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Christoph Jäger  
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Hrsg.

**Erkenntnistheorie: Kontexte, Werte, Dissens**  
**Epistemology: Contexts, Values, Disagreement**

Beiträge

Papers

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7. – 13. August 2011

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Kontexte, Werte, Dissens**

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Contexts, Values, Disagreement**

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## Editors

Christoph Jäger  
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# Making Sense of Faultless Disagreement

Dominik Aeschbacher, Bern, Switzerland

When talking about matters of taste we somehow have the intuition that there is no such thing as a matter of fact which decides whether a speaker is right or wrong in believing that something is tasty or fun. Therefore it is possible that two speakers A and B have a disagreement and neither A nor B is at fault. For instance, if speaker A thinks that Broccoli is tasty and speaker B thinks that Broccoli is not tasty, we tend to have the intuition that B's belief contradicts in some way the belief of A. But more importantly it seems to be obvious that neither A nor B are at fault. This kind of disagreement usually goes under the name *faultless disagreement* and is one of the main motivations for preferring semantic relativism over contextualism. A more precise analysis of faultless disagreement is provided by Max Kölbel:

"A faultless disagreement is a situation where there is a thinker A, a thinker B, and a proposition (content of judgement) *p*, such that:

- (a) A believes (judges) that *p* and B believes (judges) that not-*p*
  - (b) Neither A nor B has made a mistake (is at fault)."
- (Kölbel 2004, p.53/54)

Some people are skeptical about the possibility of this kind of disagreement. Isidora Stojanovic (2007) has argued that what *prima facie* seems to be a faultless disagreement is either some kind of genuine disagreement, where one speaker is mistaken, or not a disagreement at all but a misunderstanding. If we deal with a misunderstanding, then the speakers will settle their dispute by showing that they were actually talking about different things. Consider again the example above where the speakers disagree about whether Broccoli is tasty: If speaker B contradicts speaker A, then A can settle the dispute by saying that she just meant that Broccoli is tasty for *her*. Thus, what seemed to be a disagreement wasn't a disagreement at all, for A and B were talking about their own preferences. On the other hand, if A doesn't withdraw her claim, then she must claim something stronger: That there is actually some kind of objective standard which applies to both speaker A and B. In that case, one speaker is wrong and therefore the disagreement is not faultless. Since there can be only a misunderstanding or a genuine disagreement, there is no place for faultless disagreement.

That this criticism is mistaken gets clear, when we have look at the way how the authors understand the notion of disagreement. According to Kölbel's definition, two speakers seem to disagree if and only if one of them believes a proposition *P* and the other speaker its negation  $\neg P$ . But that's not how Stojanovic understands disagreement. For her, disagreement looks rather like this: "For any two utterances *u*<sub>1</sub> and *u*<sub>2</sub>, the utterer of *u*<sub>1</sub> disagrees with the utterer of *u*<sub>2</sub> only if: if *u*<sub>1</sub> is true, then *u*<sub>2</sub> is false, and if *u*<sub>1</sub> is false, then *u*<sub>2</sub> is true (Stojanovic 2007, p. 692)." While Kölbel is talking about the contradictory beliefs of two subjects, Stojanovic talks about contradictory utterances of two speakers. I think that this makes a great difference and I will argue that Stojanovic's objection is based on an equivocation.

According to Hermann Cappelen and John Hawthorne (C&H 2009) we can understand *to agree* and *to disagree* in two different ways. Sometimes the verb *to agree* picks out the state of an individual or of a group of individuals.

According to this understanding, some individuals agree that *P* if they all believe the proposition that *P*. C&H call this kind of agreement *agreement as a state*. But you can also understand agreement as some kind of activity where agreeing that *P* is the endpoint of a debate or negotiation. According to C&H, *to agree* in this sense denotes a specific event and I would add that this is probably some kind of speech act. The latter, unlike the former, presupposes that the speakers engage in a conversation and interact with each other.

If we apply this distinction *mutatis mutandis* on the verb *to disagree*, then I think that we can make explicit where critics like Stojanovic are mistaken: Stojanovic's criticism is only justified when we take *to disagree* in the sense of an activity. If two speakers disagree actively, then either both of them made a mistake and the disagreement is only superficially a disagreement or they have a genuine disagreement where one of the speakers made a mistake. But this has nothing to do with the kind of disagreement in which the relativist is interested. If we look at Kölbel's definition of faultless disagreement, then it should become clear that he had more the state sense of disagreement in mind than the action sense. In his definition of faultless disagreement he writes very clearly that two speakers disagree if and only if they have contradictory beliefs and not when they are uttering contradictory utterances. So, what the relativist wants to do is to account for the intuition that a speaker A and speaker B can have contradictory beliefs on some matters and neither A nor B is at fault. This doesn't mean that the speakers must be debating about it, but rather that they cannot adopt the belief of their opponent without getting into a contradiction. Since Stojanovic equivocates this two different uses of *to agree* and *to disagree*, I conclude that faultless disagreement stays untouched by her objection.

There remains still one thing to show: Does Stojanovic's objection also apply to disagreement in the state sense? I don't think so, but in order to show this I have to argue that these two kinds of disagreement are fundamentally different. Therefore, I will now compare these two kinds of disagreement.

A possible explanation of how disagreement in the activity-sense works can be found in Keith DeRose's "Single Scoreboard Semantics" (DeRose2004). In this Paper, DeRose tries to account for the possibility of a disagreement when we take knowledge ascriptions like "S knows that *P*" to be context sensitive in their truth value. More precisely, he wants to explain how a speaker can disagree with a skeptic who raises the epistemic standards in an everyday conversation. To say "Come on, are you crazy? Sure I know that *P*," seems to be a natural reaction in this situation, but since this answer is false relative to the standards of the skeptic and true relative to the standards of its opponent, the speakers are somehow talking past one another. In order to solve this problem, Keith DeRose has proposed the metaphor of a scoreboard which shows us which epistemic standards are relevant in the actual conversation. According to this view, each conversation provides something like a scoreboard which indicates the epistemic standards which are relevant for the purpose of the conversation. Since there can be only one relevant standard, the speakers have a genuine disagreement and

one of them makes a mistake. The same can be applied *mutatis mutandis* for predicates of taste and other context sensitive expressions.

As John MacFarlane (2007) has pointed out correctly, analyzing disagreement in this way doesn't give us enough disagreement. We take two speakers to be in a disagreement even when one of them died a long time ago or when one of them lives on the other side of the planet. In that case, there can be no single-scoreboard for a single-scoreboard is bound to a single conversation. Since the single-scoreboard metaphor only works for intra-conversational disagreement and not for inter-conversational disagreement, MacFarlane rejects it. I think that he drops this idea way to fast. What his objection shows is not that the single-scoreboard metaphor is not adequate, but that it doesn't apply to all kinds of disagreement. Since the scoreboard metaphor works perfectly for intra-conversational disagreement, it works only for disagreement in the active sense (because this kind of disagreement is always intra-conversational). But it doesn't work for disagreement in the state-sense. This can be explained as follows: Since disagreement in the sense of an activity presupposes a single standard which is provided by the conversation, disagreement must be relativized to this particular standard. But if we take disagreement merely in the state-sense, then it is sufficient to have contradictory propositions without assessing them to a particular standard provided by the context of utterance (though they still have to be assessed relative to a standard). Here is a more precise definition<sup>1</sup>:

*Disagreement as a state:* Two speakers A and B disagree in the state-sense about a proposition P if and only if a) A believes P and B believes  $\neg P$ , and b) P and  $\neg P$  cannot both be true according to a single standard S.

*Disagreement as an activity:* Two speakers A and B disagree in the activity-sense about a proposition P in a context of utterance C if and only if a) A believes P and B believes  $\neg P$ , and b) A expresses P by an utterance U and B expresses  $\neg P$  by an utterance  $\neg U$ , and c) P and  $\neg P$  cannot both be true according to a single standard S provided by C.

I don't want to explain how the standard in C is provided, but I think that DeRose's scoreboard metaphor is a promising explanation. Furthermore, disagreement in the state-sense must be relativized to a particular standard too, but unlike disagreement as an activity it doesn't have to be relativized to a particular standard provided by the context of utterance.

Now we can see that the two kinds of disagreement are different in an important way and that Stojanovic's criticism doesn't apply to disagreement in the state sense: Since it is completely sufficient for disagreement in the state sense that two subjects believe contradictory propositions (which can be assessed from any context of assessment), it isn't possible to have a misunderstanding. Either a disagreement in the state-sense is genuine, while one of the speakers is at fault, or we have a faultless disagreement where the subjects believe contradictory propositions. Because of this, I think that Stojanovic's criticism really misses its target. Furthermore, the distinction between these two kinds of disagreement can account for an everyday intuition: We don't think that it makes sense to debate about matters of taste but, we are still inclined to say that there is a contradiction between a speaker A who thinks that Broccoli is tasty and a speaker B who thinks

that Broccoli is not tasty. For example, it is impossible for A to adopt B's belief without changing her mind. We can explain this intuition by saying that the speakers believe contradictory propositions and therefore they disagree in the state-sense. But since there is no single standard in their conversation, they cannot disagree in the activity-sense. And this is actually what we understand by *faultless disagreement*.

In the remainder of this paper I will show that the distinction between disagreement in the state-sense and disagreement as an activity gives us an argument to prefer relativism over contextualism. Since disagreement in the state sense is not bound to a conversation, relativism can explain why we think that there is still a disagreement even when we deal with context sensitive expressions. Unlike contextualism, relativism takes the semantic value of context sensitive expressions to be invariant. Therefore, a disagreement is also possible outside of a conversation. Contextualists, on the other hand, cannot account for disagreement outside of a conversation, because according to them, context sensitive expressions change their content with the context of utterance. For the same reason, relativism can also account for the intuition of faultless disagreement while contextualism cannot. But more importantly, only relativism can also account for disagreement in the activity-sense. My definition of disagreement in the activity-sense shows that it entails disagreement in the state-sense. Therefore, disagreement in the state-sense is a necessary but insufficient condition for disagreement in the activity-sense. Thus, in order to disagree in the activity sense, two speakers must disagree in the state-sense and since only relativism can account for the possibility of disagreement in the state-sense, only relativism can account for disagreement in the activity sense. This must be surprising for contextualists like DeRose, for even when they apply the single-scoreboard metaphor, they cannot account for the possibility of a disagreement in the activity-sense. I think that this speaks against all forms of contextualism (epistemic contextualism, contextualism of predicates of taste etc.)

To sum up: I think that despite of the criticism of the notion of faultless disagreement, it is a healthy intuition that should not be denied too easily. When differing between two kinds of disagreement, that is to say to disagree as a state and to disagree as an activity, it makes completely sense to accept faultless disagreement. Since disagreement as a state is a necessary condition for disagreement as an activity and since disagreement as a state can only be explained by a relativist framework, it follows that disagreement in the sense of an activity can only be explained by relativism. This gives us a good reason to prefer relativism over contextualism.

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<sup>1</sup> Those readers which are familiar with (C&H 2009) will realize that my definition differs significantly from the way how C&H understand these two kinds of disagreement.

# Eine reliabilistische Rechtfertigung des Wertes von Wissen über Theorien

Albert J.J. Anglberger & Christian J. Feldbacher, Salzburg, Austria

Klassischerweise wird das sogenannte Menon-Problem auf Aussagesätze bezogen diskutiert. Es geht dabei um die folgende Frage (cf. Pritchard 2007):

## MENON-PROBLEM.

Warum ist es erkenntnistheoretisch wertvoller, einen wahren Aussagesatz zu wissen, als ihn nur zu glauben?

Viele Theorien zur Beantwortung dieser Frage können zu einigen wenigen erkenntnistheoretischen Positionen zusammengefasst werden – wir wollen hier nur kurz auf zwei dieser Positionen eingehen:

## REVISIONISTISCHE POSITION.

Es erscheint uns erkenntnistheoretisch wertvoller, einen wahren Aussagesatz zu wissen, als ihn nur zu glauben; tatsächlich ist dies jedoch nicht der Fall.

Begründet wird die revisionistische Position z.B. mit der Behauptung, dass es – von einem pragmatischen Standpunkt betrachtet – von gleichem Nutzen ist, einen wahren Aussagesatz zu wissen, als ihn nur zu glauben (cf. Kaplan 1985, p.361). Dass man im Wissensfalle beispielsweise auch noch zusätzliche Rechtfertigungsgründe angeben kann, ist für eine revisionistische Antwort auf das Menon-Problem nicht weiter von Bedeutung, da man ja im Allgemeinen nicht voraussetzt, dass die Gründe, die man zur Rechtfertigung von Glaubenseinstellungen anführt, selbst wiederum gewusst werden müssen. Damit hat man im Wissensfall durch Angabe von Rechtfertigungsgründen kein zusätzliches, über den Aussagesatz hinausgehendes (und damit erkenntnistheoretisch wertvolles) Wissen. Anders fällt die Antwort auf das Menon-Problem in der reliabilistischen Position aus:

## RELIABILISTISCHE POSITION.

1. Wenn jemand einen Aussagesatz weiß, dann glaubt er den Aussagesatz aufgrund eines allgemein-reliablen Verfahrens (z.B. Aufgrund allgemein-reliabler Untersuchungen).
2. Wenn jemand einen Aussagesatz nur glaubt (d.h. er glaubt ihn, weiß ihn aber nicht), dann glaubt er den Aussagesatz nicht aufgrund eines allgemein-reliablen Verfahrens.
3. Allgemein-reliable Verfahren sind erkenntnistheoretisch wertvoller (instrumentell oder intrinsisch) als alle anderen Verfahren zur Bildung oder Rechtfertigung von Glaubenszuständen.
4. Daher: Es ist wertvoller, einen Aussagesatz zu wissen, als ihn nur zu glauben.

Die Prämissen 1 und 2 sind in der reliabilistischen Position mehr oder weniger definitiv wahr. Prämisse 3 kann erkenntnis- und wissenschaftstheoretisch weiter untersucht und begründet werden. Was jedoch hauptsächlich problematisch ist, ist der Übergang von den Prämissen 1-3 auf 4: Nur weil Wissen über einen Aussagesatz durch ein erkenntnistheoretisch wertvolles Verfahren gewonnen wurde, ist noch nicht sichergestellt, dass das Wissen über den Aussagesatz auch erkenntnistheoretisch wertvoll ist.

Dieser Einwand wird u.a. von Linda Zagzebski gemacht (cf. Zagzebski 2003, pp.141ff).

Im Folgenden wollen wir für diesen Übergang argumentieren. Wir "bringen" dafür das Menon-Problem von der Ebene der Aussagesätze auf die Ebene der Theorien und stellen uns die Frage, ob es erkenntnistheoretisch wertvoller ist, eine wahre Theorie zu wissen oder einfach nur zu glauben. Im Speziellen werden wir dafür argumentieren, dass – ganz im Sinne des Reliabilismus – adäquaterweise genau jene Theorien gewusst werden können, die allgemein-reliabel testbar sind. Wir wollen dabei Theorien, die prinzipiell gewusst werden können, als 'allgemein-reliable Theorien' bezeichnen.

Beginnen wir gleich mit unserer Argumentation: Was ein allgemein-reliabler Test ist, kann einigermaßen klar angegeben werden:

## DEFINITION 'allgemein-reliabler Test'.

t ist ein allgemein-reliabler Test einer Theorie gdw t eine intersubjektive und wissenschaftsfundierende Methode ist.

Als Methode fassen wir hier ganz klassisch eine Gesamtheit von Beschreibung eines Anfangs-, Beschreibung eines Endzustandes und einer Menge von Anweisungen, mit denen man vom beschriebenen Anfangs- zum beschriebenen Endzustand gelangen sollte, auf. Dass eine dieserart angegebene Methode intersubjektiv ist, heißt dann, dass prinzipiell jeder, der die Anweisungen der Methode befolgt, bei gleichen Anfangsbedingungen zu gleichen Ergebnissen kommt. Mit 'prinzipiell' wird die Menge der Personen eingeschränkt auf die Menge jener, die die Terminologie der Methode verstehen und damit anwenden können.

Als wissenschaftsfundierend werden hier hinsichtlich Theorien jene Methoden angesehen, die den Grad der Sicherheit einer Einschätzung einer Theorie im Lichte von Datenmengen erhöhen, wobei als Datenmenge jede Teilmenge der Menge aller (wahren oder falschen) Beobachtungssätze einer Sprache anzusehen ist:

## BEDEUTUNGSPOSTULAT 'wissenschaftsfundierende Methode'.

Wenn eine Methode t wissenschaftsfundierend ist, dann sind Ausgangspunkt von t Theorien  $T_1$ ,  $T_2$ , eine Wahrscheinlichkeitsfunktion p und eine Datenmenge B, sodass gilt:  $T_1$  und  $T_2$  stehen in der Identitäts- oder Teilmengenbeziehung zueinander und das Ergebnis von t hat den Wert 0, im Falle, dass  $p(T_2, B) < p(T_1, B)$  oder  $T_2$  logisch falsch ist; das Ergebnis von t hat den Wert 1 in allen anderen Fällen.

Es ist leicht zu erkennen, dass wir hier 'wissenschaftsfundierend' einfach bestätigungstheoretisch beschrieben haben. Die Beschränkung auf die Testergebnisse 0 und 1 ist eine starke Vereinfachung, die wir vornehmen, da wir hier 'wissenschaftsfundierend' rein klassifikatorisch und nicht z.B. komparativ verwenden wollen. Dass wir für den Ausgangspunkt einer wissenschaftsfundierenden Methode anstelle von einer Theorie zwei gewählt haben, liegt daran, dass wir unseren Ansatz zu einer reliabilistischen Lösung des Menon-Problems auch auf nicht-empirische Theorien anzuwenden gedenken. Vorläufig nur soviel dazu:  $T_1$  ist

für nicht-empirische Theorien, T2 ist für empirische Theorien, die auf T1 aufbauen, intendiert.

Beispielsweise sind Konsistenzuntersuchungen von Theorien allgemein-reliable Tests, da für mindestens eine Datenmenge B gilt: Ist eine Theorie konsistent, dann ist  $p(T,B) \geq p(T)$  und damit ist das Testergebnis 1. Ist eine Theorie inkonsistent, dann ist sie auch logisch falsch und damit ist das Testergebnis 0. Es kann leicht gezeigt werden, dass Verifikation, Falsifikation, Bestätigung und Untergrabung allgemein-reliable Tests im angegebenen Sinne sind. Zudem sind gängige Verfahren zum Test von statistischen Hypothesen in diesem Sinne allgemein-reliable Tests. Intersubjektivität ist in allen Fällen gewährleistet. Auch z.B. die von Nelson Goodman vorgeschlagene Methode, die Repräsentativität von Gesetzen einer Theorie hinsichtlich einer Datenmenge zu überprüfen, ist ein solcher Test (cf. für eine populäre Darstellung Goodman 1990, Kapitel VII.5). Man kann sogar noch weiter gehen und in diesem Sinne allgemein-reliable Tests entwickeln, die die Anwendbarkeit oder Nützlichkeit von nicht-empirischen Theorien betreffen. Ein solcher Test könnte z.B. das Ergebnis 0 liefern, wenn eine Theorie kaum für empirische Theorien anwendbar ist und in allen anderen Fällen 1. Beispielsweise setzt die ursprünglich formulierte Newtonsche Physik eine euklidische Geometrie voraus – es besteht also zwischen diesen beiden Theorien eine Teilmengenbeziehung – und die Newtonsche Physik ist hinsichtlich einer Datenmenge allgemein-reliabel testbar. Damit sind euklidische Geometrien relevant empirisch anwendbar. Andererseits wurde gezeigt, dass die allgemeine Relativitätstheorie eine nicht-euklidische Geometrie voraussetzt und so, durch ihren weiteren Anwendungsbereich, nicht-euklidische Geometrien weiter empirisch anwendbar sind. Implizit, und vielfach nur in heuristischer Weise, befassen sich mit der Konstruktion solcher Tests zur Nützlichkeit Institutionen zur Forschungsförderung etc. Wie genau solche Tests adäquat gestaltet werden können, ist klarerweise ein offenes und nach Auffassung vieler sogar ein nicht-lösbares Problem, da die Annahme, dass es solche Tests gibt, vielen unplausibel erscheint. Nichtsdestotrotz soll hier von dieser starken Annahme ausgegangen werden. Sie ist damit wohl der hauptsächlichste Schwachpunkt unserer Argumentation.

Im Gegensatz zu diesen klassischen Tests sind Methoden wie Akzeptanz oder Ablehnung von Theorien aufgrund spiritueller Erfahrungen weder intersubjektiv noch wissenschaftsfundierend – diese Behauptung kann empirisch untersucht werden. Die Frage, ob Introspektion eine in unserem Sinne allgemein-reliable Methode zur Akzeptanz oder Ablehnung von Theorien über Daten ist, ist Teil vieler Debatten, z.B. von Debatten zur Adäquatheit qualitativer Methoden in der Sozialforschung etc. Auch diese Frage wird empirisch hinsichtlich Wissenschaftsfundiertheit untersucht.

Ist in dieser Weise geklärt, was allgemein-reliable Tests von anderen Testverfahren unterscheidet, kann man daran gehen, Theorien in Abhängigkeit von ihrer Testbarkeit zu unterscheiden. Wir erweitern dazu einige klassische erkenntnistheoretische Einteilungsbedingungen:

DEFINITION 'a posteriori-Theorie'.

T ist eine a posteriori-Theorie gdw T empirisch untersucht werden kann; d.h.: Für mindestens zwei Datenmengen B1 und B2 und einen allgemein-reliablen Test test gilt:  $\text{test}(T,B1) \neq \text{test}(T,B2)$ .

DEFINITION 'a priori-Theorie'.

T ist eine a priori-Theorie gdw sie nicht a posteriori ist; d.h.: Für alle Datenmengen B1 und B2 und alle allgemein-reliablen Tests test gilt:  $\text{test}(T,B1) = \text{test}(T,B2)$ .

D.h., dass eine Theorie genau dann eine a priori-Theorie ist, wenn alle allgemein-reliablen Tests hinsichtlich aller Datenmengen – d.h. hinsichtlich aller möglichen "Zustandsbeschreibungen" im Sinne von Rudolf Carnap (cf. Carnap 1975, p.9) – zum selben Ergebnis kommen. Wir wenden auch noch zwei weitere klassische Einteilungsbedingungen auf Theorien folgenderweise an:

DEFINITION 'analytische Theorie'.

T ist analytisch gdw T nur logische, definitorische oder rein theoretische Folgerungen (das sind Folgerungen mit nur logischen und theoretischen Zeichen) hat.

DEFINITION 'synthetische Theorie'.

T ist synthetisch gdw T nicht analytisch ist.

Beispielsweise ist die allgemeine Relativitätstheorie zusammen mit Randbedingungen eine synthetische a posteriori-Theorie, da sie empirische Folgerungen hat und unterschiedliche Daten zu unterschiedlichen Testergebnissen führen; näherhin ist sie sogar falsifikationistisch testbar. Hingegen sind alle mathematischen Theorien, wenn man sich nur auf die klassischen allgemein-reliablen Tests ohne Nützlichkeitsüberlegungen beschränkt, analytische a priori-Theorien, da sie nur logische, definitorische und theoretische Folgerungen haben und jeder allgemein-reliable Test unabhängig von der gewählten Datenmenge zum selben Ergebnis kommt. Auch die meisten philosophischen Theorien sind aus denselben Gründen analytische a priori-Theorien. Zieht man zudem wissenschaftliche Tests zur Nützlichkeit von Theorien in Betracht, dann sind auch mathematische Theorien wie die Geometrie und philosophische Theorien der Metaphysik im oben angegebenen Sinn analytische a posteriori-Theorien: Sie enthalten höchstens logische, definitorische oder rein-theoretische Folgerungen, sind aber hinsichtlich ihrer Anwendbarkeit in empirischen Theorien allgemein-reliabel testbar in dem Sinne, dass mindestens zwei unterschiedliche Datenmengen bei einem solchen Test zu unterschiedlichen Testergebnissen führen. Der Bezug solcher Theorien zu einer Datenmenge ist aber sehr lose, etwas pauschal gesprochen: Unterschiedliche, als wahr angenommene Datenmengen führen zu unterschiedlichen empirischen Theorien und unterschiedliche empirische Theorien setzen unterschiedliche nicht-empirische Theorien voraus.

Die gegebene Einteilung von Theorien gemäß der vier Bedingungen (analytisch, synthetisch, a priori und a posteriori) ist bis hierher analog zu klassischen Einteilungen von Sätzen: Wird die Menge der allgemein-reliablen Tests solcherart eingeschränkt, dass dadurch keine Nützlichkeitsüberlegungen angestellt werden, dann kommt man vorläufig zu dem Ergebnis, dass die hier angesprochenen und gemeinhin als allgemein-reliable Theorien angesehenen Theorien analytisch und a priori oder synthetisch und a posteriori sind. Bekanntlich haben logische Positivisten, wie z.B. Carnap, eine vollständige und disjunkte Einteilung von Sätzen in die Menge der analytischen a priori-Sätze und die Menge der synthetischen a posteriori-Sätze vorgeschlagen; und bekanntlich haben logische Positivisten im Allgemeinen auch einen "lockeren Umgang" in der Verwendung von 'logisch' gehabt, d.h. sie haben diesen Ausdruck relativ weit gebraucht. Dies spiegelt sich in der gegebenen ersten Einteilung von Theorien darin wieder, dass keine allgemein-reliablen Tests zur Nützlichkeit angestellt werden – getreu dem Motto: Theoretisch erlaubt ist, was konsistent ist. In der gegebenen zweiten Einteilung, in der auch Nützlichkeitsüberlegungen angestellt werden, gelangt man zu dem Ergebnis, dass alle gemeinhin als allgemein-reliabel angesehenen Theorien analytisch und a priori, synthetisch

und a posteriori oder analytisch und a posteriori in einem sehr weiten Sinn sind. Bekanntlich läuft eine Einteilung von Sätzen vom Urheber dieser Einteilungsbedingungen, Immanuel Kant, ganz analog dazu. Wir stehen derzeit also bei folgendem Ergebnis zu allgemein-reliablen Theorien:

	a priori	a posteriori
analytisch	+	+/-
synthetisch	?	+

Was aber ist mit der Menge der synthetischen a priori-Theorien? Bezogen auf Sätze wird, mit nur wenigen Ausnahmen – wie z.B. Saul Kripke –, die Meinung vertreten, dass diese Menge leer ist. Bezogen auf Theorien scheint diese Menge aber nicht leer zu sein: Sie enthält genau all jene Theorien, die zwar empirische Folgerungen haben, die sich jedoch jeder allgemein-reliablen empirischen Untersuchung widersetzen. Im Falle, dass keine Nützlichkeitsüberlegungen in allgemein-reliablen Tests angestellt werden, sind das genau jene Theorien, die zwar konsistent und empirisch sind, die aber Daten-immun sind, d.h.: die mit allen Fällen verträglich sind. In diese Kategorie fällt nach Auffassung vieler z.B. die Freud'sche Psychoanalyse als nicht allgemein-reliable Theorie (cf. Popper 1995, pp.113ff). Im Falle, dass auch Nützlichkeitsüberlegungen mitangestellt werden, sind das genau jene Theorien, die konsistent, empirisch, Daten-immun und, da zwar Nützlichkeitsüberlegungen relevant ist, aber die Theorie dennoch a priori ist, auch noch unnützlich sind. In diese Kategorie fallen nach Auffassung vieler die nicht-biologischen Ergänzungen des Kreationismus als nicht allgemein-reliable Theorie (cf. Bird 1998, Einleitung). Dies führt uns zu folgendem Vorschlag, der im Lichte der gegebenen Beispiele adäquat erscheint:

DEFINITION 'allgemein-reliable Theorie'.

Eine Theorie T ist allgemein-reliabel gdw T nicht synthetisch a priori ist.

Mit dieser – unserer Ansicht nach – adäquaten explikativen Festsetzung gilt, dass genau die Theorien, die gewusst werden können, auch allgemein-reliabel testbar in dem Sinne sind, dass mindestens ein allgemein-reliabler Test bei mindestens zwei unterschiedlichen Datenmengen zu unterschiedlichen Testergebnissen führt. Bei Theorien, die nur geglaubt (d.h. geglaubt, aber nicht gewusst) werden, gilt dies nicht immer: z.B. ist keine synthetische a priori-Theorie in diesem Sinne allgemein-reliabel testbar, da jeder allgemein-reliabler Test, unabhängig von der gewählten Datenbasis immer zum gleichen Testergebnis kommt. Damit sind aber solche Theorien nur mit einem erkenntnistheoretisch weniger wertvollen Verfahren zu gewinnen, als dies bei den allgemein-reliabel testbaren Theorien der Fall ist. Und damit sind solche wahren Theorien, die gewusst werden können, zumindest intrinsisch erkenntnistheoretisch wertvoller als solche wahren Theorien, die nur geglaubt, nicht aber gewusst werden können.

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# Referring to Circumstances

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I will focus on the concept of intention, although this word will hardly be mentioned. I will try to outline some aspects of this concept, mainly what it is to perceive an intention, and to evaluate one. This will lead to the idea of a 'circumstance' or 'situation' which I argue is secondary in relation to the concept of 'intention'. I will defend that we normally understand intentions rather than acquiring any kind of technique that enables us to identify them. Nonetheless, I will not fully dispense of the concept of 'circumstance' or 'situation', but try to dissolve these into a broader description of the idea of 'intention'.

In the *Investigations* Wittgenstein faces a similar problem to the one above. He does not offer a solution, but his commentary points out an interesting aspect of the problem. In §591 Wittgenstein makes the following remark:

[Are there] experiences of 'tending'? – Remember this case: if one urgently wants to make some remark, some objection in a discussion, it often happens that one opens one's mouth, draws a breath and holds it; if one then decides to let the objection go, one lets the breath out. The experience of this process is evidently the experience of tending towards saying something.

In the first part of his remark, Wittgenstein describes what would be the noticing of a certain kind of interior process characteristic of a certain intention. The interesting aspect of this remark is the example Wittgenstein chose. He speaks of a tendency to talk, without mentioning what that person would say. The tendency described is general, a tendency to talk rather than a tendency to say\_\_\_\_. Of course when we finish Wittgenstein's paragraph we find out he has less hope for the idea of an interior movement than this quotation seems to indicate. But this set back, as if his attack on every description that postulates an interior process throughout the *Investigations* had gone too far, reveals something important. The example describes someone who is having a discussion, and is therefore in a particular circumstance. But if that person is noticing a tendency like the one described, then she has to notice what that tendency to talk is about, in the sequence of *that* discussion. This simply means the conditions of identity cannot be, for the person experiencing the tendency, as general as the ones Wittgenstein describes. Wittgenstein's description is from the point of view of someone who is watching this person having this tendency, rather than the person herself. Here it is important these two levels get confused in the same example. One also notices his example of an experience of this particular tendency is a description of physical features. Partially, this confusion shows us Wittgenstein's position. It seems he holds a place for the notion of 'tendency' but not a private one. This notion is dependent on a particular circumstance, and will serve to highlight an aspect about the latter notion. Of course we can, dismissing my claim that this description fuses two different levels, interpret Wittgenstein as saying the person who has this tendency could say something like: 1)'I am having the tendency to talk'. I think it is unlikely someone utters a sentence like this. Rather it would be expected the person in question, when asked about what she was going to say answers: 2)'Well, I was thinking about saying that\_\_\_\_.' The interesting aspect about 1) is that it can be the answer to 'Were you having a tendency to talk?' But this is a specialized question (one about something you already knew, unless doubt prevails over

the identity of those physical movements). As I have said before, it is unlikely for someone to have this tendency without having the tendency to say anything at all. But the example has another aspect: Wittgenstein's *characteristic* description of someone who just gave up saying something. We want to say, together with Wittgenstein, that this is a characteristic description. Yet we suspect it will not tell us anything about the meaning of people's intentions. This is because we know the total sum of these characteristic descriptions do not give us the key to what people are intending. But Wittgenstein's fusing of two perspectives in the same example gives us an insight into how we understand circumstances. Consider the following: I am sitting at a table, and there are several people around me. I try to catch someone's attention by looking at that person. After doing so, I look with an inquiring expression at some corner of the room. The person's eyes follow my indications, and she turns around to find out there is nothing noticeable. All of the time I was doing this with the sole intention of conducting an experiment. I myself hadn't noticed anything about that specific corner. The person I fooled did understand the situation *well*: she thought I was indicating something. Of course here 'to understand well' has a peculiar sense. What we have is an example in the same family as Wittgenstein's; it stresses what you get when you try to describe a tendency. We see, since I have fooled this person, she did not, in a sense, get it right. The tension lies in this habitual sense of sign (of which our description seems to be a case), and a sense where these signs are constituents involved in our judgments. Back to my example, we can say that doubt about my actions might even prevail, and after a while this person might ask me what I was looking at in that manner. She would be looking for an answer like in 2). We could even say that something like 1) is obvious to her. But there is yet another possibility. She might, after not noticing anything special in that corner of the room, give up, because anything past that situation would be uninteresting to her, as if her interest in my action had expired its validity date. My example shows two sets of related concepts. First, the characteristic features of a situation or circumstance do not necessarily tell us anything about their meaning. Second, the understanding of a particular circumstance is dependent upon the interest someone shows for that particular circumstance. Both these aspects lead to the thought that the identification of a circumstance or situation is a complex one. First we have a relation between the identifying procedure of a circumstance and a particular circumstance. Second, we have the relation between that particular circumstance and the interest of the person who identified it.

I would like to start by commenting on the second pair just mentioned. When I refer to a particular interest in an occasion, I am referring to a competence that can, although not always, be trained. This kind of competence was for Rousseau crucial to the proper work of a lawgiver. Since, the lawgiver cannot "mistake his object" and "build[s] on principles that differ from what is demanded by the circumstances" (98). Here the inquiring interest of the lawgiver cannot expire on a passing occasion. We want to say he has to have a general interest at all times. To understand what the circumstances demand presupposes the ability to understand them as entrapping the necessities of their protagonists. As in Wittgenstein's example, that particular configuration of body movements entrapped

the necessity to say something. Of course here there is a crucial distinction between Wittgenstein's example and Rousseau's lawgiver. It is easier to fake a bodily reaction than the necessities of civil society. That is, in the first case we have a very thin relation between certain muscles moving and the meaning of these movements, and Wittgenstein will indeed in §594 talk about these as an inclination as opposed to a "testimony" to guess what was said. Wittgenstein's description has a rather positive tone to it. Since he, nonetheless, maintains that these movements show us a tendency. Of course even in the case of faking, these movements show that this person knows how to *mean something* by acting *somehow*. In turn, Rousseau's lawgiver has to be aware of how the application of certain norms are recognized or not by its users. Intuitively we make the first case (hence, the thinness) to be dependent on a certain correlation between these two different things (muscles, meanings), while in the second one we would hesitate (lots of muscles, lots of meanings). Apart from the difference I have mentioned before, there is no need to distinguish these radically. The difference in identifying circumstances is in both these cases one of degree. So we have a particular and a general sense of interest in a circumstance. I want to argue that, despite the differences pointed out, they share an important aspect: that circumstances are normally brought about by people, and what these circumstances mean is not necessarily dependent on a particular aspect they might show. In the same manner, the way people bring these about does not have to be through any kind of explicit performative (a kind of iconology). So when we look at the particular case and contrast it with the general one, we learn not to look for any particular body configuration or specific correlation. By doing the opposite exercise, we realize that the lack of faith we acquired through being fooled in particular cases, serves as a warning not to adopt an external point of view considering meaning and so construct general cases as instances of particular ones.

Now returning to the *Investigations*, the second part of §591 reads the following:

Anyone who observes me will know that I wanted to say something and then thought better of it. In this situation, that is. – In a different one he would not so interpret my behaviour, however characteristic of the intention to speak it may be in the present situation.

I think that Wittgenstein is referring here to something like I have been calling interest, though not explicitly. He talks of someone's capacity to understand a circumstance, despite any typicality. But there is another important aspect here: the italics on "*this*". Wittgenstein means a *specific* circumstance, not in virtue of its appearance but rather of its meaning. This expression is a referring one. Furthermore in this case, the demonstrative does not work as usual. These expressions normally require more than just an utterance. They sometimes rely on a pointing gesture, for example. But here it is strange to imagine pointing at a circumstance, or someone asking 'Which one?' and the reply 'That one!'. But it is not unusual that someone inquires regarding what to do in particular circumstances. This inquiring is here very important. We are in this case tempted to say that the person is inquiring about what she is supposed to look for. The difference in the *questioning method* shows an aspect of how we construct identity in both cases. A circumstance is not a question about identity in a referential sense. Here again we are reminded of what I have called the more general cases. Like the lawgiver, our interest helps us notice aspects about the circumstances, and what these require from us. This competence is nonetheless not completely constitutive of the circumstance. This is, of course, the motivational force behind the inquiry into what to do in a particular circumstance. We

should keep in mind the lesson we learned from particular cases, namely, that we cannot interpret Wittgenstein's demonstrative as a referring expression as we do in "That frog there [pointing finger at a frog] is 'Froggy the frog'". The demonstrative in this particular use refers something that is paraphrasable, as opposed to a fixed referent. We could represent this difference by saying that we do not have here a demonstrative *d*, that supposits for a referent in a predicative context  $\Phi(\ )$ . But rather a demonstrative *d'* that supposits for a relational expression  $(\ )R(\ )$ , where R will be an appropriate relation between unspecified physical movements and the meaning of these in an act of judgment. The demonstrative is a restriction upon what the movements reported in the example mean. Although if you choose to describe, then you will have a physical description; but that will not be what you are pointing at. The demonstrative is in this case a peculiarity of language, its importance lies in the illustrative character of particular judgments about circumstances. Our use of the demonstrative in these cases shows our active interest in the circumstances we are dealing with. It is only in this way, that it makes a particular contribution to the sense of the judgment expressed.

Now regarding this identifying competence I have been calling *interest*. This competence can be learned and this ability to learn implies that this particular competence can represent a specific value. Being able to understand something bears a value to others. Therefore, this competence can become an obligation in the cases where someone offers it as a trading coin. This is obvious, but I would focus on one aspect. The value of this competence can be exemplified as follows: I solve a particular puzzle by pure chance. Impressed with this, I show it to others. They in turn ask me how I did it. When I say it was by pure coincidence, they respond rather mildly to my accomplishment. The example means to show how to *have* and to *understand* intentions and the circumstances these generate depends on specific values. The assessment of these values is not solely dependent on me. This is again a banality. Although the work of the lawgiver consists in having to be interested in such a banality, we would not call it an easy task. Rousseau himself noticed this, and it is clear in his idea that the spirit of civil society, although it cannot be completely wrong about its will, can be misled. This tension makes the lawgiver's task particularly difficult – a careful balance between understanding the will of civil society and understanding the lack of reason of the misled will. This particular competence is indeed subject to what Rawls (when reading Rousseau) considered a direct consequence of deliberation, namely the capacity for perfectibility. Perfectibility of interest is what is lacking in the example. However sad the mildness of others' reactions to my accomplishments might make me, it might be claimed I still *can bring about*, or that I *am able to bring about* what was missing. For our present discussion this matters in the sense that in many cases of deferral or disagreement about a circumstance, the participants are not cut-off from each other as in a case of contradicting evidence. The disagreement about the fact that what I have done is not a circumstance of solving a puzzle properly is quite sound.

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# Understanding and its Relation to Knowledge

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Epistemology's traditional focus on propositional knowledge has recently been challenged. There is a growing insight that understanding rather than knowledge is our main cognitive goal. It has been argued that acknowledging this admits avoiding the value problem for knowledge (Kvanvig 2003; Pritchard 2010), identifying intellectual virtues (Riggs 2003), accommodating science (Elgin 2007) and defending morality (Hills 2010). The still little literature about the nature of understanding is primarily concerned with its relation to knowledge. Outside epistemology, particularly in the philosophy of science, the standard view is that understanding is a species of knowledge; within epistemology, the standard view is that understanding is neither identical with nor a species of knowledge (Grimm 2006, 515–4).

In this debate, it is not always duly acknowledged that understanding and knowledge come in at least three varieties. Even though ordinary language is not always a reliable guide, they are typically classified in terms of the grammatical form of the ascription as *understanding- or knowledge-that*, *-why* and *objectual* understanding or knowledge. In this paper, I will compare these types of understanding with each other and with different types of knowledge. Since it is rare to talk of understanding that *p*, I focus on understanding-why (the most important form of understanding-why) and objectual understanding and argue that they are not reducible to one another and neither identical with nor even a species of the corresponding or any other type of knowledge. My discussion reveals important characteristics of these types of understanding and has consequences for propositional understanding and its relation to knowledge.

## 1. Understanding-why

Understanding why *p* is neither equivalent with knowing that *p* nor with knowing why *p*. Obviously, you can know that the global surface temperature has increased without understanding why. Testimonial cases show that you can even know why it has increased without understanding why. Suppose a climate scientist explains to you that it has increased mainly because of the increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases. If he is right and you have good reasons to believe in his reliability, you know why the global surface temperature has increased. But as long as you have no grasp of how increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases can cause global warming you do not understand why the global surface temperature has increased.

When you know why *p* (where *q* is why *p*), you correctly *believe* that *p* because of *q*. When you understand why *p*, you additionally have a *grasp* of how *q* can cause *p*. Grasping *q* as the cause or reason why *p* is not the same as correctly believing that *p* because *q* and experiencing a revelation. However strong your experience of revelation is when you know that *p* because of *q*, you do not understand why *p* if you do not have certain abilities. Modifying a suggestion by Hills (2010, 194–5), let us say that if you understand why *p* (and *q* is why *p*), then you are able (1) to comprehend and render an explanation why *p*, which involves an explanatory story about how *q* can cause or be a reason why *p*, (2) draw the conclusion that *p* from the information that *q*, and (3), for some *p\** and *q\**, similar but

not identical to *p* and *q*, draw the conclusion that *p\** from the assumption that *q\**, and, assuming that *p\**, give the right explanation, i.e. *q\**.

Understanding-why is not even a species of knowing-why. Pritchard (2010, 78–9) argues that cases involving environmental epistemic luck illustrate that you can understand why *p* even while failing to know why *p*. Suppose you come to understand why the global temperature has increased by studying a reliable book. Suppose furthermore that all other books about global warming are very unreliable but superficially just as scholarly so that it is only by chance that you have chosen the reliable one. The involved epistemic luck prevents you from knowing since you could easily have bought an unreliable book; but when one has knowledge one's true belief could not have easily been false. However, it does not undermine your understanding. After all, your belief why the global temperature has increased is correct and you assumedly grasp correctly how increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases cause global warming and hence have the requisite abilities. This would still be the case if your own book were the result of some inventive guesswork and thus very unreliable, but its explanation were, as a matter of luck, correct. Hence, I'm inclined to claim against Pritchard and with Hills (2010, 196, fn. 13) that understanding-why is also compatible with standard Gettier-style epistemic luck.

Kvanvig (2003, 197) suggests that understanding has a different relationship to epistemic luck than knowledge due to a difference in focus. When we think about understanding, we focus on grasping explanatory connections and thus on having certain abilities. When we think about knowledge, we focus on believing a proposition that could not easily have been false and thus on non-accidentality. Hence, having acquired the belief in a lucky way undermines knowledge-why, but having acquired the abilities in a lucky way does not undermine understanding-why.

Besides grasping explanatory connections, understanding-why requires having good reflectively accessible grounds in support of one's explanation. Both requirements are internal to cognition since the facts determining that the understander satisfies them are accessible to him. But understanding-why cannot be construed along purely internalist lines. To understand why *p*, one's explanation must answer the facts. Like knowing-why, understanding-why is therefore usually considered factive (Pritchard 2010, 75–6; Hills 2010, 190). The factivity of knowledge follows the truth condition. You know why *p* if you know that *p* because of *q*; this implies that “*p* because of *q*” is true. Hence, understanding-why seems to be factive iff you cannot understand why *p* if you treat *q* as the reason or cause why *p* but “*p*” or “*q*” are false or *q* is not why *p*. However, scientific explanations often make use of idealizations. Even though the ideal gas law is not strictly true for actual gases, in circumstances where the divergence from the ideal is negligible, the behaviour of actual gases is explained by reference to the idealization (Elgin 2007, 38). We can only acknowledge that such explanations provide some understanding-why when we admit that it is not always factive. Non-factive cases are further cases of understanding why *p* without knowing why *p*.

Understanding why *p* involves a whole set of coherent beliefs constituting one's explanation. Even in simple

cases, it involves beside the belief that  $p$  because of  $q$  beliefs about how  $q$  can cause  $p$  and that if  $q^*$  rather than  $q$  were true, then  $p^*$  rather than  $p$  would be true. In complex cases such as explaining global warming, there are several causes that interact in complicated manners. The suggested factivity requirement leaves it open whether all further beliefs must be true for understanding-why in order to be factive. This leads to objectual understanding.

## 2. Objectual understanding

Understanding a subject matter involves more than understanding why some fact about it obtains. Besides understanding why it occurs, understanding global warming involves, for instance, understanding what effects it will have, which relations it has to human activities and how far the temperature is likely to rise in future. As a result, objectual understanding involves grasping more explanatory and other coherence-making relationships in a more comprehensive body of information. Again, the grasping manifests itself in certain abilities (Elgin 2007, 35). Understanding global warming involves being able to comprehend and render explanations for a whole range of facts, draw conclusions from a variety of information and answer “what-if-things-had-been-different?” questions concerning a whole web of explanations; but also to develop emission scenarios, use them to project future concentrations of greenhouse gases, assess uncertainties in climate model projections, and so on.

Objectual understanding is not identical with knowledge since for each type there are cases in which one has knowledge but not objectual understanding. It follows from what has already been said that you can know that and even why a fact about a subject matter  $S$  obtains without understanding  $S$ . To know  $S$  you have to know the important facts about  $S$  and to know how they are related. Nonetheless, you can even know  $S$  without understanding  $S$ , namely when you fail to grasp the relations between the facts and thus do not have the requisite abilities.

Objectual understanding is not even a species of knowledge since for each type there are cases in which one has objectual understanding but not knowledge. If environmental and standard Gettier-style epistemic luck do not undermine your understanding of the causes of global warming, then they do not undermine your understanding of global warming either. But they prevent you also from having objectual knowledge. The reason is that we are inclined to explain knowledge of  $S$  in terms of knowledge of the facts involved in  $S$ ; at least, we should claim that knowing  $S$  involves knowing a number of facts constituting  $S$  (Kvanvig 2003, 197). Hence, if epistemic luck prevents you from knowing that and why some fact about  $S$  obtains, it prevents you also from knowing  $S$ . Thinking otherwise would separate the different types of knowledge too much.

Having environmental or standard Gettier-style epistemic luck is very unlikely with respect to theories about such complex phenomena as global warming. Non-factive cases of objectual understanding, however, are quite frequent. Objectual understanding is factive iff most of the propositions and all of the central propositions that constitute the account of the subject matter are true. It is not always factive for two reasons (Elgin 2007, 36–9). Firstly, it can be more or less accurate. Previous and even current scientific theories do not largely consist of truths with a few relatively insignificant falsehoods at the periphery. Hence, we can only acknowledge that science provides some understanding if we admit that even some rather central falsehoods lower the degree of understanding but do not

destroy it if they are in the right neighbourhood. Kvanvig (2003, 190) objects that we in such cases use “understanding” in an honorific sense, just as “knowledge” when we speak of “the current state of scientific knowledge”. But if we call such uses “honorific”, epistemology should explain why the achievements in question are worthy of honour (Elgin 2007, 38); and this does not seem to be a purely pragmatic matter.

Secondly, as already mentioned, even mature science is rife with idealizations. They are neither eliminable from scientific theories, nor can they be banished to the periphery of such theories. Hence, we can only acknowledge that science exhibits some understanding if we admit that idealizations do not destroy it (some may not even degrade it). Kvanvig (2009, 342–3) objects that idealizations do not imply non-factivity if we appreciate that the object of understanding is not simply the model itself but involves a relationship between model and reality. However, environmental scientists do simply not know how climate models diverge from reality; but this does not completely undermine their understanding of global warming.

You may have no understanding of  $S$  if all your beliefs about  $S$  are just false. But in non-factive cases, you have some understanding of  $S$  without knowing all central facts involved in  $S$  and, indeed, without knowing  $S$ . Here is an argument why. Objectual understanding is not factive; knowledge-that is factive. If one takes some types of knowledge as factive and others as not factive, this may separate them too much. Hence, objectual knowledge should be taken to be factive. So, there are further cases of objectual understanding without objectual knowledge.

## 3. Characteristics of understanding

As a result of my discussion, understanding-why and objectual understanding are

*gradual*: besides being more or less accurate, they can at least vary in depth (grasping more or less explanatory and other coherence-making connections) and breadth (in a more or less comprehensive body of information);

*no species of belief and not even fully explicable as collections of beliefs*: they involve a whole set of beliefs, grasping explanatory and other coherence-making connections between their contents and thus owning certain abilities;

*not always factive but answer the facts*: they can involve even central propositions that are not strictly true but in the correct neighbourhood;

*epistemically internalist states*: besides grasping explanatory and other coherence-making connections, they require entailing good reflectively accessible grounds;

*compatible with epistemic luck*: they are neither undermined by environmental epistemic luck nor by standard Gettier-style epistemic luck.

These characteristics affect any explication of understanding-why and objectual understanding. The explicandum has to be construed as a gradual one. The definition of the explicatum has to include a grasping condition that corresponds to the belief condition for knowledge-that and should be spelled out in terms of owning certain abilities (Grimm 2006, 530–3), an answering-the-facts condition that corresponds to the truth condition and a justification condition that has to be construed along internalist lines, and may also be spelled out in terms of owning certain abilities; but it does not need a further external anti-luck condition.

#### 4. Propositional understanding

Here are two widespread claims involving propositional understanding:

Understanding-why is a species of propositional understanding (Kvanvig 2003, 189–90): understanding why p is equivalent with understanding that p because of q.

Propositional understanding is equivalent with propositional knowledge (Elgin 2007, 34); hence, understanding that p because of q is equivalent with knowing that p because of q.

If understanding-why is neither equivalent with nor a species of knowing-why, then (6) and (7) cannot be both correct, since together they imply that understanding why p is equivalent with knowing that p because of q and thus with knowing why p. Since giving up both (6) and (7) does not seem attractive, two options remain.

Firstly, accepting (6) and giving up (7). Understanding that p because of q is not equivalent with knowing that p because of q; it additionally involves grasping q as the cause or reason why p and thus having certain abilities. This proposal could acknowledge that simply understanding that p (rather than that p because of q) is equivalent with knowing that p. It is usually with respect to such examples – “He knows/understands that the train leaves now.” – that claim (7) is made.

Secondly, accepting (7) and giving up (6). Understanding why p is not equivalent with understanding that p because of q; it additionally involves, for instance, under-

standing how q can cause or be a reason for p and that if q\* rather than q were the case, then p\* rather than p would be the case.

The first option seems more in line with my argument, since it acknowledges that there are intimate connections between the different types of knowledge and between the different types of understanding, and clearly distinguishes knowledge and understanding, at least in its important types.

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# What Did “The Supplements” to the *Tractatus* Contain Precisely, and When Were They Typed by Wittgenstein?

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The supplements are exactly what must not be printed. [...] To let you print the *Ergänzungen* would be no remedy. It would be just as if you had gone to a joiner and ordered a table and he had made the table too short and now would sell you the shavings and sawdust and other rubbish along with the table to make up for its shortness.

Letter to Ogden, May 5<sup>th</sup> 1922

Proposition 4.0141 is not typed into Ts202, the final typescript of the *Tractatus*. Like other eleven supplementary propositions, it was inserted later, by means of an additional sheet of paper written in pencil, and by a sign of inclusion on the typescript. However, unlike the other insertions, that sheet of paper doesn't contain a proposition, but only an additional link to another document. In fact, one can read on the sheet: “4.0141 See supplement No. 72”. As a result, in Ostwald's 1921 edition the proposition 4.0141 was printed just as it was: “4.0141 (*Siehe Ergänzung Nr 72*)”. In amending the English-and-German version to be edited by Ogden, Wittgenstein sent him the text of the missing proposition and explained that “when [he] had finished the work *roughly* there remained certain propositions – about a hundred – about which [he] was doubtful whether [he] should take them in or not”, but from which he extracted, eventually, only proposition 4.0141. Ogden asked to print them all, but Wittgenstein refused in the resolute way I quoted above (Wittgenstein 1973, p. 46). Later, Wittgenstein cut off proposition 4.0141 from the supplementary typescript and enclosed it into Ts202, while destroyed all the other “*Ergänzungen*”. Today, we can see on the document that proposition 4.0141 was effectively typed as paragraph “72”, half at the end of page 7 and half at the beginning of page 8 of a larger typescript. Von Wright admits that “[he] is struck by the relative high number” of the supplements, and renounces to investigate further on (see Wittgenstein 1971, p. 31). But really, what did that typescript contain, and when did Wittgenstein build it?

Before answering, we have to summarise briefly some aspects of the composition method of the *Tractatus*, that we can dig out from Wittgenstein's manuscript itself, i.e. Ms104. The first 26 pages of Ms104 (pp. 3-28) are original, that is, they contain no quotation from previous scripts (with only one exception over 280 propositions, a very short quote from *Notes on Logic*). On the contrary, all the thirty propositions from the separating pencil line on page 28 until page 34 are extracted from *Notes on Logic*, a typescript composed in 1913 (probably, recapitulating a pre-war notebook, now lost). From p. 36 to p. 78, we can find that 19 propositions come from Ms101 diary, 88 propositions come from Ms102 diary, five from *Notes on Logic* again, and at least ten from the pre-war Notebook (we recognize them when they correspond to the *Notes* dictated to Moore in April 1914)<sup>1</sup>. We know that these quotations didn't come from philosophical diaries directly, which remained most of the time in Vienna, but from some typewritten extracts that Wittgenstein brought with him to

the front<sup>2</sup>. Pages 79-86 of the manuscript, instead, contain a direct and consecutive transcription of “all the good sentences” of the second part of an intermediate diary (now lost; not covered by the typewritten extracts, see footnote 2) and of the whole Ms103 diary (respectively, 22 and 37 propositions), exactly in date order of composition<sup>3</sup>.

If we look at the Notebooks we have, we can see that *none* of the paragraphs quoted from Ms101 and Ms102 diaries is checked on the source pages, while *all* the paragraphs quoted from Ms103 are double-marked. We may suppose that, during a leave period in 1917, Wittgenstein first traced a red warning sign in front of every good proposition of Ms103 (and, ex hypothesis, of the second part of the previous diary), and then checked the red signs with a pencil mark while copying each proposition onto Ms104 manuscript. Well, we can see in the Notebooks some *other* identical red-and-black warning signs, *none* of which corresponds to quotations on Ms104 manuscript. We can interpret them only as a summation of the previous techniques of composition. I.e., we have to suppose that, after compiling Ms104 manuscript, Wittgenstein did a last check of his diaries, marking each relevant, not yet used proposition with a red mark. Then, he copied the correspondent paragraphs *onto some else document*, checking in pencil their red marks (note that a dozen of red signs remain unmarked). As a result, we have to presume that there was a further, final document extracted from diaries, corresponding to the 65 quotation marks of the Notebooks we have (6 on Ms101, 48 on Ms102 and 11 on Ms103) and to other quotations from the now lost diaries. By analogy with the earlier extracts, we can think that that document was a typescript.

Given the identity of form, content and length, we are compelled to conclude that this last typewritten extract from Wittgenstein's diaries matches perfectly, and cannot be anything else than, the typescript of “supplements” he spoke about with Ogden<sup>4</sup>. If this is true, we can even correct him: in fact, in May 1922 he said to Ogden that he used only one proposition of it (4.0141), but probably he disregarded<sup>5</sup> that four years earlier he had copied four propositions (and part of a fifth: 3.22, 3.221, 3.251, 4.0311 and the second paragraph of 4.01) from the supplementary fascicle to the final typescript Ts202. For sure, these

<sup>1</sup> Wittgenstein's strategy is enounced on the very first page of Ms104: “In between these sentences are being inserted all the good sentences from my other manuscripts”. Without any doubt, this note was inserted at, and refers to – pace von Wright – the method change from page 28 ahead. See Bazzocchi 2005.

<sup>2</sup> The existence of these typescripts was discovered by McGuinness in 1989, deciphering Hermine Wittgenstein's correspondence. He interpreted them as intermediate stages of development of the *Abhandlung*, because it would have been impossible managing the manuscript alone (Ms104) without some other reference document. I attribute that essential function to a twin version on loose sheets, and then I can assume the typescripts were literally what Hermine's list says, i.e. simple extracts from diaries. In fact, we read in front of the inventory of Wittgenstein's first diaries (pre-war Notebook, Ms101, Ms102 and half of a fourth, lost diary): “they exist also in typescript”. See McGuinness 1989 and 2002; Geschkowsky 2001, pp. 30-34; Bazzocchi 2010a, pp. 21-24.

<sup>3</sup> Evidently, Wittgenstein had not the time for a typescript, and reserved himself to put every proposition on the right place later on, by assigning to them the right decimal code. Note that here, exceptionally, a half-dozen of statements remains without number, i.e. is not logically inserted into the book. See Bazzocchi 2010a, pp. 22-23; Bazzocchi 2010c, pp. 93-98 and 108-109; Geschkowsky 2001, pp. 45-50.

<sup>4</sup> We can add identity of source too, given that Wittgenstein describes the origin of the supplementary propositions saying: “It had often happened that I had written down a proposition in many different forms, when the same thought had occurred to me in different way *during the long time I worked at that business*” (Wittgenstein 1973, p. 46; my italics).

<sup>5</sup> Better, he could intend that 4.0141 had been the unique *further* proposition, i.e. used after the dictation of the definitive Ts202.

statements are the *only* propositions of the original Ts202 which were *not* in the Ms104 manuscript, while they belong to the red-and-black marked paragraphs of Ms101 and Ms102 Notebooks.

Following this hypothesis, the "supplements" were typed between the end of Ms104 and the dictation of Ts202 (August 1918). It was not a simple task. Wittgenstein had to read all his seven Notebooks again, to mark the good propositions not used yet in the *Abhandlung*, and to dictate them to a typist. It would have no sense to do the job immediately before completing the *Abhandlung*, on the same 1918 Summer leave. All previous extracts were done during brief periods in Vienna, *before* returning to the front: their aim was that of leaving the Notebooks in a safe place, and of carrying to the front only light and unimportant typescripts. Then, we have to find a previous period of leave, when the job could be reasonable. The only available period is March 1918, before leaving for the Italian front<sup>6</sup>.

