount to a genuine contribution to philosophical debate. And in the event that they do not comply with such a methodology, then his practice belies his stated methodological views – 'he would be propounding the non-obvious thesis that there are no non-obvious philosophical theses.' Without perceiving this embarrassment, Wittgenstein would hold the conviction that there are no theses in philosophy, that differing opinions or disputes on a question indicate that things have not yet been expressed clearly enough, and that once a perfectly clear formulation – ultimate clarity – has been reached, there can be no second thoughts or reluctance any more, for these always arise from the feeling that something has now been asserted, and I do not yet know whether I should admit it or not.

But 'what are the subjects of difference that cause hatred and anger?,' Socrates asks, again without proving anything or clarifying anything to Wittgenstein. 'What subject of difference would make us angry and hostile to each other if we were unable to come to a decision? Perhaps you do not have an answer ready, but examine as I tell you whether these subjects are the just and the unjust, the beautiful and the ugly, the good and the bad. Are these not the subjects of difference about which, when we are unable to come to a satisfactory decision, you and I and other men become hostile to each other whenever we do?'

Neglecting the fact that differing opinions or disputes about a question do not merely indicate that things have not yet been expressed clearly enough, Wittgenstein was sure who the speaker should be to achieve a perfectly clear formulation – ultimate clarity; who should make the grammar clear, proceeding by very short steps in such a way that every single step becomes perfectly obvious and natural, until no dispute whatsoever can arise. If a dispute arose, Wittgenstein would disregard his interlocutor, retaining the right

to belittle him without rationally responding to his objections. In the meetings of the Vienna Circle, for example, according to Rudolf Carnap, Wittgenstein 'tolerated no critical examination by others, once the insight had been gained by an act of inspiration.' Carnap himself verified this intolerance, since, for having asked Wittgenstein several times to clarify his idea about the possibility of talking about linguistic expressions, he was banished forever more from his presence. 'If he [Carnap] doesn't smell it, I can't help him. He just has got no nose!,' Wittgenstein told Herbert Feigl. When Feigl's admiration for Carnap became clear, he too was banished from Wittgenstein's presence.

A few years after having banished Carnap and Feigl from his presence, Wittgenstein would give another demonstration of being 'a man who is quite incapable of carrying on a discussion' – as the logician W. E. Johnson characterized him – by presenting the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* as a thesis at Cambridge. On that occasion, Wittgenstein was dismissive of his examiners, Russell and Moore, to whom the truth of the thoughts communicated in the book did not seem 'unassailable and definitive': 'Don't worry, I know you'll never understand it,' Wittgenstein told them. Russell never really "understood" the mixture of logic and mysticism in the *Tractatus*. In delivering the lecture "Current Tendencies" in 1912, in part to justify the scientific attitude against the mystical attitude, Russell even stated that the logic used in defence of mysticism seemed to him faulty as logic. Russell also never "understood" the religiosity of Wittgenstein, who became a Christian during World War I. Moreover, Russell did not "understand" Wittgenstein's sympathy for communism or his antagonism to universal suffrage, as Russell despised the Soviet regime, and championed suffrage to the point of running for the British Parliament for the Women's Suffrage Party in 1907.

In view of all these controversies between Russell and Wittgenstein, which evidently did not arise when language *went on holiday*, it would be naïve to believe that disputes between them would cease to arise if they made the grammar clear to themselves,

if they proceeded by very short steps in such a way that every single step became perfectly obvious and natural. After all, the controversies between Russell and Wittgenstein came from the fact that their points of view were different, which led to disputes in the first months of living together as a professor and student at Cambridge and later to the end of their friendship: 'Our quarrels don't arise just from external reasons such as nervousness or over-tiredness but are – at any rate on my side – very deep-rooted,' Wittgenstein wrote to Russell in 1914. 'You may be right in saying that *we ourselves* are not *so very* different, but *our ideals* could not be more so. And that's why we haven't been able and we shan't *ever* be able to talk about anything involving our value-judgements without either becoming hypocritical or falling out.' And that's why it would be definitely naïve to believe that the disputes between Russell and Wittgenstein on the most diverse questions would cease to arise if they made the grammar clear to themselves, if they proceeded by very short steps in such a way that every single step became perfectly obvious and natural; if, in sum, they had achieved a perfectly clear formulation – ultimate clarity.[7]

3.7 A tragic character

A man quite incapable of carrying on a discussion, Wittgenstein rejected throughout his life not only points of view different from his own, but also interests different from his own. By this, it is understandable why those who can be considered his equals or even his mentors instead of his disciples, as defined by Brian McGuinness and G. H. von Wright, ended up turning away from him: Russell, Keynes, Moore, Ramsey and Sraffa. It is also understandable why Russell described Wittgenstein as the most perfect example he had ever known of genius as traditionally conceived, 'passionate,

7 For an analysis of the disputes between Wittgenstein and Turing over the foundations of mathematics, which *did not arise* when language *went on holiday* nor were they resolved by a quiet weighing of linguistic facts, see section 6.6.

profound, intense, and dominating.' This image refers to Beethoven, who, for Wittgenstein, was exactly 'the sort of man to be.' However, Wittgenstein believed that if he was to behave like Beethoven, he must also produce a truly great work. To this end, Wittgenstein undertook the task of solving philosophical problems once and for all. This assignment evokes Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character*, a book that Wittgenstein read as a teenager and which had a great and lasting impact on his conception of life.

As Monk points out, the choice that Weininger's theory offers is a bleak and terrible one indeed: genius or death. In fact, Weininger killed himself at the age of 23 in October 1903 in the house where Beethoven had died, for him the greatest of all geniuses. Having been viscerally scarred by this episode, Wittgenstein would confess to Pinsent, when they were students at Cambridge, that Russell's encouragement had been his salvation, putting an end to nearly 10 years of loneliness and suffering during which suicide was often contemplated. 'It made an enormous difference to my life when I discovered that there really was a subject for which I had a special ability,' Wittgenstein admitted years later.

In Monk's opinion, by encouraging Wittgenstein to devote himself to philosophy, Russell saved his life by preventing him from following the fate of three of his brothers, who ended up killing themselves. The price of this salvation, from the perspective of this 'tragic character' that was Wittgenstein, as Pascal defined him, would be to solve philosophical problems once and for all. 'If my name lives on then only as the Termius ad quem of great occidental philosophy. Somewhat like the name of the one who burnt down the library of Alexandria,' Wittgenstein wrote in the early 1930s. Once the philosophical problems were solved with the 'right method of philosophy' presented in the *Tractatus*, the first Wittgenstein believed himself to be the terminus. Later, having finally recognized the errors of the *Tractatus*, the second Wittgenstein elaborated the method by examples, with which he would again believe to be the Terminus ad quem of great occidental philosophy. But Wittgenstein's name will not live on like this.

4. The analogy between the proposition and a model of a motor-car accident irresistibly drags Wittgenstein on

> *We may say that we are led into puzzlement by an analogy which irresistibly drags us on.* (Wittgenstein, *The Brown Book*)

4.1 A determining reason for Wittgenstein's contradictions

As seen in the second chapter, Wittgenstein projected upon other people his misunderstandings concerning the use of words, brought about, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of our language, especially in abstract and concrete regions. Continuing this line of analysis, in this chapter I will explain how the analogy between the proposition and a model of a car accident dragged Wittgenstein on, leading him to a series of contradictions in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.*

In fact, contradictions abound in Wittgenstein's first and second philosophy, and he knew it. So much so that, when Chadbourne Gilpatrick advised him to publish his writings using income from the Rockefeller Foundation, Wittgenstein replied: 'But see, I write one sentence, and then I write another – just the opposite. And which shall stand?' On another occasion, when his literary executor G. E. M. Anscombe pressed him for advice as to

how in editing his work she should choose among alternatives, he told her to toss a coin.

As I will detail in this chapter and the next two – in which I will discuss how Wittgenstein was irresistibly dragged on by the analogy between language and games and by the analogy between mathematics and games, respectively – a determining reason for the proliferation of contradictions in Wittgenstein's work is the constant tension between, on the one hand, his attempts to maintain the analogies at any price and, on the other, his concessions to obvious facts and data that highlight the limitations of the analogies.

4.2 An obviously unsatisfactory evasion

The story of how Wittgenstein developed, during the First World War, the idea that propositions are a figuration of the reality they describe, was related years later by G. H. von Wright. According to his friend, while serving in the Austro-Hungarian army, Wittgenstein read a magazine report about a lawsuit in Paris concerning a car accident. In court, a model of the accident was presented, which led Wittgenstein to the idea that the model could depict the accident, given the correspondence between the parties – that is, miniature houses, cars and people and the real things: houses, cars and people. Having made an analogy between the accident model and language, Wittgenstein concluded that a proposition is also a model, a figuration of reality that describes: 'In the proposition a world is as it were put together experimentally. (As when in the law-court in Paris a motor-car accident is represented by means of dolls, etc.),' Wittgenstein wrote in a notebook on September 29, 1914. 'On this analogy,' Monk stated, 'one might say a proposition serves as a model, or picture, of a state of affairs, by virtue of a similar correspondence between its parts and the world.'

However, as Anscombe stressed, it is clear that infinite propositions do not serve as a model, or picture, of a state of of affairs, by virtue of a similar correspondence between its parts and the

world, nor do mathematical propositions, propositions expressing laws of nature, propositions about God, about the meaning of life, nor about space and time. Not to mention philosophical propositions – including, of course, those of the *Tractatus* itself. Nevertheless, having been irresistibly dragged on by the analogy between the proposition and the model of the Parisian courtroom car accident, Wittgenstein proposed in the *Tractatus* a pictorial theory of meaning – with which language is essentially restricted to concrete domains. 'His first book [...] focused on language as a mirror of reality – the "picture-theory" of philosophy,' Michael Fitzgerald observed. 'He believed that only objective facts could be spoken of. In this book he failed to achieve what Hobson (1998) pointed out an infant can achieve, that is, a disembedding of "the infant from an immediate, unreflective concrete apprehension of the environment."'

Indeed, Wittgenstein stated in the *Tractatus*: 'In a proposition a thought can be expressed in such a way that elements of the propositional sign correspond to the objects of the thought'; 'I call such elements "simple signs", and such a proposition "completely analysed"'; 'The simple signs employed in propositions are called names'; 'A name means an object. The object is its meaning [...]'; 'The configuration of objects in a situation corresponds to the configuration of simple signs in the propositional sign'; 'In a proposition a name is the representative of an object'; 'An elementary proposition consists of names. It is a nexus, a concatenation, of names.' In § 1 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein reintroduced the pictorial theory of meaning more directly: '[...] the words in language name objects – sentences are combinations of such names. – In this picture of language we find the roots of the following idea: Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands.'[8]

8 For a discussion on Wittgenstein's preference for pictorial thinking in light of the diagnosis of autism, see Appendix III.

In the *Tractatus* itself, however, Wittgenstein contradicts his pictorial theory of meaning, for example by citing in propositions 3.323, 4.025 and 4.126 classes of words that do not name objects, such as adjectives, verbs, conjunctions and numerals. But, without realizing the notorious deficiencies of his linguistic theory, Wittgenstein formulated on the basis of it the 'right method of philosophy,' which is announced in proposition 6.53:

> The right method of philosophy would be this: To say nothing except what can be said, i.e. the propositions of natural science, i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy: and then always, when someone else wished to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had given no meaning to certain signs in his propositions. This method would be unsatisfying to the other – he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy – but it would be the only strictly correct method.

In a 1919 letter to Russell, Wittgenstein summed up the 'unassailable and definitive' truth of his thought:

> The main point is the theory of what can be expressed (gesagt) by props – i.e. by language – (and, which comes to the same, what can be *thought*) and what can not be expressed by props, but only shown (gezeigt); which, I believe, is the cardinal problem of philosophy.

And this, I believe, is the cardinal problem of Wittgenstein's 'right method of philosophy': if what can be expressed by propositions – i.e. by language – (and, which comes to the same to Wittgenstein, what can be *thought*), is restricted to natural science, the *Tractatus* could not even be thought, much less expressed by propositions. And, as Monk notes, 'the *Tractatus* itself, with its numbered

propositions, notoriously fails to adhere to this method. Insisting that these propositions are not really propositions at all, but "pseudo-propositions" or "elucidations,"' is an obviously unsatisfactory evasion of this central difficulty.' Aware that the *Tractatus* itself notoriously fails to adhere to the 'right method of philosophy,' i.e., aware that 'the whole book is nonsense,'[9] as he admitted in a letter to C. K. Ogden in 1922, Wittgenstein presented an obviously unsatisfactory evasion of this central difficulty in proposition 6.54:

> My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it.)
>
> He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly.

Taking the 'right method of philosophy' to its ultimate consequences, Wittgenstein writes in proposition 7: 'Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.' But in the *Tractatus* itself Wittgenstein manages to say a lot of things about what cannot be said, as Russell pointed out in the introduction to the book – including concerning 'the mystical,' as he calls it in proposition 6.522. Moreover, Wittgenstein always broke his own vow of silence, as Julian Bell ironically observed in his poem quoted in section 3.3. In fact, Wittgenstein never, so to speak, threw away the ladder, after he had climbed up on it. Notwithstanding this, in a letter to Ludwig von Ficker of November 1919, Wittgenstein stated about the book:

> [...] my work consists of two parts: of the one which is here, and of everything which I have not written. And precisely this second part is

9 The *Tractatus* can be synthesized as a book of philosophy written to "show" that one cannot write a book of philosophy.

> the important one. For the Ethical is delimited from within, as it were, by my book; and I'm convinced that, *strictly* speaking, it can ONLY be delimited in this way. In brief, I think: All of that which many are *babbling* today, I have defined in my book by remaining silent about it.

Wittgenstein, however, did not remain silent about ethics in the *Tractatus* – as can be seen from propositions 6.421, 6.422, 6.423 – just as he would not be silent after the publication of the book, as explained in section 3.4. But, contradictorily, Wittgenstein would insist in a January 1930 lecture – the only one he would give in his entire life – that ethics can only be delimited from within:

> My whole tendency and I believe the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk on Ethics or Religion was to run against the boundaries of language. This running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely hopeless. Ethics so far as it springs from the desire to say something about the meaning of life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable, can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it.

Ironically, a few months before delivering this lecture, Wittgenstein wrote in his diary, running against the 'boundaries of language': 'What is good is also divine. Queer as it sounds, that sums up my ethics. Only something supernatural can express the Supernatural." Queer as it sounds, despite repeating so much that nothing can be said about ethics, Wittgenstein reflected and said a lot about ethical and moral problems. And records of this tendency of Wittgenstein are not lacking. In a letter to Paul Engelmann dated

a few months before the publication of the *Tractatus*, for example, Wittgenstein confessed to his friend, running once more against 'the boundaries of language':

> In fact I am in a state of mind that is terrible to me. I have been through it several times before: it is the state of *not being able to get over a particular fact*. It is a pitiable state, I know. But there is only one remedy that I can see, and that is of course to come to terms with that fact. But this is just like what happens when a man who can't swim has fallen into the water and flails about with his hands and feet and feels that he *cannot* keep his head above water. That is the position I am in now. I know that to kill oneself is always a dirty thing to do. Surely one *cannot* will one's own destruction, and anybody who has visualized what is in practice involved in the act of suicide knows that suicide is always a *rushing of one's own defences*. But nothing is worse than to be forced to take oneself by surprise.
>
> Of course it all boils down to the fact that I have no faith!

A short time later, on January 13, 1922 – less than a year after the publication of the *Tractatus* – Wittgenstein again ran against 'the boundaries of language,' having noted in his diary:

> I felt at once my utter nothingness, and I saw that God could command of me whatever he wanted with the understanding that my life would immediately become meaningless if I was disobedient. I thought immediately whether I could explain away the whole thing as an illusion and not at all God's command; but it became clear to me that if I did that, then I would have to explain away all the religion

> in me as an illusion. That I would have to renounce the meaning of life. [...] I felt utterly defeated and in the hand of God, who could do with me as he pleased at any moment. I felt that God could force me to confess my meanness instantly, at any time. That he could at any moment force me to accept the worst for myself, and that I was not ready to accept the worst for myself. That I was not yet ready to renounce friendship and all earthly happiness. [...]
>
> Like I said, last night I glimpsed my utter Nothingness. God deigned to show it to me. The whole time I thought of Kierkegaard and believed that my situation was "Fear and Trembling."

This note refers to a dream that Wittgenstein had had that night and, along with so many other notes before and after, shows how he has never been silent about what is supposedly unspeakable – nor did he stop reading authors who ran against 'the boundaries of language,' like Kierkegaard, whom he not only considered the most profound thinker of the 19th century, but also a saint.

4.3 The man with the gospels at the Vienna Circle

'One of the least self-explanatory books ever published – an enigma, or *roman a clef*, to which the reader can bring any of a dozen different interpretations,' as Janik and Toulmin defined it, the *Tractatus* gave rise to all kinds of misunderstandings. None of them, however, was as blatant as that of the neo-positivists of the Vienna Circle, who, despite their logicism and scientism, venerated Wittgenstein as a deity, according to A. J. Ayer, the English philosopher who frequented the Circle. Carnap, for example, confessed, remembering his reaction to seeing Wittgenstein engrossed with the poems of the Indian mystic Rabindranath Tagore:

> When we were reading Wittgenstein's book in the Circle, I had erroneously believed that his attitude toward metaphysics was similar to ours. I had not paid sufficient attention to the statements in his book about the mystical, because his feelings and thoughts in this area were too divergent from mine. Only personal contact with him helped me to see more clearly his attitude at this point.

Only personal contact also helped the logical positivists to see more clearly the affinities that Wittgenstein acknowledged having with philosophers such as St. Augustine, Kierkegaard, and Heidegger, who would be the targets of derision in the Vienna Circle, if they were mentioned. Wittgenstein admired St. Augustine to the point of choosing his *Confessions* as possibly 'the most serious book ever written.' He read it when he was taken prisoner at Monte Cassino in Italy at the end of World War I, along with Ludwig Hänsel. Before the war, Wittgenstein had already read and appreciated William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. During the conflict, in the midst of his conversion to Christianity, Wittgenstein not only reread Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation*, which had marked him so much as an adolescent, but he also read Nietzsche's *The Anti-Christ* and Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief*. The latter book became for Wittgenstein a kind of talisman in war. He carried it with him and, from reading and rereading it so much, he even memorized entire passages. After a while, he became known among his companions as 'the man with the gospels.' Needless to say, the man with the gospels did not follow the 'right method of philosophy.'

It must be said, however, that the famous proposition 6.52 of the *Tractatus* echoes precisely the writings of Tolstoy. In it, Wittgenstein observes, running against the 'boundaries of language': 'We feel that even if *all possible* scientific questions be answered, the problems of life have still not been touched at all. Of course there is then no question left, and just this is the answer.'

It is likely that Wittgenstein reproduces in this proposition the following reflection of Tolstoy:

> If we turn to the branches of knowledge which are not concerned with the problem of life but find an answer to their own particular scientific questions, we are lost in admiration of the human intellect, but we know beforehand that we should get no answer to our question about life itself, for these branches of knowledge directly ignore the question of life.

Indeed, Wittgenstein often presented the ideas of others as his own.[10] In any case, the fact is that the neo-positivists of the Vienna Circle had not paid enough attention to the 'mystical' side of the *Tractatus* before meeting Wittgenstein personally, nor had they realized the profound influence exerted by authors like Tolstoy on Wittgenstein's thought.

Externalizing this influence, Wittgenstein said to Drury in 1930: 'Don't think I despise metaphysics.' This assertion might have surprised the logical positivists of the Vienna Circle. However, in December of the same year, the neo-positivist Waismann asked Wittgenstein if the existence of the world is connected with what is ethical, to which Wittgenstein would have replied, running once more against the 'boundaries of language': 'Men have felt that here there is a connection and they have expressed it thus: God the Father created the world, the Son of God (or the Word that comes from God) is that which is ethical. That the Godhead is thought of as divided and, again, as one being indicates that there is a connection here.' Saying something metaphysical, Wittgenstein had already concluded in proposition 6.432 of the *Tractatus*: '*How* things are in the world is a matter of complete indifference for what is higher. God does not reveal himself *in* the world.' But logical positivists had

10 For a discussion on this topic, see Appendix II.

not paid enough attention to this assertion of Wittgenstein's, who told his fellow prisoner in Italy Franz Parak, that he would prefer to be a priest in the postwar period, but that as a teacher he could read the gospel with children. In addition, after retiring from teaching in 1926, Wittgenstein considered becoming a monk. Thus, he was definitely not the positivist that Carnap and his colleagues had hoped for.

However, the disparity between who logical positivists imagined Wittgenstein to be and who he actually was did not prevent his influence on the Vienna Circle from being profound. And, given Wittgenstein's contradictions and nonsense, it is not surprising that the fundamental principle of logical positivism, verificationism, is nonsense. According to this principle, which was formulated by Wittgenstein in the 1920s, the meaning of a proposition is its means of verification – or as Wittgenstein himself told his students in the early 1930s: 'The meaning of a proposition is the mode of its verification.' As a consequence of verificationism, at this stage Wittgenstein would keep the entire ethical and aesthetic theme in the mystical, inexpressible region, stating that 'ethical and aesthetic judgments are not propositions because they cannot be verified.' Nevertheless, as already observed in the 1920s and 1930s, the principle itself, which Wittgenstein would soon abandon, cannot be verified either.

4.4 The conjuring tricks of the *Tractatus*

Also, interestingly, the neo-positivists of the Vienna Circle also had not paid enough attention to 'the conjuring tricks of the *Tractatus*,' as Monk termed them, stemming from its pictorial theory of meaning. Thus, for example, in the face of the obstacle to this theory that mathematical propositions do not serve as a model, or picture, of a state of affairs, instead of abandoning the theory, Wittgenstein maintained that mathematical propositions are pseudo-propositions. In fact, the concept of pseudo-proposition

already appears in the notebooks of Wittgenstein written during the First World War, in which he noted: 'Every connexion of signs which appears to say something about its own sense is a pseudo-proposition (like all propositions of logic).' And also: 'Pseudo-propositions are such as, when analysed, turn out after all only to *shew* what they were supposed to *say*.' Since, as Wittgenstein argues in the *Tractatus*, all propositions of logic say the same thing, namely, nothing, and mathematics is a logical method, for him mathematical 'pseudo-propositions' only show what they are supposed to say. Thus, for Wittgenstein, 'a proposition of mathematics does not express a thought.' Given this conclusion, as Brian McGuinness pondered, it is understandable why the approach to mathematics presented in the *Tractatus* had very few adherents.

In fact, although Wittgenstein is contested in philosophical circles and is losing relevance even among analytic philosophers – as attested in the introductory essay to the *Oxford Handbook of Wittgenstein* – his greatest critics are the mathematicians, who have generally always disapproved of him, often emphatically and even angrily. In his book on the logician and mathematician Kurt Gödel, for example – himself a harsh antagonist of Wittgenstein, as will be seen in section 6.5 – Goldstein reports:

> Nary a mathematician I have spoken with has a good word to say about Wittgenstein. One articulately incensed mathematician I know characterized Wittgenstein's famous proposition 7: Whereof we cannot speak we must remain silent as "accomplishing the difficult task of being at once portentous and vacuous."

This negative evaluation that mathematicians have of Wittgenstein's philosophy as a whole and of the *Tractatus* in particular is reinforced by the definition of number presented in

the *Tractatus*, [0, ξ, ξ + 1],[11] which 'is only capable of dealing with finite numbers,' leaving aside transfinite numbers, as Russell stated in his introduction to the book. Indifferent to this observation, Wittgenstein would maintain his definition of number in conversations with members of the Vienna Circle, telling them that 'the numbers come into existence through repeated applications of the operation + 1.' Only later would Wittgenstein finally recognize the inadequacies of his definition of number and go on to highlight that numbers can be cardinal, irrational, complex, etc. In any case, the central point here is that Russell, for whatever reason, did not extend his critique of Wittgenstein's conception of number to his conception of language – the pictorial theory of meaning – which is not even capable of dealing with nouns, let alone verbs, prepositions, adverbs, pronouns... With this critique, Russell would have refuted the entire nonsensical book, avoiding the portentous and vacuous discussions about the 'right method of philosophy' in Cambridge and Vienna in the 1920s and 1930s.

11 In logic and mathematics, the Greek letter ξ usually represents an unknown variable or an arbitrary quantity.

5. The analogy between language and a game irresistibly drags Wittgenstein on

> *We find an analogy, embody it in our language and then can't see where it ceases to hold.* (Wittgenstein, *Lectures. Cambridge, 1930–1932*)

> *I shall in the future again and again draw your attention to what I shall call language games. These are ways of using signs simpler than those in which we use the signs of our highly complicated everyday language. [...] When we look at such simple forms of language the mental mist which seems to enshroud our ordinary use of language disappears.* (Wittgenstein, *The Blue Book*)

5.1 Between theory and practice

Just as Wittgenstein's first philosophy is based on the pictorial theory of meaning, which originates in the analogy between the proposition and the Parisian court's car accident model, the second Wittgenstein's philosophy of language is based on the analogy between language and a game. According to Norman Malcolm, this analogy occurred to Wittgenstein when he was passing a field where a football game was in progress. 'A central idea of his philosophy, the notion of a "language-game," apparently had its genesis in

this incident,' states Malcolm. Anyway, this is an old analogy that had been made before Wittgenstein by many authors, including the Austro-Hungarian philosopher Fritz Mauthner. 'Language' – ponders Mauthner in *Beiträge zu einer Kritik der Sprache*, a book that Wittgenstein had read in his youth – 'is only a convention, like a rule of a game: the more participants, the more compelling it will be. However, it is neither going to grasp nor alter the real world.' So, according to Mauthner's point of view – Janik and Toulmin remark – language is a social phenomenon, to be grasped along with other associated customs of the individuals who use it. Taking this into account, they stress:

> Wittgenstein's later writings revived many positions and arguments already put forward by Mauthner in 1901 – for example, the view that the rules of language are like the rules of a game, and that the very word "language" is itself a general abstract term, which we need to unpack by looking to see how, in actual practice, men put the expressions of their languages to use, within the contexts of all their varied cultures.

Unlike Mauthner, however, Wittgenstein was irresistibly dragged on by the analogy between language and a game, which once again led him to fall into gross contradictions. In § 199 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, for example, Wittgenstein states: 'To follow a rule, to make a report, to give an order, to play a game of chess, are customs (usages, institutions). To understand a sentence means to understand a language. To understand a language means to have mastered a technique.' In the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, Wittgenstein again takes up the analogy between language and a game and adds: 'The words "language," "proposition," "order," "rule," "calculation," "experiment," "following a rule" relate to a technique, a custom.' Indeed, these words relate to a technique, a custom, and the rules of chess, like the rules of any game, must be

strictly followed – or, to use Wittgenstein's own terminology, '*blindly*' followed –, because, as Wittgenstein notes, 'if you follow other rules than those of chess you are *playing another game*.' However, as discussed in section 3.2, linguistic rules are not followed blindly.

Without having taken due care of this difference, Wittgenstein not only asserts in the second part of the *Philosophical Investigations* that 'the kind of certainty is the kind of language-game' but decrees in § 124: 'Philosophy must not interfere in any way with the actual use of language, so it can in the end only describe it. [...] It leaves everything as it is.' But it is quite obvious that philosophy must interfere with the actual use of language, not only describe it, and that philosophy does not leave everything as it is. No wonder that, as Peter Hacker points out, Wittgenstein himself 'did not hesitate to introduce his own technical or quasi-technical terminology in philosophy (e.g., "language-game," "family resemblance concept," "grammatical proposition").' More than that: as Paul Snowdon observes, 'Wittgenstein [...] seems to go against his own idea of philosophy as leaving everything as it is by himself proposing a conception which does not do that.' Considering these contradictions, it is comprehensible that some Wittgensteinians, such as Anthony Kenny, do not believe that it is in the end possible to reconcile Wittgenstein's account of philosophy with the entirety of his philosophical activity in the *Philosophical Investigations*. 'We are forced in the end to make a choice between accepting his theory and following his practice,' asserts Kenny.

5.2 Between explanations and descriptions

In addition to stating in § 124 of the *Philosophical Investigations* that philosophy must not interfere in any way with the actual use of language, so it can in the end only describe it, Wittgenstein affirms in § 109: 'All *explanation* must disappear, and description alone must take its place.' However, the *Philosophical Investigations* itself, as the examples below illustrate, are full of explanations, which

reiterate that it is not possible to reconcile Wittgenstein's account of philosophy with the entirety of his philosophical activity in the book:

> I shall also call the whole, consisting of language and the activities into which it is woven, a "language-game". (§ 7)
>
> The word "language-game" is used here to emphasize the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life. (§ 23)
>
> Don't take it as a matter of course, but as a remarkable fact, that pictures and fictitious narratives give us pleasure, absorb us.
>
> ("Don't take it as a matter of course" – that means: puzzle over this, as you do over some other things which disturb you. [...]). (§ 524)
>
> If the feeling gives the word its meaning, then here "meaning" amounts to: *that which matters*. (§ 545)

Also contrary to his '*purely descriptive*' method, Wittgenstein philosophized at length about colors even though he claimed that they cannot be described:

> When asked "what is the distinction between blue and red?" we feel like answering: one is blue and the other red. But of course that means nothing and in reality what we're thinking of is the distinction between the surfaces or places that have these colours. [...]
>
> [...]
>
> So what I am saying means: red can't be described. [...]
>
> [...] it's no accident that in order to define the meaning of the word "red" the natural thing is to point to a red object.

That is, 'when we're asked "What do "red," "blue," "black," "White," mean?" we can, of course, immediately point to things which have these colours, – but that's all we can do: our ability to explain their meaning goes no further.' So, according to Wittgenstein, colors can't be described and in order to define the meaning of a color the natural thing is to point to an object of that color. Therefore, his purely descriptive method should exclude remarks on color.

5.3 Metaphysical use of words

Long before declaring in the early 1930s that 'philosophy really *is* "purely descriptive"' and stating in the early 1950s that 'at some point one has to pass from explanation to mere description,' Wittgenstein had already presented a descriptive view of philosophy. In his 1913 *Notes on Logic*, for example, Wittgenstein says that 'in philosophy there are no deductions: *it* is purely descriptive.' Based on this understanding of philosophy – and clearly ignoring the implications of the fact underlined by anthropologist Ernest Gellner that, contrary to descriptions of how we use chess pieces, 'the descriptions of "how we use words" are anything but neutral' –, Wittgenstein ponders: 'I am only *describing* language, not *explaining* anything.' But was Wittgenstein, who asserted that 'a new word is like a fresh seed thrown on the ground of the discussion,' indeed only *describing* language, not *explaining* anything? In other terms, has Wittgenstein, who observed that 'nothing is more important [...] than the construction of fictional concepts, which will teach us at last to understand our own,' really left everything as it is? 'What *we* do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use,' Wittgenstein says in § 116 of the *Philosophical Investigations*. However, is Wittgenstein's use of words their everyday use? Is the use of the words and the expressions listed in Hans-Johann Glock's *A Wittgenstein Dictionary*, for example, their everyday use?

6. The analogy between mathematics and a game irresistibly drags Wittgenstein on

> *Mathematics is dressed up in false interpretations.* (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Grammar*)
>
> *On mathematics: "Your concept is wrong. – However, I cannot illumine the matter by fighting against your words, but only by trying to turn your attention away from certain expressions, illustrations, images, and* towards *the* employment *of the words."* (Wittgenstein, *Zettel*)
>
> *Philosophical clarity will have the same effect on the growth of mathematics as sunlight has on the growth of potato shoots. (In a dark cellar they grow yards long.)* (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Grammar*)

6.1 A quite different arithmetic

Just as the foundation of the later Wittgenstein's philosophy of language is the analogy between language and a game, the foundation of the later Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics is the analogy between mathematics and a game. This analogy, like the analogy between language and a game, had already been made

by renowned thinkers such as the formalist mathematician David Hilbert, who stated that 'mathematics is a game played according to certain simple rules with meaningless marks on paper.' Unlike Wittgenstein, however, Hilbert and the other mathematicians and philosophers who resorted to the same analogy were not irresistibly dragged on by it into a series of contradictions.

