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LANGUAGE AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE LATER WITTGENTEN

Language and philosophy over the years presented themselves in a number of different guises to Wittgenstein. It is, however, the later ways in which he saw these two things, and how they are related, that are especially interesting and the subject of heated controversy in the contemporary philosophical circles. The purpose of the present paper is to offer an exposition of these later views as well as to evaluate some of them.

It is worth noticing at the outset a connection between some things G.E. Moore, the «Philosopher of Common Sense», wrote and insights into language and philosophy the later Wittgenstein arrived at. As is well known, Moore devoted much of his work to refuting metaphysical philosophical theories¹. The philosophy in vogue when Moore was writing was the idealism of F. H. Bradley. Bradley attempted to prove that ordinary experience is illusory and that physical things are not real, or are mere appearance. Moore was perplexed and troubled by these paradoxical pronouncements of idealist philosophy as, for him, the commonsensical world was real, objective and meaningful. The main reason, he thought, for these paradoxical assertions in defiance of common sense was the idealists' insensitivity to, and misuse of, ordinary language. Ordinary language, Moore admitted, is by no means perfect - it is often loose and ambiguous. But if one gets to know it well and to use it sensitively, he will be never tempted to make the claims of idealist philosophy. Moore's opinion that everyday ordinary language is «expressly designed to mislead philosophers»² resembles the view of the later Wittgenstein³, although the two philosophers differed

1. See «Proof of an External World» and «A Defence of Common Sense», both reprinted in *Philosophical Papers* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1959), pp. 127-150 and 32-59.

2. *Philosophical Studies* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1922), p. 217.

3. As in fact it does, up to an extent, his earlier views for, as will be pointed out later, some of the things Wittgenstein believes about Philosophy in the later period are not dissimilar to some of the things he supported in the earlier work.

in their detailed accounts. In a similar fashion Wittgenstein wrote that «Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language»¹. Much of Moore's practice of philosophy consisted in the careful analysis of the meanings of words in order to solve philosophical puzzles. Wittgenstein also used this procedure to free philosophers from their bewitchment. According to him «A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command a clear view of our use of words - Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity» (PI 123).

Before I proceed to a detailed account of Wittgenstein's later views on language and how it is the source of philosophical problems, it will be helpful briefly to look at his earlier views on language as they appear in the *Tractatus*. For, as is well known, in the later period Wittgenstein sets himself the task to repudiate all the basic views about language which characterize his earlier work. The following are his earlier contentions about language:

(A) Language has a clear logical structure or every proposition in language has a perfectly determinite sense. However much this logical structure or definite sense of a proposition may be obscured in ordinary everyday use, it can be uncovered by careful analysis.

(B) The essence of language is to depict or «picture» the world around us: The simplest or «elementary» propositions in language consist of «names» and their function is to refer to or «name» the simple constituent parts of reality—the «objects».

(C) As the simplest elements in language are «names», each name referring to an «object», the meaning of a word consists essentially in what it refers to.

All these contentions, Wittgenstein asserts in the *Philosophical Investigations*, are false. Let us take them in turn.

(A) There is no precise logical structure concealed within ordinary language. Indeed, this «crystalline purity of logic» is not a «result of investigation» but rather a «requirement» (PI 107). Propositions do not have a definite sense. This is just a «preconceived idea» about propositions which prevents a clear vision «like a pair of glasses on our nose through which we see whatever we look at. It never occurs to us to take them off» (PI 103). In actual language we find that many

1. *Philosophical Investigations*. Trans. by G.E. Anscombe. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), par. 109. Henceforth references to the same book will be incorporated into the text with the abbreviation «PI», followed by paragraph number for Part I and by «p.» and page number for Part II.

propositions are vague, inexact and indefinite. However they serve our ordinary purposes perfectly well. «If I tell someone 'stand roughly there' - may not this explanation work perfectly? And cannot every other one fail too?» «Roughly» constitutes a refusal to say exactly to what place I am referring, yet what I mean is perfectly understood. Other explanations could «fail» in the sense that, however precisely I tell someone where to stand, he could ask me to be more exact. «But isn't it an inexact explanation? - Yes... Only let us understand what 'inexact' means...it does not mean 'unusable'. And let us consider what we call an 'exact' explanation...» We have an exact explanation, probably, when we draw a chalk line round an area. However a line has breadth. So a colour edge would be more exact. But what is the purpose, in the circumstances, of striving for such increased exactness? «Isn't the engine idling?» asks Wittgenstein (PI 88).