If so, we have the opportunity to clarify a notable and very puzzling assertion of Engelmann's. In two letters to Hayek, he recalls that "the *Tractatus* is the final selection from seven books", and that "before going to the Italian front [Wittgenstein] dictated his manuscript for the typewriter" (Wittgenstein 1971, pp. 4, 9; letters dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 12<sup>th</sup> June 1953). Von Wright, McGuinness and most critics think that Engelmann was wrong on the date, and that his statement is to be interpreted as: "before *going back* to the Italian front", i.e. before September 1918, and not before the end of March (since we know that the final typescript was dictated in August). Ray Monk, instead, believes that the fault was about the object, and supposes that, "before leaving for the Italian front", i.e. in March, Wittgenstein dictated a previous version of the *Tractatus*, the so-called Prototractatus (Monk 1990, p. 152). I think we can show that a typescript of such supposed "Prototractatus" was not realistic nor reasonable (for matters of fact and of principle, see Bazzocchi 2009 and 2010b), but I accept the idea that Engelmann, who didn't see factually the job, couldn't know its content. Then, it's possible that, if Engelmann is right in talking about a typewriting in March, it was the dictation of the supplementary typescript, and not a version of the *Tractatus* itself. Also Engelmann's other reference to the job ("The *Tractatus* is the final selection from seven books") matches perfectly this last extraction from all the seven diaries, and not the very long and complex composition of Ms104 manuscript, nor its final revision and dictation<sup>7</sup>. The only way to imagine a reasonable use of the diaries for a "final selection" (diaries which in such a late stage of the work, we can effortlessly calculate, were exactly seven), is to suppose a job of the kind we saw above – a job that, we can take for sure (we do have a piece of it in our hands), was *done*, and was done in some period before August 1918<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> By the way, from this we can infer that in March Ms104 was roughly finished.

<sup>7</sup> It is absolutely impossible that Wittgenstein, who was compiling his manuscript for at least three years, filtering and modifying his previous statements very carefully and subtly, might "extract" them again from his "seven notebooks" of diary just in the moment of the final dictation, or a little before.

<sup>8</sup> We cannot suppose that the extract was done *after* Ts202 dictation, since Ts202 contains, as we said, five propositions that came *from it*, and not from Ms104. Furthermore, when Wittgenstein told to Ogden that the supplements played a role "after I had *roughly* finished the work", he couldn't refer to a period after Ts202 typescript – he wrote to Russell: "I *finished* the book in August 1918". Rather, Monk reports that "a letter from Frege of 1<sup>st</sup> June [which answers to a lost post-card dated 10<sup>th</sup> May] remarks how pleased he is that Wittgenstein's work is *coming to a conclusion*". And from a letter of April 9<sup>th</sup>, Monk deduces that in his previous communication (March 25<sup>th</sup>) Wittgenstein already wrote that "his book [was] now *almost complete*" (Monk 1990, p. 153).

Following this thesis, therefore, we can easily rebuild great part of the "supplementary typescript" Ogden asked for, and which Wittgenstein refused to give him. It's enough to put aside all the paragraphs of Wittgenstein's 1914-1916 Notebooks that are double-checked and that *are not* already copied onto Ms104 manuscript. With some obvious gathering of brief and consecutive clauses, we obtain 56 paragraphs. A likely disposition of them gives something like the following schema:

§§ 1-2	from pre-war Notebook (lost)	}	pp. 1-7
§§ 3-8	from Ms101 (one typed in Ts202)		
§§ 9-51	from Ms102 (four typed in Ts202)		
§§ 52-62	from an intermediate diary (lost)		
§§ 63-69	from Ms103		
§§ 70-71	from 1917 diary (lost)	}	pp. 8-11
§ 72	we have it, it's typed on two slips of paper (from 1917 diary)		
§§ 73-100	(roughly) from the two 1917-18 diaries (lost)		

Not only, but we can recollect also a second list of, say, "sawdust-propositions", i.e. the fourteen propositions that have *only* the red check-mark. By hypothesis, these were considered as usable at first assessment, but in fact were not dictated into the supplementary typescript. We can regard them as less remarkable.

Somebody may be disappointed to realise that in this partial rebuilding of the famous "*Ergänzungen*" there is no statement that we don't know yet, but the result in not so unsatisfying. Scholars always grieved for having no certainty about which statements of Wittgenstein's diaries are to be considered significant and which instead are out-of-date and superseded in respect of the *Tractatus*. Now, we have the Author's *imprimatur* about which statements he himself, at the very end of the work, considered still good and potentially exploitable for his book. Even if the above account is fallacious – and I believe it is not – we have at least gained a very interesting selection of Wittgenstein's 1914-1916 thoughts.

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# Wittgenstein on 'The Nothing'

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Perhaps the most notorious proposition in the history of philosophy is Heidegger's '*Das Nichts selbst nichtet*', usually translated as 'The nothing noths'. Many critiques have been made of this, most notably Rudolph Carnap's vehement critique in 1932. To this day if a philosopher needs a ready-made piece of nonsense for their purposes, this is often cited.

One apparent critique that remains unclear lies with Wittgenstein, who discusses this in an elusive remark from December 1932. The orthodox view holds that Wittgenstein's position on Heidegger is essentially the same as Carnap's. However, some argue that Wittgenstein does not put forward a critique at all, but rather attempts to engage with what Heidegger might mean.

Through discussion of the contributions to the debate concerning this remark from P.M.S. Hacker, Gordon Baker, James Conant and Duncan Richter, I argue that we should not read Wittgenstein as putting forward a Carnapian attack against Heidegger.

## Introduction

Heidegger's discussion of what he calls 'the nothing' (*das Nichts*) in 'What is Metaphysics?' ('WM') is amongst the most notorious collections of alleged nonsense in the history of philosophy. Indeed, his phrase '*Das Nichts selbst nichtet*', usually translated as 'the nothing [itself] noths' (WM, 37), is perhaps the most notorious proposition in the history of philosophy. This led to Heidegger becoming the protagonist in Vienna Circle discussions about metaphysical nonsense. It gained much of its notoriety through Carnap's vehement critique in his seminal paper on verificationism (Carnap 1959). This notoriety has grown since, and to this day if a philosopher needs a ready-made piece of nonsense for their purposes, 'the nothing noths' is often cited.

One apparent critique that has not been the subject of much attention lies with Wittgenstein. In a remark from December 1932, Wittgenstein discusses Heidegger's remarks on the nothing, particularly this proposition (VW 69-77). What has been described as 'the orthodox view' holds that Wittgenstein's position is 'essentially the same' as Carnap's (Richter, 1). However, the substance of Wittgenstein's apparent critique is not clear; indeed, some hold that Wittgenstein does not put forward a critique at all.

The aim of this paper is to clarify Wittgenstein's position. It will be argued that the orthodox view is untenable.

## 1. Carnap's Critique of Heidegger

Carnap argues that Heidegger's remarks on the nothing are 'especially obvious' examples of metaphysical pseudo-statements that illustrate the verificationist thesis on meaning 'especially well' (Carnap, 69). He cites various passages from WM, culminating with '*Das Nichts selbst nichtet*'. Carnap argues that this proposition is 'senseless for a twofold reason' (Carnap, 71). First, Heidegger uses the word 'nothing' as a noun, even though it doesn't pick out an entity (Carnap, 70). Moreover, predicating existence of 'the nothing' poses a unique problem in that involves a

contradiction, since if we were to 'introduce "nothing" as a name or description of an entity, still the existence of this entity would be denied in its very definition'. This, he argues, shows 'the nothing noths' to be 'contradictory, hence absurd, even if it were not already meaningless'. Second, this sentence introduces a 'meaningless word', the verb 'to nothing' (*nichtet*) (*ibid.*).

Carnap's consideration of context is extremely brief. He conjectures that 'perhaps the word "nothing" has in Heidegger's treatise a meaning entirely different from the customary one'. He very briefly talks about what Heidegger says in WM about anxiety (*Angst*) and its relation to the nothing, which Carnap takes to show that 'nothing' might refer to 'a certain emotional constitution, possibly of a religious sort, or something or other that underlies such emotions'. But Carnap quickly dismisses this, claiming that the first sentence in the remarks he quotes shows 'unmistakably that the word "nothing" here has the usual meaning of a logical particle that serves for the formulation of a negative existential statement' (*ibid.*). The sentence to which he refers is:

What should be examined are beings only, and besides that – nothing; beings alone, and further – nothing; solely beings and beyond that – nothing. (WM, 84)

Carnap's approach has been criticised as one of condemning Heidegger's remarks as nonsense without sufficient attention to context. James Conant, for example, argues that Carnap 'wants to apply his analytical tools directly to the metaphysician's words considered in isolation from possible contexts of use' (Conant, 38). It should be noted, as Oswald Hanfling points out, that this approach is arguably not even consistent with verificationist methodology (Hanfling 1981). A.J. Ayer, also discussing Heidegger's 'nothing', follows Carnap in arguing that Heidegger commits the error of thinking that 'for every word or phrase that can be a grammatical subject of a sentence, there must somewhere be a real entity corresponding' (Ayer, 27). Again, he doesn't look at the context of Heidegger's remarks. He also considers F.H. Bradley's proposition 'the Absolute enters into, but is itself incapable of, evolution and progress', and claims that this is also 'a metaphysical pseudo-proposition' (Ayer, 17). Ayer notes that this proposition was 'taken at random'; yet he is prepared to claim that it is a metaphysical pseudo-proposition, just like Heidegger's remarks on the nothing. Hanfling asks whether the reason Bradley's proposition strikes us as meaningless is because it is unverifiable, or because it has been 'taken at random' out of its context' (Hanfling, 131). He continues:

Perhaps if we read Bradley's book we shall find there the materials for assessing the truth of his statement. If the meaning of a statement is the method of its verification, then *that* is the sort of verification that must be sought in this case. What we must do, following the verification principle in this spirit, is to look to the philosopher's arguments to see what meaning (if any) his statements have; and this is certainly a sound principle. By contrast, to take such a statement 'at random' out of its context is simply to cut it off from the method of verification appropriate to it. (*Ibid.*)

So not only may Carnap's approach, like Ayer's, yield untenable conclusions once we look at the context of Heidegger's remarks, but it is also perhaps not consistent with his own verificationist methodology.

## 2. Wittgenstein on Heidegger

Wittgenstein's 1932 remark begins as follows:

If we want to deal with a proposition such as 'The nothing noths' ... to do it justice we ask ourselves: What did the author have in mind with this proposition? (VW 69)

By addressing this question we may be able to ascertain what Heidegger meant. The first task in any Wittgensteinian analysis of whether a given proposition makes sense is to look at what the speaker might mean by their words. As Conant notes, 'The task of philosophical elucidation, for Wittgenstein, always begins with such an attempt' (Conant, 56). A primary way of doing this is to look at the context; for by looking at the context, we can gain an understanding of how the proposition has been used, and thus what the speaker might mean. Later in the remark Wittgenstein raises further examples of questions designed to ascertain what possible uses Heidegger's notorious proposition might have:

If someone says 'The nothing noths', then we can say to this ... : Very well, what are we to do with this proposition? That is to say, what follows from it and from what does it follow? From what experiences can we establish it? Or from none at all? What is its role? Is it a proposition of science? And what position does it occupy in the structure of science? That of a foundation stone on which other building-blocks rest? Or has it the position of an argument? I am ready to go along with anything, but I at least must know this much. I have nothing against your attaching an idle wheel to the mechanism of our language, but I do want to know whether it is idling or with what other wheels it is engaged. (VW 73)

If we can find uses for this proposition, which we may find through answering these kinds of questions, then the proposition engages with other wheels in the mechanism of language; if not, then it is just like an engine idling: not doing any work (*cf.* PI §132).

Wittgenstein also tries to imagine what Heidegger means:

Anyone who speaks of the opposition of being and the nothing, and of the nothing as something primary in contrast to negation, has in mind, I think, a picture of an island of being which is being washed by an infinite ocean of the nothing. Whatever we throw into this ocean will be dissolved in its water and annihilated. But the ocean itself is endlessly restless like the waves on the sea. It exists, it is, and we say: 'It noths'. In this sense even rest would be described as an activity. (VW 71)

Wittgenstein offers a way of understanding how someone might not only use 'nothing' to denote a thing, but also predicate an action of that thing, even if that very action is one of inaction.

This process of attempting to imagine and articulate what the respective speaker means by their words, and in the process bringing out possible confusions, is one of the central tenets of his *maieutic* method of 'therapy'. This is why Wittgenstein compares his method to psychoanalysis in the remark (VW 70-1). To be sure, Wittgenstein does not say that Heidegger is confused; but he does foresee

that what underlies Heidegger's remarks may be confused. But, equally, this might not be the case: if we can answer some of the questions Wittgenstein raises, we may see uses that the proposition has been put to – uses which give it sense. The therapeutic approach and contextual investigation are two methods Wittgenstein suggests here of doing the same thing: ascertaining whether Heidegger's propositions make sense and whether confusions are at work.

## 3. Interpretations

A proponent of the orthodox view, P.M.S. Hacker, claims that 'The difference between Carnap and Wittgenstein on this issue lies largely in the bedside manner' (Hacker, 19). He claims that Wittgenstein 'asks the very questions the answers to which Carnap characterizes as determining the meaning of an expression, i.e., how is it to be verified? What does it follow from and what follows from it? What is its role? Is it a cognitive proposition? What place does it occupy in the structure of knowledge? And so forth' (Hacker, 18). Wittgenstein, as we have seen, does raise such questions; but he makes no mention of verification, *pace* Hacker. The issue is not one of verification, unlike the approach of Carnap. This question, if it were raised, would be merely one of many others designed to help us gain an insight into the possible uses of the proposition, just like those Wittgenstein suggests.

Hacker claims that Wittgenstein doesn't attempt to imagine what Heidegger might mean by his words, but rather 'tries to imagine what *misconceived picture* underlies Heidegger's nonsense' (Hacker, 18). However, as Duncan Richter notes, at no point does Wittgenstein say that the picture he imagines is *misconceived* (Richter, 6). Hacker further claims that 'Far from being sympathetic to Heidegger, Wittgenstein stigmatizes Heidegger's remarks on Nothing as a 'free-wheeling cog in the language machine' (Hacker, 18). But Wittgenstein does not say this. On the contrary, he is open to the possibility that the wheel might be engaged.

Conant, by contrast, holds that Wittgenstein's response to Heidegger's remarks, unlike Carnap's approach, 'is to attempt to imagine what Heidegger might mean by his words' (Conant, 56). Conant backs this up by reference to Wittgenstein's only other reference to Heidegger, in December 1929, where Wittgenstein says he 'can imagine what Heidegger means by being [*Sein*] and anxiety [*Angst*]', and goes on to suggest that Heidegger might have in mind 'the astonishment that anything exists' (WWK, 68). Not only does this provide another example of Wittgenstein's attempt to imagine what Heidegger means, but this attempt at imagining what Heidegger means is a good one, given that this is a possible way of characterising anxiety in the Heideggerian sense (*cf.* Beale 2010).

Gordon Baker further emphasises the importance of attempting to imagine what Heidegger means. Baker argues that for Wittgenstein we can only do justice to a proposition such as Heidegger's by 'clarifying what he had in mind' (Baker, 219). *Pace* Carnap (and Hacker), Baker argues that 'It would be a moral defect in us to make fun of this statement along the lines that Carnap makes fun of Heidegger' (Baker, 222), because we have failed to attempt to engage with what Heidegger might have thought. It runs entirely against the fundamental tenet of Wittgenstein's method.

What unites Conant, Baker and Richter against the orthodox view is that they argue that Wittgenstein's position

is not one of antipathy, but rather one of *sympathy*: that what Wittgenstein recommends is a process of trying to imagine what Heidegger has in mind in an effort to understand what he means. This seems correct. Wittgenstein's view appears to be one of imaginative empathy, rather than dogmatic antipathy. A way of doing this, as Richter states, is to look at the context of Heidegger's words (Richter, 8). This is the proper method that we should follow, on the basis of what Wittgenstein says.

## Conclusion

Central to Wittgenstein's method of philosophical elucidation is to attempt to imagine what the speaker means by their words. Wittgenstein exhibits this in the 1932 remark. Another way of doing this is to examine the context of a given proposition. These points stand in opposition to the approach exhibited by Carnap. The orthodox view of how Wittgenstein would approach Heidegger's remarks on 'the nothing', at least insofar as this is expressed in Wittgenstein's 1932 remark is therefore untenable. We have no good reason to think therefore, on the basis of this remark at least, that Wittgenstein would have regarded Heidegger's remarks on 'the nothing' as nonsense.

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# Ethical Dimensions of the Private Language Metaphor?

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## 1.

Wittgenstein's private language argument is a well known analytical *topos*. The example concerns an imagined language designed to write down a person's inner experiences, as they are known only to this one person (her private sensations). This language and what it speaks of therefore cannot be understood by anyone else. (It is *not* the *ordinary* discourse talking about "moods", "feelings", etc.) The "signs" used here cannot be given any public definition; an ostensive definition cannot be given either, as the objects cannot be simply pointed to. The others then lack any clue, how they should use the signs of such a language, or how to distinguish correctly performed moves in this strange language game from incorrect ones. The only person disposing of such a key (knowing the rules) seems to be the speaker herself. But playing a language game is a *rule-governed* activity; the distinction between correct and incorrect must have a normative validity independent on individual players. It is a custom, institution (in the Searlian sense) what stands in the root of this validity. Only in such a game can one make errors and be corrected. To play a game (to follow a rule) in only one person, "privately", is not really possible; there is nobody with the authority to correct the speaker (typically a whole community), and whatever seems right to her/him, is such. This contradicts the very concepts "rule", "correct" or "normativity" (Wittgenstein 1953, § 201f).

Wittgenstein's argument was designed to show that real language cannot as a whole operate on such a basis: its semantics must be based publicly, not on such a private meaning intuition or intention. The normativity of real language stems from the authority of the linguistic community, and the validity of meaning is also bound to the *coherence* and *pragmatics* levels. Wittgenstein's reasoning is sometimes interpreted as arguments in favor of the thesis that there can be no private language (e.g. Gert 1986). But Wittgenstein himself documents the possibility of a private language, such as diarizing one's inner experiences in the sketched manner. The problematic point is rather to classify this as full-fledged *language* activity (a language game worthy to be called a language game).

There also exist several *real* linguistic phenomena with private features, usually of marginal character ("schizophrenese", "twin talk", glossolalia). They are structurally more similar to the variety of language games of real language, than to Wittgenstein's private language in the sense of a set of labels. Their existence is made possible by two things: firstly, they are not constitutive for the body of language; if they didn't exist, the rest of language wouldn't be considerably changed – unlike the case if e.g. the "game of giving and asking for reasons" (Brandom 1994) vanished. Second, this shows that language is not a homogenous body; it represents rather an open, "fuzzily normative" space with blind spots, dead ends and vague borderline zones.

## 2.

The public character of language presupposes a kind of agreement, in accepting the rules governing our language usage, including the rules governing our interaction in the shared "space of reasons". This agreement is not an agreement on what speakers "mean" (their speech intentions), but on the practice of their life-forms, which means, first of all, the agreement on the way of how they reason – making arguments and inferences (Wittgenstein 1953, § 241f). Unless the interactions of our practice prove to be in such an agreement – and they often don't – the situation bears certain "private" features.

A prototypical example of such agreement failure is a simple misunderstanding. The two parts don't share assumptions (explicit or tacit), definitions, or reasoning patterns; or some of them (or both) makes considerable mistakes in the communication process. Again, prototypical image is an isolated misunderstanding: suddenly a trouble in discourse occurs, one of the parts (or both) asks control questions, and the situation is clarified. However, in practice many misunderstandings are quite stable and may persist for a long time, sometimes known of, sometimes even unknown. This is true especially in the cases of alleged *mutual* misunderstanding, where the participants come from differently defined well-established groups; typically in the opposition of nationalities, races, classes or religions (etc.), where the mutual misunderstanding seems to be particularly stable, due to the influence of traditions and interpretation stereotypes.

A particularly interesting example is the supposed *gender* misunderstanding. That men and women use language in different ways has been noticed by various authors through centuries; it has been also variously interpreted (for details see Coates 2004, Cameron 2008). A more conceptual exploration of gender differences in language use was begun only in seventies, starting with Robin Lakoff's work. According to her, it is characteristic for the "women's language" that it uses speech forms preserving (reproducing) the inferior social position of women also by articulating and codifying their weakness, powerlessness etc. (Lakoff 2004).

Lakoff uses this linguistic analysis as starting point for a feminist *critique* of this "women's language" institution. However, her observations – that she herself has criticized, doubted and revised since – have been overtaken and popularized as a picture of the *actual* state of facts, with an implicit quasi-Hegelian assumption that what is actual, is also "natural", so in a sense right and can't (perhaps shouldn't) be altered significantly. According to Deborah Tannen, the linguistic misunderstanding between men and women is like a clash between incompatible cultures: children of opposite sexes are from the beginning nurtured in different ways, they spend their time in different backgrounds and by different activities and are guided to

different behavior standards. Hence, as adults they behave like people of different cultures who understand each other only with difficulties and often just think they understand each other. Languages of men and women represent here mutually disconnected systems. Men and women don't really misunderstand each other as to the literal meaning of their utterances, but they constantly use different translating vocabularies, i.e. ascribe motivations that are unacceptable for one or both parts, and infer "metamessages" disagreeing with what the speaker really wanted to express, which results in reactions unexpected or even undesired for their counterparts (Tannen 2009). According to Tannen, two people speaking the same (native) language and differing only in gender can consequently use two different – mutually incomprehensible, private – way how to "mean" the same expression. But it is not clear how can an utterance "mean" consequently something else than how considerable part of its possible recipients normally understands it.

This division of roles is problematic in several respects. One of the sides (perhaps both?) could have been forced into its position; "women's language" is said to develop e.g. wider and finer scales of techniques of conversation-preserving, yet it doesn't have to mean that female speakers favor this activity more than male speakers do, or that they are naturally "superior" in this skill – it may have fallen to them as those who were not allowed to decide for themselves, as "conversational shitwork" (Coates 2004).

The myths of Mars and Venus are also "remarkably patronising towards men" (Cameron 2008). On the face of it, men are considered to be less skilled speakers, pitiable creatures, but as a result it bestows more advantageous position on them, than their female counterparts have, since they are not responsible for keeping the communication in process anymore, being the less able participants. This makes it possible to reinterpret insensitivity, idleness or disregard for others (*moral vices*), as disabilities of epistemological or technical rank – based on a private language – (morally neutral), or as wholly natural and unchangeable.

Private language in the "misunderstanding" metaphor proves here to an advantage on its own – there are situations where it is *useful* to present oneself as unable to understand the other. The "private" interpretation of discourse situation considerably weakens the speaker's *responsibility* to the counterpart: someone I don't understand is not an inhabitant of the same "space of reasons" that I inhabit. A drastic document of this point is served by numerous cases of sexual assaults. The accused men sometimes defend themselves (successfully!) claiming that they actually didn't understand the woman's refusal. And though this would sound ridiculously in any other context, they are often successful in re-interpreting their immoral action as a case of *misunderstanding* where the blame was actually on the *other* side (it is the *woman* who has failed here: in expressing herself clearly enough). The foisted asymmetry in communication skills (in favor of women) made a responsibility shift possible, stemming from and resulting in the *real* asymmetry in terms of *power* (in favor of men) (see Cameron 2008).

### 3.

Relying upon the private language model can lead the account of gender antagonism to serious problems: as far as men and women don't understand each other, no side can be sure as to what does it mean what the others say. Hence they do not inhabit the same space of reasons; their (speech) practice doesn't follow the same rules, they don't understand any rules as such. As a result one cannot be properly bound by these rules towards her/his counterpart (of the opposite gender) – as she/he has no genuine counterpart.

Another option of conceiving the notion of radical difference is offered by Lévinas: If men and women differ so radically that they can't understand each other (though in local contexts these differences take various shapes), one should rather resign on "translations" attempting to look "beyond" the border to the other side. Such translations just reduce the Other to such a systematical idea that *I* am able to make and think of her/him. For Lévinas, a misunderstanding of the other is due to the primacy of ontology in my approach. That is, the way I *treat* the other (my *political* relations towards her/him) stems from what suits my ontology, i.e. the reduction of the Other to such a position within my worldview that is useful for me. Ethics means here to resign of my spontaneity in treating reductively the Other, to let her/him be: not just a property of my thought or possession (Lévinas 1980). Subordinating ethics to ontology seems to be especially dangerous in the case of real politics among larger groups of people, such as gender-defined groups, or whole nations (Caygill 2002).

"Private language" that I ascribe to my counterpart thus becomes a metaphor through which I bestow on the Other the status of someone independent and transcending the range of my power. Misunderstanding, intentionally *left unsolved* as an *epistemological* problem, is used here as grounding for an *ethical* attitude. Unfortunately, this concept of ethics is not very practical. It indeed enables us to admit the status of moral subject also to a person we don't understand (private speaker). But such a status includes only her *right* to be treated as a moral subject. It would be much more difficult to show, in a community of people whose moral subjectivity consists in their inexhaustibility by the public discourse, what bases here the validity of any rules of moral action, which means also *obligations* and responsibility. Therefore if I hold the position of the Lévinasian ethics, I cannot mistreat irresponsibly anybody anymore, but I have no guarantee or argument to make the other treat *me* responsibly, i.e. to treat me as someone who has the status of moral subject in *her/his* eyes.

The problem may consist in still too big emphasis on epistemological perspective; while to see "misunderstanding" as an epistemological problem is possible only in abstraction from practice. Heidegger showed theory to be deficient practice. Analogously, not even "ontologized" politics can be put into opposition to the ethical, in so far as political and ethical are paralleled with the public and the private. Otherwise the level of our practical relations and interactions would be conceived as either ethics-neutral (governed purely in terms of practicality), or as

ethics-deficient practice (that should subdue to ethics). Either way, ethics would be conceived as private enterprise, grounded in the perspective of the individual and her cognitive skills – based either on the reach of what she is able to know, or her ability to admit the moral subjectivity also beyond the reach of her cognition. Yet ethics cannot be grounded this way anymore than semantics can; especially if it is expected to correct the political practice. Why should “ethics” oppose somehow the view we have about who the other is? It would be more appropriate to say that we are born (or “thrown”?) into an ethics from the very beginning, it surrounds us just as language with its semantic contexts does. And as we are from the beginning “set up” to address the others as “souls” (Winch 1980-1981), it implies also ethical stances. Certainly, such thrown-in ethics is not absolute: it needn’t be either perfect (respecting properly the others as myself), or completely wicked (manipulating the others as things, completely subject to my spontaneity). And just as the thrown-in semantics, ethical stances are not unalterable or necessary, but can change and develop – which doesn’t mean it would be easy (no *a priori* is easily subject to changes). Any politics already goes along with ethics, better or worse.

The same objection concerns the attempts to interpret the male-female miscommunication in terms of private language. It can illuminate some points; but truth is that to postulate the opposition of two mutually private domains here – either so that I can avoid my responsibility to the other, or that I cannot make her responsible to me – means to mistake the epistemological question for the ethical one. To “misunderstand” someone painfully is not politics ontologized (un-ethical), just politics morally wrong. We already understand *somehow* each other and address each other in terms of *some* ethics. What is bad in current situation and what is to be changed and how, is another story. However, this is not meta-ethical, but “just ethical” enterprise, representing a challenge for epistemology only secondarily, if at all. To blame hypertrophied ontology or ineffective knowledge for political problems means to miss or obscure the point.

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# Kant and Wittgenstein: The Regulative Aspect of Some Limit Concepts

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## 1. Introduction

The aim of this essay is to point out several general similarities between some limit concepts in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and how can these be seen as regulative aspects in knowledge and in language. In other words, the comparison I make in this paper, emulating Kant, can be founded on the questions: what can I know? And: what can I talk about?

I will firstly present the idea in Kant's case that the limit concept of *noumenon* is a condition of possibility – and therefore functions as regulative – for knowledge. I will compare this view with Wittgenstein's position that the *logical form* is a condition of possibility to talk about the world and therefore regulates meaningful language.

Secondly, I shall underline the similarities between both authors regarding their critique to a traditional and axiomatic metaphysic and how they give a new approach to it. Metaphysic and logic are not limit concepts in themselves (like the noumena or the logical form) but they do set limits to what can be known and said; in this sense they regulate the possibility of the propositions of science.

Thirdly, I propose the similarity of the limit concepts of subject (Kant's 'I' and Wittgenstein's 'eye') and how they also represent the limits of what stands as the faculty of reason in Kant's terms and what stands as facts of the world in Wittgenstein's.

Finally, I will analyse the regulative aspect of that which cannot be known and of which cannot be spoken of. For both authors the propositions or judgements which are not a part of science do have the regulative function of leading a kind of behaviour or habitus.

## 2. Conditions of Possibility

In 'The Transcendental Aesthetic', on the question of Space, Kant determines already the limitations of what can be known as representations of our sensibility and what cannot: "[...] objects in themselves are not known to us at all, [...] what we call outer objects are nothing other than mere representations of our sensibility [...]" (A 30/B 45). The thing in itself, the *noumenon*, cannot be known for it is a limit concept, and thus a concept of negation. It is a concept of negation because it does not exist as an object of knowledge; it exists only as a condition of possibility for the phenomena to present itself to the subject of knowledge.

Similarly, Wittgenstein analyses the limits of language and these refer to what makes sense to talk about and what remains senseless (*sinnlos*). He talks about the *logical form* as the condition of possibility for reality to be represented: "Propositions can represent the whole of reality, but they cannot represent what they must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it – logical form." (TLP 4.12). This logical form is also not an object in the world, and therefore we cannot represent it save as a condition of possibility for the propositions of our language to make sense: "In order to be able to represent

logical form, we should have to be able to station ourselves with propositions somewhere outside logic, that is to say outside the world." (TLP 4.12). Yet, just like in Kant's relation noumena–phenomena, to know these limits as condition of possibility is not enough, for we shall be aware of the two sides of the limits, accordingly claims Wittgenstein already in the preface of the *Tractatus*:

Thus the aim of this book is to set a limit to thought, or rather – not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts: for in order to be able to set a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides of the limit thinkable (i.e. we should have to be able to think what cannot be thought).

Kant shows the necessity of the conditions of possibility as presuppositions for the structure of knowledge, just as there is a structure in understanding. Wittgenstein also craves for a general structure of language as an entity, a structure which is in accordance to each speaker through its general logic. Just like the structures of reason for Kant have a common form, logical structures for Wittgenstein are also universally applied and understood.

## 3. Metaphysics and Logic

A main aim in philosophising, which both authors share is that each one in its moment and in its way has struggled against the axioms of traditional, speculative, dogmatic metaphysics. Kant, with an elaborated method of analysis, has argued against metaphysical propositions as dogmatic truths and showed the way towards a new metaphysical approach i.e. through the transcendental philosophy. From a Kantian and from a Wittgensteinian perspective we can say that traditional metaphysical claims are sentences which could be understood, yet they are empty because they do not add anything new to knowledge. Moreover Kant's definition of analytic judgments (sentences in which the content of the predicate is implicit in the concept of the subject) do not add any knowledge: they are of the form  $A=A$ . Thus for Kant the only judgments that are part of science are synthetic judgments.

Similarly Wittgenstein claims that tautologies are senseless propositions which repeat known information and therefore they should not be uttered, yet both: analytic judgements and tautologies are necessary as limits of knowledge and sense. The conclusion is the same for both in terms of the kind of propositions which function as limit and therefore regulate what science should say: For Kant synthetic judgments and for Wittgenstein propositions that depict facts of the world, can be the only ones which can be the content of the body of science.

These limits are necessary also in relation to logic. For Wittgenstein "Logic is not a body of doctrine, but a mirror-image of the world. Logic is transcendental." (TLP 6.13). Here we can say that Kant and Wittgenstein refer to 'transcendental' in a different way. In the *Tractatus* logic is responsible of marking the limits of what can be represented: logic gives the possibility of the discourse of facts and it gives a structure to understand and represent reality (the world). This is, in the 'picture theory' there is a circle of

references because the sentences of science have their starting point in a description of true facts and these true facts shall have a direct reference in the elements of the logical form and hence in the propositions. From every point from which it can be looked at, the proposition of science has a structure that refers directly to true facts. The discourse of facts is delimited by an unutterable logic, which means that the non-represented facts are equally unutterable.

For Kant, there is a general logic and a transcendental logic. The second one has a task which seems very close to Wittgenstein's logic:

Such a science, which would determine the origin, the domain, and the objective validity of such cognitions (pure thinking), would have to be called transcendental logic, since it has to do merely with the laws of the understanding and reason, but solely insofar as they are related to objects *a priori* [...] (A 57/B 82)

Though Wittgenstein does not refer to any *a priori* knowledge: "there are no pictures that are true *a priori*" (TLP 2.225), we can say that for both authors logic is understood as the fundamental structure in order to form the possibilities of knowledge and language. Nevertheless, even though logic for Kant stands – as transcendental – behind the conditions of possibility of knowledge and not behind the structure of our thoughts, it still has a regulative task for it establishes the fundamental rules for what can be thought and what cannot and hence in a way it regulates reason.

#### 4. 'I' and 'Eye'

Kant talks about the 'I' as the original-synthetic unity of apperception: "The I think must be able to accompany all my representations [...]" (B 132). This is what for Kant means this synthetic unity: "And thus the synthetic unity of apperception is the highest point to which one must affix all use of the understanding, even the whole of logic and, after it, transcendental philosophy; indeed this faculty is the understanding itself." (B 134) This faculty then regulates the possibility of the analytical unity. That is, the synthesis 'I think' is the only possibility of understanding the manifold of intuitions given *a priori* and all the empirical representations which I have of myself – as an object, and of all the other objects in the world. The 'I think' regulates the possibility of the analysis and again synthesises all these combinations of knowledge.

Wittgenstein talks about the eye that sees the world which appears to it, and which the eye is not a part of. Consequently the eye does not see itself and therefore does not understand itself as an object of the world for it stands at the limits of it. Interestingly enough, this eye is the subject, which is not part of the world, but it is not outside of it either. That is, the subject as a concept is also not a part of all those concepts which do not participate in the description of the world and therefore senseless. The subject has the role of the limit. It stands exactly as a boundary and not outside enough to share the senseless nature of sentences of Ethics, Aesthetics, Religion, Metaphysics, etc.

The eye observes the world but is not a part of it. Thus the 'I', the 'eye' remains solipsist. Because the world is *my* world, the limits of language and of the world are the same. Wittgenstein states: "*The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.*" (TLP 5.6). That is, what is axiological and the metaphysical are not a part of the world, and for this reason we cannot talk about it. What is

shown cannot be said, so the solipsistic 'I' stays contemplating only its own experience as a limit, just like Kant suggested with the original-synthetic unity of apperception which cannot know itself.

Yet another difference between the subject-conceptions between the authors rises in *Tractatus* 5.631, where Wittgenstein rejects the thinking subject: "The thinking, presenting subject; there is no such thing." Whereas for Kant it is precisely the 'I think' the transcendental condition of possibility for knowledge at all.

#### 5. When the Unknowable and Unsayable is Regulative

For Kant, reason (*Vernunft*) postulates what shall not be conditioned in knowledge i.e. the existence of God, the immortality of the soul and freedom of the will (A 798/B 826). This is not with the *aim* of getting to know those 'objects', for they remain transcendent for speculative reason: "If, then, these three cardinal propositions are not at all necessary of our knowing, and yet are insistently recommended to us by our reason, their importance must really concern only the practical." (A 800/B 828).

Moreover, from reason it is demanded the rule of conduct. For Kant it is necessary to postulate God (not to know Him), to postulate an intuition other than the sensible: the noumena of what is perceived (not to know them); to postulate the unity of the 'I' (not to know the synthesis in itself). In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein distinguishes: 1) propositions related to facts, 2) evaluative or axiological propositions i.e. aesthetics and ethics: "It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words. Ethics is transcendental. (Ethics and aesthetics are one and the same.)" (TLP 6.421) and 3) the metaphysical. This differentiation makes clear that propositions related to facts are the only ones which can have sense because they picture (*Bild*) the world and these are the propositions of science. All the rest are not pictures, but they just orient behaviour in a regulative way. To say 'Jon is good' is not a proposition that pictures any matter of fact in the world, but it does suggest the kind of behaviour that is expected towards Jon without saying what exactly this kind of behaviour is, or what does it mean to be 'good'.

Kant claims that the 'objects' of metaphysics are not knowable. It is in the same way suggested in the *Tractatus*: propositions like 'God is p' as a metaphysical postulate does not describe a fact of the world and therefore is not picturing anything. It does not say anything about the existence of God, or about the relation of God and the world. That is why it cannot be said to be a meaningful proposition because the 'object' God is not an element of the atomic facts of the world: "*How* things are in the world is a matter of complete indifference for what is higher. God does not reveal himself *in* the world." (TLP 6.432) Yet, to a certain extent for Wittgenstein, it is not an absurdity (*unsinnig*) because the intention of this kind of proposition is a regulative one, i.e. it aims to show a possible ethical way of life. For Wittgenstein what is beyond the limits is not unknowable, but incapable of being spoken of. Hence it is shown in the *Tractatus* that the propositions of Ethics as regulative, rest on the other side of the limit opposite to where the propositions of science stand. In an analogous way, Kant would argue that the idea of God is only a postulate of something not conditioned but which operates as basis of the categorical imperatives of reason, and these imperatives determine the will to act in a correct way.

It is in this aspect that both authors agree, namely in claiming that what is beyond the limits of experience is related to the regulative character of conducting ourselves but not with knowledge itself or the meaning of propositions which picture the facts of the world. Kant argues that all which is constituted in the realm of subjectivity is *part of experience* and can be known. All that is outside of experience is of no use to knowledge. Wittgenstein clearly establishes that what is *part of experience* can be described, pictured, in forms of propositions. Every proposition about facts, which do not occur in the realm of experience, is senseless.

## 6. Conclusions

With the following quote from Wittgenstein we can conclude how is it that what regulates the sense must remain outside the empirical, the known, the world and the sayable: "The sense of the world must lie outside the world. In

the world everything is as it is, and everything happens as it does happen: *in* it no value exists – and if it did exist, it would have no value." (TLP 6.41). The similarities of these two cornerstones of philosophy are not surprising. For this matter, we are invited to think that their interests and reflections on universal matters are a result of the aim to achieve accuracy in their philosophical methods may them be epistemological or in the realm of a logical language. In such methods, they both inquired scientific, mathematical and logical notions by setting quite clear limits.

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# Virtue and Argument: Taking Character into Account

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In this paper we consider the prospects for an account of good argument that is augmented by taking factors about the character of the arguer into consideration. We begin by situating arguments in an epistemic context and in relation to epistemic norms. We then consider cases in which we seem already to take legitimate account of agents' character. We go on to consider aspects of agents' character that might usefully be taken into account when evaluating arguments. We end by suggesting that these characteristics are also ones which we should nurture in epistemic agents.

§1. Historically it has been recognised that epistemic good and epistemic should are connected. Phronesis, understood as practical wisdom, is an early site of their connection, while in the introduction to his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke counsels against allowing epistemic ambition to outrun epistemic capacity (1975, I, i, 4-7, 44-47) and William K. Clifford (1879) famously invites reflection on the ethics of belief when he identifies a *duty* to regulate beliefs in line with the evidence available to us. More recently, the development of a character-based turn in epistemology has also brought the connection to the fore.

Viewed through an epistemic lens, arguments, in the sense associated with everyday reasoning, are potentially a site where epistemic good and should connect. When we put forward an argument we seek to rationally persuade others of the truth of our conclusion. When we come to believe a true statement on the basis of a good argument that has that statement as its conclusion, we might be said to have achieved knowledge. Arguments seem clearly to be part of our epistemic practices, and striving to develop and apply good habits as arguers and as appraisers of arguments is part of a broader web of practices guided by norms of epistemic conscientiousness.

Recently, as agent and character-based strands of epistemology have become established, some philosophers interested in argumentation have begun to consider whether a similar agent-oriented turn has potential to improve upon our understanding and evaluation of arguments. Among these, Andrew Aberdein has developed an initial framework for a virtue-based account of argumentation that is parallel to, but not identical with, virtue-theoretic approaches to knowledge in a (roughly) responsibilist vein (2010). Responsibilist virtues include epistemic conscientiousness and open-mindedness; they are contrasted with reliabilist virtues such as perception, inferential skills and memory.

To anyone comfortably embedded in the more or less agent-neutral approach to argument appraisal, a shift of orientation towards agents and their characteristics may seem counter-intuitive. Indeed, many arguments often regarded as fallacious are held to be so because they involve appeals to claims about agents that are deemed to be irrelevant to the truth of their conclusions. However, we suggest that our capacity to appraise arguments may be enhanced by taking character into account. Furthermore, there is a widely recognised problem of lack of transfer of knowledge and skills between tuition in reasoning and life more generally (Paul 1992) which we think a character-based approach may have the potential to solve: this transfer gap might be bridged by encouraging the devel-

opment of the right sorts of epistemic dispositions. Tuition in reasoning already takes into account at least some of what are considered virtues by those who are committed to a reliabilist account of good epistemic character: such tuition is largely an attempt to nurture the traits of being a good deductive and inductive reasoner. In part, this paper represents an initial step towards seeing what other sorts of dispositions might usefully be encouraged in this regard.

§2. Although the established approach to argument evaluation leans strongly towards agent-neutrality, in practice there are circumstances where we already accept that facts about a person's character are relevant to whether or not we should believe what that person says. Do we have reason to think that X is habitually dishonest? If so, we should not accept X's claim solely on the grounds that X has made it. Do we have reason to think that Y is unreliable about the kind of thing about which she is testifying? For example, if Y is making a claim about distances on the basis of her perceptions and we know that Y's depth perception is defective, we should not accept the claim merely on the grounds that Y has made it. This amounts to saying that there are some ad hominem arguments that are good arguments: sometimes pointing out a fact about a speaker (rather than a fact about the content of her claim) can undermine her claim.

A related point can be made about arguments from authority. Such arguments are legitimate if the authority appealed to is genuinely an authority on the subject in question, if there is a high degree of agreement amongst authorities in that area, and if there is no reason to think that the person in question is insincere. The last of these conditions opens the way to an evaluation of her epistemic character. Should that evaluation turn out a certain way, it will provide good reason to reject the argument from authority.

Legitimate ad hominem arguments provide reasons to doubt the truth of a *claim* on the basis of facts about the person making it. It is commonly supposed that it is never reasonable to reject an *argument* on the basis of such facts, however. If the CEO of a brewing company provides an argument to the conclusion that the drinking age should not be raised, we should not reject his argument solely on the grounds that the arguer has a vested interest in the conclusion's being accepted: he has provided an argument, and we should evaluate that argument on its merits. If it is a good argument – either valid or inductively forceful, with premises that we have good reason to believe – then on the face of it no facts about the arguer will make it cease to be so.

Is this always right? One reason to think not is that when someone presents an argument they are in general asserting the premises and suggesting, implicitly or explicitly, that the premises provide good reason to accept the conclusion. To the extent that we accept the premises purely because the arguer has asserted them, we should care about the veracity of the arguer. In other words, part of what you do when you give an argument is make substantive claims, and so all of the considerations above, about how the character of a speaker legitimately influences whether we should believe his claims, apply. This brief consideration of contexts where we, as a matter of course, consider agents' characteristics when evaluating

their arguments' content demonstrates that we take into account a mix of reliabilist and responsibilist virtues. We make legitimate *ad hominem* appeals on the basis of an arguer's habitual lack of honesty and on the basis of her unreliability as a perceiver. If we have developed the right habits of awareness and self-awareness, we know that we should not reject someone's argument solely on the basis that they might have a vested interest in the conclusion's being accepted and we know that we don't automatically lack conscientiousness if we attempt to persuade via an argument in whose conclusion we ourselves have a vested interest so long as we provide reasons independent of that interest for accepting that conclusion.

Notice that in a number of these cases the characteristics we take into account fall under the umbrella of a principle of charity. Application of a principle of charity is standard in argument appraisal – if we have no good reason to do otherwise, we take honesty, sincerity and an intention to believe and communicate truths as the default position to be attributed to an arguer – thus character considerations are already in play. However, it is only when we have good reason to think that one of these characteristics is absent that we treat it as explicitly relevant.

So much for taking character into account when evaluating the truth of an argument's premises, is it ever the case that facts about the arguer legitimately influence our evaluation of the *structure* of an argument? On the face of it, no. If the conclusion logically follows from the premises, or if given the premises, the conclusion is almost certain to be true, no fact about the arguer can change that. Likewise, an argument which is structurally bad is not redeemed by any facts about the epistemic virtues of the arguer. However, consider the following cases.

a. While it is surely true that facts about the arguer cannot undermine the validity of a deductive argument, or make an invalid argument valid, perhaps they can be relevant to the evaluation of an inductive argument. Suppose someone tries to convince me that Tom is not fluent in German, on the grounds that Tom is a New Zealander and only 2% of New Zealanders are fluent in German. This looks like a good enough inductive argument. However, there could be background information that I don't know that would undermine the argument without falsifying the premises; for example, the information that Tom is the New Zealand ambassador to Germany. Given this, facts about the arguer might matter. The arguer hasn't given me any information about Tom other than that he is a New Zealander. Is the arguer the sort of person who would tell me if he knew that Tom was the NZ ambassador to Germany, or is he the sort of person that would delight in tricking me into thinking that the NZ ambassador to Germany doesn't speak German?

b. Just as there are areas in which I defer to experts about matters of fact, there might be areas in which I defer to experts about matters of logic. Some kinds of reasoning might be just too complicated for the untrained to follow; complex statistical reasoning, for example. Then it makes practical and epistemic sense for me to defer to someone who is an expert in this kind of reasoning. When I do this, it is not so much that facts about the arguer are influencing my evaluation of the structure of the argument, but that I am accepting the conclusion of the argument even though I *cannot* evaluate the structure of the argument: because of facts about the arguer, I trust that he or she would not put forward an argument that was structurally bad.

§3. A character-based account of *knowledge* explains what it is for an agent to know that *p* in terms of that agent's exercise of the relevant epistemic virtues in coming to truly believe that *p*. If one were to develop a full-blown character-based account of good *argument*, parallel to a character-based account of knowledge, then the characteristics of a good arguer would become constitutive of what counts as a good argument. However, there are important disanalogies between good argument and knowledge that suggest that we ought to resist this move. While it seems plausible that someone who displays all the relevant characteristics, both reliabilist and responsibilist, will be able to construct good arguments and be successful at appraising the arguments of others, surely a good argument could be put forward by someone who lacked those characteristics. Suppose someone put forward a valid argument with true premises but didn't see that it was a good argument – someone who, for instance, had learned to recite a valid syllogism, or someone who doesn't understand the premises of her own argument. We would not deny that the argument is a good argument; rather, we say that they have *accidentally* put forward a good argument. This contrasts with what we would say in the parallel case regarding knowledge: we would deny that the person who accidentally arrives at a true belief that *p* knows that *p*.

In our example above, while the argument remains a good argument, if the arguer doesn't have good reason to accept her own premises or does not see that the syllogism is valid, the arguer herself ought not to be rationally persuaded by her own argument. However, someone who hears her argument, understands and believes the premises with good reason *should* be rationally persuaded by it.

While we don't think that an agent-based account can *replace* a conventional account of argument, we do think that there are useful ways in which taking character into account in argument appraisal can augment a conventional, agent-neutral account.

§4. Which characteristics of an arguer might usefully be taken into account in the evaluation of her argument? We have already mentioned some: reliabilist virtues such as perceptual acuity, responsibilist virtues such as honesty. Linda Zagzebski provides a list of epistemic virtues which include further candidates: the ability to recognize the salient facts; sensitivity to detail; open-mindedness; fairness; epistemic humility; perseverance; diligence, care and thoroughness; the ability to recognise reliable authority; intellectual candour; intellectual courage, autonomy, boldness, creativity and inventiveness. (1996 114) Knowing about these kinds of characteristics of an arguer may in some cases legitimately influence our evaluation of their argument in that they are characteristics the possession of which tends towards the believing and asserting of truths.

§5. We suggest that these characteristics are also ones we want agents to have – they are some of the characteristics of the good epistemic citizen – and contexts in which reasoning is taught are contexts in which these characteristics could be developed and nurtured. In critical thinking courses, teachers guide students in developing the ability to evaluate arguments and to construct good arguments of their own. Some of the virtues mentioned above are ones that are already included – diligence, care and thoroughness, and the ability to recognise reliable authority. The other virtues on the list are not. There is considerable evidence that students do not use the argument-evaluation skills they acquire in a critical thinking course outside the classroom. The maintenance and continued use of these skills would be more likely if we could not only teach



students to recognise a good argument, but also help them to acquire truth-directed dispositions more generally. Ideally we would hope to produce students who are open to the possibility that their own views are false, who are disposed to question their own reasons for believing things, who are inclined to seek out further information about things that they care about rather than making a decision on the basis of whatever information they happen to have to hand. It is easy to see why a student who had critical thinking skills (narrowly construed) but lacked these character traits would be unlikely to apply their critical thinking skills: the genuinely critical thinker has not just the skills but the motivation to use them.

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# “The Whole Hurly-Burly”: Wittgenstein and Embodied Cognition

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*Cognitivism* may be the dominant paradigm underlying cognitive science today, but it seems unlikely to remain that way. In the last two decades, *Embodied Cognition* (EC) has begun to unseat *Cognitivism*. *Cognitivism* is the idea that cognition is a formal operation in the brain, consisting of internal, rule-bound, computational and representational symbol manipulation. EC theorists reject *Cognitivism* in favor of a broader, more comprehensive conception of cognition, one that takes into account a combination of brain, body, and world.<sup>1</sup> As Esther Thelen puts it:

[f]rom this point of view, cognition depends on the kinds of experiences that come from having a body with particular perceptual and motor capacities that are inseparably linked and that together form the matrix within which memory, emotion, language, and all other aspects of life are meshed (2001, 4).

Philosophical foundations for EC have previously been sought by turning to thinkers like Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty; however, few have considered Wittgenstein's unique contribution. Wittgenstein's approach to problems about language, mind, and embodiment was a direct result of his reaction to *Cartesianism*. In this paper I argue that *Cognitivism* has its roots in *Cartesianism* and further I show that Wittgenstein's exposure of the flaws in *Cartesianism* reveals flaws in *Cognitivism* as well. More importantly, his response here provides the philosophical foundations EC theorists are in search of: cognition is actional, time-pressured, body-based, and dependent on environment.

## Cognitivism: Descartes & Chomsky

*Cognitivism* can be traced to Descartes' conception of innate ideas. Descartes thought it noteworthy that human mental activities, particularly the ordinary use of language, could neither be explained nor predicted by means of mechanical laws:

[i]t is rather remarkable that there are no men so dull and stupid (excluding not even the insane), that they are incapable of arranging various words together and of composing from them a discourse by means of which they might make their thoughts understood, and that, on the other hand, there is no animal at all, however perfect and pedigreed it may be, that does the like (AT 57).

To associate thinking with abstract higher-order reason as it is displayed in language use is, as Michael Anderson points out, “the true heart of the Cartesian attitude.” “[I]t is primarily from this inheritance,” Anderson observes, “that the central attitudes and approach of cognitivism can be derived” (2003, 93).

Cognitivists like Noam Chomsky believe that innate ideas contain a “creative aspect,” one that makes human language possible:

all languages have in common [a] ‘creative’ aspect. ...[A]n essential property of language is that it provides the means for expressing indefinitely many thoughts and for reacting appropriately in an indefinite range of new situations (1965, 6).

“This creative aspect of normal language use,” says Chomsky, “is one fundamental factor that distinguishes human language from any known system of animal communication” (1968, 100).

Descartes' and Chomsky's point here is that certain properties of cognition, like creativity, cannot be explained through empiricist means. Human beings' capacity for language manifests itself in this “remarkable,” “creative” activity of language use. “When we study human language,” says Chomsky, “we are approaching...‘human essence,’ the distinctive qualities of mind...unique to man” (1968, 100).

Like Descartes, Chomsky's description of “human essence” emphasizes the power, flexibility, and productivity of language as a formal system while downplaying or even ignoring its embeddedness and situatedness in concrete contexts of sensing and acting. “Human essence,” however, is not couched in abstract symbol manipulation; our “essence of being,” says Rodney Brooks, is embedded in our “dynamic environment”:

problem solving behavior, language, expert knowledge and application, and reason, are all rather simple once the essence of being and reacting are available. That essence is the ability to move around in a dynamic environment, sensing the surroundings to a degree sufficient to achieve the necessary maintenance of life and reproduction (1999, 115-116).

Brooks and other EC theorists maintain that instead of emphasizing formal operations and abstract symbols, cognition must be analyzed by looking at how brain, body, and environment interact. This marks an important shift away from Chomsky's *Cognitivism*, and away from the “disembodied lone spectator” of Descartes.

## Wittgenstein & Cartesianism

Wittgenstein was frustrated with traditional philosophy for many reasons, but one of the biggest was its attempt to divorce cognition from embodiment. In the Cartesian tradition, the cleavage between mind and body focused not on the world as we actively live and participate in it, but on the world when we are removed from it and simply think about it. As a result of this split, Wittgenstein believed that philosophy, far from working for us, was “idle,” or “on holiday.” To illustrate just how little is accomplished when we assume Descartes' division, Wittgenstein invites us to imagine what language would be like for a Cartesian subject.

With only the content of our own minds to go on, how might we learn a language? If there is no way to prove an external world exists, then there is no way to prove that other people exist. But if there is no way to prove that other people exist, everything would have to be done *privately*, within one's own mind. Furthermore, with no

<sup>1</sup> The computational model has come under attack from within analytic philosophy as well. John Searle criticizes it in “Minds, Brains, and Programs”; Hilary Putnam argues against his own earlier functionalism in *Representation and Reality*; and Laurence Bonjour argues against the “symbolic conception of thought” in his *In Defense of Pure Reason*.

other people to teach us a language, it would have to be *self-taught*.

Wittgenstein noticed that these two problems present a third: how would you know your words had a fixed meaning if *you* were the only one who has access to them? For "[i]f you are not certain of any fact, you cannot be certain of the meaning of your words either" (1972, §114). If the acquisition of language were a private affair, there would be no independent checking of the assumed associations between what goes on in the mind and what goes on in the external world. Wittgenstein therefore concluded that a private language is not only *unsharable* and *unteachable*, it is simply *impossible*. What makes language meaningful, what makes it dynamic is its shared and active use within a *form of life*.

Borne out of a combination of many factors—instincts, communal practices, language, and the actions we perform in the world—*forms of life* are part of our biological and socio-cultural nature. They create the conditions necessary for establishing understanding, meaning, belief, etc. "It is this central idea," says Meredith Williams, "that threatens current cognitive psychology" (1999, 242).

Our *forms of life* presuppose what Wittgenstein, at different times and places, refers to as our "background," our "framework," our "scaffolding." This presupposition is neither a theory nor an opinion but the structure within which it is possible to *have* theories, to *have* opinions; it is the framework—the environment—within which we can propose concepts and ideas. "The background," he says, "is the bustle of life. And our concept[s] point to something within this bustle" (1980(b), §625).

Within this "bustle," our *forms of life* represent a history that is biological and social, external and observable. Yet, "[t]he facts of human natural history are," as he says in *Remarks On Philosophy Of Psychology*,

difficult for us to find out, for our talk passes them by, it is occupied with other things. (In the same way we tell someone: "Go into the shop and buy..."—not: "Put your left foot in front of your right foot etc. etc., then put coins down on the counter, etc. etc.") (1980(a), §78).

Accompanying our conviction that we have a body is, what Gilbert Ryle has described as a *knowing how*: an ability to do certain sorts of things, often without explicit thought (1949, 27). For instance, when we tell a person to go to the bakery and buy a loaf of bread, she does not become paralyzed with overwhelming doubt. While she may have some doubt concerning, say, the whereabouts of the bakery or what kind of bread is being requested, her doubt does not require explicit instructions concerning how to walk, what a bakery is, what coins are used for, etc. Nor does she require evidence that she *has* a body, legs to walk, and hands to carry the coins in. We possess convictions about a number of different things that rarely cross our minds. They have developed (evolved) naturally and necessarily from our human history. Indeed, attempts to put these certainties into words sound so banal as to be not worth saying:

What we are supplying are really remarks on the natural history of human beings; we are not contributing curiosities however, but observations which no one has doubted, but which have escaped remark only because they are always before our eyes (1953, §415).

## Philosophical Foundations

In his later works, Wittgenstein supplies the philosophical foundations EC theorists believe are necessary for cognition, i.e., cognition is actional, body-based, dependent on environment, and time-pressured. For instance, in *Philosophical Investigations* he says:

- §19 [T]o imagine a language means to imagine a form of life.
- §23 The speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life.
- §43 [T]he meaning of a word is its use in the language.
- §241 [H]uman beings...agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life.
- §489 Ask yourself: On what occasion, for what purpose, do we say this? What kind of actions accompany these words? (Think of a greeting.) In what scenes will they be used; and what for?
- ii, p.175 And the expression "I was then going to say..." refers to a point of time and to an action.

Here and elsewhere, Wittgenstein demonstrates the important connection between language, thought, and "the actions into which [they are] woven" (1953, §7). EC theorists call this *embodied action*. In their book *The Embodied Mind*, Francisco Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch describe this as follows:

[b]y using the term *embodied* we mean to highlight...that cognition depends upon the kinds of experience that come from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities...By using the term *action* we mean to emphasize...that sensory and motor processes, perception and action, are fundamentally inseparable in lived cognition (1991, 172-173).

Embodied action is central to *On Certainty*, where Wittgenstein fleshes out a particular sort of unreflective conviction. Bound within our *forms of life*, this conviction develops out of our instinctive actions, or what he simply calls *certainty*:

- §358 Now I would like to regard this certainty, not as something akin to hastiness or superficiality, but as a form of life.
- §359 But that means I want to conceive it as something that lies beyond being justified or unjustified; as it were, as something animal.

Within our *forms of life* we possess an instinctual certitude, one that has evolved with us and is demonstrated *via* our embodied activities. This certainty consists of the brain and body acting together, inseparably, without doubt and without ratiocination:

- §475 I want to regard man here as animal; as a primitive being to which one grants instinct but not ratiocination.
- §110 ...the end is not an ungrounded presupposition: it is an ungrounded way of acting.
- §204 Giving grounds...justifying the evidence, comes to an end;—but the end is not certain propositions' striking us immediately as true, i.e., it is not a kind of seeing on our part; it is our acting, which lies at the bottom of the language-game.
- §196 Sure evidence is what we accept as sure, it is evidence that we go by in acting surely, acting without any doubt.

For Wittgenstein, certainty implicitly (unreflectively) assumes that one has a body which is capable of "various sensorimotor capacities," within a particular environment.

§148 Why do I not satisfy myself that I have two feet when I want to get up from a chair? There is no why. I simply don't. This is how I act.

§7 My life shows that I know or am certain that there is a chair over there, or a door, and so on.—I tell a friend e.g. "Take that chair over there," "Shut the door," etc.

Cognition depends on many different factors working together, in concert. Embodied action, as Wittgenstein demonstrates, is among these factors.