In *Philosophical Grammar*, for example, Wittgenstein asks: 'What are we taking away from mathematics when we say it is only a game (or: it is a game)?' And he responds by drawing attention to an obvious fact that spells out the limitations of the analogy: 'If you want to say that mathematics is played like chess or patience, and the point of it is like winning or coming out, that is manifestly incorrect.' To Wittgenstein, 'calling arithmetic a game is no more and no less wrong than calling moving chessmen according to chess-rules a game; for that might be a calculation too.' Therefore, according to Wittgenstein, mathematics is only a game, and as such, the rules are followed and the game is played. In taking this position, however, Wittgenstein seems to have disregarded that a game can have any rules, established arbitrarily, but mathematics cannot. It would be possible, for example, to double the number of chess pieces or change their movement (a rook could jump pieces, for example) and then we would have another game than chess, because if you follow other rules than those of chess you are playing another game. But it is not possible to arbitrarily establish other mathematical rules. After all, as Wittgenstein himself noted, 'you can't round off mathematics any more than you can say "let's round off the four primary colours to eight or ten" or "let's round off the eight tones in an octave to ten."' Taking this fact into account and being aware of the difficulties that it brings to the analogy between mathematics and a game, Wittgenstein told his class in 1939:

> It has been said very often that mathematics is a game, to be compared with chess. In a sense this is obviously false – it is not a game in the ordinary sense. In a sense it is obviously true

> – there is some similarity. The thing to do is not to take sides, but to investigate. It is sometimes useful to compare mathematics to a game and sometimes misleading.
>
> There is an argument used again and again against the idea that mathematics is a game: "All right – it is comparable to chess. Moves on the board can be compared with transformations of mathematical expressions. But in chess we must distinguish between (1) games played by different people; (2) the theory of the game."[12]
>
> If you compare mathematics to a game, one reason is that you want to show that in some sense it is arbitrary – which is certainly misleading and very dangerous in a way. – Now I have said things which could be interpreted in this way: "You could do it another way", etc. – But if you say the rules of chess are arbitrary, your opponents will say the *theory* of chess is not arbitrary. If you prove that you can't mate with two knights, that is a fact, a truth – and is not arbitrary. – So if you had part of mathematics which was a game, then anyway there would be another part – the theory of the game – which would not be a game and would not be arbitrary.

Of course, it is sometimes useful to compare mathematics to a game, as many of Wittgenstein's forerunners did. However, there seems to be no point in writing, on the one hand, that you can't round off mathematics and, on the other, claiming that Martians might have a different arithmetic: 'For all I know,' said Wittgenstein to his class in 1939, 'the Martians may teach their children *Principia* [*Mathematica*] and then the children multiply. But they might keep

12 Cf. Frege, *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik*, vol. II, § 93, 101–102. (A note from the editor Cora Diamond).

Principia and say that 20 x 30 is not 600 but 601, and have generally a quite different arithmetic.'

At the same time that he was discussing with his students the possibility of Martian arithmetic, Wittgenstein pointed out:

> The mathematical proposition has the dignity of a rule. So much is true when it's said that mathematics is logic: its moves are from rules of our language to other rules of our language. And this gives it its peculiar solidity, its unassailable position, set apart. (Mathematics deposited among the standard measures.)

A few years later, in 1942, Wittgenstein would reaffirm mathematics' peculiar solidity and unassailable position by declaring: 'One might say: what splendid laws the Creator has built into numbers!' At the same period, Wittgenstein also wrote: 'I should like to be able to describe how it comes about that mathematics appears to us now as the natural history of the domain of numbers, now again as a collection of rules.' And I should like to be able to describe how it comes about that Wittgenstein continually oscillates from one position to another in his reflections on mathematics, sometimes trying to make the analogy between mathematics and a game hold throughout, sometimes acknowledging obvious facts and data that highlight the limitations of the analogy.

6.2 Between truth and possibility

Persisting with the analogy between mathematics and a game, Wittgenstein wrote in the *Philosophical Observations*:

> An equation is a rule of syntax.
>
> Doesn't that explain why we cannot have questions in mathematics that are in principle unanswerable? For if the rules of syntax cannot

> be grasped, they're of no use at all. And equally, it explains why an infinity that transcends our powers of comprehension cannot enter into these rules. And it also makes intelligible the attempts of the formalists to see mathematics as a game with signs.

Taking into account the attempts of the formalists to see mathematics as a game with signs, Wittgenstein mused with the neo-positivists Waismann and Moritz Schlick:

> The truth in formalism is that every syntax can be conceived of as a system of rules of a game. I have been thinking about what Weyl may mean when he says that a formalist conceives of the axioms of mathematics as like chess-rules. I want to say that not only the axioms of mathematics but all syntax is arbitrary.

But are the axioms of mathematics – that is, mathematical propositions that are accepted without proof, such as the geometrical axioms according to which (1) an infinite number of lines can pass through one given point, (2) parallel lines never intersect, and (3) one and only one line passes through two distinct points – as well as all the syntax, indeed arbitrary, like the rules of any game? 'You cannot give reasons for syntax. Hence it is arbitrary,' said Wittgenstein to Waismann and Schlick. 'Detached from its applications and considered by itself it is a game, just like chess.' Subsequently, Wittgenstein would add: 'A rule of syntax corresponds to a configuration of a game. [...] Syntax cannot be justified.' And he would say by way of example: 'There is a circle. Its length is 3cm and its width is 2cm. Indeed! What do you mean by a circle then?' As Monk observes, the possibility of a circle that is longer than it is wide is ruled out by what we mean by the word 'circle.' Thus, completes Monk, the syntax – or the grammar, as Wittgenstein also says – of geometrical terms prohibits, a priori, the existence

of such circles, just as the syntax of our colour words rules out the possibility of a thing's being both red and blue. So, if the axioms of mathematics were indeed arbitrary, as are the rules of any game such as chess, the syntax of geometric terms could be arbitrarily altered to include, for example, a circle 3cm long and 2cm wide. But it is clear that the syntax of geometric terms is not arbitrarily established – including the syntax of non-Euclidean geometries. It is not surprising, therefore, that Wittgenstein stated in § 208 of the *Philosophical Investigations* that 'the fact that we cannot write down all the digits of π is not a human shortcoming.' It is surprising, however, that Wittgenstein, on the one hand, told Waismann and Schlick that the axioms of mathematics are arbitrary and, on the other hand, wrote: '"There is no such thing as a reddish green" is akin to the sentences that we use as axioms in mathematics.'

Still grappling with these questions, Wittgenstein told his students in the early 1930s: '[Grammar] lets us do some things with language and not others; it fixes the degree of freedom.' The colour octahedron, Monk offers, is an example of grammar because it tells us that, though we can speak of a greenish blue, we cannot speak of a greenish red. 'It therefore concerns, not truth, but possibility,' Monk adds. 'Geometry is also in this sense a part of grammar.' And in this sense, it is quite clear that it is nonsense to say, as Wittgenstein did, that you cannot give reasons for syntax (or grammar), it is arbitrary, and detached from its applications and considered by itself it is a game, just like chess. For, if the syntax were arbitrary, just like a game, we could establish arbitrarily new rules and speak of a greenish red or say that 20 x 30 is not 600 but 601, and have generally a quite different arithmetic.

Without having decided on the question of the arbitrariness of syntax, Wittgenstein would further state:

> We have a colour system as we have a number system. Do the systems reside in our nature or in the nature of things? How are we to put it? – Not in the nature of numbers or colours.

> Then is there something arbitrary about this system? Yes and no. It is akin both to what is arbitrary and to what is non-arbitrary.

Hesitant about the character of the number system, Wittgenstein had already considered the possibility of a quite different arithmetic in another lecture in the early 1930s: 'If every time we counted 40 plus 20 we got 61, then our arithmetic would be awkward. We could make up an arithmetic in which this was true, and this is not to say 61 is the same as 60.' But not only did Wittgenstein never construct this arithmetic, he said in a 1939 lecture just the opposite of what he had said before: 'We shouldn't ever allow anything to prove that we're wrong in saying 12 x 12 = 144. For this is what we *call* correct multiplication.' In the same vein, Wittgenstein also wrote:

> But if I now say: See, this is how 3 + 2 make 5, laying 3 apples on the table and then 2 more, here I mean to say: 3 apples and 2 apples make 5 apples, if none are added or taken away. – Or one might even tell someone: If you put 3 apples and then 2 more on the table (as I am doing), then what you see now almost always happens – and there are now 5 apples lying there.
>
> I want perhaps to shew him that 3 apples and 2 apples don't make 5 apples in such a way as they might make 6 (because e.g. one makes a sudden appearance). This is really an explanation, a definition of the operation of adding.

And I want perhaps to shew him that 40 apples and 20 apples don't make 60 apples in such a way as they might make 61 (because e.g. one makes a sudden appearance).

6.3 Between discovery and invention

In another class in 1939, Wittgenstein said: 'I shall try again and again to show that what is called a mathematical discovery had much better be called a mathematical invention.' Years earlier, in the course "Philosophy for Mathematicians," taught between 1932 and 1933, Wittgenstein had already defended this position. During this course, Monk states, Wittgenstein read extracts from mathematician G. H. Hardy's textbook *A Course of Pure Mathematics* to exemplify the "philosophical fog" that he believed surrounded the whole discipline of pure mathematics. This "fog", according to Wittgenstein, was due to the many commonly held assumptions about mathematics that are so deeply embedded as to be very rarely examined, such as that mathematics stands upon the logical foundations given to it by Cantor, Frege and Russell, among others, and the idea that mathematics is concerned with the discovery of facts that are in some way objectively true.

In § 96 of the *Foundations of Arithmetic*, as quoted in section 2.1, Frege defends the objective truth of mathematics by resorting to the old analogy between a mathematical discovery and a geographical discovery. Russell, in turn, expresses this conception using the same analogy in the also cited § 427 of the *Principles of Mathematics* and in *Mysticism and Logic*, in which he stresses that 'not only is mathematics independent of us and our thoughts, but in another sense we and the whole universe of existing things are independent of mathematics.' Hardy offered the same view on the objective truth of mathematics in the lecture "Mathematical proof," published in the journal *Mind* in 1929:

> [...] no philosophy can possibly be sympathetic to a mathematician which does not admit, in one manner or another, the immutable and unconditional validity of mathematical truth. Mathematical theorems are true or false; their truth or falsity is absolute and independent

> of our knowledge of them. In some sense, mathematical truth is part of objective reality. […] [mathematical propositions] are in one sense or another, however elusive and sophisticated that sense may be, theorems concerning reality. […] They are not creations of our minds.

According to Monk, the tone and content of this lecture infuriated Wittgenstein. However, he confined himself to criticizing it with his students rather than debating it with Hardy or publishing a paper in *Mind* itself, presenting his view of mathematics. To his students, Wittgenstein stated:

> The talk of mathematicians becomes absurd when they leave mathematics, for example, Hardy's description of mathematics as not being a creation of our minds. He conceived philosophy as a decoration, an atmosphere, around the hard realities of mathematics and science. These disciplines, on the one hand, and philosophy on the other, are thought of as being like the necessities and decoration of a room. Hardy is thinking of philosophical opinions. I conceive of philosophy as an activity of clearing up thought.

To Wittgenstein, Monk observes, the whole idea that mathematics is concerned with the discovery of truths is a mistake that has arisen with the growth of pure mathematics and the separation of mathematics from physical science. Indeed, Wittgenstein had said to Waismann and Schlick years before that 'in grammar you cannot discover anything. There are no surprises' and 'in mathematics it is just as impossible to discover anything as it is in grammar.' Years later, Wittgenstein would reiterate this understanding of mathematics when he declared: 'The mathematician is an inventor, not a discoverer.' A question, however,

immediately arises from this perspective: if the mathematician is an inventor, not a discoverer, why can't you round off mathematics, as Wittgenstein himself stated? Moreover, if what is called a mathematical discovery had much better be called a mathematical invention, why are there not different mathematics, arbitrarily invented with different axioms? In this regard, as Ayer points out,

> [...] the difficulty seems to lie in reconciling the view that mathematics is a human invention with its seeming to compel us to accept certain conclusions, which in many cases we have to labour to discover. Thus, we are at liberty to define a prime number as one that is divisible only by 1 or itself, but having introduced this concept, we do not go on to control its application; we have to discover which numbers are prime.

So, if what is called a mathematical discovery had much better be called a mathematical invention, why haven't mathematicians controlled the application of the concept of prime number, instead of striving to discover which numbers are prime? 'We are not despising the mathematicians; we are only drawing a most important distinction – between discovering something and inventing something,' Wittgenstein explained to his students in the same 1939 course. 'But mathematicians make most important discoveries,' Wittgenstein completed, saying just the opposite of what he had said before.

6.4 Quixotic assault

It is possible to say that Wittgenstein – in his 'quixotic assault' on the status of pure mathematics, as Monk called it – was so interested in the analogy between mathematics and a game because he was convinced that mathematics is not a science. However, Wittgenstein

knew that because he contradicted the prevailing conception that mathematics is a science, with objectively true facts to discover, he would not effectively influence the work of mathematicians. And Wittgenstein didn't really influence the work of mathematicians. Nor did he influence the work of mathematical logicians. But this would have been expected, given that, after abandoning logicism, Wittgenstein went on to declare trivial the contradictions in Frege's logic, discovered by Russell (the so-called "Russell's paradox" – the resolution of which he had previously believed to be the fundamental task of philosophy). In fact, Wittgenstein went on to declare contradictions in general trivial, convinced that the problem is not contradictions, but the error of thinking them to be important dilemmas.

Naturally, this perspective of Wittgenstein's generated intense reactions, with many logicians and mathematicians ardently condemning him. In fact, even people who lived with Wittgenstein did not spare his intellectual legacy from the harshest comments. A good example of this is the mathematician Georg Kreisel, who arrived at the University of Cambridge in 1942 as a mathematics graduate student and attended Wittgenstein's courses in the philosophy of mathematics. After leaving Cambridge, Kreisel went to study with Gödel and became not only a central figure in mathematical logic, but also a scathing opponent of Wittgensteinian philosophy: 'Wittgenstein's views on mathematical logic are not worth much,' wrote Kreisel, 'because he knew very little and what he knew was confined to the Frege–Russell line of goods.' In Kreisel's review of the *Blue and Brown Books*, which were published posthumously in 1958, 'his dismissal was couched in still stronger, perhaps even bitter, terms' in Monk's opinion:

> As an introduction to the significant problems of traditional philosophy, the books are deplorable. This is largely based on a personal reaction. I believe that early contact with Wittgenstein's outlook has hindered

> rather than helped me to establish a fruitful perspective on philosophy as a discipline in its own right.

Gödel's dismissal of Wittgenstein's views on mathematical logic was also couched in strong terms.

6.5 Gödel against Wittgenstein

In September 1930, a conference on "Epistemology of the Exact Sciences" was held in Königsberg at which exponents of the main schools of the philosophy of mathematics defended their respective views. The Dutch mathematician Arend Heyting represented the intuitionists, the Hungarian mathematician John von Neumann, the formalists, Carnap, the logicists, and Waismann spoke for the reclusive Wittgenstein, summarizing his new ideas about the nature of mathematics. A brief statement, however, by the young logician and mathematician Kurt Gödel[13] presenting his famous incompleteness theorem would eventually surpass the other lectures in importance. Later, Gödel would publish a second theorem, as a corollary of the first. With his two incompleteness theorems, Gödel proved that in any consistent formal system (i.e., without the rules of the system generating contradictions) there will always be a sentence whose truth cannot be proved in that system, and that the consistency of a formal system of arithmetic cannot be proved from within the system itself. In doing so, Gödel demolished Hilbert's project of providing a finitary formal proof of the consistency of the axioms of arithmetic from within the arithmetic system itself. Moreover, he proved that mathematics cannot be reduced to logic, as logicists such as Frege and Russell

13 Some contemporary psychologists and psychiatrists, including Michael Fitzgerald, have come forward with the posthumous diagnosis that Gödel had autism. However, Gödel is much more commonly diagnosed to have suffered from schizophrenia.

believed. 'Whether Wittgenstein accepted this interpretation of Gödel's result is a moot point,' stated Monk. 'His comments on Gödel's proof (see *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, Appendix to Part I) appear at first sight, to one trained in mathematical logic, quite amazingly primitive.' At second, third, and fourth sight, it was confirmed that Wittgenstein's comments on Gödel's proof were quite amazingly primitive – and even embarrassing, in the estimation of several scholars, as J. W. Dawson Jr. observed. Be that as it may, it is not a moot point whether or not Wittgenstein accepted this interpretation of Gödel's results (see *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, VII, § 19).

In this section of the book, Wittgenstein states: 'My task is, not to talk about (e.g.) Gödel's proof, but to by-pass it.' However, as Goldstein points out, despite this statement, which tends to irritate mathematicians, Wittgenstein always takes up Gödel's incompleteness theorem in his *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, trying to show that it cannot mean what it purports to mean. Also to the irritation of mathematicians, Wittgenstein tries to disqualify Gödel's proof, saying that it is based on 'bits of legerdemain,' since for him 'mathematics cannot be incomplete; any more than a *sense* can be incomplete.' 'My aim is to alter the *attitude* to contradiction and to consistency proofs,' Wittgenstein wrote. In conversation with Waismann and Schlick in December 1930, Wittgenstein detailed his position on the subject, without losing sight of the analogy between mathematics and a game:

> I've been reading a work by Hilbert on consistency. It strikes me that this whole question has been put wrongly. I should like to ask: Can mathematics be inconsistent at all? I should like to ask these people: Look, what are you really up to? Do you really believe there are contradictions hidden in mathematics?
>
> [...] if inconsistencies were to arise between the rules of the game of mathematics, it would

> be the easiest thing in the world to remedy. All we have to do is to make a new stipulation to cover the case in which the rules conflict, and the matter's resolved.

So, for Wittgenstein, 'what Hilbert does is mathematics and not metamathematics. It's another calculus, just like any other.' That is, as long as mathematical symbols can be used correctly, there is no need for a "theory" of mathematics, as Monk summarizes Wittgenstein's conception of mathematics. Thus, Monk adds, a definitive and fundamental justification of mathematical rules is neither possible nor desirable, which means that the whole debate about the 'foundations' of mathematics rests on a misconception. From this perspective, as Goldstein points out,

> It is really not so surprising that Wittgenstein would dismiss Gödel's result with a belittling description like "*logische Kunststücke*," logical conjuring tricks, patently devoid of the large metamathematical import that Gödel and other mathematicians presumed his theorems had. Gödel's proof, the very possibility of a proof of its kind, is forbidden on the grounds of Wittgensteinian tenets [...]. He was, in short, adamant in denying the possibility of a proof such as Gödel's.

In the 1970s, the mathematician Karl Menger showed Gödel excerpts from the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* regarding the incompleteness theorems. Gödel later wrote to his former colleague in the Vienna Circle:

> As far as my theorems about undecidable propositions are concerned, it is indeed clear from the passage that you cite that Wittgenstein did *not* understand it (or that he

> pretended not to understand it). He interprets it as a kind of logical paradox, while in fact it is just the opposite, namely a mathematical theorem within an absolutely uncontroversial part of mathematics (finitary number theory or combinatorics). Incidentally, the whole passage you cite seems nonsense to me. See e.g. the "superstitious fear of mathematicians" of contradiction.

Gödel further remarked to the mathematician Abraham Robinson that Wittgenstein's comment on his theorems was a 'completely trivial and uninteresting misinterpretation' of his results.

6.6 Turing against Wittgenstein

To understand Wittgenstein's attitude towards Gödel's proof, it is necessary to bear in mind that his aim was in reality to discard all mathematical logic. Precisely to this end, Wittgenstein dismissed various aspects of the discussion of the foundations of mathematics in his course on the subject, taught at the University of Cambridge in 1939, including Russell's paradox:

> Take Russell's contradiction. There are concepts which we call predicates – 'man', 'chair', and 'wolf' are predicates, but 'Jack' and 'John' are not. Some predicates apply to themselves and others don't. For instance 'chair' is not a chair, 'wolf' is not a wolf, but 'predicate' is a predicate. You might say this is bosh. And in a sense it is.

To Monk, Wittgenstein's 'lack of sophistication' examining Russell's contradiction – 'from a mathematical point of view, quite extraordinarily primitive' – had a propagandist purpose.

'Wittgenstein's use of casual, everyday, language in discussion of problems in mathematical logic, and his simple dismissal as "bosh" of the terms in which those problems have been raised, serves as an antidote to the seriousness and earnestness with which they have been discussed by those who have fallen for their "charm" (including, for example, himself, in 1911).' However, mathematicians – as well as most analytic philosophers, which, as Oskari Kuusela and Marie McGinn note, 'still seem too scandalized by Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics to consider it very seriously' – have never accepted this "antidote" of Wittgenstein's, starting with one of the attendees in those classes, the mathematician Alan Turing.[14] That same year Turing gave a course at Cambridge entitled "Foundations of Mathematics," in which students were introduced to the technique of proving mathematical theorems from a rigorously axiomatic system of logic – that is, the source of the mathematical fascination that Wittgenstein tried to dismiss as "bosh."

According to Monk, Wittgenstein probably believed that if he could convince Turing to see mathematics through his eyes, he could convince anyone. However, Wittgenstein failed to convince Turing, who, asked on one occasion if he understood what Wittgenstein was saying, replied: 'I understand but I don't agree that it is simply a question of giving new meanings to words.' Wittgenstein – 'somewhat bizarrely,' in Monk's opinion – commented to this: 'Turing doesn't

14 Contemporary psychologists and psychiatrists, including Michael Fitzgerald, also came forward with the posthumous diagnosis that Turing had autism. As a result, there is a change of aspect in a wide range of information about him and some comparative observations between him and Wittgenstein, such as the assertion by his biographer Andrew Hodges that Turing and Wittgenstein were alike in intensity and seriousness and both were unique individuals, who created their own mental worlds. Interestingly, Turing considered Wittgenstein 'a *very* peculiar man.' After they had talked about some logic, Turing recalled, Wittgenstein had said that he would have to go into a nearby room to think over what had been said. It is worth mentioning here that Fitzgerald also presented the posthumous diagnosis that Russell had autism. However, the evidence he uses to justify this diagnosis does not seem as robust as the evidence he lists to support the diagnoses of Wittgenstein, Gödel, and Turing, as well as other personalities and historical figures.

object to anything I say. He agrees with every word. He objects to the idea he thinks underlies it. He thinks we're undermining mathematics, introducing Bolshevism into mathematics. But not at all.' As for these disputes between Wittgenstein and Turing, Monk is incisive:

> It was important to Wittgenstein's conception of his philosophical method that there could be no disagreements of opinion between himself and Turing. In his philosophy he was not advancing any theses, so how could there possibly be anything to disagree with? When Turing once used the phrase: 'I see your point', Wittgenstein reacted forcefully: 'I have no point.' If Turing was inclined to object to what Wittgenstein was saying, it could only be because he was using words in a different way to Wittgenstein – it could only be a question of giving meanings to words. Or, rather, it *could* only be a question of Turing's not understanding Wittgenstein's use of certain words.

Or, rather, it could only be a question of Wittgenstein – who believed he was 'persuading people to change their style of thinking' – not understanding that there was in fact a disagreement of opinion between himself and Turing. In reality, even more bizarrely, Wittgenstein told the students: 'Obviously the whole point is that I must not have an opinion.' But obviously Wittgenstein had an opinion on the question of the foundations of mathematics. In fact, as Monk points out, contradicting his 'no opinion'-methodology, Wittgenstein 'quite clearly did have very strong opinions – opinions that were, moreover, at variance with the conception of their subject held by most professional mathematicians.' And because he was convinced that objections to his opinions could only arise from misunderstanding, the clarity that Wittgenstein was aiming at was indeed complete clarity – ultimate clarity – with which he believed

that no dispute whatsoever could arise. If it did, in Wittgenstein's opinion, it could only be because words were used in a different way. In relation to this, Monk is again precise:

> Turing was inclined to say that there could be experiments in mathematics – that is, that we could pursue a mathematical investigation in the same spirit in which we might conduct an experiment in physics: 'We don't know how this might turn out, but let's see…' To Wittgenstein, this was quite impossible; the whole analogy between mathematics and physics was completely mistaken, and one of the most important sources of the confusions he was trying to unravel. But how was he to make this clear without opposing Turing's view with a view of his own? He had to: (a) get Turing to admit that they were both using the word 'experiment' in the same sense; and (b) get him to see that, in that sense, mathematicians do not make experiments.

Wittgenstein, however, did not get Turing to admit that they were using the word 'experiment' in the same sense, nor did he get him to see that, in that sense, mathematicians do not make experiments. Unable to effectively persuade Turing to change his style of thinking, Wittgenstein once again attributed the dispute to a question of giving meanings to words, believing that if he expressed himself clearly, the problem would disappear *completely*:

> Turing thinks that he and I are using the word 'experiment' in two different ways. But I want to show that this is wrong. That is to say, I think that if I could make myself clear, then Turing would give up saying that in mathematics we make experiments. If I could arrange in their proper order certain well-known facts, then it

> would become clear that Turing and I are not using the word 'experiment' differently.
>
> You might say: 'How is it possible that there should be a misunderstanding so very hard to remove?'
>
> It can be explained partly by a difference of education.

As Monk points out, on Wittgenstein's view, this misunderstanding so very hard to remove could not be explained by the fact that there was a substantive difference of opinion between him and Turing. For Wittgenstein, of course, it could only be a question of giving meanings to words.[15] For this reason, Wittgenstein also failed to recognize that his dispute with Turing over the concern of mathematicians to avoid a contradiction in a system was explained by the fact that there was a substantive difference of opinion between them. In analyzing this question, Wittgenstein addressed the liar paradox by dismissing it as bosh, which led to yet another argument with Turing:

> It is very queer in a way that this [the liar paradox] should have puzzled anyone – much more extraordinary than you might think: that this should be the thing to worry human beings. Because the thing works like this: if a man says 'I am lying' we say that it follows that he is not lying, from which it follows that he is lying and so on. Well, so what? You can go on like that until you are black in the face. Why not? It doesn't matter.

15 For other grammatical inquiries of Wittgenstein related to mathematics, see Appendix III.

'One usually uses a contradiction as a criterion for having done something wrong,' Turing said. 'But in this case one cannot find anything done wrong.' Yes, replied Wittgenstein – asserting something that Turing would not admit – because nothing has been done wrong. 'One may say, "This can only be explained by a theory of types." But what is there which needs to be explained?' Turing then explained not only why the paradox was puzzling, but also why it was important. The damage caused by a system containing a contradiction, he argued, 'will not come in unless there is an application, in which case a bridge may fall down or something of the sort.' Thus, being committed to mathematical logic and aware of Gödel's use of the liar paradox, Turing was convinced of the importance of paradoxes and contradictions in general. Wittgenstein, however, was adamant about the irrelevance of paradoxes and contradictions, and consequently the discussion with Turing continued in the following lecture:

> *Turing*: You cannot be confident about applying your calculus until you know that there is no hidden contradiction in it.
>
> *Wittgenstein*: There seems to me to be an enormous mistake there. For your calculus gives certain results, and you want the bridge not to break down. I'd say things can go wrong in only two ways: either the bridge breaks down or you have made a mistake in your calculation – for example you multiplied wrongly. But you seem to think there may be a third thing wrong: the calculus is wrong.
>
> *Turing*: No. What I object to is the bridge falling down.
>
> *Wittgenstein*: But how do you know that it will fall down? Isn't that a question of physics? It may be that if one throws dice in order to calculate the bridge it will never fall down.

> *Turing*: If one takes Frege's symbolism and gives someone the technique of multiplying in it, then by using a Russell paradox he could get a wrong multiplication.
>
> *Wittgenstein*: This would come to doing something which we would not call multiplying. You give him a rule for multiplying and when he gets to a certain point he can go in either of two ways, one of which leads him all wrong.

Shortly after this discussion, Turing would abandon that course. If Wittgenstein would not admit that a contradiction is a fatal flaw in a mathematical system, Monk states, then there could be no common ground between them. However, as it seems, even then Wittgenstein did not recognize that his dispute with Turing over the mathematicians' concern to avoid a contradiction in a mathematical system could be explained by the fact that there was a substantive difference of opinion between them. For Wittgenstein, indisputably, it could only be a question of giving meanings to words.

6.7 An absurdity for psychological reasons

Despite having spent years trying to persuade people that paradoxes and contradictions are bosh, as he did in his 1939 course on the philosophy of mathematics, Wittgenstein would not be embarrassed to attest, in the mid-1940s, to the importance of the so-called "Moore's Paradox." According to Monk, this was the name that Wittgenstein himself gave to the absurdity of stating a proposition and then saying that one does not believe it, such as "There is a fire in this room and I don't believe there is." Wittgenstein's interest in the "paradox" stemmed from the fact that, although it is usually said that someone who makes this kind of statement is contradicting himself, the statement is not formally a contradiction. Wittgenstein became aware of the "paradox" in a

monograph Moore presented at the Moral Science Club in October 1944 and immediately wrote to him asking him to publish his "discovery":

> You have said something about the *logic* of assertion. Viz: It makes sense to say 'Let's suppose: p is the case and I don't believe that p is the case', whereas it makes *no* sense to assert 'p is the case and I don't believe that p is the case.' This *assertion* has to be ruled out and *is* ruled out by 'common sense', just as a contradiction is. And this just shows that logic isn't as simple as logicians think it is. In particular: that contradiction isn't the *unique* thing people think it is. It isn't the *only* logically inadmissible form and it is, under certain circumstances, admissible. And to show that seems to me the chief merit of your paper.

Moore did not see the matter that way, and felt that because the "paradox" did not result in a formal contradiction, it was absurd on psychological rather than logical reasons. Wittgenstein, however, rejected Moore's opinion and wrote to him: "If I ask someone 'Is there a fire in the next room?' and he answers 'I believe there is' I can't say: 'Don't be irrelevant. I asked you about the fire not about your state of mind!' In Wittgenstein's opinion, any investigation into what it does and does not make sense to assert was a part of logic. Thus, Monk observes – reiterating Wittgenstein's unfair criticisms of logicians' search for a perfect logical language, as will be detailed in the eighth chapter – "'Moore's Paradox' interested Wittgenstein as an illustration that, contrary to the logician's desire for simplicity, the forms of our language cannot be squeezed without distortion into the pigeon-holes created for them by the categories of formal logic." And 'Moore's Paradox' interests me as another illustration of the fact that Wittgenstein used to write one sentence, and then another – just the opposite – to the point of contradicting himself even about paradoxes and contradictions.

6.8 Wittgenstein's chief contribution

Given Wittgenstein's contradictions and the inconsistencies of his quixotic assault on the state of logic and pure mathematics, it is not surprising that he was never satisfied with the second part of the *Philosophical Investigations*, which was to be devoted to the philosophy of mathematics, and was therefore excluded from the book. Nor is it surprising that Wittgenstein's main book on the philosophy of mathematics, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, is 'the one that met with the least favourable reception, at any rate from logicians,' as Ayer points out. Much less is it surprising that Wittgenstein abandoned his work in the philosophy of mathematics. Indeed, in the mid-1940s, John Wisdom wrote a brief note about Wittgenstein to be included in a biographical dictionary and, before publishing it, asked him to comment on it. Wittgenstein made only one modification, adding a final sentence to the text: 'Wittgenstein's chief contribution has been in the philosophy of mathematics.' However, two or three months later, when Rhees asked him about his work on mathematics, Wittgenstein answered with a wave of his hand: 'Oh, someone else can do that.'

7. Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind

> *The reasonable man* does not *have certain doubts.* (Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*)

7.1 One of the least dangerous of Wittgenstein's ideas

In the previous chapters, the philosophy of language and the philosophy of mathematics of both the early and later Wittgenstein were analyzed in light of the diagnosis of autism. It is now appropriate to address his philosophy of mind. To do this, first of all, it is important to explain that it is based on the assumption that we do not think with our heads or in our heads. In *Zettel*, for example, Wittgenstein states:

> One of the most dangerous of ideas for a philosopher is, oddly enough, that we think with our heads or in our heads. (§ 605)
>
> No supposition seems to me more natural than that there is no process in the brain correlated with associating or with thinking; so that it would be impossible to read off thought-processes from brain-processes [...]. (§ 608)
>
> It is thus perfectly possible that certain psychological phenomena cannot be investigated physiologically, because physiologically nothing corresponds to them. (§ 609)

Following this line of argument, Wittgenstein ponders in *Philosophical Grammar*:

> In the consideration of our problems one of the most dangerous ideas is the idea that we think with, or in, our heads. The idea of a process in the head, in a completely enclosed space, makes thinking something occult.
>
> "Thinking takes place in the head" really means only "the head is connected with thinking". – Of course one says also "I think with my pen" and this localisation is at least as good.

Reinforcing his assertion that thinking with the pen is at least as good a localisation as the localisation of thinking in the head, Wittgenstein wrote in 1931: 'I really do think with my pen, for my head often knows nothing of what my hand is writing.' Years later, Wittgenstein would further note:

> Thinking in terms of physiological processes is extremely dangerous in connexion with the clarification of conceptual problems in psychology. Thinking in physiological hypotheses deludes us sometimes with false difficulties, sometimes with false solutions. The best prophylactic against this is the thought that I don't know at all whether the humans I am acquainted with actually have a nervous system.