Connected with the idea that every proposition must have a determinate sense is the idea that the process of analysis, by breaking a proposition into more elementary ones, makes its sense explicit or clear. However the notion of analysis is now under severe criticism: If someone said not (a) «The broom is in the corner» but (b) «The broomstick is in the corner and the brush is in the corner and the broomstick is fixed in the brush» we would not understand him better. Rather we would wonder why he was talking in such an odd way. Yet (b) is a «further analyzed sentence» which expresses more clearly the meaning of (a). Wittgenstein objects: «This sentence, one might say, achieves the same as the ordinary one, but in a more roundabout way» (PI 60). Moreover to say that (b) is an analyzed form of (a) might make one think that (b) is the more fundamental form, and that if we have only (a) we miss out on the analysis. But can we not say that an aspect of the matter is lost in the analyzed form as well? (PI 63).

It is of course true, Wittgenstein points out, that sometimes misunderstanding «can be removed by substituting one form of expression for another; this may be called an 'analysis' of our form of expression» (PI 90). So analysis is useful in some cases. However we may be tempted to think that the «further analyzed» form of an expression can be further and further analyzed until we come to a «final analysis» in which the expression is completely clarified and all vagueness eliminated. But Wittgenstein rejects this: There is no «final analysis of our forms of language and so a single completely resolved form of every expression ... as if there were something hidden in [our usual forms

of expression] that had to be brought to light» (PI 91), «something that lies within, which we see when we look into the thing, and which analysis digs out» (PI 92).

(B) «Picturing» is not an adequate characterization of the function of language. It misrepresents language by ignoring the wide variety of ways in which it functions. In order to exhibit the multiple ways that words function Wittgenstein invents the following simple language situation or what he calls «language-game». Suppose, he says, that I send someone shopping and give him a slip marked «five red apples». He takes it to the shopkeeper who has been trained in such a way that, firstly, he goes to the box marked «apples»; then he looks up the word «red» in a colour chart and finds a colour sample beside it; finally, he recites the cardinal numbers up to the word «five» and for each number he takes an apple of the same colour as the sample from the box. Here it is immediately evident that the words «five», «red», «apples» play roles of very different kinds (PI 1). In contrast with this language-game Wittgenstein constructs another one which is meant to serve for communication between a builder A and an assistant B. A is building with building stones and B has to pass stones in the order in which A needs them. For this purpose they use a communication system consisting of the words «block», «pillar», «slab», «beam». When A calls out these words B, who has been trained to do so, brings the appropriate object (PI 4).

The striking difference between the first and the second language-games above is that whereas words function in a variety of ways in the first, they only function in a single way in the second. Of course when the builder calls out «pillar» he is not doing the same thing as when he calls out «slab» (he is calling for a pillar, not a slab). Yet the similarity between the uses of «pillar» and «slab» becomes evident when we compare them with the contrasting uses of «apple» and «five». The difference between the two cases comes out even more clearly when we take into account the different procedures with which the uses of «apple» and «five» are taught, in contrast with the single procedure with which the uses of «pillar» and «slab» are taught (PI 9). The mentioned difference between the first and the second language-games is meant to parallel a difference between natural language and the conception of language Wittgenstein presents in the *Tractatus*.

To illustrate the diversity of types of words in language Wittgenstein uses many similes and metaphors. For example, he invites us to compare words in a language with tools in a tool-bag saying

that «the function of words are as diverse as the function of these objects» (PI 11). There is not one function that all words have in common (e. g. to name objects) as there is not one function that all tools have in common. Or he invites us to compare language to the cabin of a locomotive, with a row of similar handles but the most diverse modes of operation (PI 12). His conclusion is that the relationship between language and the world is much more complex and diverse than the *Tractatus* allows.