## Conclusion

Our "human essence" is not couched in abstract symbol manipulation. The foundation necessary for cognitive life is not, as Descartes and Chomsky contend, *a priori*. This approach ignores the enormous influence, richness, and variety that have evolved within our *forms of life*. This, however, does not mean that cognition is solely an external phenomenon. As Andy Clark recently wrote in the *New York Times*, while the brain obviously plays "a major role," is "the locus of great plasticity and processing power," and will certainly be "the key to almost any form of cognitive success," it must also be analyzed in concert with the organism, the actions it performs, and the environment in which it performs them. Instead of emphasizing formal operations and abstract symbols, EC maintains that cognition will be understood by analyzing how brain, body, and environment interact *collectively*.

While typically ignored by the cognitive sciences, Wittgenstein's later work provides those defending EC with a needed philosophical foundation. Cognition, as Wittgenstein demonstrates, is not simply a matter of disembodied intellect, but is actional, time-pressured, body-based, and dependent on the larger environment. At one point in *Zettel*, Wittgenstein, responding to his interlocutor's question, "How could human behavior be described?" says:

Surely only by showing the actions of a variety of humans, as they are all mixed up together. Not what *one* man is doing *now*, but the whole hurly-burly, is the background against which we see an action, and it determines our judgment, our concepts, and our reactions (1967, §567).

## Literature

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# A New Problem for Perceptual Justification

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## 1. Introduction

It is plausible to think that perceptual experience is capable of justifying our beliefs concerning the world around us. Why am I justified in believing that there is sugar in my coffee? – because I taste it. Why am I justified in believing that the door to my office is closed? – because I see it. Yet in the last decades of the 20th century, the justificatory significance of perceptions was brought into question via an interesting argument which concludes that our beliefs cannot be justified by perceptual experiences but only by other beliefs (see for example Davidson 1986). However, even though many philosophers found this argument convincing at the time, today most epistemologists think it is flawed. In this paper I will reconsider the argument and argue that its popular refutation is problematic in a way that has been overlooked thus far. Nevertheless, I do not want to conclude that we should *accept* the reconsidered argument. That is, I do not intend to argue that perception is incapable of justifying our beliefs. The aim of the paper is simply to point to an overlooked problem that needs to be solved in order to properly understand the justificatory relationship between perceptions and beliefs.

The paper is organized as follows: In section 2, I discuss the argument for the conclusion that perceptions are incapable of justifying our beliefs (the *Incapability Argument*), and I introduce the most popular refutation of that argument. In section 3, I elaborate on the heretofore overlooked problem of the popular refutation. Finally, in section 4, I offer a few proposals for solving the problem.

## 2. The Incapability Argument

The justificatory significance of perception has been attacked by a number of philosophers. The following argument summarizes and systematizes the basic idea (for an similar argument, cf. Pryor 2005, 188):

The Incapability Argument (*hereafter*, IA)

- (1) Justificatory relations between a justifier and a belief are inferential relations. (In order for something to justify a belief, it needs to stand in inferential relations to that belief.)
- (2) Inferential relations can only hold between propositions or attitudes with propositional content that represent the world assertively. (In order for something to stand in inferential relations to a belief, it needs to have propositional content and to represent the world assertively.)
- (3) Perceptions have no propositional content.
- (4) Hence, perceptions are incapable of justifying our beliefs.

Premise (1) is plausible because it is hard to understand what kind of justificatory relation a non-inferential relation is supposed to be. Inferential relations are either deductive, inductive or abductive. So if a justifier justifies a belief non-inferentially, then it justifies the belief neither deductively, inductively, nor abductively. But it is difficult to see how this is possible.

Premise (2) is also plausible. We have already noted that inferential relations are either deductive, inductive or abductive, and all three variants appear to be relations between propositions or attitudes with propositional content (cf. also Williamson 2000, 194 ff.). Deductive relations are implications, and implications, quite obviously, can only hold between propositions or attitudes with propositional content. But what about inductive inferences? These relations provide the basis for probabilistic reasoning. In this kind of reasoning, we are interested in the conditional probability of an hypothesis  $h$  on some evidence  $e$ :  $P(h|e)$ . And the kinds of things that have a probability conditional on something else are propositions. The probability of an hypothesis is the probability, *that [...]*. The gap in the last sentence can only be filled by an assertoric sentence with propositional content. Therefore, the thing that receives a probability must be a proposition or something with propositional content. Of course, we might suppose that in  $P(h|e)$ , only  $h$  (the thing that *receives* probability) needs to be a proposition. But the basic definition of conditional probability shows that  $e$  (the thing that *gives* probability) needs to be propositional as well.

Conditional Probability:  $P(h|e) = P(h \ \& \ e)/P(e)$

This definition shows that the evidence  $e$  which gives  $h$  its probability must also receive a probability. And since only propositions or something with propositional content can receive probability, the evidence (or justifier) in an inductive inference also needs to have propositional content. Now what about abductive inferences, i.e., inferences to the best explanation? We often choose between different hypotheses by realizing that one of them, if true, would explain our evidence better than the other. The kinds of explanations in question have the following form: [...] because of [...]. Here, both blanks can only be filled with assertoric sentences containing propositional content. The evidence an hypothesis is supposed to explain must be propositional, as well as the hypothesis that explains the evidence. Thus abductive relations, too, can only hold between propositions or propositional attitudes.

In this way, it appears that all inferential relations (deductive, inductive and abductive) can only hold between propositions or attitudes with propositional content. But premise (2) claims more. (2) claims that inferential relations can only hold between propositions or attitudes with propositional content *that represent the world assertively*. But this additional claim is quite plausible as well. There are obviously some propositional attitudes that cannot be used to justify a belief inferentially – take a wish for example. This is why we have to be more specific about what additional feature enables an attitude to be a justifier. This feature is captured in the additional claim of premise (2): Justifying inferential relations can only hold between attitudes with propositional content *that represent the world assertively*. I will come back to this additional feature in more detail in the next section.

The most problematic premise of the IA is (3). A lot of philosophers agree that perceptions have propositional content and that IA is therefore blocked at premise (3). Let us call the view that perceptions have propositional content 'representationalism'. The arguments for representationalism vary: Philosophers who take the justificatory

force of perceptions for granted will merely point to the nice way representationalism handles *IA*. Some will appeal to linguistic considerations concerning the behaviour of constructions like 'it looks to be the case that *p*', 'it tastes as if *p*', etc. Others will appeal to promising psychological theories that presuppose that perception is representational.

However, in order to solve the problem which *IA* raises, it is not enough to hold that perceptions have propositional content. They also need to *assertively represent the world*. Otherwise premise (3) (and thereby *IA*) could be easily modified as follows in order to sidestep the representationalist blockade:

(3)\* Perceptions have propositional content, but they do not represent the world assertively.

Of course most representationalists not only hold that perceptions have propositional content, they also agree that they are assertive. So most representationalists would also dismiss the modified premise (3)\* and thereby block the modified *Incapability Argument IA\** (that is the argument you get by replacing (3) with (3)\*). But such a response might be too hasty. It is not really clear what it actually means for a propositional attitude to represent the world assertively in the first place. And as soon as we try to be more specific about it, it becomes questionable whether perceptions ever really are assertive. This is the overseen problem of the representationalist refutation of the *Incapability Argument* I am going to discuss in the remainder of the paper.

### 3. Assertively Representing the World

The given defense of premise (2) consisted of two parts. Firstly, we showed that inferential relations can only hold between propositions or attitudes with propositional content. Secondly, we claimed that inferential relations can only hold between propositional attitudes *that represent the world assertively*. Let me quickly rerun the second part in order to simplify the rest of the discussion.

Why can there only be inferential relations between propositional attitudes *that represent the world assertively*? Because there are some states with propositional content that could not be used to inferentially justify a belief. A wish for example has propositional content but is incapable to inferentially justify a belief. This is why we have to be more specific about what features enable an attitude to be a justifier – merely having propositional content will not be enough. The additional feature we are looking for is supposed to be the quality of *representing the world (or a specific feature of the world) assertively*.

A wish does not represent the world assertively. It does not purport to be saying how the world is, and this is why a wish cannot be used to justify a belief. The same is true for hopes, mere assumptions or wild imaginings. All these attitudes are propositional attitudes – they have propositional content – but they do not justify beliefs because they do not represent the world assertively. A belief, on the other hand, has propositional content that purports to be saying how the world is, and this is why a belief can justify another belief.

What about perceptions? Are perceptions the kind of propositional attitude that can represent the world assertively? Most philosophers think that they are. But what exactly is the criterion for being an *assertive* attitude? This is an important question, because if perceptions lacked assertive propositional content, *IA\** (the *Incapability*

Argument with the modified premise (3)\*) would go through, and the justificatory significance of perceptions would be lost.

Here are some suggestions for the criterion of assertiveness we are looking for:

(A) A belief is the paradigmatic case of a propositional attitude that represents the world assertively. All propositional attitudes that stand in the same direction of fit as a belief assertively represent the world and are therefore capable of justifying beliefs.

(A) cannot be correct. It is true that wishes or hopes have another direction of fit than beliefs, so (A) might explain why a hope or a wish cannot inferentially justify a belief. But (A) cannot explain why mere assumptions or wild imaginings cannot do so. These states have the same direction of fit as beliefs, but they cannot inferentially justify a belief. And if having *assertive* propositional content is the specific feature that enables a propositional attitude to be a justifier, then mere assumptions and imaginings do not assertively represent the world.

(B) A belief is the paradigmatic case of a propositional attitude that represents the world assertively. A belief inherits its truth-value from the truth-value of its content. All propositional attitudes that inherit their truth-value from their content assertively represent the world and are therefore capable of justifying beliefs.

(B) cannot be correct for the same reasons we have given with respect to (A). (B) might explain why a hope or a wish cannot inferentially justify a belief, since these states do not inherit a truth-value from their content – a wish is neither true nor false. But (B) cannot explain why mere assumptions or wild imaginings cannot justify a belief, since they *do* inherit a truth-value from their content. So by the lights of criterion (B), they too should represent the world assertively and should be capable of justifying a belief.

(C) A belief is the paradigmatic case of a propositional attitude that represents the world assertively. Thus, all propositional attitudes that assertively represent the world have to meet the following condition:

(CO) If *S* has an attitude *A* that assertively represents that *p*, then it cannot be the case that *S* simultaneously believes that not-*p* without being irrational.

As far as I can see (C) is the most promising suggestion. A belief is the paradigmatic propositional attitude that is assertive, in the sense that it purports to convey how the world is. Therefore, if you believe that not-*p*, and you simultaneously have an attitude *A* with the propositional content that *p*, without being irrational, then this attitude *A* cannot be assertively representing that *p*, – then this attitude cannot purport to be saying how the world is. This sounds quite plausible. But does (C) give us the right classification of attitudes? Wishes do not meet condition (CO): you can wish that you were the strongest person alive and simultaneously believe that you are not the strongest person alive without being irrational. So wishes do not represent the world assertively. The same is true for hoping, merely assuming or imagining that you are the strongest person alive. So far (C) gives us the classification we want.

But unfortunately perceptions fail to meet condition (CO). This can be easily illustrated by the Müller-Lyer-Illusion. You can perceive that two lines are of *unequal* length and believe that they are of *equal* length without

being irrational. Hence, by the light of criterion (C), perceptions do not represent the world assertively. Thus if (C) is the best criterion we have to decide whether a propositional attitude assertively represents the world, then the justificatory significance of our perceptions is in trouble. Because if (C) is correct, then premise (3)\* is true and *IA\** (the modified *Incapability Argument*) goes through, and perceptions are incapable of justifying our beliefs.

#### 4. Conclusion

What conclusion should be drawn from the considerations in the last sections? We have seen that the weakest link in *IA\** is premise (3)\*. We have also seen that even the weakest link in the argument seems true, if we accept criterion (C), which appears to be the best criterion we have thus far to decide whether an propositional attitude is assertive or not. So if we want to hold on to the justificatory significance of our perceptions, and I think that we should, we have the following options:

- (I) Give up (C) and find another and better criterion to decide whether a propositional attitude is assertive or not;
- (II) Give up the idea of an assertive propositional attitude and find another feature that differentiates proposi-

tional attitudes that are capable of inferentially justifying a belief from propositional attitudes that are incapable of doing so (like wishes, hopes, imaginings, etc.);

- (III) Dismiss one of the other premises, i.e., premise (1) or (2), of the *Incapability Argument*.

None of the above options is an obvious non-starter. It will take serious work to find the most promising candidate. Nevertheless, the result of this work will surely improve our understanding of the justificatory relationship between perceptions and beliefs.

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# Wittgenstein über Gedankenexperimente

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Während Wittgenstein selbst seine Kritik an der traditionellen Philosophie als eines seiner Hauptanliegen erachtet („Wenn mein Name fortleben wird, dann nur als der *Terminus ad quem* der großen abendländischen Philosophie. Gleichsam wie der Name dessen, der die Alexandrinische Bibliothek verbrannt hat.“, *Denkbewegungen*, 39), werden seine diesbezüglichen Überlegungen oft als „Werbeprospekte ohne argumentative Stützung“<sup>1</sup> abgetan. In diesem Vortrag soll demgegenüber dafür eingetreten werden, dass Teile seiner späteren Philosophiekritik durchaus argumentativ untermauert sind. Wittgensteins Überlegungen könnten dabei insbesondere weitreichende Implikationen für die Methoden des Gedankenexperiments und der Begriffsanalyse haben und somit auch von Interesse für die aktuelle Debatte um Metaphilosophie sein. Insbesondere soll gezeigt werden, dass Wittgensteins metaphilosophische Überlegungen sich *auch* auf semantischer Ebene bewegen und sich nicht lediglich in psychologischen Erwägungen erschöpfen, wie sie in der Debatte um den therapeutischen Charakter von Wittgensteins Philosophie derzeit vornehmlich diskutiert werden.

## 1. Einige sprachtheoretische Überlegungen Wittgensteins

Wittgenstein entwickelt im Rahmen seiner *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* eine Auffassung von Begriffen, die dem nahekommt, was gegenwärtig unter der Bezeichnung der *partiell definierten Prädikate* diskutiert wird. Unter einem partiell definierten Prädikat versteht man dabei einen prädikativen Ausdruck  $F$ , bei dem es zumindest möglich ist, dass es Objekte gibt, die weder zur Extension noch zur Antiextension von  $F$  gehören.<sup>2</sup> In seinen *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* legt Wittgenstein nahe, dass viele umgangssprachliche Begriffswörter partiell definierte Prädikate sind (ohne diese Terminologie zu verwenden). Dass ein umgangssprachliches Begriffswort ein partiell definiertes Prädikat ist, erklärt Wittgenstein damit, dass dessen Bedeutung, genauer gesagt dessen Extension und Antiextension, durch Regeln bestimmt wird, die festlegen, wann das Begriffswort auf ein gegebenes Objekt korrekt angewendet werden kann und wann das Begriffswort einem solchen Objekt regelkonform abgesprochen werden kann. Somit wird festgelegt, wann ein Objekt zur Extension des Prädikats gehört und wann es zu dessen Antiextension zählt. Um die Regeln explizieren zu können, welche die Extension eines Begriffsworts wie etwa *Spiel* festlegen, sind wir Wittgenstein zufolge auf die Präsentation paradigmatischer Beispiele sowie eine vage Ähnlichkeitsrelation angewiesen, die Wittgenstein unter der Bezeichnung der *Familienähnlichkeit* diskutiert: So beschreiben wir nach Wittgenstein die Extension des Begriffswortes *Spiel* vollständig dadurch, dass wir paradigmatische Beispiele präsentieren und dann fortfahren: „das, und Ähnliches, nennt man ‚Spiele‘“ (vgl. PU §69). Die Extension von  $F$  wird somit gewissermaßen rekursiv definiert: Ihr gehören alle paradigmatischen Beispiele an sowie Objekte, die den bereits zur Extension von  $F$  zählenden Objekten ähneln. In analoger Weise wird die Antiextension von  $F$  rekursiv festgelegt: Zu ihr zählen die paradigmatischen Gegenbei-

spiele zu  $F$  sowie alle Objekte, die den bereits zur Antiextension von  $F$  zählenden Objekten ähneln (vgl. PU §75).<sup>3</sup>

Es überrascht nicht, dass die derart bestimmten Regeln *unterbestimmt* sein können in dem Sinne, dass es möglich ist, dass es Objekte gibt, für welche die Regeln *nicht* festlegen, ob sie zur Extension oder zur Antiextension des Begriffsworts zählen. Die Unterbestimmtheit von Regeln ist wiederum dadurch möglich, dass die Regeln nicht in trennscharfen notwendigen und zusammengenommen hinreichenden Merkmalen bestehen (wie etwa im Rahmen eines deskriptivistischen Ansatzes im Sinne Freges). So ist es nach Wittgenstein möglich, dass es Objekte gibt, die *weder* hinreichend Gegenständen ähneln, die berechtigterweise zu den Dingen gezählt werden, die  $F$  (z.B. Spiele) sind, *noch* hinreichend Gegenständen ähneln, die berechtigterweise zu den Dingen gezählt werden, die *nicht-F* sind. Die Unterbestimmtheit eines Prädikats resultiert somit in der Möglichkeit von *Grenzfällen*, denen das Prädikat weder eindeutig zu- noch abgesprochen werden kann (wobei dies nicht in einem Wissensdefizit hinsichtlich des Objektes begründet ist). Die Existenz solcher Grenzfälle wird oftmals als Zeichen der *Vagheit* des betroffenen Prädikats interpretiert, so dass die Unterbestimmtheit eines Prädikats dessen Vagheit nach sich zieht. Wie kommt es aber, dass wir Begriffe verwenden, deren Anwendungsregeln unterbestimmt sind? Begriffe sind nach Wittgenstein sprachliche Werkzeuge, die für bestimmte praktische Anwendungsfälle im Rahmen bestimmter Kontexte, Wittgenstein spricht auch von *Lebensformen*, ‚gedacht‘ bzw. konzipiert sind. Ihre Anwendung ist dabei nur für Fälle geregelt bzw. bestimmt, die in diesen Kontexten üblicherweise auftreten. Außerhalb dieses Anwendungsbereichs ist die korrekte Verwendung der Begriffe nicht geregelt (PU §142), was gerade die Unterbestimmtheit ausmacht.

Ebenfalls – und deutlich überraschender – ist es möglich, dass es Objekte gibt, die *sowohl* Objekten hinreichend ähneln, die berechtigterweise zu den Dingen gezählt werden, die  $F$  sind, *als auch* Gegenständen ähneln, die berechtigterweise zu den Dingen gezählt werden, die *nicht-F* sind. In diesem Sinne können Begriffe Wittgenstein zufolge auch *überbestimmt* sein. Sowohl die Unter- als auch die Überbestimmtheit eines Prädikats können nach Wittgenstein zu philosophischen Scheinproblemen führen (der Kürze halber beschränkt sich das Folgende auf das Phänomen der Unterbestimmtheit).<sup>4</sup>

Die Unterbestimmtheit einiger philosophisch relevanter Begriffe zieht nach Wittgenstein die folgenden beiden Konsequenzen und entsprechende Scheinprobleme nach sich (wobei hier nur das zweite der beiden Probleme erörtert werden kann):

- (i) Einige (philosophisch relevante) Begriffe besitzen keine exakten Definitionen.
- (ii) Einige (philosophisch relevante) Behauptungen sind weder wahr noch falsch.

<sup>1</sup> Zitiert nach Glock 2000, 266, der aber nicht dieser Meinung ist.

<sup>2</sup> Siehe zu partiell definierten Prädikaten etwa Soames (1999), insbesondere Kap. 6, oder Tappenden (1999), Abschnitt 3.

<sup>3</sup> Die hier verfolgte Interpretation von Wittgensteins begriffstheoretischen Überlegungen findet sich ansatzweise etwa bei Williamson (1994), S. 86–87, und wird ausführlicher dargelegt in Bromand 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Eine ausführlichere Behandlung beider Phänomene findet sich in Bromand 2009.



## 2. Wittgenstein und Gedankenexperimente

Insbesondere der zweite der letztgenannten Punkte ist von Belang für Gedankenexperimente. Aus diesem Punkt ergibt sich zunächst, dass es nicht auf jede philosophische Frage eine Antwort gibt: Wendet man nämlich einen solchen Begriff  $F$  auf einen Fall  $a$  an, der nicht zu den Objekten gehört, für den die Regeln festlegen, ob  $F$  oder  $\text{nicht-}F$  gilt, besitzt die Frage „ $F(a)$ ?“ nach Wittgenstein keine richtige Antwort: Es gilt weder  $F(a)$  noch  $\text{nicht-}F(a)$ , so dass aufgrund von Wittgensteins deflationärem Wahrheitsverständnis (BGM I, Anhang III-6; PU §136) der Satz  $F(a)$  weder wahr noch falsch ist. Wichtig ist hier, dass es Wittgenstein lediglich auf extensionaler Ebene um die Frage der regelkonformen Anwendbarkeit von Begriffen bzw. der Wahrheit der resultierenden Sätze geht und dass die obigen Überlegungen keinen Wiederbelebungsversuch des verifikationistischen Sinnkriteriums des Wiener Kreises darstellen. Von der Nichtbeantwortbarkeit betroffen sind Fragen, in denen es um die Anwendbarkeit eines unterbestimmten Prädikats auf entsprechende Grenzfälle geht. Insbesondere Gedankenexperimente, in denen es um die Anwendbarkeit eines solchen Begriffs unter radikal veränderten Rahmenbedingungen bzw. um die Anwendbarkeit auf gänzlich untypische Anwendungsfälle geht, für die der Begriff nicht ‚gedacht‘ bzw. nicht hinreichend bestimmt (d. h. unterbestimmt) ist, sind hiervon betroffen. Wittgenstein verdeutlicht dies seinerseits am Beispiel eines Gedankenexperiments:

Ich sage: „Dort steht ein Sessel.“ Wie, wenn ich hingehe und ihn holen will, und er entschwindet plötzlich meinem Blick? – „Also war es kein Sessel, sondern irgendeine Täuschung.“ – Aber in ein paar Sekunden sehen wir ihn wieder und können ihn angreifen, etc. – „Also war der Sessel doch da und sein Verschwinden war irgend eine Täuschung.“ – Aber nimm an, nach einer Zeit verschwindet er wieder, – oder scheint zu verschwinden. Was sollen wir nun sagen? Hast du für solche Fälle Regeln bereit, – die sagen, ob man so etwas noch „Sessel“ nennen darf? Aber gehen sie uns beim Gebrauch des Wortes „Sessel“ ab; und sollen wir sagen, daß wir mit diesem Wort eigentlich keine Bedeutung verbinden, da wir nicht für alle Möglichkeiten seiner Anwendung mit Regeln ausgerüstet sind? (PU §80; vgl. Z §350)

Bereits im *Blauen Buch* macht Wittgenstein Begriffe, deren Anwendung nicht für alle möglichen Fälle geregelt ist, für das Entstehen philosophischer Probleme verantwortlich (BB, 74). Diese Position behält er auch im Rahmen seiner *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* bei. In diesem Sinne stellt er etwa fest: „[D]ie philosophischen Probleme entstehen, wenn die Sprache *feiert*“ bzw. außerhalb ihrer üblichen, ‚werktaglichen‘ Verwendungsweise gebraucht wird (PU §38 vgl. §§116, 119, 132–133).

Welche weiteren philosophischen Fragen könnte Wittgensteins Kritik nun betreffen? Sainsbury 1990 erörtert entsprechende Beispiele in Wittgensteins Sinne. So erlauben uns etwa die Begriffe *Erdbeere* und *Himbeere* jeweils zwischen Erdbeeren bzw. Himbeeren und anderen Früchten zu differenzieren, solange wir die Begriffe in alltäglichen Kontexten verwenden (wie etwa auf dem Markt), in denen nur die gängigen Sorten vorzufinden sind. Im Rahmen eines solchen begrenzten Gegenstandsbereichs funktionieren die Begriffe wie (etwa von Frege) erwünscht und unterteilen den Gegenstandsbereich in zwei ‚Hälften‘. Diese Leistung wird Wittgenstein zufolge *nicht* dadurch geschmälert, dass die Begriffe nicht mehr unbedingt in dieser Weise funktionieren, wenn der Gegenstandsbereich *erweitert* wird. So ist es zumindest

denkbar, mit gentechnischen Mitteln eine Reihe von Pflanzen zu erzeugen, von denen die erste eine Erdbeerpflanze ist, die letzte ein Himbeerstrauch, so dass deren Zwischenstufen sich hinsichtlich ihrer Früchte paarweise jeweils nur geringfügig unterscheiden. Wendet man die Begriffe *Erdbeere* und *Himbeere* auf einen Gegenstandsbereich an, der auch solche gentechnisch manipulierten Früchte enthält, werden sich für beide Begriffe Grenzfälle finden, so dass der Begriff einem entsprechenden Zweifelsfall weder regelkonform zu- noch abgesprochen werden kann. Die *umgangssprachlichen* Begriffe unterteilen einen derart erweiterten Gegenstandsbereich nicht disjunkt und sind sozusagen nicht für solche Anwendungsfälle ‚gedacht‘. Dies schließt nicht aus, dass die Gebrauchsregeln für die Anwendung auf Grenzfälle *erweitert* werden können. Aus einer solchen Erweiterung resultierte dabei freilich ein *anderer*, in der fraglichen Hinsicht weniger vager Begriff. Ob ein unterbestimmtes Prädikat auf einen Grenzfall zutrifft, kann somit aber nur willkürlich festgelegt und nicht durch eine Begriffsanalyse des ursprünglichen Begriffs (vor der Erweiterung seiner Verwendungsregeln) eruiert werden.

Ähnlich verhält es sich vermutlich auch mit philosophisch relevanteren Begriffen wie *Mensch* oder *Person*. So erlaubt uns der umgangssprachliche Begriff *Mensch* zwar zumeist, Menschen von anderen Lebewesen oder Objekten zu differenzieren. Der Wittgenstein’schen Auffassung zufolge wäre es aber vergebens, etwa im Rahmen von Debatten der Bioethik um die Zulässigkeit von Abtreibungen, trennscharfe Kriterien für das Menschsein aufgrund einer Analyse des Begriffs *Mensch* finden zu wollen. Weitere Anwärter für eingehend diskutierte philosophische Fragen, die sich aus Wittgensteins Perspektive als Scheinprobleme erweisen könnten, sind etwa auch Fragen nach diachroner Identität bzw. Persistenz. Ein berühmtes Beispiel, das im Rahmen entsprechender philosophischer Diskussionen immer wieder herangezogen wurde, ist das *Schiff des Theseus*, bei dem auf hoher See alle Planken durch neue ersetzt, die alten aber verwahrt werden, um daraus wieder ein Schiff nach dem ursprünglichen Bauplan zu bauen. Auch in diesem Falle könnte man vermuten, dass die Regeln, welche die Bedeutung bzw. die korrekte Anwendung von *identisch* auf zeitlich ausgedehnte Objekte festlegen, nicht hinreichend spezifiziert sind, um die Frage zu beantworten, welches der beiden resultierenden Schiffe identisch mit dem ursprünglichen ist.

## 3. Ein Fallbeispiel

Wie genau lässt sich nun mit Wittgensteins Verständnis vager Ausdrücke der Fall von Theseus’ Schiff erklären? Eine Möglichkeit, wie Wittgensteins allgemeine Überlegungen auf diesen speziellen Fall angewendet werden könnten, soll im Folgenden angedeutet werden, wobei es bei einer Skizze der wichtigsten Argumentationsschritte bleiben muss. Zunächst einmal handelt es sich beim Ausdruck *x ist dasselbe Schiff wie y* um einen Relationsausdruck, der nicht auf einzelne Gegenstände, sondern auf Paare von Gegenständen zutrifft.

Typische Beispiele für Paare, die unter den Relationsausdruck *ist dasselbe Schiff wie* fallen, könnten Paare von Schiffen sein, die (1) oder (2) klarerweise erfüllen:

- (1)  $x$  entsteht aus  $y$  durch die Ersetzung höchstens einer begrenzten Anzahl von Teilen(oder umgekehrt)
- (2)  $x$  und  $y$  bestehen zum selben Zeitpunkt aus denselben Teilen

Typische Gegenbeispiele könnten etwa Paare sein, die nicht einmal die Negationen der schwächeren Bedingungen (1') oder (2') erfüllen,

(1') zwischen  $x$  und  $y$  besteht eine raumzeitliche Kontinuität

(2')  $x$  und  $y$  bestehen aus denselben Teilen,

also Paare, die weder zu einem Zeitpunkt aus denselben Teilen bestehen noch raumzeitlich kontinuierlich sind. Betrachten wir das Paar bestehend aus Theseus' ursprünglichem Schiff und dem Schiff mit den erneuerten Planken. Dieses Paar ähnelt den typischen Beispielen für Paare, die unter die Relation fallen, insofern nicht, als es kein klares Beispiel für (1) ist. Klare Beispiele für diese Bedingung sind Beispiele komplexer Gegenstände mit vielen Bestandteilen, von denen nur sehr wenige Bestandteile etwa zu Reparaturzwecken ausgetauscht wurden. Dies trifft in diesem Falle, bei dem im Vergleich zu Theseus' ursprünglichem Schiff alle und somit sehr viele Bestandteile ausgetauscht werden, sicherlich nicht zu. Bei diesem Paar handelt es sich aber auch nicht um ein typisches Gegenbeispiel, da es in diesem Falle sehr wohl eine raumzeitliche Kontinuität zwischen dem ursprünglichen Schiff des Theseus und dem Schiff mit den erneuerten Planken gibt. Ähnlich kann auch im Falle von Theseus' ursprünglichem Schiff und dem aus den alten Planken rekonstruierten Schiff gezeigt werden, dass sie weder den typischen Beispielen noch den typischen Gegenbeispielen von Paaren ähneln, die unter die Relation  $x$  ist dasselbe Schiff wie  $y$  fallen. Beide Paare bilden somit Grenzfälle für die besagte Relation, in denen eben nicht geregelt ist, ob der Relationsausdruck auf die Paare korrekterweise angewandt werden kann oder nicht.

#### 4. Ausblick: Wie weit reichen die Konsequenzen von Wittgensteins Überlegungen?

Eine ähnliche Diagnose wie im Falle von Theseus' Schiff liegt auch im Falle vieler Fragen nach personaler Identität nahe, insbesondere in den sog. *Fission*-Fällen, wie sie bisweilen in der Philosophie des Geistes diskutiert werden. In diesem Sinne weist auch Derek Parfit (1984, 213f.) auf die Möglichkeit von unbestimmten (wahrheitswertlosen) Behauptungen personaler Identität hin. Auch hier resultierte die Unbestimmtheit des Satzes aus der Vagheit des Identitätsprädikats. Wie im Falle von Wittgensteins Sessel-Beispiel (PU §80, s.o.) handelte es sich aber auch bei unbestimmten (wahrheitswertlosen) Behauptungen personaler Identität nicht um ein Wissensdefizit unsererseits; vielmehr gibt es im Sinne der Auffassung Wittgensteins nichts, von dem wir wissen könnten. Damit sollen aber nicht Gedankenexperimente *per se* als philosophisch unfruchtbar erwiesen werden. Vielmehr ist zu erwarten, dass Gedankenexperimente, in denen es um Szenarien

geht, die denen unserer alltäglichen Lebenswelt ähneln, erfolgreich in dem Sinne sein könnten, dass sie Fragen aufwerfen, die mit Hilfe unserer bisherigen Begrifflichkeit beantwortet werden können. Beispiele solcher alltagsnahen Gedankenexperimente stellen etwa die berühmten Gettier-Beispiele oder das sog. Gödel-Schmidt-Gedankenexperiment Kripkes dar. Auch schließen Wittgensteins Überlegungen nicht die Möglichkeit erfolgreicher *Science fiction*-Gedankenexperimente wie etwa das von Putnams *Zwillingserde* aus. Wichtig ist hier, dass dieses Gedankenexperiment nicht in *irreduzibler* Weise von *Science fiction*-Szenarien Gebrauch macht: Die *Science fiction*-Szenarien hier sind im Wesentlichen verzichtbar und nahezu alle Aspekte des Zwillingserde-Gedankenexperiments können von entsprechenden Gedankenexperimenten ohne *Science fiction*-Elemente erfasst werden. Selbst irreduzible *Science fiction*-Szenarien, die unseren augenblicklichen Lebensumständen in Hinblick auf den Sprachgebrauch noch hinreichend ähneln, wären aus der obigen Perspektive Wittgensteins unproblematisch. Problematisch sind lediglich solche Gedankenexperimente, in denen radikal neue Szenarien für die Anwendung vager Begriffe und somit eventuell Grenzfälle für solche Begriffe konstruiert werden und dann die Frage aufgeworfen wird, ob das fragliche vage Prädikat auf den im Gedankenexperiment konstruierten Grenzfall zutrifft. Unsere Schwierigkeit, solche Fragen zu beantworten, ist dabei nicht darin begründet, dass unsere kognitiven Möglichkeiten zu begrenzt sind, um die Antworten in Erfahrung zu bringen – vielmehr gibt es in solchen Fällen keine richtigen Antworten, von denen wir wissen könnten. Der Wittgenstein'schen Position zufolge handelt es sich hier lediglich um Scheinprobleme, die durch sprachtheoretische Überlegungen aufgelöst sind, worin nach Wittgenstein auch das hauptsächliche Anliegen der Philosophie bestehen sollte (vgl. PU §§109, 133).

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# The Knowledge Norm of Practical Reasoning and Impurism

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## 1. Impurism and the knowledge norm

Traditional accounts of knowledge hold that whether S's true belief that p is knowledge depends on such factors as S's evidence for p, and whether S's belief that p was formed reliably. Impurism is distinctive in holding that whether S knows that p also depends on the stakes for S, on how important it is to S that p be true (Fantl and McGrath 2002 and 2009; Hawthorne 2004; and Stanley 2005).

Impurism has been defended by appealing to the idea that knowledge is the norm of practical reasoning. In particular, the sufficiency direction of the knowledge norm combined with contextualist cases provides a powerful argument for impurism. An initial formulation of the sufficiency direction of the norm is as follows:

*Sufficiency:* if you know that p then you are in a good enough epistemic position to rely on p in practical reasoning.

Of course, even if you are in a good enough epistemic position to rely on a proposition in your practical reasoning, it does not follow that it is appropriate in other senses for you to do so. For example, perhaps one comes to know some truth in a dishonest way. Since one knows this truth, then one is in a good enough epistemic position to rely on it in one's practical reasoning. But in virtue of the dishonest way in which one acquired this knowledge, it may be morally wrong to exploit it in one's practical reasoning.

To see how *Sufficiency* may be used to motivate impurism, let us consider a standard contextualist case, say DeRose's bank case. In this case, it is stipulated that in both the low and high contexts, DeRose truly believes that the bank is open on Saturday on the basis of the same evidence, namely his recent visit to the bank. Given the setup, it is plausible that, in the low context, DeRose knows that the bank is open on Saturday. Further, given that in the low context nothing much turns on whether the bank is open on Saturday, it seems appropriate for DeRose to rely on this claim in his practical reasoning, say his reasoning to the conclusion that instead of waiting in the long Friday queue, he will go to the bank on Saturday instead. However, in the high context, it is of great importance to DeRose whether the bank is open on Saturday: he stands to default on his mortgage payments and risk his house if he does not deposit money in his bank account before the end of Saturday. Given the stakes in the high context, it seems that he is not in a strong enough epistemic position to rely on the claim that the bank is open on Saturday in his practical reasoning. Instead, before deciding not to wait in the long Friday queue, he should check the bank's opening hours. If *Sufficiency* were true then it could be combined with the claim that, in high, DeRose is not in a strong enough epistemic position to rely on the relevant proposition in his practical reasoning to conclude that, in high, DeRose does not know that proposition. Since DeRose does plausibly know in the low context, one may conclude that knowledge is a function of the stakes. An argument of this form is explicitly given in Fantl and McGrath's recent defence of impurism (Fantl and McGrath 2009).

## 2. Formulating the knowledge norm

Having seen how *Sufficiency* is important to the defence of impurism, I now consider one main formulation of the sufficiency thesis, that given by Fantl and McGrath, (KJ):

(KJ) if you know that p, then p is warranted enough to justify you in  $\emptyset$ ing, for any  $\emptyset$ .

Here,  $\emptyset$  ranges over actions, preferences and mental states (Fantl and McGrath 2009: 66). They explain that in saying that p is warranted enough to justify you in  $\emptyset$ ing, they mean that there is no weakness in your epistemic position with respect to p which stands in the way of p justifying you in  $\emptyset$ ing (66). This is compatible with other things standing in the way of p justifying you in  $\emptyset$ ing. For instance, by (KJ), if I know that the local shop sells ice cream, then no epistemic weakness stands in the way of this proposition justifying me in  $\emptyset$ ing, say my going to the shop. However, I might have a countervailing reason not to go to the shop, for instance that I want to lose weight. Further, for some  $\emptyset$ , the proposition that the local shop sells ice cream might be entirely irrelevant to the decision to  $\emptyset$ . For instance, without special suppositions, the proposition that the local shop sells ice cream would be irrelevant to my decision on whether or not to attend the forthcoming epistemology conference. All that (KJ) claims is that if I know a proposition, then no epistemic weakness stands in the way of that proposition justifying me in  $\emptyset$ ing, for any  $\emptyset$ . Thus, (KJ) contains no restriction whatsoever that the proposition p should be relevant to the decision whether or not to  $\emptyset$ .<sup>1</sup>

The fact that principle (KJ) is unrestricted raises the worry that (KJ) places unreasonably strong demands on a proposition's being known. As the stakes get higher, it seems that a stronger epistemic position is needed in order for one to rely on a proposition in one's practical reasoning. By (KJ), it is a necessary condition for you to know that p that no weakness in your epistemic position with respect to p stands in the way of p justifying you in  $\emptyset$ ing, even when  $\emptyset$ ing has incredibly high stakes. In this way, it seems that the standard of epistemic position required to justify one in  $\emptyset$ ing for high stake actions becomes a general requirement on knowing that p.

However, it seems implausible to suppose that knowing a proposition always requires a standard of epistemic position so strong that no weakness in one's epistemic position with respect to that proposition stands in the way of its justifying you in  $\emptyset$ ing, for any  $\emptyset$  whatsoever. For instance, suppose that while travelling home, a doctor is called from her hospital and asked by a junior colleague to advise on what should be done with a critically ill patient. Given the stakes for the patient, it seems that she should rely on a proposition in giving her advice only if she is in a very strong epistemic position with respect to that proposition. For instance, even if she seems to recall various statistics from the patient's notes earlier in the day, this apparent memory is not a strong enough basis for her to treat those statistics as certainties in her reasoning. So, for instance, she may ask the junior doctor to check the

<sup>1</sup> In Fantl and McGrath's example, if I know that my car battery is dead, then no epistemic weakness stands in the way of this proposition justifying my believing that there is water under the surface of Jupiter's moon (64).

patient's records for her before she gives her view. But, it does not seem that, for any proposition whatever, the very same standard of epistemic position is required for her to know that proposition. For instance, while waiting for the junior to call back with more information, she may engage in reasoning about when she is likely to get home given the traffic, and whether she'll be in time to call her daughter, or watch the early evening news. It seems that she can know various propositions relevant to this reasoning even though her epistemic position with respect to those propositions is not as high as the position required for her to rely on a proposition in reasoning about how to deal with the critically ill patient in hospital. Furthermore, she may be in a good enough epistemic position to rely on these propositions in her reasoning even if her epistemic position with respect to them is not as high as the position required for her to rely on a proposition in decisions about the critically ill patient.

Reflecting on this case, we can see that KJ risks extremely sceptical consequences. For, it is not just doctors and emergency staff who face high-stakes situations. Many of us for much of our lives are considering actions with potentially high stakes. For instance, we may be considering changing job or moving house. We may be considering important changes in our personal lives, such as whether to get married or whether to have children. We may be considering actions with potentially high-stakes consequences for important relationships in our lives, for instance we may be considering whether to tell our best friend about her errant behaviour of her partner, or considering whether to tell a relation about how problematic their behaviour is. In many of these cases, there is no particular one moment for us to act, and given the importance of such decisions, we often have them at the back of our minds for a long period of time during which we are considering how to proceed. So, it seems that, for many of us and for much of our lives, there are high stake actions we are considering undertaking. KJ risks raising the epistemic standards for any proposition to be known to the standards required for us to rely on a proposition in undertaking these high-stakes actions. In reply, a defender of KJ might say that her view need not result in all-out scepticism since we may meet the high epistemic standards for some suitably qualified proposition, say the proposition that it is highly likely that I'll be able to sell my house and buy another without incurring huge financial loss, or it is highly likely that, given time, my best friend won't end our friendship if I tell her the truth about her partner. However, notice that, if unrestricted, KJ) will place incredibly high standards on all propositions whatsoever, not just those involved in the reasoning in question. So the very same high standards will affect every proposition, including those which we would ordinarily take ourselves to know unqualified. So, KJ) will have revisionary consequences. Even if it doesn't have the consequence that we know nothing at all, it will have the consequence that we do not have knowledge of many unqualified propositions we take ourselves to have knowledge of, for example that there is milk in the fridge, that the bus leaves at 10 am, that the film starts at 7 pm, that the dinner will be cooked in an hour, and that the kids have had breakfast and cleaned their teeth etc.

In response to these difficulties, the defender of KJ) might attempt to restrict it in some way so that the high

epistemic standards required by some high-stakes actions do not become general epistemic standards for knowledge of any proposition whatsoever. This is effectively what Hawthorne and Stanley do in their formulation of the knowledge norm for practical reasoning. They note that when  $p$  is completely irrelevant to the issue at hand, it seems odd to say that if one knows that  $p$ , it is appropriate to treat  $p$  as a reason for acting. Thus, they suggest restricting the knowledge norm to 'p-dependent choices' where a choice between options  $x_1$ - $x_n$  is p-dependent iff the most preferable of  $x_1$ - $x_n$  conditional on  $p$  is not the same as the most preferable of  $x_1$ - $x_n$  conditional on not- $p$ '. They state the knowledge norm thus: 'where's one's choice is p-dependent, it is appropriate to treat  $p$  as a reason for acting iff you know that  $p$ ' (Hawthorne and Stanley 2008).

However, this response offers no easy escape of the impurist. Impurism already faces difficulties in allowing that, of two subjects, or one subject at different times/circumstances, who have the very same epistemic position with respect to a proposition, one but not the other knows the proposition. As a result, impurism is committed to such problematic conjunctions as "she knows that  $p$ , but if she had been in a high-stakes situation, she wouldn't have known that  $p$ ". Restricting KJ) to avoid the sceptical consequences mentioned above has the result that impurism is also committed to holding that a single subject who has the very same strength of epistemic position with respect to two propositions at the same time may know only one of them. This seems even more problematic than the earlier result.

### 3. Conclusion

I've been examining one main formalisation of the sufficiency direction of the knowledge norm for practical reasoning. The sufficiency direction of the knowledge norm is central to the most promising argument for impurism. According to Fantl and McGrath's formulation of the sufficiency direction, the principle is unrestricted and concerns any proposition whatsoever. However, we've seen that this formalisation leads to scepticism. One might seek to avoid such problems by restricting the sufficiency direction of the knowledge norm. But, we've seen that this offers no easy escape since it raises distinct problems for impurism. Thus, one main way of motivating impurism seems to be in difficulty.

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# Reflective Equilibrium and Disagreement about Logics

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This paper investigates the claim that rival logics can simultaneously be justified by the method of reflective equilibrium (henceforth “RE”). Against Resnik’s extensive discussion of RE as the methodology for logic (Resnik 1985; 1996; 1997:ch. 8.3), Shapiro (2000) argues that the method of RE can only account for a pluralist position if we accept that there is a “core” of logical notions outside the scope of the method of RE and knowable a priori. After briefly discussing some aspects of the method of RE, I analyse the dispute between Shapiro and Resnik and suggest a defence of the claim that there can be reasonable disagreement between proponents of rival logics.

## 1. Reflective Equilibrium

At the core of the method of (so-called “wide”) RE are two ideas. Epistemic justification is a matter of whether judgements, systematic principles and background theories are in equilibrium, and this state is reached through a process of mutual adjustment of judgements, principles and in some cases also background theories. Various accounts of the method of RE spell out these ideas differently and include additional elements. So far, the most elaborated general account is Elgin’s (1996); Resnik (1985; 1996; 2004) has presented the most thorough discussion of the application to logic. Three points are crucial for present purposes.

Firstly, in the case of logic, an equilibrium is sought between judgements (or more generally, “commitments”) about logical properties of (sets of) sentences (e.g. validity, logical truth or consistency) in some given language and a logical system (“a logic”) that includes: a logical formalism, which is a formal language with a semantic or proof-theoretic definition of validity and further logical notions; an informal interpretation of the formalism, which relates, e.g., “ $\Rightarrow$ ” with “follows from”; and a theory of formalization, which regulates the relation of ordinary language arguments and sentences to expressions of the formalism. Without the last two elements, there is no way of deciding whether the judgements follow from the logical system.

Secondly, all accounts of the method of RE emphasize that the elements of a logical system (“systematic elements” for short) contrast with judgements which express extra-systematic commitments. However, there are in fact two contrasts involved. At every stage in a process of developing a RE (abbreviated “RE-stage of a RE-process”), there is a contrast between the systematic elements at that stage and our judgements at that stage. A second contrast is between the resulting account and the judgements the RE-process started out with. To fix the distinction terminologically, judgements will be characterized as “antecedent” in the context of the second contrast; in the context of the first contrast, I will use “current judgement” or simply “judgement”.

Thirdly, as Elgin made clear, justification by RE involves several criteria. Judgements, logical system and background theories must be in equilibrium. This requires at least that judgements, logical system and background theories are consistent, and that the judgements follow from the logical system. Moreover, the resulting logical system must do justice to relevant epistemic desiderata

(such as being formal, simple and fruitful); and the resulting account (i.e. the ordered pair ⟨judgements, logical system⟩) must respect antecedent judgements adequately. To simplify, I will often leave implicit that a RE includes background theories and that being in RE is relative to antecedent commitments and to desiderata.

## 2. Justification of Rival Logics

We are now in a position to analyse the debate between Resnik (1997:160–2; cf. 1996:502–5) and Shapiro (2000:349–51) about the pluralistic nature of RE. Since they primarily target other issues (cognitivism and realism), I arrange their arguments in a different dialectical order.

The method of RE has been claimed to be pluralistic in the following sense: it is possible that rival logics – for example classical, intuitionistic and paraconsistent logics – are simultaneously justified according to the method of RE. Even if two epistemic subjects apply the method of RE to the same antecedent judgements, they may end up with rival logics, each in equilibrium with the respective judgements and hence justified. This may happen because in the process of mutual adjustments different epistemic subjects need not deal with the various conflicts in the same order and they can weigh judgements, systematic elements and desiderata differently.

(P1) Given a set of antecedent judgements  $A$ , it is possible that two RE-processes lead to rival logics  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  and to sets of judgements  $J_1$  and  $J_2$ , such that (relative to  $A$ ):  
 $L_1$  and  $J_1$  are in RE, and  $L_2$  and  $J_2$  are in RE.

Two points need a comment. First, I limit the discussion to rival logics that are developed from the same set of judgements. Second, I will not try to define “rival”. Examples of rival logics are classical, intuitionistic and paraconsistent logics. They are non-equivalent, in contrast to, for example, mere notational variants, different axiomatizations and systems with truth-table vs. systems with semantic tableaux. Also, more and less comprehensive logical systems (such as zero- vs. first-order logic, or extensional vs. modal logic) and systems designed for application to different languages or discourses do not count as rival logics.

A challenge to (P1) points out that a proponent of, say, classical logic will find that intuitionistic and paraconsistent logics are not in RE because they are incomplete and inconsistent. As long as an epistemic subject is committed to a particular logic, she will find that at least one of two rival accounts is not in RE and hence that (P1) is false.

Against this charge, one can argue that the notion of RE has logical components and therefore the criteria for being in RE are not independent of the account they are applied to. As Resnik points out, RE requires that a logical system be consistent by its own lights and the judgements follow from the logical system in the sense of “follow” defined in the logic under consideration. Hence we cannot argue against rival logics that they are not in RE according to our standards. The question is rather whether they are in RE according to their own standards.

For an analysis of this argument, we need to distinguish three ways of using expressions with a logical meaning, such as “follows from” and “is consistent”:

- (1) In current and antecedent judgements, “follows from”, for example, is used extra-systematically as a relation between sentences.
- (2) In a logical formalism, there is typically a symbol such as “ $\Rightarrow$ ”, which expresses a relation between formulas. It is read “follows from” because it is – according to the informal interpretation of the formalism – intended to be a systematic counter-part to the extra-systematically used “follows from”.

The extra-systematic use of “follows from” and the systematic use of the corresponding symbol typically change during a RE-process as a result of revisions affecting the judgements or the logical system; we cannot assume that use (1) and (2) agree as long as RE has not been reached.

- (3) In applying the method of RE, logical expressions are used extra-systematically with reference to judgements and logical systems (not as in (1) and (2) as parts of judgements or expressions of a logical formalism). For example, “is consistent” may be used to express a property of the logical system or of a set of judgements; “follows from” may be used to express a relation between the logical system and a judgement.

Resnik’s argues that we must use at every RE-stage the logical notions developed up to that point. In determining whether a set of judgements and a logical system are in RE, principles “contained in one’s own evolving logical theory” determine whether the required coherence has been achieved (Resnik 1997:160). Thus, Resnik’s remark that an account needs to be coherent by its own lights amounts to the claim that type (3)-uses of “is consistent” and “follows from” must agree with their corresponding type (2)-uses. Consequently, these type (3)-uses will change together with the respective type (2)-uses in the course of a RE-process.

Resnik’s position leads to two difficulties. First, the relation of agreement between the systematic use (2) and the extra-systematic uses (1) and (3) is not at all straightforward. We cannot use “follows from” and “ $\Rightarrow$ ” in exactly the same way because the two expressions do not belong to the same language; “ $\Rightarrow$ ” is meaningless when flanked by expressions that are not formulas in the language of the formalism in question.

Secondly, Resnik claims that type-(3) use of, say, “is consistent” should agree with use (2) of a corresponding systematic expression. I suggest we rather insist that the extra-systematic uses (3) and (1) agree. Unless a RE is reached, the two proposals may have different consequences. The reason for the suggested move can be found in the reason why we should accept an “own lights” principle in the first place: one cannot appeal to considerations of consistency or valid inference in arguments about the justification of logical systems, yet deny that one is committed to those very notions of consistency and validity. When we develop a logical system, we simultaneously make our logic explicit and adapt it according to our epistemic desiderata; we reconstruct the logic we already have and during this process we use at every stage the logical commitments we have at this stage. I therefore suggest:

- (OL) At every RE-stage, the logical notions used in criteria for being in RE must agree with the logical

notions used extra-systematically in the “current” account.

If the notion of being in RE varies with the account it is applied to, the thesis about pluralism must be rewritten:

- (P2) Given a set of antecedent judgements  $A$ , it is possible that two RE-processes lead to rival logics  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  and to sets of judgements  $J_1$  and  $J_2$ , such that (relative to  $A$ ):  
 $L_1$  and  $J_1$  are in  $RE_1$  (but not in  $RE_2$ ), and  $L_2$  and  $J_2$  are in  $RE_2$  (but not in  $RE_1$ ).

(P2) evades the objection to (P1). If an epistemic subject  $S_1$  argues against a proponent  $S_2$  of a rival logic that this logic is not in RE by  $S_1$ ’s standards, this is beside the point.  $S_2$ ’s logic must be in RE by standards according with  $S_2$ ’s account.

### 3. Reasonable Disagreement

(P2) opens up the possibility of reasonable disagreement:

- (RD) Given two rival logics as described in (P2), then two epistemic subjects  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  who adopt the accounts  $\langle J_1, L_1 \rangle$  and  $\langle J_2, L_2 \rangle$  respectively are in reasonable disagreement because both accounts are in RE.

Against (RD), Resnik and Shapiro argue that the expression “in RE” is problematic since it is not tied to a specific account. This, so they argue, is incompatible with the immanence of logical notions, which can be used only in the context of a specific account, in contrast to transcendent notions, which can be used in the context of various (or even all) accounts. The notion *reflective equilibrium*, in turn, is immanent to an account because it is partly defined by logical notions such as *is consistent* and *follows from*. For Resnik, this is reason to be sceptical about the possibility of reasonable disagreement. (RD) and other claims invoking transcendent logical notions are in danger of making no sense. Shapiro turns the argument against Resnik by pointing out that transcendent logical notions are needed if we want to acknowledge for the intuitively plausible possibility of reasonable disagreement. Moreover, he argues, without transcendent logical notions, speaking of *the* method of RE is meaningless.

If we accept these arguments, (RD) has to be given up and we are back with (P2). But (P2) is not a claim of reasonable disagreement because it merely asserts that an account may have some property and lack another, whereas it is the other way around for its rival.

To thwart this line of argument, one could attack the distinction between immanent and transcendent notions, dispute the need for transcendent notions, or argue in favour of transcendent logical notions. For present purposes, I shall adopt the last strategy. My basic idea is that distinguishing two contrasts between judgements and systematic elements (sect. 1) allows us to defend the possibility of reasonable disagreement while acknowledging what is convincing about Resnik’s and Shapiro’s arguments. To begin with, we distinguish, within the extra-systematic use, between antecedent and current logical notions. Current notions result from a RE-process and are immanent to the current account. But some antecedent notions are transcendent, namely the pre-systematic notions, which are not the product of some previous development of a logical system. They may be just used informally as part of ordinary language, but their use may also be carefully regulated or explicitly defined (as, for

example, in the discussion of validity in Beall/Restall 2006:ch. 2). In contrast to current extra-systematic notions, they are “open”; that is, they cannot be classified as, say, classical or intuitionistic. In the course of developing a logic, they will be replaced by more precise extra-systematic notions.

Transcendent notions are, firstly, the basis for giving an account of *the* method of RE (including the “own lights”-principle). Framed in pre-systematic terms, such an account is not tied to a particular logic. Precise but immanent notions of *being in RE* (and *being consistent, following from* etc.) become available if we develop a logic, and they will be subject to the arguments of Resnik and Shapiro. Secondly, an account of the method of RE is also a basis for defending the possibility of reasonable disagreement. The arguments about immanence can be avoided if we interpret “both accounts are in RE” in (RD) as follows: each account falls under a specific notion of being in RE which meets (OL). The method of RE settles what counts as a specific RE-notion by specifying how such notions are developed starting from pre-systematic logical notions. Once we have developed an account in RE, there are two ways of discussing the justification of rival logics. In terms of pre-systematic notions, there can be reasonable disagreement because rival logics can be justified as the result of applying the method of RE to the same antecedent judgements. On the background of the commitments an epistemic subject has in the context of a particular account of logic, rival logics are unjustified, because they are not in RE in terms of these commitments.

In sum, we can defend the claim that the method of RE permits reasonable disagreement about rival logics if we rely on a pre-systematic common ground of logical notions, even though in terms of a particular account of logic in RE, we can argue that rival logics are unjustified.

To put things into perspective, I would like to mention some caveats. Firstly, the arguments discussed are specific to the application of the method of RE to logic and do not directly bear on its application in other contexts, such as moral philosophy, where pluralism and reasonable disagreement do not raise the issues discussed here. Secondly, the possibility of reasonable disagreement raises a range of further issues such as tolerance, resoluteness and pluralism in the sense of Beall and Restall, which cannot be dealt with here. Thirdly, defending pre-systematic logical notions as transcendent does not amount to claiming that the pre-systematic background is immune to criticism. On the contrary, the method of RE calls for critically reworking pre-systematically used logic.

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# Ethical Framework

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I will speak of language-games as snapshots of human life. I am interested in investigating the ethical life in an attempt to shed light upon the framework which makes it possible.

If by proposition we mean what can be true or false then the hinges of *On Certainty* are not propositions. My certainty that “The external world exists” is not true or false but it is what makes it possible for the proposition, “Earth has a molten core” to be true. Meaningful language lies within this framework. These hinges are not themselves part of the game – they constitute it. Our basic certainties can be put into propositional form, e.g. “the external world exists”, but doing so is only to offer a piece of nonsense, not an empirical proposition open to refutation. If I were to doubt such a hinge, everything else would go with it. Telling me that the external world exists is *useless* (meaningless/senseless) – it goes without saying. My certainty is displayed in what I do – in action. When we put hinges into propositional form the role they play is *logical* – they act purely as rules to remind the philosopher or foreign speaker that they have transgressed the bounds of sense; just as the tautologies of the *Tractatus* show the logical properties of the world (TLP, 6.22) so too do our actions show what cannot meaningfully be said. It is within this framework that human life takes place.

Both empirical propositions and moral judgments require something to hold them fast; a ground. This ground plays a logical role, i.e. that it enables talk about truth and falsity within the language game. Let us examine how this works in logic. Consider the role a theory such as AE plays. AE is a set of axioms in the language of number theory. The Conclusions of AE are a finite subset of everything true about the natural numbers. Now, AE is a model of many (not all) truths about the natural numbers. It makes no sense to ask whether AE is itself true or false since it is a ground for what can be said truthfully within the game. AE represents the *grammar* of a particular language game.

Hinges play a similar role.<sup>1</sup> Some are taught, e.g. “events take place over time” and the role they play is grammatical; they govern the use of words in language. Others are more basic and instinctual; these hinges are universal: “the external world exists”, “I have a body”, “this is a hand” etc... They are animalistic and as Danièle Moyal-Sharrock argues, ‘ungiveupable’ (Moyal-Sharrock 2004). Others are personal: “My name is Luke Cash”, “I was born in 1990” etc. ... And yet further are local, “someone has been to the moon”. These are examples of what we take for granted; what lies beyond doubt. This is not to say that we *can’t* doubt them – we can. But we do not. Within these bounds lies the edifice of our language. We can say (meaningfully) whatever we want within a particular game so long as what we say does not contradict them. Human life, and therefore ethical life takes place within this framework.

That which lies at the bounds of ethical discourse, the moral hinges which make up the framework, cannot themselves be moral or immoral; for again, this would presuppose a ground against which they could be measured. But hinges do not lie within the game; they constitute it. In order for the proposition “the coffee table is grey” to

be true, the existence of the external world must be taken for granted as something indubitable – not something susceptible to truth or falsity. Similarly, judging actions as moral or immoral *presupposes* a ground which is neither moral or immoral.

It strikes me that this is the fundamental mistake in ethical theory. If someone takes it for granted that “the morally right action is the one that maximizes happiness”, we immediately ask for justification.<sup>2</sup> It requires a ground and so cannot itself act as such. Therefore it is obviously mistaken to ask of an action, “did that maximize the happiness?” If it did, it would require further grounds that are not themselves moral. Hinges must be such that they give us no new information. – They must be nonsensical to say, since they *go without saying*.