Given the strangeness of these statements by Wittgenstein – which are added to so many other statements that were at least unusual made by him about thought – it is curious that they did not receive the attention they would in principle deserve from the commentators of his work. In the entire section on the philosophy of mind in the *Oxford Handbook of Wittgenstein*, for example, with six

essays spread over almost 150 pages, it is not even discussed why Wittgenstein thought that, in the consideration of our problems one of the most dangerous ideas is the idea that we think with, or in, our heads. However, it is not possible to understand Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind without understanding why he questioned that thinking takes place in the head.

7.2 Philosophical investigations: conceptual investigations

'Never one to allow facts to stand in the way of his compulsive intuitions,' as Gellner stated, Wittgenstein adopted the somewhat bizarre supposition that there is no process in the brain correlated with associating or with thinking, trying to maintain his conceptual method at any price. No wonder Wittgenstein declared categorically: 'Philosophical investigations: conceptual investigations.' Of course, there was nothing to prevent Wittgenstein from limiting his philosophical investigations to conceptual investigations, although he never actually did so in his philosophy of language, his philosophy of mathematics, or his philosophy of mind. In spite of this, Wittgenstein intended to restrict philosophical investigations to conceptual investigations. In his 1946–1947 course on the philosophy of psychology, for example, Wittgenstein said to his students:

> Psychology is often defined as the science of Mental Phenomena. This is a little queer, as we shall see: contrast it with physics as the science of physical phenomena. It is the word 'phenomena' which may be troublesome. We get the idea: on the one hand you have phenomena of one kind which do certain things, on the other, phenomena of another kind which do other things: so how do the two sorts of things compare? But perhaps it makes no sense to say that both do the sort of things the other does. 'The science of mental phenomena' – by this we mean what everybody means,

> namely, the science that deals with thinking, deciding, wishing, desiring, wondering. [...] And an old puzzle comes up. The psychologist when he finds his correlations finds them by watching people doing things like screwing up their noses, getting rises in blood pressure, looking anxious, accepting this after S seconds, reflecting that after S plus 3 seconds, writing down 'No' on a piece of paper, and so on. So where is the science of mental phenomena? Answer: You observe your own mental happenings. How? By introspection. But if you observe, i.e., if you go about to observe your own mental happenings you alter them and create new ones: and the whole point of observing is that you should not do this – observing is supposed to be just the thing that avoids this. Then the science of mental phenomena has this puzzle: I can't observe the mental phenomena of others and I can't observe my own, in the proper sense of 'observe'. So where are we?

Wittgenstein's answer, Monk observes, is that the only thing capable of clearing the fog is a conceptual investigation of the use of words like 'intention,' 'willing,' 'hope' etc., which shows that these words gain their meaning from a form of life, a 'language-game,' quite different from that of describing and explaining physical phenomena. Not convinced, however, of the relevance of conceptual investigation, some students objected to Wittgenstein's proposal, which he took up again at the following meeting:

> Now let us go back to last day. You must remember I suggested (i) we want analysis. This wouldn't do unless it meant (ii) we want the definition of thinking. And then I made a fishy step. I suggested: Perhaps we really want the use of 'thinking'. 'But', you say, 'clearly, we don't want to know about the "use of words". And, in a sense, we clearly don't.

So, Monk comments, we don't want to know about the use of words for its own sake. The point of describing the real and imagined use of words is to loosen the hold of the confused way of looking at things that is the product of the philosopher's 'impoverished diet' of examples. But did Wittgenstein's confusing way of examining things clear any fog? Or, more specifically, did Wittgenstein's confusing way of examining things, often, as Malcolm points out, with 'imaginary events and circumstances [...] so odd and so far beyond the reach of natural possibility that he himself could not help being amused,' clear any of our fogs? In order to answer this question, let us look at a typical example of Wittgenstein's description of the use of words:

> Are the words "I'm afraid" a description of a state of mind?
>
> I say "I'm afraid"; someone else asks me: "What was that? A cry of fear; or did you want to tell me how you feel; or was it an observation on your present state? – Could I always give him a clear answer? Could I never give him one?
>
> One can imagine all sorts of things here: for example, "No, no! I'm afraid!"
>
> "I'm afraid. I am sorry to have to admit it."
>
> "I'm still a bit afraid, but no longer as much as before."
>
> "In fact I'm still afraid, though I'm reluctant to admit it to myself."
>
> "I torment myself with all sorts of fearful thoughts."
>
> "Now, just when I should be fearless, I'm afraid!"
>
> To each of these sentences a special tone of voice is appropriate, to each a different context.

It does not seem plausible that Wittgenstein's description of the use of the words "I'm afraid" dispelled any fog from anyone. The same can be said of many other examples of Wittgenstein's description of the use of words, such as the description of the verb "see":

> Two uses of the word "see".
>
> The one: "What do you see there?" – "I see this" (and then a description, a drawing, a copy). The other: "I see a likeness in these two faces" – let the man to whom I tell this be seeing the faces as clearly as I do myself.
>
> What is important is the categorial difference between the two 'objects' of sight.
>
> The one man might make an accurate drawing of the two faces, and the other notice in the drawing the likeness which the former did not see.
>
> I observe a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I see that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience "noticing an aspect".
>
> Its *causes* are of interest to psychologists.
>
> We are interested in the concept and its place among the concepts of experience.

Wittgenstein was interested in the concept and its place among the concepts of experience. Psychologists are interested in the *causes* of psychological experience. And why should they act differently? After all, as Wittgenstein himself asks, 'if concept formation can be explained by facts of nature, shouldn't we be interested, not in grammar, but rather in what is its basis in nature?' Of course, psychologists are interested in facts of nature, but Wittgenstein was interested in grammar: 'We do not analyse a phenomenon (for

example, thinking) but a concept (for example, that of thinking), and hence the application of a word.' It is precisely to justify his conceptual interest in opposition to the interest of psychologists in facts of nature that Wittgenstein asserted that in the consideration of our problems one of the most dangerous ideas is the idea that we think with, or in, our heads. That is, in Wittgenstein's conception, since psychological phenomena do not occur in the head, they cannot be investigated physiologically. Therefore, there would only be the possibility of investigating them conceptually.

7.3 A defense of common sense

Given that Wittgenstein went to great lengths to deny that we think with our heads or in our heads, it is somewhat ironic that one of the most valued points of his late philosophy is his critique of Moore's refutation of scepticism presented in the papers "Proof of an external world" and "A defense of common sense." In the first paper, Moore tries to prove the incontrovertible existence of some external objects, such as his hands. In the second, Moore lists things that he claims to know for sure to be true, such as the fact that he has a body; that this body was never far from the surface of the Earth, that the Earth existed for many years before he was born, etc. On his visit to the United States, Wittgenstein was questioned about the validity of Moore's argument by Malcolm, who had published criticisms of it in the paper "Defending common sense," which Moore refuted in a letter. On this occasion, Wittgenstein said to Malcolm: 'An expression has meaning only in the stream of life. [...] To understand a sentence is to be prepared for one of its uses. If we can't think of any use for it at all, then we don't understand it at all.' Thus, concludes Wittgenstein: 'Instead of saying that Moore's statement "I know that this is a tree" is a misuse of language, it is better to say that it has no clear meaning, and that Moore himself doesn't know how he is using it. [...] It isn't even clear to him that he is not giving it an ordinary usage.'

In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein returns to the question and states:

> [...] the sentence "The Earth has existed for millions of years" makes clearer sense than "The Earth has existed for the last five minutes". For I'd ask anyone who asserted the latter: "What observations does this sentence refer to; and what observations would count against it?" – whereas I know to what context of ideas and what observations the former sentence belongs.

According to Monk, Wittgenstein's argument is based on the fact that it is possible to imagine common uses for some of Moore's statements more easily than for others: 'It isn't difficult to think of usages for "I know that this is a hand," Wittgenstein said, 'it is more difficult for "I know that the Earth has existed for many years."' Moore, however, as Monk points out, was not using his statements in an 'ordinary' way, but using them to make a philosophical point – i.e., Moore was not informing his readers that he had two hands; he was attempting to refute philosophical scepticism. In this regard, Wittgenstein was sure that Moore had failed: 'When the sceptical philosophers say "You don't know" and Moore replies "I do know,"' Wittgenstein remarked, 'his reply is quite useless, unless it is to assure them that he, Moore, doesn't feel any doubt whatever.' To Wittgenstein, Moore's common-sense propositions were not examples of 'certain knowledge,' but, rather, examples of cases in which doubt is nonsensical. In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein says by way of example:

> It's possible to imagine a case in which I could satisfy myself that I had two hands. Normally, however, I can't do so. "But all you need do is to hold them up before your eyes!" – If I am now in doubt as to whether I have two hands, I need not believe my eyes either. (I might just as well ask a friend.)

Thus, 'in certain circumstances a man cannot make a mistake,' Wittgenstein completes. 'If Moore were to pronounce the opposite of those propositions which he declares certain, we should not just not share his opinion: we should regard him as demented.' Further ahead, Wittgenstein concludes, presenting imaginary events and odd circumstances far beyond the reach of natural possibility:

> I could imagine Moore being captured by a wild tribe, and their expressing the suspicion that he has come from somewhere between the earth and the moon. Moore tells them that he knows etc. but he can't give them the grounds for his certainty, because they have fantastic ideas of human ability to fly and know nothing about physics. This would be an occasion for making that statement.

In other words, Monk observes, the only occasion Wittgenstein can think of in which it would be appropriate for Moore to assert: 'I know that I have not left the surface of the Earth,' would be one in which he is faced by people operating within a vastly different framework. With this in mind, it is necessary to ask: in which occasion, apart from Wittgenstein's philosophy, could we conceive that it would be appropriate for him to assert: 'One of the most dangerous of ideas for a philosopher is that we think with our heads or in our heads,' 'I really do think with my pen, for my head often knows nothing of what my hand is writing,' 'I don't know at all whether the humans I am acquainted with actually have a nervous system,' etc.?

7.4 Style of thinking

In spite of all his efforts to deny that we think with our heads or in our heads, Wittgenstein wrote at the end of his life that 'we belong to a community which is bound together by science and education' and 'we should not call anybody reasonable who believed something in despite of scientific evidence.' However, in addition to believing many things in despite of scientific evidence, Wittgenstein was a staunch critic of science, against which he declared, for example:

> It is not [...] absurd to believe that the scientific & technological age is the beginning of the end for humanity, that the idea of Great Progress is a bedazzlement, along with the idea that the truth will ultimately be known; that there is nothing good or desirable about scientific knowledge & that humanity, in seeking it, is falling into a trap. It is by no means clear that this is not how things are.

For Wittgenstein, as it seems, it was also not absurd to believe that if science was not part of the solution, it could only be part of the problem. Indicatively, shortly after his return to Cambridge in January 1929, Wittgenstein wrote to Ramsey, with whom he met frequently to discuss questions of logic and the philosophy of mathematics: 'I don't like taking walks through the fields of science alone.' This is a significant statement because it reveals that at that time Wittgenstein had not yet identified in science such a significant source of problems for humanity. But a short time later, when he concluded that walking through the fields of science – continuing what he called in the review of the book *The Science of Logic* 'the great work of the modern mathematical logicians' – would not lead him to solve philosophical problems once and for all, Wittgenstein would exchange logic for his grammatical inquiries and go on to

attack science. Wittgenstein, however, never exchanged science for another 'style of thinking' when he was ill. Moreover, for many years, Wittgenstein contemplated studying medicine and specializing in psychiatry, which he intended to provide 'the correct treatment of *all* [phenomena of mental life]' – i.e., a treatment based on conceptual investigations.

7.5 A synoptic view

Wittgenstein considered becoming a psychiatrist because he believed that his style of philosophizing and Freudian psychoanalysis required a similar gift. This gift, for Wittgenstein, was essentially the capacity to invent new similes. Indeed, according to Monk, Wittgenstein wished to contribute to psychiatric medicine through his 'ability to form a synoptic view by constructing illuminating similes and metaphors.'[16] Evidently, however, this ability of Wittgenstein's never influenced the work of psychiatrists. Nor did his criticisms of psychology and psychoanalysis itself – which, by the way, had already been made decades earlier by other authors, including Karl Kraus, whose periodical, *Die Fackel*, Wittgenstein followed for many years.

Unlike Kraus, however, Wittgenstein came to declare himself 'a disciple of Freud' in the 1940s, despite his criticism of psychoanalysis. In fact, Wittgenstein recognized the importance of Freud's ideas, but he was convinced that Freud had been seduced by the method of science and the 'craving for generality,' making the mistake of trying to present a single model for all dreams, which would only be expressions of desires and not fears, for example. In opposition to Freud, Wittgenstein pointed out, as other authors had done before, that there is not only one type of dream, nor only one way of interpreting the symbols of a dream. 'Dream symbols

16 For an analysis, in light of the diagnosis of autism, of the relationship between Wittgenstein's similes and his preference for pictorial thinking, see Appendix III.

do mean something,' Monk explains Wittgenstein's position, 'but to understand them requires not some general theory of dreams, but the kind of multifaceted skill that is involved, say, in the understanding of a piece of music.' There is no need to say who, in Wittgenstein's opinion, would be the person gifted with the multifaceted skill that is involved in the understanding of a piece of music, of dream symbols, of the use of words...

8. The *Philosophical Investigations*' rather obvious point of view

> *That which I am writing about so tediously, may be obvious to someone whose mind is less decrepit.* (Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Colours*)

8.1 A revolution less revolutionary than it seemed

Although Wittgenstein himself stated that his chief contribution was in the philosophy of mathematics, his name became widely associated with the philosophy of language. This was due not only to the negative reception that his reflections on mathematics had among logicians and mathematicians, but above all to the fact that many philosophers and even historians of linguistic ideas credited him with presenting a revolutionary pragmatic theory of language in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

For instance, Marie-Anne Paveau and Georges-Élia Sarfati state in their book *Les grandes Théories de La Linguistique: De la Grammaire Comparée à la Pragmatique* that pragmatics was born from the philosophy of language and that its emergence is the result of the so-called "linguistic turn of philosophy," which took place between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. It was characterized by the choice of language analysis as a primary condition for the resolution of philosophical problems.

A central figure in this movement, Wittgenstein is pointed out by Paveau and Sarfati as the one who distances himself from his first works of logic and formulates in the *Philosophical Investigations* the broad lines of an unprecedented research program, concerning the examination of the relations that a natural language establishes with the categorization of experience, perception, and the world of culture.

In clear divergence from the assessment of Paveau and Sarfati, and in line with the historiographical research of scholars such as Brigitte Nerlich and David D. Clarke, authors of the book *Language, Action, and Context: The Early History of Pragmatics in Europe and America, 1780-1930*, I will detail in this chapter how what are considered to be Wittgenstein's most important linguistic ideas had already been presented and defended by great thinkers over several centuries. The intention in doing so is to deconstruct the false conception that Wittgenstein formulated an unprecedented research program in the *Philosophical Investigations*, and to reinforce the observation made by Nerlich and Clarke that 'what was considered by some to be a "philosophical revolution" was in fact less revolutionary than it seemed.'

8.2 A pragmatic conception of language

In the preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein states that the mathematician and philosopher Frank Ramsey's criticism of the ideas of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* had helped him to recognize the 'grave mistakes' of his first book to a degree that he himself was hardly able to estimate, but that to the 'stimulus' of the economist Piero Sraffa he owed 'the most fruitful ideas' of the *Investigations*. For Monk, this latter acknowledgment was a puzzling claim, given the intellectual differences between Wittgenstein and Sraffa. For the economist Amartya Sen, in turn, it was puzzling that his former teacher Sraffa considered his 'stimuli' to be 'rather obvious,' found it boring to talk to Wittgenstein, and

was never enthusiastic about his influence on the work of the man who many claimed was the greatest philosopher of the 20th century. In Sen's opinion, Sraffa found his own point of view rather obvious due to his Marxist background, a result of the profound influence he had received in his youth from his friend Antonio Gramsci. This explanation, however, is misguided. Sraffa found it boring to converse with Wittgenstein, was never enthusiastic about his influence on his work, and considered his own point of view rather obvious because his point of view was actually rather obvious.

One of Sraffa's 'stimuli' to Wittgenstein has become almost legendary: in a conversation between the two, Wittgenstein is said to have insisted that a proposition and what it describes must have the same "logical form" (or "grammar," depending on the version). In response to Wittgenstein, Sraffa is said to have made the Neapolitan gesture of brushing his chin with his fingertips and asked him: 'What is the logical form of *that*?' The gesture helped Wittgenstein abandon the idea defended in the *Tractatus* that a proposition must be a "figuration" of the reality it describes. Curiously, though, Sraffa didn't even remember this episode years later, when Sen asked him about it. 'I can't remember such a specific occasion,' Sraffa told him. 'I argued with Wittgenstein so often and so much that my fingertips did not need to do much talking.'

Be that as it may, the conversations with Sraffa would eventually lead Wittgenstein to give up trying to correct the structure of the *Tractatus* and to abandon altogether the idea that there had to be a commonality of structure between the world and language. Moreover, with Sraffa's "stimuli," Wittgenstein acquired an "anthropological" way of examining philosophical questions, beginning with an emphasis in his late thought on the relationship between language and the socio-cultural milieu in which it is used. Now, the fact that Sraffa's perspective has been characterized as "anthropological" reveals that the association between language and society is a current practice among anthropologists. 'Again and again,' recalled linguist Roman Jakobson at the Conference of Anthropologists and Linguists held at Indiana University in 1952

– a year before the posthumous publication of the *Philosophical Investigations* – 'anthropologists repeat and prove that language and culture imply each other, that language must be conceived as an integral part of the life of society, and that linguistics is closely linked to cultural anthropology.'

Aware of the fact highlighted by Jakobson that 'language really is the foundation of culture,' anthropologist Bronisław Malinowski pointed out in the essay "The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages," which was added as a supplement to the book *The Meaning of Meaning*, published by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards in 1923 – that is, two years after the release of the *Tractatus* – that 'language is essentially rooted in the reality of the culture, the tribal life and customs of a people, and [...] it cannot be explained without constant reference to these broader contexts of verbal utterance.' Thus, Malinowski concluded, 'the study of any language, spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and possess a different culture, must be carried out in conjunction with the study of their culture and of their environment.' At the end of his essay, in the course of which he repeatedly stressed the importance of assuming a 'pragmatic conception of language,' Malinowski noted that both his approach and the semantic theory of Ogden and Richards 'maintain most emphatically that language, and all linguistic processes derive their power only from real processes taking place in man's relation to his surroundings.'

Co-author of *The Meaning of Meaning* and the first translator of the *Tractatus* into English, Ogden sent a copy of his book to Wittgenstein, who considered the work irrelevant. 'Is it not a miserable book?!,' Wittgenstein wrote to Russell in April 1923. Years later, however, with Sraffa's 'stimulus,' Wittgenstein would change his perspective and adopt precisely a pragmatic conception of language like Malinowski's. In fact, as Gellner pointed out, Malinowski already possessed the theory, 'later to be acclaimed as the terminal revelation in philosophy,' that language is directly linked to culture. In this way, posited Gellner, it could be said that Malinowski formulated the key idea of the *Philosophical*

Investigations at a time when Wittgenstein was still 'sunk in the darkness of the *Tractatus*' – a book that for Gellner could be summarized not in seven propositions, but one: 'There is no such thing as culture.' Moreover, it can be said that, like anthropologists, linguists had already formulated the key idea of the *Philosophical Investigations* at a time when Wittgenstein had not even been born.

In his 1916 *Course in General Linguistics*, for example, Ferdinand de Saussure separates everything external to the linguistic system from the linguistic system, relegating it to what he calls 'external linguistics.' This linguistics, says Saussure, deals with important things, including first of all the points where linguistics borders on ethnology, the relationships that can exist between the history of a language and a race or civilization. Thus, in accord with the 19th-century German linguist Hermann Paul – who observed that 'all which has in any way touched the human mind, the organisation of the body, its environing nature, the entire range of culture, all the experiences and circumstances of life, have left behind effects on language' – Saussure stressed that the culture of a nation exerts an influence on its language and the language is largely responsible for the nation. In the same way, in line with the position taken by the 19th-century American linguist William Dwight Whitney that we regard a word 'as a part of a system, as a link in a historical series, as an indicator of capacity, of culture, of ethnological connection,' Saussure observed in his first lecture at the University of Geneva, in November 1891:

> [...] I would want to highlight the very specific contribution that linguistics has made to ethnography, to the point where linguistic data remain the primary proof for the ethnologist, at least until a richer source of information is uncovered. How, without such data, could the ethnologist ever have asserted (to take one example among thousands) that among Hungarians the Gypisies represent a totally distinct race from the Magyar, that within the

> Austrian Empire the Magyar in turn represents a race totally distinct from the Czech or the German; that on the other hand the Czech and the German who so detest each other are very close relatives; that in turn the Magyar is a close relative of the Finnish populations of the Russian Empire, on the Baltic Sea, about whom they know nothing; that in turn the Gypsies are a people who originate in India?

Thus, taking as a reference exactly the environment in which Wittgenstein and Malinowski were born and raised – that is, the Austro-Hungarian Empire of the late 19th century – Saussure not only reinforces the assertion made by Whitney that the anthropologist is also a linguistic scholar and knows what language is to man and how, but clearly illustrates the rather obvious fact pointed out by Wittgenstein in § 23 of the *Philosophical Investigations* that 'the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life.' In fact, Saussure insists in his manuscripts, one does not fully know a people without knowing its language or having some idea of it, since language is an important part of the baggage of nations, contributing to characterizing an epoch and a society.

Sharing Saussure's position on the deep relationships established between a people and its language, Heidegger stated in 1933:

> The dominant *fundamental reality* of this *being-with-one-another* is *language*. But language is not at all a tool that, as it were, is subsequently attached to a sum of initially isolated human beings so that they may find their way to each other with the help of this tool. To the contrary, the individual, if he ever somehow isolates himself into his own individuality, is releasing himself in each case on the basis of the shared world and spiritual community of the already *dominant language* and is speaking

> "in" language. Language can be a tool of communication only because in advance and in its origin it is what *preserves and increases the world* into which a people exists in every case.

That is, like Saussure, Heidegger would surely find the statement that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life, rather obvious. And even more so Aristotle, who observed in the *Politics*, for example, that what is called 'justice' in oligarchy is not the same as what it is called in democracy. Considering situations like this, Aristotle teaches in *Topica* that you should define what kind of things should be called as most men call them, and what should not, but that when one asks what things are or are not of a certain kind, it is necessary to turn to experts. With this, Aristotle exemplifies, most say that healthy is what produces health, but in order to know whether an object under discussion produces health or not, it is necessary to resort to the language of the doctor.

Also along with the rather obvious fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life, Plato argues in *Ion* that one who is a navigator, doctor, cowherd, spinner, and general understands words differently from one who has not learned their respective trades. Besides, in dialogue with Protagoras in the homonymous text, Socrates draws attention to possible differences in the uses of the word "hard" by people of different times and forms of life. Moreover, Plato observes in the *Republic* that Greek children learn in a certain way what is the just and the fine, but that there are other ways of living that are opposed to those of their countrymen in which these concepts acquire different meanings.

Equally aware of the rather obvious fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life, Nietzsche wonders in the book *On the Genealogy of Morality*, from the etymological point of view, about the meaning of the designations for "good" coined by various languages. He concludes that "noble," "aristocratic," is the basic concept from which "good" has developed,

and "plebeian," "common," "low," the basic concept from which "bad" has developed. Nietzsche further states that it was the Jews who inverted this equation, bringing "good" closer to "plebeian" and "bad" to "aristocratic." Against Judeo-Christian morality, Nietzsche, always attentive to 'the past of every form and way of life,' details the meanings of words in the Ancient Greek form of life. Thus, it is necessary to conclude that Nietzsche had already adopted a pragmatic conception of language decades before Wittgenstein initiated himself into philosophy and proposed his pictorial theory of meaning in the *Tractatus*, which for Gellner 'appears to be an autistic work in which there simply are no others' – an observation that, of course, changes aspect in light of the diagnosis that Wittgenstein actually had autism spectrum disorder.

8.3 Bad influence of Wittgensteinian logic

Given the evidence that Sraffa's 'stimuli' that led Wittgenstein to acquire an "anthropological" way of examining philosophical questions were rather obvious, it is important to ask whether language-games are not also rather obvious. Wittgenstein introduced the technique of language-games in a course given in the early 1930s – thus shortly after he had begun his conversations with Sraffa. According to Monk, this technique is a kind of therapy and its purpose is to free ourselves from the philosophical confusions that result from considering language in isolation from its place in the 'stream of life.' Reflecting his new stance on language, Wittgenstein lists in § 23 of the *Philosophical Investigations* a series of language-games, such as giving orders, describing an object, reporting an event, requesting, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying, and declares: 'It is interesting to compare the diversity of the tools of language and of the ways they are used, the diversity of kinds of word and sentence, with what logicians have said about the structure of language. (This includes the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.)' But is what logicians have said about the structure of language what the

author of the *Tractatus* said about it with his pictorial theory of meaning, which excludes language-games such as those listed by the author of the *Philosophical Investigations*?

A good starting point for answering this question is to look at what the father of logic, Aristotle, said about the structure of language. In *On Interpretation*, Aristotle states that every sentence has meaning, but not every sentence is a proposition; only such are propositions as have in them either truth or falsity. Thus, Aristotle says by way of example, a prayer is a sentence, but is neither true nor false and therefore its study is up to rhetoric or poetics. In *Poetics*, in turn, Aristotle cites 'a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer, and so forth,' but concludes that the study of these modes of utterance belongs to another art than poetics, since to know or not to know these things involves no censure upon the poet's art. Based on these two references alone, it is possible to conclude that language-games would seem rather obvious to Aristotle.

Wittgenstein, however, despite never having read Aristotle, repeatedly reproached him. Towards the end of his life, for example, Wittgenstein wrote: 'Aristotelian logic brands a contradiction as a non-sentence, which is to be excluded from language. But this logic only deals with a very small part of the logic of our language. (It is as if the first geometrical system had been a trigonometry; and as if we now believed that trigonometry is the real basis for geometry, if not the whole of geometry.)' With this, Wittgenstein stressed: 'Bad influence of Aristotelian logic. The logic of language is immeasurably more complicated than it looks.' Or rather: bad influence of Wittgensteinian logic. The logic of language is infinitely more complicated than it looked to the author of the *Tractatus*, who in § 304 of the *Philosophical Investigations* announces: '[...] we make a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way, always serves the same purpose: to convey thoughts – which may be about houses, pains, good and evil, or whatever.' Considering this radical break announced by Wittgenstein, it is also interesting to compare what Frege, one of the fathers of modern logic, said about

the structure of language with what the author of the *Tractatus* said. In the 1918 paper "The Thought: A Logical Inquiry," Frege calls a thought 'something for which the question of truth arises' and, to clarify what he meant by thought, he distinguishes 'various kinds of sentence,' approximately as Aristotle had done:

> One does not want to deny sense to an imperative sentence, but this sense is not such that the question of truth could arise for it. Therefore I shall not call the sense of an imperative sentence a thought. Sentences expressing desires or requests are ruled out in the same way. Only those sentences in which we communicate or state something come into the question. But I do not count among these exclamations in which one vents one's feelings, groaning, sighing, laughing, unless it has been decided by some agreement that they are to communicate something.

In view of the distinctions between various kinds of sentence made by Frege, who also investigates interrogative sentences, it is natural to conclude that language- games would also seem rather obvious to him.

It is also interesting to compare what Heidegger said in the 1920s about the structure of language with what the author of the *Tractatus* said. Aware that, for Aristotle, there is truth or falsity only within the sphere of synthesis, that is, of the linking, the combining, of subject and predicate, Heidegger observed:

> All discourse, all discursiveness has meaning, that is, all speaking oneself out that is a wishing, requesting, asking, commanding, or asserting means something. But not all of these modes of discourse are λόγος, that is, not all discourse is discourse that exhibits. A request to someone

> does not have the sense or the intrinsic semantic function of making something clear to him, of communicating something to him, but just of requesting something from him. Correspondingly, the command does not, in its proper sense, convey some piece of knowledge but rather is a demand to act. Not all discursiveness, therefore, is an exhibiting in such a way that the exhibiting of something would be the proper tendency of the discourse. Only that λόγος is exhibitive in which something like being true or being false occurs. In the discourse that is true or false, that is, in the assertion, in the proposition, there lies something like a synthesis, a combining.

Thus, in accordance with logicians such as Aristotle and Frege, and unlike Wittgenstein, Heidegger never made a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way, always serves the same purpose, to convey thoughts, because he never defended this idea. On the contrary: like Aristotle and Frege, Heidegger contrasts the 'discourse that exhibits' with so many other discourses that do not have in them either truth or falsity. Therefore, language-games would surely seem rather obvious to him too.

8.4 A naive picture of Augustine's view of language

Undoubtedly, language-games would also seem rather obvious to St. Augustine, to whom Wittgenstein mistakenly imputes a pictorial theory of meaning. In the first paragraph of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein quotes a passage from Augustine's *Confessions* in which he describes how he learned, with the aid of gestures, his first words, and ponders that in this account there would be a representation of what is believed to be the essence of human language: that words name objects and sentences are combinations of such names. 'Augustine does not

mention any difference between kinds of word,' says Wittgenstein. 'Someone who describes the learning of language in this way is, I believe, thinking primarily of nouns like "table," "chair," "bread," and of people's names, and only secondarily of the names of certain actions and properties; and of the remaining kinds of word as something that will take care of itself.' To oppose this conception of language, Wittgenstein invites his imaginary interlocutor to consider a language-game in which he sends someone shopping with a piece of paper on which is written "five red apples." According to Wittgenstein, the person takes the paper to the merchant, who opens the box which has the sign "apples." Then, the dealer searches a chart for the word "red" and finds a model of the color in front of it. He then enunciates the series of numerals up to the word "five" and at each numeral, he takes from the crate an apple of the color of the model. 'It is in this and similar ways that one operates with words,' Wittgenstein concludes.

In the passage from the *Confessions* quoted by Wittgenstein, Augustine does not actually mention learning numerals like "five" or adjectives like "red," but restricts himself to learning the first words, those that denote objects. Thus, knowing with Paul that 'a child learns only occasional applications of a word, and, what is more, learns in the first place nothing but its relations to a concrete object,' Augustine recalls only the process of 'pointing to and naming objects, as one teaches children the beginnings of language.' Since Augustine sticks to the 'beginnings of language,' it does not seem correct to associate with him, as Wittgenstein does, something like the pictorial theory of meaning. In fact, it seems fairer to say, as Fogelin does, that 'Wittgenstein simply discusses "a particular picture" that this passage [from the *Confessions*] suggests – a picture more naive than the view actually presented by Augustine.'

Nevertheless, Glock, like so many other Wittgensteinians, not only corroborates in his *A Wittgenstein Dictionary* this injustice committed against St. Augustine (see 'Augustinian picture of language'), but also argues that 'the picture theory subscribes to the Augustinian picture of language.' Against this misinterpretation,

it suffices to recall that, contrary to what Wittgenstein claims, Augustine does speak in chapter XV of the *Confessions* of a difference between kinds of words, indicating that not all of them denote objects. Augustine first cites concrete objects such as stone and sun, but then he moves on to abstractions such as some pain of the body and numbers. So, to say that Augustine does not mention any difference between kinds of word is to unduly attach to him the picture of the essence of human language of the author of the *Tractatus* – that is, the pictorial theory of meaning.

In his 1913 *Notes on Logic*, Wittgenstein had already stated that 'naming is like pointing' and in 1914 he had already written in a notebook that 'in the proposition the name goes proxy for the object.' However, in the early 1930s, instead of only admitting with Sraffa's 'stimuli' that he had made a mistake in defending this picture of the essence of human language, the author of the *Tractatus* began to attribute it to St. Augustine in order to refute it. Later, in writing the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein not only continued to confer on Augustine the pictorial theory of meaning, but also criticized 'Augustine's conception of language' for its simplicity.

This confusion, however, is dispelled by the reading of the *Confessions* and definitively removed in the pages of *The Teacher*. In this dialogue, Augustine and his son Adeodatus list different kinds of words, such as prepositions, verbs, nouns, conjunctions, pronouns and adverbs. Besides, Augustine explains that not every word names objects. To support his argument, Augustine, for instance, investigates the eight words that make up the sentence "Si nihil ex tanta superis placet urbe relinqui" (If it please the gods that nothing remain of so great a city) by analyzing the meaning of each word.