(C) Meaning does not consist in simple reference of «name» to «object». This is a conception of language - what Wittgenstein calls the Augustinian conception - against which he in fact devotes a good part of the *Investigations*. St Augustine assumed that the mastery of language consists in learning the names of objects. Wittgenstein criticizes this particular conception by pointing out (among other things) that Augustine fails to recognize any difference between kinds of words (PI 1). If you describe the learning of language as essentially a naming activity you are, he points out, thinking primarily of nouns like «table», «chair», «bread» and people's names. Even a primitive reflection shows that this Augustinian picture does not fit words like «five», «and», «or» and many others.

Let us think again of the person who goes shopping with the slip «five red apples». In this imaginary situation it makes sense to ask: «What does the word 'apple' refer to?» and «what does the word 'red' refer to?». But not «What does the word 'five' refer to?». How would the Augustinian account for the meaning of the word «five» in such a situation? It might be thought that the shopkeeper's mastery of the meaning of the word «five» could have been achieved by having had this word correlated with five things, for example five nuts (PI 1, 28). These five things, however, are not the number five; whereas the things to which the words «apple» and «red» are correlated in his training are apples and red samples. There is a difference, Wittgenstein points out, in the shopkeeper's mastery of the meaning of the words «five» on the one hand and «apple» and «red» on the other. But this difference does not lie in the different character of the «objects». It lies, rather, in the different roles that the two sorts of words play in the language-game.

Connected with the Augustinian conception of language is the view that «ostensive» definition is the fundamental act by which the meaning of a word is given: We learn the meaning of a word by ^{historical}countering with the object. Others can teach us the meanings of words ^{historical}by ^{historical}countering with the object. Others can teach us the meanings of words ^{historical}by ^{historical}countering with the object.

but they can do this only by helping us to become acquainted with the objects which are the references of the words (PI 1, 36). After we are acquainted with the objects and we have fixed our attention to them and associated the words with them, we know their meanings.

Wittgenstein admits here that although the meaning of a word is distinct from the object, sometimes it can be taught by pointing to the object and directing the learner's attention to it. But this ostensive teaching can be successful «only with a particular training. With different training the same ostensive teaching... would have effected a quite different understanding» (PI 6). That is to say, ostensive definition can be understood only in a context. In different contexts with different training the explanation of a word may be interpreted differently. For example, the explanation of the word «tove» by pointing to a pencil and saying «This is called tove» might be taken to mean «This is a pencil» in one context, «This is round» in another, «This is wood» in still another and so on¹. What is important in the understanding of a word is not becoming acquainted with the word's bearer, Wittgenstein says, but mastering the word's role in the language, its general use. «So one might say: The ostensive definition explains the use — the meaning — of a word when the overall role of the word in language is clear (PI 30).

As has already been hinted upon, Wittgenstein understands the meaning of a word to be very closely connected (almost identical) to its use. In a famous statement he says: «Don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use»². Whereas «the meaning of a word» may imply the presence of an object or property corresponding to the word (c.f. the shape of a book), «the use of a word» clearly carries no such implication. The replacement of the notion of meaning by the notion of use in the above statement is meant to discourage us from looking for an object when we are searching for the meaning. In order to grasp the meaning of a word, Wittgenstein insists, we should not look for the object for which it stands, we should rather study the diversity of its functions, the diversity of its uses (PI 1, 43). This approach to the understanding of meaning brings out what Wittgenstein wants to support, namely its contextual nature. For «use» cannot be understood merely

1. L. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books, Preliminary Studies for the Philosophical Investigations*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958). Henceforth references to the same book will be incorporated into the text with the abbreviation «BB» followed by page number.

2. John Wisdom, «Ludwig Wittgenstein 1934-37» in K.T. Fann ed., *Wittgenstein, The Man and His Philosophy. An Anthology*. (New York: Dell, 1967) p. 46.

by looking at the word, it can only be understood in a context, linguistic and social. This is why Wittgenstein suggests that instead of comparing the relationship between the word and the meaning to the relationship between the money and the cow that you can buy with it, we should compare it to that between money and its use (PI 120). The use of money is not something different from the money. And the specific use of money to buy things makes sense only in a context, financial and social. Similarly, the use of a word is not an object separable from the word. And the specific use of words to name things makes sense only in a context, linguistic and social.