“It is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics”  
(TLP 6.42)

Indeed. I will remove talk of truth and falsity and instead speak about ethical actions or the attitudes which govern them as moral or immoral. Talk of truth in ethics is not necessarily mistaken, but I find it confusing. The logical role of the hinges turns from grounding truth to morality. Here is what I will offer:

“Other people are not automatons.” –universal hinge

“Friends help each other out.” –universal hinge

“My mother loves me.” –personal hinge

“Betrayal is wrong.” –grammatical rule

“Humans behave decently towards one another.”  
–local hinge

These are examples (and I could give others) of what governs our ethical dimension of our lives. All are, as hinges, nonsense. There is no framework within which they can fall for they are part of the framework. Just as the certainty “the external world exists” makes skepticism nonsensical – so too does the hinge that “friends help each other out” and “betrayal is wrong” provide the grounds for judging a friend’s betrayal as immoral. Sleeping with my best friend’s wife is not wrong because it fails to maximize happiness – it might. No, it is wrong because it is the denial *in action* of what is ineffable; what lies beyond doubt; what governs what it is to have friends.

Now I suppose it is a bit strange to say that such sentences are nonsense, since it does seem that we do understand them. I believe that the explanation of this is that the uttering of such statements brings the hinge out of the background and into the foreground; this in turn creates a use, and therefore meaning. But this is only within a peculiar context. If a sentence has a meaning, it must have a use. These sentences, as hinges in everyday language, have no use. There is no context in which these statements add anything. As Danièle Moyal-Sharrock argues, what we do when we say (not merely utter) the hinges in language is create a ‘doppelganger’, i.e. a

<sup>1</sup> I follow Danièle Moyal-Sharrock in my separation of hinges into categories; Personal, Universal, Grammatical, and Local.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J.S. Mill, “The creed which accepts as the *foundation* of morals, Utility...”; “This theory of morality is *grounded* [on the principle of utility]” (Mill 1863). Similarly, “*The Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*” is a telling title.



sentence which looks identical to the hinge certainty, but which does not play the same role. When I introduce myself saying, “my name is Luke Cash” the role of the statement is *fundamentally* different from when I say to myself that “my name is Luke Cash”. The later has no use. My hinge certainty is *shown* by my writing my name whenever asked. Similarly, I can tell someone that “my mother loves me.” But this is this is susceptible to doubt; it is the doppelganger of the hinge “my mother loves me”. I *show* my certainty by not saying anything at all; it is displayed in all my actions and responses to her.

Consider what Wittgenstein says in the *Lecture on Ethics*.

Supposing that I could play tennis and one of you saw me playing and said “Well, you play pretty badly” and suppose I answered “I know, I’m playing badly but I don’t want to play any better,” all the other man could say would be “Ah then that’s all right.” But suppose I had told one of you a preposterous lie and he came up to me and said “You’re behaving like a beast” and then I were to say “I know I behave badly, but then I don’t want to behave any better,” could he then say “Ah, then that’s all right”? Certainly not; he would say “Well, you ought to want to behave better.” Here you have an absolute judgment of value, whereas the first instance was one of a relative judgment” (LE 5).

His conclusion in the lecture was that such absolute judgments were nonsense. In light of his later philosophy we can see that such a judgment lies within the bounds of sense. It is a hinge that “we behave decently towards one another” And this leads to the moral judgment, “you ought not to want to behave like a beast.” Behaving in a reasonably polite manner constitutes the foundations of human life. Saying this is obviously empty, but that’s the point. The hinge is meaningless unless it is put into action. Someone who *showed* their desire to behave like a beast is unhinged; something has gone seriously wrong. This is where immorality begins; the rejection *in deed* of what goes without saying.

Below immorality lies madness – the collapse of our most basic certainties. Consider Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*. Approaching Raskolnikov with this in the background is telling. In the novel we can see the reasoned collapse of the ethical framework. The result is a truly deranged individual – a murderer. This is someone who *shows* their desire to behave like a beast.

I don’t have any intention of analysing a fictional character, but I do have some things to say. Firstly, it is probable that his madness is a product of his dismal living conditions in 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia. However, these conditions are not the only factor playing a role in his descent; consequentialist *reasoning* does its part as well:

“I simply hinted that an extraordinary man has the right...to overstep...certain obstacles, and only in case it is essential for the practical fulfillment of his idea (sometimes, perhaps, of benefit to the whole of humanity)” (Dostoevsky 2000).

Just as the difference between the madman and the skeptical philosopher is that the madman shows his doubt where they skeptic merely utters it, the difference between the consequentialist and Raskolnikov is that one acts and the other speaks. Consequentialists *reason* themselves into a position where the correct action is the one which maximizes the good. But this reasoning is completely divorced from normal life. Raskolnikov is an example of a consequentialist *in deed*.

I want to return to consider a few things I said about, “betrayal is wrong”, and “everyone deserves justice”. I said that the first was a grammatical rule. Lars Hertzberg discusses it and argues that you cannot understand the meaning of ‘betrayal’ without knowing that it is wrong (Hertzberg 2009). Similarly, Nigel Pleasants argues that “murder is wrong” expresses a basic moral certainty (Pleasants 2009). I agree, but with reservations. ‘Wrongness’ and ‘betrayal’ seem to me to be *internally* related in Wittgenstein’s sense. Understanding the wrongness of murder is part of understanding what murder *is*. Yet of course it *sounds* like a moral judgment in a way that “other people are not automatons” does not. I must admit I am not at all sure about this. There is a difference between the doppelganger “betrayal is wrong”, said in response when a foreign speaker asks, “What does betrayal mean?” and the hinge certainty which is *shown* by acting as we do.<sup>3</sup> Those for who these foundations have collapsed are people operating outside the game; they aren’t playing by the rules.

It strikes me then as a puzzle why “everyone deserves justice” is not an ethical hinge. If it is possible that in saying “everyone deserves justice” we utter a doppelganger then surely it can still be a hinge that manifests itself *in action*. No, I don’t believe I can save it. There is a fundamental difference between the two cases. We show our certainty that “betrayal is wrong” by not acting a certain way. But this is not the case with “everyone deserves justice”. In fact, it is denied, *in action*, quite often by most of us. We hope our football teams get away with penalties, that our employers overlook the fact that others are better qualified than us, etc... etc... While “everyone deserves justice” *sounds* like a grammatical rule, (to me) an examination of human life shows that it is not part of the ethical framework surrounding our actions. I believe that a similar investigation of statements such as, “treat everyone as ends in themselves and never as a means merely” will yield a similarly negative answer.

This being said, I do believe that “everyone deserves justice” *can* become a *personal* hinge. It can lie in the background for some. And when it does it constitutes an attitude towards the world. This I believe holds for all hinges. Which certainties stand fast for us will affect how we act, how we approach the world. But this relationship is recursive. The system feeds into itself; every application of the rule redefines the rule. Thus, the riverbed shifts.

“Ethics must be a condition of the world, like logic” (NB 77).

Ethics is not something transcendent as the early Wittgenstein would have had it, but this doesn’t change the fact that our experience of the world, our form of life, would be fundamentally different without it; its absence gives birth to chaos. When the foundations upon which we stand give way life collapses. We are left with individuals who do not make sense; they are operating outside its bounds. These people need help. It is part of our task to shed light upon the framework so that it can be restored.

Ethical framework is part of the *human* framework. “Let us be human” (CV 30).

<sup>3</sup> Of course betraying someone like Hitler would not have been wrong; hence, my reservations. Yet such counterexamples seem to me to highlight the hinge, rather than disprove it.

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# Wittgenstein Out Of Context

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In my *Moore and Wittgenstein. Scepticism, Certainty and Common Sense*, I have proposed an interpretation of Wittgenstein's criticism of Moore's use of "I know" in relation to his truisms and the premises of his proof, as well as a defense of Wittgenstein's position against John Searle's (1969) allegation that his remarks were based on an "assertion fallacy", which relies on the decisive role of use in the determination of meaning. In particular, I have stressed how, for Wittgenstein, knowledge claims make sense, in the literal sense of having a meaning, only when they are based on reasons, and, in fact, on reasons stronger than what the latter are supposed to ground; only when it is possible to make an inquiry to verify that things are as one claims to know and yet the possibility that things may not be so is open. Finally and surprisingly, claims to knowledge make sense only when they are relevant within the communicative exchange.

I have also pointed out how, however, Wittgenstein recognized a "grammatical" use of "I know", such that no epistemic relation between a subject and a proposition is expressed by means of it. Grammatical uses of "I know" aren't based on grounds and don't express knowledge but objective certainty. Hence, they could be replaced by "Here I can't be wrong" or "Here a mistake/doubt is logically impossible", or, even, "I couldn't admit any experience as proof to the contrary". I have maintained that, according to Wittgenstein, the fact that one can't be wrong in these cases doesn't depend on one's privileged epistemic position, but on the role that the propositions one claims (grammatically) to know play in our language games. These propositions – like "Here is my hand", "There are physical objects", "I am a human being", "The earth has existed for a very long time", etc. – have a normative function, even when they are the content of a judgment and not the explicit statement of a rule. In context, however, they can also be used as explicit formulations of rules, e.g. when we use "This is a hand" as an ostensive definition of the meaning of the word "hand" in English. In either case, they contribute to the determination of meaning, since meaning is established not only by definitions but also by agreement in judgment, as well as to the possibility of acquiring evidence for or against genuinely empirical propositions. That is why they play both a linguistically and an epistemically normative role.<sup>1</sup> Judgments like "Here is my hand", "There are physical objects", "I am a human being", "The earth has existed for a very long time", "My name is AC", are all cases in point. That they play a normative role, while also being judgments, can be evinced from the fact that they constitutively contribute to the determination both of meaning and of what would count as, for instance, normal conditions of perception, evidence for or against historical or geological specific judgments, normal conditions of human functioning, etc. For if those judgments were given up, one could no longer count on one's perception, memories, or on apparent testimonies regarding the age of the Earth, to acquire evidence which could, in its turn, *disprove* those very propositions. Finally, the way in which we acquire hinges depends on what we have been drilled to and

taught, either implicitly or explicitly, in the process of acquiring language, and of learning to take part in our various epistemic practices. That is why "I know", in connection with them, can also be glossed as "I have been drilled to/taught thus-and-so". Such an explanation, however, plays a causal role and it isn't an epistemic reason which could sustain a genuine claim to knowledge.

I have therefore come close to so-called "therapeutic" interpretations of Wittgenstein's thought,<sup>2</sup> according to which Moore with his use of "I know", and more generally philosophers, often tend to fall prey to an illusion of meaning: they think they are making sense, when they employ certain words, and that they are therefore discovering deep philosophical truths (or problems), while they are in fact speaking nonsense. Yet I think therapeutic interpretations are too partial. For they fail to see that while use comes first and determines meaning, it does so, for Wittgenstein, because it fixes the rules for the correct employment of signs and for the actual deployment of our epistemic practices. So there is no opposition, in my view, between stressing the importance and primacy of use in the later Wittgenstein and his insistence on rules and grammar. When philosophers speak nonsense, they do so because they run against the rules of language, as well as of evidential significance, established by use and by our actual language games and epistemic practices. Furthermore, in my view, therapists tend to discard the important insights, contained in *On Certainty*, on the grammatical role of "I know", which help greatly to clarify the normative status of our certainties, viz. of those "hinge" propositions with respect to which "I know" may be used grammatically.

Be that as it may, here I wish to signal my distance from semantic contextualist readings of, in particular, *On Certainty* and of Wittgenstein's observations on Moore's use of "I know". I think it is appropriate to address this issue in connection with the points just rehearsed because semantic contextualists join therapists and myself in stressing the fact that Wittgenstein's insistence on use would have deep philosophical consequences. In particular, it would entail that most philosophical employments of, e.g. "I know that P", would actually fail to make sense (Travis 1989, 153). This, however, may suggest that there are more similarities between semantic contextualist readings of Wittgenstein and mine, than it is in fact the case.

Charles Travis, in his *The Uses of Sense* (1989), has argued that Wittgenstein held that "A knows that P" can express many different thoughts – viz. various truth-conditions – on different contexts of its use. However, he bases his interpretation on a passage where Wittgenstein is actually discussing a different example, i.e. "I'm here".

Just as the words "I am here" have a meaning only in certain contexts, and not when I say them to someone who is sitting in front of me and sees me clearly,—and not because they are superfluous, but because their meaning is not *determined* by the situation, yet stands in need of such a determination (OC 348)

So too, the comparison goes, do the words "I know that that's a tree" uttered when one is clearly in view of a tree

<sup>1</sup> I thus agree with Moyal-Sharrock's (2005) suggestion that in *On Certainty* the notion of a rule, as well as that of grammar, are extended to cover not only linguistic norms but also those which we may call "norms of evidential significance".

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Conant 1998.

(cf. OC 347). Travis' idea is that, unless we look at context, the truth-conditions of a given utterance of those words are *underdetermined*. Hence, it is only by considering the context that we can find out which thoughts they express and establish whether they are used to express a truth or a falsity.

I find this suggestion odd for a number of reasons. First of all, I think Wittgenstein's view is more radical than Travis makes of it. For in the passage quoted above Wittgenstein is saying that outside a specific context of use, those words have *no meaning*. Using a piece of classical semanticist terminology, I take that to entail that they don't even have a role or a character. Therefore, they naturally fail to determine a thought, i.e. specific truth-conditions. Travis, on the contrary, seems to think that they actually have a meaning, on Wittgenstein's view of the matter, while context has to be invoked in order for them to express a determinate thought. This, however, wouldn't be very surprising, since in OC 348 indexicals occur. Yet, clearly, Wittgenstein's remark is meant to make a stronger and surely more contentious claim.

Secondly, it seems to me that the only kind of "contextualism" envisaged by Wittgenstein is about the fact that in different contexts "I/A know(s) that P" could actually *mean* different things. In particular, either an epistemic relationship between the subject and P; or else, a grammatical remark where no epistemic property is attributed to a subject. Finally, those words could fail to mean anything at all, when they are used by philosophers such as Moore, irrespective of all criteria that govern their mundane employment. Only in the first case could those words express a Fregean thought, i.e. something which is susceptible of being either true or false. For in the second case, the role of the ascription would be that of expressing a rule, hence nothing which could either be true or false; and, in the third, those words would fail to have a meaning altogether and would then express no Fregean thought at all.

Lastly, contrary to Travis (1989, 156-66), I find no suggestion in Wittgenstein that, depending on various factors, such as our practical interests and world-involving conditions, an utterance of the first kind – viz. the one in which a genuine ascription of knowledge is made – could actually express different truth-conditions. Let us illustrate this idea with a classic example. Consider a subject who needs to deposit a check in the bank by Friday. Now, depending on whether it is a matter of urgency or not and, therefore, on whether certain defeaters are salient to the case, an ascription of knowledge to him (either made by the subject himself or by a third party) regarding whether the bank is going to be open on Fridays, could be either true or false. However, as remarked, given the textual evidence at our disposal, I find no hints of this sort in *On Certainty*. I would say because Wittgenstein, to the best of my knowledge, simply doesn't discuss such a kind of case and isn't so much interested in knowledge *per se* as in certainty. So, I actually think that, if it makes sense to describe Wittgenstein's position in these anachronistic terms, he seems to have been more of an *invariantist* with respect to knowledge ascriptions than anything else.

Finally, one may think, following Michael Williams (2004a, b), that though a semantic invariantist with respect to knowledge ascriptions, Wittgenstein was after all an *epistemological* contextualist. For, allegedly, he pointed out that, "Here is my hand" could be the object of a genuine claim to knowledge in some cases and could thus be supported by grounds, while it would fail to be so in different ones. On such a contextualist reading, in the latter case the relationship between the subject and the proposi-

tion would still be epistemic, though non evidential. Hence, the subject would actually *know* that there is a hand in front of him, for he would be *entitled*—i.e. non-evidentially justified—to take that *truth* for granted, though he couldn't articulate reasons in its favor such as to ground an eventual claim to knowledge. He would be non-evidentially justified because no reasons to the contrary could be produced and because to take that much for granted would be necessary to gather any evidence in favor of other propositions.

Yet, I find this suggestion misleading mainly because, on Wittgenstein's view, in the latter case "Here is my hand" would be a "hinge" and hence a rule.<sup>3</sup> If so, it would simply fail to be in the business of epistemic justification and assessment.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, at the end of the day, I think Wittgenstein didn't even argue that the nature of *justification* varies depending on context. Rather, he argued for the view that, in certain cases, propositions which, in different circumstances, may really be subject to verification and control, would fail to be so, as their *status and role* would be different in those different contexts. To repeat, in some contexts they wouldn't be genuinely empirical propositions but rules and would thus be unsuitable for epistemic support, no matter how non-evidential that might be. In their connection, the use of "I know" could therefore sensibly be taken only as grammatical, according to Wittgenstein, and, as we have seen, such as actually to fail to attribute any epistemic property to the subject at all.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Further reasons of discontent can be found in Coliva 2010, chapter 3.

<sup>4</sup> Unsurprisingly Travis (1989, 234-5) and Williams (2004a, b) deny, actually citing no passage in *On Certainty*, that hinges are norms.

<sup>5</sup> Williams simply ignores Wittgenstein's suggestion that there are "grammatical" uses of "I know" and takes them to show that Wittgenstein favored an *externalist* view of knowledge, whereby one may have knowledge of P even if unable to articulate grounds in its favor, provided one were entitled to it. Another possible source of Williams' confusion is the fact that sometimes Wittgenstein considers practical, non-propositional knowledge for which it is obviously unnecessary to be able to offer reasons, which would prove that one knows.

# Knowing How to $\phi$ and Intelligent Abilities

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## 1. Puzzle about Attribution and Intellectualism

Gilbert Ryle (2009), who famously argued against intellectualism with respect to knowing *how to*, held that knowing how attributions always entail ability attributions. In their recent defense of intellectualism, John Bengson and Mark Moffett (2007), henceforth B&M, point to the following Puzzle about Attribution (PA): *Some know-how attributions entail ability attributions while others don't*. PA which serves as a motivation for their intellectualist account of knowing how can be demonstrated as follows. Consider two pairs of attributions (1)–(2) and (3)–(4) below:

- (1) Irina knows how to do a quintuple salchow.
- (2) She is able to do a quintuple salchow.
- (3) Irina knows how to add.
- (4) She is able to add.

To see whether (1) entails (2) and (3) entails (4) take (5) and (6):

- (5) Irina knows how to do a quintuple salchow, *but* she is unable to do one.
- (6) Irina knows how to add, *but* she is unable to do so.

According to B&M, it is natural to assert that while (5) is acceptable, i.e., it doesn't violate our semantic intuitions, (6) is not. If so, then (1) does not entail (2), but (3) entails (4). That yields the conclusion that on some occasions know-how attributions entail ability attributions while on others they don't.

Once PA is introduced, in order to address it, B&M deliver their own account of knowing how. They begin with the idea that *knowing how* attributions always entail attributions of *understanding*. It would be somewhat awkward to claim that one knows how to add, but s/he does not understand how to add. It would be equally incorrect to hold that one knows how to do the quintuple salchow, but s/he does not understand how to do the quintuple salchow. Thus, *prima facie*, the appeal to understanding seems to indicate a possible direction towards a unified approach to knowing how. At the same time, B&M reject three other potential alternatives which tend to dismiss the puzzle. These are anti-intellectualism, Puritanism, and the ambiguity view whose proponents claim, correspondingly, that know-how attributions always, never or only sometimes entail ability attributions. In opposition to those accounts B&M not only accept PA, but they also see a solution to it primarily in the analysis of the complement of the attitude, i.e., the type of activity towards which the know-how-to attitude is taken, rather than in the analysis of the attitude itself.

The elaboration of their proposal can be summarised in three steps. The first step consists in explicating the notion of understanding on the basis of addition. B&M argue that to understand how to add is to have a *reasonable conceptual mastery* of some relevant concepts. Specifically, X's understanding of addition requires of X the mastery of the concept 'plus'. Reasonable mastery of 'plus' involves X's *minimal ability* to add in simple ways, where one possible exemplification of such a way would involve adding 1+1. Reasonableness is to exclude instances of

learning calculations by rote as well as those of requiring of X the ability to add multi-digit numbers or to provide a rigorous definition of addition. Moreover, the concept 'plus' is an *ability-based concept*, a concept that corresponds to the *select activity* of adding. While B&M don't explain the nature of the link between the two, one can speculate that a concept is ability-based and activity is select when (i) there is an easily traceable one-to-one correspondence between them and (ii) given a set of standard cognitive conditions, whenever X successfully *applies* the concept 'plus' s/he also performs addition. Arguably (i) yields that ability-based concepts are universal conditions of application.

The second step is to distinguish select activities, the knowing of which entails being able to do them, from the remaining ones for which no such entailment holds. Although B&M give no criteria for the distinction, they conjecture that the ability requirement disappears as activities under consideration become more complex.

That leads to the third step: specifying what is required for the understanding of complex activities. B&M again appeal to reasonable mastery of certain relevant concepts. Complex activities are represented as ways  $w$  to  $\phi$ . For X to understand a way  $w$  to  $\phi$  is for her/him to have a unique and complete conception  $\zeta$  of  $w$ . The understanding of  $\zeta$  requires that X have the mastery of individual concepts within  $\zeta$  as well as their composition. Complexity, however, is not the only difference between conceptions such as  $\zeta$  and ability-based concepts. Although minimal understanding of  $\zeta$  amounts to the ability to apply  $\zeta$  and the concepts of which it is composed in standard cognitive conditions, the ability in question is an *ability to acknowledge* (identify, recognize, etc.), that  $w$  is the case with respect to  $\phi$ -ing. It is not to be confused with the ability to perform  $\phi$ -ing itself. These two differences are better exhibited in the link between the conception and activity illustrated by the example of the quintuple salchow. First, (iii) there is no easily traceable one-to-one correspondence between the conception 'quintuple salchow (performance)' and the activity of doing a quintuple salchow. The activity can be represented in numerous ways. What matters is that every agent have their own and unique one. Secondly, (iv) given a set of standard cognitive conditions, each time X successfully *applies* the conception 'quintuple salchow (performance)' s/he also identifies, recognizes, etc., that quintuple salchow performance is the case. Thus, knowing how to do a quintuple salchow does not involve being able to perform it, but being able to *intellectually grasp* how to perform it.

## 2. PA and Intelligent Abilities

B&M maintain that they provide a firm intellectualist basis for a general theory of intentional action, where understanding plays a pivotal role. On their account of knowing how,  $\zeta$  is X's guiding conception in  $\phi$ -ing, one that makes her/him *apt to  $\phi$* . In what follows I shall outline arguments in favour of three claims. My first claim is that B&M's view of understanding is too narrow. The second claim concerns B&M's failure to appreciate Ryle's major insight, namely that knowing how along with its other characteristics is a *multi-track ability*. Finally, I conjecture that once

we accept the first two claims it will become clear that within Ryle's anti-intellectualism PA is not bluntly rejected, but it simply dissolves.

Here is the most brief characterization of B&M's intellectualism. If X understands how to  $\phi$  then X knows how to  $\phi$ . Since, unless select activities are involved, one needn't be able to  $\phi$  in order to understand how to  $\phi$ , knowing how to  $\phi$  doesn't entail being able to  $\phi$ . Consequently, on most occasions there is a gap between understanding how to  $\phi$  and being able to  $\phi$ .

Immediately the question arises whether some conception  $\zeta$  suffices to make X apt to  $\phi$ . As noted earlier, understanding  $\zeta$  is an ability to apply  $\zeta$  in standard cognitive conditions. This ability is purely representational in character. My first claim is simple. Should we accept that knowing how to  $\phi$  is success through understanding  $\zeta$  we face the difficulty of explaining what makes  $\phi$ -ing non-accidental. Take a quintuple salchow. The example is problematic since it presupposes that the activity in question goes beyond human capacity. Nevertheless, let us imagine for a few seconds that the sort of jump is performable. Now, is it plausible that the conception 'quintuple salchow (performance)' makes X's performance of the salchow non-accidental? It seems that it isn't, for X's application of the conception may equally yield the performance of salchow or the lack of thereof. The reason for that is obvious. The success or failure in *performing* the salchow becomes a matter of luck. And it turns out to be so because X's understanding of how to do it is grounded in his/her sole ability to acknowledge that the performance of the salchow is the case. What remains mysterious is how one's ability to acknowledge a fact can activate the relevant performance. The most straightforward option out of the mystery would be to declare that all concepts and conceptions were ability based in the strict sense. This, however, produces other undesired consequences, one of them being that all concepts and conceptions would only underlie select activities, leaving no room for thinking about those activities.

It seems that B&M's view of understanding is too narrow. As addition indicates, if X is able to add, then s/he understands how to add. Also, if X understands how to add then s/he knows how to add. Thus, both attributions of knowing how and understanding entail ability attributions. The problem is how to extend the entailment to other activities so as to avoid the threat of PA.

Both B&M and a few contemporary anti-intellectualists (e.g. Hawley 2003) interpret knowing how attributions as descriptions, reports, etc., related to whatever is *mentioned* in them. The only difference concerns the kind of attributions entailed. While for an intellectualist any particular attribution of knowing how entails the attribution of some dedicated propositional content representing a specific activity, an anti-intellectualist maintains that the former attribution entails a dedicated ability attribution quoting the ability to perform that very activity.

It is my second claim that such an interpretation is mostly due to the negligence of Ryle's account of *intelligent abilities*. First, it is often ignored that those abilities are acquired through training and not conditioning. While training makes room for correction, adjustment and continuous improvement, conditioning is thoroughly automatic and allows little flexibility.

Second, and most crucial for the present discussion, intelligent abilities are multi-track dispositions, quite unlike habits which are single-track. According to Ryle knowing how attributions are, to an extent, similar to law-sentences.

Instead of being reports or descriptions potentially satisfied by specific facts or other entities, they are open-ended, i.e., potentially satisfied by an infinite number of  $\phi$ -ings across distinct contexts. On that reading, to say of X that s/he knows how to do a quintuple salchow is to ascribe to her/him the ability realizable in various context-sensitive ways. One such manifestation would involve a step-by-step demonstration of a single salchow supplemented with a statement 'It is done like this, only five times'. The ability attribution is, to use Ryle's terminology, a *season inference ticket* which permits its owner to draw an infinite number of statements about potential manifestations of X's ability. It is impossible that all of those manifestations be mentioned in the attribution itself.

That final statement indicates a plain answer to the threat of PA. If we accept that intelligent abilities are multi-track, then the puzzle becomes illusory. We easily discover that our appeal to the notion understanding, as B&M construe it, becomes superfluous. For instance, it will give us no trouble to hold that knowing how to do a quintuple salchow entails a multi-track disposition which can be manifested as an act of thinking about the salchow. The fact that a successful performance of the salchow itself is impossible *may be* unimportant. Naturally, whether it is unimportant will vary with context. On some occasions a technical explanation of how to perform the jump will suffice, on others we might require the occurrence of the mentioned performance.

### 3. Intelligent Abilities as Epistemic Virtues

Intelligent abilities are good candidates for epistemic virtues and can be accommodated within the project of virtue epistemology (VE). One example is the analysis of knowing how to do something. Generally, when we say that some successful performance by X is (an instantiation of) knowing how to  $\phi$ , we acknowledge that X deserves the credit for her/his success. What underlies the credit is X's intelligent ability. The ability is multi-track, which explains why the credit is never limited just to this single performance, but extends to other potential ones. In other words, we expect that if X succeeded in circumstances  $C_1$  s/he will also succeed in circumstances  $C_2, C_3$ , etc. To the question what made X's performances non-accidentally successful we answer: they were successful through her/his intelligent ability.

Why 'intelligent ability' instead of 'intellectual ability'? By now the answer should be clear. The analysis of *knowing how to* has wider scope than the analysis of *knowing that*. Following Ryle, and in line with the VE proposal that knowing is apt performance (Sosa 2007), knowing that may be approached as a subset of knowing *how to*. On that approach intellectual abilities would not exhaust the domain of abilities that qualify as intelligent mostly because, as I pointed in 2., they would not suffice for a range of performances to be apt, i.e., non-accidentally successful.

### Literature

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# Apt Seeing and Intelligent Seeing

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To separate intelligent performances from non-intelligent ones Gilbert Ryle distinguishes between open capacities, which are trained multi-track dispositions, and blind habits, which are drilled single-track dispositions, to conclude that intelligent performances are such that are given in multi-optional situations forcing a free choice which, if successful, is non-accidentally successful and adapts performers to these situations (Ryle 2009). Following Ryle, I speak of seeing not in terms of an innate ability but in terms of trained abilities which manifest themselves in visual beliefs as performances of a special kind. It is crucial for me whether an occurrent visual belief can be explained as a manifestation of a determined disposition, i.e., having one possible manifestation, or a determinable disposition, i.e., having an open number of possible manifestations, as only beliefs resulting from determinable dispositions, if successful, satisfy Ryle's criteria of being intelligently successful. Shortly, I try to demonstrate that instrumental seeing is of essential epistemic value just because it becomes, at least sometimes, highly intelligent.

Instrumental seeing results in beliefs that aim not at detecting classical primary/secondary properties, at sketching an outline of the ontological identity of a seen object. Motivated by problems of ordinary life it intentionally goes beyond ontological properties to actualize a chosen instrumental identity of the object. From the point of view of ordinary life, my innate visual experience of physical object A is not even a necessary condition of instrumental seeing but merely a dubious postulate of philosophical reduction. In contrast to seeing as imagined by philosophical reduction, which treats physical object A as an ontological monad, ordinary seeing highlights one or another of a spectrum of A's instrumental values. I assume that everyday visual identifications of physical objects are dominated by their standard or non-standard instrumental properties, whereas their ontological identity remains rather obscure and decidedly less important. When I say that I see a bottle, for example, what does it mean? A bottle is typically defined as a drink container and even then it is interpreted instrumentally, though in a banal way. It is not so easy to see a bottle ontologically, i.e., as a bottle. On the other hand, it is common to see a bottle as something instrumentally desirable, useful or even dangerous as I cannot ignore the fact that a bottle can be seen as a weapon.

One of the reasons why philosophers ontologize visual beliefs is perhaps their respect for the principle of bivalence. They want to speak of fully adequate or wholly true visual beliefs, so they avoid grading either their adequacy or truth-value. The primary aim of visual perception of a bottle is for them to answer the question "What is this?", by demonstrative belief "This is a bottle", or "What is it like?", by predicative belief "The bottle is green" in order to convey essential information about the object. That is why they care much about what seeing of an "observable fact in itself" consists in and are puzzled about the question whether perception is rich enough to inform me also about causal connections between two facts if it tells me first only about these facts separately. Truth-relativism and causation are, on the other hand, basic categories of instrumental seeing as no object can be an instrument if it cannot be imagined as changing identity or causing some results.

Can we find in virtue epistemology any instrumental bent? No, there is none even behind Ernest Sosa's dispositional explanation of knowledge-that (Sosa 2007). Sosa repeatedly evaluates perceptual beliefs and his conceptual framework reveals striking affinities with Ryle's conceptual framework created to detect intelligence. Nevertheless, final results of their evaluations are different because Sosa is inspired only by the problem non-accidental cognitive success. Like Ryle's example of a shooting soldier, Sosa's paradigmatic example describes an archer aiming at a bull's-eye. Both examples concern knowledge-how and are gradually replaced with examples of knowledge-that. Like Ryle, Sosa claims that visual beliefs are performances that can be judged on the basis of three interrelated criteria: accuracy, adroitness and, finally, aptness. The accuracy of a belief is declared to be its cognitive end, adroitness or competence of the subject is a means to the end and aptness links causally accuracy and adroitness into an indivisible unity: a belief is apt if it is accurate because the subject is adroit. Thus, a particular visual belief is for Sosa virtuous if the subject achieves the aim of accuracy by applying the prescribed means of adroitness. Subject's adroitness is identified with his intellectual competence, belief's adroitness is identified with a manifestation of intellectual competence. Intellectual competence, importantly, is defined as a disposition of a person to achieve a cognitive success in appropriately normal conditions.

Fascinated by the problem of non-accidental success Sosa asks to what a degree aptness neutralizes the impact of defeating circumstances. It is possible that the archer might easily have missed in some circumstances which are beyond his control: he might have luckily avoided being drugged before the competition, which would have impaired his competence, or a gust of wind might have blown, which would have changed the trajectory of the arrow. Such circumstances would make his performance unsafe. But if he is actually successful and competent, is he non-accidentally successful? Sosa thinks that all my visual beliefs resemble archer's shots: in some cases I have apt visual beliefs even though I might easily have been wrong. Describing a linguistically competent person who formulates successful belief "This surface is red", while her visual field is at the same time randomly manipulated by a joker who can at will exchange a white surface lighted red for a red surface lighted white, so that at some points of time the accurate belief should be: "This surface looks red", Sosa decides that her belief, if successful, is apt and, therefore, non-accidental. But there is something missing in Sosa's model of apt beliefs that is present in Ryle's model of intelligent beliefs. The one thing missing is relativity: Sosa assumes that perceptual beliefs' accuracy is their truthfulness and that they are true in only one way: when they are ontologically accurate. That is, my visual beliefs are apt only if (1) they are ontologically successful and (2) my adroitness is limited to making ontological identifications. To show that this focus on the ontological truth is somewhat too narrow I propose some examples of intelligent seeing involving a free choice of instrumental identity.

Everyday situations suggest that seeing devoid of any instrumental interpretation would be pathetic. (1) If a student sees a friend waving a bottle and singing, the bottle indicates to him that his friend is somewhat drunk. (2) If a

husband sees his wife waving a bottle and singing, the bottle indicates that she intends to water flowers. (3) If a policeman sees a demonstrator waving a bottle and singing, the bottle indicates that there will be some fight. (4) If an anti-terrorist sees an Arab waving a bottle and singing, the bottle indicates the possibility of a terrorist attack.

In such situations nobody asks the first-person question: Do I see a bottle? Why? Because, if the question was asked, their instrumental seeing would be blocked. The anti-terrorist cannot mix his job with “epistemic *epoché*”, i.e., with focusing on a certain part of his visual field and asking himself: What does my visual experience represent? Only if he does not suspend his bottle-belief he can speculate that the bottle is a bomb. Anyone in these four cases claims to know what the bottle is for because they don’t believe that waving a bottle is for nothing, for no deliberate end. So, tested by the question: What do you essentially see? no one claims to see just a bottle but a different instrument.

Common to instrumental approach is the naive assumption of the transparency of visual experience. They all assume that they see a bottle immediately; no one would admit that he is aware of a particular visual experience of the bottle. When their perception is instrumentally oriented to the identification of a bottle with something else, their experience, though in itself a key ontological factor, is epistemically thoroughly ignored. In order to see instrumentally they must see objects of the world and intelligently think. But not to think of seeing.

Instrumental seeing is also highly context-sensitive. (1) The student does not expect that his friend holds a Molotov cocktail. (2) The husband does expect that his wife is a suicide-bomber. (3) The policeman does not expect that the demonstrator intends to propose him a drink (4) The anti-terrorist surely does not expect that the Arab intends to water flowers. It would be equally strange to imagine that they have no instrumental expectations or that their expectations are non-contextual. If they focused on the bottles as bottles or if they had irrelevant instrumental expectations they would be fools.

As instrumental seeing requires some mixture of ontological naivety and epistemic sophistication, or criticism, one can wonder why there is no strong connection between breaking epistemic naivety and breaking ontological naivety. If I am epistemically naïve I think that I don’t make mistakes: if I claim to see that “this is thus”, this should be thus. If I am ontologically naïve I think that my visual experience is transparent. But when I start from instrumental beliefs, the plausible answer to the question how far back I can go to remain reasonably critical is that I should go no further than to the point at which I am able to correct my perceptual mistakes.

Sellars (Sellars 1956) is instructive in this respect when he claims that I must first have perceptual beliefs to become epistemically critical and the aim of my criticism is to find intellectual tools necessary to correct false beliefs rather than to reach the level of pure visual awareness. The realization of a mistake is to be a constructive turning point imposing on me no more obligation than to explain and correct the mistake. It is dubious to Sellars, for example, whether I break my ontological naivety when I realize that there are natural illusions which, coupled with epistemic naivety, provoke a false belief. Rationalizing illusions I may learn to speak of “looks” and differentiate between “X is Q” and “X looks Q”. But this device serves to announce a transitory suspension my visual belief, not my penetration of the content of my pure visual awareness. Looks-utterances are pseudo-beliefs which are neither at

the beginning nor the end of perceptual cognition. They are transitory stops on the way to resolve an epistemic confusion, i.e., to acquire a corrected object-belief.

Travis (Travis 2004) and Crane (Crane 2009) elaborately argue that if I tried and succeeded in breaking my ontological naivety I would be disappointed to find that visual experience is representationally silent since its visual content, if alienated from beliefs, can be true/accurate in many ways in the sense that it can be related to ontologically different external objects. No visual content is able to determine which ontological properties an object should have to cause it. Accordingly, visual content does not have truth-conditions as it does not have one truth-maker. I think it is interesting to get to know that my senses are silent. But if I remember that my prior task is to think instrumentally I instantly realize that visual experience alone cannot represent instrumental properties. Even if it represented some ontological properties to me I would not feel much better as it surely could not represent instrumental properties.

I now return to scenario (4) of my example to propose a final conclusion. Suppose that the anti-terrorist intervened, the Arab was arrested and the suspicious-looking object is now investigated by an expert. After a while of suspense the expert says to the anti-terrorist: (1) “You were wrong about the bomb but you are right about the bottle”. Should I say of the anti-terrorist that he was cognitively successful because he had an apt belief about the ontological identity of the seen object? Now, suppose that the expert says: (2) “You were right about the bomb but you were wrong about the bottle”. Should I say that the anti-terrorist cognitively failed because he was unsuccessful about the ontological identity of the seen object? I hope that there is no difficulty to decide that the anti-terrorist is spectacularly successful only in the second situation. My conclusion is that the truth about the bomb is so much better, as highly intelligent, that it really covers and neutralizes the non-intelligent falsehood about the bottle. Sosa’s model of apt seeing is not calibrated to catch the difference between instrumentally better and worse truths.

Natural illusions pose no great epistemic challenge because most of them are pretty tame. Really wild and dangerous are instrumental illusions. They have little to do with the natural intentionality/non-intentionality of visual experience as they are dominated by people’s intentions. And to be misled by them is easy not because they are ontologically silent but because they are deliberately instrumentally talkative. They are dangerous, for example, in prompting me to accept some of their standard and innocent instrumental interpretations. Instrumental illusions are not born in the world but in people’s intelligent minds to prey on my tendency to make pseudo-ontological identifications of objects “in their essence”. They aim at penetrating my thinking in one of contradictory ways: (1) to persuade me that there is nothing behind the object seen (to under-value something instrumentally important) or (2) to persuade me that there is something behind the object seen (to over-value something instrumentally unimportant).

## Literature

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# Wittgensteinian Approach to Partiality

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## Introduction

Sinnott-Armstrong has attacked moral intuitionism on the grounds that intuitionism is committed to the view that at least some moral beliefs have a justification that does not come from their relation with other beliefs. He claims that it is not justified to have some moral beliefs without them needing to be inferred from other beliefs. He believes that our moral judgments in many situations are prone to be blurred since we are partial.<sup>1</sup> Sinnott-Armstrong claims that, in these situations, some confirmations are needed. He therefore appeals to some analogies and illustrations which suggest that moral intuitionism is unpersuasive.

I find Sinnott-Armstrong's case against moral intuitionism quite unconvincing. In what follows, I will take issue with the parts of his argument that involve partiality. In the first section, I will spell out Sinnott-Armstrong's mode of argument, in terms of partiality, against non-inferential justifications in intuitionism. Then in the second section I will provide a solution to the partiality problem based on the Wittgensteinian notion of "game" and seeing the similarities (resemblances).

## 1. Sinnott-Armstrong appeals to partiality to refute intuitionism

Walter Sinnott-Armstrong has argued against moral intuitionism, which he understands to be the claim "that some people are adequately epistemically justified in holding some moral beliefs independently of whether those people are able to infer those moral beliefs from any other beliefs" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2006, p. 341). Moral intuitionists believe that some of our moral beliefs are basic or foundational, i.e. justified without being inferred from other beliefs, moral or non-moral. According to Sinnott-Armstrong, many of our moral beliefs are formed in doubtful circumstances in which we are partial. Because of this, we cannot be justified in holding any moral beliefs simply on the basis that they seem true, because partiality removes any non-inferential justification. Moral intuitionism is therefore false.

Sinnott-Armstrong argues that partiality can undermine the justification for certain moral beliefs. He appeals to a non-moral example which could be called "Piano-playing". Simply, the story is that a father cannot judge his daughter's performance in playing the piano in a competition because he is partial and would judge unfairly. In the other words, partiality renders his moral beliefs unjustified. So, the father is partial when he forms the judgement that his daughter played excellently and her rival did not. Sinnott-Armstrong says:

"...I still might be justified, if I am able to specify laudable features of her performance, or if I know that others agree, but some confirmation seems needed" (2006, p. 343).

<sup>1</sup> Sinnott-Armstrong, in "moral intuitionism meets empirical psychology", proposed five different problems with moral intuitionism: (1) partiality, (2) disagreement (3) emotionality (4) the circumstances are conducive to illusion, and (5) the source of our moral beliefs is unreliable. In this paper I will focus only on issue of partiality. Other philosophers, to some extent, provided others responses to other issues. For example, see: Smith (2010), Shafer-Landau (2008) and Tolhurst (2008). Also, you can see Sinnott-Armstrong's reply to Tolhurst and Shafer-Landau: Sinnott-Armstrong (2008b).

From "Piano-playing", Sinnott-Armstrong concludes this principle: confirmation is required for a believer to be justified when the believer is partial. This rule from "Piano-playing" is then applied to the moral case. We have a huge benefit in morality; i.e., the truth or falsity of the various moral judgements we make affects our self-interest. Sinnott-Armstrong's argument can also be articulated in the following way, which he prefers (*Master argument*)<sup>2</sup>:

Premise (1): If our moral intuitions are formed in situations in which we are partial, then our moral intuitions are not justified *non-inferentially*. Premise (2): If moral intuitions are subject to partiality, then they are not reliable in those situations. Premise (3): Moral intuitions are subject to partiality in many situations. Conclusion (4): Therefore, our moral intuitions in those situations need *inferential* confirmation.

## 2. Providing a solution: Wittgensteinian approach

It seems that Sinnott-Armstrong fails to argue that in every situation people who are partial, need inferential confirmations. Since, in some situations, where the case is clear, confirmation is not needed even if we are partial. However, what are we to do in situations in which the case is unclear and we are partial at the same time? I will respond to this question by employing the Wittgensteinian concept of "game". It seems that in cases where we are partial and might be somewhat less confident about our moral judgement, much more needs to be done to show that our beliefs are unjustified or justified.

Let us look at the concept "game" and the way in which we grasp this concept.<sup>3</sup> Suppose that we want to articulate and define the concept 'game'. On the face of it, it seems that in order to do so, we state the common properties of different kinds of games. On the basis of the obtained common properties, we would say that:

If  $x$  meets the condition  $g_1, g_2, g_3 \dots g_n$ ,  $x$  is a 'game'.

This view presupposes that there is something in common which needs to be captured and categorised to arrive at the definition of the concept 'game'. In other words, the general rule acts as the normative standard of the rightness or wrongness of the use of words. However, Wittgenstein rejects the existence of such a set of common properties among different kinds of games, something which can be articulated in a proposition as 'an essence' of the concept 'game'. In rejecting that, Wittgenstein attempts to show that we can define the concept 'game' just through identifying examples and through the ongoing practice of seeing the similarities and dissimilarities. He states:

What does it mean to know what a game is? What does it mean, to know it and not be able to say it?... Isn't my knowledge, my concept of a game, completely expressed in the explanations that I could give? That is, in my describing examples of various kinds of game; shewing how

<sup>2</sup> See: Sinnott-Armstrong, (2008a), p 52.

<sup>3</sup> We should be aware that Wittgenstein usage of the concept of "game" is somewhat metaphysical and semantic. However, I utilise this notion in an epistemic way; i.e., the epistemic implications of the concept of "game" are important here.

all sorts of other games can be constructed on the analogy of these (1953, p 35).

According to Wittgenstein, it is not true to say that I know what a game is and can fully express or define it before being engaged in it in practice. Rather, what we see within practice is all that we have with regard to the concept 'game'. It is not the case that within practice a pre-existing notion of game becomes clearer. Rather, the more we are engaged in the practice, the more we see what a game is. Grasping the concept 'game' is an open-ended process. Moreover, it does not follow from this that any phenomenon can be regarded as an example of a game. In contrast, there is a normative constraint which lies in the way in which we see things as similar.

Now, let us consider the concept 'game' and its constituents from another point of view. What I wish to say, at this stage, is that there is no such thing as a lexical order for several game-making features that make different games. However, it does not follow from this that we cannot articulate a game-making feature as a pattern.

Now consider that if the way in which these game-making features are combined together cannot be regarded in a hierarchical way, how do they combine together? Could it be the case that there is an account that can be given with regard to their combination?

To answer this question, we have to use the notion of 'seeing the similarities' and seeing things as similar. For Wittgenstein there is no such thing as a lexical order for the different game-making features of various games, but it does not follow from this that these features are combined together vaguely to the extent that nothing can be said with regard to their combination. Rather, we see the way in which different game-making features are combined together to the extent that we are engaged in the practice. The more we are engaged in the practice, the more we see how these game-making features are combined together. In other words, *looking away* at similar cases is an essential ingredient to understanding. There is nothing beyond seeing the similarities. All we can do to see how these game-making features are combined together in for example badminton is to see how the different game-making features are combined together in similar games such as: squash, snooker, cricket, volleyball, etc. There is no other way to see how these features are combined together in badminton. So, instead of just looking at badminton over time, we have to look away at similar and dissimilar cases to arrive at the classification. The more we are engaged in the practice of seeing different game-making features in similar games, the more we see what can be said with regard to the way in which these features are combined together in badminton. Seeing the similarities is the main issue. The account that can be given with regard to the way in which several game-making features are combined together and form badminton, is this: look at similar games to see how they are combined together. There is no such thing as a determined general pattern according to which several game-making features are combined together and form several games. Rather, they are combined together in different ways which can be seen *only* within practice: this combination is like that one, that combination is like the other one.... There is nothing beyond these different combinations.

### 3. Partiality and seeing the similarities

Let us return to the Sinnott-Armstrong case of partiality. We can compare the argument of Sinnott-Armstrong for partiality with what we have learned with regard to the concept "game". According to him, the idea of the non-inferential justification in the epistemology of intuitionism is false, because we are partial in many situations, so we need other confirmations.

Now, let us consider the concept of "game" with partiality. On the basis of the account drawn from Wittgenstein with regard to the nature of the concept 'game', it seems that we can give an account to resolve the partiality problem. As we have seen, there is no such thing as a lexical order between different features of different games. However, there is an account which can be given with regard to the way in which several game-making features are combined together and form different games. We have to see different cases of partiality. The more we are engaged in the practice, the more we can see what different partialities are. Although there is no such thing as a lexical order for different partialities which make different moral cases, there is an account which can be given. Here is the account: the more we are engaged in the practice, the more we can see how these different features are combined together. So, we have an indispensable role in seeing this partiality and partialities need to be seen.

According to this Wittgensteinian account, looking away at similar partialities in different cases instead of looking at a partiality in one case is the whole issue. It is being engaged in the practice of seeing this likeness that makes our behaviour intelligible. There is an account available of how we behave reasonably in different ethical contexts which is grounded in the way in which we are engaged in looking away at similar cases. Looking away at similar cases is associated with being answerable and responsive to general patterns. In this way, our behaviour in different contexts makes sense.

I think, in this way, we can recognise our partialities in different moral situations. Seeing different moral situations could help us to be justified in our judgement in one moral situation. I agree with Sinnott-Armstrong that we need other confirmations in partial situations; however other confirmations could be based on intuitions as well. It is possible to be an intuitionist and partial at the same time. People can judge about one moral situation based on their intuitions whilst at the same time being partial. Other intuitions in other situations can help them to correct or amend their judgements. In the other words, looking away towards different cases in which people are partial could help us to not be partial.

### 4. Conclusion

On the basis of what has been discussed so far, I am inclined to conclude that the Sinnott-Armstrong epistemological account with regard to partialities in different contexts suffers from a problem of generalization. In order to resolve the problem of partiality and give a plausible account of how a partial person could be justified in judging non-inferentially about a moral situation, an account drawn from Wittgenstein with regard to the concept "game" is used. According to the Wittgensteinian story, seeing the similarities and being engaged in the practice has a key role in clarifying how different partial intuitions (confirmations) are combined together in different contexts.

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# Tabatabaie's Ethics versus Tractarian Ethics: A Comparative Study

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## 1. Tabatabaie's Ethics

In Tabatabaie's *The Principles of Philosophy and the Realist Method* and *Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* we could distinguish two types of goodness and badness from each other. The first is the very idea of 'goodness' which is attributed to the subject, regardless of what is going on out there, where as the second is the 'goodness' and 'badness' which is attributed to the very action. According to Tabatabaie, goodness and badness in ethical propositions such as 'promise-keeping is good' and 'killing an innocent child is bad' refers to the subject, in the sense that they cannot be found in the world, independently of the subject. In other words, Tabatabaie tries to give a plausible account of conventionalistic ethics, according to which the ways in which thin moral properties such as goodness, badness, duty, obligation... are connected to thick moral properties such as: fidelity, gratitude, non-maleficence... in different ethical propositions have nothing to do with what is going on with real world. In order to make his point clearer, Tabatabaie compares 'marriage' and 'adultery' with each other. According to him, what is going on in 'marriage' and 'adultery' is more or less the same, metaphysically speaking. In other words, the ways in which men and women are connected to each other in these phenomena are the same. However, we regard 'marriage' permissible and 'adultery' impermissible, morally speaking. It follows from this that 'goodness' and 'badness' cannot be found in the world and the way in which they are connected to thick moral properties in moral propositions is entirely dependent on moral subjects and their conventions, not what is going on in the real world. He says in the *Al-Mizan*:

"It seems that the nature of "good" is related to our interests, emotions and sensations".<sup>1</sup>

Also he maintains in *The Principles of Philosophy and the Realist Method*:

"Goodness and badness are nothing to do with the fabric of the world".<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, as far as meta-ethics is concerned, there are two main schools in contemporary moral epistemology which can be distinguished from each other: cognitivism and non-cognitivism. Cognitivists believe that moral claims are truth-apt in the sense that, they are true or false. However, non-cognitivists endorse that moral claims do not have cognitive element and their truth and falsity cannot be talked about at all. Moreover, moral epistemology is associated with moral ontology in a way that cognitivists are not necessarily realists. Cognitivism does not entail realism. In principle, one can be categorized both as cognitivist and realist. For instance, Kantian ethics is categorized as both cognitivist and anti-realist, according to which, moral properties do not exist in the phenomenal world, however, it does not follow from this that moral propositions have no cognitive elements.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See: *Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, Vol 2, P 9.

<sup>2</sup> See: *The Principles of Philosophy and the Realist Method*, p 204.

<sup>3</sup> For more details about cognitivism and realism in ethics see:

Miller, A. (2003) *An Introduction to Contemporary Meta Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon press), Chapter 1.

Having seen the relationship between moral epistemology and moral ontology, we could say that Tabatabaie is cognitivist, as he does believe that moral claims have cognitive elements, epistemically speaking and can be talked about, inter-subjectively, though they do not refer to anything in the world, out there.

Furthermore, Tabatabaie believes that words such as goodness, badness,...are definable, on the grounds that he thinks 'goodness' is not a sui generis property and one can define it by utilizing other concepts such as pleasure, beauty... So, although he thinks that goodness is not a real property from the metaphysical point of view, he maintains that it can be defined, semantically speaking.

In the next section, Wittgensteinian ethics is elaborated. In the third section, the above-mentioned ethical frameworks are compared with each other.

## 2. Wittgensteinian Ethics

At this stage, let us discuss about ethics and moral proposition in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (henceforth; *Tractatus*).<sup>4</sup> Wittgenstein clearly denies the existence of moral values. This means that he endorses that moral propositions like logical and mathematical propositions are necessary, since these propositions say nothing about states of affairs and the real world. According to the *Tractatus*, moral propositions like logical and mathematical propositions are transcendental.<sup>5</sup> In other words, moral concepts cannot make meaningful propositions; rather, they just contain subject's attitude towards the world. Moral propositions cannot talk about the world and the ways in which things are connected in it, rather they only talk about language-users' moral perspective. Wittgenstein says that if we resort to the consequences of actions to explain the very ideas of goodness and badness, we move beyond the realm of ethics (see 6.422). In fact, according to the *Tractatus*, we do not have bad and good moral consequences, since in order to do that, we need to refer to what is going on in the world, out there, whereas there is no such a thing as real moral properties in the Tractarian story. This means that moral judgments are a-priori and different subject's moral judgments are not related to what is going on in the real world.<sup>6</sup>

Wittgenstein says:

"If for instance in our world-book we read the description of a murder with all its details physical and psychological, the mere description of these facts will contain nothing which we could call an ethical proposition."<sup>7</sup>

Smith, M. (1997) 'Realism' in *A Companion to Ethics*, Singer, P. (ed.), (Oxford: Blackwell), pp.399-410.

<sup>4</sup> All references to *Tractatus* are taken from the following translation: Wittgenstein, L. (1961) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, translated by Pears, D. and Mc Guinns, B. (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London and New York), Revised Edition 1974.

<sup>5</sup> See 6.421 and 6.41

<sup>6</sup> For more details on this issue see: Mounce, H., Wittgenstein's Tractatus: An Introduction, Midway reprint edition 1989, USA. P 122-25.

<sup>7</sup> Wittgenstein, L., "A Lecture on Ethics", *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (Jan., 1965), p 6.

And:

"If good or bad willing changes the world, it can only change the limits of the world, not the facts; not the things that can be expressed in language. In brief, the world must thereby become quite another, it must so to speak wax or wane as a whole. The world of the happy is quite another than that of the unhappy."<sup>8</sup>

To sum up, Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* endorses that there is no relation between moral propositions and real world. So, in the *Tractatus* we can say nothing meaningful about ethics and moral propositions, since they have no pictures. In fact, as language is propositional and propositions are pictorial in the Tractarian story, ethical propositions have no pictures, as they do not correspond to any possible state of affairs. If we say 'promise-keeping is good' and 'harming others is bad', these propositions are senseless in the Tractarian story, as there is no such a thing as goodness and badness to be found in the real world. Fact-value distinction which sounds Humean in the first place is compatible with Tractarian account of value, ontologically speaking. As it is discussed in 6.4 entries in the *Tractatus*, both aesthetic and moral values do not exist in the world, out there. It follows from this that ethical propositions are neither meaningful nor have cognitive element. In fact, Tractarian ethics is both anti-realistic and non-cognitivist.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Tabatabaie's Ethics and Tractarian Ethics: Similarities and dissimilarities

As we have seen in the above, Tabatabaie's ethics is an anti-realistic and cognitivist ethics. According to him, there is no such thing as moral concepts to be found in the real world, since these moral concepts are strongly associated with moral subjects, i.e. they are subjective, not objective. Also, he believes that the cognitive element of moral propositions can be talked about and discussed inter-subjectively. It means that we can talk about their truth and falsity, epistemologically speaking. Now we can articulate Tabatabaie's ethics from different points of views as follows:

1. *Ontological*; moral values or thin moral properties do not exist in the real world. In fact, these properties are not in the world like other entities. Kant, Mackie and Hare are anti-realist in this sense like Tabatabaie.
2. *Semantic*; Tabatabaie unlike Moore thinks that words such as good, bad, out,...are definable. In other words, he believes that good is not a sui generis property and one can define it by utilizing other concepts. In this way, it could be possible to compare Tabatabaie's ethics with the naturalists like Bentham and Mill who believe that moral properties can be defined by resorting to other natural properties such as pleasure, beauty, perfection and so on.
3. *Epistemic*; Moral judgments are truth-apt, can be talked about and have truth and falsity. It follows from this that they have cognitive element.

On the basis of what has been discussed so far, we can compare Tabatabaie's ethics and early Wittgenstein's ethics. To do that, let us categorize Wittgensteinian ethics from different perspectives in such a way:

1. *Ontological*; moral values are not found in the real world. The world consists of things, facts and existing states of affairs ; however, moral values are not part of the furniture of the world.

2. *Semantic*; in the Tractarian story, just the propositions which are associated with possible states of affairs and have pictures, are meaningful. As moral concepts like goodness and badness have nothing to do with the real world, ethical propositions have no pictures. It follows from this that they are meaningless.

3. *Epistemic*; in the Tractarian story, propositions which have no meaning, cannot be talked about and evaluated from the epistemic point of view either. So, moral proposition as well as aesthetic propositions have no epistemic value.

Now, the comparison between Tabatabaie's Ethics and early Wittgenstein can be formulated as follows:

1. *Ontological*; both Tabatabaie and Wittgenstein are anti-realists and categorize the real world devoid of moral values.
2. *Semantic*; Tabatabaie unlike Wittgenstein believes that moral properties and moral concepts can be defined and talked about. In fact, moral properties refer to their referents in the real world. It follows from this that ethical propositions are meaningful. However, moral propositions are meaningless in the Tractarian story.
3. *Epistemic*; Tabatabaie maintains that moral judgments are cognitive. According to him, they are truth- apt and have epistemic value. However, Wittgenstein endorses that moral judgments are meaningless, as a result of which, they have no epistemic value at all.

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<sup>8</sup> *Tractatus*, 6.43

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# Unerkennbares Neues?

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Das Neue ist für die Erkenntnistheorie ein verwirrender Gegenstand gewesen. Es werden zwei dafür paradigmatische Erzählungen vorgestellt, die komplementäre Antworten auf die Frage liefern, ob das wirklich radikal Neue überhaupt erkannt werden kann. Im ersten Fall bleibt es notwendig unsichtbar, im zweiten Fall erscheint es schillernd als Unbestimmbares. Es wird ein beiden Erzählungen gemeinsamer Irrtum aufgezeigt, nämlich ein Missverständnis des Ausdrucks „neu“. Die Untersuchung im Anschluss an Wittgensteins Spätphilosophie stellt die Antwort auf die Frage zurück und bringt stattdessen die Frage selbst durch einen Wandel der Betrachtungsweise zum Verschwinden. Nicht das radikal Neue ist unerkennbar, sondern die Frage nach seiner Erkennbarkeit sinnlos.

Geradezu phantastisch sind viele der Erzählungen vom Neuen. Zwei solcher Erzählungen möchte ich herausgreifen, um an ihnen etwas zu verdeutlichen – nämlich wie inspirierend ein bestimmtes Bild des Neuen gerade da gewesen ist, wo es seine Bodenhaftung verloren hat, kulminierend in der Frage: Kann man das Neue eigentlich erkennen?