Apparently unaware of Augustine's text, Wittgenstein disputes in § 35 of the *Philosophical Investigations* the simple conception of the author of the *Notes on Logic* and the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* that naming is like pointing, calling attention to the fact that the words "to point at the shape," "to mean the shape," and

so on, are not used in the same way as "to point at this book" (not that one), "to point at the chair, not at the table", and so on. Wittgenstein also stresses in the same paragraph that we learn differently the use of the words "to point at this thing," "to point at that thing," and on the other hand, "to point at the colour, not the shape," "to mean the colour," and so on. Such remarks would certainly seem rather obvious to Augustine, who, again anticipating the author of the *Philosophical Investigations*, clarifies with Adeodatus in *The Teacher* that not every name refers to an object, that not every name can be pointed out with the finger, and that pointing to the body differs from pointing to the qualities of the body, including its color:

> Aug. [...] But suppose I should ask you what was signified when these three syllables *paries* [wall] are spoken, could you not point with your finger so I could see clearly the reality itself, of which this three-syllable word is a sign. You would be showing it to me, but without the use of words.
>
> Ad. I grant that this is possible only for names signifying bodily objects, provided these are present.
>
> Aug. Are we going to call color a body? Do we not rather speak of it as a quality of bodies?
>
> Ad. That is right.
>
> Aug. Here again, why can it not be indicated with the finger? Or do you also include with bodies the qualities of bodies, so that these, as well as bodies, can be shown without words, whenever they are present?
>
> Ad. When I said "bodies," I intended that all things corporeal should be understood, namely, everything which the senses perceive in bodies.
>
> Aug. But consider whether even here you should allow for exceptions.

Ad. That is sound advice. For I should not have said all things corporeal, but all things visible. I indeed acknowledge that though sound, odor, taste, weight, heat, and other qualities pertaining to the senses other than sight, cannot be perceived apart from bodies, and are therefore corporeal, yet they cannot be indicated with a finger.

And also:

Aug. You will [...] agree, I think, that when we say "noun," we are signifying something.

Ad. That is true.

Aug. Well, what is that?

Ad. That, precisely, which anything is called, as Romulus, Rome, virtue, river, and numberless other things.

[...]

Aug. And is there any difference between these nouns and the things they signify?

Ad. Yes, there is a big difference.

[...]

Ad. I see there is this difference between what is called a noun and those four things included under its meaning. The former is an audible sign of other audible signs, while the latter, though real signs, are nevertheless not signs of signs, but signs of things. Some are visible, such as Romulus and Rome, others are intelligible, such as virtue.

[...]

Aug. I would like you to answer this question too. You said that "word" is a sign of "noun" and "noun" is a sign of "river" and "river" is

> the sign of a reality that we can see; also, that there is a difference between the reality and "river," which is its sign, and between this sign and "noun," which is the sign of this sign. Tell me, then, what difference you think there is between the sign of "noun," which was found to be a "word," and "noun" itself, which is its sign.
>
> Ad. I see there is this difference. Things signified by "noun" are also signified by "word," for just as "noun" is a word, so also is "river" a word. On the other hand, not everything signified by "word" can also be signified by "noun." For both the term "if," at the opening of the verse you quoted, and the term "from," are words but not nouns, though they have been occupying our attention for such a long time and have now, with reason as our guide, led us to the present subject. And there are many such cases to be found. Consequently, since all nouns are words but not all words are nouns, I think the difference between "word" and "noun" is plain, namely, the difference between the sign of a sign not signifying other signs, and a sign of a sign which itself signifies other signs.

In sum, 'every noun [...], even "noun" itself, is a word, but not every word is a noun, though "word" is itself a noun.' In these words we find the real picture of human language according to Augustine, the real Augustinian conception of language.

8.5 The simplest and smallest kind of speech

As seen in section 4.2 of this book, in the *Tractatus* itself, Wittgenstein disproves his pictorial theory of meaning by citing classes of words that do not name objects, such as adjectives, verbs, conjunctions, and numerals. But the greatest sign of the contradictions into which the author of the *Tractatus* has fallen

because of his simple conception of language is that the sentence with which he presents the general propositional form is not a concatenation of names: 'The general form of proposition is: Such and such is the case.'[17] In the early 1930s, with Sraffa's 'stimulus,' Wittgenstein would not only abandon the general form of proposition of the *Tractatus*, but would tell his students: 'I shall not try to give a general definition of "proposition," as it is impossible to do so. This is no more possible than it is to give a definition of the word "game."' In § 65 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, the question is taken up again, and Wittgenstein clarifies through his imaginary interlocutor that he dispenses with the part of the investigation which had given him the most headache, the part about the general form of the proposition and of language, concluding that 'such and such is the case' is not the general form of proposition.

This fact, however, would seem rather obvious to Heidegger, who was familiar with the Greeks' theory of truth and proposition, according to which the truth as the character of a proposition shows itself as a link between subject and predicate. As early as the 1920s, Heidegger stated that one cannot interpret impersonal propositions such as "it is raining," or "there is lightning," or existential statements such as "this human being exists," by means of the usual theory of the proposition and of the assertion. 'If one surveys the problems of the proposition and of truth in their entirety, this simple definition of the proposition is questionable,' Heidegger observed.

Without knowing the history of philosophy as did Heidegger, Wittgenstein attributes to both Plato and Augustine the idea that a sentence is composed of nouns and verbs, and criticizes them by stating that 'they describe the game as simpler than it is.' In fact, Plato holds that a sentence is composed of nouns and verbs. However, once again without proving anything and clarifying anything to the author of the pictorial theory of meaning, Plato argues in the *Sophist* that speech is never composed exclusively of successive

17 "Die allgemeine Form des Satzes ist: Es verhält sich so und so."

names, such as lion, stag and horse, or of successive verbs, such as walks, runs and sleeps, and it is necessary to combine names and verbs. 'If somebody said "lion stag horse," and whatever names there are of things that perform actions, the series wouldn't make up speech [...] – not until he mixed verbs with nouns. But when he did that, they'd fit together and speech – the simplest and smallest kind of speech, I suppose – would arise from that first weaving of name and verb together.'

Echoing Plato, the author of the pictorial theory of meaning would tell his students in the early 1930s: 'A substantive in language is used primarily for a physical body, and a verb for the movement of such a body. This is the simplest application of language, and this fact is immensily important.' And this immensily important fact did not escape Aristotle either, who in the *Categories* points out that combinations of words are found in propositions such as 'the man runs,' 'the man wins.'

The same immensely important fact did not escape Russell, who in *The Principles of Mathematics* states that three parts of speech are especially important: nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Moreover, in this work, Russell not only recommends the study of grammar for its ability to shed light on philosophical questions, but also takes grammar as a guide for his analysis. This same guide, by the way, was taken by Augustine and Adeodatus in their analysis of the words in *The Teacher*, and by Frege in his analysis of the sentences in the paper "On Sense and Reference."

The author of the *Tractatus*, on the other hand, did not take grammar as a guide for his analysis, but instead elaborated his simple conception of language, which later, with Sraffa's 'stimulus,' he would criticize from a rather obvious point of view. In fact, the obvious character of the point of view adopted by the later Wittgenstein against the pictorial theory of meaning becomes even more evident when he makes explicit the different functions of words, as Western grammarians have been doing since at least Ancient Greece, certain like Saussure that 'in language, everything boils down to differences but also to groupings': 'If we group

words together according to the similarity of their functions, thus distinguishing parts of speech, it is easy to see that many different ways of classification can be adopted,' Wittgenstein pondered in *The Brown Book*. In § 11 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, he added:

> Think of the tools in a toolbox: there is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screwdriver, a rule, a glue-pot, glue, nails and screws. – The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects. (And in both cases there are similarities.)
>
> Of course, what confuses us is the uniform appearance of words when we hear them in speech, or see them written or in print. For their use is not that obvious. Especially when we are doing philosophy!

'I confess that I do not find this line of reasoning particularly persuasive,' wrote Fogelin. 'It is hard to believe that philosophers have been misled – and deeply misled – by the mere look (or sound) of language.' But in light of the diagnosis of autism, it is not hard to believe that Wittgenstein had been misled – and deeply misled – by the mere look (or sound) of language. Thus, what confused Wittgenstein was the uniform appearance of words when he heard them in speech, or saw them written or in print. Especially when he was doing philosophy.

Tellingly, in § 17 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein states that the functions of the word "slab" and the word "block" are more alike than those of "slab" and "d" – a word that designates a color (i.e., an adjective). In addition, Wittgenstein points out that how we group words into kinds will depend on the aim of the classification and on our own inclination. 'Think of the different points of view according to which one can classify tools into kinds of tools. Or chess pieces into kinds of chess pieces.' And think of Wittgenstein's rather obvious assertion that 'grammar distinguishes between nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc.'

Think now of Plato, who, using the work of grammarians to group words according to the similarity of their functions, thus distinguishing parts of speech, divides words into verbs and nouns (including nouns and adjectives). Think also of Aristotle, who, also making use of the work of grammarians to group words according to the similarity of their functions, thus distinguishing parts of speech, divides language, in chapter 20 of the *Poetics*, in letter, syllable, connecting word, noun, verb, inflexion or case, sentence or phrase. Think also of the history of grammatical terminology used by Wittgenstein throughout his work, including the *Tractatus*, in which he cites nouns, adjectives, verbs, conjunctions, and numerals, and the *Philosophical Investigations*, in which he cites nouns, numerals, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and conjunctions.

8.6 Another confusion which must be cleared up

Now think of the history of the grammatical concepts of assertion, exclamation, and imperative, and how centuries before Wittgenstein cited them in the *Philosophical Investigations*, grammarians, philologists, and linguists were already studying assertive, exclamation, and imperative sentences, analyzing them syntactically, thus distinguishing parts of speech. Aware of the long grammatical tradition in the West and mindful of the rather obvious fact pointed out by Wittgenstein in § 27 of the *Philosophical Investigations* that 'we do the most various things with our sentences,' linguist and psychologist Karl Bühler (who was, according to Nerlich and Clarke, the most celebrated pragmatic thinker in Germany in the 20th century) detailed some of the very different things we do with our sentences, including making statements, giving orders, making appeals and asking questions. And in 1918 he proposed the tripartite model of language, differentiating emotive/expressive, conative/appealing and representational/denotative functions.

Equally attentive to the rather obvious fact that we do the most various things with our sentences, Malinowski breaks down in "The

Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages" the different functions that certain sentences can play in the most diverse societies by noting:

> A mere phrase of politeness, in use as much among savage tribes as in a European drawing-room, fulfils a function to which the meaning of its words is almost completely irrelevant. Inquiries about health, comments on weather, affirmations of some supremely obvious state of things – all such are exchanged, not in order to inform, not in this case to connect people in action, certainly not in order to express any thought. It would be even incorrect, I think, to say that such words serve the purpose of establishing a common sentiment, for this is usually absent from such current phrases of intercourse; and where it purports to exist, as in expressions of sympathy, it is avowedly spurious on one side. What is the *raison d'être*, therefore, of such phrases as 'How do you do?,' 'Ah, here you are,' 'Where do you come from?,' 'Nice day today' – all of which serve in one society or another as formulæ of greeting or approach?

In view of Malinowski's observations, which are characteristic of his pragmatic conception of language, as well as the work of Austro-Hungarian thinkers such as Mauthner, it is clear, as Gellner points out, that 'the idea that Wittgenstein, in *Philosophical Investigations*, "propounded a wholly novel philosophy of language" is absurd,' because 'that allegedly novel philosophy was a commonplace in the climate in which both Malinowski and Wittgenstein grew up' – i.e., the Austro-Hungarian empire of the late 19th century.

In any case, being indifferent both to the millennia-old grammatical tradition and to the work of Wittgenstein's precursors such as Mauthner, Malinowski, and Bühler, 'adherents of WII

[the second (later) Wittgenstein],' as Russell observes, 'are fond of pointing out, as if it were a discovery, that sentences may be interrogative, imperative or optative as well as indicative.' Monk, in particular, disregarding Russell's criticism of adherents of WII, argues that Wittgenstein and his former teacher had had too rigid a notion of proposition, and the purpose of the language-game method was to loosen such notions. In fact, according to Wittgenstein, Russell and he were misled by focusing on a single type of language, the assertive sentence, while trying to analyze the totality of language, as if it had only one type of sentence or as if the other uses of language could be analyzed as variations on the assertive sentence. 'The basic evil of Russell's logic,' Wittgenstein said, 'as also of mine in the *Tractatus*, is that what a proposition is is illustrated by a few commonplace examples, and then presupposed as understood in full generality.' On another occasion, Wittgenstein would reiterate:

> Russell and I both expected to find the first elements, or 'individuals', and thus the possible atomic propositions, by logical analysis. [...] And we were both at fault for giving no examples of atomic propositions or of individuals. We both in different ways pushed the question of examples aside. We should not have said 'We can't give them because analysis has not gone far enough, but we'll get there in time.'

But did Russell really push the question of examples aside? Did Russell really illustrate what a proposition is by a few commonplace examples, and then presuppose it as being understood in full generality? 'A main cause of philosophical diseases – a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example,' Wittgenstein diagnosed in § 593 of the *Philosophical Investigations*. But did Russell really nourish his thinking with only one kind of example? 'In this connection there is another confusion which must be cleared up, which is as to the perfect logical language,' Russell

stressed. 'If you are engaged in the work of logical dissection, you need a language differing considerably from that of daily life, but you need it for this purpose only.' In the introduction to the three volumes of *Principia Mathematica*, a work published by Russell and Alfred North Whitehead between 1910 and 1913 in which they aimed to reduce mathematics to logic, this point is made explicit:

> The grammatical structure of language is adapted to a wide variety of usages. Thus it possesses no unique simplicity in representing the few simple, though highly abstract, processes and ideas arising in the deductive trains of reasoning employed here. In fact the very abstract simplicity of the ideas of this work defeats language. Language can represent complex ideas more easily. The proposition "a whale is big" represents language at its best, giving terse expression to a complicated fact; while the true analysis of "one is a number" leads, in language, to an intolerable prolixity. Accordingly terseness is gained by using a symbolism especially designed to represent the ideas and processes of deduction which occur in this work.

Decades after the presentation of his perfect logical language in *Principia Mathematica*, Russell would reinforce his qualification: 'I thought that the construction of such a language would be a great help to clear thinking, though I never thought that such a language would be suitable for the purposes of daily life.' Thus, it is rather obvious that, in his work of logical dissection, Russell, like Aristotle in his logic, focused on a single type of language, the assertive sentence, but he never assumed that the totality of language consisted of only one type of sentence or that the other uses of language could be analyzed as variations on the assertive sentence. So much so that he mocked the adherents of WII for fondly pointing

out, as if it were a discovery, that sentences may be interrogative, imperative or optative as well as indicative.

In his work of logical dissection, Frege also focused on a single type of language, the assertive sentence, but he never assumed that the totality of language consisted of only one type of sentence or that the other uses of language could be analyzed as variations on the assertive sentence. In the preface to his *Begriffsschrift*, an 1879 work in which he first published the results of his search for a perfect logical language, Frege states that his language is quite different from the one we use in daily life and points out that it would have no practical use:

> I believe that I can best make the relation of my ideography to ordinary language [Sprache des Lebens] clear if I compare it to that which the microscope has to the eye. Because of the range of its possible uses and the versatility with which it can adapt to the most diverse circumstances, the eye is far superior to the microscope. Considered as an optical instrument, to be sure, it exhibits many imperfections, which ordinarily remain unnoticed only on account of its intimate connection with our mental life. But, as soon as scientific goals demand great sharpness of resolution, the eye proves to be insufficient. The microscope, on the other hand, is perfectly suited to precisely such goals, but that is just why it is useless for all others.
>
> This ideography, likewise, is a device invented for certain scientific purposes, and one must not condemn it because it is not suited to others.

Therefore, being aware that 'languages are unreliable on logical questions' and 'it is indeed not the least of the logician's tasks to indicate the pitfalls laid by language in the way of the thinker,'

Frege, like Aristotle, Russell, and logicians in general, focused on a single type of language not because he was misled, but to partition language for a specific purpose. On this account Wittgenstein's remarks on the variety of types and uses of sentences in ordinary language would certainly seem rather obvious to Frege, as they were to Russell.

8.7 Convention and agreement in the use of words

Having shown that the "anthropological" way of examining philosophical questions, language-games, and the critique of the pictorial theory of meaning are rather obvious, it is now necessary to discuss why the idea defended by Wittgenstein in § 43 of the *Philosophical Investigations* that 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language' is also rather obvious, as well as the conception put forward in § 508 that 'words are, after all, arbitrary signs.' But first of all, it is important to underline that in propositions 3322, 3328 and 3342 of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein had already adopted the rather obvious point of view of the arbitrariness and conventionality of signs. Indeed, even before writing the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein had adopted this view in his *Notes on Logic* and in later notes.

In any case, the theory of arbitrariness and conventionality of the meaning of words dates back to Ancient Greece and had already been adopted by Hermogenes in the *Cratylus*: '[...] no one is able to persuade me that the correctness of names is determined by anything besides convention and agreement. [...] No name belongs to a particular thing by nature, but only because of the rules and usage of those who establish the usage and call it by that name.' The rather obvious view of the arbitrariness and conventionality of the meaning of words had already been adopted by Aristotle as well. In consideration of the 'established terminology,' Aristotle asserted that 'by a noun we mean a sound significant by convention.'

In fact, the rather obvious view of the arbitrariness and conventionality of the meaning of words had already been adopted

by countless thinkers before Wittgenstein, from different historical periods and of different intellectual shades. Nietzsche, for example, drew attention to the 'linguistic conventions' in the essay "On Truth And Lies In A Nonmoral Sense." Schopenhauer, in turn, asserted in § 9 of *The World as Will and Representation* that 'as an object of outer experience, speech is clearly nothing other than a highly perfected telegraph that communicates arbitrary signs with the greatest speed and the finest nuance.'

Following this line of reasoning, Frege pointed out in the opening paragraph of the paper "On Sense and Reference" the arbitrariness of associating signs with the thing designated, and emphasized: 'Nobody can be forbidden to use any arbitrarily producible event or object as a sign for something.' In the same vein, Saussure clarified in his manuscripts that he did not find any significant difference between the terms '*value*, *meaning*, *signification*, *function* or *use* of a form,' having them as synonyms. In the *Course in General Linguistics*, Saussure chose arbitrariness as the first principle of linguistic signs and argued that no one disputes this principle.

8.8 A social possession

Familiar with both the age-old principle of the arbitrariness of linguistic signs and the traditional theory that language is directly linked to culture, Gellner found it ironic that Wittgenstein had gained fame as the person who allegedly showed that there can be no "private language." Indeed, Kenny notes that there was no school that advocated such a thing as a "private language" and that Wittgenstein was arguing in the *Philosophical Investigations* against his earlier linguistic view, presented in the *Tractatus*. Moreover, as logician W. V. Quine reminds us, at a time when Wittgenstein was still upholding his 'copy theory of language,' philosopher John Dewey already proclaimed that meaning is not a psychic existence, but it is primarily a property of behavior, and language is a mode of interaction of at least two beings, a speaker and a hearer,

presupposing an organized group to which these creatures belong, and from whom they have acquired their habits of speech. 'Once we appreciate the institution of language in these terms,' Quine observed, 'we see that there cannot be, in any useful sense, a private language.'

Certainly, as Whitney pointed out, a language is a social possession, not an individual one. Thus, as stressed by Paul,

> Were not language so completely reared on the basis of the common properties of human nature, it would not be the fitting instrument for general communication that it is. Conversely, the fact that it is so entails the necessary consequence that it rejects everything of a purely individual character which seeks in anyway to force itself upon it, and that it accepts and retains nothing but what is sanctioned by the agreement of a number of individuals in connexion with each other.

In this way, says the 19th-century French linguist Michel Bréal, 'I am not free to change the meaning of words, nor to construct a phrase according to a grammar of my own.' Consequently, a language which only one person understood and could use would have no right to be called a language, as Whitney concluded.

8.9 Trivial positive doctrines, unfounded negative doctrines

As detailed in the previous sections, by having ignored in the *Tractatus* basic philosophical and linguistic knowledge accumulated in the West since Ancient Greece, Wittgenstein made 'grave mistakes' that he would later, with Sraffa's 'stimulus,' correct by resuming this basic philosophical and linguistic knowledge in his later philosophy. In view of this finding, it is imperative to conclude that the 'most fruitful ideas' of the *Philosophical Investigations* are

indeed rather obvious. Moreover, given that, for reasons we now understand, Wittgenstein expended enormous energy "dissolving" problems that aren't really problems for anyone, it is no wonder that Glock points out that the *Philosophical Investigations* rarely identifies its targets, and because of that some readers have complained that Wittgenstein seems to be exorcizing philosophical views no one has ever held. Much less is it any wonder that Sraffa asked Wittgenstein, evidently trying to 'stimulate' him: 'But has anybody ever actually made this or that confusion you pillory?'

Against this backdrop, one can understand why Russell rejected Wittgenstein's late thinking with vehemence:

> [Wittgenstein's late philosophy] remains to me completely unintelligible. Its positive doctrines seem to me trivial and its negative doctrines unfounded. I have not found in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* anything that seemed to me interesting and I do not understand why a whole school finds important wisdom in its pages. Psychologically this is surprising.

Taking into account that the positive doctrines (i.e., the proposals) of Wittgenstein's late philosophy are trivial and the negative doctrines (i.e., criticism of other people's proposals) unfounded, one can also understand Ramsey's lack of enthusiasm for Wittgenstein's analyses, who complained about his doctoral advisor in his notebooks: '[...] real philosophical reflection disquieted him until he put its result (if it had one) on one side as trivial.' And also:

> R's [Ramsey's] incapacity for genuine enthusiasm or genuine reverence, which is the same, finally repulsed me more & more. [...] And so at first one labored arduously for a long

> time in vain to explain something to him until he suddenly shrugged his shoulders about it & said this was self-evident, after all.

Wittgenstein labored arduously for a long time in vain to explain to us that there are different kinds of words; that not all words name objects; that not all sentences are assertive; that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life; that the meaning of a word is its use in the language... But at first without genuine enthusiasm or genuine reverence, we shrugged our shoulders about it and said all of this is rather obvious, trivial, and self-evident.

9. How is it possible that there should be a misunderstanding so very hard to remove?

> *What makes the object hard to understand – if it's significant, important – is not that you have to be instructed in abstruse matters in order to understand it, but the antithesis between understanding the object & what most people want to see. Because of this precisely what is most obvious may be what is most difficult to understand. It is not a difficulty for the intellect but one for the will that has to be overcome.* (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*)

The main objective of this book has been to show how the meaning of Wittgenstein's philosophical work changes in light of the diagnosis of autism. However, at the end of this endeavor, it is crucial to emphasize that the identification and criticism of the mistakes, contradictions, and trivialities that permeate Wittgenstein's intellectual legacy is independent of this ASD diagnosis-reinterpretation of his ideas. This is attested by the historically ASD independent criticisms made by exponents such as Sraffa, Kreisel, Gödel, Turing, Russell, and Gellner. Against this backdrop, it must be said that what makes Wittgenstein's philosophy hard to understand is not that you have to be instructed in abstruse matters in order to understand it, but the antithesis between understanding his philosophy and what most people *want*

to see – in particular, what Wittgensteinians *want* to see. Because of this precisely what is most obvious in Wittgenstein's philosophy may be what is most difficult to understand. It is not a difficulty for the intellect but one for the will that has to be overcome.

The reader of this book who has already overcome this difficulty may be wondering how it is possible that there could be a misunderstanding so very hard to remove. To explain this, it is important first of all to point out the fact that neither Russell, nor Moore, nor Ramsey, nor the neo-positivists of the Vienna Circle, all men who prided themselves on their rationality, were able to resist Wittgenstein's 'single-mindedness, resoluteness and will-power,' which 'make him stand out as a prophet, a kind of general in battle,' as Pascal characterized it. Russell, for example, wrote to Ottoline Morrell a few months after he had met the singular young man he would elect as his protégé: 'I love him & feel he will solve the problems I am too old to solve [...]. He is *the* young man one hopes for.' Soon after, Russell would confide to Morrell: 'I love him as if he were my son.' In Monk's opinion, this rather unexpected behavior of Russell's was due to the hard period he was going through. In 1910 Russell and Whitehead had concluded the monumental *Principia Mathematica*, to which they had dedicated themselves for 10 years. Exhausted after working so long on mathematical logic, Russell knew that he would not have the energy needed to solve the problems left open. 'It is really amazing how the world of learning has grown unreal to me,' he confessed to Morrell in 1912. 'Mathematics has quite faded out of my thoughts, except when proofs bring it back with a jerk. Philosophy doesn't often come into my mind, and I have no impulse to work at it.' This lack of will to work in philosophy, according to Russell himself, was due in part to Morrell, with whom he had fallen in love in 1911, and in part to Wittgenstein. Thus, states Monk,

> The Russell Wittgenstein met in 1911, then, was far from being the strident rationalist, the offender of the faith, he later became. He was a

> man in the grip of romance, more appreciative than he had been before, or was to become, of the irrational and emotional side of human character – even to the extent of adopting a kind of transcendental mysticism. Perhaps more important, he was a man who, having decided that his contribution to technical philosophy was finished, was looking for someone with the youth, vitality and ability to build upon the work which he had begun.

Therefore, Monk reckons, Russell's encouragement of Wittgenstein may have been due to Morrell's influence. 'If Russell had not been going through such a sentimental phase, he may not have taken to Wittgenstein in the way that he did,' Monk speculates. 'And, perhaps, if he had not lost faith and interest in his own contribution to mathematical logic, he might not have been quite so prepared to hand the subject over to Wittgenstein.' Having received the endorsement and support he needed from a weakened Russell, who did not even need to understand his protégé to feel in his bones that he must be right, Wittgenstein would later snatch disciples in the main centers of influence of Russellian logicism – Cambridge and Vienna – where even mature men would be enchanted by his charisma and his 'haggard beauty,' as I. A. Richards described it.

Among logical positivists, Janna Levin points out, Wittgenstein had the effect, which 'almost defies explanation' in Goldstein's opinion, 'to roast otherwise brilliant people [...] into fanatical, unwanted apostles.' The mathematician Olga Taussky-Todd, who spent some time in the Vienna Circle, wrote that Wittgenstein was the idol of the group and that an argument could be settled by citing the *Tractatus*. In line with this account, A. J. Ayer stated in a letter to Isaiah Berlin in 1933 that, for the Circle, Russell 'was merely a forerunner to Christ (Wittgenstein).' 'Schlick adored him and so did Waismann, who, like others of Wittgenstein's disciples, even came to imitate his gestures and manner of speech,' said the banned Feigl. 'Schlick ascribed to Wittgenstein profound philosophical insights

that in my opinion were in fact formulated much more clearly in Schlick's own early work.'

But worse than the neopositivists' devotion to Wittgenstein is the fact pointed out by Goldstein that '[his] name posthumously loomed ever more prominently, the awed inclination to accept him a priori (prior even to understanding what he might have meant) persisting in analytic circles, even in the absence of his persuasive presence.' Since this awed inclination to accept Wittgenstein a priori has no precedent in mathematical and scientific circles, it is necessary to ask: How is it possible that there should be a misunderstanding so very hard to remove *in philosophy*?

The answer seems to be rather obvious. After all, long before Wittgenstein was considered to be one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century, philosophy had been criticized for its portentous and vacuous discussions and obscure texts. Thus, for there to be a misunderstanding so very hard to remove in philosophy as Wittgenstein's was not only possible but even expected. The ironic fact of the Wittgenstein episode is that it took place precisely at the core of a philosophical current, led by Russell, which fought against these problems in philosophy with reference to the work of mathematicians and scientists. In a letter to Morrell in 1913, for example, Russell revealed to her:

> I believe a certain sort of mathematicians have far more philosophical capacity than most people who take up philosophy. Hitherto the people attracted to philosophy have been mostly those who loved the big generalizations, which were all wrong, so that few people with exact minds have taken up the subject. It has long been one of my dreams to found a great school of mathematically-minded philosophers, but I don't know whether I shall ever get it accomplished. I had hopes of Norton, but he has not the physique, Broad is all right, but has no fundamental originality. Wittgenstein of course is exactly my dream.

Although Russell exaggerates that the people attracted to philosophy have been mostly those who loved the big generalizations and that few people with exact minds have taken up the subject, it is undeniable that someone with an imprecise mind but charismatic as Wittgenstein is much more likely to roast otherwise brilliant people into fanatical, unwanted apostles in philosophy than in mathematics or science.'Wittgenstein remarks that "nothing seems to me more unlikely than that a scientist or mathematician, who reads me, should be seriously influenced thereby in the way he works,"' physicist Steven Weinberg observed. 'This is not merely a matter of the scientist's intellectual laziness.' There is no doubt that this is not merely a matter of the scientist's intellectual laziness.

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Appendices

I. Revisiting Wittgenstein's autism spectrum disorder diagnosis

> *If I had planned it, I should never have made the sun at all. See! How beautiful! The sun is too bright and too hot. [...] And if there were only the moon there would be no reading and writing.* (Wittgenstein)
>
> *I tend a bit to sentimentality. But please, no sentimental relations. Not to language either.* (Wittgenstein, *Movements of Thought*)

1 ASD and intellectual disability according to the *DSM-5*

The American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5* (*DSM-5*) made some key changes to autism diagnosis. Now there is a single diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder that replaces the different subcategories that were used previously – autistic disorder (autism), Asperger's disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, Rett's disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified.

According to the *DSM-5*, ASD is classified into three levels (levels 1, 2, and 3) based on the severity of symptoms displayed by the person and is characterized by impairment in social interaction and communication along with repetitive, restricted, and stereotyped behaviors, interests, and activities. Also according to the *DSM-5*, individuals with ASD often have intellectual disability. 'Delayed motor, language, and social milestones may be identifiable within the first 2 years of life among those with more severe intellectual disability, while mild levels may not be identifiable until school age when difficulty with academic learning becomes apparent.'

In the book *How to Live with Autism and Asperger Syndrome*, Williams and Wright report that communication skills are not fully developed in people with autism spectrum disorder. Thus, children with ASD may develop language later in life and have limitations in expressing themselves and understanding what is said to them. However, Williams and Wright note, children with Asperger's syndrome (mild autism, level 1, with average or above-average intelligence) have seemingly normal language development by age 1, problems arising only later, when abstract language and social use of language are developed.

Given that Wittgenstein did not begin to speak until he was 4 years old, as mentioned in section 1.1, it is plausible that his degree of autism was more severe than that of Asperger's syndrome. This possibility was considered by Michael Fitzgerald. From this perspective, another possibility to be discussed by experts is whether Wittgenstein had below-average intelligence or even intellectual disability. Actually, following the criteria established in the *DSM-5*, there is no lack of evidence in favor of this hypothesis, since Wittgenstein presented great delay in linguistic development; poor school performance; immaturity in social relationships; more concrete communication, conversation and language; difficulties understanding social cues in his relationships; recurrent suicidal thinking; reading and writing difficulties; and so on.

2 Characteristics of mild to moderate intellectual disability

The *DSM-5* classifies intellectual disability (or intellectual developmental disorder) into four levels of severity: mild, moderate, severe, and profound. People with severe or profound intellectual disability require support for all activities of daily living, including meals, dressing, bathing, and elimination. That was not Wittgenstein's situation. Nevertheless, Wittgenstein had most of the characteristics presented by people with mild to moderate intellectual disability.

2.1 Difficulties in learning academic skills

People with mild intellectual disability, according to the *DSM-5*, have difficulties in learning academic skills involving reading, writing, arithmetic, time, and money. In turn, people with moderate intellectual disability present slow language and pre-academic skills development when preschoolers. For school-age children, progress in reading, writing, mathematics, and understanding of time and money occurs slowly and is markedly limited compared with that of peers.

Revealingly, beyond his expressive language delay, Wittgenstein was considered one of the dullest of the siblings for much of his childhood. He was educated at home by private tutors until 14 years old. Because his family feared that he would not pass the rigorous entrance examinations set by a grammar school, Wittgenstein was sent to the more technical and less academic *Realschule* in Linz. There, Wittgenstein was ridiculed by his colleagues, who used to chant an alliterative jingle that made play of his unhappiness and of the distance between him and the rest of the school: 'Wittgenstein wandelt wehmütig widriger Winde wegen Wienwärts' ('Wittgenstein wends his woeful windy way towards Vienna'). In his efforts to make friends, Wittgenstein felt 'betrayed and sold' by his schoolmates, as he later said.

Wittgenstein was a 'fairly poor student,' Monk observed. In most subjects, he was graded C or D. Only twice he achieved an A – both times in religious studies. As a matter of fact, Wittgenstein was weaker in the scientific and technical subjects than in the humanities. As it turns out, he wouldn't have had much of a chance to study engineering at the University of Manchester or philosophy at the University of Cambridge if his father hadn't been one of the richest men in Europe.

Regarding money, after World War I, Wittgenstein insisted that the fortune he had received as an inheritance from his father be distributed among his siblings.

2.2 Immaturity in social interactions

According to the *DSM-5*, another characteristic of people with mild intellectual disability is immaturity in social interactions. These individuals may have, for example, difficulty in accurately perceiving peers' social cues. People with moderate intellectual disability not only have the same immaturity in social interactions but also marked differences from peers in social and communicative behavior across development. Beyond that, their friendships with typically developing peers are often affected by communication or social limitations.