The contextual nature of meaning also comes out when Wittgenstein compares language with games or speaks of and constructs language-games. At some point Wittgenstein defines language-games as «ways of using signs simpler than those in which we use the signs of our highly complicated everyday language» (BB 17). But as he develops the concept, he expresses through it, besides the fact that language has multiple functions (as there is no characteristic that is common to all games (PI 65-67), there is not one function that language has), the connection between the speaking of language and non-linguistic activities, the fact that words and expressions have meaning only in social contexts. Think of a chess game. To understand what a piece in chess is one must understand the whole game, the rules defining it, and the role of the piece in the game (PI 108, 33, 563). Similarly, to understand the meaning of a word or expression in a language one must understand its place in the actions and activities into which the language is interwoven. For, the speaking of language, Wittgenstein emphasizes, is part of a communal activity, a way of living in society, a «form of life» (PI 23. cf. 19).

To illustrate what exactly Wittgenstein means by «form of life» it is useful to quote a remark of his that has captured the imagination of many philosophers: «If a lion could talk, we could not understand him» (PI 223). Suppose a lion says «Goodness it is three o'clock, I must hurry to make that appointment», while, at the same time, he continues lying there, yawning and showing no sign of wanting to move¹. Assuming that the lion's general behaviour is in every respect like that of an ordinary lion, we would not say that he had asserted or that he had meant that it is three o'clock and that he must hurry, although he has uttered these words. Indeed, we could not tell

1. C.f. G. Pitcher, *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein*. (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1964), p. 243.

what, if anything, he has asserted or meant, for the modes of behaviour into which his use of words is woven are too different from our own. We would not understand him, as he does not share the relevant forms of life with us.

Now what is the bearing of all these things Wittgenstein says about language on philosophy? In the *Investigations*, as in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein criticizes language as a means to elucidating traditional philosophical problems. That is to say, he is not interested in language for its own sake, but for the sake of philosophy. His investigation, he writes, «gets its light, that is ... its purpose, from the philosophical problems» (PI 109). Here, as in the earlier work, philosophical problems arise through a misinterpretation of the forms of language and the task of philosophy is the clarification of language. However, the specific origins of the problems and the techniques of exposing them are different here from how they are in the earlier work. It is not that there is a gulf between our ordinary forms of expression and logical form and that the philosopher must analyze propositions in order to reveal their logically correct form which «lies beneath the surface» (PI 92). Instead, he must describe the uses of words in propositions and clarify their roles in the language-game where they operate. Philosophy, says Wittgenstein, is «a fight against the fascination which forms of expression exert upon us» (BB 27), «a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language» (PI 109).

Let us come now to see why language exerts this fascination, this bewitchment upon us or, more precisely, upon the philosopher. One of the causes is that grammar is less flexible, less subtle, than the uses for which language is required: «A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command a clear view of the use of our words - Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity» (PI 122). Wittgenstein distinguishes between the surface grammar and the depth grammar of the use of expressions (PI 664). The surface grammar of an expression is «what immediately impresses itself upon us», that part of its use «that can be taken in by the ear». The depth grammar is the application of expressions. It is because of the surface grammar that we are frequently led to misunderstand the use of words: when we see an analogy between forms of words in surface grammar we wrongly assume an analogy in depth grammar (BB 7). But this need not be so. The clothing of our language, says Wittgenstein, makes everything look alike. Consequently we remain unconscious of the great diversity of language (PI p. 224).

A couple of examples would help to clarify this. Superficially the words «thinking», «writing» and «speaking» are grammatically similar. This, Wittgenstein suggests, is one of the reasons why we tend to ascribe to thinking some of the features of writing and speaking, for example locality (BB 7), and we thus get entangled with the problem of other minds. The propositions «A has a gold tooth» and «A has a toothache» are, in the surface grammar, similar. Conceptually, however, they are not analogous (BB 53, 49. PI 288-293), as becomes clear when we compare: «This is not A's tooth» and «This is not A's toothache», where the latter of course makes no sense. Overlooking their conceptual dissimilarity leads philosophers, once again, to suppose that there is a problem about our knowledge of other minds.