Die erste Erzählung ist eine bekannte Legende, die von der Ankunft eines seefahrenden Entdeckers – wahlweise Magellan, James Cook oder Kolumbus – an fernen Küsten handelt und dem dortigen Empfang durch die Einheimischen:

„Als Kolumbus mit seiner Armada in der Karibik landete, war keiner der Eingeborenen in der Lage, die Schiffe zu sehen. Obwohl diese am Horizont existierten. Der Grund, warum sie die Schiffe nicht sahen, war, dass sie kein Wissen, keine Erfahrung hatten, dass Klipper existierten. Der Schamane bemerkte Wellen draussen im Meer. Aber er sah kein Schiff. Er begann sich Gedanken zu machen, was den Effekt verursachte. Er begab sich jeden Tag hinaus und schaute. Nach einer Weile konnte er die Schiffe sehen. Im Anschluss daran erzählte er allen, dass dort draussen Schiffe seien. Und weil ihm alle vertrauten und glaubten, sahen sie sie dann auch.“

Soweit eine Version der Legende. Ich will ihre offenkundigen Ungereimtheiten hier außer acht lassen – etwa, den Schiffstyp Klipper zur Zeit des Kolumbus, oder dass die Einheimischen zunächst mangels Wissen und Erfahrung die Schiffe nicht sehen, dann aber durch Vertrauen und Glauben und das Hören des Satzes „Dort draußen sind Schiffe!“ diese plötzlich erblicken können. Mich interessiert an der Legende vielmehr die Radikalität der Annahme der Unerkennbarkeit des Neuen. Es gibt dort am Neuen – den Schiffen – für die Einheimischen buchstäblich nichts zu sehen. Die Schiffe seien wie beim sagenumwobenen Philadelphia-Experiment unsichtbar, nur dass das Licht nicht physikalisch gebogen wurde, sondern die Schiffe gewissermaßen mit einem epistemischen Stealthmodus ausgestattet waren. Nur die Spuren des Neuen, nämlich die Wellen im Wasser, hätten es angezeigt. Die zugrundeliegende Annahme ist, dass die Wahrnehmung von etwas irgendwelcher akquirierter kognitiver Voraussetzungen bedarf. Angeblich gibt es Leute, welche diese Erzählung, deren Reisebericht nirgends aufzufinden ist, erkenntnistheoretisch für möglich halten. So etwa die US-amerikanische Neurowissenschaftlerin Candace Pert, oder der australische Historiker Robert Hughes in seinem Buch *The*

*Fatal Shore* über die Kolonialisierung Australiens. Ich will mich gerade nicht auf die schon irreführende Diskussion einlassen, ob die Einheimischen etwas gesehen haben können oder nicht. Bevor ich dazu übergehe, dieses zu erläutern, möchte ich eine zweite Stilisierung des Neuen vorstellen, die sich exemplarisch an der Erzählung *Die Farbe aus dem All* von H. P. Lovecraft veranschaulichen lässt:

„Es war ein makabres Geflimmer unnatürlichen Lichts, [...] und seine Farbe war [eine] namenlose Blasphemie [...]. Währenddessen wurde die Lichtsäule [...] heller und heller und erfüllte die Seelen der dicht beeinanderstehenden Männer mit einem Gefühl der Verderbnis und der Abnormität. Das Licht *leuchtete* nicht mehr, es *schoß* aus der Tiefe empor; und der formlose Strahl unbestimmbarer Farbe [...] schien direkt in den Himmel aufzusteigen. [...] Es war eine Farbe von außerhalb allen Raumes – ein fürchterlicher Sendbote aus formlosen Bereichen der Unendlichkeit jenseits aller uns bekannten Natur. Aus Bereichen, deren bloße Existenz unseren Verstand betäubt und uns erstarren lässt unter den außerkosmischen Tiefen, die sich vor unseren entsetzten Augen auftun.“ (Lovecraft 1980, S. 73 f./80)

Das Neue in dieser zweiten Erzählung wird stilisiert als die fremdartige Heimsuchung durch eine nicht bloß unbestimmte, sondern unbestimmbare Chrominanz (Farbsignal). Die Schilderung dieses Einbruchs des Phantastischen in unsere Welt hat eine grundlegende Übereinstimmung mit Redeweisen im gesellschaftstheoretischen und philosophischen Diskurs, der vom Neuen als etwas erzählt, was zwar radikal anders ist als alles Bekannte, jedoch dabei durchaus erfahren werde und sich mit Hoffnung und Angst verbinde. Das „wahre Neue“, wie Walter Benjamin im Anschluss an Baudelaire schreibt, breche den die Erfahrung aushöhlenden Zirkel des Immerwiedergleichen und gebe in der schockartigen Preisgabe der Äquivalenzwahrnehmung die verschüttete Reichhaltigkeit des Erlebens frei – eine Auffassung wie sie auch von Karl Heinz Bohrer in *Die Ästhetik des Schreckens* beschrieben wurde (Bohrer 1984). Dieses Motiv der negierenden Öffnung findet sich auch bei Adorno in der Rede vom Nichtidentischen und vom Rätselcharakter, den das Neue für das identitätslogische Denken annehme, wodurch es die Ratio veranlasse, selbst mimetisch zu werden (Adorno 2000, S. 38). Diese Formulierungen sind ebenso bekannt wie schillernd und deshalb möchte ich dieses das Bild, das in der Erzählung als unbestimmbare Chrominanz figuriert das des „schillernden Neuen“ nennen.

Der grundlegende Unterschied zwischen den beiden Erzählungen, liegt darin, dass das Neue im ersten Fall angeblich nicht erfahren werden kann, im zweiten Fall dagegen schon. Im ersten Fall sehen die Einheimischen, zunächst einmal nichts, im zweiten Fall wird von Beginn an etwas gesehen, das jedoch näherer Bestimmung unzugänglich ist. Die Gemeinsamkeit der beiden Erzählungen ist die, dass in beiden Fällen das Neue etwas sein soll, dass quasi unseren Verstehensapparat leerlaufen lässt. Das Neue wird zu etwas stilisiert, das eine völlige Anomalie darstellt und jenseits der Sphäre alles Bekannten liegt. Sein Auftauchen in den Erzählungen, ob es nun unsichtbar bleibt oder rätselhaft schimmert, wird als isolierte Erstbe-

gegnung konzipiert. Was kann der Mensch in solch einem Fall erkennen?

Seit John Lockes Grundannahme des menschlichen Verstandes als einer *tabula rasa* bei Geburt ist der Weg einer platonischen *Anamnesis*, also die Wiedererinnerung der Seele an die in ihr liegenden Ideen als Lösung versperrt und so stellt die Erklärung der Möglichkeit der Begegnung des radikal Neuen eine erkenntnistheoretische Herausforderung dar. Beide Erzählungen bearbeiten das Thema der Begrenztheit des Menschen. Sie erkenntnistheoretisch zu ernst zu nehmen, erscheint mir aber höchst problematisch. Im Anschluss an Wittgenstein möchte ich klärend am Bild des Neuen laborieren.

Was hat nun Wittgenstein selbst über das Neue zu sagen gehabt? Wenn man den Topos des Neuen bei Wittgenstein bearbeiten will, findet man in dessen Nachlass nur einzelne, verstreute Bemerkungen. Zentral für die hiesige Problematik ist folgende Bemerkung aus dem zweiten Teil der PU, Kapitel xi (der in den PU einzigen expliziten Thematisierung „des Neuen“): „Das Neue (Spontane, ‚Spezifische‘) ist immer ein Sprachspiel.“ (PU II, S. 570) Wittgenstein aktualisiert hier seine frühere Warnung, nicht außerhalb von Sprachspielen zu sprechen bzw. nicht der verführerischen Annahme zu erliegen, ein einfaches Jenseits der Sprachspiele sei uns zugänglich.

Eine wie auch immer vorgestellte Begegnung mit dem Neuen kann für uns Menschen, als kulturelle Wesen, nicht anders als im Rahmen von Sprachspielen stattfinden. In diesem Sinne hat auch Joachim Schulte die obige Stelle gedeutet:

„Was Wittgenstein damit meint, ist wohl, daß eine neue Ausdrucksform nicht möglich ist, ohne daß ein ihr entsprechender Kontext gegeben ist. Wer z.B. trefend über Musik reden will, der muß etwas von Musik verstehen. Und über Schmerzen kann man nur reden, wenn man bestimmte Erfahrungen gemacht und in gewisse Sprachspiele eingeübt worden ist. Das Neue ist also nie bloß das als solches unverständliche Hörerlebnis oder das niegekante Schmerzenerlebnis. Beide Erlebnisse sind zwar in höherem oder geringerem Maße mit instinktiven, unmittelbaren Reaktionsweisen verknüpft, doch ohne ein Minimum an Einübung in die entsprechenden Sprachspiele sind diese Erlebnisse für mich selbst „bedeutungslos“ („Ich weiß nicht, was ich da habe“) und nicht mitteilbar.“ (Schulte 1987, S. 58)

Etwas Neues könne nur dann erlebt werden, wenn es eine bestimmte Rolle in einem Sprachspiel (oder grundlegend: in einer Lebensform) einnimmt. Die Konsequenz der Bedeutungslosigkeit für den Erlebenden selbst bricht mit der ganzen Auffassung eines privilegierten privaten Zugangs jenseits der vermeintlich bloß öffentlichen Sprachspiele. Diese Argumentation betrifft eben nicht lediglich das Sprechen vom Neuen, sondern dessen Erfahrung selbst, wie Schulte wenig später deutlich macht:

„Ohne die entsprechenden Begriffe – also ohne gehörige Einübung ins Sprachspiel – ist das *neue* Erlebnis kein Erlebnis, und ohne Kenntnis der im Sprachspiel verwendeten Techniken gibt es keine spontanen Reaktionen auf die Erlebnisse, geschweige denn Möglichkeiten, das *Spezifische* an ihnen zu identifizieren und zu artikulieren.“ (Ebd.)

Etwas Neues ist etwas Neues erst innerhalb eines Sprachspiels – das ist die hier von Schulte vermittelte Einsicht. Nur dann könne das neue Erlebnis ein solches sein, wenn man über die minimal notwendigen Begriffe verfüge. Schulte deutet hier also Wittgensteins Bemerkung

(„Das Neue (Spontane, ‚Spezifische‘) ist immer ein Sprachspiel.“) in der Weise, dass sie sich etwa so paraphrasieren ließe: „Das Neue (Spontane, ‚Spezifische‘) ist immer als Teil eines Sprachspiels zu beschreiben.“ Wenn die Begegnung mit dem Neuen überhaupt ein Erlebnis sein solle, dann *müsse* sie zumindest im Rahmen von einigen bestehenden Sprachspielen stattfinden. Man bedenke etwa die unübersehbaren Voraussetzungen deren man bedarf, um etwa durch die Neuheit eines literarischen Phänomens affiziert zu werden. Man muss die Neuheit erst einmal *begreifen*, bzw. den Platz kennen, den das Neue in unserer Sprache überhaupt einnehmen soll. Bei einem radikalen Bruch mit allem Bekannten ließe sich also nicht mehr von einem irgendwie bedeutungsvollen Neuen sprechen. Konsequenterweise könne ein radikal Neues kein Erlebnis sein – und damit wären wir fast bei der Legende vom unsichtbaren Neuen. Die Erzählung vom schillernden Neuen hingegen beschreibt das Neue tatsächlich als innerhalb des bekannten Sprachspiels der Farbbegriffe auftretend. Beim unsichtbaren Neuen gibt es jenseits der Sprachspiele nichts zu sehen, beim schillernden Neuen erscheint etwas Unverständliches.

Wenn man Wittgensteins Bemerkung in dieser Weise behandelt, dann hat man den erkenntnistheoretischen Meinungsstreit bislang nur in ein anderes Vokabular übersetzt. Es ist aber auch eine weitergehende Deutung möglich, nämlich dass wir das Neue überhaupt nicht als Begegnung mit einem isolierten Gegenstand ohne bekannte Eigenschaften erläutern sollten, sondern als ein unbekanntes und (noch) nicht verständliches Sprachspiel. Das Neue ist ja nicht notwendig ein Gegenstand und vielleicht in der Philosophie besser gar nicht als ein solcher aufzufassen.

Man denke zunächst an ganz alltäglichen Situationen der Begegnung mit Neuem. Wir alle kennen sie. Ganz offenkundig gibt es neue Phänomene, die uns erstaunen und überraschen, die uns rätselhaft erscheinen, uns vielleicht verstören oder ängstigen, vielleicht auch erfreuen oder begeistern, oder die wir einmal übersehen. Ein einjähriges Kind im Zoo kann sich z. B. sehr für einen Rüssel interessieren und dabei den daranhängenden restlichen Elefanten glatt übersehen. Aber sollen wir sagen, der Elefant sei „unsichtbar“? Ebenso gibt es rätselhaftes Neues, das erst entschlüsselt werden will – z.B. Eschers optische Illusionen oder die „ewig steigende Tonfolge“. Aber macht es Sinn, zu sagen, das Neue sei stets rätselhaft? Der Punkt ist: Die Reaktionen auf Neues sind so vielfältig wie die Situationen, in denen es auftritt. Das scheint mir ein erstes Ergebnis zu sein, nämlich dass man mit Wittgenstein die Pluralität der Beispiele nicht aus den Augen verliert. Man sollte die Erzählungen also zunächst einmal nicht zu einem erkenntnistheoretischen Paradigma hypostasieren, sondern sie als – freilich fiktive – Beispiele nehmen.

Ein fundamentaler Irrtum beider Erzählungen liegt in ihrer zweifelhaften Annahme von etwas radikal Neuem als einem Gegenstand. Die Nominalisierung „das Neue“ läßt nämlich zu einer Reifizierung, zur Postulierung eines Objekts ein, das sich durch keine Bestimmung weiter charakterisieren lasse, als eben „neu“ zu sein. In der ersten Erzählung führt dies zur Unsichtbarkeit, in der zweiten zur Unbestimmbarkeit seiner Erscheinung. Die armen Einheimischen sind dem substantialisierten Neuen gegenüber erkenntnistheoretisch mittellos, während die Männer in Lovecrafts Erzählung glücklicherweise über einen Begriff des Neuen verfügen, der ihnen das Neue auch ohne weitere Bestimmungen zugänglich macht. Sowohl das reifizierte Neue als auch der Begriff des Neuen als Öffnung im kognitiven Apparat leben von den

grammatischen Möglichkeiten der Nominalisierung. Diese hintergründige Abstraktion eines *Novissimum* begegnet einem gelegentlich in Feuilleton-Diskussionen. Jemand sagt über irgendetwas: „Das ist noch nie da gewesen, es ist etwas *völlig* Neues!“ Es gehört zum Spiel, dass geschichtskundige Personen glauben, dies mit einem abwinkenden Hinweis auf irgendeine historische Vorläuferschaft hinreichend widerlegt zu haben. Solchen Diskussionen liegt ein grammatisches Missverständnis zu Grunde, denn „neu“ ist ja ein relationaler Ausdruck, der verschiedene Eigenschaftskonfigurationen in ein zeitliches Verhältnis setzt. Man könnte argumentieren, dass für ein solches Verhältnis das jeweils Neue und sein Pendant, das Bekannte, ja eine Ebene des Vergleichs teilen müssen und deshalb die Annahme eines ausschließlich Neuen ohne irgendwelche Ähnlichkeiten zu Bekanntem schlicht widersinnig sei. Genauso lässt sich umgekehrt die Behauptung von Neuheit nicht durch den schlichten Aufweis von bestehenden Ähnlichkeiten zu Bekanntem widerlegen.

Was lässt sich an den beiden Erzählungen vom Neuen also zeigen? In einem Fall wird das Neue notwendig ignoriert, im anderen Fall macht es einen intensiven Eindruck, der das Weltbild grundlegend erschüttert. Im ersten Fall sind wir geneigt, zu sagen, das „unsichtbare Neue“ müsste doch irgendwie sichtbar sein. Im zweiten Fall neigen wir zum Zweifel, ob ein solches „schillerndes Neues“ überhaupt sichtbar wäre. Wie soll man sich hier entscheiden? Ich möchte mich eigentlich nicht auf eine Entscheidung einlassen, ob das Neue schillert oder unsichtbar ist. Ich wollte vielmehr die Prämissen der beiden Erzählungen beleuchten: Sie konzipieren neue Phänomene wie die Erstbegegnung mit einem auf seine Neuheit reduzierten Gegenstand – und das macht die Frage, ob man diesen erlebt oder nicht eigentlich gegenstandslos. Der Punkt wird vielleicht klarer, wenn man die quasi-erkenntnistheoretischen Redeweisen durch konkrete Verhaltensbeschreibungen ersetzt. Man könnte in der ersten Erzählung sagen: „Die Schiffe waren nahe der Küste, aber die Einheimischen reagierten nicht auf sie. Einer von ihnen begann zu reagieren und die anderen folgten.“ Bei der zweiten Erzählung könnte man sagen: „Die Menschen blickten die Substanz nachdenklich an und versuchten ansonsten, so gut wie möglich mit ihren Auswirkungen zurechtzukommen.“

In diesen Verhaltensbeschreibungen taucht kein geheimnisvolles Neues auf. Es wird durch das Ausbleiben erkenntnistheoretischer Überfrachtung weder zu einer unsichtbaren Anwesenheit, noch zu einer Erscheinung des Inkommensurablen, sondern schlicht zu einer praktischen Herausforderung. Die sinnvolle Frage ist hier nicht: „Kann das Neue erkannt werden?“, sondern „Ist man in der Lage, ein neues Sprachspiel zu lernen?“ Die Antwort ist ein klares „Manchmal ja, manchmal nicht“. Wer etwa Kinder aufwachsen sieht, für den ist das Erlernen neuer Sprachspiele etwas ganz alltägliches. Und gleichwohl ist diese Fähigkeit sehr erstaunlich, wenn man sie mit den begrenzten Fähigkeiten unserer nächsten Artverwandten im Tierreich vergleicht. Aber es gibt Fälle, in denen es zwischen Sprachspielen keine Übergänge, keine Zwischenglieder gibt und wir an unsere Grenzen stoßen. Aber dieses als Begegnung mit einer substantivierten Datierung wie „das Neue“ zu artikulieren und mit allgemeinen erkenntnistheoretischen Begründungen zu versehen, führt – so mein Eindruck – einfach in die Irre. Die Schwierigkeit liegt vielleicht darin, zu akzeptieren, dass es hinsichtlich der Frage der ontologischen, der epistemischen oder der phänomenalen Konstitution oder Nicht-Konstitution des Neuen als solchen für uns nichts zu erkennen gibt.

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# Determining Value in Sense Impressions of Music and Interpretations

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In this essay, I plan to discuss several comments Ludwig Wittgenstein makes in *Culture and Value* related to music and epistemic virtues. I will specifically examine parts where he describes listening to music, the perception of music and understanding music. The purpose of this exposition will be to show how an appreciation of music incorporates a series of epistemic virtues that are important to Wittgenstein. These epistemic virtues, albeit somewhat uncustomary, are: the ability to describe, to teach differences, to be able to follow examples, to understand examples. It is here that what is to *understand* music for Wittgenstein fully takes shape. It is in the fine-tuning of one's perception of music via these virtues that lays the groundwork for understanding music. Recognizing the function of these virtues and their progression, including the ability to make an accurate interpretation of music, will show what all understanding music involves.

To start the examination of the importance of epistemic virtues in Wittgenstein in relation to understanding music, the first fragment I will look at from *Culture and Value* is from 1931 [MS 110 12: 12.–16.1.1931]. Wittgenstein writes,

Music, with its few notes & rhythms, seems to some people a primitive art. But only its surface is simple, while the body which makes possible the interpretation of this manifest content has all the infinite complexity that is suggested in the external forms of other arts & which music conceals. In a certain sense it is the most sophisticated art of all (11e).

It is important to notice a kind of pyramid within this citation: the notion of "primitive art" at the bottom, understood as the raw material of music, or its sounding content; the "body" which stands in a mid-way point to the top of the pyramid and helps define direction in the hearing of the raw or "manifest" content; and the "interpretation" at the very top, which is formed with help from the "body". Notice that Wittgenstein does not use the word "ear" to say it is the "ear" that makes interpretation possible, but the body. This turns the musical experience into one that is not only for one particular sense (hearing), but multiple or involving other processes. The body is not the key that opens the door to an interpretation right there for the grabbing, because this would indicate that everyone could have access to the interpretation. Instead, Wittgenstein carefully points out that the body *makes possible* the interpretation, thus the body helps in the hearing and the recognizing or understanding of the sound. On a very rudimentary level, in one respect the body acts as a windsock, suggesting the direction for interpretation as the sense data is received.

As we will see, the concept of *body* is a complex one. In one sense, it is the first step in determining an understanding of music; it aids in the internalization of music, and stands in the middle between a completely internal process and an external one. Wittgenstein refers to a process like this, a pre-interpretation stage, when he describes imagining a piece of music "I – always I think – rhythmically grind my upper & lower front teeth together [...] I can of course also imagine music without moving my teeth, but then the notes are much more blurred, much

less clear, less pronounced" (32e [MS 118 71v c: 9.9.1937]). What is important to remember is the way in which the body aids in the rendering of what seems *primitive* into an interpretation. This interpretation will then reflect the complexity that is within the sonorous content of the music. An interpretation at the top of this pyramid process is assumed to resemble Wittgenstein's comments such as Mendelssohn's music lacks a 'courageous' melody (40e [MS 162a 18: 1939–1940]) or that there are problems "of the intellectual world of the West which Beethoven [...] tackled & wrestled with but which no philosopher has ever confronted" (11e). What we are trying to look at here is the process of how to get from the sounding music to this kind of interpretation.

To flesh out the problem of perceiving music, Wittgenstein describes in 1939–1940 an interlocutor who says, "the impression (made by this melody) is completely indescribable." To which Wittgenstein responds, "That means: a description is no use (for my purpose); you have to hear the melody. If art serves 'to arouse feelings', is, perhaps, perceiving it with the senses included amongst these feelings?" (42e [MS 162b 59r: 1939–1940]). This fragment points to an importance of hearing music (or melody), and the effect it has on the listener. It also shows a problem faced when making a description of music: does a description take away from the impression the music made because it does not capture the experience? Moreover, Wittgenstein takes one step beyond this when he mentions that art serves to arouse feelings, and perceiving it with the senses is included in these feelings. It suggests a description is something else than the experience of an artwork itself, such that a description of a work of music does not count as (nor stand in for) the attending to a piece of music. It is in the sense that someone giving you the description of Schiller's "An die Freude" does not qualify as you having read the poem, nor, by the same token, having heard it in the setting of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony [D minor, Op. 125]. In this fragment by Wittgenstein we have a development from the initial perspective I described related to the body and the pyramid toward interpretation: (1) there is the introduction of a second person, the interlocutor – it is not only Wittgenstein describing his own experience but introducing another; (2) There is a presence of an "inner"/internal and "outer"/external – "inner" as in the senses, the 'impression' / perception of music; versus "outer", as description (or lack of one), words to describe the hearing of music to another person; and finally (3) the very notion of "description", a cousin to *interpretation*, which the body helps make possible. Wittgenstein makes an important distinction between one whose purpose it is to describe, versus another who has no such purpose. Having the purpose where a description of music is necessary, or of use, determines how one might hear music – listening for and identifying particularities for the formation of an interpretation. Therefore, the way one makes a description of music defines how, or whether, you understand music.

How being able to make an interpretation necessarily implies understanding music, inspires Wittgenstein to ask in 1946, "What does it consist in, following a musical phrase with understanding, or, playing it with understand-

ing? Don't look inside yourself" (58e [MS 132 51:22.9.1946]), a question he returns to in 1948, stating, "Understanding & explaining a musical phrase. – The simplest explanation is sometimes a gesture; another might be a dance step, or words describing a dance" (79e [MS 137 20b: 15.2.1948]). "The simplest explanation" described is regarding the impression music leaves, though expressed outwardly, as in a gesture and not the evaluation of, or reference to, an inner process "inside yourself". Further, the idea of explaining a musical phrase as describing a dance inspires the reader perhaps first to imagine works by Johann Strauss II, and how the feeling of a waltz melody pushes toward imagining a dance. But taking into account Wittgenstein's comments specifically regarding composers in *Culture and Value*, and his musical examples, we understand this "description of a dance" is far beyond the conception of a waltz. It is, instead, how the appropriation of a dance can push comprehension or understanding of music toward an interpretation incorporating the complexity Wittgenstein remarked about in 1931. An example of how the description of a dance might assume the simplest explanation is because it gives a visual cue or image to associate with the sounding music, which otherwise does not have an external exhibition. The comment also has relevance in regard to how someone is 'playing with understanding', as it would follow if one plays with understanding, it would help a listener grasp the meaning of a piece. Fitting Wittgenstein's example could be the explanation that the opening theme of the first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata in F-Major [K. 332] is like a dance: there is a dance-like interaction between the themes, a polite conversation with the brightness and lightness of a waltz. The shape and sway of the melodic line throughout the movement maintains this expression; and provides contrast when the theme is modulated into the minor-mode and an urgency pulls the melody forward into the next appearance of the "dance" figure.

Wittgenstein continues saying,

I give someone an explanation, say to him, 'It's as though...'; then he says "Yes now I understand" or "Yes now I know how it is to be played" [ ...] Above all he did not have to *accept* the explanation; it is not after all as though I had given him compelling reasons for comparing this passage with this & that (79e).

I find Wittgenstein's fascination with the interlocutor's acceptance of his explanation is specifically because Wittgenstein did not show anything analytical or formal, nor technical aspects related to the music; the interlocutor accepted something simpler like the description of a dance. When Wittgenstein then asks what is actually experienced if the theme is heard and heard with understanding, first he responds, "Sure enough I say 'I go along with it' [*Ich gehe mit!*]" (79e) which he follows with remarks like it is only on a very elementary level that he accompanies music with gestures, and these movements are supplemented with images. However there is importance in this elementary level of grasping a work of music, even if we are to reject images and kinaesthetic sensations (80e) as we go along in making a description. The 'I go along with it' statement is similar to a body moving or being pulled in the current of a river, as it is the 'body' mentioned in 1931 that facilitates interpretation. In other words, as what is felt while "going with" the music forms the building blocks for the interpretation.

Wittgenstein reaches a climax in his discussion of this topic when he turns, after the rejection of kinaesthetic sensations, etc. to ask, "How then do we explain to someone what it means 'to understand music'?" By naming the

images [...] experienced by someone who understands? *More likely*, by pointing out the expressive movements of one who understands" (80e). Importantly, introduced here is the music expert, "the one who understands" and is a great reference for our inquiry. Wittgenstein further describes the expert saying,

Appreciation of music is *expressed* in a certain way, both in the course of hearing & playing [...] Someone who understands music will listen differently, play differently [...] talk differently about the piece than someone who does not understand (80e).

We see the expert's qualities in his discourse about music, and not something in his physical make-up. The key is to understand and locate the differences between the way this individual speaks versus another person who does not understand.

As Wittgenstein does not wish to maintain descriptions such as, "the impression of the melody is indescribable", he tries to hash out what appreciating music could mean and what it looks like. He continues in the manuscript from 1948 to question what "appreciating music" is. He answers this stating that it requires us to describe *music*. The word "music" is put in italics (actually underlined by Wittgenstein) because the term is now encompassing the appreciation of it, what it is that we are referring to when speaking about music, and the general problem of describing music. Wittgenstein asks about describing the appreciation of music to someone, "is it also part of the process to teach him to appreciate for himself?" (81e). So for Wittgenstein, it were as though a musical expert had an ethical responsibility to explain to others, and this is exactly what is at the heart of the matter here related to epistemic virtue: one must be able to explain well to others how to appreciate music in order to be really called an "expert". Not only does the description of a work of music aid in the understanding of it, but it also reflects an understanding of how one's body moves with music and the inner workings of what is concealed within music itself (like the dissection of the "primitive" exhibited content). Wittgenstein concludes this fragment stating, "Well, developing his appreciation will teach him what appreciation is in a *different* sense, than a teaching <explanation> that does not do this. And again, teaching him to appreciate poetry or painting can be part of an explanation of what music is" (81e). In this final definition we see how special musical appreciation is. As Wittgenstein stated earlier, in a certain sense music is the most sophisticated art: considering it is difficult to describe on its own terms – teaching, giving an explanation or interpretation to someone about a piece of music often transcends the confines of the art itself and requires the aid, or borrowing from other arts: in this case poetry or painting. Indeed, it is being able to capture what is exhibited externally in the other arts and how these aspects can be applied to music. First, it requires us to have the tools to unlock what the body helps in identifying within the sound, be it the impressions or images brought to mind, kinaesthetic sensations, etc. These tools must then work in such a way to turn these impressions intelligible and we *understand* the music. One may believe he understands music quite well, but if he is unable to give an explanation of it or show how to form an appreciation of music, he stands poorly in comparison to Wittgenstein's expert. The appreciation of music must then span enough music, not only the kind or time period of music one likes, but enough to provide a foundation for such explanations and teachings. In the unearthing of what is concealed in music, Wittgenstein is able to, for example, put Beethoven in the same category as Goethe, as an individual who tackled problems that philosophers never did. In order to make such a

remark, it is necessary to be able to hear many things within a work of music, or a series of works (in this particular case Beethoven, and with focus on the Ninth Symphony). It is to be able to reach beyond the realm of music and its sensorial impressions, and gestures made by the body, to an interpretation that rests on conclusions based in determined concepts derived from music that for some may only be heard and the experience unable to be put into words.

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# Contexts of Knowledge

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Examples play a pivotal role in the analysis of knowledge. The usual procedure is this. We are presented with little stories of someone or other. Then we are asked whether one could say that the person in question does or does not know this or that. How do we find out? We reflect upon what we would accept as a correct application of the word "knowledge" in these situations by reflecting on what we ourselves would feel entitled to say. By doing this we make explicit the rules we follow when we normally apply the word "knowledge". This, at least, seems to be the general idea. But if the purpose of this whole procedure is to make explicit the rules we normally follow, the examples we encounter in the tradition initiated by Gettier seem to me to be odd. The reason why they seem to be odd is not so much that they invoke extremely unlikely situations. This, of course, is also true, and necessarily so, since all of these examples are cases in which someone has got a true belief by mere luck. And luck, by its very definition, is not common. But there is a rather different, much neglected reason why these examples are odd. They sit, as it were, uneasily between two standard applications of the word "knowledge". In this short paper, I am going to briefly describe these two contexts of knowledge, explain why the examples in the Gettier tradition are, in a sense, mixed cases, and draw a conclusion for contextualists. (I pursue this program in much more detail in Ernst 2011 and 2002).

There are two quite different everyday situations in which the question whether someone does or does not know something arises. Adopting classifications previously given by Oswald Hanfling and D.C. Clarke, I call these two situations the *situations of the ignoramus* and the *situations of the knower* respectively (cf. Hanfling 1985, Clarke 1990, Ernst 2002, Ernst 2011).

Let's start with the situations of the ignoramus. Sometimes we are interested in the question whether someone knows something or not because we want to acquire a piece of information and, therefore, are looking for an informant (cf. Craig 1999). Herbert does not know that Mary is in Venice. Therefore he asks Claire: "Hi Claire, do you know where Mary is?" Let us assume Claire has the true belief that Mary is in Venice and accordingly she answers "Yes, Herbert, I do. She is in Venice." In these situations Herbert *might* be interested in the reasons Claire has for her belief or for the way in which she has acquired it. Whether he will be so interested depends on what he knows about the situation at hand and on how important it is for him that Claire is right. Let's assume that Mary has told Herbert previously that the city she hates the most is Venice. Hence, Herbert might harbour some doubts concerning Claire's statement. He might say: "Are you sure, Claire? How do you know that she really is in Venice (of all places)?" Whether Herbert will say that Claire knows the whereabouts of Mary depends on whether Claire can give a satisfactory answer to the "how do you know"-question. So, in this case true belief is not enough for knowledge. One rather needs a true belief and reasons that match the standards of the person ascribing knowledge. Or, with semantic assent: The sentence "Claire knows that Mary is in Venice" is true when uttered by Herbert just in case Claire has the true belief that Mary is in Venice and, in addition, if she has reasons that meet the conversational standards for justification relevant for Herbert's utterance. This, in a nutshell, is the contextualist

account of knowledge, or, if you care for the difference: this is the contextualist account of knowledge ascriptions (cf., f.e., DeRose 2009).

The situations of the ignoramus figure prominently in the epistemological literature. Nevertheless, outside the study the word "knowledge" is used much more frequently in a totally different kind of context. I dub this different kind of context the *situations of the knower* because when we ask for knowledge in these situations we ourselves possess the relevant piece of information already. Why are we interested in the question whether someone knows something even though we are not ourselves looking for information? Take the following example. Now Herbert knows that Mary is in Venice. He wonders whether her friend Claire also knows because she is supposed to feed the cat while Mary is away. Therefore, he asks the husband of Claire: "Hi Charlie, does Claire know that Mary is in Venice?" In this situation Herbert is a knower himself. He does not need information on the whereabouts of Mary. What his question aims at is whether Claire has the relevant information as *well*. The reason why he is interested in this is that he wants to know whether Claire has got a firm belief she is ready to act on. If Claire has got the firm belief that Mary is in Venice she will probably feed the cat. And this is all Herbert is interested in here. Hence, for all intents and purposes, Claire knows in this situation that Mary is in Venice if and only if she has got the firm true belief that Mary is in Venice. In any case, Herbert is not interested in the reasons Claire might have for her belief or in how she happened to acquire that belief *at all*.

In this example the knower is interested in knowledge because he wants to make a prediction about the behaviour of someone. Herbert wants to find out whether Claire is likely to feed the cat. There is another subclass of situations in which we are interested in knowledge even though we do possess the relevant piece of information already. Let's assume Mary discovers after her return from Venice that the cat is famished. She might very well ask: "Didn't Claire know that I was in Venice?" Again, for all intents and purposes, Claire knew that Mary was in Venice if she had the firm true belief that Mary was in Venice. If she believed wrongly that Mary was at home, she is not to blame for not feeding the cat. But if she did have the firm true belief that Mary was in Venice – whatever her reasons, however she arrived at that belief – she will have to find an excuse for not feeding the cat. In this example the knower is interested, not in the prediction but in the justification of someone's behaviour. Therefore he is interested in knowledge. And again: firm true belief is all that is at stake when we are interested in knowledge in situations like these.

One subclass of the situations of the knower has been given much attention recently (cf. Stanley 2005, Fantl and McGrath 2009): situations in which we assess the rationality of someone's actions. Let's assume Herbert has acquired the firm true belief that Mary is in Venice by reading in the tea leaves. Is it rational for him to ask Claire to feed the cat while Mary is away? One might be tempted to say that this depends on whether he knows that she is in Venice or not. If he knew, it would be rational. It isn't rational, so he doesn't know. "Act only on what you know" seems to be a principle of rationality which helps us to get

a clearer picture of knowledge here. And the picture we get is that knowledge is more than firm true belief. I am not convinced by this train of thought for reasons I can't get into here (but cf. Ernst 2011). In fact, I believe that even in this subclass of the situations of the knower just firm true belief is at stake when we speak of knowledge. But since I can't argue for this claim within the confines of this paper I just want to register these situations as potential exceptions to the claim that firm true belief is knowledge in the situations of the knower and set them aside in what follows.

Given these rather different situations in which we normally use the word "knowledge", the situations of the ignoramus and the situations of the knower, the examples in the Gettier tradition are odd for the following reason. On the one hand, we are explicitly told in these examples that the person in question has got a true belief. Therefore we, who judge the example, are knowers ourselves, and as such would normally not be interested in the reasons the person has got for her true belief or in the way she has acquired it. On the other hand, we are confronted in detail with precisely this information. We are told at length about the devious ways in which the person came to have a true belief.

Take, for example, the well-known barn case. Barney sees a barn in the distance and, therefore, believes that there is a barn nearby which is true. But fake-barns in the vicinity abound. Does he know that there is a barn? On the one hand we are told that he has got a true belief. The question whether he knows or not, therefore, seems to be the question whether he *also* knows what we know, i.e. that there is a barn. On the other hand we are led to consider the way in which he has acquired his belief, namely by looking at a barn from a distance in the vicinity of many fake-barns. This is information we would be interested in mainly if we would *not* know whether there is, in fact, a barn or not, and if we would try to find out whether Barney is in the position to answer this question. So the example somehow combines two different normal situations in which we use the word "knowledge". In what way, then, are we supposed to judge the example?

It doesn't matter, one might say, since we have got a clear intuition what we would say concerning this example. Barney doesn't know that there is barn. This, one might add, shows two things: We are confronted with a Gettier-style problem here, since Barney has got a justified true belief but not knowledge. And the idea that knowledge is sometimes merely firm true belief is absurd since Barney has got a firm true belief if anyone has, but not knowledge. As soon as a true belief is arrived at in an unreliable manner it doesn't constitute knowledge – whatever the situations in which we are interested in knowledge.

In my opinion it really does matter with which normal situation in mind we do judge the example. This can be brought out clearly if we add some more description in order to place the example in one context or the other. Normally, I think, we implicitly judge the example with the situation of the ignoramus in mind. Let's make this explicit. Herbert is in search of the only real barn in fake-barn county. He encounters Barney who claims to know that there is a barn nearby. Herbert wonders whether he is a reliable informant, and he asks him: "Well, Barney, how do you know that there is a barn nearby?" If Barney answers "I just took a good look from the distance" this will not be good enough to qualify as a justification. For all Herbert knows Barney might very well be wrong. Therefore, Herbert is right in saying "Then you don't know that there is barn nearby (even if, by chance, you happen to be right)." I

think it is because we think of situations like this one that we feel compelled to say that Barney does not know that there is barn. When we do judge the example with the situations of the ignoramus in mind we simply ignore that we already know that Barney is actually right about the barn. The important point here is that he is not a reliable informant (cf. Craig 1999).

But now consider the following Hanfling-style variant (cf. Ernst 2011, 2002 and Hanfling 1985, 2003). Mary, who is Barney's mother, knows that he has passed a barn on his walk through the countryside. Let us assume she wants to know whether Barney knew that he passed a barn for the following reason: Barney did not enter the barn and, therefore, became soaking wet in a rain shower. Now he has got a cold, and his mother asks him: "Barney, didn't you know that there was a barn you could have entered?" I think, it is quite clear that Barney can *not* answer: "Look Mom, I didn't know there was a barn, since there were so many fake-barns in the vicinity, although, of course, I knew nothing about these fake-barns at the time." For all intents and purposes Barney did know quite well that there was a barn. He had the firm true belief that there was a barn at the time. And that is all that is at stake here. Not knowing is an excuse Barney doesn't have in this situation. His mother has every reason to be angry with him. This variant shows that, as soon as we judge the example with the situations of the knower in mind, it is not a case of ignorance but of knowledge.

One lesson to be learnt from these considerations is this: Contextualists have emphasized that we have to be told what the context of the knowledge ascriber is in order to be able to judge examples. They are right. But what is involved in specifying the context of the knowledge ascriber? In my opinion the first thing we need to know is whether we are confronted with a situation of the ignoramus or a situation of the knower. If we are confronted with a situation of the ignoramus we need to be told what the knowledge ascriber knows about the situation and how important the piece of information he is looking for is for him. If, on the other hand, we are confronted with a situation of the knower nothing but firm true belief is at stake. This, I think, gives some important structure to describing contexts of knowledge.

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# Wired for Anticipation: An Adaptive Trait Challenging Philosophical Justification?

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## 1. Inductive Learning and Radical Skepticism

“Radical skepticism about the external implies”, according to Graham (2007:19), “that no belief about the external is even *prima facie* justified.” His demanding program of an exhaustive theoretical reply to skepticism focuses on skepticism about the external. But, as he notes, radical skepticism “also extends to beliefs about the future, the past, and the unobserved.” Thus, if we correctly understand, it extends to both, radical constructivist epistemology (a) and Humean skepticism (b). Nola (2005: 258), in support of (a): “Radical constructivists take skepticism about the external world seriously as part of their position.” Concerning (b) we refer to Douven’s (2009: 25) admission that his attempt to a formal a posteriori resolution of “external world skepticism [...] relies on the anti-Humean assumption that we can learn from experience”. Given that this assumption is really anti-Humean – but see below the quotation from Hume – this would indicate that Cartesian and Humean skepticism cannot not be discussed completely independent from each other. To make things even more complicated, we cannot even take for granted that Hume’s conception of “induction is skeptical at all” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2010: 1).

A discussion of these questions goes beyond the scope of this paper. Our program is, in contrast to Graham’s, not at all exhaustive but – a well known correlation – as simple as radical: In Section 2 we refer to (neuro)biological studies suggesting cerebral “top-down” or “expectancy-driven” processing and the view of anticipation as a ubiquitous adaptive trait in living systems – not only in organisms having a central nervous system, such as *Homo* or the favored model organism *Drosophila*, but also in microorganisms having no brain at all.

In Section 3 we shall compare top-down models of learning and Bayesian machinery with conceptions of induction in radical constructivist epistemology and in Hume. It can be shown that top-down information processing and Bayesian machinery is – in contrast to Hume’s conception of learning as “custom or habit” – well compatible with cases of single-instance inference (cf. Griffiths and Tenenbaum 2007). Hume knew that “even brute beasts” learn and “improve by experience” (Hume 1993: 25). But he was fixated on a data-driven conception of learning and could of course not know the meanwhile growing evidence for a view of anticipation as a ubiquitous adaptive trait. These arguments amount to a rather provocative question in the conclusions (Section 4): If (i) anticipation is an ubiquitous adaptive trait in biology, if (ii) there is no cogent argument for a preferential treatment of our “conscious” and “reasoned” forecasts, and if (iii) a logical justification is neither necessary nor possible in adaptive traits such as anticipation in microorganisms and in our adaptive immune system – why should it, then, be necessary and possible in our “conscious” inductive inferences?

## 2. Wired for Anticipation?

This title is inspired by Dickson’s (2008) article “Wired for sex: [...]”: *Drosophila* males estimate their respective chances primarily on the basis of female “pheromone signals predictive of mating success” (p.905). But the pheromone profiles that allow discriminating between receptive and unreceptive females can vary with time and place. Thus, “an optimal strategy for each location” requires learning from trial and error. At least some circuit elements of the flies’ wiring system “must remain plastic in order to record this experience. In this case, evolution has written into the genome the instruction for solving the classification problem, not the solution itself.” (p.907) This description of neuronal programs being, to some degree, open for “learning to predict mating success”, also applies to the brains of other species, and apart from courtship and sexual behavior, to other domains such as eating behavior. Speaking more generally, we are not only wired for sex, but, above all, wired for anticipation.

The above example implies that inductive learning does not depend on “universal laws”, but is, in contrast, induced by variation among different locations, with some local reliability or “local redundancy” as a sufficient condition. A largely overlooked side effect in Pavlov’s experiments, mentioned in Pickenhain (1959: 28), moreover shows that the differences between locations can in turn become the object of the animals’ classifications: The dog not only learns to classify a certain “neutral” stimulus as predictive of feeding, but also learns very soon – as a restricting condition, or as some higher-order redundancy – that these redundant stimulus-feeding successions are context-specific, i.e., restricted to a specific labor setting. (Due to lack of space, we cannot discuss a further kind of “higher order conditioning” described in Pickenhain, p.36f)

What might be the neurophysiological basis for anticipatory information processing and behavior? Buzsáki (2006) emphasizes that the brain, due to its ability to produce spontaneous activity, “does not simply process information but also *generates* information. [...] ‘Representation’ of external reality is therefore a continual adjustment of the brain’s self-generated patterns by outside influences, a process called ‘experience’ by psychologists.” Ringach (2009: 439) similarly argues that “ongoing cortical activity represents a continuous top-down prediction/ expectation signal that interacts with incoming input to generate an updated representation of the world”. Such continuous interactions between expectation and input may also explain the effects of learning by doing: Practice of whatever kind enhances the efficiency (speed and/or accuracy) of anticipatory analysis in specific domains such as reading (Järvilehto et al. 2009) as well as in rather general respects such as the allocation of visual attention (Collins and Barnes 2009).

But learning and anticipatory behavior are much older than brains and nervous systems in general. Should we consider anticipation a general trait of living systems? Maturana (1970) characterizes organisms as conservative but inductive/prognostic systems. Tagkopoulus et al. (2008: 1313) describe microbial networks forming “internal representations that allow prediction of environmental

change“, and the work of Mitchell et al. (2009: 220) “indicates that environmental anticipation is an adaptive trait that was repeatedly selected for during evolution and thus may be ubiquitous in biology.“ A growing body of literature (e.g. Allada et al. 2009) indicates that circadian clocks are universal in organisms and play a crucial role in the anticipatory control of behavioral and physiological processes.

One might suspect a “just metaphorical” wording in some of the above quotations using the terms *learning*, *anticipation* and *prediction*. Two papers that may dispel such concerns: Stewart (1993:196) emphasizes that it “is not just loose heuristic talk” when he assumes the immune system to be “cognitive” in the sense of his thorough definition of that term. More recently, Ginsburg and Jablonka (2009) elaborate a rather restrictive explication of *learning*; neither memory (p.633) nor anticipation (p.643) is a sufficient condition. Nevertheless they insist that this explication applies to learning in the immune system and to some responses of unicellular organisms.

### 3. Top-down Processing, “Subjective” Information, and our Sensitivity to Coincidences

Anticipation plays a multiple role in experience: It can be considered a precondition for efficient “learning” (in the broadest sense) and its enhancement an essential aim and criterion of success in the learning process. Cognitive progress, in this sense, is done by a continuous projection of more or less fitting hypotheses onto the process under consideration (“use of redundancy”) and continuous modifications induced by discrepancies between the expected and the observed – to the effect that the predictability of events and the efficiency of the analysis increase (Fenk 1986: 212). This description of learning connects with some of the above descriptions of the underlying neuronal activity but was mainly inspired by philosophical analyses of the growth of empirical knowledge (e.g. Popper’s “Logik der Forschung”) and thus “anticipates” Waldmann’s (1997:98) conclusion that learning, like the development of scientific theories, requires a flexible coordination of prior knowledge and empirical input.

In his analysis of Hempel-Oppenheim explanations, Feyerabend arrives at the view that it is generally impossible to maintain a formal theory of explanation; theory assessment should, instead, concentrate upon the formal character of theories and their “predictive success” (Feyerabend, 1962: 92).

Just as predictive power of theories and of tests reflects their validity, the increase of a subject’s predictive performance in Shannon’s guessing-game technique reflects the increment of learning and knowledge achieved by this subject (Fenk 1986): Predictive success can be used as measure of prior knowledge and its increase as measure of the growth of knowledge. Despite of varying terminology, the thread and aim of most of the relevant methodology is to determine the contribution of the current input (input in the broadest sense, including sensory and statistical data) by relating it to prior knowledge (knowledge in the broadest sense, including assumptions and subjective probabilities):

Hierarchical Bayesian models represent a very advanced such method allowing “flexible inductive biases for lower levels” of a (hierarchically organized?) body of knowledge, “whereas the Bayesian Occam’s razor ensures the proper balance of constraint and flexibility as knowledge grows.” (Tenenbaum et al. 2011: 1284)

Accordingly, methods using the apparatus of information theory tend to a relational concept of *information* (information as “subjective” information), meaning that the degree to which an event or a message is “informative” – from relatively new to extremely surprising – depends on the relevant prior knowledge. Information is a “relative quantity”, says Dretske (1999: 80), and “it reveals the extent to which /.../ the information one receives is a function of what one already knows” (p. 81f).

Von Foerster (1972: 14), known as constructivist, also repeatedly stresses “that information is a relative concept”, but adds: “The environment contains no information. The environment is as it is.” Certainly true that it is as it is; but is this all we can say about it? Von Foerster avoids localizing information and redundancy in the cognitive subject’s environment. But can we really conceive living systems or nervous systems that produce redundancy through interactions with a non-redundant environment and that function as prognostic systems in such a non-redundant world? The assumptions of radical constructivists about the external are as “parsimonious” as those of behaviorists about the internal; but both positions complicate the description as compared with a view of cognitive subjects as parts or subsystems of an overall redundant world. These subjects not only seek to optimize internal consistency/redundancy and to avoid or eliminate non-“viable” concepts; they positively learn about their environment. Since the “transinformation” – in turn a special case of redundancy – yielded between the internal and the external is symmetric, redundancy has to be ascribed to the external world as well. Internal representations need not be understood as “iconic”, but as constructed following rules that are in turn empirically accessible.

Contemporary developments in the understanding of *learning* in cognitive psychology and neurobiology also allude to a further complex of epistemological questions: Hume’s problem of induction (i) that prompted him to reduce induction to “custom or habit” (ii) which seems to be incompatible with cases of learning from only one instance (iii).

Popper (2007: 55) assents to Hume’s explanation “that induction cannot be logically justified.” (So, if this point makes Hume a skeptic, it makes Popper a skeptic, too.) But he rebuts Hume’s “explanation of induction in terms of custom or habit” (p.56) – other than e.g. Suppes (2009: 151) who takes Hume’s habits as “the basis of the theory of rational choice”. We are, however, perfectly in line with Popper in this respect and for the same reason: “even a single striking observation” may, even in young animals and babies, be sufficient to create an expectation; one of the facts that Hume attempted to “explain away” (p.58) in his *Treatise*. An inconsistency in his *Enquiry* concerning the use of the “heat and flame”-example was shown elsewhere (Fenk 2010: 85).

The problem of “single-instance inferences” (for a more detailed discussion from a different perspective see Millican 2009) seems to be no problem for the Bayesian machinery (Griffiths and Tenenbaum 2007) that may be considered a special case of hypothesis testing models: When rats or even worms (cf. Zhang et al. 2005) show aversion and avoidance reactions after only one “suspicious coincidence” between “testing” some new food and getting a severe malaise, they obviously follow a more intelligent strategy than would be learning by custom and habit that something is poisonous.

## 4. Conclusions

(I) Predictive success is the touchstone in the evolution of knowledge systems.

(II) Yes, Hume may be right to the point that a logical justification of induction and prediction is not possible.

(III) Yes, Feyerabend is also right, a formal foundation of explanation may not be possible either.

(IV) Hume and Feyerabend are right just because the generalizations we project to the past and the future are (at best) based on observations “so far”. They are, or may turn out to be, only statistical laws. And, which is not the same: Low level redundancy – “low” in a hierarchy of regularities of increasing generality – may easily change when contexts change.

(V) Thus, any decision within and beyond science is always a decision under uncertainty; growth of knowledge is reduction of uncertainty.

(VI) Our intelligence can understand and describe many things as intelligent/rational without always asking for a logical or otherwise philosophical justification. Take inductive learning in our immune system as an example.

(VII) Recalling points (II) to (V) we cannot see any reasonable argument for a preferential treatment of our “conscious” and “systematic” inductive inferences within and beyond science.

(VIII) Our final conclusion: A logical justification of induction and prediction is as impossible and unnecessary as a logical justification of anticipation in microorganisms, in our adaptive immune system or any other adaptive trait. It is as obsolete as an attempt to justify metabolism. Or, with more reservation, and “anticipating” some objections: If a logical justification is neither possible nor necessary in adaptive traits such as anticipation in microorganisms, why should it, then, be possible and necessary in our “conscious” inductive inferences?

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# Some Thoughts on Wittgenstein and Film

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1. It is not uncommon to find, among philosophers interested in film, some interest in or influence from Ludwig Wittgenstein. Stanley Cavell's work in general is perhaps the paradigm example of this, and (Mulhall 2006) and (Read and Goodenough 2005) both provide ample evidence for the phenomenon as well. We can see the effect of this background of Wittgenstein's work in different ways. Some philosophers can be said to be applying Wittgenstein's ideas to questions in aesthetics *about* film (for instance, one might talk about family resemblance and genre).<sup>1</sup> Somewhat differently—but not necessarily unrelatedly—some philosophers take inspiration from Wittgenstein's general approach to doing philosophy<sup>2</sup> and use it as a model for coming to understand (particular) films. In the best cases, relatively rare though they might be, there is also a philosophical payoff, because the film is “doing philosophy.” Thus coming to understand it is coming to understand some stretch of philosophy. Rupert Read describes something like this approach to film in this way: “Wittgenstein's thought helps clear the way for an appreciation of how films can philosophize” (Read 2005, p. 30).

What I will show in this paper is one way of saying why Wittgenstein's work, in particular, lends itself to thinking about films, how it “helps clear the way” for appreciating *certain* aspects of *certain* films. So instead of focusing on one particular film and its specifics (which is a worthwhile approach, and one I've taken in the past), I will focus on Wittgenstein's work—primarily (Wittgenstein 2009). I will make reference to films or to things directors have said about films to show the parallels. I want to show explicitly how it is possible that Wittgenstein's way of doing philosophy can make sense in a medium other than the written text, how it's not in some sense “essentially tied to the written word.” (Indeed, part of my interest in the debate over “film as philosophy” lies simply in being bothered by the assumption that the written word is the best—or the only—medium in which philosophy may be embodied.)

2. One paradigm of philosophical argumentation is the following: offer premises and a conclusion, argue for the truth of the premises, and logic will guarantee the truth of the conclusion. Relatedly, one might again start with premises and conclusion, show the falsity of the conclusion, and—via logic—conclude that at least one premise is false.<sup>3</sup> Wittgenstein, while well aware of the logic, does not primarily operate in this mode.<sup>4</sup> This is, it seems to me, what leads many analytic philosophers to be dismissive of Wittgenstein's work, and it's part of why Bouwsma puzzlingly asks the question I quoted above.

Wittgenstein's philosophy is, as I stated, more radical. But this comes from the tradition in which it's situated—which, indeed, he helped to bring about. Wittgenstein is rarely arguing for some particular claim or “conclusion.” His

concerns are elsewhere. In his (Diamond 1989, p. 22) from 1939, while he was in the midst of writing the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein says the following about how he's going to proceed:

The investigation is to draw your attention to facts you know quite as well as I, but which you have forgotten, or at least which are not immediately in your field of vision. They will all be quite trivial facts. I won't say anything which anyone can dispute. Or if anyone does dispute it, I will let that point drop and pass on to something else.

Whatever he's doing, he's not offering premises and arguing for their truth; and if these “premises” turn out to be false he doesn't seem concerned either.

So he's said that he's reminding us of things, that he's calling our attention to facts we already know. This in itself can be valuable, but there's a further reason for it. In PI§79, Wittgenstein discusses the sentence “N doesn't exist.” He highlights various ways we might “cash out” what we mean by the name “N” and thus what the sentence means. What Wittgenstein demonstrates is that there are various possible legitimate meanings and various possible ways to assign truth or falsity to the sentence. It is important that he has given us this sentence *ex nihilo*, absent any significant context. The question he raises, in light of these possibilities, is “Should it be said that I'm using a word whose meaning I don't know and so am talking nonsense?” The typical (or stereotypical) analytic philosopher would want an account that would yield a definite answer here. But this is not what he does. The first part of his response is well-known: “Say what you please, so long as it does not prevent you from seeing how things are.” This is not an anything-goes attitude, however, licensing our literally saying whatever we choose. He continues, misleadingly within parentheses (for they mask something very important): “And when you see that, there will be some things that you won't say.” *This* could be seen as a goal of Wittgenstein's philosophy.

One way to characterize all of this is to say that Wittgenstein reminds us of things that we can say and of facts about things that we can say. The result is that we get many of the relevant facts for a given “puzzling situation” placed on the table. We're not told what to say about the situation, though Wittgenstein does believe that given the facts there are “things that we will not say.” I will not say, for instance, that “N” cannot be a name because it doesn't refer to an extant thing.<sup>5</sup> I would classify this kind of philosophical method as a kind of persuasion. In using this word, I mean to suggest that it's something other than—or in addition to—rational, logical argument. It's an appeal to something we all (purportedly at least) share. We are to be persuaded, if we are, to acknowledge that-which-we-share.

In his (Goodenough 2005, p. 12) Jerry Goodenough asks, “Why, then, a film?” He then talks about Wittgenstein for a bit, and summarizes that through his work we are shown that often “we are, if you like, persuaded at a deeper and more fundamental level than merely the rational.” This happens to us in ordinary life, and Wittgenstein is highlighting the significance of it. Goodenough then turns to the film *Blade Runner* (dir. Ridley Scott, USA,

<sup>1</sup> For two examples, see (Cavell 2008, p. 214) on the characteristics of comedies of remarriage, or see Dan Flory's suggestions in (Flory 2008, pp. 21-2).

<sup>2</sup> Generally, as seen in work from the 1930's on; paradigmatically as represented in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

<sup>3</sup> It is this latter conception of philosophical argumentation that Bruce Russell relies upon in his discussion of the philosophical capabilities of film in (Russell 2000, pp. 163-67).

<sup>4</sup> There are arguments of these sorts at points. One such example: §§39-40, on the meanings of names whose referents do not exist. However, even when such arguments do occur, they are always in the course of a larger context. They're not meant to stand alone as philosophical arguments.

<sup>5</sup> Again, see §§39-40.

1982, 1992, 2007) to explain what he means. He believes that “the film allows us to perceive and to feel, to experience what is happening at a deeper and more persuasive level than any mere written account could manage.” For a variety of reasons then, we get more of “the facts” of the situation with replicants and humans in the world of *Blade Runner*, for instance, from the film than we would from a “mere” written description. According to Goodenough, the film can do a better job of getting the facts on the table, which is Wittgenstein’s self-described task. In his view, then, there are things we’re led *not* to say about the nature of what it is to be human (Goodenough 2005, pp. 12-14).

In a discussion with an audience at USC in 1968, Jean-Luc Godard was asked, “Are you concerned more with making movies or with making social commentary?” His response was, “I see no difference between the two,” (Youngblood 1998, p. 32). Later, he was asked “You mean you are trying to change the audience?” to which he responded, “Well, I am trying to change the world. Yes,” (Youngblood 1998, p. 49). These comments make sense on the model of “presentation of facts” and persuading the viewer.

The important question is always what the motivation for the persuasion is; if it’s a philosophical target (say, a conceptual assumption or confusion),<sup>6</sup> then the persuasion might be something like the Wittgensteinian sort. In the paradigmatic cases that Wittgenstein addresses, the philosophical targets are mirrored in how people use words. So I’ll now turn to consider language.

3. Why is it that Wittgenstein focuses on words? The kind of answer I don’t find particularly helpful is to say, “philosophical errors are errors in language use” or something like that. This is too quick; Wittgenstein is not a (caricature of a) logical positivist. So what should we say then? Well, he’s trying to remind us of facts and to persuade us in a certain way. So what more can we say about these facts and why the persuasion should or ought to work? My suggestion is that Wittgenstein focuses on language as the facts because it is something we can cite, that we can point to, as the “that-which-we-share.” We can assess what Wittgenstein asserts—say, that we can talk about a nonexistent object—because with respect to any justification of such a claim, we are in the same position as Wittgenstein. We—Wittgenstein and the reader—use language. In this way Wittgenstein’s comments are on a par with our own: hence his insistence on speaking “the language of every day” (PI§120). Edward Minar helps us see how this helps when it comes to persuasion: he says that the obviousness of what Wittgenstein says about language is “the sole source of their philosophical weight,” (Minar 1995, p. 415). So once it’s pointed out to us that we say such-and-such, we won’t want to say so-and-so, on pain of inconsistency.