As seen in section 1.2, Wittgenstein did not realize Marguerite Respinger's intention when she told him that she no longer wanted to kiss him. Wittgenstein also did not understand that for Keith Kirk there was no romantic relationship between them. There is also no shortage of reports of Wittgenstein's difficulties in communicating and behaving socially, such as on the occasions when he was rude or inconvenient to Moore and Malcolm, as also seen in section 1.2.

As a matter of fact, to David Pinsent, who lived with Wittgenstein in Cambridge before the First World War, he seemed to be 'a bit mad.' This opinion was shared by the residents of Puchberg, the Austrian village where Wittgenstein worked as a primary school

teacher in the 1920s. John Ryle's teenage son, Anthony, considered Wittgenstein just weird and boring, as he recorded in his diary when his family was visited by the philosopher in Sussex on New Year's Eve 1942: '[Wittgenstein] is awful strange – not a very good english speaker, keeps on saying "I mean" and "its 'tolerable' meaning intolerable. [...] We spent the afternoon arguing – he's an impossible person every time you say anything he says "No No, that's not the point." It probably isn't his point, but it is ours. A tiring person to listen to.'

Given Wittgenstein's irascible behavior, many of his friends eventually drifted away from him, like Basil Reeve. Shortly after visiting Wittgenstein in Norway before the First World War, Moore would cut ties with him because of an untimely letter from him: 'Think I won't answer it because I really don't want to see him again,' Moore noted in his diary. Years later, he would reconnect with Wittgenstein, but taking certain precautions, such as avoiding his company for hours at a time.

Of all the breaks with Wittgenstein, Sraffa's is perhaps the most interesting, for two reasons. Firstly, because it happened in May 1946, only about a month after the death of John Maynard Keynes, who had introduced the two many years earlier, after having taken Sraffa to Cambridge to save him from persecution by Mussolini's fascist government. Secondly, because the break was made with harsh words coming from someone known for his cordiality. When Sraffa decided that he would no longer talk to Wittgenstein, he made it clear: 'I won't be bullied by you, Wittgenstein.' Wittgenstein begged Sraffa to continue their weekly talks: 'I'll talk about anything,' Wittgenstein said to him. 'Yes,' Sraffa replied, 'but in *your* way.'

Wittgenstein's way of talking was detailed by Bouwsma when commenting on a conversation between him, Wittgenstein, and Malcolm: 'There is an intensity and an impatience about him which are enough, certainly, to frighten one, and there was once when Norman was floundering, going on talking perhaps, in order to get W. to go on, when he was nearly violent. No wonder so many people have found him difficult.' No wonder either that so many people

were exhausted with Wittgenstein, such as Malcolm himself, who confessed that after hours of conversation with him, he could not bear to see him again for some days.

Frank Ramsey also had difficulties in relating to Wittgenstein, as he confessed in a letter to Keynes shortly after their first meetings in Austria in the 1920s: 'Though I like him very much I doubt if I could enjoy him for more than a day or two, unless I had my great interest in his work, which provides the mainstay of our conversation.' Years later, when he was Wittgenstein's doctoral advisor, Ramsey said to him bluntly: 'I don't like your method of arguing.' 'In argument he forgets about manners & simply says what he thinks,' Russell observed.

In fact, in argument Wittgenstein did not consider the opinion or interest of the listener to the point that Russell in 1912 floated the possibility that his student was becoming deaf. '*He* is a tyrant,' Russell summed up to Ottoline Morrell. In 1930, Russell confessed to Moore in a letter that he did not know anything more fatiguing than disagreeing with Wittgenstein in an argument. It is not surprising, therefore, that Russell also distanced himself from him and Ramsey would end up cutting ties with Wittgenstein for two years.

Keynes, in turn, would always prudently keep his distance from Wittgenstein. '[Wittgenstein] wants to stay with me here in about a fortnight. Am I strong enough? Perhaps if I do not work between now and then, I shall be,' Keynes wrote to his wife in 1928. Despite his difficulty interacting with Wittgenstein, it was Keynes who received him in Cambridge in 1929, when he returned to the city. 'Well,' Keynes wrote to his wife on January 18 of that year, 'God has arrived. I met him on the 5.15 train. Meanwhile we have had tea and now I retire to my study to write to you. I see that the fatigue is going to be crushing. But I must not let him talk to me for more than two or three hours a day.' According to Monk, soon after the first few weeks of Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge, his relationship with Keynes was restricted to the professional realm, since being a friend of Wittgenstein would require much more time and energy than Keynes was willing to give.

Interestingly, Wittgenstein himself was aware of his difficulty in adjusting to social conventions and relating to people. For instance, when he moved to Newcastle in the 1940s, Drury wrote to him wishing him good luck in his new job and saying he hoped he would make 'lots of friends.' 'It is obvious to me that you are becoming thoughtless and stupid,' Wittgenstein replied. 'How could you imagine that I would ever have "lots of friends"?' At another point, Wittgenstein lamented in his diary: 'Drury, I think, is growing more and more unfaithful. He has found friends with whom he can live more easily.'

In reality, Wittgenstein was deeply troubled by his difficulties in maintaining relationships. 'To my great shame, I must confess that the number of people to whom I can talk is constantly diminishing,' he wrote to Paul Engelmann in 1922, when he lived in Cambridge. In 1925, shortly after he arrived in Otterthal, an Austrian village where he worked as a primary school teacher, Wittgenstein revealed to Engelmann: 'I suffer much from the human, or rather inhuman, beings with whom I live – in short it is all as usual!' In 1947, towards the end of his life, Wittgenstein lamented: '[I] feel myself to be an alien in the world. If you have no ties to either mankind or to God, then you *are* an alien.' On another occasion, Wittgenstein summed up his situation: 'Normal human beings are a balm to me and a torment at the same time.'

Skinner was perhaps the person who most represented both a balm and a torment for Wittgenstein. Symptomatically, when Wittgenstein received Skinner at his hut in Norway in 1937, the philosopher noted in his diary: 'The last 5 days were nice: he settled into the life here and did everything with love and kindness, and I was, thank God, not impatient, and truly I had no reason to be, except for my own rotten nature. Yesterday I accompanied him as far as Sogndal; returned today to my hut. Somewhat depressed, also tired.' Aware of his 'rotten nature,' Wittgenstein strove for decades to be what he called *anständig* (decent).

2.3 Communication, conversation, and language more concrete or immature

According to the *DSM-5*, people with mild intellectual disability have communication, conversation, and language more concrete or immature than expected for their age. In turn, people with moderate intellectual disability tend to present a spoken language much less complex than that of peers.

Concerning Wittgenstein's communication, conversation, and language more immature than expected for age, his letters are quite illustrative, as discussed in section 1.4. Besides, it is notorious that Wittgenstein had predominantly logical, fixed, concrete, and literal ways of talking and thinking, as detailed in sections 1.4 and 1.5. As for Wittgenstein's spoken language, Anthony Ryle's account quoted above is revealing. Moreover, Malcolm stated that Wittgenstein's words came out with great force, but not fluently. 'Anyone who heard him say anything knew he was a singular person,' Malcolm noted. Malcolm also observed that when he first met Wittgenstein, at the Moral Science Club in 1938, the philosopher had extreme difficulty in expressing himself, and his words were unintelligible to him.

2.4 Difficulties regulating emotion and behavior

Individuals with mild intellectual disability, according to the *DSM*-5, may have difficulties regulating emotion and behavior in age-appropriate fashion. These difficulties are noticed by peers in social situations. Maladaptive behavior is present in a significant minority of individuals with moderate intellectual disability and causes social problems.

In Wittgenstein's case, there are many accounts of his quick temper and his difficulties in containing himself, as in the episode of his visit to Whitehead cited in section 1.1, and Jim Bamber's recollection, quoted in section 3.5, that Wittgenstein's 'nervous temperament' made him the last person suitable for the engineering

job. There are also some funny accounts about Wittgenstein's inappropriate behavior due to his intemperance. For instance, in the 1920s, when Wittgenstein was a primary school teacher in Trattenbach, in the Austrian countryside, he attended a catechism at the local Catholic Church. On one occasion, he listened carefully to the questions put to the children by the priest, with the Dean in attendance, and then said suddenly very audibly: 'Nonsense!'

Other episodes of inappropriate behavior by Wittgenstein are far more serious. As is well known, he used to mistreat his students in the Austrian countryside with hair pulling, ear slaps and even punches on the head. In fact, Wittgenstein abruptly quit teaching in 1926 after assaulting a student to the point of causing him to pass out. On seeing the boy collapse, Monk stated, Wittgenstein panicked. He sent his class home, carried the boy to the headmaster's room to await attention from the local doctor and then hurriedly left the school.

Decades later, at a meeting of the Moral Science Club, Karl Popper would verify how aggressive Wittgenstein could become. On that occasion, Popper expounded on the question "Are there philosophical problems?" Apparently, Wittgenstein didn't like the discussion and the two philosophers ended up giving rise to one of the best-known and most controversial episodes in their biographies.

As for the fact described by Julian Bell in his poem quoted in section 3.3 that Wittgenstein used to shout at people, it must be noted that once, after having shouted at an Oxford student, Wittgenstein remarked to Drury: 'I am no saint and don't pretend to be, but I shouldn't lose my temper like that.'

2.5 Gullibility

The *DSM*-5 also informs us that people with mild intellectual disability have immature social judgment for their age. Therefore the person is at risk of being manipulated by others due to his (or her) gullibility.

In Wittgenstein's biographies and in the memoirs written by people who knew him, it is frequently mentioned that he was naive. Pascal, for example, defined Wittgenstein as 'a man of great purity and innocence.' When Russell was his teacher at the University of Cambridge, he attested that Wittgenstein was indeed 'a little too simple.' Actually, evidence of Wittgenstein's naivety abounds. For instance, on the evening of 10 March, Drury told Wittgenstein that all the papers reported that Hitler was poised to invade Austria. 'That is a ridiculous rumour. Hitler doesn't want Austria. Austria would be no use to him at all,' Wittgenstein replied 'with quite breath-taking naïvety,' as described by Monk. The next evening, Drury told Wittgenstein that Hitler had indeed taken over Austria. Then he asked Wittgenstein if his sisters would be in any danger, since his family was Jewish. 'They are too much respected, no one would dare to touch them,' Wittgenstein replied with 'quite extraordinary insouciance', in Monk's terms.

2.6 Jobs that require limited conceptual and communication skills

Individuals with mild intellectual disability, remarks the *DSM*-5, can be employed in jobs that do not emphasize conceptual skills. And individuals with moderate intellectual disability can be employed in jobs that require limited conceptual and communication skills, but they need considerable support from co-workers, supervisors, and others to manage social expectations.

At Cambridge, Wittgenstein always received support from friends like Russell, Moore, Ramsey, and Keynes. In reality, as Pascal observed, Cambridge was 'a university that unobtrusively gave

help and made only the slightest demands on him.' Nonetheless, Wittgenstein preferred manual labor. In the 1920s, for example, he worked as a gardener at two Austrian monasteries. In the 1930s, Wittgenstein left Cambridge and moved to the Soviet Union seeking manual labor. Dissatisfied with the life there, he returned to England. However, in the 1940s, he would abandon the post of Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge to become a dispensary porter at the Guy's Hospital, in London.

Besides, Wittgenstein never had a home of his own and preferred to live with friends or in a family boarding house, such as the Morgans', the Clements', and the Kingstons'.

2.7 Risk for suicide

The *DSM-5* also states that people with a diagnosis of intellectual disability with co-occurring mental disorders – such as autism spectrum disorder – are at risk for suicide.

As a matter of fact, in his letters to friends and his diaries, Wittgenstein often expresses the possibility of killing himself, following three of his brothers who committed suicide. During World War I, for example, he wrote in a diary: 'No news from David [Pinsent]. I am completely abandoned. I think of suicide.' Also during the conflict, he noted: 'If suicide is allowed then everything is allowed. If anything is not allowed then suicide is not allowed. This throws a light on the nature of ethics, for suicide is, so to speak, the elementary sin. [...] Or is even suicide in itself neither good nor evil?' In the early 1930s, Wittgenstein wrote in a notebook, signaling his constant flirtation with suicide: 'Despair has no end & suicide does not end it, unless one puts an end to it by pulling oneself together.'

2.8 Impaired functional use of academic skills

The *DSM-5* also informs us that people with mild intellectual disability have impaired functional use of academic skills, like reading and writing. The same thing occurs in people with moderate intellectual disability. For adults with moderate intellectual disability, academic skills development is typically at an elementary level, and support is required for all use of academic skills in work and personal life.

Meaningfully, there is evidence and testimony from Wittgenstein himself that he had difficulties reading and writing. Regarding Wittgenstein's writing difficulties, it is suggestive that he said on one occasion: 'My bad spelling in youth, up to the age of 18 or 19, is connected with the whole of the rest of my character (my weakness in study).' Wittgenstein's texts are not only obscure but full of spelling and grammatical errors. The first German edition of the *Philosophical Grammar*, for instance, has dozens of corrections. Not by chance, Wittgenstein's preface to a dictionary that he had produced in the 1920s with his elementary school students was omitted due to grammatical errors: 'By no means should the mistake of writing "eine mehrmonatliche Arbeit" instead of saying "eine Arbeit von viele Monaten" ["a work of several months"] creep into the German language, not even into the preface,' wrote the District School Inspector Eduard Buxbaum.

Considering Wittgenstein's writing limitations and the fact that he was often frightened that he would write his texts 'in a stilted and bad style,' as he expressed it on one occasion, it is ironic that he set himself the goal of achieving complete, ultimate clarity, as discussed in section 3.6. Once, in 1933, being concerned about possible misrepresentations of his ideas in an article signed by Richard Braithwaite, Wittgenstein sent a letter to the journal *Mind* refuting what had been attributed to him, and explaining the reason for the delay in publishing the work he had been developing: the difficulty of presenting it 'in a clear and coherent form.' On another occasion, this same difficulty would lead Wittgenstein to ask

Malcolm, Anscombe, and Smythies to publish for him a rebuttal to an article on his philosophy that had also displeased him. The same difficulty would also lead him, shortly after he had written the letter to *Mind*, to a peculiar partnership with Waismann on a book project. According to Monk, Wittgenstein would provide the content and establish the form and structure of the book, while Waismann would be in charge of writing everything clearly and coherently. Thus, Monk commented, Waismann was responsible for what Wittgenstein himself regarded as the most difficult part of the job. However, disagreements between the two led to the cancellation of the project.

In any case, the fact is that Wittgenstein remained dissatisfied with the form of everything he wrote from 1929 until his death in 1951, leaving it to his literary executors to organize his notes in books, as Rush Rhees detailed in the note to the edition of the *Philosophical Grammar*. 'Heaven knows if I'll ever publish this work, but I should like you to look at it after my death if you survive me,' Wittgenstein asked G. H. von Wright. 'There is a good deal of hard thinking in it.'

It is no coincidence that in the preface to volume II of the *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology*, signed with the co-editor of the work Heikki Nyman, Von Wright stated that there are many passages in the text which, given their lack of clarity, are very difficult to read. Likewise, Russell said that understanding the manuscripts that would later be collected in the *Philosophical Remarks* would have been difficult for him without the conversations he had had with his former student about the material in the early 1930s. The lack of clarity, as in the *Tractatus*, is a hallmark of all the works of the later Wittgenstein – and none of them, as Monk stressed, can be regarded as a finished work.

Concerning Wittgenstein's reading difficulties, it is suggestive that in December 1933 he wrote to W. H. Watson: 'Please, don't send me your manuscript. I shouldn't be able to look at it. I should very much like to see you and discuss things with you, but *I'm not good at reading*! It strains me *enormously* and I get nowhere.' In

December 1947, Wittgenstein wrote to Von Wright: 'I read hardly anything: a few detective stories and some other things I've already read many times. Real reading is always bad for me.' Possibly as a defense mechanism, Wittgenstein once wrote: 'As little philosophy as I have read, I have certainly not read too little, *rather too much*. I see that whenever I read a philosophical book: it doesn't improve my thoughts at all, it makes them worse.'

Being most certainly aware of Wittgenstein's reading limitations, Sraffa used to be didactic when writing to him. In the letter below, Sraffa advises his 'politically naïve' friend, as Monk puts it, about his situation as an Austrian Jew and the dangers he would face if he traveled to Vienna after the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany in 1938:

> Before trying to discuss, probably in a confused way, I want to give a clear answer to your question. If, as you say, it is of 'vital importance' for you to be able to leave Austria and return to England, there is no doubt – *you must not go to Vienna*. You are aware no doubt that now you are a German citizen. Your Austrian passport will certainly be withdrawn as soon as you enter Austria: and then you will have to apply for a German passport, which may be granted if and when the Gestapo is satisfied that you deserve it. [...]
>
> As to the possibility of war, I do not know: it may happen at any moment, or we may have one or two more years of 'peace'. I really have no idea. But I should not gamble on the likelihood of 6 months' peace. If however you decided in spite of all to go back to Vienna, I think: a) it would certainly increase your chance of being allowed out of Austria if you were a lecturer in Cambridge; b) there would be no difficulty in your entering England, once you are let out of Austria (of Germany, I should say); c) *before* leaving Ireland or England you should have

> your passport changed with a German one, at a German Consulate: I suppose they will begin to do so in a very short time; and you are more likely to get the exchange effected here than in Vienna; and, if you go with a German passport, you are more likely (though not at all certain) to be let out again.
>
> You must be careful about various things: 1) if you go to Austria, you must have made up your mind not to say that you are of Jewish descent, or they are sure to refuse you a passport; 2) you must not say that you have money in England, for when you are there they could compel you to hand it over to the Reichsbank; 3) if you are approached, in Dublin or Cambridge, by the German Consulate, for registration, or change of passport, be careful how you answer, for a rash word might prevent your ever going back to Vienna; 4) take great care how you write home, stick to purely personal affairs, for letters are certainly censored.
>
> In the present circumstances I should not have qualms about British nationality if that is the only one which you can acquire without waiting for another ten years' residence: also you have friends in England who could help you to get it: and certainly a Cambridge job would enable you to get it quickly.
>
> [...]
>
> Excuse this confused letter.

It is quite revealing that Sraffa starts the letter by saying that the discussion would probably be 'confused' and at the end of it apologize for the 'confused letter' – 'forcing one to wonder,' Monk observed, 'what levels of clarity and precision he reached in the rest of his correspondence.' Or rather, in light of the diagnosis of autism: forcing one to wonder what levels of clarity and precision Sraffa

needed to reach to be understood by Wittgenstein, who not only frequently used to read with friends but also used to ask them to read out loud for him.[18]

18 See, for example, Drury 1984a: 91; Drury 1984b: 115, 119, 126; Leavis 1984: 66–67; Monk 1990: 158, 265, 310, 574.

II. Stimuli, paraphrasing and plagiarism

> *For more than one reason, what I publish here will have points of contact with what other people are writing today. – If my remarks do not bear a stamp which marks them as mine, then I do not wish to lay any further claim to them as my property.* (Wittgenstein, preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*)

In section 4.3, I observed that Wittgenstein often presented the ideas of others as his own. It is conceivable, for instance, that he would read a text and later paraphrase it in his notes as if he were developing philosophical reflections of his own. Something similar seems to have happened with Sraffa's 'stimuli' that led Wittgenstein to adopt a pragmatic conception of language, as discussed in the eighth chapter. McGuinness, for example, cites some remarks made by Sraffa to Wittgenstein that were reproduced (or 'echoed,' in McGuinness' term) in *The Blue and Brown Books* without any credit being given to the Italian economist.

Glock, in turn, reports that the comparison between language and an 'ancient city' made in § 18 of the *Philosophical Investigations* is contained in the texts of two authors that Wittgenstein had read: Ludwig Boltzmann and Fritz Mauthner. No credit, however, was given to them. Glock also speculates that Wittgenstein's view that a sentence is a minimum unit for making a move in the language-game was inspired in part by Karl Bühler – who would have been read by Wittgenstein shortly after the First World War – although he points out that this conception originates from an earlier view, shared by Plato, Aristotle, Bentham, and Frege: that only propositions, not individual words, say or communicate something. Again, however, no credit was given to any author.

Also according to Glock, Wittgenstein may have picked up the concept of 'form of life' from Oswald Spengler. Janik and Toulmin, on the other hand, consider the possibility that Wittgenstein acquired it from Eduard Spranger, author of the Viennese bestseller of the post-First World War *Lebensformen* (*Forms of Life*). Spengler or Spranger, the truth is that, as Glock pointed out, the concept of 'form of life' already had a long tradition in German philosophy, being found in the work of authors such as Hamann, Herder, Hegel, and Von Humboldt.

Likewise, the notion of "family resemblance" had a long tradition in philosophy before Wittgenstein presented it in the *Blue Book*:

> We are inclined to think that there must be something in common to all games, say, and that this common property is the justification for applying the general term "game" to the various games; whereas games form a *family* the members of which have family likenesses. Some of them have the same nose, others the same eyebrows and others again the same way of walking; and these likenesses overlap.

In fact, despite being widely considered one of the most innovative aspects of Wittgenstein's late philosophy, the idea that examples of a concept have varied and overlapping characteristics was acquired by him from Spengler, according to McGuinness. Monk shows that the "family resemblances" go back to Goethe's poem "The Metamorphosis of Plants," which Wittgenstein greatly appreciated. Glock, in turn, considers two other sources to which Wittgenstein may have resorted to obtain this notion: Nietzsche's book *Beyond Good and Evil*, and Jean Nicode's book *Geometry in the Sensible World*. Regardless of which author Wittgenstein actually acquired the idea of "family resemblances" from, the fact is that he never gave it due credit. In any case, this idea is much older than

is generally imagined, having been made explicit by countless thinkers throughout history.[19]

Following this whole line of argument, it is equally conceivable that Sraffa's 'stimuli' (which led Wittgenstein to adopt the rather obvious point of view of the *Philosophical Investigations*) were made subtly; for example using questions that induced Wittgenstein to arrive at certain conclusions. (This subtlety is noticeable, for example, in the case quoted in section 8.9 where Sraffa asked Wittgenstein if anybody had ever actually made this or that confusion the philosopher pilloried.) Subsequently, Wittgenstein presented these conclusions as philosophical reflections of his own.

Much of the *Tractatus* seems to have had a similar origin. It is known that when he was a student at Cambridge, Wittgenstein spent many hours conversing with Russell about philosophical questions and personal problems. No wonder the technical terms used in the *Tractatus* are clearly derived from ideas elaborated by Russell. In 1912, for example, in the lecture "Logic as the Essence of Philosophy," which was published in the collection *Our Knowledge of the External World*, Russell mentions "facts" in a manner similar to the *Tractatus* and distinguishes "atomic propositions" from "molecular propositions" in line with what Wittgenstein would do in his book.

Be that as it may, the terminology of the *Tractatus* is unmistakably obscure. Monk, for example, notes that Wittgenstein was unable to illustrate what he meant by the basic concepts of his work such as atomic proposition, atomic fact, and simple object: 'Wittgenstein could produce no examples of either an atomic proposition or an atomic fact, nor could he say what a "simple object" was, but he felt that the very possibility of analysis demanded that

19 See, for example, Aristotle 2016a: II, 2; Kant 2008: B 91–92, B 755-756; Schopenhauer 2010: § 28, § 36; Moore 1993: § 112, § 114.

there be such things, providing the structure of both language and the world, which allowed the one to mirror the other.'[20]

In any case, many of the ideas presented in the *Tractatus* are manifestly derived from Russell's ideas. In fact, in the preface to the book, Wittgenstein makes it clear that what he meant by 'stimulus' and 'stimulation' is very close to what is commonly meant by paraphrasing or even plagiarism:

> How far my efforts agree with those of other philosophers I will not decide. Indeed what I have here written makes no claim to novelty in points of detail; and therefore I give no sources, because it is indifferent to me whether what I have thought has already been thought before me by another. I will only mention that to the great works of Frege and the writings of my friend Bertrand Russell I owe in large measure the stimulation of my thoughts.

Ironically, as stressed by Monk, Wittgenstein kept a close eye on academic philosophers' use of what he considered to be his ideas. In 1932, for example, Wittgenstein became involved in something like a *Prioritätstreit* (dispute over the right of priority) with Carnap. In the article "The Language of Physics as the Universal Language of Science," Carnap defends physicalism, according to which all statements worthy of scientific study are reducible to the language of physics. To Wittgenstein, this idea had been expounded by him in meetings of the Vienna Circle, and Carnap had used it without acknowledging its authorship. Always worried about the possibility of being the target of plagiarism – as observed by Malcolm, for example – Wittgenstein claimed that Carnap had made use of Waismann's notes of their conversations. As a result of the

20 For disparate analyses of the *Tractatus*, see, for example, Anscombe (1996), Mounce (1981) and Nordmann (2005).

episode, Wittgenstein, who no longer conversed with the banished Carnap, would also cease to converse with Waismann.

But far worse than the fact that Wittgenstein often gave no sources was his habit of attributing to others his own errors and 'mental cramps.' To complicate matters further, the Wittgensteinians tend to carry this misconception forward. It is common, for instance, to attribute to Frege and Russell the pictorial theory of meaning. But to clear up this confusion, it is enough to read the texts of these authors. In the paper "On Sense and Reference," for example, Frege takes the word 'object' 'in the widest range,' contrary to the 'very widespread tendency not to recognize as an object anything that cannot be perceived by means of the senses,' and thus naming with it, in addition to concrete objects such as "table," "chair" and "bread", numbers and truth values, for example. This observation alone seems sufficient to correct the common mistake of extending to Frege the simple conception of language of the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Also, it is worth remembering the fact mentioned in section 8.5 that both Frege and Russell take grammar as a guide for their analysis of language.

Anyhow, one of the reasons for this gross error of attributing to Frege and Russell the pictorial theory of meaning is certainly the fact that both of them investigated referentiality. However, to assert on this basis that they shared the simple conception of language of the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* – or some version of it – is as plausible as to assert that the philosopher of ordinary language John Searle also shared it because he investigated referentiality in *Speech Acts*. In this book, Searle not only cited the *Philosophical Investigations*, but also examined in section 6.4 what he called the "slogan" 'Meaning is Use.'

At the very beginning of the first chapter, Searle asks: 'How do words relate to the world?' In the same paragraph, he also asks: 'How do words stand for things?' Later on, in section 2.3 and chapter 4, entitled "Reference as a speech act," Searle lists 'referring expressions' such as "you", "the battle of Waterloo", "our copy of yesterday's newspaper", "Caesar", "the constellation of Orion" and

states that 'it is characteristic of each of these expressions that their utterance serves to pick out or identify one "object" or "entity" or "particular" apart from other objects, about which the speaker then goes on to say something, or ask some question, etc.' In other terms, Searle also takes the word 'object' in the widest range.

Thus, Searle was occupied with the same questions about referentiality to which Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein and so many other philosophers of language have devoted themselves, but it would be incorrect to conclude that he thought that all words stand for things; or that he believed that 'the words in language name objects' and 'sentences are combinations of such names'; or that he was up against one of the great sources of philosophical bewilderment: he tried to find a substance for a substantive.

II. Similes, comparisons and grammatical inquiries

> *[My work] is not important but if anyone is interested I'm good at it and I may help. I don't recommend it. It's for people who cannot leave it alone.* (Wittgenstein)

As illustrated in this book, Wittgenstein exhibited many of the behavioral and cognitive traits typical of someone with autism spectrum disorder, including predominantly logical, fixed, concrete, and literal ways of talking and thinking. One of the reflections of how Wittgenstein's mind worked can be identified in the pictorial character of his thought and writing. In 1931, Wittgenstein wrote: 'I believe that my sentences are mostly descriptions of visual images that occur to me.' In the same period, Wittgenstein further noted that 'thinking is quite comparable to the drawing of pictures' and 'to think or speak is to depict.' 'Everything that comes my way becomes a picture for me of what I am thinking about at the time,' Wittgenstein summed up.

To Ishisaka, Wittgenstein's preference for pictorial thinking was designed to overcome his rather fragmentary and analytical thinking. Actually, the realization of Wittgenstein's preference for pictorial thinking elucidates why he resorted so much to similes – many of which are reproduced in this book – and to comparisons – for example, between words and the handles in the cabin of a locomotive, words and tools, and words and chess pieces. Indeed, it is interesting to note that in his intermediate and late philosophy Wittgenstein seems to make a tremendous effort to detach language and image. Bouwsma reports that in 1949 Wittgenstein insisted that learning a language is learning a technique. 'The whole point of this emphasis upon technique is to help us to get

rid of the common impression that language is like a mirror, and that whenever a sentence has meaning, there is something, a proposition, corresponding to it,' explained Bouwsma. But who had that impression? 'I said in my book: The sentence is the picture,' Wittgenstein told his American colleague. In fact, influenced by Russell's logical atomism, Wittgenstein asserts in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* that logic 'mirrors the world' and that 'logic is not a theory but a reflexion of the world.' In the notes dictated to Moore in Norway in April 1914, Wittgenstein already indicated this perspective, noting that 'a language which *can* express everything *mirrors* certain properties of the world by these properties which it must have; and logical so-called propositions shew *in a systematic way* those properties.' Reaffirming this idea, Wittgenstein wrote in a notebook in October of the same year: 'The proposition *only says something in so far* as far as it is a *picture*!'

Even after meeting Sraffa, who, as analyzed in the eighth chapter, 'stimulated' Wittgenstein to abandon the pictorial theory of meaning in favor of a pragmatic conception of language, Wittgenstein would retain the impression that language is like a mirror, and that whenever a sentence has meaning, there is something, a proposition, corresponding to it. In the early 1930s, for example, Wittgenstein told his students that 'a proposition is like, or something like, a picture.' Written in the same period, the *Philosophical Observations* are permeated by the pictorial theory of meaning and by comparisons between language and image: 'If you think of propositions as instructions for making models, their pictorial nature becomes even clearer'; 'The idea that you "imagine" the meaning of a word when you hear or read it, is a naive conception of the meaning of a word. [...] Yet the naive theory of *forming-an-image* can't be utterly wrong'; 'The agreement of a proposition with reality only resembles the agreement of a picture with what it depicts to the same extent as the agreement of a memory image with the present object'. Still in this period, Wittgenstein would exchange logic for "grammar," but he would insist that 'grammar is a mirror of reality.' Even in the *Philosophical*

Investigations there are hints of Wittgenstein's pictorial thinking: 'If we compare a proposition to a picture, we must consider whether we are comparing it to a portrait (a historical representation) or to a genre-picture. And both comparisons make sense'; 'Sometimes I visualize a picture, an illustration, as it were. Indeed, this seems to help me to read with the correct expression. And I could mention more things of the same kind. I can also give a word an intonation which makes its meaning stand out from the rest, almost as if the word were a portrait of the whole thing. (And this may, of course, depend on the structure of the sentence.)' Besides, Wittgenstein argues in § 40 against the picture theory of meaning:

> Let us first discuss the following point in the argument: that a word has no meaning if nothing corresponds to it. It is important to note that it is a solecism to use the word "meaning" to signify the thing that 'corresponds' to a word. That is to confound the meaning of a name with the *bearer* of the name. When Mr N.N. dies, one says that the bearer of the name dies, not that the meaning dies. And it would be nonsensical to say this, for if the name ceased to have meaning, it would make no sense to say "Mr N.N. is dead".

But who confounds the meaning of a name with the *bearer* of the name?

Anyhow, the point to be made here is that the observation of Wittgenstein's preference for pictorial thinking, closely related to his literalism (a form of absence of imagination), also helps to understand why a good part of his linguistic reflections seem to stem from his struggle against misunderstandings concerning the use of words, brought about, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of our language – above all, analogies of forms of expression in concrete and abstract domains. The following examples of Wittgenstein's

grammatical inquiries, which are added to many similar ones in his work, support this analysis:

1 [...] the propositions "A has a gold tooth" and "A has toothache" are not used analogously. They differ in their grammar where at first sight they might not seem to differ. (Wittgenstein 1969b: 53)

2 The grammar of "having toothache" is very different from that of "having a piece of chalk," as is also the grammar of "I have toothache" from "Moore has toothache".' (Wittgenstein 2001b: 17)

3 It is difficult for us to shake off this comparison: a man makes his appearance – an event makes its appearance. As if an event even now stood in readiness before the door of reality and were then to make its appearance in reality – like coming into a room. (Wittgenstein 1970: § 59)

4 [...] if the words "language," "experience," "world" have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words "table," "lamp," "door." (Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 97)

5 "I know, that he arrived yesterday" – "I know, that 2 x 2 = 4" – "I know that he had pain" – "I know that there is a table standing there." (Wittgenstein 1977: III, § 311)

In each case I know, it's only that it's always something different? *Oh yes*, – but the language-games are far more different than these sentences make us conscious of. (Wittgenstein 1977: § 312)

6 Why does one use the word "suffering" for pain as well as for fear? Well, there are plenty of tie-ups. – (Wittgenstein 1970: § 500)

To the utterance: "I can't think of it without fear" one replies: "There's no reason for fear, for...." That is at any rate one way of dismissing fear. Contrast with pain. (Wittgenstein 1970: § 501)

7 We learn to describe objects, and thereby, in another sense, our sensations. (Wittgenstein 1998d: I, § 1082)

8 It is not, of course, that I identify my sensation by means of criteria; it is, rather, that I use the same expression. But it is not as if the language-game ends with this; it begins with it.