Grammar is a source of confusion in still another way: Usually when we use a noun to refer to an object we assume that the object exists. We are thus inclined to look for an existing object for every single noun and, when we can find none, we assume the existence of a Platonic, an ideal object. So, for example, we talk of numbers as ideal objects, while we are not aware that all that is meant by this is that the use of numerical expressions is similar to that of words that correspond to objects, although numbers do not¹. Or, as is the case with the moral intuitionists, we assume the existence of «indefinable»² moral properties which correspond to moral goodness or rightness and we are consequently exposed to the «argument from queerness»³, to the effect that we cannot account for what sort of thing these properties are, in what sense they exist and how we can have knowledge of them.

Another important reason why language confuses us is that there lies embedded in our use of it certain ways of viewing the world, certain «pictures», which always mislead us by forcing us to think that the facts must conform to them. These pictures constitute possibilities of expression for us: in terms of them we express what we find important, strange, impressive. For example we talk of time flying or of time stopping for a second or of the stream of time; we picture space as a receptacle - something like a container with an inside and an outside; we conceive the mind as analogous to the body, a self-contained entity, separate from other minds, a receptacle which can accommodate in it

1. L. Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*. Trans. by G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1959), p. 136.

2. See G.E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), pp. 6-7, 10-11.

3. J.L. Mackie presents this argument in *Ethics*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), pp. 38-42.

various mental images. These pictures are by no means mistakes. On the contrary, they are, like myths, quite important for us as they constitute a medium of expression¹. But when doing philosophy, we tend to misinterpret them, to take them at their face value, by not being clear about their application. We take them literally and then look for some way of applying them (PI 423-5). Thus arise various philosophical problems, which a clearer understanding of language would help to avoid, and which concern the nature of time and space, the nature of the mind and mental events, the knowledge of other minds.

«A picture held us captive» says Wittgenstein «and we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably» (PI 115). «A simile that has been absorbed into the forms of our language produces a false appearance» (PI 112). We are misled «by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of language» (PI 90). An important source of these misleading pictures can be found in various philosophical theories, various metaphysical constructions which put forward a certain view of the world, such as Platonism, Dualism, Empiricism, Idealism, Wittgenstein's own theory in the *Tractatus*. These are the result of the mind's natural craving of reason, its propensity for seeking a unity and an essence - a metaphysical urge. But they clearly create a problem in linguistic understanding. Wittgenstein suggests a cure for this: «What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use» (PI 115).

The above are some of the ways in which language exercises a «fascination», a «bewitchment» on our intelligence and manages to baffle and confuse us. These are so deeply structured into our thinking that we are not aware of them. We are thus faced with problems which are difficult to solve, not because we are ignorant of various facts but, rather, because we are lacking insight. «A philosophical problem has the form: 'I don't know my way about'» (PI 123). Philosophy is a mere elucidatory activity. The philosopher's task is to help us to see our way clearly, to find our way about. «What is your aim in Philosophy? - To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle» (PI 309). Philosophy is not concerned to discover new facts, only new insights into old facts. Philosophical problems are solved «by looking into the workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognize those

1. See G. P. Baker and M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein, Meaning and Understanding*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), pp. 272-273.

workings: *in despite* of our urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known» (PI 109). Philosophy is «purely descriptive» (PI 124, BB 18), not in the sense of giving factual information but in the sense of revealing the hidden sources of our confusion by merely describing the workings of language. «We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place» (PI 109). There are no philosophical propositions. Philosophy can only bring about an understanding of non-philosophical propositions as well as discover the illegitimacy of traditional philosophical - metaphysical - propositions. The result of the philosopher's pursuit is clarity «indeed *complete* clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear» (PI 133).