The title of the interview with Jean-Luc Godard in 1968 that I cited above is “Jean-Luc Godard: No Difference between Life and Cinema.” I want to suggest that one way to see at least part of this continuity is as being rooted in language. Part of a film’s persuasive power lies in its use of *our* language. In this sense the film is, we might say, about us. This is perhaps why the director Arnaud Desplechin is led to comment on Woody Allen’s *Hannah and Her Sisters* (USA, 1986). Toward the end of the film, Woody Allen’s character has been emotionally at sea for months, contemplating various religions as well as suicide. He goes to a movie theater to see a Marx Brothers film, and it enables him, says, Desplechin, “to reestablish

contact with the world.” (Cavell 2008, p. 218). Indeed, in this case, it relieves him of certain philosophical worries.<sup>7</sup>

But why is film more suited to this task than, say, a novel (if it in fact is)? In part, I want to say this is perhaps best construed as a psychological question. But there is more to say, too. Wittgenstein makes clear that when he looks at samples of languages—he calls them language-games in the more extended examples—that much more needs to be before us than simply a collection of words. Rather, he says we need to consider the activities with which the words are interwoven (PI§7). This is an expansive category; in his *Lectures on Aesthetics* he makes clear that language-games are to encompass the “whole culture” from which the words come (Barrett 1966, I, §26). So it’s unclear in the abstract how much we need to know about the lives of people who use certain words, in order to understand what they mean. This is, incidentally, another way of seeing Wittgenstein’s talk of “meaning and use” (PI§43). What I’d suggest is that films give us—for various reasons—good ways of filling in “the culture” that goes along with words. We’re thus (at least potentially) well situated to understand those words.

4. I have begun to make the case, here, merely for a possibility. I’ve not given any arguments about the nature of philosophy or of film, nor for the nature of “film as philosophy.” I would think that all three could conceivably take various forms. What I have done is to argue for a similarity in philosophical methodology between one way of taking Wittgenstein’s later work and how some films work. Whether this comparison is useful can only be seen by examining actual films. If it does prove to be useful, though, then what I’ve offered here is the beginning of a suggestion as to why a thoroughgoing “anti-theoretical” reading of Wittgenstein’s work need not be purely negative, and can actually be useful and of interest.

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<sup>6</sup> Filling this out further will be contentious. Again, this is part of the “film as philosophy” discussions.

<sup>7</sup> It brings him peace. See §133.

# The Concept of Objective Certainty and the Conception of Dynamic Knowledge

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In 1929, Wittgenstein gives his *Lecture on Ethics* to the *Heretics Society* in Cambridge, in which he tries to describe his understanding of absolute value. Wittgenstein describes the notion of absolute value through two different experiences: First, the experience of wondering at the existence of the world and second, the experience of feeling absolutely safe. In both cases, Wittgenstein remarks, “that the verbal expression which we give to these experiences is nonsense!” (LE 8).

Even though Wittgenstein has changed his views about language and about sense by this time (cf. Rhees 1965, p. 19), it is clear that his remark is very affected by thoughts of the *Tractatus*. There he claimed that, if ethical values exist at all, they have to lie beyond the world, since propositions which describe the world have no higher value (cf. T 6.4ff). The border between the sayable and the unsayable, between the world and beyond, is drawn between propositions which describe the world in a scientific way and their transcendental conditions. Ethical propositions cannot exist, since “it is clear that when we look at it [in a scientific way] everything miraculous has disappeared” (LE 10).

If we consider what is said about the later concept of ‘objective certainty’ in the remarks of *On Certainty* one can get the impression, that the features of the so-called ‘hinges’ are very similar to what Wittgenstein is saying about absolute values. In her book *Understanding Wittgenstein’s On Certainty*, Danièle Moyal-Sharrock insists on the point that hinges are definitely not propositions<sup>1</sup>. Neither do certainties have truth-values, since they are not empirical judgements, nor are they effable, but can only show themselves in what is said and done: “For Wittgenstein [...], it is not that our objective certainties are not usually said, but that they are *logically ineffable*” (Moyal-Sharrock 2007 p. 66).

In this paper I elucidate how this logical ineffability regarding to objective certainties should be conceived. I argue that drawing on such comparisons with the ‘saying/showing structure’ of the *Tractatus* may lead to a misconception of foundationalism that I suggest is actually at work here. Objective certainty should not be conceived as a mystical “Something” at the bottom of our propositional beliefs and upon which they are grounded, “but not [as] a Nothing either” (PI 304). Rather certainty indicates the origin of primitive language-games, such that, if their grammar changes then certainty changes, too. This leads to a dynamic conception of knowledge and certainty which I will discuss in the second section. First, I consider what objective certainty actually means in Wittgenstein’s sense.

## Objective Certainty

Wittgenstein’s view of the human being as an animal has an extensive impact on the traditional self-image of mankind and our relation to language. Against the traditional anthropological view, Wittgenstein objects: “Language did

not emerge from some kind of ratiocination” (OC 475). In the beginning, there was no ratiocination, but there were simply deeds of human creatures, which one can call “natural” or “instinctive” (Moyal-Sharrock 2007 p. 104). A one-year-old child, who is not yet in possession of language, uses her body without any doubt. This seems unsurprising, since she is not endowed with linguistic instruments to consider, to ponder, or to question her acting. She just acts and reacts.

The same circumstances – and this is what Wittgenstein has probably provoked to a different anthropological view – occur in case of primitive language-games. The one-year-old child not only engages in activities alone by herself, but imitates her parents or other attachment figures. What is meant by a primitive language-game is described in §2 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, in which an assistant learns the words ‘block’, ‘pillar’, ‘slab’ and ‘beam’ by means of an activity, namely *to bring* the building stones. The building stones become meaningful only in context of this activity, and we can imagine a lot more primitive activities in which words can become meaningful like ‘to point to something’, ‘to name something’, ‘to turn something round’, etc. Wittgenstein claims that such primitive forms of language are used by a child, when she learns to talk (PI 5). As he puts it in *On Certainty*,

“Children do not learn that books exist, that armchairs exist, etc. etc. – They learn to fetch books, sit in armchairs, etc. etc.” (OC 476).

Regarding primitive language-games, there is now a crucial and very interesting point in relation to doubt and certainty. When a child is trained in certain activities, it has no linguistic background yet to decide whether to follow any particular activity as a good or a bad one or as a true or a false one. In primitive language-games, children do not *opt* for something but just *react*. Since there is no possibility of making a considered choice, the child simply trusts in the way in which it is trained. As a result there is a special need for custody for children in relation to their trainers, since they cannot choose *who* these trainers are, *what* is being trained and *how* the trained content makes sense. It is significant for the training that it stands outside of any critique and as such it imparts certainty in the absence of any doubt.

Norman Malcolm suggests the absence of doubt be called ‘instinctive’ and Danièle Moyal-Sharrock follows him by drawing a distinction between “instinctive confidence” on the one hand, which comes – as she puts it – naturally and unprompted, and “conditioned confidence” on the other hand, which requires some sort of prompting (Moyal-Sharrock 2007 p. 106). Instinctive confidence seems here to involve a confident move outside any language-game, whereas conditioned confidence is confidence imparted by or within a trained language-game. The conditioned confidence of the meaning of the words ‘block’, ‘pillar’, and ‘slab’, for example, is prompted by the builder’s call.

However, it seems that the crucial point of the prompt in Wittgenstein’s sense is that in primitive language-games, the prompt is conceived as a “cause” (cf. OC 74, 130, 429,

<sup>1</sup> Moyal-Sharrock argues that the erroneous expression ‘hinge propositions’ goes back to the misleading translation of G.E.M. Anscombe, who has not regarded different meanings of the German word ‘Satz’ (cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2007, p. 34).

474; PI 217)<sup>2</sup>. In primitive language-games, children do not understand by reasons, but their training takes place in a causal framework in which they are part of causal interactions. Every language-game has a cause (i.e. the training), but it can also have grounds in later language-development. Accordingly, the requirement of a prompt is not very helpful for a distinction between instinctive and conditioned confidence, since prompted moves in primitive language-games can be conceived as both, instinctive and conditioned. To name a stone is a language-game in which the assistant instinctively reacts to the builder's call and at the same time the call is conceived as a cause, namely the conditioned training.

Rather than utilise Moyal-Sharrock's distinction between instinctive and conditioned confidence which does not quite capture these issues, I would distinguish between "primitive" and "elaborated" language-games, as Michael Kober has suggested (cf. Kober 1993, p. 222ff). In the *Philosophical Grammar*, Wittgenstein talks about "simple" and "more developed" or rather "more complicated" language-games (PG 26). Also in *On Certainty* he points out that through certain moves "the original language-game has been expanded" (OC 566). These remarks confirm that primitive language-games, as Wittgenstein details in the beginning of the *Philosophical Investigations*, are "not everything that we call language" (PI 3), but that the trained language-games are just the beginning of more elaborate moves in language, which yet presupposes primitive language. Being taught instead of being trained implies, for instance, that a learner can ask for something, that she can differentiate things from one another, and that she can make decisions. "The grammar of the word 'know'", Wittgenstein remarks, "is evidently closely related to the grammar of the words 'can', 'is able to'. But also closely related to that of the word 'understand'. (To have 'mastered' a technique.)" (PI 150).

From this remark we can draw at least two conclusions. First, since the language-game of 'I know...' means to master a technique, we can say that to know or to doubt is an elaborate language-game. Second, if certainty goes along with the training of primitive language-games, elaborate language-games like knowing or doubting are not uttered with certainty but rather rest upon primitive language games, which indicate certainty. If Moore claims that he knows that here is one hand and here is another, whilst he is holding up his hands and refers to this certainty because of the supposed empirical evidence, then he is wrong, because the certainty of his claim rests upon the primitive language-game that humans usually have two hands. The objectivity of this certainty does not come from empirical evidence but from the grammar of our language-games in which children are brought up and socialized. Used as an empirical proposition under these circumstances, the claim "I know that these are two hands" is mistaken.

"But now", Wittgenstein admits, "it is also correct to use 'I know' in the contexts which Moore mentioned, at least in particular circumstances" (OC 622). Let's assume that Moore was part of an accident and both hands had to be operated on. He is not sure afterwards, if under his dressings, there are still both hands. We would accept here that Moore's claim makes sense. "I know I still have two hands, after I have talked to the doctor" he might say. However, this proposition can only make sense since there is a grammatical place for the existence of human hands at all.

Certainty here is a grammatical certainty and can be expressed in a grammatical rule like 'These are (what we call) two hands'.

Since the grammatical rule and the empirical proposition can have similar appearance, Danièle Moyal-Sharrock has unfortunately chosen to call the empirical propositions of hinges "doppelgänger" (cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2007 p. 66). This term provokes misunderstanding, because 'doppelgänger' means two different persons who look identical. However, what Wittgenstein actually means is that there is one sentence (e.g. "I have two hands") which is used under different circumstances. In fact, there is no 'doppelgänger' at all, but there are different uses of the same sentence or expression and under some circumstances an expression can be misused (OC 6).

## Dynamic Knowledge

As it was mentioned in the introduction, certainties remain unspoken. Certainties are not the content of sentences and therefore nothing one can speak about. Certainties are rather an attitude in which activities are done. Wittgenstein often notes in *On Certainty*, that we "act with certainty" (cf. OC 196, 331, 360; my emphasis) and also indicates the causal origin of these activities. Our grammatical rules are not certainties; we rather follow them *with* certainty. By following them the certainty itself remains unspoken.

Knowledge, however, does not indicate the origin of language-games, but is itself part of elaborate language-games. Knowledge claims and doubts are moves in language-games which have the grammatical space for justification and rejection. Therefore it is necessary that other participants who are involved are also acquainted with the language-game in which knowledge is claimed. As Wittgenstein notes, one "must be able to imagine how one may know something of the kind" (OC 18). This makes clear that only what can be part of a language-game can be part of a knowledge-claim, and since certainty is not part of a language-game but an attitude which indicates the origin of a language-game, it cannot be part of a knowledge-claim.

Does this mean that certainties are foundational and immutable? One might argue that, since we are socialized in primitive language-games which we use with certainty, and knowledge is claimed in elaborate language-games which are the extension of primitive ones, primitive language-games and their use with certainty can be considered as foundational for the knowledge claimed in elaborated language-games. To this view, one can agree. But this does not imply that primitive language-games and also the certainty, in which they are used, are immutable. To claim immutability here means, that there exist foundational language-games and foundational rules in our language, which last forever and constitute something like a universal 'pre-knowledge' of our language. As Danièle Moyal-Sharrock claims, "[n]o scientific progress can prompt the alteration of our universal hinges – some hinges, we can never relinquish, as long as we want to be *making sense* in a *human world*" (Moyal-Sharrock 2007, p. 149).

However, this view disregards the point that our way of making sense, i.e. our grammatically ruled actions are indeed not immutable. Grammar is – in principle – mutable, because our acting at the bottom of our language-games is not justified by any reasons; it is rather arbitrary and could be imagined differently. What makes us act with

<sup>2</sup> Malcolm's distinction of three kinds of instinctive behaviour (i.e. just reacting, responding, employing) is problematic, since primitive language-games can be reduced to a causal reaction.

certainty is the fact, that we are socialized in a common practice, which – even in its arbitrariness – provides a grammar. This grammar is not a universal one and so neither are hinges. Making sense in a human world even requires the flexibility to change grammar. And many times, the understanding of how we talk about things is challenged – through literature, through philosophy, through science etc.

Our picture of the world is, in principle, mutable in every part and it is challenged and affirmed by the use of our language. By claiming that ‘I have a human body’, I affirm grammatical rules, i.e. how we usually talk about humans or bodies. For instance, in philosophy grammatical rules are challenged. Wittgenstein puts this fact into the following story:

“I am sitting with a philosopher in the garden; he says again and again ‘I know that’s a tree’, pointing to a tree that is near us. Someone else arrives and hears this, and I tell him: ‘This fellow isn’t insane. We are only doing philosophy.’” (OC 467)

Philosophy can be the place, where the ruling background of a picture of the world, i.e. how we talk about certain things in a grammatical way, can be discussed. Talking about grammatical sentences can lead to the result that we change them and give them a different sense. Challenging the grammar has therefore impact on our picture of the world and furthermore has reverse impact on language-games which themselves are based on that background of the picture of the world. This means that knowledge does not depend on foundational hinges which are claimed to be – in part – universal, but that knowledge is a continuing dynamic process and a result of a reciprocal modulation of language-games and their ruling back-

ground. Wittgenstein expresses this relation in the very appropriate metaphor of a riverbed: Propositions of the form of empirical propositions are the hardened background for fluid empirical propositions, whereas *this relation alters with the time* (cf. OC 96). To argue, as Danièle Moyal-Sharrock did, that the background – even in parts – is immutable, means to neglect, that the hardened background arises from mutable grammar. To conceive it as a foundational condition for language-games beyond and independent from their actual use means to step into the Tractarian picture of language again.

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# Epistemic Variantism and the Factivity Problem

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In a recent exchange, Anthony Brueckner & Christopher Buford (2009 and 2010) and Peter Baumann (2010) discuss the right reaction to an apparent problem for both epistemic contextualism and SSI deriving from the factivity of knowledge. While Brueckner & Buford suggest to give up the possibility of cross-context knowledge of variantist scenarios, Bauman takes this to be an unsatisfactory response. In this article, I present a unified description of the problem for both contextualism and SSI and argue that, with a clear view on the commitments of epistemic contextualism and SSI, the problem turns out to be apparent only.

## 1. A unified description of the factivity problem

Let 'K(S, T, P)' stand for 'S knows at T that P'. Since we are concerned with attributor contextualism and SSI, we must make room for context-dependent concepts of knowledge. In the following, let  $\mathfrak{X}$  be the set of possible contexts and  $\mathfrak{X}_i \subseteq \mathfrak{X}$  be the set of possible contexts with knowledge standard  $i$  (for varying  $i$ ). In particular, let  $\mathfrak{X}_h \subseteq \mathfrak{X}$  be the set of high-standard contexts and  $\mathfrak{X}_l \subseteq \mathfrak{X}$  the set of low-standard contexts. I will make the simplifying assumption that  $\mathfrak{X} = \mathfrak{X}_h \cup \mathfrak{X}_l$  and thus that there are only high- and low-standard contexts. Let 'K<sub>h</sub>(S, T, P)' stand for "S knows at T that P' is true according to standards operative in high-standard contexts", and 'K<sub>l</sub>(S, T, P)' stand for "S knows at T that P' is true according to standards operative in low-standard contexts."<sup>1</sup> Both attributor contextualism and SSI claim it to be possible that K<sub>l</sub>(S, T, P) and non-K<sub>h</sub>(S, T, P). They both agree that standards for correct attribution of 'knows' may vary from context to context, differing mainly with respect to the nature of the context relevant for the determination of knowledge standards. Attributor contextualism takes this to be a function of the context of the knowledge *attributor*; 'K<sub>l</sub>(S, T, P)' is then to be read as a short version of "the utterance 'S knows at T that P' is true in an attributor context with standard  $l$ ".<sup>2</sup> SSI by contrast takes the strength of the epistemic position required to be a function of the interests, stakes and salient error possibilities of the *epistemic subject* S. 'K<sub>l</sub>(S, T, P)' is then to be read as a short version of "the utterance 'S knows at T that P' is true in a context with standard  $l$  determined by S's interests, stakes and salient error possibilities."<sup>3</sup> We may ignore the differences between assertor contextualism and SSI for present purposes and speak of what is common to both views as (*epistemic*) *variantism*.

The factivity problem derives from the following considerations. Let  $\mathfrak{S}$  be the set of subjects,  $\mathfrak{T}$  the set of times and  $\mathfrak{P}$  the set of empirical propositions. The following principles are hard to give up; in particular they are usually accepted by proponents of epistemic variantism:

(Fact)  $\forall x \in \mathfrak{X} \forall s \in \mathfrak{S} \forall t \in \mathfrak{T} \forall p \in \mathfrak{P}: K_x(s, t, p) \Rightarrow p$ ; <sup>4</sup> and

(Clos-KE)  $\forall x \in \mathfrak{X} \forall s \in \mathfrak{S} \forall t \in \mathfrak{T} \forall p, q \in \mathfrak{P}: [K_x(s, t, p) \wedge K_x(s, t, (p \Rightarrow q))] \Rightarrow K_x(s, t, q)$ .<sup>5</sup>

(Fact) is a variantist version of the factivity condition for knowledge. (Clos-KE) is the claim that knowledge is closed under known entailment, given that the context of knowledge ascription remains constant. My policy in this paper will be to grant all 'transitional' principles to those who argue that variantism has the factivity problem. For ease of presentation, I will even grant a stronger principle than (Clos-KE), namely,

(Clos)  $\forall x \in \mathfrak{X} \forall s \in \mathfrak{S} \forall t \in \mathfrak{T} \forall p, q \in \mathfrak{P}: [(K_x(s, t, p) \wedge (p \Rightarrow q))] \Rightarrow K_x(s, t, q)$ .

(Clos) states that knowledge is closed under entailment *simpliciter*: given (Fact), (Clos) implies (Clos-KE). If a theory turns out to be unproblematic given (Clos), it will also be unproblematic given the weaker principle (Clos-KE).

Now to the problem as it forms the basis of the mentioned dispute. Let S and S\* be subjects, T be some point in time, and 'HANDS' stand for the proposition 'S has hands'. Given (Clos) and (Fact), the following three propositions lead to contradiction:

- (1) K<sub>l</sub>(S, T, HANDS),
- (2) Not: K<sub>h</sub>(S\*, T, HANDS),
- (3) K<sub>h</sub>(S\*, T, (1)).

Proposition (4) follows from (3) with (Fact) and (Clos), but it contradicts (2):<sup>6</sup>

- (4) K<sub>h</sub>(S\*, T, HANDS).

The argument is meant to show that epistemic variantism cannot be known<sub>h</sub> by S\*: (1) and (2) are taken to be contextualist theses and (3) states that (1) is known<sub>h</sub> by S\*. As Brueckner & Buford understand the argument: "This seems to be a *reductio* of [epistemic variantism] given [(Clos) and (Fact)]. [(3)] appears to be the culprit, and since [epistemic variantism] seems to be committed to cross-context claims like [(3)], so much the worse for [epistemic variantism]" (2009: 432).

## 2. The problem and the entailment thesis

Brueckner & Buford defend epistemic variantism against the threat of contradiction by claiming that "the theories are not committed to the possibility of such asymmetrical knowledge attribution" (2009: 434) and therefore that (3) can be rejected. The fact that a variantist "cannot 'knowledgably' state the [variantist] thesis [(1)]" (Brueckner & Buford 2009: 436) is, according to their view, not a problem for variantism: a true theory need not be knowledgably

<sup>1</sup> Indexing "knowledge" allows us to avoid cumbersome metalinguistic representation. For a similar way of representing contextualism, see also Bach 2005. By indexing "know" in the way described, we are not liable to the *fallacy of semantic descent*, which we would be if we were to use disquotation without indexing (see Brendel 2005: 46, and Baumann 2008: 588 ff.). Note that we can retranslate our way of description into proper metalinguistic form without loss of content.

<sup>2</sup> Prominent contextualists along these lines are Stewart Cohen (e.g. 1988 and 1998), Keith DeRose (e.g. 1992 and 1995) and David Lewis (1996).

<sup>3</sup> Proponents of SSI are, for example, John Hawthorne (2004) and Jason Stanley (2005).

<sup>4</sup> The symbol ' $\Rightarrow$ ' stands for entailment.

<sup>5</sup> Obviously (Clos-KE) is itself very problematic (see, for some critical points, Williamson 2000 and Hawthorne 2004). My point is that, usually, *some* form of closure is accepted. Which form this might be is rather irrelevant to present concerns.

<sup>6</sup> See Brueckner & Buford 2009: 431–34; Baumann 2010: 83–84. Similar arguments can be found in Williamson 2001, Brendel 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and Wright 2005.

stable. Baumann objects that stability limitations as those accepted by Brueckner & Buford are “bad enough for [variantism] to not deserve acceptance” (2010: 87). This then is the dispute between the two parties: Is the (putative) fact that variantism is not knowledgably stable detrimental for the theory? I take this to be a very interesting question,<sup>7</sup> but not one with which we must be concerned in the present context. I will argue that no negative answer to the question is needed to save epistemic variantism, since variantism is indeed knowledgably stable.

Assuming that a theory must be knowledgably stable,<sup>8</sup> the argument presented above is a problem for epistemic variantism only if it has both (1) and (2) as *consequences*. Call the claim that variantism has these consequences the ‘entailment thesis’. Brueckner & Buford endorse the entailment thesis: “According to contextualism, [(1)] is true” and “[[(1)] is a consequence of SSI]” (2009: 431 and 433), and implicitly ascribe (2) to epistemic variantism. Baumann concurs: “According to [the epistemic variantist] views, it would then be true that [(1)] and that [(2)]” (2010: 83).<sup>9</sup> The entailment thesis is the common ground for the participants of the present debate, which might explain why the authors do not explicitly argue in its favour. I will now argue that the entailment thesis is not only unwarranted; it is even false.

### 3. Rejecting the entailment thesis

Whether the entailment thesis is true or false depends on the claims of epistemic variantism. The major motivation of variantism is to disarm the sceptic. The following represents the position of ‘global’ scepticism:

(GS)  $\forall x \in \mathfrak{X} \forall s \in \mathfrak{S} \forall t \in \mathfrak{T} \forall p \in \mathfrak{P}: \neg \diamond K_x(s, t, p)$ .<sup>10</sup>

Global scepticism says that knowledge of any standard is impossible. Given the variantist reconstruction, scepticism relies on the following assumptions:

(Invariantism)  $\forall x, y \in \mathfrak{X} \forall s \in \mathfrak{S} \forall t \in \mathfrak{T} \forall p \in \mathfrak{P}_e: \square(K_x(s, t, p) \leftrightarrow K_y(s, t, p))$ ;

(High Standard)  $\mathfrak{X}_h \neq \emptyset$ ;

(Scepticism<sub>h</sub>)  $\forall x \in \mathfrak{X}_h \forall s \in \mathfrak{S} \forall t \in \mathfrak{T} \forall p \in \mathfrak{P}_e: \neg \diamond K_x(s, t, p)$ .

Assumption (Invariantism) claims that, necessarily, a knowledge ascription true according to *some* standard is true according to *any* standard. In other words, there are no different knowledge standards. Assumption (High Standard) says that there are high knowledge standards. Assumption (Scepticism<sub>h</sub>) states that it is impossible to fulfil these high knowledge standards. These three assumptions jointly entail (GS).

The distinctive variantist reaction to (GS) is to deny (Invariantism). As DeRose says with respect to epistemic contextualism:

[T]he fact that the sceptic can [...] install very high standards which we don’t live up to has no tendency to show that we don’t satisfy the more relaxed standards that are in place in ordinary conversations. Thus, it is hoped, our ordinary claims to know will be safeguarded from the apparently powerful attacks of the sceptic, while, at the same time, the pervasiveness of the sceptical argument is explained. (DeRose 1992: 914)

According to DeRose, the high standards are indeed sometimes operative, but only in very special contexts of knowledge attribution. In ordinary, non-sceptical contexts more moderate standards are at work. Analogously for SSI; the high standards are at work only given certain interests, stakes and salient error possibilities of the subject. In other situations, low standards may be operative. The distinctively variantist answer to the problem of scepticism is hence the negation of (Invariantism), resulting in the following thesis:

(Variantism)  $\neg \forall x, y \in \mathfrak{X} \forall s \in \mathfrak{S} \forall t \in \mathfrak{T} \forall p \in \mathfrak{P}: \square(K_x(s, t, p) \leftrightarrow K_y(s, t, p))$ .

Every theory that supports (Variantism) constitutes a version of epistemic variantism. Given (Variantism), (GS) cannot be derived from (Scepticism<sub>h</sub>) and (High Standard), and therefore the argument for (GS) is blocked.

(Variantism) is all that epistemic variantists have to claim in response to the sceptical argument.<sup>11</sup> While epistemic variantism of the usual sort *allows* for actual variantist scenarios, scenarios in which a subject has low-standard knowledge, but not high-standard knowledge, it does not *entail* such scenarios, let alone any such scenario with respect to HANDS. Consider (1): No form of epistemic variantism known to me *entails* that subject S knows HANDS. It may be that S is not in the right epistemic position with respect to HANDS. It may be that HANDS is false. It may even be that S does not exist. All this is possible without variantism being falsified. Likewise, no epistemic variantist known to me claims that (2) is a *part* of the variantist theory. (In this context it is worth emphasizing that (Scepticism<sub>h</sub>) is no part of epistemic variantism. Acceptance of (Scepticism<sub>h</sub>) is needed to make epistemic variantism interesting; if (Scepticism<sub>h</sub>) is denied, the cited argument for (GS) fails no matter what.) Variantism only states that it is *possible* for (1) and (2) to be true, but this entails neither (1) nor (2). If the entailment thesis is false, however, the contradiction derived from (1), (2) and (3) is pointless as an argument against epistemic variantism. Even though it shows that (1) and (2) are not jointly knowledgably stable, this has no relevance for the stability of epistemic variantism.

At this point I must hasten to add that it is not possible to rescue the spirit of the argument by changing the example. Even if HANDS were replaced by some other sample proposition, the adapted versions neither of (1) nor of (2) would be consequences of epistemic variantism. Thus, no contradiction can be derived from the fact that epistemic variantism is knowledgably stable.<sup>12</sup> So, even if failure of being able to knowledgably state a theory T should be held

<sup>7</sup> A theory which holds, for example, that nothing whatsoever is known or knowable would not be knowledgably stable. Is that a problem for the theory?

<sup>8</sup> In what is to follow, I grant – at least for the sake of argument – that knowledgably stating (1) and (2) entails knowing<sub>h</sub> that (1) and (2) obtain. If only knowledge, were at stake, the factivity problem would not arise in the first place.

<sup>9</sup> We find the entailment thesis already in Baumann 2008.

<sup>10</sup> “The sceptic typically argues that we do not know because we *cannot* know” (Williamson 2001: 27). Sometimes the sceptic position is described as stating the much weaker claim that all knowledge ascriptions are false as a matter of contingent fact. Such a characterisation, however, is not really distinctive of scepticism. A moderate (non-sceptical) invariantist may hold that all knowledge ascriptions are false, if he thinks that, as a matter of contingent fact, people do not fulfil his moderate demands. Surprising as this empirical fact would be, it would not turn moderate invariantism into a form of scepticism.

<sup>11</sup> I have sympathies with those who claim that this answer to scepticism is not adequate (see, e.g., Sosa 2000, Kornblith 2000 and Williams 2001). But this debate is only tangential to the purposes of this essay.

<sup>12</sup> Freitag 2011 provides a general argument for this claim.

detrimental for T, neither epistemic contextualism nor SSI would be affected by this problem.

#### 4. An alternative argument?

Can it be shown that epistemic variantism is problematic given certain empirical assumptions? Call the fact that at T a subject S knows<sub>i</sub>, but does not know<sub>n</sub>, that P the *STP-variantist scenario*. Given that an STP-variantist scenario obtains, is it possible to know<sub>n</sub> that it obtains? Surely it is – if (Scepticism<sub>n</sub>) is denied; a subject S\* ( $\neq$  S) may know<sub>n</sub> that S is in a variantist scenario. Can S herself know<sub>n</sub> that the STP-scenario obtains? Surely, if this type of knowledge obtains at T\* (with  $T^* \neq T$ ). Can S at T know<sub>n</sub> that the STP-scenario obtains? Of course *not* (given (Fact) and (Clos)). A subject cannot know<sub>n</sub>, and therefore cannot knowledgeably state, that she herself is, at that very point in time, in a variantist scenario. More generally, a subject who does not know<sub>n</sub> that P at a certain time T, cannot at T knowledgeably state of anybody that they know<sub>i</sub> that P. But this does not, of course, entail that epistemic variantism is not knowledgeably statable.

Nor are statability limitations peculiar to epistemic variantism; they apply also to epistemic invariantism. As the propositions (1), (2) and (3) are (together with (Clos) and (Fact)) jointly inconsistent, so are

(5) K(S, T, HANDS),

(6) Not: K(S\*, T, HANDS), and

(7) K(S\*, T, (5)).

If a subject does not, at T, know a certain proposition, then she cannot, at T, knowledgeably state that somebody else knows this proposition. Failure of knowing/knowing<sub>n</sub> some proposition entails limitations on what is knowledgeably statable. But this fact appears to be as unproblematic for epistemic variantism as it is for epistemic invariantism.

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# “I have my reasons...” – Edward Craig on Testimony and Epistemic Justification

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## I. Introduction

The epistemology of testimony has received growing attention over the last few years. One issue being discussed in the literature, among others, is the question of justification of testimonial knowledge. The following article is concerned with Edward Craig's position on these concepts. In his *Knowledge and the State of Nature* he argues for a radical turn in efforts to define the concept of knowledge. Instead of evermore analyses that try to state necessary and sufficient conditions in response to evermore Gettier-cases in which proposed definitions fail, Craig invites us to attempt the task from the opposite direction: What circumstances in human practice make it necessary to develop a concept such as knowledge? Why doesn't e.g. true belief already suffice? This is something like the key-question of so called “conceptual synthesis”. Thus Craig comes up with the concept of a good informant. “To put it briefly and roughly,” he says “the concept of knowledge is used to flag approved sources of information.” (Craig 1990, 11) It is these circumstances of rating different sources of information that make a concept such as knowledge important and desirable. It is easy to imagine a particular situation where someone wants to decide whether or not  $p$ , but cannot do so on his own. He therefore seeks an informant who could answer that question for him. If the informant can answer the question, then the inquirer will say that he has knowledge. Hence the connection of the concept of a good informant to the concept of knowledge.

In the next step Craig speaks of so-called “objectivisation” of the concept of knowledge to explain its historical or genealogical development. I will explain the process briefly. According to Craig, objectivisation starts when the totally subjective stance becomes inadequate as a general strategy in human epistemic practices. In the subjective state the concept of knowledge and its application is solely determined by factors which are dependent on my own subjective stance and in particular my own current situation. I want information solely for my purpose here and now. But, as Craig's thesis goes, human needs and practices become more and more complex and the subjectivised concept will no longer suffice. Thus Craig says:

“From such facts arises a pressure towards the formation of ‘objectivised’ concepts, concepts which separate as it were the common core from the multitude of accretions due to particular circumstances and particular persons and so varying with them. [...] I shall hope that others will on occasion recommend informants to me.” (Craig 1990, 88)

The recommendation of potential informants to others in a community is the crucial effect of an objectivised concept of knowledge. So, what objectivisation does is to turn the triplet [me – here – now] into [me or anybody else – here or anywhere – now or anytime]. The recommendation of potential informants is a good point, for we have to consider that, in order to recommend somebody as a good informant to another person, I am already forced to forget or prescind from my own subjective position and I have to take the situation of my fellow human being into account. Objectivisation thus makes it possible to use the concept

of knowledge, i.e. of the good informant, under a variety of different circumstances which don't have to be *my* circumstances.

Three important aspects of Craig's conception of knowledge have to be kept in mind:

1.) The concept of knowledge is intimately connected to the concept of a good informant.

Situations in which an inquirer is seeking an approved informant can be regarded as standard situations for the operation of a concept such as knowledge.

2.) Knowledge is an epistemic state or property of *subjects*.

Accordingly, what is important are not the conditions a belief or statement has to fulfil in order to count as knowledge, but the conditions imposed on a particular subject in order to count as an informant.

3.) Having knowledge is not equal to having information.

This follows from (2). A subject is said to have knowledge if it can function as a good informant and being a good informant implies of course being well informed. But this implication does not hold the other way round. Being well informed does not imply being a good informant. It is easy to imagine circumstances where a particular subject has information on  $p$  but can nonetheless not function as a good informant to others, e.g. persons who have lost all their credibility because of lying in the past. So being informed does not automatically lead to being a good informant. What makes someone a good informant for others is something in addition to his solely being well informed.

## II. Testimony and the Good Informant

In the following I will argue that the concept of the good informant leads to reductionism on testimony. I will stick to a definition of reductionism provided by Jennifer Lackey in her book *Learning from Words* while somewhat modifying her formulation to facilitate its application to our case. I will call the thesis we are discussing Reduction-Thesis<sup>1</sup>, (hereafter RT):

(RT)  $S_2$  is justified in believing the testimony of  $S_1$  if  $S_2$  has 1.) positive and 2.) non-testimonial reasons to accept  $S_1$ 's testimony.

This already brings us to the very concept of a good informant. What makes a potential informant a good informant on a particular question? What reasons does the inquirer have (if any) to choose him over his neighbour? And are these reasons essentially non-testimonial in character?

First of all, in the standard situation considered by Craig, there is one inquirer seeking a good informant. In order to determine whether any one subject could be such an

<sup>1</sup> For Lackey's original formulation and discussion of reductionism see (2008, 142-154)

informant, the inquirer searches for someone who has a true belief on the issue and a "detectable property", which indicates to him, that he has knowledge on the question. So, at first sight, there seems to be no doubt, that for Craig it is a necessary condition that the inquirer must have positive reasons for accepting a potential informant's testimony among which is the detection of an indicator-property of a potential informant, which, as he knows, correlates well with having knowledge on the question. In order to decide whether this really qualifies as reductive on testimony we have to take a closer look at what Craig says about the function of the indicator-properties.

Remember the standard-situation: An inquirer seeking a good informant on a particular question, say, whether or not  $p$ . What reasons could he have to believe an informant? Craig says:

"Other things which we believe about the informant will also play a part in determining whether we believe what he tells us [...]. Very briefly, what I have in mind is that if the informant satisfies any condition which correlates well – as we believe – with telling the truth about  $p$  he will be regarded as a good source." (Craig 1990, 13)

And in the following he adds:

"Obviously, we have to detect the right informant without benefit of prior knowledge. So we need some detectable property – which means detectable to persons to whom it is not yet detectable whether  $p$  – which correlates well with being right about  $p$ ;" (1990, 18)

I take it, that with this indicator-property requirement the necessity of having positive reasons to accept someone's testimony is implied. The indicator property helps the inquirer to determine whether any one potential informant could also be a good informant. But there is more to it. The indicator-property also serves as a source of epistemic justification for it justifies the inquirer's belief in what the informant told him. It does so because it indicates that the informant is likely to be right on the particular subject matter he was asked about. This is important to keep in mind. The indicator-property is not just a device for the detection of good informants, it also provides the inquirer with proper epistemic justification for accepting their testimony. I think we can therefore say that the detection of an indicator-property is equivalent to an inquirer's having positive reasons for accepting testimony. When in the paragraph quoted above, Craig says that we *need* to detect such a property, I take it that he thereby means that an inquirer must have positive reasons for accepting a belief via testimony and that the indicator-property not only shows him who is potentially a good informant on a particular question, it also furnishes the inquirer with good reasons for accepting the testimony. The first condition of RT therefore is apparently satisfied. On Craig's account an inquirer needs to have positive reasons first for deciding which potential informant to choose, and second, as a consequence, for believing his testimony.

But what about the second condition? Do these reasons have to be non-testimonial in character? To decide this question remember what we have already said about the process of objectivisation in the introduction.

According to Craig objectivisation of the concept of knowledge goes hand in hand with the need or the wish to recommend informants to each other, so that the recommendation of potential informants in a speaker-community becomes an essential feature of the concept of knowledge. Now, one could be inclined to argue that this practice

could be interpreted as providing *testimonial* positive reasons for accepting the testimony of an informant. If this is correct then Craig's account of testimony is not reductionist, because obviously the second condition of RT would not be satisfied. The reductionist requires the reasons for believing the reports of an informant to be non-testimonial, because he believes that accepting the testimony of others cannot be justified through another testimony. We have already seen that the inquirer needs to have positive reasons for accepting testimony, one of which is the detection of indicator-properties. An inquirer believes an informant only if he has first detected the informant's possession of that particular indicator-property, and without its detection he would never even have asked him whether or not  $p$ . The reductionist takes this to support his claim. But, so the non-reductionist could argue, if it is possible to recommend potential informants to each other as being likely to be right on the particular question at hand, and if inquirers accept these recommendations, then it could be said that there can be genuine *testimonial* positive reasons for picking and believing informants and this in turn would suggest that not all positive reasons have to be non-testimonial in character. If this is correct, then RT is wrong and Craig is not reductionist.

Unfortunately for the non-reductionist I do not think this is the case. Although the practice of recommending potentially good informants in a speaker-community can be regarded as providing testimonial reasons for accepting a particular testimony, this practice in turn can be reduced to non-testimonial origins. To see that, one simply has to consider the possible circumstances under which an inquirer would depend on a recommendation. Craig says:

"I want them [my fellow human beings, R.F.] to recommend as informants persons whom but for their help I could not have recognised. [...] [The reason being, R.F.] that they can detect properties of the informant which I cannot detect, or have more knowledge than I have of which properties correlate well with being right on the topic at issue. In practice this will mostly be a matter of their being 'better placed' than I am." (Craig 1990, 88)

Now from this passage I take the following point: What the practice of recommending informants to each other really amounts to is not the provision of genuine testimonial reasons for accepting the reports of others, but simply a shift of work to be done from one person (the inquirer) to another (the recommender). What the recommender is really doing is detecting the indicator-property for me, because I happen not to have the relevant background information, or whatever, to do it myself. The crucial point is that even if there is a long chain of recommendations, such that e.g.  $S_1$  recommends an informant to  $S_2$  and  $S_2$  recommends the same informant to  $S_3$  and so on, the *first* subject in the chain,  $S_1$ , recommends the informant not because he was himself recommended but because he was able to detect the relevant indicator-property by himself. As a consequence  $S_1$  does not have testimonial reasons to recommend the informant to an inquirer. The inquirer on the other hand can be perfectly well advised with the recommendation by  $S_3$  or  $S_4$  or even higher. He does not *have* to go to the beginning of the chain. What is important is that it is *possible* to go back to the first part of the chain. Because of this, the testimonial reasons which a particular inquirer may have (if he depends on recommendation) can in principle be reduced to non-testimonial sources, namely the detection of an indicator-property. Therefore, if my argument is correct, the second element of a reductionist position on testimony (which says that the positive reasons one has for accepting testimony must

themselves be non-testimonial in character) is satisfied and Craig's position clearly qualifies as reductive.

### III. Conclusion

We have seen that for Craig it is a necessary condition that an inquirer have positive reasons for accepting testimony. I have argued that within the framework of the concept of the good informant it is the indicator-property which plays that role of providing positive reasons. These positive reasons are necessary first for picking out a particular informant over others, and therefore also provide reasons for accepting the testimony of the chosen informant. Although it is perfectly fine, and common practice, that people recommend potential informants to each other after the process of objectivisation, thereby testifying on who is a good informant regarding whether  $p$ , and so at first sight

seem to give testimonial reasons for accepting testimony, I have further argued that this fails to show that the reasons for accepting testimony are or can be non-testimonial in character. Every recommendation has as its source a detection of an indicator-property, which itself is non-testimonial in character. Therefore both conditions of RT are satisfied and the concept of the good informant leads to reductionism on the epistemic justification of testimony.

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# The Epistemology of Zombie-Beliefs

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According to one reply to the zombie-argument the conceivability of zombies need not be explained by their possibility, since an alternative explanation is available which recurs to phenomenal concepts. The basic idea is that we conceive of our experiences in terms of phenomenal concepts, whereas in imagining zombies we employ physical concepts. This explains our intuitions that phenomenal experiences and physical states can come apart, even if this is metaphysically impossible.

In this paper I investigate to what further claims one is committed if one holds that the conceivability of zombies can be explained recurring to phenomenal concepts. Comparing us to zombies instantiating epistemic gaps, sheds light on accounts of phenomenal concepts and their epistemic ramifications. Zombie-beliefs turn out to convert into knowledge according to *reliabilism*. But, I argue, in the *actual world* there is an alternative explanation available why we have knowledge about our mental states, which, contrary to reliabilism, can also account for dualist intuitions: namely, *evidence on the basis of constitutional phenomenal concepts*.

## 1. Phenomenal Concepts and Phenomenal Beliefs

I start sketching an account of phenomenal concepts which explains our epistemic situation in the actual world best: the constitutional theory.<sup>1</sup>

In contemporary literature there is wide agreement that the decisive particularities of phenomenal concepts can be found in their *conceptual isolation* as well as in their *cognitive role*. First, as Jackson (1982) demonstrated, the conceptual isolation of phenomenal concepts is such that even physically omniscient Mary cannot deduce them from physical-functional concepts. According to the constitutional account of phenomenal concepts an explanation for this conceptual isolation can be found in the fact that the *experience is a constitutive part* of the phenomenal concept and, hence, we can gain the relevant concept only when undergoing the experience. Second, I take the cognitive role of phenomenal concepts to consist in carrying information about the phenomenal aspects of experiences and making it introspectively accessible to the subject. This role explains Mary's epistemic development when leaving her achromatic environment as well as how we make introspective judgments regarding our experiences. According to the constitutional account the fact that the experience is part of the concept and therefore presents the class it refers to as well as itself (as a member of the class) to the subject deploying the concept, explains this cognitive role best.

Importantly, quotational phenomenal concepts explain also how we can have *direct knowledge* of our current experiences. First, if we form a belief about a current experience by deploying a phenomenal concept, the specific nature of the concept explains the *directness* of the belief: What accounts for the directness is the particu-

larity that the mode of presentation of a phenomenal concept does not have the form of a description (i.e. there is no separate mode of presentation involved), but it *represents itself*. Second, phenomenal concepts ensure the *truth* of the belief, since, at least in *basic applications* (see Balog forthcoming) of a phenomenal concept, the experience is always present as a token of the referent. If I believe that "I am having a red-experience" by thinking of the red-experience in terms of a constitutional phenomenal concept, my belief cannot fail to be true because the concept is realized by a token of the relevant experience. In other words: Constitutional phenomenal concepts can account for the *direct knowledge* we have of our current experiences.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Pseudo-Phenomenal Concepts

Next, I apply this framework to the zombie-argument (Kripke 1972, Chalmers 1996) by analyzing zombie's concepts corresponding to our constitutional ones.

Obviously, zombies cannot entertain thoughts such as "I am currently undergoing a red-experience" by thinking of the red-experience in terms of a constitutional phenomenal concept. The reason is that constitutional concepts necessarily involve the relevant experiences and following the thought-experiment zombies lack experiences. Nonetheless, zombies are supposed to be functionally equivalent to us and, hence, in front of a ripe tomato shall utter the same sentence "I am currently undergoing a red-experience". Moreover, we can conceive of zombie-Mary who could not infer a pseudo-phenomenal concept from the other physical ones. How can the structure of the concept, which is supposed to be functionally equivalent to our genuine phenomenal concept, underlying this zombie-Mary's utterance and the epistemic gap be analyzed? Following Chalmers (2003) I call this a *pseudo-phenomenal concept* the zombie deploys when looking at the tomato and which is supposed to be conceptually isolated from other physical concepts as well. Broadly, I see two possibilities to spell out the nature of pseudo-phenomenal concepts.

The first possibility would be to hold that pseudo-phenomenal concepts have the same content as genuine phenomenal concepts, but the latter ones refer to phenomenal experiences whereas the former ones have no extension and, hence, are empty. I have a worry concerning this interpretation: Recall that in the case of genuine phenomenal concepts the mode of presentation of the concept involves the referent itself. This account explains the conceptual isolation from physical-functional concepts and our direct knowledge of our experiences best. Therefore, to be functionally equivalent, pseudo-phenomenal concepts have to involve somehow their referents as well. But in the zombie world there are no such referents. I wonder how zombies' concepts could manage to have the same content, when the content of the genuine phenome-

<sup>1</sup> Since I aim at elaborating the epistemic differences between us and zombies, I regret that the characterization of this account is going to be short. A detailed theory of constitutional phenomenal concepts is given in Fürst (in draft).

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account along the lines I sketched above see Fürst (draft) and Lehrer's account of "exemplarization" (2011). The main idea of experiences being part of the concept can be found as well in the *physicalist* phenomenal concept strategy as put forward by Papineau (2007) or Balog (forthcoming), even if the latter ones differ in some important details from the view I sketched above.

nal concept can be only *gained* and is *constituted* by the experience itself. Therefore, I suggest an alternative interpretation of the contents and referents of pseudo-phenomenal concepts.

The second possible account of pseudo-phenomenal concepts holds that the content of a pseudo-phenomenal concept is a *functional state* and being in this state is constitutive for zombie's concepts. This accounts for the conceptual isolation of pseudo-phenomenal concepts in the zombie-world: Zombies need to *instantiate* the relevant functional state to gain the pseudo-phenomenal concept because, similarly to genuine phenomenal concepts, the pseudo-phenomenal one also involves an instance of its referent. Note that this involvement of the referent cannot concern the *mode of presentation* of the concept as in the case of genuine phenomenal concepts, but solely the *vehicle* which realizes the concept. A theory which is compatible with such pseudo-phenomenal concepts can be found in Papineau's (2007) recent version of the quotational account (which he takes to capture genuine phenomenal concepts). Papineau claims that phenomenal concepts are individuated by the *neural vehicle* which is instantiated when the concept is employed. This explains the isolation of the concept – if the relevant neural state has not been instantiated yet, the concept can not be tokened.

At this point a pressing question arises: Can a pseudo-phenomenal concept present itself to the zombie in the same way as genuine phenomenal concepts do? In other words: Do pseudo-phenomenal concepts explain how zombies have *direct knowledge* of the relevant functional state as well?

### 3. The Epistemology of Pseudo-Phenomenal Beliefs

Next let me evaluate the epistemic aspects of the two theories of pseudo-phenomenal concepts sketched above.

According to the first account, pseudo-phenomenal concepts have the same content as genuine ones, but are empty. Accordingly, the corresponding pseudo-phenomenal belief of the zombie lacks truth-value. Obviously, on this account there is an important epistemic difference between us, having direct knowledge about experiences, and our zombie-duplicates, lacking any kind of knowledge.

According to the second interpretation, pseudo-phenomenal concepts are realized by a functional state to which they refer. One could borrow Papineau's recent account of phenomenal concepts and apply this to pseudo-phenomenal concepts.<sup>3</sup> Then zombie's belief "I am currently undergoing a red-experience!" is true, since the pseudo-phenomenal concept refers to whatever functional state plays the right functional role and makes her utter this sentence. In other words: On this account, whenever we are having true beliefs about our own experiences, the zombie has corresponding true beliefs about her pseudo-experience as well.

In the following, I investigate firstly, the differences between zombie's and our epistemic situation and secondly, under which accounts zombies' pseudo-phenomenal true-beliefs convert into knowledge. This examinations aim at demonstrating that we should abstain to adopt accounts compatible with zombie-knowledge for explaining *our*

*epistemic situation in the actual world*, since there is a better alternative available.

In accordance with Chalmers's "master argument" (2007), I doubt that the phenomenal concept strategy succeeds in giving a purely *physicalist* explanation of our epistemic situation. I will highlight this point recurring to zombies and demonstrating that accounts of phenomenal concepts compatible with the zombie-world, i.e. accounts that do not involve any mode of presentation, cannot explain *our* epistemic situation satisfactorily. Therefore, let me work out the crucial epistemic differences between us and zombies.

First, consider zombie-Mary: As demonstrated above, pseudo-phenomenal concepts involving and referring to functional states might account for their conceptual isolation, i.e. why zombie-Mary cannot deduce pseudo-phenomenal concepts from other physical-functional ones. But note that this account does not explain the *whole extent of the epistemic gap in the actual world* in a plausible way. Especially, it is not so easy to see why zombie-Mary, once released, should *keep on wondering* why a physical-functional concept she had before associates with her new pseudo-phenomenal concept of the form *this-* (where the blank is filled by a functional state). I grant that a remaining epistemic gap faced by zombie-Mary is *conceivable*. But we do not have a *very plausible explanation* for this scenario close at hand. In contrast, conscious-Mary still wonders why her brain state associates with a red-experience and not with a blue one. In the actual world, where phenomenal experiences exist, a plausible explanation of this epistemic gap is available – it is offered by the constitutional account of phenomenal concepts which is precluded in the zombie-world.

The second crucial point against adopting pseudo-phenomenal concepts for explaining *our* epistemic situation in the actual world is that zombie-beliefs do not capture what philosophers are really worrying about – namely, how an experience can be identical to (or necessarily supervenient on) a functional state. The reason is that zombies cannot entertain the very same thought we are entertaining: either their utterance is meaningless or it boils down to the question how one functional state can be identical to another functional state, both conceived under functional concepts. Therefore, pseudo-phenomenal concepts do not seem to be the adequate explanation of *our* epistemic situation in the actual world. But the problem of pseudo-phenomenal concepts does not restrict to their deficiency to explain the *whole extent of our epistemic gap* in a plausible way.

Thirdly, pseudo-phenomenal concepts also cannot positively account for the *direct knowledge we have* of our inner states. We have a strong intuition that there is an epistemic difference between zombies and us, qua being conscious. The constitutional account succeeds in reflecting this intuition adequately. It explains why we have *evidence* for our beliefs, which the zombies lack. Our evidence is based on the self-presentation of a phenomenal experience; whereas zombie's pseudo-phenomenal belief is just triggered by an instantiated functional state. Since this might be a reliable process, reliabilists such as Goldman (1979) could count the pseudo-phenomenal belief as knowledge. But it can be regarded as a disadvantage of reliabilism that it cannot account for the intuition that we, qua being conscious, are better justified than zombies (see Chalmers 2007).<sup>4</sup> Recall that this intuition

<sup>3</sup> But also purely demonstrative accounts which do not involve any mode of presentation, such as e.g. Levin's (Levin 2007), are compatible with zombies' concepts.

<sup>4</sup> Whether virtue-accounts of knowledge face the same problem as reliabilism depends on what specific account of virtue is defended

can be explained by an alternative account – namely, by appealing to the evidence we have due to constitutional phenomenal concepts. In short: our beliefs are justified on the basis of self-presentation and this entails knowledge. The zombie belief lacks justification of the same extent.

Finally, even without embracing a specific theory of justification, an important epistemic difference between us and zombies can be highlighted by considering phenomenal concepts: In the actual world we are justified in our beliefs in a stronger sense than the zombie: The evidence we have is grounded in the constitution of a concept which turns our beliefs *automatically* into knowledge. This is a stronger kind of justification than just having a reliable process triggering the right output, since in the latter case it is conceivable that the functional state and the right output could come apart. In other words: we know *necessarily* that we are in the relevant state and the zombie just knows *contingently* that she is in the corresponding state.

To sum up: Pseudo-phenomenal concepts might share the functional role with genuine phenomenal ones, but differ in their epistemic role. Even if pseudo-phenomenal concepts might explain the epistemic gap zombie-Mary faces in her achromatic room, they fail to explain a) the gap that persists for conscious-Mary and b) our evidence and, hence, direct knowledge of experiences in the actual world.

#### 4. Conclusion

An account of pseudo-phenomenal concepts has to be compatible with physicalism and to explain the epistemic gap between pseudo-phenomenal states and physical states. Such an account can be found in versions of the physicalist phenomenal concept strategy, namely such which do *not* involve a phenomenal mode of presentation of the concept. One candidate would be Papineau's recent version of quotational phenomenal concepts which are supposed to be individuated by their neural vehicle.

The outcome of my analysis is that we should abstain to adopt these accounts in explaining *our epistemic situation* because of the following difficulties: First, we can conceive of zombie-Mary with an epistemic gap, but the reasons for this gap, if spelled out in detail, are not as plausible as the reasons we can offer for our epistemic gap in the actual world. Second, when zombie-Mary has pseudo-phenomenal beliefs, they lack evidence and are not justified in the same way as ours. Therefore, accounts which do not involve a phenomenal mode of presentation and, hence, are compatible with the zombie-world can neither explain the epistemic gap in its full extent, nor the evidence and knowledge we have regarding our own

mental states. But an alternative account of phenomenal concepts, the constitutional one, that is available in our world (but not in the zombie world), meets this explanatory constraints. Therefore, we have strong reasons to hold that in our world phenomenal concepts are constituted by phenomenal experiences and individuated by their mode of presentation. This explains *our entire epistemic gap* regarding experiences and physical states, plus it additionally explains how we have *direct knowledge* of our current experiences.

To sum up: Physicalist accounts of phenomenal concepts might explain the functional aspects of the epistemic gap and, if combined with reliabilism, might also account for knowledge. But the constitutional account of phenomenal concepts has more explanatory power: First, it can explain the whole extent of the gap and second, it can account also for the real problem underlying the gap, which doesn't reduce just to a conceptual isolation. Finally, constitutional phenomenal concepts offer a more adequate explanation of our direct knowledge of current experiences.

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# Wittgenstein – Benjamin – Flusser: Correspondences

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Between Wittgenstein, Benjamin and Flusser there are strong correspondences: culturally, historically, thematically, biographically. This affinity ultimately can best be grasped by the equally complex and vague concept of 'style'. In the following I will indicate this relationship through a brief summary of various aspects. I will also briefly indicate pairwise comparisons between these three thinkers. These are merely exploratory prolegomena for a more thorough investigation (a small household step ladder that can be thrown away).

## Wittgenstein-Benjamin-Flusser

I. They were all raised in the affluent circles of the Central European Jewish intelligentsia, the 'Parnassus between Prague and Vienna', from which they detached themselves at a relatively young age in order to go to another country (Flusser to Brazil, Wittgenstein to Great Britain, Benjamin to France) whose respective national language (Portuguese, English, French) they quickly came to master well enough to publish in as a second language. Nevertheless, they share common roots in 'German culture': a rather difficult to define, general and elusive concept, but with an enormous potential weight. Two aspects: first, thinking about language and translation and the relationship between language and world, reality and society has a solid basis in a number of German thinkers situated between 1750 and 1850, the flowering of German Idealism and Romanticism. The great interest in language and linguistics, philology or (Indo-) Germanic, should not only be seen in the broader context of the nineteenth century but also in the light of the German version of the pursuit of unification, idealism and systematics. Foundations were laid for a linguistic turn long before the one signalled by Richard Rorty. Second: the German idiom. Without immediately falling into the trap of linguistic relativity one can say that certain German words and concepts can be related to certain systematizing and unifying tendencies in the above-mentioned idealistic thinking. I'm not referring to concepts as *Sprachzeichensystem* or *Begriffsschrift*, but to common German idiom, nouns and verbs as *(Ur-)phänomen*, *Ursache*, *Wesen*, *Naturphilosophie*, *Vernunft*, *Verstand*, *anschauen*, *gestalten*, *(ein-, ab-)bilden*, *vorstellen* and the like, and even to an ordinary word like *Sachverhalt*.

II. All three carry out epistemologically and ontologically oriented philosophical inquiries, and initially take language as the basis for a capital project: an investigation into the relationship between language, reality and the world.

III. At some point in the development of each member of this threesome there has risen an overall vision of a totalizing system, an all-encompassing model, a formalistic maxim, sublime principle; of a primal fundament that has to be traceable to the human linguistic capacity to symbolize.

IV. Whether (as in Benjamin's case) a choice was made for retrospection and historicizing language criticism, improbable connections in tiny details, or for an 'optical' approach and the principle of 'montage'; or (as with Flusser) a choice was made for projection and 'futurizing' culture criticism, jumping back and forth between formalism & mysticism, science & art, image, code & language; and whether Wittgenstein took as a model a pure ideal logical language or the common language –their quest into

these matters has, despite their methodological (quasi-) revisions, never really stopped.

V. None of them has left behind a major, ordered system and their work is posthumously characterized by a piecemeal approach. Although it could be argued that Benjamin and Flusser in *Passagenwerk* and *Menschwerdung*, and Wittgenstein in his *Abhandlung* may have aspired to leave behind a sovereign, definitive work.

VI. Perhaps it is true that not every philosopher is a good writer; on the other hand a strong case can be made for the assertion that only those thoughts are worthwhile that are clearly articulated, and that poorly formulated thoughts are fallacies or at most vague ideas –in any case all three thinkers are brilliant stylists.

VII. What each of them writes is *sui generis* and the fruit of an essayistic, autodidactic way of thinking that is at least unorthodox, and definitely *not* (or better: *anti*-)academic. A way of thinking that focuses on accuracy, if not mathematical formality, but that does not eschew the esoteric, that affirms itself as speculative and hypothetical as well as logical and compelling. All three share a penchant for the short form (continuing the break with major philosophical systems, like e.g. Kierkegaard). They are open to the small, the ephemeral, the detail and the anecdotal, do not shun improvisation, allegories and metaphors, noting freely all sorts of associations and observations. They give space to that which is more 'literary' or 'artistically' motivated, e.g. to bold analogies between widely separated affairs, to meaningful constellations of various marginalia, to concentration on everyday things. Therefore it seems as though they are rather less interested in explanation or understanding, in accommodating a theme in a larger whole, or in logically correct 'scientific' conclusions, and rather more in a flash of recognition, a spark of inspiration, a short circuit that provides insight. Although their writing is not always easy to follow, there are certain kinds of striking, telling 'visual' examples and often aphoristic formulations that provide solace to the reader, by conferring the 'literal heaviness' of the reading a concrete imaginability. (Possibly it is stylistic characteristics as these that make each of them so quotable (*zitationsfähig*); in this regard Benjamin rivals Wittgenstein, and Flusser also seems to go this way).