But doesn't it begin with the sensation which I describe? Perhaps this word "describe" tricks us here. I say "I describe my state of mind" and "I describe my room". One needs to call to mind the differences between the language-games. (Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 290)

What we call "descriptions" are instruments for particular uses. Think of a machine-drawing, a cross-section, an elevation with measurements, which an engineer has before him. Thinking of a description as a word-picture of the facts has something misleading about it: one tends to think only of such pictures as hang on our walls, which seem simply to depict how a thing looks, what it is like. (These pictures are, as it were, idle.) (Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 291)

9 Consider how the following questions can be applied, and how decided:

(1) "Are these books *my* books?"

(2) "Is this foot *my* foot?"

(3) "Is this body *my* body?"

(4) "Is this sensation *my* sensation?"

Each of these questions has practical (non-philosophical) applications.

For (2): Think of cases in which my foot is anaesthetized or paralysed. Under certain circumstances, the question could be settled by finding out whether I can feel pain in this foot.

For (3): Here one might be pointing to a reflection in a mirror. But in certain circumstances, one might touch a body and ask the question. In others, it means the same as "Does my body look like *that*?"

For (4): But which sensation is *this* one? That is, how is one using the demonstrative pronoun here? Certainly otherwise than in, say, the first example. Here, again, one goes astray, because one imagines that by directing one's attention to a sensation, one is pointing at it. (Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 411)

10 Consider this example: You tell me to write a few lines, and while I am doing so you ask "Do you feel something in your hand while you are writing?" I say, "Yes, I have a peculiar feeling". – Can't I say to myself when I write, "I have *this* feeling"? Of course I can say it, and while saying "this feeling", I concentrate on the feeling. – But what do I do with this sentence? What use is it to me? It seems that I am pointing out to myself what I am feeling, – as though my act of concentration was an 'inward' act of pointing, one which no one else but me is aware of, this however is unimportant. But I don't point to the feeling by attending to it. Rather, attending to the feeling means producing or modifying it. (On the other hand, observing a chair does not mean producing or modifying the chair.) (Wittgenstein 1969b: 174)

11 But now am I to say that I really 'see' the fearfulness in this behaviour – or that I really 'see' the facial expression? Why not? But that is not to deny the difference between two concepts of what is perceived. A picture of the face might reproduce its features very accurately, but not get the expression right; it might, however, be right as far as the expression goes and not hit the features off well. "Similar expression." takes faces together in a quite different way from "similar anatomy." (Wittgenstein 1998d: I, § 1068)

Naturally the question isn't: "Is it right to say 'I see his sly wink'." What should be right or wrong about that, beyond the use of the English language? Nor are we going to say "The naive person is quite right to say he saw the facial expression."! (Wittgenstein 1998d: I, § 1069)

On the other hand one would like to say: We surely can't 'see' the expression, the shy behaviour, in the same sense as we see movement, shapes and colours. What is there in this? (Naturally, the question is not to be answered physiologically.) Well, one does say, that one sees both the dog's movement and its joy. If one shuts one's eyes one can see neither the one nor the other. But if one says of someone who could accurately reproduce the movement of the dog in some fashion in pictures, that he saw all there was to see, he would not have to recognize the dog's joy. So if the ideal

representation of what is seen is the photographically (metrically) exact reproduction in a picture, then one might want to say: "I see the movement, and somehow notice the joy." But remember the meaning in which we learn to use the word "see". We certainly say we see this human being, this flower, while our optical picture – the colours and shapes – is continually altering, and within the widest limits at that. Now that just is how we do use the word "see". (Don't think you can find a better use for it – a phenomenalogical [[sic]] one! (Wittgenstein 1998d: I, § 1070)

12 Looking at these language games, we don't come across the ideas of the past, the future and the present in their problematic and almost mysterious aspect. What this aspect is and how it comes about that it appears can be almost characteristically exemplified if we look at the question "Where does the present go when it becomes past, and where is the past?" – Under what circumstances has this question an allurement for us? For under certain circumstances it hasn't, and we should wave it away as nonsense.

It is clear that this question most easily arises if we are preoccupied with cases in which there are things flowing by us, – as logs of wood float down a river. In such a case we can say the logs which *have passed* us are all down towards the left and the logs which *will pass* us are all up towards the right. We then use this situation as a simile for all happening in time and even embody the simile in our language, as when we say that 'the present event passes by' (a log passes by) 'the future event is to come' (a log is to come). We talk about the flow of events; but also about the flow of time – the river on which the logs travel.

Here is one of the most fertile sources of philosophic puzzlement: we talk of the future event of something coming into my room, and also of the future coming of this event.

We say, "*Something* will happen", and also, "Something comes towards me"; we refer to the log as "something", but also the log's coming towards me.

Thus it can come about that we aren't able to rid ourselves of the implications of our symbolism, which seems to admit of a question like "Where does the flame of a candle go to when it's blown out?" "Where does the light go to?", "Where does the past go to"? We have become obsessed with our symbolism. – We may say that we are led into puzzlement by an analogy which irresistibly drags us on. (Wittgenstein 1969b: 107– 108)

13 Let us look at the grammar of ethical terms, and such terms as "God," "soul," "mind," "concrete," "abstract." One of the chief troubles is that we take a substantive to correspond to a thing. Ordinary grammar does not forbid our using a substantive as though it stood for a physical body. The words "soul" and "mind" have been used as though they stood for a thing, a gaseous thing. "what is the soul?" is a misleading question, as are questions about the words "concrete" and "abstract," which suggest an analogy with solid and gaseous instead of with a chair and the permission to sit on a chair. (Wittgenstein 2001b: 31–32)

14 There is no trouble at all with primitive languages about concrete objects. Talk about a chair and a human body and all is well; talk about negation and the human mind and things begin to look queer. A substantive in language is used primarily for a physical body, and a verb for the movement of such a body. [...] When we have difficulty with the grammar of our language we take certain primitive schemas and try to give wider application than is possible. We might say it is the whole of philosophy to realize that there is no more difficulty about time than there is about this chair. (Wittgenstein 2001b: 119)

15 Philosophers do not try to define everything, but certain things they have tried many times to define. What is common to those things for which they crave a definition? This craving arises from a question which bothers one and yet seems unanswerable in a straightforward way. "What is a chair?", by comparison with "What is 3?", seems simple. For if one is asked what a chair is one can point to something or give some sort of description; but if asked what the number 3 is, one is at a loss. (Wittgenstein 2001b: 150–151)

When we hear the substantive word "number" used in the question "What is number?" our propensity is to think of an ethereal object. (Wittgenstein 2001b: 44)

When people are asked, What is the number 3?, they first feel they are being asked to look about for something. (Wittgenstein 2001b: 151)

16 We are constantly misled by having the same forms of expression for mathematical and empirical facts. We say, for example, that one rod is longer than another and also that 6 feet is longer than 5 feet. We talk about finding out the same fact in different ways, and of finding the same mathematical result in different ways. But these are utterly different. Matters of fact always involve time; mathematical facts or propositions do not. (Wittgenstein 2001b: 184)

17 Let us ask the question "What is the similarity between looking for a word in your memory and looking for my friend in the park?" What would be the answer to such a question?

One kind of answer certainly would consist in describing a series of intermediate cases. One might say that the case which looking in your memory for something is most similar to is not that of looking for my friend in the park, but, say, that of looking up the spelling of a word in a dictionary. And one might go on interpolating cases. Another way of pointing out the similarity would be to say, e.g., "In both these cases at first we can't write down the word and then we can". This is what we call pointing out a common feature. (Wittgenstein 1969b: 169)

18 In other cases, if I am looking for something, then even before it is found I can describe what finding it is; not so, if I am looking for the solution of a mathematical problem. Mathematical Expeditions and Polar Expeditions. (Wittgenstein 1974: 359)

The comparison between a mathematical expedition and a polar expedition. There is a point in drawing this comparison and it is a very useful one.

How strange it would be if a geographical expedition were uncertain whether it had a goal, and so whether it had any route whatsoever. We can't imagine such a thing, it's nonsense. But this is precisely what it is like in a mathematical expedition. And so perhaps it is a good idea to drop the comparison altogether. (Wittgenstein 1974: 365)

19 A number that we have no method of developing is a number in a different sense. In the case of an irrational number without a development we supposedly have a description corresponding to which there is a number which can be found by looking for a method of development; and this number will we the irrational number described. Discovery of this number is treated analogously to make an expedition of discovery or solving a problem in physical science by finding something corresponding to a description. But the analogy is misleading. (Wittgenstein 1969b: 224)

20 What if I were to ask: does it become evident, while we are uttering the sentences "This rod is 1 metre long" and "Here is 1 soldier", that we mean different things by "1", that "1" has different meanings? – It does not become evident at all. – Say, for example, such a sentence as "1 metre is occupied by 1 soldier, and so 2 metres are occupied by 2 soldiers". Asked, "Do you mean the same by both 'ones'?", one would perhaps answer, "Of course I mean the same: *one*!" (Perhaps raising one finger.) (Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 552)

Now has "1" a different meaning when it stands for a measure and when it stands for a number? If the question is framed in *this* way, one will answer affirmatively. (Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 553)

21 If you want to know what a proposition means, you can always ask "How do I know that?" Do I know that there are 6 permutations of 3 elements in the same way in which I know that there are 6 people in this room? No. Therefore the first proposition is of a different kind from the second.

You may also say that the proposition "There are 6 permutations of 3 elements" is related to the proposition "There are 6 people in this room" in precisely the same way as is "3 + 3 = 6", which you could also cast in the form "There are 6 units in 3 + 3". And just as in the one case I can count the rows in the permutation schema, so in the other I can count the strokes in

I I I
I I I

Just as I can prove that 4 x 3 = 12 by means of the schema

o o o
o o o
o o o
o o o

I can also prove 3! = 6 by means of the permutation schema. (Wittgenstein 1974: 350)

22 If you say to someone who has never tried "try to move your ears," he will first move some part of his body near his ears that he has moved before, and either his ears will move at once or they won't. You might say of this process: he is trying to move his ears. But if it can be called trying, it isn't trying in at all the same sense as trying to move your ears (or your hands) in a case where you already "know how to do it" but someone is holding them so that you can move them only with difficulty or not at all. It is the first sense of trying that corresponds to trying "to solve a mathematical problem" when there is no method for its solution. (Wittgenstein 1974: 393)

What's meant by analogy? E.g. analogy with indirect proof? Here it's like the trisection of an angle. I can't look for a way to

trisect an angle. What really happens when a mathematician concerns himself with this question? Two things are possible: (1) He imagines the angle divided into 3 parts (a drawing); (2) He thinks of the construction for dividing an angle into 2 parts, into 4 parts. And this is where the mistake occurs: people think, since we can talk of dividing into 2, into 4 parts, we can also talk of dividing into 3 parts, just as we can count 2, 3 and 4 apples. But trisection – if there were such a thing – would in fact belong to a completely different category, a completely different system, from bisection, quadrisection. In the system in which I talk of dividing into 2 and 4 parts I can't talk of dividing into 3 parts. These are completely different logical structures. I can't group dividing into 2, 3, 4 parts together since they are completely different forms. You can't count forms as though they were actual things. You can't bring them under one *concept*.

It's like waggling your ears. The mathematician naturally lets himself be led by associations, by certain analogies with the previous system. I'm certainly not saying: if anyone concerns himself with Fermat's Last Theorem, that's wrong or illegitimate. Not at all! If, for instance, I have a method for looking for whole numbers satisfying the equation $x^2 + y^2 = z^2$, the formula $x^n + y^n = z^n$ can intrigue me. I can allow myself to be intrigued by a formula. And so I shall say: there's a *fascination* here but not a *question*. Mathematical 'problems' always fascinate like this. This kind of fascination is in no way the preparation of a calculus. (Wittgenstein 1975: 334)

23 What is hidden must be capable of being found. (Hidden contradictions.)

Also, what is hidden must be completely describable before it is found, no less than if it had already been found.

It makes good sense to say that an object is so well hidden that it is impossible to find it; but of course the impossiblity [[sic]] here is not a logical one; i.e. it makes *sense* to speak of finding an object to describe the finding; we are merely denying that it will happen.

[We might put it like this: If I am looking for something, – I mean, the North Pole, or a house in London – I can *completely* describe what I am looking for before I have found it (or have found that it isn't there) and either way this description will be logically acceptable. But when I'm 'looking for' something in mathematics, unless I am doing so *within* a system, what I am looking for cannot be described, or can only apparently be described; for if I could describe it in every particular, I would already actually *have* it; and before it is *completely* described I can't be sure whether *what* I am looking for is logically acceptable, and therefore describable at all. That is to say, the incomplete description leaves out just what is necessary for something to be capable of being looked for at all. So it is only an apparent description of what is being "looked for."]

Here we are easily misled by the legitimacy of an incomplete description when we are looking for a real object, and here again there is an unclarity about the concepts "description" and "object". If someone says, I am going to the North Pole and I expect to find a flag there, that would mean, on Russell's account, I expect to find something (an x) that is a flag – say of such and such a colour and size. In that case too it looks as if the expectation (the search) concerns only an indirect knowledge and not the object itself; as if that is something that I don't really know (knowledge by acquaintance) until I have it in front of me (having previously been only indirectly acquainted with it). But that is nonsense. There whatever I can perceive – to the extent that it is a fulfilment of my expectation – I can also describe in advance. And here "describe" means not saying something or other about it, but rather expressing it. That is, if I am looking for something I must be able to describe it completely. (Wittgenstein 1974: 363–364)

24 But doesn't it still have to count as a question, whether there is a finite number of primes or not? – Once you have acquired this concept at all. For it certainly seems that the moment I'm introduced to the concept of a prime number, I can ask 'How many are there?' Just as I can ask 'How many are there?' straight off when I am given the concept 'man in this room'.

If I am misled by this analogy, it can only be because the concept 'prime number' is given me in a completely different way from a genuine concept. For, what is the strict expression of the proposition '7 is a prime number'? Obviously it is only that dividing 7 by a smaller number always leaves a remainder. There cannot be a different expression for that, since we can't describe mathematics, we can only do it. (And that of itself abolishes every 'set theory'.)

Therefore once I can write down the general form of prime number, i.e. an expression in which anything analogous to 'the number of prime numbers' is contained at all, then there is no longer a question of 'how many' primes there are, and until I can do this, I also can't put the question. For, I can't ask 'Does the series of primes *eventually* come to an end?' nor, 'Does another prime *ever* come after 7?'

For since it was possible for us to have the phrase 'prime number' in ordinary language, even before there was the strict expression which so to speak admitted of having a number assigned to it, it was also possible for people to have wrongly formed the question how many primes there were. This is what creates the impression that previously there was a problem which is now solved. Verbal language seemed to permit this question both before and after, and so created the illusion that there had been a genuine problem which was succeeded by a genuine solution. Whereas in exact language people originally had nothing of which they could ask how many, and later an expression from which one could immediately read off its multiplicity.

Thus I want to say: only in our verbal language (which in this case leads to a misunderstanding of logical form) are there in mathematics 'as yet unsolved problems' or the problem of the finite 'solubility of every mathematical problem'. (Wittgenstein 1975: 188–189)

25 If you have a mathematical proposition about $\aleph_0$, and you imagine you are talking about a realm of numbers, – I would reply that you aren't as yet talking about a realm of anything, in the most

important sense of "about". You are only giving rules for the use of $\aleph_0$.

You are developing the mathematics of it. And you have now to ask: in which *non*-mathematical propositions is it used? If you want to know the realm to which it points, you have to see in what sentences we use it.

As soon as you do this, you get an entirely different picture of what you have been doing. At first, we picture ourselves flying to the end of the cardinal number series and beyond; this comes from thinking of mathematical propositions as the *application* of numbers. We get an entirely different picture if we consider it the other way: the statement that John has mastered $\aleph_0$ multiplications will mean he has mastered a certain technique of multiplying. And now we see we haven't been flying anywhere. (Wittgenstein 1989a: 251–252)

If we say of a child who has learned to multiply that he has learned $\aleph_0$ multiplications, then we have the right imagery. But not if we have the image of a line of $\aleph_0$ lime trees, which we cannot see the end of.

This business about imagery comes from the fact that a mathematical proposition is not *about* its constituents in the sense in which "The sofa is in this room" is *about* the sofa. (Wittgenstein 1989a: 253–254)

Notes

Introduction

p. 27 'Working in philosophy...': Wittgenstein 1984: 16.

p. 28 '[…] expends enormous energy...': Fogelin 1995: 108–109.

p. 28 'The questions, "What is length?"...': Wittgenstein 1969b: 1.

p. 29 For the posthumous diagnosis that Wittgenstein had autism, see Fitzgerald (2000a, 2000b), Gillberg (2002), and Ishisaka (2003a, 2003b).

p. 30 '[…] what his work...': Monk 1990: xviii. Of course, much of Monk's own information and observations about Wittgenstein changes aspect when considering the diagnosis of autism, such as the assertion that 'one of the earliest photographs of him to survive shows a rather earnest young boy, working with apparent relish at his own lathe' (Monk 1990: 13); the comment that 'for much of his childhood, he was considered one of the dullest [of the siblings]' (Monk 1990: 12); the reference to the fact that Wittgenstein continued to wear his uniform for many years after the First World War, 'as though it had become a part of his identity, an essential part, without which he would be lost' (Monk 1990: 169), and the report that, in working, Wittgenstein was oblivious to everything around

him (Monk 1990: 521, 525, 536). This singularity of Wittgenstein's did not go unnoticed by Russell, who, considering the unusual circumstances in which the *Tractatus* was written – on the fronts of the First World War – stated with a dash of his characteristic humor that Wittgenstein 'was the kind of man who would never have noticed such small matters as bursting shells when he was thinking about logic' (Russell 1998: 330).

1 Wittgenstein's extraordinariness

p. 31 'Nearly all my writings...': Wittgenstein 1984: 77.

p. 31 'My own problems appear...': Rhees 1974: 75.

p. 31 'The joy of my thoughts...': Malcolm 2001: 84.

p. 31 'I am of course in many ways...': Wittgenstein 2003: 161.

p. 31 Wittgenstein did not talk until he was four years old: Monk 1990: 12, 451.

p. 32 His peculiar voice: Malcolm 2001: 24. 'My words and my actions interest me in a completely different way than they do someone else. (My intonation also, for instance.) I do not relate to them as an observer,' Wittgenstein pondered (1999: II, 10).

p. 32 'He was a curious...': Janik and Toulmin 1973: 20.

p. 32 'I cannot think...': Pascal 1984: 18.

p. 32 'He was an aggressive...': Pascal 1984: 47.

p. 32 'He never saw himself...': Pascal 1984: 47.

p. 32 'He had all the characteristics of a prophet...': Monk 1990: 133.

p. 32 Wittgenstein's disciples imitated his gestures and his way of speaking: e.g., Monk 1990: 499; Malcolm 2001: 25.

p. 32 'He was very demanding...': Monk 1990: 576. Wittgenstein also preferred to eat the same things over and over again. When he stayed at Malcolm's house, for example, Wittgenstein insisted on

eating bread and cheese at every meal, saying he didn't care what he ate as long as it was always the same (Monk 1990: 552).

p. 32 'He was not always easy...': Russell 1998: 332.

p. 33 'Being alone here...': Monk 1990: 96.

p. 33 '[...] did not easily fit in...': Monk 1990: 449.

p. 33 *How to Live with Autism and Asperger Syndrome*: Both the posthumous diagnosis that Wittgenstein had autism presented by psychiatrists such as Fitzgerald (2000a, 2000b), Gillberg (2002), and Ishisaka (2003a, 2003b) and the exposition of ASD by Williams and Wright (2004) are based on the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (*DSM-4*), published in 1994. The *DSM-5*, published in 2013, presents a single diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder that replaces the different subcategories that were used previously – autistic disorder (autism), Asperger's disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, Rett's disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (American Psychiatric Association 2013: 809). According to the *DSM-5*, ASD is characterized by deficits in two core domains: 1) deficits in social communication and social interaction and 2) restricted repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, and activities (American Psychiatric Association 2013: 809).

p. 33 'He was reserved...': Monk 1990: 456.

p. 33 For accounts of Wittgenstein, see, for example, Bouwsma (1986), Malcolm (2001), McGuinness (2005), Monk (1990), and Rhees (1984).

p. 33 Behavioral features presented by people with ASD: Williams and Wright 2004: part 1 and part 2.

p. 34 Mindblidness: Williams and Wright 2004: ch. 4.

p. 34 'I have occasionally thought...': Wittgenstein 2003: 51.

p. 35 In 1939, Moore read a text...: Malcolm 2001: 30.

p. 35 'After the meeting ended...': Malcolm 2001: 31.

p. 35 'Smythies thinks...': Malcolm 2001: 31.

p. 35 '[...] uncivilized savagery of Wittgenstein's...: Monk 1990: 257.

p. 35 '[...] *he* discusses': Monk 1990: 102.

p. 35 'Moore is as nice as always...': Monk 1990: 473.

p. 36 'childlike innocence': Pascal 1984: 14.

p. 36 'He did not realise...': Monk 1990: 474.

p. 36 Wittgenstein did not take the hint...: Monk 1990: 281.

p. 36 'one of the happiest lives': Monk 1990: 427.

p. 36 For an account of Skinner's sufferings, see Monk (1990: 358–362, 425–426).

p. 36 Wittgenstein did not care what his loved one thought or felt: Monk 1990: 428. 'Wittgenstein's infatuation with Kirk – entirely unspoken, unacknowledged and unreciprocated as it was – exemplifies in its purest form a feature that had characterized his earlier loves for Pinsent and for Marguerite; namely, a certain indifference to the feelings of the other person,' Monk observed (1990: 428).

p. 36 'What the coded remarks...': Monk 1990: 428.

p. 37 'The philosophical solipsism...': Monk 1990: 428.

p. 37 '[...] needing the normal physical expressions of affection': Pascal 1984: 48.

p. 37 'Although I cannot give affection...': Malcolm 2001: 51.

p. 37 'I interpret words...': Wittgenstein 1970: § 218.

p. 38 'Get a human being to give angry...': Wittgenstein 1970: § 224. 'The expression of soul in a face,' Wittgenstein wrote (1998d: I, § 267). 'One really needs to remember that a face with a soulful expression can be *painted,* in order to believe that it is merely shapes and colours that make this impression. It isn't to be believed, that it is merely the *eyes* – eyeball, lids, eyelashes etc. – of a human being, that one can be lost in the gaze of, into which one can look with astonishment and delight. And yet human eyes just do affect one like this.' And, with his 'expressive face' (Malcolm 2001: 24)

and ‘deep and fierce eyes in their expression’ (Malcolm 2001: 24), Wittgenstein impressed the people around him, such as A. J. Ayer, who would highlight his ‘penetrating blue eyes’ (1985: 11), and Bouwsma, who would confess: ‘It is an awful thing to work under the gaze and questioning of such piercing eyes’ (1986: xvi).

p. 38 For Wittgenstein’s reflections on tones of voice, gestures, and facial expressions, see, for example, 1970, § 161, § 513; 1969b, I, § 48; II, § 7; 2009 [1953], § 21, § 285, § 357, § 536, § 537, § 539, § 543, § 652, II, XI; 1998d, I, § 137, § 138.

p. 38 ‘an “inner process” stands...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 580.

p. 38 ‘Consciousness in another’s face...’: Wittgenstein 1970: § 220. On one occasion, Wittgenstein said to Drury: ‘I think in some sense you don’t look at people’s faces closely enough’ (Drury 1984a: 96). At another point, he also said to him: ‘Drury, just look at the expression on that child’s face. You don’t take enough notice of people’s faces; it is a fault you ought to try to correct’ (Drury 1984b: 126). In light of the diagnosis of autism, one can imagine how much effort Wittgenstein had to put into looking at the expressions on people’s faces.

p. 38 “Consciousness is as clear...”: Wittgenstein 1970: § 221.

p. 38 ‘One speaks of a feeling...’: Wittgenstein 1970: § 513.

p. 38 ‘if I see someone writhing in pain with evident cause...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, § 324.

p. 38 ‘Indeed, Wittgenstein’s…’: Ayer 1985: 77.

p. 39 People with ASD have difficulty in drawing together lots of information from a situation in order to make sense of it: Williams and Wright 2004: 53.

p. 39 ‘A mother commented...’: Williams and Wright 2004: 54.

p. 40 When Wittgenstein was a war prisoner in Cassino, Italy: Monk 1990: 161.

p. 40 ‘I’m afraid there is a...’: Monk 1990: 275.

p. 40 ‘naïvety’: Pascal 1984: 27, 47.

p. 40 Mrs Bevan related...: Monk 1990: 576.

p. 40 'Many happy returns': Monk 1990: 579.

p. 40 'Here was no simple lack...': Edmonds and Eidinow 2002: 194–195.

p. 41 'pragmatic language difficulties': Williams and Wright 2004: 32.

p. 41 'His extraordinary directness...': Monk 1990: 498.

p. 41 'When talking with people...': Wittgenstein 2003: 61.

p. 42 'I have to live with people...': Monk 1990: 276.

p. 42 'In a conversation...': Wittgenstein 1984: 74.

p. 42 people with ASD have problems with imagination: Williams and Wright 2004: 74 ff. 'Children with ASD have problems with imagination. When we imagine something, we are calling into our mind something that is not present. This is more than memory, because it involves playing with alternatives in our minds or making up new things. It makes use of memories but allows us flexibly to interweave different memories and construct ideas and plans. [...] Most people with autism spectrum disorders do develop imagination abilities as they grow older although this may be at a slower rate for many. They can also be extremely creative but are more likely to use alternative creative channels. For example, picture drawing may fall back less on intuition, impression or imagination, and more on logic, memory and juxtaposition' (Williams and Wright 2004: 74–75). For a discussion of imagination, creativity and autism, see for example Fitzgerald (2003), David Duncan (2010) and Temple Grandin (2022).

p. 43 'trivia and feeble humour': Monk 1990: 265.

p. 43 'nonsense': Monk 1990: 265.

p. 43 'If by a sense of humour...': Pascal 1984: 33.

p. 43 'talk nonsense to by the yard': Monk 1990: 265.

p. 43 'astonishingly feeble': Monk 1990: 267.

p. 43 In nearly every letter Wittgenstein makes some use of the adjective 'bloody': Monk 1990: 266.

p. 43 'Sorry you don't get...': Monk 1990: 493.

p. 43 'heavy' sense of humour: Pinsent 1990: 3.

p. 43 'Why can't a man...': Bouwsma 1986: 60.

p. 43 'Humour is not...': Wittgenstein 1984: 78.

p. 43 'Two people are laughing...': Wittgenstein 1984: 78.

p. 44 'What is it like for people...': Wittgenstein 1984: 83.

p. 44 'I walked down the street...': Bouwsma 1986: 8. In a class at Cambridge in 1939, Wittgenstein told the students: 'In ironical statements, a sentence is very often used to mean just the opposite of what it normally means. For instance, one says "He is very kind", meaning that he is not kind. And in these cases the criterion for what is meant is the occasion on which it is used' (Wittgenstein 1989a: 189). However, it seems that due to his absence of imagination, Wittgenstein had difficulty perceiving ironical statements in everyday life.

p. 45 'an absence of imagination in thinking' and 'predominantly logical...': Williams and Wright 2004: 77.

p. 45 people with ASD also tend to have a literal understanding of metaphors, analogies and idiomatic expressions: Williams and Wright 2004: 77, 142.

p. 45 'The red table can sit down': Williams and Wright 2004: 169.

p. 45 'I want you to take your vitamin...': Williams and Wright 2004: 77.

p. 45 Wittgenstein liked Paul Ernst's afterwords: McGuinness 2005: 251–252.

p. 45 Wittgenstein preferred to develop metaphors with Max Bieler rather than developing them by himself: McGuinness 2005: 236.

p. 45 '[...] the figurative use of the word...': Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, § 265.

p. 45 'I had my tonsils out...': Pascal 1984: 28–29.

p. 46 Wittgenstein's logical austerity was 'attached to his person as well...': Goldstein 2005: 114.