On several occasions Wittgenstein compares philosophy to a medical technique, to a therapy (PI 133, 255), having mainly in mind psychotherapy in general and psychoanalysis in particular. (Wittgenstein was impressed by and critical of the work of Freud.)¹ And there is undoubtedly a similarity of method between his understanding of philosophy and psychoanalysis²: Like the psychoanalyst, the Wittgensteinian philosopher makes the patient - in this case the conceptually confused philosopher - aware of what he is doing - of the confusion he is under due to the misuse of language.

We come now to the question: Which are the specific methods of the therapeutic process which is philosophy? These are several. «There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies» (PI 133). Let us look at a few of them. Already we mentioned what is basic to all of them, namely bringing into the surface the linguistic confusion under which the traditional philosopher operates. One of the ways this is done is by describing the uses of expressions in order to clarify their meaning. This may involve collecting various instances of the use of an expression - «assembling reminders» (PI 127) - so that the actual pattern of this use is made clear to us and a picture is formed of the language-game to which the expression belongs; not randomly, nor yet systematically, but on each occasion with some particular purpose in view, namely that of dispelling a certain confusion (PI 127). It may also involve finding or constructing related uses - «intermediate cases» (PI 122)- so as to produce «an un-

1. See C. Barrett ed, *Wittgenstein. Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966), pp. 41-52.

2. See Baker and Hacker, *op. cit.* p. 279.

derstanding which consists in «seeing connexions» between the various instances which may not appear related, how they «gradually merge into one another» (BB 28).

Another philosophical method Wittgenstein discusses involves the deliberate construction of various language-games in the process of counteracting the misleading effects of certain analogies of surface grammar (BB 28). For example, in surface grammar, the expressions «I have a toothache» and «I see a red hat» are similar. But when we imagine a world in which these expressions are similar in depth grammar, i.e. in their applications, we arrive at an absurd situation; which of course indicates the deceptiveness of the original similarity of the expressions. «Let us imagine the following: The surfaces of the things around us (stones, plants, etc) have patches of regions which produce pain in our skin when we touch them. (Perhaps through the chemical composition of these surfaces. But we need not know that). In this case we should speak of pain-patches on the leaf of a particular plant just as at present we speak of red patches» (PI 312).

Still another method involves the construction of simple language-games in order to use them for understanding important features of more complicated language-games in real life. So, for example, situations like that of the shopkeeper who responds to the slip marked «five red apples» indicate the diverse functions of words and expressions in real language by serving «as *objects of comparison* which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities» (PI 130).

Wittgenstein's insights into philosophical problems and how they are the symptoms of linguistic confusion have revolutionized philosophy and have exercised a powerful influence on the practicing of it in the twentieth century. Yet his views are not unproblematic. For one thing, he restricts the role of philosophy unduly by overemphasizing the significance of language. If false metaphysical doctrines are indeed the result of the misunderstanding of the actual use of words, then Wittgenstein's claim that the sole aim of philosophy is to clarify usage is of course correct. The question is whether language and linguistic misunderstanding constitute always the single source of false metaphysical assertions. There is no doubt that ordinary language can be a fertile source of philosophical confusion. This many philosophers before Wittgenstein have pointed out, although few, if any, have considered the scrutiny of the use of words as the only cure of this confusion. But there are other sources of philosophical puzzlement which are found,

for instance, in the limitation of human experience and intellect, in faulty logic; and if metaphysical doctrines arise from these, they cannot be solved by a mere linguistic elucidation.

As the role of philosophy is not to make discoveries but to remove the obstacles to the understanding by clarifying linguistic usage, it is critical, negative, destructive - although, Wittgenstein adds, what it destroys is not worth preserving. «Where does our investigation get its importance from since it seems only to destroy everything interesting, that is all that is great and important? (As it were all the buildings, leaving behind only bits of stone and rubble). What we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards, and we are clearing up the ground of language on which they stand» (PI 118). As such it is similar to psychoanalysis, as we have already pointed out (p. 113): As the psychoanalyst is trying to cure e.g. his patient's phobias by inducing him to recognize the significance of some of his thoughts and actions, so the Wittgensteinian philosopher is trying to dispose of imaginary metaphysical systems and abstract entities by inducing the metaphysician to recognize the linguistic muddles out of which they are fabricated. However the analogy breaks at an important point: The psychoanalyst has a theory about the nature of his patient's mental disorder which the patient can come to understand. The Wittgensteinian philosopher, on the other hand, does not have any theory whatsoever, as his role is simply to describe the workings of language.