VIII. The work of all three is steeped in the intertwinement of word and image and in the ubiquity of images in the text.

IX. Although all three show an absolute mastery in the verbal domain, their texts are very picturesque (concrete, graphic, metaphorical) and the visual (or the optical) plays a dominant role. This is evident not only from figurative language but also in their choice of subject. (Think of Benjamin's essays on visual media such as photography, painting or film, Flusser's description of a utopian society in which (technical) images replace textual communication, Wittgenstein's numerous statements about the image, the tractarian picture theory, etc.) Furthermore, on and off there are 'pre-texts' or 'pre-images' (*Vor-bilder*), e.g. extended elaborations of a visual fact using fiction to visualize, or employing a scenario for an audiovisual project.

X. Apart from a few drawings or photographs, one can find actual visual material only very sporadically in the work of all three. It is subordinate to the text. They had an especially strong belief in the expressive power of the word, which they repeatedly stated. Yet, the awareness of the importance of the image has never led Wittgenstein, Benjamin or Flusser – apart from an occasional excursion (to architecture, radio, and a giant octopus respectively) – to continue philosophizing through a non-textual medium.

## Pairwise comparisons

### I. Flusser-Benjamin

1. They condensed their views on photography in separate treatises, e.g. *Für eine Philosophie der Fotografie* and *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit*, respectively, in which they each argue that the advent of photography entails a socio-cultural caesura similar to the advent of writing. Both make this observation at a mature stage in their work, after a period that was more or less dedicated to philosophy of language had given room to a period of more aesthetic concerns. Benjamin introduces the 'aura' and Flusser the 'technical image', and both these concepts each have a somewhat normative function, pointing to an ideal horizon: the aura as an appearance of something original that points backwards in time to rites and magic, and the technical image as a projection of something in the future that points ahead in time towards a telematic society.

2. The way Flusser describes the collapse of 'linear, historical thinking' and the mosaic structure of the resulting technical images (textual lines disintegrate into points, which are then synthesized into images), recalls the manner in which Benjamin's photographic theory arises from his analysis of the 'detail' and the new interpretation he gives it.

3. Both show a lack of interest in 'art photography' (the popularity of photography among the general public interested them more), and a critical attitude towards the arts; they do not hide their dislike of a fetishistic, anti-technical view of art.

4. Both share a belief in 'new media' (e.g. Benjamin's sympathy for radio and film, Flusser for the computer / video). Flusser displays a similar revolutionary fervour as he pleads for a commitment against the circuitry of technical images. Both see the 'cult of distraction' detested by cultural pessimists rather with positive eyes.

5. Both are at least cautious in terms of making political statements; the interest is primarily in technique and theory. They attach less importance to the applicability of media theory than to (its) epistemological significance.

6. Both tried to suppress a penchant for mysticism: Benjamin repressed his propensity (which, for example, manifested itself in his theory of language) with Marxism, while Flusser found the antidote in Kant (and the Marburg School).

7. In their writings (genre, motifs, themes and tone), they share an influence of Kant, Hegel and Marx, the autobiographical sketch as a genre, the theme of the city, chess, Kafka, a proclivity for quoting, for overcoming the antithesis of science and art, a messianic tone (the motif of salvation).

### II. Benjamin-Wittgenstein

1. Both were at one time driven by the idea of an 'ideal language'. Benjamin's philological and hermeneutical approach can be lead back to romantic ideas about language and was completely different from Wittgenstein's formal-logical and mathematical approach that can be traced to ideas about symbolic language. Initially, Benjamin was mainly looking for the origin of language, historicizingly looking back; this origin had paradisiac connotations, he sought a primal language. Wittgenstein was initially mainly looking for an original logic in and behind language, mathematically calculating truth-functions; this origin had crystalline connotations, he sought a pure language. Both approaches are exponents of modernism, in which mystical and purist impulses can go hand in hand.

2. There is a complementarity in their concentration on the sentence: whereas Benjamin wanted everything said in every sentence to include the greatest possible containment in it, the tractarian Wittgenstein wanted to exclude as much as possible from the 'significant proposition' and to exclude as much futility as possible from language as whole.

3. One can compare rather well both their views on the universality of language by putting side by side their ideas about translating. With Wittgenstein this was a matter of definitions, rules, syntax, using notations that can effectuate a one-to-one transcription; translation as 'decoding and recoding'; with Benjamin this was a matter of equivalence of codes or the recording of the language in a sign system, of an 'affinity' between the texts, a complementariness in expressive power.

4. Comparison of their different connotations of the issue of naming (what they saw as an essential aspect of language): Wittgenstein initially limited naming to something external, to the 'how' and not the 'what' (aussprechen). Benjamin links it to the divinity of the creative act; he made a similar mystical connection between the 'essence of the word' at the moment when the word becomes symbol, and the unity-in-multiplicity of the 'idea'. But particularly in Wittgenstein's later work, there arises a certain resemblance to Benjamin's principles on this issue.

### III. Flusser-Wittgenstein

1. Science and mathematics play a big role, especially in their first works. Although they exercise 'merely' philosophical critique rather than science – they are both looking for criteria for philosophy – they derive most of their criteria from the sciences. In this connection the importance of the philosophy of science should be mentioned. Flusser in his early works tries (unsuccessfully, under the influence of the *Tractatus*) to combine the analytical with existentialism. The philosophy of science gives him new insights. Through mathematical information theory and cybernetics he became interested in automation and mass communication. He shifts his focus from 'language' to 'medium' and 'communication'. The concept of feedback led to the idea that language is not so much (as in the case of Wittgenstein) a map of reality – which ultimately leads to the notion that scientific discourse is the only valid language at all or at least the privileged conception of language –, but that language engages into a mutual interaction with reality.

2. Flusser connected the epistemological enigma of science with the larger mystery of the human capacity to symbolize. He came to see that if one recognizes that scientific propositions (Wittgenstein's 'logical pictures of facts') contain a dialectics of representation (that they reveal and conceal reality at the same time), then this



leads one to reverse one's perspective. Scientific propositions are not a reflection of states of affairs, but these states of affairs are the consequences of the impact language has on reality. Philosophy of science showed that in a sense, science is a matter of belief; and it contributed to demythify science in the sense that truth is recognized as conventional. Flusser's way to the realization that knowing does not mean *exposing order* but *ordering* can be compared to Wittgenstein's development from the *Tractatus* to his posthumous work, towards ordering rather than exposing order.

3. Wittgenstein's 'thinking in facts' rather than 'thinking in objects' can be directly related to Flusser's 'ecological thinking', as well as with his ideas about renouncing 'thinking in objects' and welcoming 'relational thinking'. (Both allow for a certain Musilian 'sense of possibility'.)

4. 'The exemplary' increasingly has come to play a vital and dominant role in their philosophizing. Particularly in their later work (*Philosophische Untersuchungen* and *Vom Subjekt zum Projekt: Menschwerdung*) – the kind of examples that were used became more eccentric and resulted increasingly in *Verfremdungseffekt*. This trend can be related to a development towards: an increasing detachment from the philosophical commitment to generalize; rebellion against dogmatic thinking; reserving more place for the absurd, the fictional, the metaphorical and a growing pluralism; and the sprouting of a 'latent iconicity'.

5. Whereas in the *Tractatus* it was the case that –in spite of everything– all that one had to be silent about was said, in Flusser's writing it was the case that –in spite of everything– all that had to be calculated and put into technical images was written. Flusser also seems to have wanted to put up a ladder: a written ladder for the image makers of the future.

6. Wittgenstein can be seen as a major exponent of the linguistic, Flusser as a major exponent of the pictorial turn.

7. Last but not least there is the role of doubt. It pervades not only Wittgenstein's complete writings, from the first remarks in the *Tractatus* (relating it to nonsensicality) to his last in *Über Gewißheit*, (relating it to vanity and a game that presupposes certainty), but also Flusser's. In his case maybe one should speak of 'dialectics of doubt and certainty'. Indeed, he commutes between the fact that the only thing one cannot doubt is the fact that one is in doubt, and also the fact that there is nothing that cannot be doubted. Or maybe one should speak of 'dialectics of doubt and faith'? For both, it seems, methodical doubt is the philosophical gesture itself. To paraphrase Wittgenstein: "*Woran man nicht zweifeln kann, daran kann man nicht glauben.*"

## Literature

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# Anmerkungen zur Rezeption von „Über Gewissheit“ als erkenntnistheoretischer Schrift

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## 1. Die Grenze zwischen Sinn und Unsinn

Die als „Über Gewissheit“ publizierte Sammlung von Bemerkungen hat in der jüngeren Vergangenheit zahlreiche erkenntnistheoretische Aufsätze inspiriert. Diesen Arbeiten liegt folgende Annahme zugrunde: Ludwig Wittgensteins Notizen enthalten ein Argument gegen Skeptizismus, welches auf der Einsicht beruht, dass der Skeptiker seinen Zweifel nicht formulieren kann, ohne gegen bestimmte Voraussetzungen zu verstoßen, die diesen Zweifel erst ermöglichen. Diese Voraussetzungen werden für gewöhnlich mit einer bestimmten Haltung gegenüber einer schwer abzugrenzenden Klasse von Sätzen identifiziert, welche als *Moore-type propositions*, *Hinge propositions*, *Common-Sense propositions* und ähnlich bezeichnet werden. Wenig überraschend dreht sich die Debatte zu „Über Gewissheit“ zuvorderst um den Status dieser Sätze und die interessierte Leserin findet eine erstaunliche Menge unterschiedlicher Positionierungen zu dieser Frage.

Der vorliegende Aufsatz soll einige Bedenken bezüglich der Adäquatheit dieses Vorgehens zur Analyse von „Über Gewissheit“ aufwerfen. Aus dem Vorwort von G.E.M. Anscombe wissen wir, dass Wittgenstein die Bemerkungen G. E. Moores zum *Common-Sense* geschätzt hat. Keine Auskunft erhalten wir aber über die dahinter liegenden Gründe und es scheint eine selten ausgesprochene, aber doch weitgehend geteilte Annahme zu sein, dass Moores Argument Wittgenstein dazu angeregt habe, sich intensiv mit dem Problem des Skeptizismus auseinanderzusetzen. Es ist diese Annahme, der ich im Weiteren nachgehen werde: Vermutlich in den Jahren 1946 bis 1948 verfasst Wittgenstein die Bemerkungen, die heute als Teil zwei der „Philosophischen Untersuchungen“ bekannt sind. Weitgehend gesichert ist zudem, dass die Bemerkungen zu Gewissheit zwischen 1949 und 1951 entstanden sind. Ich erwähne dies, weil ich glaube, dass Wittgensteins Interesse für Moores Beweis der Außenwelt nicht als Interesse an dessen erkenntnistheoretischer Fragestellung aufzufassen ist. Es erscheint mir plausibler anzunehmen, dass Wittgenstein erst 1949 die Relevanz der Mooreschen Bemerkungen für ein Problem erkennt, das ihn bereits 1946 zu beschäftigen beginnt und die folgende Form annimmt: Wenn eine philosophische Untersuchung der Aufklärung der Grammatik bestimmter Ausdrücke dient und letztlich in der übersichtlichen Darstellung begrifflicher Verbindungen resultiert, dann drängt sich fast unweigerlich die Frage nach dem Verhältnis der festgestellten begrifflichen Verbindungen zur empirischen Welt auf. Man ist versucht zu fragen, ob die vorgefundenen grammatischen Gegebenheiten in empirischen Fakten begründet sind und durch Verweis auf diese als adäquat ausgewiesen werden können. Anscombe bringt das dabei zum Vorschein tretende Problem in ihrem Aufsatz „The Question of Linguistic Idealism“ wie folgt auf den Punkt: „What we want to be assured of is that ‘what we realize’ actually exists and is not a mere projection of the forms of our thinking upon reality“ (Anscombe 1981:113) Eine häufig zitierte Stelle, an der Wittgenstein sich selbst zu diesem schwer festzumachenden Verhältnis zwischen Welt und Begriff äußert, findet sich im erwähnten zweiten Teil der „Philosophischen Untersuchungen“:

„Ich sage nicht: Wären die und die Naturtatsachen anders, so hätten die Menschen andere Begriffe (im Sinne einer Hypothese). Sondern: Wer glaubt, gewisse Begriffe seien schlechtweg die richtigen, wer andere hätte, sähe eben etwas nicht ein, was wir einsehen, — der möge sich gewisse sehr allgemeine Naturtatsachen anders vorstellen, als wir sie gewohnt sind, und andere Begriffsbildungen als die gewohnten werden ihm verständlich werden.“ (Philosophische Untersuchungen II, xii)

Was hat dies nun mit Moore und den Bemerkungen zu Gewissheit zu tun? Um dies aufzuklären, kehren wir nochmals zurück zur Idee, die besagt, „Über Gewissheit“ sei ein anti-skeptisches Traktat. Die vorherrschende Meinung scheint zu sein, dass die grammatische Untersuchung (zumindest hier) mit einer Untersuchung der Behauptbarkeitsbedingungen von Sätzen, die die Worte „wissen“, „zweifeln“, etc. enthalten, zusammenfällt und dass diese Untersuchung erkennen lasse, dass bestimmte Äußerungen nicht sinnvoll gemacht werden können, weil es eine Voraussetzung unserer gewöhnlichen Praxis des Urteilens und Bezweifelns darstellt, dass gewisse Sätze unangetastet bleiben und weil die Äußerung eines solchen Satzes gegen eben diese Voraussetzung verstößt, ist sie aus dem philosophischen Diskurs auszuschließen. Dabei handelt es sich um eine Variante transzendentaler Argumentation, die keine Neuheit darstellt, was zu einem gewissen Ausmaß den Schwerpunkt erklärt, der von der Sekundärliteratur auf die Frage gelegt wird, welchen besonderen Status diejenigen Sätze besitzen, deren Behauptung in vielen Fällen keinen Sinn macht und warum äußerst selten darauf Wert gelegt wird, die Form der Argumentation selbst kritisch zu betrachten.

Wird nun hingegen angenommen, dass Wittgensteins Interesse dem Verhältnis von Begriff und Wirklichkeit gilt, dann sind Moores Bemerkungen von Interesse, weil eine Affirmation dieser Sätze der Behauptung gleichkommt, dass unsere Begriffe die richtigen sind. Ein solcher Versuch, die Adäquatheit unserer Begriffe mit eben diesen Begriffen selbst zum Ausdruck zu bringen, steht allerdings umgehend unter Verdacht, inhaltsleer zu sein. Diese Darstellung wird im ersten Moment weniger nahe liegend erscheinen, als gängige Ausarbeitungen zu „Über Gewissheit“. Es ist aber hervorzuheben, dass anti-skeptische Strategien, die darin bestehen, bestimmte Aussagen als Unsinn auszuweisen und dann daraus folgern, eine skeptische Position lasse sich nicht kohärent vertreten, nur unter der Voraussetzung erfolgreich sind, dass eine klare Grenze zwischen Sinn und Unsinn gezogen werden kann. Ein Vorteil der vorgeschlagenen Alternative ist es demgegenüber, ohne diese Voraussetzung auszukommen. Man ist dann auch nicht gezwungen anzunehmen, Wittgenstein sei gegen Ende seines Lebens zur zweifelhaften Ansicht zurückgekehrt, der zufolge sich eine solche Grenzziehung zweifelsfrei durchführen lasse. Insbesondere belegen auch späte Textstellen — wie die folgende vom 21. März 1951 —, dass Wittgensteins Haltung zur Sinnhaftigkeit der fraglichen Aussagen weit weniger klar ist, als übliche Darstellungen dies nahe legen:

„Warum sag ich also mit Moore nicht einfach 'Ich weiß, daß ich in England bin'? Dies zu sagen, hat unter bestimmten Umständen, die ich mir vorstellen kann, Sinn. Wenn ich aber, nicht in diesen Umständen, den Satz ausspreche als Beispiel dafür, daß Wahrheiten dieser Art von mir mit Gewißheit zu erkennen sind, dann wird er mir sofort verdächtig. — Ob mit Recht??“ (Über Gewissheit § 423)

## 2. Alternative Konzeptionen der Welt

Im Folgenden werde ich versuchen, die von mir vorgeschlagene Herangehensweise anhand einer Textpassage näher zu erläutern, die *prima facie* für die herkömmliche Interpretation, also gegen die soweit entworfene Alternative, zu sprechen scheint:

„Ich weiß, daß hier ein kranker Mensch liegt? Unsinn! Ich sitze an seinem Bett, schaue aufmerksam in seine Züge. — So weiß ich also nicht, daß da ein Kranker liegt? — Es hat weder die Frage noch die Aussage Sinn. So wenig wie die: 'Ich bin hier', die ich doch jeden Moment gebrauchen könnte, wenn sich die passende Gelegenheit dazu ergäbe. [...] Und 'Ich weiß, daß hier ein Kranker liegt', in der unpassenden Situation gebraucht, erscheint nur darum nicht als Unsinn, vielmehr als Selbstverständlichkeit, weil man sich verhältnismäßig leicht eine für ihn passende Situation vorstellen kann [...]“ (Über Gewissheit § 10)

Als die beiden zentralen Motive dieser Bemerkung werden für gewöhnlich die Behauptung, dass „weder die Frage noch die Aussage Sinn“ hat, sowie die zugehörige Erklärung, dass der Satz „in der unpassenden Situation“ gebraucht wurde, identifiziert. Die Schwierigkeit ist, daran anschließend eine Antwort darauf zu geben, was eine Situation „unpassend“ für den Gebrauch des Satzes macht. Substantielle Ansätze, unter deren Vertretern sich etwa Marie McGinn, Avrum Stroll oder Crispin Wright wiederfinden, behaupten eine besondere epistemische Rolle dieses Satzes und es ist diese besondere Rolle die eine Erklärung dafür liefert, weshalb es Unsinn ist zu sagen „Ich weiß, dass hier ein kranker Mensch liegt“. Resolute Ansätze, wie etwa jener von James Conant, verfechten demgegenüber die Idee, dass der Satz, wie er im gewählten (philosophischen) Szenario verwendet wird, tatsächlich *keine* Rolle spielt und entsprechend auch im vollen Wortsinn bedeutungslos ist. Ich will im Weiteren nicht versuchen zu zeigen, dass diese Leseweisen des zitierten Absatzes falsch sind, sondern lediglich, dass es eine plausible Alternative zu beidem gibt.

Anstatt zu überlegen, was eine „unpassende Situation“ auszeichnet, sei der Versuch unternommen, zu erfragen, was Wittgensteins Diskussion des Satzes „Ich weiß, dass hier ein kranker Mensch liegt“ über die Adäquatheit unserer Begriffe zeigt. Zuerst ist festzustellen, dass der Satz nur dann für diese Frage relevant sein wird, wenn er auf bestimmte Weise aufgefasst wird, und zwar als Beispiel für etwas, woran *jeder* von uns in einer geeignet vorgestellten Situation *unumstößlich* festhalten würde. Nun lässt sich umgehend Zweifel daran äußern, dass man derartige alltägliche Wissensansprüche einfach aufzählen kann. Dieser Zweifel kann in Bedenken die Adäquatheit bestimmte Äußerungen betreffend begründet sein, er kann aber auch — wie ich im vorliegenden Aufsatz verteidigen möchte — am Umstand anknüpfen, dass diese Wissensansprüche hier eine besondere Rolle einnehmen, und zwar als Feststellungen unsere Darstellungsmittel betreffend, deren Begründung in Frage steht. Das lässt sich etwas abgewandelt auch so ausdrücken: Anstatt sich auf

die Behauptung zu beschränken, dass bestimmte Äußerungen Unsinn sind, halte ich es für hilfreicher zu erkunden, was diese Zuschreibung von Sinn und Unsinn über die Möglichkeit aussagt, einen externen Standpunkt einzunehmen, von welchem aus nach der Rechtfertigung unserer Darstellungsmittel gefragt wird. Gegeben also die Annahme, dass durch die Grammatik unserer Begriffe eine Grenze zwischen Sinn und Unsinn festgelegt ist, so ist die Auszeichnung einer Äußerung als „Unsinn“ gleichbedeutend mit der Reaffirmation dieser Grenze und damit einem Beharren auf unseren Begriffen. Anstatt nun aber die oben zitierte Bemerkung bloß als einen solchen Akt der Beteuerung aufzufassen, bietet sich an, die Ausführungen in „Über Gewissheit“ derart aufzufassen, dass es sich darin um die Frage dreht, ob und inwieweit eine Entfernung von diesen (unseren) Begriffen hin zu Begriffen, die anderen grammatischen Regeln gehorchen, durchführbar oder zumindest vorstellbar ist.

Die theoretischen Alternativen scheinen an diesem Punkt die folgenden zu sein: (1) Ja, andere Begriffe sind möglich und verständlich, weil es sich bei unseren Begriffen lediglich um das Ergebnis willkürlicher Konventionen handelt. Die Notwendigkeit logischer Folgerung ist nach dieser Ansicht das Resultat frei wählbarer Normen und es ist pragmatischen und/oder kulturellen Einflussfaktoren zuzuschreiben, dass wir an unseren Begriffen festhalten. (2) Nein, andere Begriffe sind weder möglich noch verständlich, denn unsere Begriffe konstituieren erst dasjenige, was wir „denken“, „folgern“ und „mitteilen“ nennen und die Vorstellung anderer Begriffe scheitert an der Undenkbarkeit einer anderen Form des Denkens. (3) Weil unsere Begriffe in empirischen Regelmäßigkeiten uns und unsere Umwelt betreffend verankert sind, sind andere Begriffe möglich und (3a) wir können uns diese Begriffe auch verständlich machen, indem wir von den tatsächlichen Gegebenheiten abstrahieren und diverse mögliche Konsequenzen dieser Variation für unsere Begriffe durchspielen, oder (3b) wir können uns andere Begriffe als die unseren *nicht* verständlich machen, da wir im Versuch uns etwaige Konsequenzen zu überlegen, stets auf unsere tatsächlichen Begriffe zurückgeworfen sind. Gilt letzteres, dann kann der Idee anderer Begriffe nur insofern Inhalt gegeben werden, als wir die empirischen Regelmäßigkeiten, die unseren Begriffen zugrundeliegen, nicht als notwendig geltend empfinden.

Wird „Über Gewissheit“ nun als ein Abwägen dieser Alternativen verstanden, ergibt sich nach meinem Dafürhalten ein kohärenteres Bild dessen, was in Wittgensteins Aufzeichnungen verhandelt wird. Darüber hinaus zeigen sich von dieser Perspektive aus auch klare Verbindungen zu Notizen, die zeitgleich mit den Bemerkungen zu Gewissheit entstanden sind. So finden sich in den Sammlungen, die als „Letzte Schriften über die Philosophie der Psychologie“ und „Bemerkungen über die Farben“ bekannt sind, etwa die folgenden Textstellen, die direkt an das Thema möglicher anderer Begriffe anknüpfen:

„Soll ich sagen: Unsre Begriffe werden von unserm Interesse, also von unsrer Lebensweise, bestimmt? Wir lernen als Kinder zugleich die Begriffe und was man mit ihnen macht. Es kommt vor, daß wir später einen neuen und für uns zweckmäßigeren Begriff einführen. — Das wird aber nur in sehr bestimmten und kleinen Gebieten vorkommen und es setzt voraus, daß die meisten Begriffe unverändert bleiben. [...] Die Grundbegriffe sind so eng mit dem Fundamentalsten in unsrer Lebensweise verflochten, daß sie darum unangreifbar sind.“ (Letzte Schriften über die Philosophie der Psychologie, S. 60)

„Aber kann ich doch die Praxis von Leuten beschreiben, die einen Begriff haben, z.B. ‚rötlichgrün‘, den wir nicht besitzen? [...] Wenn sie wirklich einen anderen Begriff haben als ich, so muß sich das darin zeigen, daß ich mich in ihrem Wortgebrauch nicht ganz auskenne. Ich habe aber doch immer wieder gesagt, man könnte sich denken, daß unsere Begriffe anders wären, als sie sind. War das alles Unsinn?“ (Bemerkungen über die Farben III, § 122-124)

Die Bemerkung zum Begriff des ‚rötlichgrün‘ enthält des Weiteren einen Rückbezug auf die eingangs zitierte Passage aus dem zweiten Teil der „Philosophischen Untersuchungen“ und macht deutlich, dass Wittgenstein ab 1949 offenbar auch daran liegt, die früher gemachte Behauptung zur Verständlichkeit anderer Begriffsbildungen neu zu überdenken. Die vorgeschlagene Betrachtungsweise erlaubt also die Bemerkungen zu Gewissheit gemeinsam mit den anderen Notizen aus den letzten beiden Jahren als Fortführungen von Überlegungen zu sehen, die Wittgenstein bereits 1946 zu beschäftigen beginnen und verleiht den Arbeiten nach den „Philosophischen Untersuchungen“ insgesamt eine größere Einheit.

Im Lichte der angestellten Überlegungen zeigt sich der besondere Beitrag von „Über Gewissheit“ dann im Versuch, Begriffe zu erarbeiten, die von den uns gewohnten Begriffen in verschiedener Hinsicht abweichen. Bedauerlicherweise ist es im gegebenen Rahmen unmöglich, eine genauere Analyse einzelner Passagen zu geben, um die Fruchtbarkeit dieses Ansatzes zu zeigen und eine entsprechende Auseinandersetzung mit dem Textmaterial muss der geneigten Leserin überantwortet werden. Es sollen aber doch einige Hinweise gegeben werden, die bei einer solchen Analyse hilfreich sein können. Zuvorderst ist bei der Lektüre von „Über Gewissheit“ die Frage im Auge zu behalten, wie sich das Haben anderer Begriffe im Verhalten äußern würde. Das erfordert auch, sich Klarheit darüber zu verschaffen, wann etwas „eine hinreichende Beschreibung von Verhalten“ zu nennen ist. Außerdem wird es von Vorteil sein, sich Szenarien zu überlegen, in welchen jemand, etwa aufgrund von Erziehung oder natürlichen Neigungen, die Negation einer Aussage, die

für uns unumstößlich scheint, für gewiss hält. Dabei ist zuvorderst zu klären, ob Kommunikation mit einem solchen Menschen/Wesen völlig unmöglich wäre, oder nur in seltenen und speziellen Fällen zu Missverständnissen führen würde — wie es etwa wirklich manches Mal zu harmlosen Streitigkeiten zwischen Leuten darüber kommt, ob ein Gegenstand dunkelblau oder violett ist. Schlussendlich sollten die zahlreichen Bemerkungen zum Wissensbegriff nicht als bloße Reaffirmation unseres begrifflichen Rahmens angenommen werden, sondern es ist darin der Versuch zu sehen, sich ernsthaft auf den skeptischen Einwand einzulassen und dessen Tragweite zu erkunden. Eine solche Herangehensweise erschließt meines Erachtens zahlreiche Aspekte von „Über Gewissheit“, die bisher kaum berücksichtigt wurden und eröffnet einen interessanten Problembereich, der nach weiterer Beschäftigung verlangt.

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# “Meaning is Use” and Wittgenstein’s Method of Dissolving Philosophical Problems by Describing the Uses of Words

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In §43 of *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein famously wrote: “The meaning of a word is its use in the language”. In that same book, Wittgenstein also said: “What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use” (§116). Now doing that is characteristic for a method of Wittgenstein’s which is aimed at dissolving philosophical problems. My question will be: What is the relation between Wittgenstein’s method of dissolving philosophical problems by reminding us of the everyday use of words and his statement “meaning is use” in §43?

I will present my view by drawing on so-called “resolute” readings of later Wittgenstein. These readings reject the idea that Wittgenstein was concerned with *meaning* because he was after an answer to the question: “How does linguistic meaning come about?” What they instead insist on is that Wittgenstein’s concern with *meaning* is tied to his aim of introducing ways of *dissolving philosophical problems*. Moreover, these readings insist that these ways of dissolving philosophical problems – which involve asking ourselves what we *mean* by our words – do not themselves *rely on* any account of how linguistic meaning comes about.

Now from this perspective, “The meaning of a word is its use in the language” calls for special attention. After all – isn’t Wittgenstein stating here just the sort of insight into the nature of linguistic meaning which resolute readings have him reject? Now the way out of this seeming predicament for these readings has been to highlight the *grammatical* status of §43. As James Conant puts it: “Wittgenstein’s aim [...] is not to define, but to explicate – to unfold – what we mean by ‘meaning’ by looking to the ways in which we talk about it.” (Conant 1999, 2)

In the following, I aim to show that drawing on the *grammatical* status of “meaning is use” is in fact incompatible with another element of resolute readings (which they share with the readings they criticize): the idea that “meaning is use” in §43 were *connected to* the one method of Wittgenstein’s of describing the actual uses of expressions.<sup>1</sup> This idea is: It is no coincidence that, on the one hand, Wittgenstein, in §43, says that “meaning is use” and, on the other hand, that he has a method of describing the *uses* of words. As I aim to show, if we think through what resolute readings have brought out about §43, the idea of such a connection cannot be sustained.

To see why, let us now turn to a resolute reading of §43. James Conant gives this paraphrase of the famous passage featuring “meaning is use”:

The word “meaning” is a word of our language, [...] and if we look and see what *its* use (that is, the use of the word “meaning”) [...] is then we will discover that, for a *large* class of cases of its employment, though not for all, what we mean, when we employ this word in, for example, speaking of “the meaning of a word”, is *the use of that word* (whose meaning we are asking after) in the language. (Conant 1999, 2)

That means: Wittgenstein is first asking us to look and see what the *use* (*employment*) of the word “meaning” is. This leads us to discover the following: when we employ (use) this word in the expression “the meaning of a word”, what we mean by “the meaning of the word X” is, in a large class of cases, the *use* of the word X. Now what this reading entails is that the notion of “use” (or “employment”) figures on two different levels: (1) the level of a *question*: “How do we *employ* the word ‘meaning’?” and (2) the level of the *answer* to that question: “In a large class of cases, we employ ‘meaning of a word’ so as to mean the *use* of that word”. So what we have here, according to Conant, is the same notion – “use” or “employment” – once on the level of the question for the *employment* (use) of the word “meaning”, and once on the level of the answer to this question – revealing that we (in a large class of cases) by “meaning” mean *use*.

Now let us evaluate this with regard to our topic – namely, the question of the relation between Wittgenstein’s method of dissolving philosophical problems by reminding us of the everyday *use* of words and his statement “meaning is use” in §43. Conant highlights the fact that Wittgenstein, in §43, is asking us to consider the employment (use) of one particular word of our language, “meaning”. And when so considering the *use* of the word “meaning”, we discover that, in “meaning of a word”, we use the word “meaning” (in a large class of cases) so as to mean the use of this word. Now reminding us of how we actually *use* a certain expression is a characteristic of Wittgenstein’s method of dissolving philosophical problems by describing the *uses* of words. What I take all this to point to is this: if we take to heart what Conant is saying about §43, it must be regarded as an instance of the *application* of this method to a particular word – namely, “meaning”. Thus, we get the following relation between Wittgenstein’s method of reminding us of the everyday *uses* of words and his statement “meaning is use”: “Meaning is use” is a result of the *application* of this method to a particular word (“meaning”).

Read this way, I take Conant’s reading to be supported, not only by the wording of §43, but also by the fact that in §39, Wittgenstein confronts us with a regular philosophical problem – involving the name “Excalibur” – and then in §40, to diagnose *this problem* to rest on “meaning of a name” being “used illicitly”. As I take it, §43 is best seen as an attempt to dissolve *the specific problem* of §39 by bringing “meaning of a word” back to its everyday use.

In the following, I will show that highlighting the *grammatical* status of §43 (which, as I take it, commits a resolute reading to regarding “meaning is use” as a result of the *application* of the method of describing the uses of words) is in fact incompatible with the other claim of resolute readings that “meaning is use” in §43 were *connected to* this very method. I will show that there is in fact a tension between the insight that “meaning is use” in §43 is instrumental in dissolving a *particular* problem and the idea that “meaning is use” there can nonetheless be regarded as connected to the dissolution of *any* problem which we attempt to dissolve through the method of

<sup>1</sup> As voiced in e.g. Oskari Kuusela, *The Struggle Against Dogmatism*, pp. 152-3.

describing the uses of words. In order to show this, I will employ a three-step argument. Let us begin with Step 1:

*Step 1:* When looking at later Wittgenstein's practice of approaching philosophical problems, it is tempting to think that it is no coincidence that

- (1) In §43, Wittgenstein brings out that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, and that
- (2) Wittgenstein is asking questions such as "How do we actually *use* the word 'to know'?"

We may be inclined to think: Isn't Wittgenstein, when e.g. attempting to dissolve the problem of skepticism, concerned with what we *mean* by words like 'to know' (when occurring in utterances like "I know that that's a tree")? And hadn't he brought out earlier that what we mean by "meaning of a word" is the *use* of the word? So that accordingly, "the meaning of 'to know'" is the *use* of 'to know'? Now given all this – how could it be mere *coincidence* that Wittgenstein is now asking how we actually *use* 'to know' in everyday circumstances?

In order to see what is wrong with this thought, let us turn to Step 2 of my argument.

*Step 2:* Let us ask ourselves this question: Is it or isn't a coincidence that

- (1) In §43, Wittgenstein brings out that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, and that
- (3) What leads to (1) is the question "How do we actually *employ (use)* the word 'meaning'?"

Asked differently: Is it or isn't it a coincidence that "employ"/"use" occurs in the question "How do we *employ (use)* the word 'meaning'?" and *also* in the answer "We employ 'meaning of a word' so as to mean the *use* of the word"? For an answer, let us go back to Conant on §43. As we saw, what he said happens there is this: (1) Wittgenstein asks us to consider the question "How do we *employ* the (particular) word 'meaning'?", (2) we look and see what the *employment (use)* of this word is, (3) we *discover* that, in a large class of cases, what we mean, when we are speaking of, for example, "the meaning of a word", is *the use* of that word in the language. Now I take Conant's talk of "discover" here – when taken seriously – to entail two things: (a) That the question "How do we *employ* the word 'meaning'?" does not *entail* that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word: that we "discover" this must mean that this question leaves completely open just *what* the employment of "meaning of a word" is; (b) that the question "How do we *employ* the word 'meaning'?" does not *follow from* the fact that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word: that we "discover" this must also mean that in the moment that we are asking this question, we must be thought of as being completely unaware of how the word "meaning" is actually used (if not, why would we at all *ask this question*?) Taken together, I see (a) and (b) as indicating that we must indeed regard it as mere *coincidence* that in §43, the question "How do we *employ* the word 'meaning'?" yields the answer "We employ 'meaning of a word' so as to mean the *use* of the word" – and consequently, to regard it as mere coincidence that "use" / "employ" occurs in both (1) and (3).

In order to see the relevance of this for our initial question, let us now turn to the final step of my argument.

*Step 3:* First, we need to see that saying it is mere *coincidence* that

- (1) In §43, Wittgenstein brings out that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, and that

- (3) What leads to (1) is the question "How do we actually *employ (use)* the word 'meaning'?"

is the same as to say: It is mere coincidence that

- (1) In §43, Wittgenstein brings out that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, and that
- (3') Wittgenstein is asking the question "How do we actually *employ (use)* the word 'meaning'?"

For it is mere coincidence that "use" occurs in both (3') – the question – and (1) – the answer to this question. As I brought out in Step 2, whoever does (3') – the initial step of §43 – must be imagined as *unaware* of the actual employment of "meaning of a word".

Now let us go back to our initial idea from Step 1: namely, the idea that it is indeed no coincidence that

- (1) In §43, Wittgenstein brings out that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, and that
- (2) Wittgenstein is asking a question such as "How do we actually *use* the word 'to know'?"

There, it seemed to us that the fact that "use" occurs in both (1) *and* (2) could not be a coincidence. It appeared to us that "meaning is use" was connected, not just to the question "How do we actually use the word 'to know'?", but to *any* question asking for the actual use of words – with the aim of dissolving philosophical problems. Now what happens to this idea in the light of the insight that "meaning is use" cannot be regarded as connected in this same way to the question "How do we actually *employ (use)* the word 'meaning'?" As came out, it must be regarded as mere coincidence that "use" occurs in this question and also in "meaning is use". So is it then a coincidence that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, and that Wittgenstein is asking *this* question – whereas it is not a coincidence that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, and Wittgenstein is asking the question "How do we actually *use* the word 'to know'?" Are we to imagine Wittgenstein's concern with the *actual use* of "to know" as motivated by the insight that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word – whereas we are to imagine him to concern himself with (of all things) the *actual use* of "meaning" simply out of the blue? But how can that be? Isn't the question "How do we actually *employ (use)* the word 'meaning'?" of the *same type* as "How do we actually *use* the word 'to know'?" Aren't both examples of the method of dissolving philosophical problems by describing the uses of words? In the one case, the problem of the reference of the name "Excalibur" is dissolved by reminding us of the actual use of the word "meaning". In the other case, the problem of skepticism is dissolved by reminding us of the actual use of the word "to know". Now why should we think of the latter to be *connected* in this special way to the fact that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word, when we *cannot* think that of the former? Isn't that quite an incoherent idea? Shouldn't we say either that "meaning is use" were connected to *all* instances of the application of this method, or to *none* of them?

I take this to show that we should take *none* of the instances of the application of the method of dissolving philosophical problems by describing the *uses* of words to be *connected* to the fact that by "meaning of a word", we mean the *use* of the word. How we actually employ "meaning" in everyday circumstances is connected *only* to

the dissolution of the problem of §39 and related problems, but not to *all other* cases of the method of describing the *uses* of words. Seeing that Wittgenstein treats "meaning" like any other word means seeing that this method of dissolving philosophical problems is *wholly independent* from how in detail this particular word is used.

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# The Structure of Our Belief System: On Nests, Doors, Rivers, and Other Metaphors

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## 1. The Nest Structure of Our Belief System

Wittgenstein says that the propositions in which we believe form some kind of system (O.C. §141). The concept of system, as we use it many times, tends to convey the idea of a well-ordered, planned in advance group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements that constitute a complex whole. This is the idea of structure in a strong sense that is related many times with the products of human arts and techniques. Buildings, cars, and mosaics are structures in this strong sense. But Wittgenstein wants to give up two ideas that are involved in this common sense characterization. First, he tries to leave behind the idea that our system of beliefs is such a well-ordered whole. Second, he does not consider that our belief system is the outcome of a rational human project. Rather, one of his most famous metaphors tells us that our beliefs constitute a sort of nest (*Nest*) (O.C. §225, cfr. §141). And this luminous image succinctly concentrates both aspects of his attitude against the idea that our belief system forms a structure in a strong sense.

It is true that Wittgenstein introduces the concept of belief-nest in an observation in which he is not directly concerned with the description of the structure of our belief system. Rather, what he is trying to underline in this remark is the fact that we, both as individuals and as a social group, hold fast always to more than just one proposition. In this respect propositions come in clusters, like grapes. But for my purpose it is quite relevant to pay attention to the nest image that he uses to express this idea for it does not only convey the notion of a plurality of elements, but also portrays how these elements, i.e., the propositions that constitute our system of beliefs, might be structured.

What kind of structure might be a nest of beliefs? The concept of nest suggests a structure or frame that is constituted by many different, although similar parts – little branches, stems, straws, mud, etc. – that have been randomly gathered and put together in a way that they end up being intertwined in a solid whole in which it is not easy at all to say that some parts are clearly more important than others because they play a especial role in supporting the structure.

We need to ask ourselves what the little branches and pieces of wood that form the nest of the propositions in which we believe and on which we live stand for. There are two possible answers. First, each branch represents a proposition or a belief in a proposition. The other possibility is that each branch represents a group of propositions or beliefs. In fact, one answer does not need to exclude the other. Children accumulate beliefs of all sorts. And they learn progressively to label many of these beliefs with a single tag: religious, mathematical, social, personal, ethical, aesthetical beliefs, and so on. At least this is so in our culture. When children become adults they think more or less vaguely that the beliefs that fall under one of these labels are somehow related.

Wittgenstein was, of course, well aware of the many groupings that we form with our beliefs. And he proposed the idea according to which the beliefs within one group do not need to share the same standards, norms, and rules of meaning with the beliefs of another group. Each group of beliefs is regulated by a different language game and is embodied in a different form of life. If we adapt this thesis to the question about what the branches of a belief system might represent, it seems to me that a Wittgensteinian way of answering this question would be to affirm that each little branch is a language game and a form of life that coexists and cohabits in complex, but not necessarily in contiguous ways with others language games and forms of life. All of them constitute a more or less solid whole. This is the whole of the not quite systematic individual and social life.

## 2. Nests, Hinges, or Both?

We should momentarily leave and, at the same time, retain this picture of the system of human beliefs as a nest and focus now on other two important metaphors that Wittgenstein uses to portrait how our beliefs might be structured. One of them is the well known idea that some propositions function like an axis or hinge and others like a door that turns around it (O.C. § 152). The first kind of propositions constitutes the realm of certainty whereas the second kind corresponds with those propositions that might be true or false but are not certain. If we take this metaphor as an attempt to describe our belief system as a whole, it seems that it is at odds with the nest picture. For what his latter simile emphatically conveys is the idea that there is not just one axis, in fact there is no axis at all, in our belief system. Nothing rotates around an axis in a nest. If we still feel the need to accommodate the axis-door metaphor to the nest picture, we could risk the thesis that it is only within each language game and form of life that constitute the complex nest structure of our belief system where we could find this weak dualism axis/door. I say that it is a weak dualism because Wittgenstein indirectly claims that the distinction axis/door is not always clearly cut. It is not a sharp distinction because it mirrors the dichotomy bed-rock/water about which he says that there is not an exact distinction between its elements although there is one (O.C. § 96-97). In any case, if we merged the nest image with the hinge-door metaphor, the result would be a belief system with a plurality of hinges that work at different levels and might be regulated by different rules of grammar, as Wittgenstein would put it.

The idea that different rules and standards prevail in the different belief groupings that constitute a nest like system would allow Wittgenstein to avoid some problems of consistency between these groups of beliefs. You, like William James or Miguel de Unamuno, could think that science is the right approach to the rational understanding of the natural world and, at the same time, be a religious person. You could think that instrumental rationality is the right approach to political and business issues, but not to problems that are concerned with individual morality where you might feel closer to Aristotle or Kant. It is also clear that Wittgenstein's strategy would result, for example, in



the possibility of immunizing religious beliefs from rational criticism, especially if you identify rationality with scientific methods or, in general, with logical argumentation, for what it is at stake in religious life is not a matter of scientific rationality or argumentation. You might embrace a religious form of life as a consequence of an infinite angst (C.V. §504) or of unbearable existential pains (C.V. §485), but not as a consequence of historical truths (C.V. §168) or of rational proofs (C.V. §485). Of course, it goes without saying that you could also immunize science from religion with the same strategy.

However, it seems to me that this Wittgensteinian description of our nest of beliefs is not a description that would match the structure of any system of beliefs at any historical period of time. Rather, it would be a theory with normative consequences. Historically, what contributes to individualize systems of beliefs are not only, and some times not primarily, the beliefs that constitute them, but also the way in which the different groupings of beliefs are structured in a whole, and how these groupings are hierarchically organized and interrelated. *On Certainty* does not pay too much attention to these historical facts. For example, it has not always been the case that religious and scientific ideas have been so conceived that it could have been possible to immunize religion from scientific or philosophical rationality, as it was typically so in many Enlightenment projects, or to immunize scientific or philosophical rationality from religious beliefs, as it happened many times with some theories during the scientific revolution in the Renaissance. Thus, Wittgenstein's ideas leave here their descriptive character to become a theory that would prescribe how it is correct or more convenient to structure our beliefs, and how it is more appropriate to consider the relationship between the different parts of this structure.

It is true that Wittgenstein thinks that there might be a shuffling around throughout time between those parts in our belief system that constitute its bedrock and those parts that flow over and along this hardened part (O.C. §96). But this kind of changes is not enough to explain the many directions and levels in which a belief system could change. For it also changes profoundly in the way in which its different parts are interrelated, and how they are hierarchically structured.

The fact that changes in our belief system might occur at the micro-level of particular beliefs, but also at the macro-level of the general shape and structure of the system due to a rearrangement of its parts, has enormous consequences for the general problem of certainty. When a new belief or proposition knocks on the door of a nest-like belief system, it might knock on many different doors at the same time and in many different ways. Thus, the first problem is that it is not at all clear that such a proposition should be addressed only by just one part of our belief system, i.e., by just one part of our social or individual self. Moreover, it is important to connect this problem with the fact that sometimes the battle around the rational acceptance of a new belief in a previous belief system has not been so much about the certainty as the battle around its right place in the overall belief system. This battle has occurred when it is already impossible to dismiss or ignore the new belief but its rational acceptance in the cradle of the pre-existing belief system would introduce a clear inconsistency in the resulting enhanced system. The question about whether the new belief should be accepted in these not quite unusual circumstances could have both an affirmative and a negative answer from different parts of the belief system. This situation might come out into a conflict of beliefs since we cannot hold judgment anymore.

Thus, “[I]n some context we find ourselves driven to the conclusion that p, while in other contexts we find ourselves driven to the conclusion that q, which we know very well entails not-p. We never of course allow ourselves at any time and in any context to assert p and q without qualification” (MacIntyre 2008, 284). We face a problem of consistency.

I shall give an example so that all these considerations had a clear reference. It is a historical case in which changes in the overall shape of our belief system are forced by changes in particular beliefs. When Copernicus proposed a not quite unproblematic mathematical justification of the old but never culturally accepted belief according to which the Earth turns around the Sun, and, as a consequence, the Ptolemaic system progressively lost its credibility, i.e., its central place among the main “local” certainties of our worldview, a problem of consistency in our belief system rises.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, the belief that the Earth turns around the Sun could not be dismissed or ignored anymore. On the other hand, it claimed something against the certainty according to which what the Bible says is absolutely true since it is the holy word of God. Among many scientists, Copernicus' ideas were considered as basically true. Among religious persons, they were against the Holy Bible. And some of these religious persons were also some of those scientists.

One way of rationally dealing with the inconsistency was proposed by Andreas Osiander who wrote a famous preface to Copernicus' book *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*. This preface represents the introduction of instrumentalist interpretations of natural science. Osiander claims that what Copernicus affirms should not be considered as true or plausible, much less certain. *De revolutionibus* only provides us with a powerful instrument of calculus that matches our always limited empirical observations. But this matching does not mean that the mathematical model portrays reality as it is. This was an important rational qualification so that it was possible to believe without inconsistencies that the Earth turns around the Sun and that the Holy Bible is absolutely true. But for this result to be achieved it was necessary to rearrange not only the core beliefs that constitute a part of our belief system—Copernicus instead of Ptolemy—but also how the different groupings of beliefs—religious, scientific—are hierarchically organized and interrelated. Osiander found and proposed a way of maintaining religious beliefs in a central and certain place of the Renaissance belief system, while, at the same time, gave way to new scientific ideas.

Systems that are the result of unsystematic and contingent processes, either historical or personal, might end up having a problem of consistency. Thus, nest-like belief systems might also have this kind of problem. But the awareness of inconsistencies might lead individuals and societies to formulate second-order normative judgments about the adequateness not only of particular beliefs in the system but also about the way they are structured in it, and the meaning they have in the whole. Should the system be structured as it was before? These second-order judgments are an essential part of human rationality. Thus, we can ask ourselves whether to solve rationally our inconsistencies requires a reorientation, reinterpretation and restructuring of our belief system that would force us to move a step further from naturalism. This restructuring has

<sup>1</sup> The expression “local certainty” is a variation of what Moyal-Sharrock calls “local hinges”. “Local hinges constitute the underlying framework of knowledge of some human beings at a given time. They are culture-variant and many of them seem to be the product of empirical observation” (Moyal-Sharrock 2005, 136).

to go beyond the more or less simple replacement of some unshakable judgments that function at a certain period of time as hardened channels through which other empirical propositions move, by others (O.C. §96, cfr. §213). The needed restructuring might issue in a change in the overall shape of our nest-like belief system.

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# Wittgenstein's Certainty in the Face of Fallibility

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## I.

In *On Certainty* Wittgenstein makes the following *empirical observation*: There are propositions, both empirical and logic, [called 'framework beliefs' or 'hinge propositions, or, *axis propositions*] that *stand fast* for me (for us), or, equivalently according to Wittgenstein, that I do not doubt, that I do not call into question, of which I am totally convinced, of which I am *certain*.

Certainty is manifested by: "*Nothing* in the world will convince me of the opposite! ... I shall give up other things but not this." (380), "I would refuse to entertain *any* argument that tried to show the opposite!" (577), "I could not accept *any* experience as proof to the contrary." (360). [All references are to Wittgenstein 1969.]

I call this manifestation: *tenacity*, that is, I hold onto a proposition *p* tenaciously means that I shall let *absolutely nothing* count as 'evidence' against *p*. Tenacity describes a *psychological* state of mind, or an *attitude* (404), which may, of course, change over time.

As Wittgenstein notes, one can *always rationalize* holding propositions tenaciously because it is *always* possible to find grounds to dismiss *any* proposition *q* that challenges a proposition *p*. For example, if I am certain that I have two hands, then "if a blind man were to ask me 'Have you got two hands?' I should not make sure by looking. If I were to have any doubt of it, then I don't know why I should trust my eyes. For why shouldn't I test my eyes by looking to find out whether I see my two hands? *What* is to be tested by *what*? (Who decides *what* stands fast?)" (125), "For whenever we test anything, we are already presupposing something that is not tested." (163), "If I don't trust this evidence why should I trust any evidence" (672). Thus, "sure evidence is what we *accept* as sure" (196).

## II.

The above rationalization notwithstanding, Wittgenstein is, of course, aware of the fact that we are *not infallible*, that we realize that some propositions that we do not doubt are dubitable. For example, Wittgenstein has no doubt that he has a brain but, at the same time, he realizes that "nevertheless it is imaginable that my skull should turn out empty when it was operated on." (4). Similarly, "might I not then suffer doubts about what at present seems the furthest remove from doubt?" (420), or "are a lot of our statements incapable of falsehood?" (436)

I shall call *temporality* the realization that one may in the future reject propositions that, at present, he does not doubt.

## III.

There is an apparent *logical* tension between tenacity and temporality. How can I reconcile my realization that I may in the future reject a proposition that I currently hold tenaciously, with the fact that I am currently completely unwilling to accept *any* evidence against it? Put differently, by temporality, at the time that I am certain that *p* I realize

that there may exist another proposition *q* that contradicts *p* and that I myself may in the future accept *q* and reject *p*. Should not this possibility make me (*even ever so slightly*) doubt *p*? *Tenacity, therefore, seems to be inconsistent with temporality.*

Indeed, philosophers have long been troubled by the fact that in our daily lives we do hold some propositions tenaciously even though we recognize their temporality. As Lewis, echoing Quine's 'web of beliefs', puts it clearly: "Absolute certainty is tantamount to a firm resolve never to change your mind no matter what, and that is *objectionable*." In other words, *tenacity is objectionable*.

Wittgenstein's novelty is in his *absolute and unapologetic rejection* of this objection. "That to my mind someone else has been wrong is no ground for assuming that I am wrong now.—But isn't it a ground for assuming that I might be wrong? It is no ground for any unsureness in my judgment, or my actions." (606) It follows that "what I need to show is that a doubt is not necessary even when it is possible. That the possibility of the language-game doesn't depend on everything being doubted that can be doubted." (392)

Indeed, as I shall show, objecting to tenacity, even in view of temporality, has *no logical grounds*. That logically it is not necessary to reject tenacity in view of temporality. Thus, Wittgenstein's intuition is correct. More specifically, I shall show that there is a mathematical model in which the terms 'certainty', 'absence of doubt', and 'highest degree of conviction' can all be formally defined and are equivalent. Moreover, within this model, the agent can ('has the right to') be certain that *p* even if he realizes that *p* may not be the case. Within this model, therefore, *tenacity and temporality co-exist*. This model is the well-known and most widely accepted Bayesian model.

## IV.

Briefly, in the Bayesian model, when the agent is totally convinced that *p*, that is, when the agent assigns probability 1 to *p*, then

(B.1) the agent *never* revises his conviction no matter what 'evidence' is presented to him (that is, he holds onto *p* *tenaciously*).

[follows from Bayes' rule.]

(B.2) the agent realizes that *p* may, nevertheless, not be the case.

[*temporality* follows from the fact that 0 probability events may occur. See example below.

[Note that (B.2) applies in our case because probability space is infinite: "There are *countless* general empirical propositions that count as certain for us." (273)]

The following example illustrates the co-existence of tenacity and temporality. A dart that has no 'width' can land at some point on the unit interval [0,1]. The dart is equally likely to land at any point in this interval. The agent is not told where the dart lands. What he is told is that if the dart falls precisely at point 1 then he will be given a coin with Heads on both sides, and if the dart lands any-

where else (except for point 1) then he will be given a 'fair' coin (i.e., one where the probability of Heads = probability of Tails = 1/2). Once he receives the coin he can toss it a large number, N, of times, and observe the resulting sequence of Heads and Tails. He will then be asked if the coin he has is the fair coin or the one with Heads on both sides. If he answers correctly he will get a very valuable prize.

In this case, a Bayesian agent, prior to the tossing of the coin, assigns probability 0 that he will get the coin with Heads on both sides, and probability 1 that he will get the fair coin. [The probability the dart lands at a point is 0.] That is, prior to tossing the coin, the agent is *certain* (according to Definition 1) that the coin he will get is a fair coin.

Using Bayes' rule, the agent will not change this prior belief 'no matter what evidence' he gathers while tossing the coin. Even if in all of the N tosses the coin falls on Heads, the agent will continue to be *certain* that the coin he has is a fair coin. This is true no matter how large N is. [This illustrates tenacity = (B.1) above.]

[The reason is that it is possible (though unlikely) that a fair coin will fall on Heads in N consecutive tosses, just as it is possible to rationalize any belief, e.g., Wittgenstein does not see his two hands because of his bad eyesight (125).]

At the same time, the agent is, of course, aware of the fact that *the dart may land at point 1*, in which case he will get the coin with Heads on both sides. [This illustrates (B.2) above.]

Let  $p^*$  be the proposition: 'The coin I have is fair'.

Then, the agent will *rightly* say: "I am certain that  $p^*$ , I hold  $p^*$  with the highest degree of conviction (which, within the Bayesian model, means probability 1), no evidence will ever make me doubt  $p^*$ , but I do realize that I may be wrong and that [NOT  $p^*$ ] is the case (i.e., that I have the coin with Heads on both sides)."

## V.

There is an *intuitive* sense of discomfort from the fact that the ("rational"!) Bayesian agent continues to be certain that the coin he has is a fair coin even if in all the tosses the coin fell on Heads. Should not an extremely long consecutive sequence of Heads make the agent doubt, even if ever so slightly, that the coin he has is not the fair coin but the one with Heads on both sides? But, as was stated above, the answer is that it is NOT logically necessary to have *any* doubt. [Indeed, and this is what Bayesian *rationality* is based on, any agent who will answer, after many tosses of Heads, that the coin he has is the one with Heads on both sides will win the prize *infinitely less times* than the 'rational Bayesian' who will *always* answer that the coin he has is fair.]

Similarly, it may well seem to us that when one says: "I am certain that  $p$ " it implies that one takes  $p$  to be the case. But in our example, although the agent is certain that the coin he has is fair, he realizes that this may not be the case. More generally, as Wittgenstein puts it: "one does *not* infer how things are from one's own certainty." (30) This, too, is counter intuitive. Of course, even though we realize that our intuition is wrong, it does not mean that we succeed in internalizing it. Wittgenstein acknowledges this discomfort: "The difficulty is to realize the groundlessness

of our believing." (166) I believe that the purpose of *On Certainty* is to help us reach this realization.

A corollary of our discussion is that sceptic's argument reflects his uneasy *feeling* with the fact that one need not doubt propositions that are dubitable, but there is *nothing logically wrong* with doing so. There is *no logical difficulty* with going on affirming without doubt all the judgments that the sceptic's argument appears to undermine, and at the same time to admit to the sceptic that our conception of the world may turn out to be wrong.

## VI.

It is of interest (though not surprising) to note that a *psychological* uneasiness, similar to that we have discussed above, is present also in the theory of expected utility. Within this theory, events of probability 0 have *absolutely no impact* on the agent's choice. The agent is aware that such events may indeed happen, but as far as his preferences and decisions are concerned, these events carry absolutely no weight. The following example illustrates this *intuitive* discomfort.

Consider, again, the dart that can land at some point in  $[0,1]$ . This time, the agent has a chance of getting a valuable object, depending on where the dart lands. Assume, like before, that the agent believes that the dart is equally likely to land at any point in  $[0,1]$ . Consider the following two options:

Option A: The agent gets the object no matter where the dart lands.

Option B: The agent gets the object provided the dart does not land [precisely] at point 1.

According to the theory of expected utility, the agent does *not* prefer option A over option B. The agent is, of course, aware of the fact that *the dart may land at point 1*. Nevertheless, this *possibility* carries *absolutely* no weight in the sense that both options yield the agent *precisely the same* (expected) utility level.

As the dart may, indeed, land at point 1, the agent's attitude, preferences, and decisions may seem counter *intuitive*. But the *psychological* discomfort does not, of course, undermine the *logical* consistency of the mathematical theory of expected utility.

## VII.

To sum up, we have shown that Wittgenstein's intuition is correct. *One way* to realize this is to consider the Bayesian model and *define certainty* as assigning probability 1. The Bayesian agent, then, can be certain that  $p$  yet realize that  $p$  need not be the case. That is, he can hold onto  $p$  tenaciously while realizing its temporality. The Bayesian agent has the logical right to say: "I am certain that  $p$ , I hold  $p$  with the highest degree of conviction, no evidence will ever make me doubt  $p$ , but, at the same time, I do realize that I may be wrong and that [NOT  $p$ ] may be the case."

## Literature

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# Unentschiedene Alternativität in Wittgensteins *Über Gewißheit*

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1969 wurde von G.E.M. Anscombe und G.H. von Wright *Über Gewißheit* veröffentlicht. Betrachtet man die dazugehörigen Manuskripte stößt man auf eine Vielzahl von alternierten Ausdrücken, die Wittgenstein in Form von Satzzeichen, Wörtern sowie halben und ganzen Sätzen anführte. Diese Formen der *Alternativen* wurden wiederum vor, nach, unter bzw. über den zu alternierenden Ausdruck notiert. Die *Alternativen* werden – so darf man allgemein vorläufig einmal annehmen – von Wittgenstein überall da angegeben, wo er einen zutreffenderen Ausdruck als den schon vorhandenen finden will, wo er für sich keinen eindeutig treffenden Ausdruck finden kann sowie wenn er mehrere *Alternativen* nebeneinander für die zutreffendste Möglichkeit hält. Es wurden nun auf den folgenden Seiten all jene *Alternativen* untersucht die von Wittgenstein *unentschieden* stehengelassen wurden.