2 Wittgenstein's grammatical inquiries

p. 47 'Philosophy is a struggle...': Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 109.

p. 47 'Philosophy, as we use the word...': Wittgenstein 1969b: 27.

p. 47 'Philosophy points out the misleading...': Wittgenstein 2005: 1342.

p. 47 'pride of Lucifer': Russell 1998: 331. Aware of his vanity, Wittgenstein pondered: 'I'm vain and it's hard for me to admit that I'm wrong, or that an argument has dislodged me' (McGuinness 2012: 372); 'The *edifice of your pride* has to be dismantled. And that is terribly hard work' (Wittgenstein 1984: 26); 'Genuine modesty is a religious matter' (Wittgenstein 2003: 60).

p. 47 'I think there is some truth...': Wittgenstein 1984: 18.

p. 48 '[...] rests on the misunderstanding...': Wittgenstein 2001a: preface.

p. 48 'the object of philosophy is the logical...': Wittgenstein 2001a: 4.112.

p. 48 'every philosophical problem...': Russell 2009: 26.

p. 48 'method of logical analysis in philosophy': Russell 2009: 50.

p. 48 'philosophical problems arise...': Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 38.

p. 48 'Our inquiry is...': Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 90.

p. 48 ‘When words in our ordinary language...’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 7.

p. 49 ‘[...] we may say of some philosophizing...’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 28–29.

p. 50 ‘Hippasus’s discovery…’: Hsiang 1995: 17.

p. 50 ‘He thinks that numbers...’: Wittgenstein and Waismann 2003: 153.

p. 50 *Principles of Mathematics* attracted Wittgenstein to philosophy: Monk 1990: 30.

p. 51 ‘Proceeding from intuitive points of view...’: Waismann 2003: 241–242.

p. 52 ‘“To look for”...: Wittgenstein 2001b: 7.

p. 53 ‘[...] there are lots of different...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 54–55.

p. 53 ‘I ought to be no more...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 18.

p. 54 ‘“Mathematical logic” has...’: Wittgenstein 1978: IV, 48.

p. 54 ‘The real difficulty...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 265–266.

p. 56 Isidians: Russell 1959: 231–232.

p. 56 ‘Mr Warnock says that...’: Russell 1959: 232.

p. 56 ‘These discussions have had one point...’: Wittgenstein 1989a: 111.

p. 57 ‘statements of number *within* mathematics...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 348.

p. 57 ‘All the errors...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 476–477.

p. 58 ‘The use of a word...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 48.

p. 58 ‘We shall compare...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 48.

p. 58 ‘We talk of the flow...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 13.

p. 58 ‘*When* the 105th...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 13.

p. 58 ‘Suppose that the passing...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 14.

p. 59 ‘Can time go...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 14–15.

p. 60 ‘most of our understanding…’: Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 139. For an introduction to research in cognitive linguistics on how time is metaphorically structured in spatial terms, see, for example, Evans (2015).

p. 60 ‘Let us consider a particular...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 193. According to Williams and Wright (2004: 77–78), individuals with ASD tend to live much more in the here-and-now because thinking about the future involves imagination and thinking about what might be. In addition, the past is logged as memory, but it is very factual, which explains why people with ASD are more likely to become ingrained in the present. Therefore, when considering the future, they do not do so with imagination, exploring new possibilities, but in a more literal way. Thus, given Wittgenstein’s problems with imagination, many of his reflections on time change aspect. For instance, in 1937, Wittgenstein wrote in a notebook: ‘Consider how the noun “time” can conjure a medium; how it can lead us astray so that we chase (back & forth) after a phantom’ (2003: 167). In 1936, Wittgenstein told his students when commenting on a fictional character’s statement that ‘a clock is a bewildering instrument at best: measuring a fragment of infinity: measuring something which does not exist perhaps’: ‘Here you might say “obviously a clock is not a bewildering instrument at all”. – If in some situation it strikes you as a bewildering instrument, and you can then bring yourself round to saying that of course it is not bewildering – then this is the way to solve a philosophical problem. The clock becomes a bewildering instrument here because he [the character] says about it “it measures a fragment of infinity, measuring something which does not exist perhaps”. What makes the clock bewildering is that he introduces a sort of entity which he then can’t see, and it seems like a ghost’ (Monk 1990: 355). As for the future, Wittgenstein wrote a lot about it, especially in the last years of his life. In 1947, for example, he wrote shortly after leaving his post as professor at Cambridge: ‘I am in no way optimistic about my future, but as soon as I had resigned I felt that it was the only natural thing to have done’ (Monk 1990: 518). Likewise, Wittgenstein wrote in 1942: ‘I

no longer feel any hope for the future of my life. It is as though I had before me nothing more than a long stretch of living death. I cannot imagine any future for me other than a ghastly one. Friendless and joyless' (Monk 1990: 442).

p. 60 'Consider as an example...': Wittgenstein 1969b: 26.

p. 61 'But what do we measure...': Augustine 1955: XXI, 27.

p. 62 There is no fascination or a conflict between the uses of the word "measure" when applied to time and space in the few other philosophers Wittgenstein studied (e.g., Kant 2008: B 207 ff and B 435 ff; Schopenhauer 2010: § 4 ff; Spengler 1959: ch. 5).

p. 62 Wittgenstein studied few philosophers: cf., e.g., Anscombe 1996: 12; Monk 2005: 6–14.

p. 62 Wittgenstein used to show pride for not having studied philosophy properly and for having read just a few philosophers: e.g., Monk 1990: 495–496; Drury 1984b: 158.

p. 62 Wittgenstein claimed proudly never to have read Aristotle: 'Here I am, a one-time professor of philosophy who has never read a word of Aristotle!,' Wittgenstein said to Drury in 1948 (Drury 1984b: 158).

p. 62 'Space and time also belong...': Aristotle, *Categories*: VI.

p. 62 Augustine questions what is time due to his believing that an eternal being has created us: Augustine 1955: IX, 10.

p. 62 Augustine reflects on time in the face of the difficulty...: Augustine 1955: XI, 8; XI, 13.

p. 63 'An inappropriate expression is...': Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 339.

p. 63 '[...] is simply a course in thinking...': Bouwsma 1986: 28.

p. 63 'Once these are cleared away...': Bouwsma 1986: 28.

p. 63 'It is strange...': Wittgenstein 2003: 125.

p. 64 'a bunch of delinquents': Monk 1990: 114.

p. 64 '*n*o enthusiasm for anything...': Monk 1990: 114.

p. 64 'so much mean as appallingly limited': Monk 1990: 139.

p. 64 ‘almost impossible to work with them’...: Monk 1990: 139.

p. 64 As a teenager at school in Linz...: Monk 1990: 15–16.

p. 64 ‘Yes I do, but the difference...’: Monk 1990: 463.

p. 64 ‘What you call God...’: Monk 1990: 38.

p. 64 ‘How do I know that...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 85.

p. 64 ‘Practice gives the words...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 85.

p. 64 ‘[...] it is to be noted that....’: Frege 1960d: 61.

p. 65 ‘The philosopher is someone...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 44.

p. 65 ‘We have the feeling...’: Monk 1990: 356.

p. 65 ‘When a philosopher raises...’: Monk 1990: 356.

p. 66 ‘[...] it is held that...’: Heidegger 2001: 21.

p. 66 ‘within the range of basic...’: Heidegger 2001: 23–24.

p. 66 the question of the meaning of being...: Heidegger 2001: 21 ff.

p. 66 ‘What is art? Why even ask such a question?...’: Tolstoy 1995: ch. 2.

p. 67 For the average man, Tolstoy observes...: Tolstoy 1995: ch. 2.

p. 67 ‘[...] the more vague and confused...’: Tolstoy 1995: ch. 2.

p. 67 ‘After thousands of learned...’: Tolstoy 1995: ch. 2.

p. 67 ‘What [...] is this strange...’: Tolstoy 1995: ch. 2.

p. 68 for philosophy there is only one beginning: perplexity: Plato, Theaetetus: 155d.

p. 68 ‘[...] greatest knowledge of all...’: Nietzsche 1998a: 43–44.

p. 68 ‘it was natural that Socrates...’: Aristotle, *Metaphysics*: XIII, 4.

p. 68 ‘“what a thing is” is the...’: Aristotle, *Metaphysics*: XIII, 4.

p. 68 ‘Our craving for generality...’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 18.

p. 69 ‘two things may...’: Aristotle, *Metaphysics*: XIII, 4.

p. 69 ‘the youngest of all philosophical methods...’: Nietzsche 1996: § 1.

p. 69 Socrates is the father of scientific knowledge: Nietzsche 2003: § 18.

p. 69 ‘[…] there is knowledge of each thing...’: Aristotle, *Metaphysics*: VII, 6.

p. 69 ‘The idea that in order...’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 19–20.

p. 70 Socrates considers in the *Theaetetus*...: Plato, *Theaetetus*: 145c–146d.

p. 70 ‘a frightful waste of time’: Wittgenstein 1984: 14.

p. 70 ‘What’s the point...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 14.

p. 70 ‘Plato’s arguments!...’: Bouwsma 1986: 60.

p. 70 ‘the grand master of all ironists’: Kierkegaard 1980: 95.

p. 70 ‘It has puzzled me...’: Drury 1984b: 115.

p. 71 Wittgenstein never read Hegel: Monk 2005: 13.

p. 71 ‘Hegel seems to me...’: Drury 1984b: 157.

p. 71 Bishop Joseph Butler’s phrase...: Monk 1990: 451.

p. 71 ‘[...] recognizing and thinking different...’: Schopenhauer 2010: § 14.

p. 71 ‘As Plato has so often remarked...’: Schopenhauer 2010: § 22.

p. 71 ‘Wittgenstein once said that his method...’: Monk 1990: 337–338.

p. 71 *King Lear’s phrase: Drury 1984b: 157.*

p. 72 ‘[...] if definition is possible...’: Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics: I, XXII.*

p. 72 ‘Every concept...’: Nietzsche 2017.

p. 72 ‘[...] argument about definitions...’: Aristotle, *Topica, I, V.*

p. 73 ‘What is philosophy?...’: Wittgenstein 1980: 21–22.

p. 73 ‘[...] philosophical questions...’: Heidegger 2000: 44.

p. 74 the investigation is always 'on the way': e.g., Heidegger 2001: 488.

p. 74 'The lasting element...': Heidegger 1982: 12.

p. 74 'Language sets everyone...': Wittgenstein 1984: 18.

p. 74 'People say again and again that...': Wittgenstein 1984: 15.

p. 75 'All men by nature desire to know': Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I, 1.

p. 75 '[…] for it is owing...': Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I, 2.

p. 75 '[...] the most important thing...': Plato, *Crito*, 48b.

p. 75 'the spiritual and ethical preoccupations...': Monk 1990: xviii.

p. 75 'Why should one tell...': Monk 1990: 3.

p. 75 This was possibly his first philosophical question: Monk 1990: 3.

p. 75 'a real resting place': Monk 1990: 297.

p. 75 'You know I said...': Rhees 1984: 219.

3 Wittgenstein's method by examples

p. 77 'My method throughout...': Wittgenstein 2001b: 27.

p. 77 'Now you may question...': Wittgenstein 2001b: 50.

p. 77 In this same period...: Monk 1990: 297.

p. 77 'The nimbus of philosophy...' Monk 1990: 298.

p. 78 '[...] the clarity that...': Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 133.

p. 78 Wittgenstein was convinced...: Glock 1996: 292. By the end of the essay "Logic as the Essence of Philosophy," published in the 1914 collection *Our Knowledge of the External World*, Russell had already compared the impact of the new logic developed by himself and by other researchers such as Frege to Galileo's revolution in science.

p. 78 ‘no human definitions...’: Tolstoy 2009: VIII.

p. 78 ‘there is, and can be, no external...’: Tolstoy 2009: VIII.

p. 79 Rhees asked Wittgenstein...: Wittgenstein 1966: 10.

p. 80 ‘our use of language...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 32.

p. 80 the rules always allow divergent interpretations: Pears 1970: 179.

p. 80 ‘[...] we say that it...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 54.

p. 80 ‘For doesn’t the technique...’: Wittgenstein 1978: VII, § 53.

p. 80 ‘When I follow the rule...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 219.

p. 80 ‘“It is good because...’: Wittgenstein 2003: 83.

p. 82 Wittgenstein did not consider mathematics a science: e.g., Monk 1990: 330; Wittgenstein 1974: 375.

p. 84 ‘You might think Aesthetics...’: Monk 1990: 405.

p. 84 ‘You have to give...’: Monk 1990: 407.

p. 84 ‘For he talks nonsense...’: Monk 1990: 257. According to Monk (1990: 443), Wittgenstein was not only an expert whistler but had the ability to whistle whole movements of symphonies. And when someone whistled something wrong, he would interrupt the person and firmly teach them the proper way to do it.

p. 85 Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, and Labor: Monk 1990: 8.

p. 85 Mahler and Schönberg: e.g., Monk 1990: 78; Wittgenstein 1984: 67; 2003: 93.

p. 85 ‘I am deeply suspicious...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 84.

p. 85 F. R. Leavis: Leavis 1984: 66. Importantly, Leavis doubted that Wittgenstein’s disciples and his fellow scholars had really understood him (Leavis 1984: 63). ‘His ideas were usually misunderstood and distorted even by those who professed to be his disciples,’ Von Wright stressed (2001: 3). Aware of this, Drury (1984b: 98) and Malcolm (2001: 75) made a point of emphasizing that their notes on Wittgenstein’s ideas were not an authentic

version of them. In fact, both admitted to having difficulty understanding Wittgenstein's ideas, and Malcolm even confessed to having only understood Wittgenstein's lectures on the foundations of mathematics that he attended in 1939 almost 10 years later, when he reread his notes (Malcolm 2001: 23). Having been a student of Wittgenstein in the 1940s, with whom he discussed the foundations of mathematics, Kreisel declared, after the publication of the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* in 1956, that only then did he realize that the topics they debated 'were far from the centre of his interest though he never let me suspect it' (Monk 1990: 499).

p. 85 Rainer Maria Rilke and T. S. Eliot: Bouwsma 1986: 71–72.

p. 85 'An English architect...': Wittgenstein 2003: 97.

p. 85 'Through education...': Wittgenstein 2003: 95.

p. 85 'It is like saying...': Wittgenstein 1966: 12.

p. 86 'opinions on most matters...': Pascal 1984: 32.

p. 86 'quite unfamiliar...': Janik and Toulmin 1973: 20.

p. 86 'merciless': Bouwsma 1986: 29.

p. 86 'sensitive to all shoddiness...': Bouwsma 1986: 29.

p. 86 'unrelenting severity...': Bouwsma 1986: 29.

p. 86 'He did speak of all...': Bouwsma 1986: 39.

p. 86 'Impossible...': Bouwsma 1986: 45.

p. 86 'Haven't you got...': King 1984: 74.

p. 86 'You are taking...': Monk 1990: 339.

p. 87 Young Cambridge students in the 1930s and 1940s...: At meetings of the Moral Science Club, according to Gilbert Ryle, the 'veneration for Wittgenstein was so incontinent that mentions [...] of any other philosopher were greeted with jeers' (Monk 1990: 495). Dissatisfied with the environment, C. D. Broad stopped attending these meetings because he was no longer willing to see Wittgenstein present his number while his faithful 'wondered with a foolish look of praise' (Monk 1990: 263). Among these students,

the mathematician Francis Skinner, who was 21 when he met Wittgenstein, would become an emblematic case, having become 'utterly, uncritically and almost obsessively devoted to Wittgenstein' (Monk 1990: 331).

p. 87 'unquestioning attitude...': Monk 1990: 391.

p. 87 'Don't think I ridicule...': Monk 1990: 264.

p. 87 'Now there is to be no more…': Monk 1990: 335.

p. 87 'Wittgenstein's personal moral...': Glock 1996: 107.

p. 87 'If you had committed...': Pascal 1984: 32.

p. 88 'I wish to God...': Monk 1990: 96.

p. 88 'Complete clarity, or death...': Monk 1990: 96.

p. 88 'quiet weighing...': Wittgenstein 1970: § 447.

p. 88 'Here I would like...': Wittgenstein 1977: III, § 33.

p. 88 'According to Jim Bamber...': Monk 1990: 34.

p. 89 'those most difficult, abstruse...': Nietzsche 1998a: 65.

p. 89 'If there were theses in philosophy...': Monk 1990: 320–321.

p. 90 'non-opinion' methodology: Glock 1996: 297.

p. 90 'What are the subjects...': Plato, *Euthyphro*, 7b–d.

p. 91 'tolerated no critical...': Monk 1990: 244. 'When he started to formulate his view on some specific philosophical problem,' Carnap wrote, 'we often felt the internal struggle that occurred to him at that very moment, a struggle by which he tried to penetrate from darkness to light under an intense and painful strain, which was even visible on his most expressive face. When finally, sometimes after a prolonged arduous effort, his answer came forth, his statement stood before us like a newly created piece of art or a divine inspiration. [...] The impression he made on us was as if insight came to him as through a divine inspiration, so that we could not help feeling that any sober rational comment or analysis of it would be a profanation' (Goldstein 2005: 108).

p. 91 'If he doesn't smell it...': Goldstein 2005: 106.

p. 91 ‘a man who is quite...’: Drury 1984b: 103.

p. 91 ‘Don’t worry...’: Monk 1990: 271.

p. 91 Russell’s negative view of religion: e.g., Russell (2000).

p. 91 Wittgenstein’s sympathy for communism: e.g., Monk 1990: 248, 343.

p. 91 Russell despised the Soviet regime: e.g., Russell 1998: 332 ff.

p. 91 Women’s Suffrage Party: Monk 1990: 72.

p. 91 Wittgenstein against women’s suffrage: Monk 1990: 72–73.

p. 92 ‘Our quarrels don’t arise...’: Monk 1990: 99–100.

p. 92 Wittgenstein rejected throughout his life points of view different from his own and interests different from his own: e.g., Monk 1990: 496–497.

p. 92 his equals or even his mentors: McGuinness and Von Wright 1997: 1.

p. 92 ‘passionate, profound...’: Russell 1998: 329. Referring to Wittgenstein, Russell wrote in the late 1950s: ‘The earlier Wittgenstein, whom I knew intimately, was a man addicted to passionately intense thinking, profoundly aware of difficult problems of which I, like him, felt the importance, and possessed (or at least so I thought) of true philosophical genius’ (Russell 1959: 216).

p. 93 ‘the sort of man to be’: Monk 1990: 86.

p. 93 *Sex and Character*: Monk 1990: 19.

p. 93 As Monk points out...: Monk 1990: 25.

p. 93 Wittgenstein to Pinsent: Monk 1990: 41.

p. 93 ‘It made an enormous...’: Drury 1984a: 76.

p. 93 In Monk’s opinion...: Monk 1990: 41.

p. 93 ‘tragic character’: Pascal 1984: 49.

p. 93 ‘If my name lives on...’: Wittgenstein 2003: 73.

4 The analogy between the proposition and a model of a motor-car accident irresistibly drags Wittgenstein on

p. 95 ‘We may say that we are led...’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 108.

p. 95 ‘But see, I write...’: Bouwsma 1986: 73.

p. 96 ‘Toss a coin’: Wittgenstein 2005: ixe.

p. 96 Wittgenstein read a magazine report about a lawsuit in Paris concerning a car accident...: Von Wright 2001: 8.

p. 96 ‘In the proposition a world...’: Wittgenstein 1998a: 7.

p. 96 ‘On this analogy...’: Monk 1990: 118.

p. 96 As Anscombe stressed...: Anscombe 1996: 79–80.

p. 97 ‘His first book...’: Fitzgerald 2000b: 621.

p. 97 ‘In a proposition...’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 3.2.

p. 97 ‘I call such elements...’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 3.201.

p. 97 ‘The simple signs employed....’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 3.202.

p. 97 ‘A name means an object....’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 3.203.

p. 97 ‘The configuration....’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 3.21.

p. 97 ‘In a proposition a name....’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 3.22.

p. 97 ‘An elementary proposition...’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 4.22.

p. 98 ‘The main point is the theory...’: Monk 1990: 164. In turn, in the preface to the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein observed: ‘The book will, therefore, draw a limit to thinking, or rather – not to thinking, but to the expression of thoughts; for, in order to draw a limit to thinking we should have to be able to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought).’

p. 98 ‘[...] the *Tractatus* itself...’: Monk 1990: 296.

p. 99 ‘the whole book is nonsense’: Monk 1990: 206.

p. 99 ‘There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical’:

Wittgenstein 2001a: 6.522. The human perception that what is deepest, most essential, is ineffable, is inexpressible, has been expressed by countless mystics, artists, and philosophers century after century. Nevertheless, when we read some commentaries on the *Tractatus*, we get the impression that Wittgenstein was the first to come to this conclusion. In the book *A History of God*, for example, Karen Armstrong cites a series of religious people and thinkers who throughout the ages have surrendered to the 'ineffable reality of God' (Armstrong 1994: 10). Nietzsche, on the other hand, being aware of the limitations of language, observes: 'We stop appreciating ourselves enough when we communicate. Our actual experiences are not in the least talkative. They could not express themselves even if they wanted to. For they lack the words to do so. When we have words for something we have already gone beyond it. In all speech there is a grain of contempt. Language, it seems, was invented only for average, middling, communicable things. The speaker *vulgarizes* himself as soon as he speaks. – From a morality for deaf-mutes and other philosophers' (Nietzsche 1998b: IX, 26).

p. 99 '[...] my work consists of two parts...': Monk 1990: 178.

p. 100 'My whole tendency...': Monk 1990: 277.

p. 100 'What is good...': Wittgenstein 1984: 3.

p. 101 'In fact I am in a state of mind...': Monk 1990: 187.

p. 101 'I felt at once my utter nothingness...': Wittgenstein 2020: 91–92.

p. 102 Kierkegaard, the most profound thinker...: Drury 1984a: 87.

p. 102 notes before and after: see, for example, Wittgenstein 1998a and 2003.

p. 102 'One of the least self-explanatory...': Janik and Toulmin 1973: 13. Wittgenstein himself would recognize that 'every sentence in the *Tractatus* should be seen as the heading of a chapter, needing further exposition' (Drury 1984b: 159).

p. 102 the neo-positivists venerated Wittgenstein as a deity: Goldstein 2005: 108.

p. 103 'When we were reading...': Monk 1990: 243.

p. 103 St. Augustine, Kierkegaard, and Heidegger: Monk 1990: 283.

p. 103 'the most serious...': Drury 1984a: 90.

p. 103 Wittgenstein's conversion to Christianity: Monk ch. 6.

p. 103 *The Gospel in Brief*: Monk 1990: 115–116.

p. 103 'the man with the gospels': Monk 1990: 116.

p. 104 'If we turn to the branches...': Tolstoy 1889: 22.

p. 104 'Don't think....': Drury 1984b: 105.

p. 104 'Men have felt...': Waismann 1979: 118.

p. 105 Wittgenstein would prefer to be a priest in the postwar period, but as a teacher he could read the gospel with children: McGuinness 2005: 274. Foreshadowing the behavior of members of the Vienna Circle in the 1920s and 1930s and Cambridge students in the 1930s and 1940s, Parak had a respect for Wittgenstein formed a respect for Wittgenstein that bordered on worship (Monk 1990: 159). 'He hung on to Wittgenstein's every word, hoping, as he says in his memoir, to drink in as much as possible of Wittgenstein's superior knowledge and wisdom,' stated Monk.

p. 105 Wittgenstein considered becoming a monk: Monk 1990: 234.

p. 105 'The meaning...': Wittgenstein 1980: 66.

p. 105 'Ethical and aesthetic...': Wittgenstein 1980: 66.

p. 105 As already observed in the 1920s and 1930s...: Janik and Toulmin 1973: 206.

p. 105 'the conjuring tricks...': Monk 1990: 311.

p. 106 'Every connexion...': Wittgenstein 1998a: 12.

p. 106 'Pseudo-propositions...': Wittgenstein 1998a: 16.

p. 106 all propositions of logic...: Wittgenstein 2001a: 5.43.

p. 106 mathematics is a logical method: Wittgenstein 2001a: 6.2.

p. 106 'a proposition of mathematics...': Wittgenstein 2001a: 6.21.

p. 106 The approach to mathematics presented in the *Tractatus* had very few adherents: McGuinness 2005: 313.

p. 106 Wittgenstein is contested in philosophical circles and is losing relevance even among analytic philosophers: Kuusela and McGinn 2014b: 3–4.

p. 106 'Nary a mathematician...': Goldstein 2005: 119.

p. 107 'the numbers come...': Waismann 1979: 216.

p. 107 Wittgenstein highlights that numbers can be cardinal, irrational, complex, etc.: cf., e.g., Wittgenstein 1974: 113; 1969b: 18–19. It is curious to note that even while acknowledging the limitations of his definition of number, Wittgenstein tries to safeguard it. In *Philosophical Grammar*, for example, Wittgenstein states: 'Can one give the *general form of a proposition*? – Why not? In the same way as one might give the general form of a number, for example by the sign "[0, ξ, ξ + 1]." I am free to restrict the name "number" to *that*, and in the same way I can give an analogous formula for the construction of propositions or laws and use the word "proposition" or "law" as equivalent to that formula' (Wittgenstein 1974: 125). In the *Blue Book*, Wittgenstein ponders: 'If, e.g., someone tries to explain the concept of number and tells us that such and such a definition will not do or is clumsy because it only applies to, say, finite cardinals I should answer that the mere fact that he could have given such a limited definition makes this definition extremely important to us. (Elegance is not what we are trying for.)' (Wittgenstein 1969b: 18–19). On the other hand, Russell's definition of number, according to which 'a number is anything which is the number of some class' (1993: 19), was simply dismissed by Wittgenstein in a lecture in the early 1930s as 'futile' (Wittgenstein 2001b: 163).

5 The analogy between language and a game irresistibly drags Wittgenstein on

p. 109 ‘We find an analogy...’: Wittgenstein 1980: 108.

p. 109 ‘I shall in the future again and again...’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 17.

p. 109 The analogy occurred to Wittgenstein...: Malcolm 2001: 55.

p. 109 ‘A central idea of his philosophy...’: Malcolm 2001: 55.

p. 110 ‘Language is only...’: Mauthner 1901–1903: I, 25 *apud* Janik and Toulmin 1973: 126.

p. 110 Language is a social phenomenon...: Janik and Toulmin 1973: 126–127.

p. 110 ‘Wittgenstein’s later writings...’: Janik and Toulmin 1973: 232.

p. 110 ‘The words...’: Wittgenstein 1978: 346.

p. 111 ‘[...] if you follow other rules...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 184.

p. 111 ‘the kind of certainty...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: 236.

p. 111 [...] ‘did not hesitate...’: Hacker 1996: 234.

p. 111 ‘Wittgenstein [...] seems to go…’: Snowdon 2014: 405.

p. 111 it is in the end…: Kenny 2006: xix.

p. 111 ‘We are forced in the end…’: Kenny 2006: xix.

p. 112 ‘*purely descriptive*’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 125.

p. 112 ‘When asked...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 208–209.

p. 113 ‘When we’re asked...’: Wittgenstein 1977: 29.

p. 113 ‘Philosophy really...’: Wittgenstein 1969b: 18

p. 113 ‘At some point...’: Wittgenstein 1969a: § 189.

p. 113 ‘In philosophy...’: Wittgenstein 1998c: 106.

p. 113 ‘The descriptions...’: Gellner 1968: 71.

p. 113 ‘I am only...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 66.

p. 113 ‘A new word...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 4.

p. 113 ‘Nothing is more important...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 85.

6 The analogy between mathematics and a game irresistibly drags Wittgenstein on

p. 115 ‘Mathematics is dressed up...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 385.

p. 115 ‘On mathematics...’: Wittgenstein 1970: § 463.

p. 115 ‘Philosophical clarity will have...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 381.

p. 116 ‘mathematics is a game played...’: Goldstein 2005: 136.

p. 116 ‘What are we...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 289.

p. 116 ‘If you want to say...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 289.

p. 116 ‘Calling arithmetic a game...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 292.

p. 116 ‘You can’t round off mathematics...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 364.

p. 116 ‘It has been said...’: Wittgenstein 1989a: 142–143.

p. 117 ‘For all I know...’: Wittgenstein 1989a: 261.

p. 118 ‘The mathematical proposition...’: Wittgenstein 1978: 99.

p. 118 ‘One might say...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 47.

p. 118 ‘I should like to be able...’: Wittgenstein 1978: 230.

p. 118 ‘An equation is...’: Wittgenstein 1975: 143.

p. 119 ‘The truth in formalism is...’: Waismann 1979: 103.

p. 119 ‘You cannot give....’: Wittgenstein 1978: 105.

p. 119 ‘A rule of syntax...’: Waismann 1979: 126.

p. 119 ‘There is a circle...’: Monk 1990: 285.

p. 119 As Monk observes, the possibility of a circle...: Monk 1990: 285.

p. 120 ‘“There is no...’: Wittgenstein 1970: § 346.

p. 120 '[Grammar] lets us...': Monk 1990: 291.

p. 120 The colour octahedron, Monk ponders...': Monk 1990: 291.

p. 120 'It therefore concerns...': Monk 1990: 291.

p. 120 'We have a colour system...': Wittgenstein 1970: § 357.

p. 121 'Then is there something...': Wittgenstein 1970: § 358.

p. 121 'If every time we counted...': Wittgenstein 2001b: 84.

p. 121 'We shouldn't ever allow…': Wittgenstein 1989a: 291.

p. 121 'But if I now say...': Wittgenstein 1978: 310–311.

p. 122 'I shall try...': Wittgenstein 1989a: 22.

p. 122 During this course, Monk states...: Monk 1990: 328.

p. 122 'Not only is mathematics independent...': Russell 2004: 53.

p. 122 '[…] no philosophy can possibly...': Monk 1990: 329.

p. 123 According to Monk, the tone and content...: Monk 1990: 329.

p. 123 'The talk of mathematicians...': Monk 1990: 330.

p. 123 To Wittgenstein, Monk observes...: Monk 1990: 329.

p. 123 'in grammar you cannot...': Waismann 1979: 77.

p. 123 'in mathematics is just...': Waismann 1979: 63.

p. 123 'The mathematician is an inventor...': Wittgenstein 1978: 99.

p. 124 '[...] the difficulty seems to lie...': Ayer 1985: 64.

p. 124 'We are not despising...': Wittgenstein 1989a: 67.

p. 124 'quixotic assault': Monk 1990: 328.

p. 124 Wittgenstein knew he would not effectively influence the work of mathematicians: Monk 1990: 326–327.

p. 125 After abandoning logicism...: Monk 1990: 306–307.

p. 125 The contradictions in Frege's logic discovered by Russell: This is the so-called "Russell's paradox," which involves the

set of all sets that are not members of themselves. For a detailed presentation of the paradox and discussion of its implications, see, for example, Goldstein (2005: 91 ff), Monk (1990: 30–32), and Smith (2007: 10.8, 4).

p. 125 Georg Kreisel: Monk 1990: 498–499.

p. 125 'his dismissal...': Monk 1990: 499.

p. 125 'As an introduction...': Monk 1990: 499.

p. 126 Diagnosis that Gödel had autism: Fitzgerald and Lyons 2005: 175 ff.

p. 126 Gödel had schizophrenia: see, for example, Goldstein (2005).

p. 126 Mathematics cannot be reduced to logic: For a presentation and analysis of the so-called Hilbert program, Frege and Russell's logicism, and Gödel's theorems, see, for example, Goldstein (2005), Hintikka (2000), Nagel and Newman (2008), Shanker (1988), and Smith (2007).

p. 127 'Whether Wittgenstein...': Monk 1990: 297.

p. 127 'Several commentators have discussed Wittgenstein's remarks [on Gödel's theorem] in detail (see, for example, the articles by A. R. Anderson, Michael Dummett, and Paul Bernays, pp. 481-528 of Benacerraf and Putnam (1964)), and nearly all have considered them an embarrassment to the work of a great philosopher,' stated Dawson Jr. (1988: 88–89).

p. 127 Despite this statement...: Goldstein 2005: 190.

p. 127 'bits of legerdemain': Wittgenstein 1978: VII, § 19.

p. 127 'Mathematics cannot be incomplete...': Wittgenstein 1975: 188.

p. 127 'My aim is...': Wittgenstein 1978: III, § 82.

p. 127 'I've been reading...': Wittgenstein 1975: 318–319.

p. 128 'What Hilbert does...': Wittgenstein 1975: 329.

p. 128 Monk summarizes the Wittgensteinian conception of mathematics: Monk 1990: 306.

p. 128 ‘It is really not...’: Goldstein 2005: 189.

p. 128 ‘As far as my theorems...’: Goldstein 2005: 118.

p. 129 ‘completely trivial...’: Goldstein 2005: 118; Dawson Jr. 1988: 89. Gödel, in fact, was never interested in Wittgenstein’s philosophy and knew of it only from what he had heard in the Vienna Circle (Goldstein 2005: 193). ‘Wittgenstein’s views on the philosophy of math had no influence on my work nor did the interest of the Vienna Circle in that subject start with Wittgenstein (but rather went back to Prof. Hans Hahn),’ Gödel wrote in the mid-1970s (Goldstein 2005: 116).

p. 129 ‘Take Russell’s contradiction...’: Monk 1990: 416–417.

p. 129 ‘lack of sophistication’: Monk 1990: 417.

p. 129 ‘from a mathematical point of view...’: Monk 1990: 416.

p. 130 ‘Wittgenstein’s use of casual...’: Monk 1990: 417.

p. 130 ‘[...] still seem too scandalized...’: Kuusela and McGinn 2014b: 7.

p. 130 Turing’s course: Monk 1990: 417.

p. 130 Posthumous diagnosis that Turing had autism: O’Connell and Fitzgerald (2003).

p. 130 Turing and Wittgenstein were alike...: Hodges 1983: 153.

p. 130 ‘a *very* peculiar man’: Hodges 1983: 153.

p. 130 After they had talked about some logic...: Hodges 1983: 153.

p. 130 the posthumous diagnosis that Russell had autism: Fitzgerald and Lyons 2005: 283 ff.

p. 130 Wittgenstein probably believed...: Monk 1990: 418.

p. 130 ‘I understand but I don’t...’: Monk 1990: 418.

p. 130 ‘somewhat bizarrely’: Monk 1990: 418.

p. 130 ‘Turing doesn’t object...’: Monk 1990: 418–419.

p. 131 ‘It was important...’: Monk 1990: 419.

p. 131 '[...] persuading people to change...': Wittgenstein 1966: 28.

p. 131 'Obviously the whole point...': Monk 1990: 420.

p. 131 '[...] quite clearly did have very strong opinions...': Monk 1990: 420.

p. 132 'Turing was inclined...': Monk 1990: 419.

p. 132 'Turing thinks that he and I...': Monk 1990: 419.

p. 133 As Monk points out...': Monk 1990: 420.

p. 133 'It is very queer...': Monk 1990: 420.

p. 134 '[...] 'one usually...': Monk 1990: 420–421.

p. 134 theory of types: This theory was proposed by Russell in order to avoid the problems arising from the paradox that bears his name. For a presentation of this theory, see, for example, Monk (1990: 32).

p. 134 Yes, replied Wittgenstein...: Monk 1990: 421.

p. 134 '[...] will not come in...': Monk 1990: 421.

p. 134 Gödel's use of the liar paradox: For an explanation of this use, see, for example, Goldstein (2005: ch. 3), Nagel and Newman (2008: 7C), and Smith (2007: ch. 25).

p. 134 '*Turing*: You cannot...': Monk 1990: 421.

p. 135 Turing would abandon that course: Monk 1990: 421–422.

p. 135 If Wittgenstein would not admit...: Monk 1990: 421–422.

p. 135 For a full reading of the disputes between Wittgenstein and Turing, see Wittgenstein (1989a).

p. 135 According to Monk...: Monk 1990: 544.

p. 136 'You have said...': Monk 1990: 545.

p. 136 'If I ask someone...': Monk 1990: 545.

p. 136 '"Moore's Paradox" interested Wittgenstein...': Monk 1990: 546.

p. 137 Wittgenstein was never satisfied with the second part of the *Philosophical Investigations*...: Monk 1990: 414.

p. 137 '[...] the one that met...': Ayer 1985: 60.

p. 137 Wittgenstein abandoned his work in the philosophy of mathematics: Monk 1990: 466.