If philosophy is purely negative - if it involves the mere destruction of the disease which is metaphysical error - then when the cure is complete, i. e. when linguistic misunderstanding completely disappears, it must come to an end. The question arises: How does Wittgenstein envisage the future of philosophy? Does he think that we are at an end of an era? It may just be that he does and that he conceives the philosopher of the future to be the person who will merely read and discuss the work of the past philosophers and will not be concerned with the solution of any problems. After all, religion did not come to an end in the Enlightenment. However, we can find in Wittgenstein, inconsistently, evidence of a positive view of philosophy as well, a view of philosophy as offering an overall understanding by re-ordering and by systematization. This comes out, for example, when he writes: «We want to establish an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order with a particular end in view; one out of many possible orders; *no the* order. To this end we shall constantly be giving prominence to distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily make us overlook»

(PI 132). Or «We too in these investigations are trying to understand the essence of language - its function, its structure ... something that already lies open to view and that becomes surveyable by rearrangement (PI 92). On the other hand, some evidence of a positive view of philosophy is found in Wittgenstein's own practice of it, despite his efforts to confine himself to a mere description of linguistic phenomena. Thus, for example, when, in his discussion of thinking (PI 316-362, 466-470) he assembles reminders, examines intermediate cases, tabulates the various similarities and differences between thinking and e.g. speaking, he does this «for a particular purpose» (PI 127), i.e. to correct a mistaken theory of the nature of the mind. However, this inevitably involves putting forward a correct theory.

I will finish these critical remarks with a final observation. Wittgenstein's therapeutic does not seem to have had very much success in the last forty years or so. Or else, how can we explain the fact that so many philosophical problems that he attempted to solve have not disappeared?

Π Ε Ρ Ι Λ Η Ψ Η

ΓΛΩΣΣΑ ΚΑΙ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ ΣΤΟΝ ΎΣΤΕΡΟ WITTGENSTEIN

της

Σ. ΔΡΑΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ

Το δοκίμιο στόχο έχει να εξετάσει τις απόψεις του ύστερου Wittgenstein για τη γλώσσα και τη φιλοσοφία όπως αυτές παρουσιάζονται κυρίως στις *Φιλοσοφικές Έρευνες*. Καθώς η θέση του Wittgenstein για τη γλώσσα στο βιβλίο αυτό βασίζεται σε μια κριτική ενάντια στις προηγούμενες απόψεις του, όπως προβάλλονται στο *Tractatus*, εκτίθενται καταρχήν οι πρώιμες αυτές απόψεις περιληπτικά και περιγράφεται στη συνέχεια η κριτική που ασκείται εναντίον τους και η νέα θέση η οποία υιοθετείται. Ένα από τα κύρια στοιχεία της θέσης αυτής είναι η θεωρία νοήματος σύμφωνα με την οποία το νόημα μιας λέξης είναι στενά δεμένο με τη χρήση της. Στο δεύτερο μέρος της μελέτης εξετάζεται η σχέση που κατά τον ύστερο Wittgenstein υπάρχει ανάμεσα στη γλώσσα και τη φιλοσοφία. Η κεντρική άποψη εδώ είναι: ότι φιλοσοφικά προβλήματα είναι συνέπειες των πλανών που δημιουργεί η γλώσσα και ότι σκοπός της φιλοσοφίας είναι η διασάφηση της γλώσσας. Αφού πρώτα συζητηθεί η άποψη αυτή, περιγράφονται οι αιτίες των γλωσσικών πλανών όπως εντοπίζονται από τον ίδιο τον Wittgenstein καθώς και οι μέθοδοι αποσαφήνισης της γλώσσας με στόχο την εξάλειψη των φιλοσοφικών προβλημάτων. Η μελέτη ολοκληρώνεται με ορισμένες κριτικές παρατηρήσεις, κυρίως όσον αφορά τις απόψεις του ύστερου Wittgenstein για τη φιλοσοφία.