7 Wittgenstein's philosophy of the mind

p. 139 'The reasonable man...': Wittgenstein 1969a: § 220.

p. 140 'In the consideration...': Wittgenstein 1974: 106.

p. 140 'I really do think with my pen...': Wittgenstein 1984: 24.

p. 140 'Thinking in terms of physiological processes...': Wittgenstein 1998d: I, § 1063.

p. 140 'As long as someone imagines the soul as a thing, a body in our heads, there's no harm in the hypothesis [the hypothesis of a world of material objects],' Wittgenstein stated (1975: 287). 'The harm doesn't lie in the imperfection and crudity of our models, but in their lack of clarity (vagueness). The trouble starts when we notice that the old model is inadequate, but then, instead of altering it, only as it were sublimate it. While I say thoughts are in my head, everything's all right; it becomes harmful when we say thoughts aren't in my head, they're in my mind.' For other unusual statements by Wittgenstein about thought, see, for example, 1969b: 3–9, 15–17, 61, 117–118; 1989b: 33, 147; 2001b: 85; 2009 [1953]: § 149, § 156, § 158.

p. 141 'Never one to allow facts…': Gellner 1998: 60.

p. 141 'Philosophical investigations...': Wittgenstein 1970: § 458.

p. 141 In his philosophy of mind, Wittgenstein does not use conceptual investigations, for example, when reflecting on the differences in behavior between humans and animals (e.g., 1998d: I, § 922; II, § 16, § 29); on change of aspect (e.g., 1999: I, § 466–482); on intonation and tone of voice (e.g., 1999: II, § 70), etc.

p. 141 ‘Psychology is often defined...’: Monk 1990: 500.

p. 142 Wittgenstein’s answer, Monk observes...: Monk 1990: 500–501.

p. 142 ‘Now let us go back...’: Monk 1990: 501.

p. 143 So, Monk comments...: Monk 1990: 501.

p. 143 ‘[...] imaginary events and circumstances...’: Malcolm 2001: 27.

p. 143 ‘Are the words...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, 72–74.

p. 144 ‘Two uses...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, 111–115.

p. 144 ‘If concept formation...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, 365.

p. 144 ‘We do not analyse a phenomenon...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 383.

p. 145 ‘An expression has meaning...’: Monk 1990: 556–557.

p. 145 ‘Instead of saying...’: Monk 1990: 557.

p. 146 ‘[...] the sentence “The Earth...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, 313.

p. 146 According to Monk, Wittgenstein’s argument...: Monk 1990: 557.

p. 146 ‘It isn’t difficult to think...’: Monk 1990: 557.

p. 146 Moore, however, as Monk points out...: Monk 1990: 557.

p. 146 ‘When the sceptical philosophers...’: Monk 1990: 557.

p. 146 ‘It’s possible to imagine...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, 312.

p. 147 ‘In certain circumstances...’: Wittgenstein 1969a: § 155.

p. 147 ‘I could imagine Moore...’: Wittgenstein 1969a: § 264.

p. 147 In other words, Monk observes...: Monk 1990: 570.

p. 148 ‘We belong to a community....’: Wittgenstein 1969a: § 298.

p. 148 ‘We should not call anybody...’: Wittgenstein 1969a: § 324.

p. 148 ‘It is not [...] absurd...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 64.

p. 148 ‘I don’t like taking....’: Monk 1990: 259.

p. 148 ‘the great work...’: Monk 1990: 74. ‘After the concert I went with Wittgenstein up to his rooms,’ David Pinsent (1990: 45) wrote in his diary in February 1913. ‘I tried to translate into English a Review he has just written of a book on Logic: he has written the Review in German and gave me a rough translation. But it was very difficult – the construction of the sentences is so different, I suppose, in German to what it is in English. And he insisted on the translation being fairly literal.’

p. 149 ‘style of thinking’: ‘I am trying to teach a style of thinking, a technique – not a subject matter,’ Wittgenstein said (2003: 357).

p. 149 Wittgenstein never exchanged science for another ‘style of thinking’ when he was ill: e.g., Monk 1990: 56, 132, 153, 539, 542, 566, 574–575.

p. 149 ‘the correct treatment...’: Wittgenstein: 1970: § 465.

p. 149 Wittgenstein considered becoming a psychiatrist because he believed...: Monk 1990: 356.

p. 149 According to Monk, Wittgenstein wished to contribute...: Monk 1990: 357.

p. 149 For critiques of psychoanalysis similar to those of Wittgenstein (1966) made decades before him, see, for example, Peter Gay (1988).

p. 149 Wittgenstein, reader of the periodical *Die Fackel*: Monk 1990: 16, 106.

p. 149 ‘a disciple of Freud’: Monk 1990: 357.

p. 149 Wittgenstein recognized the importance of Freud’s ideas...: Monk 1990: 448–449.

p. 149 ‘Dream symbols do mean something...’: Monk 1990: 449. ‘Understanding humour, like understanding music, provides an analogy for Wittgenstein’s conception of philosophical understanding,’ Monk pondered (1990: 530). ‘What is required for understanding here is not the discovery of facts, nor the drawing

of logically valid inferences from accepted premises – nor, still less, the construction of *theories* – but, rather, the right point of view (from which to "see" the joke, to hear the expression in the music or to see your way out of the philosophical fog).' Needless to say, once again, who would be, in Wittgenstein's opinion, the right person to show the right point of view from which to 'see' the joke, to hear the expression in the music or to see your way out of the philosophical fog.

8 The *Philosophical Investigations*' rather obvious point of view

p. 151 'That which I am writing about...': Wittgenstein 1977: III, § 295.

p. 151 "linguistic turn of philosophy" and Wittgenstein's unprecedented research program: Paveau and Sarfati 2003: 207.

p. 152 'What was considered...': Nerlich and Clarke 1996: 2.

p. 152 'philosophical revolution': Strawson 1954: 99; Austin 1962: 3 *apud* Nerlich and Clarke 1996: 2.

p. 152 For Monk, this latter acknowledgment...: Monk 1990: 260.

p. 152 'rather obvious': Sen 2003: 1243. 'Was Sraffa thrilled by the impact that his ideas had on, arguably, the leading philosopher of our times [...]?,' wrote Sen (2003: 1243). 'Also, how did Sraffa arrive at those momentous ideas in the first place? I asked Sraffa those questions more than once in the regular afternoon walks I had the opportunity to share with him between 1958 and 1963. I got somewhat puzzling answers. No, he was not particularly thrilled, since the point he was making was "rather obvious." No, he did not know precisely how he arrived at those arguments, since – again – the point he was making was "rather obvious."'

p. 152 bored to talk to Wittgenstein: Sen 2003: 1243. 'When I arrived in Trinity in the early fifties as a student, shortly after Wittgenstein's death, I was aware that there had been something

of a rift between the two,' Sen observed (2003: 1243). 'In response to my questions, Sraffa was most reluctant to go into what actually happened. "I had to stop our regular conversations – I was somewhat bored," was the closest to an account I ever obtained.'

p. 152 never enthusiastic about his influence on the work of Wittgenstein: Sen 2003: 1243, 1252. 'The critical role of Piero Sraffa in contributing to profound directional changes in contemporary philosophy, through helping to persuade Wittgenstein to move from the *Tractatus* to the theory that later found expression in *Philosophical Investigations*, is plentifully acknowledged by Wittgenstein himself (as well as by his biographers),' Sen stated (2003: 1252). 'What may, however, appear puzzling is the fact that Sraffa remained rather unexcited about the momentous nature of this influence and the novelty of the ideas underlying it. However, the sharpness of the puzzle is, to a great extent, lessened by the recognition that these issues had been a part of the standard discussions in the intellectual circle in Italy to which Sraffa belonged, which also included Gramsci.'

p. 153 One of Sraffa's 'stimuli'...: Monk 1990: 260–261.

p. 153 'I can't remember...': Sen 2003: 1243.

p. 153 the conversations with Sraffa...: Monk 1990: 274.

p. 153 "anthropological" way: Monk 1990: 261.

p. 153 'Again and again anthropologists...': Jakobson 1971: 555.

p. 154 'language really...': Jakobson 1971: 556.

p. 154 'language is essentially rooted...': Malinowski 1989: 305.

p. 154 'the study of any language...': Malinowski 1989: 306.

p. 154 'pragmatic conception of language': Malinowski 1989: 317.

p. 154 'maintain most emphatically...': Malinowski 1989: 336.

p. 154 'Is it not a miserable...': Monk 1990: 214.

p. 154 'later to be acclaimed...': Gellner 1998: 148. It is worth remembering that Gellner was one of the greatest critics

of Wittgensteinian philosophy since the publication of the *Philosophical Investigations* in 1953. He made a name for himself in 1959 with his book *Words and Things*, in which he sharply attacked the linguistic philosophy of Wittgenstein, then a dominant force at the University of Oxford. A friend of Wittgenstein's and a supporter of linguistic philosophy, Oxford professor Gilbert Ryle refused to publish a review of the book in the journal *Mind*, of which he was editor. In a letter to the London newspaper *The Times*, Russell, who had signed the preface to the work, denounced Ryle's attitude, which only increased the controversy. In the 1990s, towards the end of his life, Gellner would write yet another book with vigorous reprimands to Wittgenstein's philosophy: *Language and Solitude*. In this book, Gellner shows that the linguistic ideas that made the later Wittgenstein famous had not only already been expounded by Malinowski but were commonplace in the environment in which they were both born and raised, the Austro-Hungarian Empire of the late 19th century. Thus, Gellner unveils in *Language and Solitude* how Wittgenstein presented in his second philosophy basic linguistic knowledge that he had ignored in his first philosophy. However, Gellner does so in an excessively restricted way, comparing Wittgenstein only with Malinowski, whose anthropology led him to elaborate his first critique of Wittgensteinian philosophy (Gellner 1998: ix). In addition, Gellner limits his research to the *Tractatus* and the *Philosophical Investigations*, leaving aside the rest of Wittgenstein's texts. In this book, as well as in my papers on Wittgenstein, I have sought to overcome these shortcomings in order to produce an even sharper critique of Wittgensteinian thought.

p. 155 'sunk in the darkness...': Gellner 1998: 149.

p. 155 'There is no...': Gellner 1998: 68.

p. 155 'external linguistics': Saussure 1959: 20–23.

p. 155 '[...] all which has...': Paul 1891: xlii.

p. 155 '[...] as a part of a system...': Whitney 2013: 312.

p. 155 '[...] I would want to highlight...': Saussure 2006: 94.

p. 156 the anthropologist is also a linguistic scholar: Whitney 2013: 300.

p. 156 Saussure insists in his manuscripts: Saussure 2006: 96–97.

p. 156 'The dominant...': Heidegger 2010: 46.

p. 157 *Politics:* Aristotle 1999: III, 9.

p. 157 *Topica:* II, 2.

p. 157 *Ion:* 540b–d.

p. 157 *Protagoras:* 341a–e.

p. 157 *Republic:* 538c–e.

p. 157 the designations for "good": Nietzsche 2007: I, § 4.

p. 158 equation inverted: Nietzsche 2007: I, § 7.

p. 158 '[...] appears to be...': Gellner 1998: 63.

p. 158 Wittgenstein introduced the technique...: Monk 1990: 330–331.

p. 158 shortly after he had begun his conversations with Sraffa: Monk 1990: 260–261.

p. 158 According to Monk, this technique...: Monk 1990: 330.

p. 159 *On Interpretation:* I, 4.

p. 159 *Poetics:* XIX.

p. 159 'Aristotelian logic brands...': Wittgenstein 1999: I, § 525:

p. 159 'Bad influence...': Wittgenstein 1999: II, 44.

p. 160 'something for which...': Frege 1956: 292.

p. 160 'various kinds of sentence': Frege 1956: 293.

p. 160 'One does not want...': Frege 1956: 293.

p. 160 'All discourse, all discursiveness...': Heidegger 2024: 34.

p. 162 'a child learns only...': Paul 1891: 78–79.

p. 162 'pointing to and naming objects...': Wittgenstein 2005: 27.

p. 162 ‘Wittgenstein simply discusses...’: Fogelin 1995: 108–109.

p. 162 Glock, like so many other Wittgensteinians...: e.g., Baker and Hacker 2005; Child 2011; Hacker 1996; Hallett 1985; Kenny 2006.

p. 162 ‘the picture theory subscribes...’: Glock 1996: 303.

p. 163 ‘naming is like pointing’: Wittgenstein 1998c: 94.

p. 163 ‘in the proposition the name goes...’: Wittgenstein 1998a: 37.

p. 163 Wittgenstein attributes the picture theory to St. Augustine: e.g., Wittgenstein 1969b: 77; 1974: 56–57.

p. 163 ‘Augustine’s conception of language’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 4.

p. 163 *The Teacher:* prepositions (e.g., 2,3; 5,16), verbs (e.g., 4,9; 5,14), nouns (e.g., 4,7; 4,9), conjunctions (e.g., 5,11; 5,12), pronouns (e.g., 5,13; 7,20), and adverbs (e.g., 5,16; 10,34). Sentence “Si nihil ex tanta superis placet urbe relinqui” (2,3).

p. 164 ‘Aug. [...] But suppose I should ask...’: Augustine, *The Teacher:* 3,5.

p. 165 ‘Aug. You will [...] agree, I think...’: Augustine, *The Teacher:* 4,7.

p. 166 ‘Every noun [...], even “noun” itself...’: Augustine, *The Teacher:* 5,11.

p. 167 ‘The general form...’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 4.5.

p. 167 ‘I shall not try...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 20.

p. 167 ‘If one surveys the problems...’: Heidegger 2024: 39.

p. 167 Wittgenstein attributes to both Plato and Augustine the idea that a sentence is composed of nouns and verbs: ‘Augustine does not speak of there being any difference between parts of speech and means by “names” apparently words like “tree,” “table,” “bread” and of course, the proper names of people; also no doubt “eat,” “go,” “here,” “there” – all words, in fact. Certainly he’s thinking first and

foremost of nouns, and of the remaining words as something that will take care of itself. (Plato too says that a sentence consists of nouns and verbs.)' (Wittgenstein 1974: 56)

p. 167 'They describe the game...': Wittgenstein 1974: 57.

p. 167 'If somebody said...': Plato, *Sophist*: 262a–c.

p. 168 'A substantive in language...': Wittgenstein 2001b: 119.

p. 168 'the man runs,' 'the man wins': Aristotle, *Categories:* II.

p. 168 *The Principles of Mathematics*: Russell 1937: 42.

p. 168 'in language, everything...': Saussure 1959: 127.

p. 168 'If we group words...': Wittgenstein 1969b: 83.

p. 169 'I confess that...': Fogelin 1995: 113.

p. 170 'grammar distinguishes between...': Wittgenstein 1979: 102.

p. 170 Plato: e.g., *Sophist*: 262a-e; *Theaetetus:* 206d; *Cratylus*: 425a.

p. 170 nouns, adjectives, verbs, conjunctions, and numerals in the *Tractatus*: 3.323, 4.025, 4.036, 4.126, and 5.4733.

p. 170 nouns, numerals, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and conjunctions in the *Philosophical Investigations*: e.g., §§ 1, 8, 9, 16, 44, 411; II, II; II, X; II, XI.

p. 170 assertion, exclamation, and imperative in the *Philosophical Investigations*: e.g., §§ 21, 22, 27, 323; II, § 126; II, § 271.

p. 170 Bühler, who was the most celebrated pragmatic thinker in Germany in the 20th: Nerlich and Clarke 1996: 224.

p. 170 tripartite model of language: Bühler 2011: 34.

p. 171 'A mere phrase of politeness...': Malinowski 1989: 313–314.

p. 171 'the idea that Wittgenstein...': Gellner 1998: 156.

p. 171 "propounded a wholly novel philosophy of language": Hacker 1995: 9.

p. 172 ‘adherents of WII...’: Russell 1959: 217.

p. 172 Monk argues...: Monk 1990: 331.

p. 172 According to Wittgenstein...: Monk 1990: 330.

p. 172 ‘The basic evil of Russell’s logic...’: Wittgenstein 1998d: I, § 38.

p. 172 ‘Russell and I both...’: Monk 1990: 330–331.

p. 173 ‘In this connection...’: Russell 1959: 224.

p. 173 ‘The grammatical structure of language...’: Whitehead and Russell 1950: I, 2.

p. 173 ‘I thought that the construction...’: Russell 1959: 165.

p. 174 ‘I believe that I can best...’: Frege 1967: 6.

p. 174 ‘languages are unreliable...’ and ‘it is indeed not the least...’: Frege 1960d: 126.

p. 175 Wittgenstein had already adopted...: ‘[...] since names are arbitrary, we might also choose different names, and where then would be the common element in the designations?’ (Wittgenstein 1998c: 97). ‘[...] (The proposition is a formation with the logical features of what it represents and with other features besides, but these will be arbitrary and different in different sign-languages.) [...] This part of the representation (the assignment of names) must take place by means of arbitrary stipulations. Every proposition must accordingly contain features with arbitrarily determined references’ (Wittgenstein 1998a: 17).

p. 175 *Cratylus:* 384d.

p. 175 ‘established terminology’: Aristotle, *Topica:* II, I.

p. 175 ‘By a noun we mean...’: Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, I, II.

p. 176 ‘*value, meaning, signification...’:* Saussure 2006: 12.

p. 176 In the *Course in General Linguistics...:* Saussure 1959: 67 ff.

p. 176 Gellner finds it ironic: Gellner 1998: 63.

p. 176 Kenny notes...: Kenny 2006: 12–13.

p. 176 ‘copy theory of language’: Quine 1969: 27.

p. 176 Dewey: Quine 1969: 26–27.

p. 177 ‘Once we appreciate...’: Quine 1969: 27.

p. 177 language is a social possession: Whitney 2013: 149.

p. 177 ‘Were not language...’: Paul 1891: xlvi.

p. 177 ‘I am not free...’: Bréal 1900: 250. ‘The arbitrary nature of the sign explains in turn why the social fact alone can create a linguistic system,’ Saussure observed (1959: 113). ‘The community is necessary if values that owe their existence solely to usage and general acceptance are to be set up; by himself the individual is incapable of fixing a single value.’

p. 177 a language which only one person: Whitney 2013: 149.

p. 178 Glock points out...: Glock 1996: 285. Glock (2008: 172) also notes that ‘the *Investigations* as a whole is a very difficult book, largely because the structure and the targets of the argument remain unclear.’

p. 178 ‘But has anybody...’: McGuinness 2002: 165.

p. 178 ‘[Wittgenstein’s late philosophy] remains to me...’: Russell 1959: 216. Russell (1959: 126) also noted that ‘Wittgenstein announces aphorisms and leaves the reader to estimate their profundity as best he may.’ This certainly contributed to the fact that a whole school found important wisdom in his texts. In fact, as Gellner (1968: 199) points out, Wittgenstein’s thought ‘has an inherent ambiguity which makes it “jump” from any one of a number of possible interpretations to the others, and this ambiguity is not accidental and due to inadequate precision, but essential and inherent to his thought.’

p. 178 ‘[...] real philosophical reflection...’: Wittgenstein 1984: 17.

p. 178 ‘R’s incapacity for genuine...’: Wittgenstein 2003: 16–17.

9 How is it possible that there should be a misunderstanding so very hard to remove?

p. 181 'What makes the object hard to understand...': Wittgenstein 1984: 17.

p. 182 'single-mindedness, resoluteness...': Pascal 1984: 46.

p. 182 'I love him & feel...': Monk 1990: 41. 'We expect the next big step in philosophy to be taken by your brother' (Hermine Wittgenstein 1984: 2), Russell told Hermine Wittgenstein less than a year after he met Ludwig.

p. 182 I love him...': Monk 1990: 55.

p. 182 In Monk's opinion, this rather unexpected...: Monk 1990: 36–38.

p. 182 'It is really amazing how...': Monk 1990: 54.

p. 182 'The Russell Wittgenstein met in 1911...': Monk 1990: 38.

p. 183 'If Russell had not...': Monk 1990: 55.

p. 183 Russell did not even need to understand his protégé to feel in his bones that he must be right: Monk 1990: 81–82. 'We were both cross from the heat – I showed him a crucial part of what I had been writing,' Russell said in a 1913 letter to Morrell, referring to a text he had presented to Wittgenstein. 'He said it was all wrong, not realizing the difficulties – that he had tried my view and knew it couldn't work. I couldn't understand his objection – in fact he was very inarticulate – but I feel in my bones that he must be right, and that he has seen something I have missed. If I could see it too I shouldn't mind, but, as it is, it is worrying, and has rather destroyed the pleasure in my writing – I can only go on with what I see, and yet I feel it is probably all wrong, and that Wittgenstein will think me a dishonest scoundrel for going on with it. Well, well – it is the younger generation knocking at the door – I must make room for him when I can, or I shall become an incubus. But at the moment I was rather cross' (Monk 1990: 81–82). Decades later, Russell would

take a very different stance on Wittgenstein and admit: 'I do not feel sure that, either then [before the First World War] or later, the views which I believed to have derived from him were in fact his views' (1959: 112).

p. 183 'haggard beauty': Monk 1990: 290.

p. 183 'almost defies explanation': Goldstein 2005: 105.

p. 183 'to roast otherwise brilliant...': Levin 2006: 58.

p. 183 Olga Taussky-Todd: Goldstein 2005: 108.

p. 183 '[...] was merely a forerunner...': Goldstein 2005: 108.

p. 183 'Schlick adored him...': Goldstein 2005: 105.

p. 184 '[his] name posthumously loomed...': Goldstein 2005: 214.

p. 184 'I believe a certain sort of mathematicians...': Monk 1990: 75.

p. 185 'Wittgenstein remarks...': Weinberg 1992: 167–168.

p. 185 'nothing seems to me more unlikely...': Wittgenstein 1984: 62.

Appendices

I Revisiting Wittgenstein's autism spectrum disorder diagnosis

p. 203 'If I had planned it...': Monk 1990: 555.

p. 203 'I tend a bit to sentimentality...': Wittgenstein 2003: 73.

p. 203 a single diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder: American Psychiatric Association 2013: 809.

p. 204 ASD is classified into three levels: American Psychiatric Association 2013: 58–59.

p. 204 Individuals with ASD often have intellectual disability: '[...] individuals with autism spectrum disorder often have

intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder) [...]' (American Psychiatric Association 2013: 31).

p. 204 'Delayed motor, language...': American Psychiatric Association 2013: 38.

p. 204 Williams and Wright report that communication skills...: Williams and Wright 2004: 81.

p. 204 This possibility was considered by Michael Fitzgerald: Fitzgerald 2000a: 63.

p. 204 Criteria set forth in the *DSM-5* for diagnosing intellectual disability: American Psychiatric Association 2013: 33 ff.

p. 205 Wittgenstein was considered one of the dullest...: Monk 1990: 12.

p. 205 tutors: McGuinness 2005: ch. 2.

p. 205 Because his family feared...: Monk 1990: 15.

p. 205 Wittgenstein was ridiculed...: Monk 1990: 16.

p. 205 'betrayed and sold': Monk 1990: 16.

p. 206 'fairly poor student': Monk 1990: 15.

p. 206 fortune distributed: Monk 1990: 171.

p. 206 'a bit mad': Monk 1990: 79.

p. 206 Puchberg: Monk 1990: 216.

p. 207 Anthony: Monk 1990: 434.

p. 207 Reeve: Monk 1990: 455.

p. 207 'Think I won't...': Monk 1990: 104.

p. 207 he would reconnect with Wittgenstein: Monk 1990: 473–474.

p. 207 'I won't be bullied...': McGuinness 2012: 9.

p. 207 Wittgenstein begged...: Monk 1990: 487.

p. 207 Wittgenstein's way of talking: Bouwsma 1986: 3.

p. 208 Malcolm could not see Wittgenstein again for some days: Malcolm 2001: 53.

p. 208 'Though I like...': Monk 1990: 222.

p. 208 ‘I don’t like...’: Monk 1990: 260.

p. 208 ‘In argument he forgets...’: Monk 1990: 43.

p. 208 Wittgenstein becoming deaf: Monk 1990: 57.

p. 208 ‘*He* is a tyrant’: Monk 1990: 81.

p. 208 Russell confessed to Moore...: Monk 1990: 292.

p. 208 Russell distanced himself from Wittgenstein: Monk 1990: 210–211.

p. 208 Ramsey distanced himself from Wittgenstein for two years: Monk 1990: 231.

p. 208 ‘[Wittgenstein] wants...’: Monk 1990: 251.

p. 208 ‘Well, God has arrived...: Monk 1990: 255.

p. 208 According to Monk: Monk 1990: 261–262.

p. 209 ‘lots of friends’; ‘It is obvious to me...’: Rhees 1984: 147.

p. 209 ‘Drury, I think...’: Monk 1990: 539.

p. 209 ‘To my great shame...’: Monk 1990: 214.

p. 209 ‘I suffer much...’: Monk 1990: 228.

p. 209 ‘[I] feel myself...’: Monk 1990: 516.

p. 209 ‘Normal human beings...’: King 1984: 74.

p. 209 ‘The last 5 days...’: Monk 1990: 377.

p. 209 *anständig* (decent): Monk 1990: 278.

p. 210 great force: Malcolm 2001: 24.

p. 210 ‘Anyone who heard him...’: Malcolm 2001: 24.

p. 210 Wittgenstein had extreme difficulty...: Malcolm 2001: 23.

p. 211 ‘Nonsense!’: Monk 1990: 196.

p. 211 Wittgenstein used to mistreat his students: Monk 1990: 195–196, 228, 232.

p. 211 Wittgenstein abruptly quit teaching in 1926: Monk 1990: 232.

p. 211 Karl Popper and Wittgenstein: Monk 1990: 494–495; Edmonds and Eidinow (2003).

p. 211 'I am no saint...': Drury 1984b: 109.

p. 212 'a man of great purity...': Pascal 1984: 32.

p. 212 'a little too simple': Monk 1990: 65.

p. 212 'with quite breath-taking naïvety': Monk 1990: 390.

p. 212 'That is a ridiculous rumour...': Monk 1990: 390.

p. 212 'They are too much respected...: Monk 1990: 390.

p. 212 'quite extraordinary insouciance': Monk 1990: 390.

p. 212 At Cambridge, Wittgenstein always received support from friends like Russell, Moore, Ramsey, and Keynes: Monk 1990.

p. 212 'a university that...': Pascal 1984: 43.

p. 213 Wittgenstein worked as a gardener at two Austrian monasteries: Monk 1990: 191, 234–235. In the 1920s, Wittgenstein told Ramsey that he was likely to leave Puchberg at the end of the school year, but had no firm idea of what he would do after that – perhaps find a job as a gardener, or perhaps move to England to look for work (Monk 1990: 217).

p. 213 Wittgenstein moved to the Soviet Union seeking manual labor: Monk 1990: 340, 342–344, 346, 347–354.

p. 213 dispensary porter at the Guy's Hospital: Monk 1990: 432.

p. 213 Wittgenstein never had a home of his own, preferring to be hosted by friends or living in someone else's house: e.g., Monk 1990: 463, 465, 520, 552.

p. 213 three of Wittgenstein's brothers committed suicide: Monk 1990: 11–12, 221.

p. 213 'No news from David...': Monk 1990: 115.

p. 213 'If suicide...': Wittgenstein 1998a: 91.

p. 213 'Despair has no end...': Wittgenstein 2003: 127.

p. 214 'My bad spelling...': McGuinness 2005: 52.

p. 214 ‘By no means should...’: Monk 1990: 227.

p. 214 ‘in a stilted and bad style’: Monk 1990: 376.

p. 214 ‘in a clear and coherent form’: Monk 1990: 335.

p. 215 Malcolm, Anscombe, and Smythies: Malcolm 2001: 48.

p. 215 According to Monk: Monk 1990: 340.

p. 215 ‘Heaven knows...’: Monk 1990: 522.

p. 215 Manuscripts: Wittgenstein 1975: 347.

p. 215 Monk stressed: Monk 1990: 319.

p. 215 ‘Please, don’t send me...’: McGuinness 2012: 216.

p. 216 ‘I read hardly anything...’: McGuinness 2012: 420.

p. 216 ‘As little philosophy...’: Monk 1990: 496.

p. 216 ‘politically naïve’: Monk 1990: 342; see also Sen 2003: 1243. ‘He has not a sufficiently wide curiosity or a sufficient wish for a broad survey of the world,’ Russell wrote to Ottoline Morrell in 1913. ‘It won’t spoil his work on logic, but it will make him always a very narrow specialist, & rather too much the champion of a party – that is, when judged by the highest standards’ (Monk 1990: 73).

p. 216 ‘Before trying to discuss...’: Monk 1990: 392.

p. 217 ‘forcing one to wonder’: Monk 1990: 394.

II Stimuli, paraphrasing and plagiarism

p. 219 McGuinness cites some remarks...: McGuinness 2012: 228–229.

p. 219 Glock reports...: Glock 1996: 197.

p. 219 Glock also speculates...: Glock 1996: 318.

p. 219 Bühler...: Sluga 2011: 7.

p. 220 Also according to Glock...: Glock 1996: 124.

p. 220 Janik and Toulmin...: Janik and Toulmin 1973: 230.

p. 220 as Glock points out...: Glock 1996: 124.

p. 220 We are inclined...: Wittgenstein 1969b: 17.

p. 220 according to McGuinness...: McGuinness 2012: 9, 301.

p. 220 Monk shows...: Monk 1990: 303–304.

p. 220 Glock considers...: Glock 1996: 120.

p. 221 Wittgenstein spent many hours...: e.g., Monk 1990: ch. 3–4.

p. 221 Monk notes...: Monk 1990: 129.

p. 221 'Wittgenstein could produce...': Monk 1990: 129.

p. 222 as stressed by Monk...: Monk 1990: 323–324.

p. 222 Always worried...: e.g., Malcolm 2001: 49–50.

p. 223 It is common to attribute to Frege and Russell the pictorial theory of meaning: e.g., Baker and Hacker 2005: 1, 19ff, 23ff.

p. 223 'object' 'in the widest range': Frege 1960d: 57.

p. 223 '[...] very widespread tendency...': Frege 1960a: 22.

p. 223 numbers and truth values, for example: e.g., Frege 1960c, 1980.

p. 223 Searle cited the *Philosophical Investigations: Searle 1970: 45, 55, 141.*

p. 223 "slogan" 'Meaning is Use': Searle 1970: 146.

p. 223 'How do words...', 'How do words stand...': Searle 1970: 3.

p. 224 'it is characteristic...': Searle 1970: 26.

III Similes, comparisons and grammatical inquiries

p. 225 '[My work] is not important...': Bouwsma 1986: 68. 'The history of the Wittgensteinian fashion presents many entertaining features, not least the way in which it improves on the story of the Emperor's clothes,' Gellner mocks (1968: 159). 'In it, the impostor succeeded in convincing the populace that one naked man was clothed: here, a whole clothed populace were convinced that they were all naked.'

p. 225 ‘I believe that my sentences...’: Wittgenstein 2003: 123.

p. 225 ‘[...] thinking is quite comparable...’: Wittgenstein 1974: 163.

p. 225 ‘To think or speak...’: Wittgenstein 1979: 220.

p. 225 ‘Everything that comes...’: Monk 1990: 379.

p. 225 To Ishisaka: Ishisaka 2003b.

p. 225 comparison between words and the handles in the cabin of a locomotive: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 12.

p. 225 comparison between words and tools: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 17.

p. 225 comparison between words and chess pieces: e.g., Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 108; 1969b: 83–84; 2001b: 3.

p. 225 learning a language is learning a technique: Bouwsma 1986: 23.

p. 225 ‘The whole point...’: Bouwsma 1986: 23–24.

p. 226 ‘I said in my book...’: Bouwsma 1986: 20.

p. 226 ‘mirrors the world’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 5.511.

p. 226 ‘logic is not a theory...’: Wittgenstein 2001a: 6.13.

p. 226 ‘[...] a language which...’: Wittgenstein 1998b: 108.

p. 226 ‘The proposition...’: Wittgenstein 1998a: 8.

p. 226 ‘A proposition is like...’: Wittgenstein 2001b: 27.

p. 226 ‘If you think of propositions...’: Wittgenstein 1975: 57.

p. 226 ‘The idea that you...’: Wittgenstein 1975: 58.

p. 226 ‘The agreement of a proposition...’: Wittgenstein 1975: 61.

p. 227 ‘Grammar is a mirror...’: Wittgenstein 1980: 9.

p. 227 ‘If we compare a proposition...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: § 522.

p. 227 ‘Sometimes I visualize a...’: Wittgenstein 2009 [1953]: II, § 264.

Sobre o livro

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On January 27, 1937, while traveling to Skjolden, a Norwegian village on the edge of the Sogne Fjord, where in 1913 he had built a hut for secluded living, philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889—1951) noted in his diary: 'I am of course in many ways extraordinary & therefore many people are ordinary compared to me; but in what does my extraordinariness consist?' According to contemporary psychiatrists such as Michael Fitzgerald, Christopher Gillberg, and Yoshiki Ishisaka, Wittgenstein's extraordinariness stemmed from the fact that he had autism. Considering the posthumous diagnosis made by these specialists in autism spectrum disorder, this book has two basic objectives: (1) to detail how both Wittgenstein's behavioral particularities and cognitive difficulties, including those related to language, are reflected in his work, and (2) to show that Wittgenstein "dissolved" in his second philosophy, especially in the *Philosophical Investigations*, problems that are no problem for anyone by drawing on basic linguistic and philosophical knowledge accumulated in the West since Ancient Greece that he had ignored in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, the book of his first philosophy.

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