Wie sieht nun diese Breite von *Alternativen*, falls sich überhaupt von einer Breite sprechen lässt, in *Über Gewißheit* aus? Wie ging Wittgenstein bei der Notierung vor? Und ändert sich die Bedeutung eines Satzes durch das Heranziehen der verschiedenen *Alternativen*?

## Vorgehensweise

In der Analyse der *Alternativen* wurden jene Manuskripte untersucht, welche – wie schon erwähnt – unter dem Namen *Über Gewißheit* veröffentlicht worden sind. Dies sind folgende Manuskripte:

MS 172, S. 5-22; MS 174, S. 14v-40; MS 175 S. 1r-34v + 35r-79; MS 176, S. 22r-46v + 51v-81; MS 177, S. 1r-11. (Biggs; Pichler 1993 S.14) Die Manuskripte folgen dem Katalog von G.H. von Wright. Siehe von Wright 1969.

Während der Ausarbeitung der *Alternativen* stellte sich heraus, dass es sich hier um mehrere hundert handelt, deswegen schien es sinnvoll einen Katalog anzufertigen der diese *Alternativen* anführt. Nun ist es so, dass Wittgenstein nicht nur auf eine Weise alterniert hat und es sinnvoll ist von verschiedenen *Alternativitäten* zu sprechen. Die für mich hier interessante *Alternativität* war die *unentschiedene* (genauerer zu dieser weiter unten), denn diese zeigt *Alternativen* auf, die in *Über Gewißheit* nicht veröffentlicht wurden und mit über 250 *unentschiedenen Alternativitäten* eine beachtenswerte Menge darstellen. Diese *unentschiedenen Alternativen* wurden im Katalog wiederum so aufgelistet, dass sie sowohl in den Manuskripten, als auch in der von Anscombe und von Wright veröffentlichten Version (*Über Gewißheit*), nachgeschlagen werden können. Der Übersicht, sowie der Vollständigkeit halber wurde der Katalog in zwei Teile aufgeteilt.

Der erste Teil führt die *unentschiedenen Alternativen* in Form der Bergen Electronic Edition *diplomatic transcription* (BEEd), die dazugehörigen Seiten der Manuskripte und die entsprechenden Abschnitte der Version von Anscombe und von Wright an.

Der zweite Teil führt die *unentschiedenen Alternativen* in Form der Bergen Electronic Edition *normalized transcription* (BEEEn), die dazugehörigen Seiten der Manuskripte und die entsprechenden Abschnitte der Version von Anscombe und von Wright an.

Somit ergibt sich eine Aufteilung in vier Spalten:

- Seitenzahl des Manuskripts
- dazugehöriger Satz im Manuskript
- die von Anscombe und von Wright dazu ausgewählte Alternative
- der dazugehörige Paragraph

Um der Analyse der *Alternativitäten* eine klare Einteilung zu geben, habe ich die von Alois Pichler in seinem Buch *Untersuchungen zu Wittgensteins Nachlaß* (Pichler, 1994 S. 91ff) verwendete Auflistung herangezogen. Pichler unterscheidet in dieser Arbeit, unter fünf verschiedenen *Alternativitäten*: *entschiedene Alternativität*, *unentschiedene Alternativität*, *aufgehobene Alternativität* sowie *gebundene und ungebundene Alternativität*.

Nur in der BEEd ist die der *Alternativität* zugrundeliegende Textgrundlage vollständig erhalten, in der BEEEn hingegen nur die *unentschiedene Alternativität*, wobei in einem inzwischen am Wittgensteinarchiv in Bergen weiter entwickelten Ausgabeformat jedwede *Alternativität* ersichtlich ist ([http://wab.aksis.uib.no/wab\\_hw.page/](http://wab.aksis.uib.no/wab_hw.page/)). Der BEEEn kommt hingegen, durch die Simplifizierung des Textes, ihre Leserlichkeit zu gute. Ein einfacheres Nachschlagen der *Alternativitäten* ist daher gegeben.

*Entschiedene Alternativität*: Wittgenstein hat sich für eine von zwei *Alternativen* entschieden.

Diese kommt zwar immer wieder innerhalb eines im Katalog angeführten Satzes vor, wurde aber von mir im Katalog nicht genauer behandelt. D.h., der Katalog führt keine vollständige Liste der *entschiedenen Alternativen* an. Sie wurden aber in den Sätzen, die für die Analyse der *unentschiedenen Alternativen* wichtig waren, so belassen wie sie in der BEEd veröffentlicht wurden.

Für die in diesem Artikel verwendeten Zitate aus den Manuskripten wurde die Bergen Electronic Edition herangezogen.

Bsp.: MS 172, S. 5  
„Daß kein Fehler Irrtum möglich war, ist, muß erwiesen werden.“

Wittgenstein hat sich hier für die Alternative *Irrtum* anstatt *Fehler* entschieden.

*Aufgehobene Alternativität*: die angeführten *Alternativen* sind wieder durchgestrichen worden.

In den von mir analysierten Teilen der Manuskripte wurde keine *aufgehobene Alternativität* gefunden.

*Unentschiedene Alternativität*: kann aus zwei oder mehreren *Alternativen* bestehen, die von Wittgenstein noch während des Schreibens oder im Nachhinein bei der Überarbeitung angeführt wurden. Es kommt auch vor, dass *Alternativen* wieder durchgestrichen worden sind.

In der Analyse habe ich ausschließlich die *unentschiedene Alternativität* behandelt, welche sich meistens als *ungebundene*, selten als *gebundene Alternativität* zeigt. Als *ungebunden* gilt eine *Alternativität* dann, wenn zumindest zwei *Alternativen* in keinem syntaktisch sowie semantisch gebundenen (von einander abhängigen) Verhältnis zueinander stehen. Als *gebunden* hingegen, wenn ein syn-

taktisch und/oder semantisch abhängiges Verhältnis besteht.

Bsp.: MS 172, S. 5  
„Daß kein Fehler Irrtum möglich war, ist, muß erwiesen werden.“

Unentschieden sind die *Alternativen* ist und war.

Bsp.: MS 176, S.76r  
„Es schiene dann, als müßte das Sprachspiel, die Tatsachen«e», die es ermöglichen«t», 'zeigen'.“

Hier liegt eine gebundene Alternativität vor. Die Alternativen sind entweder Tatsachen – ermöglichen oder Tatsache – ermöglichen.

## Analyse

In den rund 222 Paragraphen sind über 250 *unentschiedene Alternativitäten* (*Alternativen* wären wesentlich mehr vorzufinden) nachweisbar. Diese wiederum setzen sich hauptsächlich aus alternierten Wörtern, sowie halben Sätzen zusammen. Nur in wenigen Fällen wurden vollständige Sätze, sowie Satzzeichen alterniert. In fast allen Fällen sind nur zwei *Alternativen* vorzufinden, in ein paar wenigen Fällen sind es drei und ein Mal kommen vier bzw. fünf vor. Der Unterschied in der Bedeutung der *Alternativen* innerhalb einer *Alternativität* ist verschieden groß und verschieden beachtlich.

Generell ist anzumerken, dass die Unterschiede in der Bedeutung bei den Satzzeichen wenig bedeutend sind, so zum Beispiel in

MS 174, S.25v: „Aber handelt sich's wirklich darum, daß er's weiß, ? & nicht darum, [...], F.G.“  
Die Alternativen sind , und ?.

Bei den Wörtern, halben Sätzen und Sätzen kann der Unterschied in der Bedeutung schließlich sehr groß sein. Zunächst ein Beispiel mit geringer unterschiedlicher Bedeutung:

MS 176, S.33v: „Wir philosophieren nur bloß.“  
Die Alternativen sind *nur* und *bloß*.

Ein Beispiel wo der Unterschied in der Bedeutung groß ist, zeigt sich

MS 174, S. 24r: „Ein Kind wird freilich allerdings aber für gewöhnlich nicht an so einem Glauben festhalten & bald das glauben, von dem überzeugt werden es lehren.“, was wir ihm im Ernst sagen.

In diesem Satz finden sich zunächst zwei *entschiedene Alternativitäten*: *freilich* und *allerdings* wurden mit *aber* ersetzt; *das glauben* wurde mit *von dem überzeugt werden* ersetzt.

Am Ende des Satzes steht die *unentschiedene Alternativität*, in welcher die zwei *Alternativen im Ernst sagen* und *es lehren* einen großen Unterschied in deren Bedeutung aufweisen.

Alternativen, zwischen welchen der Unterschied in der Bedeutung groß ist, sind relativ wenige vorzufinden.

Es ist schwer zu sagen, welche Intention Wittgenstein grundsätzlich bei den *unentschiedenen Alternativitäten* hatte. Wollte er zumindest zwei *Alternativen* zur Verfügung stellen, da eine allein nicht treffend genug war? Oder hatte er nicht die Zeit, die Texte nochmals genauer durcharbeiten?

Was sich auf jeden Fall sagen lässt, ist dass Wittgenstein nachgearbeitet hat, denn zum einen sind in jedem der hier relevanten Manuskripte zumindest einige Einfügungen von *Alternativen* mit einer dunkleren Tinte (wie man auf den Faksimile der Bergen Electronic Edition erkennen kann), als die im darauf beziehenden Text, verwendet worden.

Zum anderen schreibt Pichler, dass ein Text, welcher über der Zeile in den Manuskripten eingefügt worden ist, meistens aus einer Revision entstamme und bei den von mir untersuchten *unentschiedenen Alternativen*, handelt es sich Größtenteils um solche. Weiters gibt Pichler an, dass Wittgenstein ab MS 107 (1929) während des Schreibens alterniere und diese Technik bis zu seinem Tode weiterführe. Dies zeige sich darin, dass Wittgenstein die *Alternativen* nebeneinander niederschreibt. Auch diese Alternierungsweise ist vorzufinden. Wobei sie nur ungefähr 20% der *unentschiedenen Alternativitäten* ausmacht. Kein Unterschied ist hingegen in der Aussagekraft der zwei Alternierungsweisen festzustellen, denn beide wurden für Wörter, halbe Sätze und Sätze verwendet. Satzzeichen wurden jedoch ausschließlich in ersterer Weise alterniert.

Außerdem hat sich gezeigt, dass Wittgenstein in einigen Fällen die indikative bzw. konjunktive Verwendung eines Verbes als *Alternativen* angeführt hat, wie in

MS 176, S.29v: „Ich sage allerdings: „Hier würde <sup>wird</sup> kein vernünftiger Mensch zweifeln.““

Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass Wittgenstein die hier relevanten Manuskripte, zumindest in Bezug auf die *Alternativen*, nachbearbeitet hat. Wie endgültig diese Nachbearbeitung aber beabsichtigt worden ist, und ob nun Wittgenstein zwei oder mehrere Alternativen stehen lassen wollte oder ob er noch nicht gründlich genug nachbearbeiten konnte, lässt sich soweit nicht feststellen .

## Konklusion

Die Anzahl der *unentschiedenen Alternativitäten* ist beachtlich, da sie in ca. einem Drittel der in *Über Gewißheit* veröffentlichten Abschnitte vorkommen. Diese *Alternativitäten* weisen wiederum *Alternativen* in der Form von Satzzeichen, Wörtern und halben bzw. ganzen Sätzen auf. Es hat sich herausgestellt, dass sich diese Formen der *Alternativen* verschieden stark auf die Deutung des Satzes auswirken. Ändert sich die Bedeutung eines Satzes, wo Satzzeichen alterniert wurden nur marginal, so kann sich hingegen die Bedeutung bei alternierten Wörtern, halben bzw. ganzen Sätzen beachtlich ändern, wobei die größeren Bedeutungsunterschiede unter den *Alternativen* vergleichsweise wenig vorkommen. Über die Arbeitsweise Wittgensteins bezüglich der Alternativen lässt sich sagen, dass er während des Schreibens alterniert sowie Alternativen nachbearbeitet hat.

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# Logische Symbolik und Bedeutung: Zur Ablehnung der ‚pragmatischen‘ *Tractatus*-Interpretation von Paul Livingston

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## 1

Seit einigen Jahren nimmt die Diskussion der Logik in Wittgensteins *Tractatus* wieder zunehmenden Raum in der philosophischen Forschung ein. Dies liegt zum einen daran, dass analytische Philosophen sich wieder vermehrt auf die Eigenständigkeit ihrer Theoriegehäuse zu besinnen scheinen. Darüber hinaus ist Wittgensteins Verständnis der „unsinnigen Sätze“ (TLP 4.003), die, – etwas paradox – auch noch den größten Teil seiner Aphorismen im *Tractatus* ausmachen sollen (TLP 6.54), bis heute Gegenstand der Interpretation. (Morris 2008: 7-10) Besonders herausragend ist hier die Analyse der logischen Form und der Symbolik. Während Autoren wie Marie McGinn zu evaluieren versuchen, inwiefern Wittgenstein interne Beziehungen im *Tractatus* herstellen kann (McGinn 2010), wagt sich Paul Livingston an eine ‚pragmatische‘ Theorie der Bedeutung heran. (Livingston 2004)

Ich stelle in Teil 2 Livingstons Idee sukzessive in ihren analytischen Bestandteilen vor, und weise in Teil 3 anhand unterschiedlicher Theorieansätze nach, dass Livingston den Gebrauch der logischen Form und der logischen Symbolik zu ausgedehnt im Sinne des ‚späten Wittgenstein‘ interpretiert. Ich folgere daraus, dass Wittgensteins Symbolik und eine Bedeutungstheorie nur innerhalb der logischen Analyse des *Tractatus* selbst erfasst werden können.

## 2

Paul Livingston entwirft in seinem Artikel “Meaning is Use in the *Tractatus*” (2004) ein ungewohntes Bild des Verhältnisses der Bedeutung eines Satzes und der Beziehungsstruktur einfacher Objekte in Sachverhalten im *Tractatus*. Sein ‚pragmatisches‘ Konzept (Livingston 2004: 40) einer Theorie der logischen Form und der Bedeutung von Sätzen unterliegt seiner Auffassung nach einer Gebrauchstheorie der Bedeutung, wie sie die meisten Kommentatoren eigentlich nur im ‚späten Wittgenstein‘ anträfen. (Livingston 2004: 34f.) Die logische Form als Bindeglied zwischen sinnvollen Sätzen und den von den Sätzen beschriebenen Tatsachen unterliege einer Theorie der Bedeutung von Zeichen, die nicht mehr und nicht weniger als eine Analyse der umgangssprachlichen, intersubjektiven Praxis der Sprachnutzung erfordere. (Livingston 2004: 35)

Livingstons Analyse nach sind Zeichen im *Tractatus* bloße sensual wahrnehmbare Laute oder Markierungen. Symbole hingegen liest Livingston als Zeichen zusammengekommen mit den logischen Möglichkeiten, auf die sie bedeutungsvoll gebraucht werden können. (Livingston 2004: 38ff.) Ausgehend von Wittgensteins Bildtheorie der Bedeutung müsse ein sinnvoller Satz die logische Form mit einem Sachverhalt teilen, was genau dann der Fall sei, wenn es eine Art Isomorphismus zwischen der Beziehungsstruktur eines Satzes und der Beziehungsstruktur eines Sachverhaltes gebe. (Livingston 2004: 37) Die Evaluation der logischen Form müsse daher als Schlüssel zum Verständnis der Bedeutung von Sätzen verstanden werden. (Livingston 2004: 35f.) Die Bedeutung eines Zeichens nehme in dieser Evaluation eine besonders

wichtige Rolle ein, obwohl sie in den Standard-Interpretationen des *Tractatus* zumeist außer Acht gelassen werde. (Livingston 2004: 38) Denn das Erkennen des Symbols am Zeichen geschehe durch das Erfassen der kombinatorischen Struktur der Zeichen, verstanden als logische Möglichkeiten ihrer sinnvollen Anwendung in der Satzstruktur. (Livingston 2004: 39) Und nur weil Zeichen in diesem Sinne bedeutungsvolle Anwendung erführen, könnten sie überhaupt logische Formen haben, und nur aufgrund der logischen Form könnten die Zeichen selbst Bedeutung haben. (Livingston 2004: 39f.) Daher sei der Zusammenhang zwischen Symbolen und Objekten ausschlaggebend für den Sinn eines Satzes, denn durch die Analyse des Symbols würden die Zeichen nicht nur in ihrer kombinatorischen Struktur, sondern auch in ihrer tatsächlichen Verwendung im Kontext des Satzes verstanden. (Livingston 2004: 40) Der einzige Beleg für die Richtigkeit der Analyse eines bestimmten Satzes seien die festgelegten Arten, auf die seine einfachen Zeichen Bedeutung hätten. Folglich gebe es auch keine Analyse eines Satzes, die sich nicht auch auf den Bereich anderer Sätze beziehe, auf die sich die logischen Bestandteile dieses Satzes sinnvoll beziehen könnten. (Livingston 2004: 40)

Den spezifisch pragmatischen Aspekt an diesem Verständnis der Analytik von Zeichen scheint Livingston auf zwei Ebenen zu identifizieren. Zum einen versteht er die Analyse von Zeichen in Sätzen als ein umfassendes und erschöpfendes Analyseprogramm zur Bedeutungsfindung im *Tractatus*. (Livingston 2004: 44f., 49) Die Theorie der Bedeutung sei im *Tractatus* genauso essentiell pragmatisch wie in Wittgensteins *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* in dem Sinne, dass die sinnvolle *Anwendung* der einfachen logischen Zeichen im Satz ausschlaggebend sei für die grundlegende Bedeutungsdifferenz zwischen sei Sätzen. (Livingston 2004: 40f.) Und letztlich sei *nur* das Analysieren dieser Anwendung entscheidend für jedwede Bedeutung im *Tractatus*, sodass eine nicht-pragmatische Bedeutungstheorie, etwa in Form einer übergeordneten metaphysischen Bedeutungstheorie (Livingston 2004: 64), ausgeschlossen werde. Die ‚pragmatische‘ Bedeutungsanalyse könne im Endeffekt gar sämtliche philosophische Konfusionen beheben (Livingston 2005: 44f.), weswegen sich philosophische Kritik im Zusammenfassen und Systematisieren von Alltagssprachlichen Bedeutungsurteilen erschöpfe.

Pragmatisch sei dieses Analyseprogramm ferner, weil es sich in seiner Basis auf die Alltagssprache beziehe. Die Anwendungsmöglichkeiten eines Zeichens, die in der Alltagssprache nicht deutlich hervorträten, würden durch logische Analyse insofern geklärt, als dass jedes einzelne Zeichen genau eine Bedeutung erhalte. Und diese Bedeutung bestehe eben in den kombinatorischen Regeln, die die Möglichkeiten der Bedeutung eines Zeichens lenkten, gänzlich abhängig von den sinnvollen Kombinationen mit anderen Zeichen. (Livingston 2004: 41f.) Wittgenstein bezeichne die Gesamtheit dieser Regeln als logische Syntax. (Livingston 2004: 42.) Und diese logische Syntax ist Livingstons Auffassung nach ausschließlich dafür zuständig, die Muster des Gebrauchs von Zeichen, die implizit in der Alltagssprache enthalten seien, als kombinatorische Regeln für das sinnvolle Auftreten von Zeichen

explizit zu machen. (Livingston 2004: 42.) Das sprachphilosophische Voranschreiten von Alltagsbeobachtungen über ihren sinnvollen Gebrauch bis hin zur Notation dieser Beobachtungen kulminiere im eindeutigen Zuweisen von partikularen Verwendungsregeln der Alltagssprache zu ebenso partikularen syntaktischen Regeln für die Kombination von Zeichen. (Livingston 2004: 44.) Eine entscheidende Konsequenz ist, dass die Analyse von Zeichen bei Livingston nicht aus der Sprache herausbrechen muss, weil sie in einem linguistischen bzw. dialektischen Prozess verharrt, ohne eine außersprachliche Realität zu erreichen. (Livingston 2004: 51f.) Da das Analyseprogramm bei den noch nicht analysierten Zeichen der Alltagssprache ansetze, gebe es kein Kriterium der Bedeutung, welches nicht von den Mustern des Gebrauchs der gewöhnlichen Alltagssprache abhängt. (Livingston 2004: 45) Der Analyseprozess sei derart pragmatisch, dass er aus Antworten auf Fragen wie „How are you using that term?“ (Livingston 2004: 45) bestehe. Schlussendlich sei das Anliegen des Analyseprozesses auch nicht, ein Kriterium für eine bestimmte Art von Bedeutung anzugeben; vielmehr solle die Analyse durch Formalisierungen explizit die Kriterien zeigen, die schon implizit in der gewöhnlichen Anwendung der Sprache vorhanden seien. (Livingston 2004: 45f.) Nicht einmal die quantitative Menge der Regeln der logischen Syntax müsse von der Menge der möglichen Bedeutungen in der Alltagssprache abweichen, da der Bedeutungsklärungsprozess nicht an bestimmte Inhalte gebunden sei. (Livingston 2004: 49) Eine substanziale theoretische Beschreibung der Bedeutung gebe es einfach nicht im *Tractatus* (Livingston 2004: 52), sodass das *einzig*e dort vorgelegte Kriterium der Bedeutung bereits in der intersubjektiven, alltäglichen Bedeutungsklärunge aufgewiesen werde. (Livingston 2004: 35)

### 3

Offenkundig sind im *Tractatus* die Zeichen das sinnlich Wahrnehmbare am Symbol (TLP 3.32), und die Konfiguration der analysierten einfachen Namen sind unstrittig die sprachlichen Stellvertreter der atomaren Individuen, der (zumindest) einfachen Gegenstände. (TLP 3.202, 3.203, 3.22, 4.12) Im Satzzeichen, durch welches Gedanken ausgedrückt werden können (TLP 3.12), „entspricht“ (TLP 3.21) der Konfiguration der vollständig analysierten Namen der Konfiguration der Gegenstände in der Sachlage. (TLP 3.201, 3.21, 3.202)

Doch was heißt es nun, „auf den sinnvollen Gebrauch“ (TLP 3.326) zu achten, um das Symbol am Zeichen zu erkennen? Einer klassischen Auslegung zufolge müssen die Namen im *Tractatus* in einem Symbolismus dieselben kombinatorischen Möglichkeiten aufweisen wie die Gegenstände in der Wirklichkeit. Auch der Satz muss dieselbe logische Form haben wie der Sachverhalt, dessen reale Existenz in der Wirklichkeit den Satz wahr macht. Nach diesem – angeblich metaphysischen (Mc Ginn 20010: 495) – Ansatz existiert eine substanziale Isomorphiebedingung zwischen Sprache und Welt, die dadurch zum Ausdruck gebracht wird, dass die logische Syntax der Sprache der logischen Form der Welt (nicht sagbar) entspricht. Das Symbol am Zeichen wird dadurch erkannt, dass das Zeichen in der limitierten Anzahl von Sätzen vorkommen kann, welche überhaupt dazu in der Lage sind, die nichtsprachlichen Verkettungsmöglichkeiten zur Bildung von Sachverhalten abzubilden. (Hacker 2001: 129-135) Die kategoriale Analogie der Symbolik in Sätzen zur aktuellen und möglichen Substanz-Ausgestaltung kann schlussendlich sogar als wahrheitskonstitutiv interpretiert werden. (TLP 4.022, 4.024, Hintikka & Hintikka 1986/1996: 128ff.)

Obwohl Livingston den strukturellen Zusammenhang zwischen Symbolen und Objekten ebenfalls herausstreicht, möchte er ihm aufgrund der Zurückweisung einer „metaphysisch-realistischen“ Bedeutungstheorie (Livingston 2004: 34) gewiss keine Substanzialität einräumen. Wie kann also eine nicht-substanziale Theorie der Bedeutung im *Tractatus* verstanden werden?

Versteht man die Aufgabe der logischen Syntax schlicht als in sich konsistente Methode, die logische Form der Bestandteile von Sätzen durch logische Analyse eindeutig herauszustellen, dann lässt uns die logische Form der Bestandteile von Sätzen ein kategoriales Verständnis unserer Sätze herausarbeiten. Hidé Ishiguro beispielsweise weist darauf hin, dass, obwohl Wittgenstein keine Idealsprache schaffen wollte, er dennoch das Ziel verfolgte, die Oberflächengrammatik der Umgangssprache auf logisch einfache Elementarsätze zurückzuführen. (Ishiguro 2001: 28.) Ihrer gut belegbaren Interpretation zufolge ist das Verstehen des Sinns eines Satzes abhängig vom Sinn anderer Sätze, und zwar durch die Wahrheitsbeziehungen der Sätze untereinander. (Ishiguro 2001: 31.) Da der Wahrheitswert aller Sätze auf Elementarsätze zurückzuführen sei, ergebe sich die Beziehung zwischen Sprache und Welt immer aus der Analyse des Elementarsatzes. (Ishiguro 2001: 32f.) Ihre Interpretation von Wittgensteins Bildtheorie ist realistisch in dem Sinne, dass wir durch sie unsere Gedanken und Aussagen vergleichen mit dem, was in einer gegebenen, nicht von uns konstruierten Welt vorhanden ist. (Ishiguro 2001: 44.) Die Theorie der Bedeutung involviert daher eine Dichotomie von menschlichem Verständnis und der Welt, die nur durch logische Analyse in Einklang zu bringen ist. Eine sinnvolle Anwendung auch der Zeichen bezieht sich bei ihr auf deren mögliche Rückführbarkeit auf Elementarsätze, sodass der Sinn eines Satzes sich sicherlich nicht in alltagssprachlichen Bedeutungsurteilen erschöpft. Versteht man Ishiguros „anti-metaphysischen“ Ansatz (McGinn 2010: 498) ferner ausschließlich als Untersuchung, auf welche Arten Symbole im Satz symbolisieren können (McGinn 2010: 499), dann bleibt der Geltungsbereich der Analyse eingeschränkt auf die logische Natur der Symbolik selbst – und ist damit nicht pragmatisch in Livingstons Sinne.

Die ‚resolute‘ Lesart des *Tractatus* eröffnet darüber hinaus die Möglichkeit, Wittgenstein direkt beim Wort zu nehmen und die Sätze des *Tractatus* als vollkommen sinnlos zu verstehen, sodass Wittgenstein dem Leser nicht einmal indirekt echte Erkenntnisse nahelegen möchte. (Conant & Diamond 2004: 47) Das noch verbleibende „therapeutische Ziel“ (McGinn 2010: 509) einer methodischen Analyse bleibt jedoch gebunden an das Klarwerden regelhafter logischer und semantischer Charakteristika unserer Sätze, auch wenn es sich auf die Praxis der Sprache bezieht. Der Gebrauch unserer Sprache enthält demnach bereits logische Inferenzmuster, sodass die Art, auf die Sätze symbolisieren, bereits essentiell logisch gerichtet ist, was sich jedoch im unreflektierten Umgang mit unserer Sprache nicht immer direkt offenbart. (Conant & Diamond 2004: 65ff.) In dieser Theorie entfällt jede Suche nach genuiner Wahrheit in der Verknüpfung von Welt und Sprache, sodass Wittgensteins Sätze nur Übergangsweise dem Ziel dienen, unsere eigene Sprachreflexion anzutreiben. (Diamond 1988: 9) Eine umfassende Theorie der semantischen Bedeutung gibt es in der ‚resoluten‘ Theorie daher nicht. Livingstons Wunsch, jedem Zeichen genau eine Bedeutung zuzuschreiben, oder gar definite Verwendungsregeln der Sprache auszuarbeiten, kann somit nicht entsprochen werden.



Welche Interpretation der Ziele und der Methodik Wittgensteins im *Tractatus* man sich zu Eigen machen möchte, grundsätzlich bleiben die dortigen Zusammenhänge doch in einem zwingend fundamentalen Sinne logischer Art. Auch wenn Wittgenstein im Gegensatz zu Bertrand Russell sich keine gesetzten logischen Klassen zu Nutze macht, mit denen die Gegenstände korrespondieren könnten, so haben die Gegenstände bereits ihre jeweiligen logischen Eigenschaften. Die die internen Eigenschaften einzelner Gegenstände als ihre Form (TLP 2.0141) sind bestimmte, ausschließende Möglichkeiten, in tatsächlichen Sachverhalten vorkommen zu können. (TLP 2.02331, 2.033, 2.123) Ihre Existenz ist Voraussetzung des Satzes, der uns letzten Endes eine Sachlage mitteilt. (TLP 4.027) Abgesehen von den Fragen, ob eine Symbolik substantiell vertritt oder nicht, welche Rolle ein Symbol in intensionalen Verständniskontexten spielt, oder ob das Reflektieren unserer Sprache keine genuinen Bedeutungen hervorbringen kann, bleibt es doch dabei, dass im *Tractatus* aufgrund des Kontextprinzips nur der Satz überhaupt Sinn haben kann. (TLP 3.3) Und dieser Sinn ist direkt gebunden an die Symbole und deren logisch-syntaktischen Eigenschaften. (TLP 3.31, 3.321, 3.323, 3.318, 6.126) Sogar erst durch die Existenz eines sinnvollen Satzes ist die Existenz eines Ortes im logischen Raum verbürgt, der durch diesen Satz bestimmt wird. (TLP 3.4) Es ist unklar, wie Livingston mit Fragen nach dem individuellen Gebrauch von Termini in diesen logischen Raum vorzustoßen gedenkt.

In keinem Fall kann sich das „Klarwerden von Sätzen“ auf die Lebenswelt beziehen, die erst der ‚späte Wittgenstein‘ zur Bedeutungsanalyse heranzog. Denn in der Logik des *Tractatus* sagen nicht „wir mit Hilfe der Zeichen aus, was wir wollen, sondern in der Logik sagt die Natur der naturnotwendigen Zeichen selbst aus.“ (TLP 6.124) Die logische Syntax irgendeiner Zeichensprache – nicht aber der Umgangssprache – gibt bereits alle Sätze der Logik. (TLP 6.124), auch wenn der Elementarsatz nicht *a priori* erkannt werden kann. (TLP 5.57) Die folglich logische Verifizierbarkeit bzw. Falsifizierbarkeit des Satzes führt letztendlich auch dazu, dass Wittgenstein alle nicht-naturwissenschaftlichen Sätze als unaussprechlich, als mystisch, ansieht. (TLP 3.30321, 4.11, 4.113, 6.522) Schon deswegen muss der Geltungsbereich des Sinnvollen in der Logik des *Tractatus* kleiner sein als der der Alltagssprache, da letzterer ohne Zweifel mehr enthält als naturwissenschaftliche Aussagen. Erst im ‚späten Wittgenstein‘ schließlich wird das Sprachspiel als Vermittlungsinstanz zwischen Namen und Gegenständen aufgefasst, sodass gar der Existenzmodus der Namensbeziehungen, also der semantischen Bedeutung, in verschiedenen Sprachspielen erst ermittelt wird. Die Sprachspiele treten dort nicht einfach nur an die Stelle von Namensrelationen, sondern sie sind grundlegend konstitutiv für sie selbst. (Hintikka & Hintikka 1986/1996: 251) Eine ‚pragmatische‘ Theorie der Bedeutung, wie sie in den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* zu finden ist, impliziert eine semantische Bedeutung, die Bezug nehmen kann auf ihren zeitlichen, kontextualen und historischen Rahmen. Die Umgangssprache erfüllt zwar bereits im *Tractatus* einen eigenständigen Zweck, da sie „Teil des menschlichen Organismus“ (TLP 4.002) ist und „stillschweigende Abmachungen“ (TLP 4.002) enthält, sodass sie für das alltägliche menschliche Verstehen vital ist. Sie bleibt aber uneindeutig (TLP 3.323), sodass „die logische Klärung der Gedanken“ (TLP 4.112) als einziger Zweck der Philosophie für den ‚frühen‘ Wittgenstein notwendig wird.

#### 4

Livingstons ‚pragmatisches Konzept‘ verläuft sich in überbordenden philosophischen Ansprüchen, da es der logischen Form und der logischen Analyse des *Tractatus* keine dezidierte Funktion zuweisen kann. Es ist nicht ersichtlich, welche Rolle Symbole bei ihm haben oder in welchem Sinne ein Satz semantische oder logisch-grammatikalische Bedeutung erfährt. Ich denke, eine ‚Gebrauchstheorie‘ der Bedeutung von Sätzen kann sich im *Tractatus* grundsätzlich nur auf den logisch-syntaktischen ‚Gebrauch‘ logischer Zusammenhänge im Satz beziehen. Die Symbolik im Satz folgt einer der Umgangssprache enthobenen Logik, ob sie nun der Korrespondenz mit einer Ontologie, der unterschiedlichen Funktionalität verschiedener Symbole oder dem therapeutischen Zweck des Hervorhebens logischer Muster dient. Ganz gewiss ist deswegen im ‚frühen Wittgenstein‘ kein ‚später Wittgenstein‘ der Sprachspiele zu entdecken.

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# Philosophy, Ethics and Therapy

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This paper tries to bring together some thoughts about (i) the ethical significance which Wittgenstein (and not only Wittgenstein) took his work to have; (ii) the nature of psychotherapy; and (iii) the idea, which has been very prominent in recent Wittgenstein commentary, that philosophy – according to Wittgenstein – is ‘therapeutic’.

Wittgenstein’s work is very rarely about ethics: ethics is mentioned rarely in the *Tractatus* and in *Philosophical Investigations* not at all. Nonetheless Wittgenstein’s claim about the *Tractatus* that ‘the point of the work is an ethical one’ seems no less true of the later work than it is of the *Tractatus* itself. But saying *why* it’s true requires some care.

In the first place the ethical significance of Wittgenstein’s work (from whatever period) relates not to the work’s content, but to the practice of philosophy, no matter which particular problems it is addressing: in brief, Wittgenstein’s philosophy has ethical significance because he saw its practice as a kind of spiritual exercise. Why? The basic thought is that philosophical confusion is a mark of personal badness; the practice of philosophy remedies confusion; so philosophy when practised successfully makes one a better person. The second of these ideas – that philosophy unravels confusion – is widely (and correctly) seen as a constant in Wittgenstein’s work, early and late. The first, that confusion is a mark of badness, receives somewhat different expressions at different phases of Wittgenstein’s career. In the *Big Typescript*, for example, we find the idea that ‘work on philosophy is ... a kind of work on oneself’, this work consisting in overcoming ‘resistances of the will’. In the 1914-16 *Notebooks*, by contrast, the leading thought is that of ‘being in agreement with the world’, a state one can only enjoy if – as Wittgenstein explains in a wartime letter to Paul Engelmann – one has a clear conscience. But via its unravelling of misunderstandings – which replaces the complication of the confused philosopher’s consciousness with a simplicity it borrows from the world it is a consciousness of – ‘agreement with the world’ is precisely what the activity of philosophy restores. (‘All the propositions of ordinary language, just as they stand, are in perfect logical order’, *Tractatus* 5.5563; ‘[philosophy’s] results must be simple, but its activity is as complicated as the knots it unravels’.)

The unfavourable comparison between the simplicity of the world and the complexity of the confused philosophical consciousness also resurfaces in the later work in the idea that ‘philosophy leaves everything as it is’. It also connects with the influence on Wittgenstein – and which Wittgenstein acknowledged – of the architect Adolf Loos. In his essay ‘Ornament and Crime’ (1908), Loos argued that – subject to certain conditions – decorative elements with no structural role were a crime on architecture. To work in an undecorated idiom is therefore a moral requirement. But that is just what Wittgenstein aspired to do: the theme, though somewhat recessive in the *Investigations*, makes itself felt in various ways (‘clearing up the ground of language’; ‘a wheel that can be turned though nothing else moves with it’; ‘leav[ing] everything as it is’), and it is highly insistent in the *Tractatus*. For example, expressing identity of object by identity of sign rather than by a sign of identity (5.53) is just one example of the way the construction of a perspicuous notation is the elimination of decoration (here, ‘=’). The Loosian moraliza-

tion of plainness thus enables Wittgenstein to read every detail of his philosophizing as furthering a moral project.

Clearly much of the evidence for this understanding of the ethical significance – as Wittgenstein saw it – of his work comes from the work itself. But biographical material is also relevant, for here Wittgenstein’s thoughts of his own badness, of his badness as a form of enforced separation from a better and simpler and more wholesome world, and of his need for ‘redemption’ understood as readmission to such a world, figure very prominently.

Now for all that has so far been said, the conception of the ethical significance of philosophy which I have outlined could be as true of the philosophy of history or of art as it is of the philosophy of mind or mathematics. However, this conception in fact makes itself very strongly felt in the specific choice of problems upon which Wittgenstein mainly practised. For example, a leading *topic* of Wittgenstein’s work is mind’s place in the world, and a leading ‘thesis’ of Wittgenstein’s that mentality is just an aspect of the totality of our lived relations with the world, and so as ‘external’ as any part of the world it has as its object (not something inner whose relations to the world needs to be puzzled over). The same could be said of the relation between language and world (the *topic*); the ‘thesis’ is that the *Wortsprache* – something that can be sandwiched between the covers of a dictionary and grammar book – is an abstraction from a complex set of verbal and non-verbal interactions of humans with their environments and with each other, and only if we mistakenly identify the abstraction with language itself will we see language as something whose relation to the world needs to be puzzled about. Compare Cavell: ‘[T]he correct relation between inner and outer, between the soul and its society, is the theme of the *Investigations* as a whole’, *The Claim of Reason* p. 329. There is thus a match between the goal of the practice as I have outlined it – returning the self to its world by making it philosophically unpuzzled – and the content of the thoughts the having of which would constitute the success of the practice. We become (once again) a part of the world by becoming philosophically unpuzzled, but at the same time *what* we think when we are once again philosophically unpuzzled is *that* we are part of it. The movement of thought from confusion to clarity about (say) the mind’s place in the world is an *allegory* of the (ethical, personal) transformation the thinker undergoes in making it: it is a kind of picture of the process that is constituted by the thinking of it. (In the central cases, at least: if all philosophical practice is undoing puzzlement, then it all has the same ethical significance *qua* practice, even if sometimes its content is not such as also to represent what the practice accomplishes.)

Moving now to my second theme – psychotherapy – the idea that in ridding oneself of philosophical puzzlement one makes oneself *better* (more whole) has some claim to be considered a therapeutic notion, in the sense in which that term is used in psychotherapy. This may sound strange: a long-standing part of the self-image of psychotherapy has been a medical one, so surely it addresses certain kinds of illness. And doesn’t mental *illness* begin just where moral questions leave off? On this view the very thing that makes it an ethical idea would rule it out as a therapeutic one. (Compare the complementary view that

psychotherapy is bad because it encourages us to see moral problems as merely medical.) But this seems rather old-fashioned. The story of psychotherapy's confused relation to the ethical would take too long to unravel here. But the idea that psychotherapy addresses problems of how to live or ideals of character, i.e. that it's guided by ethical notions, has become familiar in recent years – DW Winnicott and Peter Lomas are leading figures here – and this is so especially in the British Isles, where Christian or post-Christian notions about man's original goodness have been influential alongside Freudian pessimism: compare the familiar remark about 'Methodism and Marxism' and the British Left. More specifically, one of the ideals by which thinking in psychotherapy has been guided in recent (and not so recent) years has been an ideal of *relationship to others* ('real relating': Betty Joseph). And the language used to characterize the 'pathology' of narcissism, or alternatively the 'normal autism' of the newborn infant, is close to Wittgenstein on solipsism in the *Tractatus*: 'the limits of the self are the limits of the world'. I don't want to suggest direct influence. Rather, both Wittgenstein and psychotherapy are drawing on intellectual resources the origin of which goes back a long way beyond both, and upon which others in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have drawn too (Levinas, for instance). The point is that, far from being the case that because of its ethical significance, it can't be therapeutic, Wittgenstein's conception of the practice of philosophy is therapeutic *because* of its ethical significance; more specifically because its guiding ethical ideals – of wholeness, reparation, 'real relating' – are also those

of much of contemporary psychotherapy. If there's an obvious sense in which philosophy as Wittgenstein conceived it is 'like psychotherapy', then it's this. And because that's so, it is perhaps no accident that to the extent that Wittgenstein has had an influence on psychoanalytic thinking, that influence has been in Britain where the tension between the ethical and the therapeutic is least keenly felt. (And the influence has been via Wittgenstein's conception of the nature of *philosophy* as much as via anything he had to say about psychotherapy.)

But if that's so, then another question arises – which brings me to my third theme. In recent Wittgenstein commentary, the idea that Wittgenstein's philosophy is 'therapeutic' is understood in at least the following two senses: (i) philosophy cures misunderstandings but doesn't put anything (any 'theses') in their place, and (ii) philosophy doesn't argue, or doesn't only argue, but deploys a mixed toolkit of (sometimes non-logical) techniques – jokes, comparisons etc. – to achieve the first aim. In the final section of the paper I explore the relationship between the claim that philosophy is therapeutic in *this* sense, and the 'therapeutic' (psychotherapeutic) character of philosophy in the sense I have examined so far. I also raise the question to what extent we can – as I think we should – retain a sense of the ethical significance of apparently non-ethical questions in philosophy if we don't join Wittgenstein in locating it in a sense that getting these questions right is a way of restoring ourselves to wholeness.

# Skp: An Augustinian Conception of Epistemology?

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It is, of course, no news to anyone in this room that Ludwig Wittgenstein opens the *Philosophical Investigations* with a passage from Augustine's *Confessions*. Nor do we need reminding that Wittgenstein takes the quote to capture a "particular picture of the essence of human language". (PI§1) Wittgenstein seems to have chosen this particular pre-theoretical picture not because it is obscure, awkward or unlikely, but, on the contrary, because it is familiar, unremarkable and entirely plausible. This picture provides Wittgenstein with what he identifies as the "roots" of an "idea" about language. (PI§1) And it is this idea that Professor Hacker and Gordon Baker christen the "Augustinian conception of language" (B&H 2005, Chapter 1 and 2009, 48).

Wittgenstein's reflections on this *ordinary* Augustinian conception of language seem to have *extraordinary*, and indeed endless, consequences; one of which is to ensure that we no longer regard language quite so straightforwardly. What was once entirely transparent and obvious about language is now open to question; what was once innocuous, now looks problematic. What seemed to be mere external scene setting for Augustine's own description of language, now seems to be internal to the very possibility of language acquisition itself. The Augustinian conception of language might well be "a natural way to think about language", (B&H 2005, 1) but Wittgenstein entirely overhauls the reasons for thinking why.

I would like, today, to suggest that there is an epistemological equivalent to this Augustinian conception of language. In proposing this, what I am *not* going to do is select an alternative, specifically epistemologically passage from Augustine, designed to prompt some parallel investigation. Nor am I going to offer any finely discriminated correlations between the subtle details of the passage Wittgenstein selects, and a particular *preferred* epistemological view. Rather, I am going to identify an idea, a *conception*, which I think *all* epistemological enquiry takes for granted: as similarly natural, equally correct and philosophically harmless. I then question whether this view is actually as natural as it appears, by providing reasons, drawn from Wittgenstein, why this might not be the case.

The conception I have in mind has *its* roots in the presumption that what it is to have knowledge is to stand in some appropriate, perhaps reliably justified relation to some state of affairs, or way that the world is. And that given such states of affairs, or ways the world are, can be picked out propositionally, then what it is for someone to know something, is for him or her to stand in some suitable relation to a true proposition, or what it is that makes a propositions true. Now, it may be that what I've just said already sounds like a loaded description, but I merely seek a modest pre-theoretical description of what contemporary epistemology standardly formalises in the short form expression, 'Skp'. So whether your leanings are foundationalist, coherentist, internalist, externalist, reliabilist, virtue-orientated, knowledge-first, empiricist, rationalist, Kantian or sceptic, I assume that what you seek to give an account of is Skp. So, even if you would prefer to couch the preliminary descriptive picture differently, I trust that any epistemologist would be comfortable with the near ubiquitous formulation, Skp. For, it is this schema that I

wish to focus on. Contrary to its innocuous appearance, I suggest that Skp is neither neutral, nor impartial. Rather it already unevenly and unwittingly, promotes and demotes, encourages and dismisses the various members of our epistemological confederacy. I therefore wish to suggest that in the formulation, Skp, we have what might, illuminatingly, be called, 'the Augustinian conception of epistemology.' A reminder, then, of the opening of the *Investigations*:

When grown-ups named some object and at the same time turned towards it, I perceived this, and I grasped that the thing was signified by the sound they uttered, since they meant to point *it* out. This, however, I gathered from their gestures, the natural language of all peoples, the language that by means of facial expression and the play of eyes, of the movements of the limbs and the tone of voice, indicates the affections of the soul when it desires, or clings to, or rejects, or recoils from, something. In this way, little by little, I learnt to understand what things the words, which I heard uttered in their respective places in various sentences, signified. And once I got my tongue around these signs, I used them to express my wishes. (PI§1)

According to Wittgenstein, Augustine is here presenting a picture of the essence of language; one that provides the roots of the following tripartite idea:

- (i) "Every word has a meaning." (PI§1)
- (ii) "This meaning is correlated with the word." (PI§1)
- (iii) This meaning "is the object for which it stands." (PI§1)

Professors Baker & Hacker suggest that this interrelated trio can be extended to include two further commitments also present in the passage. These being:

- (iv) "[T]he form of explanation 'This is...' i.e. ostensive explanation, constitutes the foundations of language." (B&H 2005, 2)
- (v) "[T]he child can think, i.e. talk to itself (in the language of thought, as it were) before it learns its mother-tongue from its parents." (B&H 2005, 2)

These five points articulate a picture of word meaning which, according to Baker & Hacker, legitimise a further claim, namely:

- (vi) "[T]e essential function of sentences is to describe how things are." (B&H 2005, 3)

Taken together, these six points encapsulate the so-called Augustinian conception of language. Teasing out the implications of this conception motivates and occupies Wittgenstein throughout the whole of the *Investigations*, and results in vast array of substantial and interconnected insights. In particular there are various, what I call, tent poles, which one can identify as supporting the Augustinian conception of language.

The first is the view that language consists of one type of thing (words), doing one type of job (naming), in one way and one way only (by being correlated to objects). I will call this The Singularity Presumption. The second tent pole is the supposition that when this job is done correctly, a

bridge is built, connecting two discrete realms; namely our private world, rich with its pre-existing thoughts, and the external world of objects, facts and states of affairs. I will call this the Metaphysical Presumption. These two tent poles, the Singularity and the Metaphysical Presumption are commitments found, not just in the Augustinian conception of language, but in Wittgenstein's own earlier work, the *Tractatus*. [Additional TLP quotes on handout]

Yet in the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein rejects the Singularity Presumption informing language, in favour of the diversity that is our language-games. (PI §23) He rejects the singularity of naming in favour of the whole gamut of activities and practices wherein our words have meaning. Gone are the two metaphysical realms bridged by a language in virtue of some supposed shared logical form. Instead, language is a tool-box of equipment mired in our already world-involving forms of life. Describing is just one of many things we do with and in language; and in so doing we don't link two metaphysical distinct realms, courtesy of a sort of connecting rope bridge.

There is, I propose, a comparable Singularity and a Metaphysical Presumption built in to the overtly innocent expression, Skp. By this I mean that the ascription, 'Skp', is not, merely, as a whole, a vehicle for some epistemological counterpart to these two presumptions, but that its three elements, the 'S', the 'k', and the 'p', each harbour a Singular and a Metaphysical Presumption. So just as the Augustinian conception of language springs from an unremarkable, and entirely plausible, picture of the essence of language, then so, too, does the seemingly unremarkable and plausible Augustinian picture of the essence of knowledge. This supposedly innocuous picture, might be pre-theoretically articulated as follows:

- (vii) A person who knows, a *knower*, is the *subject* of knowledge.
- (viii) *Knowledge* is of the world; either of a way the world is, or of a state of affairs, or of some characteristic of the world.
- (ix) *Propositions* describe the ways, states of affairs, and characteristics of the world that do or don't, may or may not, or, must or must not exist.

You may wish to re-jig my wording to your own discretion. The task here is simply to find an uncontentious, untheoretically loaded description that might serve as those three entirely plausible roots which nourish the Skp formulation. I now consider each of the three elements of Skp; starting with the proposition.

The propositional place-holder, *p*, in the standard epistemological usage of the schema Skp, works on the assumption of a univocal concept of a proposition. This being that every sentence which looks like a proposition is one and every proposition has a determinate sense, in virtue of which it can have a truth value. But just as Wittgenstein shows us that it is a mistake to presume that every word is a name, naming some object, which is its correlative meaning, so too a singular conception of what a proposition is, requires reconsidering. For, even though a sentence takes the form of an assertoric sentence, this does not suffice to make it a bipolar proposition, which describes the world (truly or falsely) as assumed by the Augustinian conception of language. Instead, Wittgenstein's philosophical investigation into sentences such as:

- (a) Nothing can be red and green all over.
- (b) The bishop moves diagonally.

- (c)  $2+3=5$
- (d) This is a hand.
- (e) There are objects in the world.

reveal that, "not everything that has the form of an empirical proposition is one." (OC 308) Indeed, "...the concept 'proposition' itself is not a sharp one." (OC 320) For some philosophers like Peter Hacker, the proposition is a family resemblance concept. Propositions like those above (or at least the first four) are *grammatical* propositions which are necessarily true. Their negation does not, however, make them false, but rather, results in nonsense. For, they do not *describe* the world, but are *norms of description*; logico-grammatical rules which are part-constitutive of the practices in which they are used. For other philosophers, such as Daniele Moyal-Sharrock, such sentences are neither true nor false, but expressions which though they may be uttered for heuristic purposes are, actually, non-propositional hinges; the framework for propositions, not propositions themselves. These disagreements notwithstanding, there is nonetheless a shared consensus that whilst many sentences appear to be propositional, not all are. Thus, the assumption that *p* is place-holder, in Skp which can take *any* proposition, or proposition-like sentence, is mistaken. For it requires both a univocal concept of proposition (the Singularity) Presumption, which is mistaken, and a Metaphysical Presumption in which naming is just one of a whole range of normative language-game practices which need not involve objects as meaning-correlatives to words. Strike one for the Augustinian conception of knowledge.

The 'k' in Skp is presented as a relation; a relation between two items: a subject and an object. In this case it specifically relates a knower and a proposition, (either a true proposition or, given this aims to be an apparently neutral picture, what, in the world, makes the proposition true). Thus the very Skp formulation itself starts with an epistemological gap, between knower and known, as built into its picture of the essence of knowledge. But this looks like it requires a univocal notion of what it is to know. Yet what about our linguistic knowledge, i.e., what we know when we know how to speak our mother tongue? This now looks like an awkward fit; as does our mathematical knowledge. What about our knowledge how to dance, how to run an election campaign, or how to play the clarinet? It is unclear how such knowledge is to be understood in terms of a two-place relation with some discrete and particular feature of the world or its description. Nor is it clear, why all such knowledge might either begin with an epistemological gap, let alone require that it be bridge. Indeed, the Singularity and Metaphysical Presumptions now seem to be radically limiting and misconceived, when it comes to these different areas of knowledge and different kinds of knowledge-how. Strike Two.

Perhaps the 'S' in Skp is more straightforward. In my original pre-theoretical presentation of the picture of the essence of knowledge, I identified this 'S' as a person who knows, a *knower*, someone who is the *subject* of knowledge. This element of the Skp schema looks more likely, perhaps, to suit the Singularity Presumption. This hope is, however, premature. For it ignores the consequences of some of the many asymmetries between first and third person ascriptions, which Wittgenstein explores. This is a tremendously complicated area, and I simply want to remind us here that whilst the following sentences may be true:

- (f) Carol is in pain.

(g) Carol knows John, is in pain.

It may not make any sense to say:

(h) Carol knows that she is in pain.

except, perhaps, as a matter of emphasis. For, as Wittgenstein points out, in certain situations in which it makes no sense to ascribe doubt, it makes no sense, either, to ascribe knowledge. Furthermore, when Carol says she is in pain, she is not necessarily describing or reporting some feature of the world, but she may well be, rather, expressing or avowing how she feels. Yet in the Skp schema there is the (almost invisible) suggestion that if Skp makes sense for one S, *one* putative knower, it makes sense for *any* knower. Thus 'S' is taken to be a placeholder for anyone. There is no opportunity in the picture presented by Skp to countenance an internal connection between the content of 'p' and the identity of S. Yet certain such connection might rule out (as senseless) certain 'S' and 'p' combinations. So even the 'S' element of Skp is does not uphold the Singularity Presumption. Strike Three.

My aim in this paper has been to suggest that there is much that is seemingly innocent and natural in our picture of the essence of knowledge, that may not be as natural as it seems. In arguing that the apparently plausible and innocuous Augustinian Conception of Language may have a partner, or at least a set of resonances, in the Augustinian Conception of Epistemology, I have focused on the Singularity and the Metaphysical Presumptions. But these

don't even begin, let alone exhaust, the potential areas of concern. For it is part of the very principle of any Augustinian conception (as I'm using the term), that what is most entrenched is most transparent, and what is most often ignored as mere context is often playing a much more crucial role than anticipated. This is the start of a project, not the end of one. In listening to the many epistemologists here this week, there is an unrivalled opportunity to consider just what pictures are actually in play, what essentialist commitments may be unwittingly operative, and what 'force fields' (to use a favoured expression of Peter Hacker's) may have us all, in their grip.

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# Correspondence vs. Identity Theories of Truth and the *Tractatus*

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## Introduction: correspondence

Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (TLP, *Tractatus*), though it has been associated with various theories of truth, is standardly taken to endorse a peculiar variant of the *correspondence* theory. What motivates that association? A standard conception of a correspondence theory of truth may be sketched as follows: a truth-bearer (such as a sentence, or proposition) is considered true *iff* it corresponds to a truthmaker (such as a state of affairs, or fact). At least three variants of correspondence can be distinguished: a given proposition's correspondence (i) with *the facts*; its correspondence (ii) with *a (some) fact*; or its correspondence (iii) with *the fact* which it expresses (see Beckermann 1995, 530; Glock 2006, 348-9).

Bases for associating the *Tractatus* with a correspondence theory of truth can be found in its picture theory of meaning and its conception of the propositional representation of facts. According to the *Tractatus*, the world is the totality not of things but of facts (TLP 1.1), where facts are taken to be states of affairs that obtain (TLP 2, 2.04; the extent to which Wittgenstein recognizes states of affairs which do *not* obtain as facts – viz. 'negative facts', see TLP 2.06 – may be left aside here.) These are represented propositionally: a proposition (*Satz*; an elementary proposition, that is, in the first place), understood as a "propositional sign in its projective relation to the world" (TLP 3.12) is taken to stand in a projective – *picturing* – relation to a fact, having a *thought* as its *logical picture* (TLP 3, 3.02). The pictorial relation is derived from the proposition and the fact's sharing a common logical (logico-pictorial) form of the configuration of their respective elements (TLP 2.17–2.22) in virtue of which the former (or the propositional sign, respectively) can depict the latter. Thus, as states of affairs consist of objects (see TLP 2.0272–2.032), so do propositions consist of names (TLP 3.2–3.22), pictures of elements (see TLP 2.13–14), and thoughts of parts. Logical form, the 'possibility of structure' (TLP 2.033), is the possibility of such elements to enter into states-of-affairs structures (TLP 2.034). In virtue of the logico-pictorial relation of these respective constituents, "the picture touches reality" (TLP 2.1515) or "reaches right out to it." (TLP 2.1511).

The *Tractatus* conception seem to license a correspondence-theoretical construal insofar as its picture theory involves propositional depiction, involving the depiction of truthmakers (facts) by corresponding truth-bearers (propositions). Whereas formulae of Wittgenstein's such as a proposition's being in accordance with reality (TLP 2.17, 2.223) may be read along the lines of (i) (see Beckermann 1995, 536), a proposition's expressing – by depicting – the fact it corresponds to licenses a subsumption of the account under (iii). Wittgenstein's reliance upon common logical form helps to avoid a well-known criticism of correspondence conceptions of truth raised by Frege, according to whom only *perfect* correspondence (to the effect of *coincidence*, or *identity*) between the corresponding parts would suffice for truth, wherefore correspondence itself, implying the preservation of difference of the corresponding parts, would be a principally inept requirement (see Frege 1956, 290-1). With Wittgenstein's conception of isomorphy (of logical form) between a fact and the proposition expressing it, such perfect correspondence can be

accounted for while the basic distinctness of corresponding parts (truthmaker and bearer) can be maintained.

## Problems with correspondence

Thus goes the standard association of the *Tractatus* account of truth with a correspondence theory. However, one encounters a problem here: the variant of correspondence in the *Tractatus* which motivates such association does not actually relate to *truth* and *falsity*, but to *meaning*. In the *Tractatus*, a common logico-pictorial form between a proposition (or propositional sign, respectively) on the one hand a state of affairs on the other renders the 'corresponding' proposition *meaningful* (to have *sense*); *truth* and *falsity*, in contrast, depend upon the depicted state of affairs' *obtaining* or not: "What a picture must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it—correctly or incorrectly—in the way it does, is its pictorial form." (TLP 2.17) "What a picture represents it represents independent of its truth or falsity, by means of its pictorial form." (TLP 2.22; see also Beckermann 1995, 537; Glock 2006, 346; this is also the root of Wittgenstein's famous conception of bipolarity). For Wittgenstein, the states of affairs – and their logical form – conveyed by contrary statements are the same; they differ only with respect to the *sense* expressed by the respective propositions. Thus,  $\Box$ [t]he propositions  $\Box p \Box$  and  $\Box \neg p \Box$  have opposite sense, but there corresponds to them one and the same reality.  $\Box$  (TLP 4.0621)

The 'official theory' of truth in the *Tractatus*, in consequence, has been characterized as an 'obtainment theory' of truth (see Glock 2006, 347), which has yet been taken to be easily transformable into a correspondence theory if the *obtainment* requirement is duly considered (see *ibid.*, 358-60). It is not difficult, likewise, to find supposedly standard renderings of *correspondence* theories have that requirement of *obtainment* built in (see e.g. Kirkham 1995, 119, and his discussion of 'correspondence as congruence').

Despite its standard correspondence-theoretical construal (or an amended obtainment version thereof), the *Tractatus* has recently come to be associated with a different kind of theory of truth: the *identity* theory, which on some accounts even takes the *Tractatus* as a point of departure. The association is particularly interesting against the background of correspondence-theoretical construals of the *Tractatus*, insofar as the identity theory is in fundamental opposition to main tenets of the correspondence theory.

## Identity

A salient feature of the identity theory of truth is its denial of the distinction of truthmakers and truth-bearers, as it supposedly opens an ontological gap between the world and its (conceptual) representation. Thus e.g. McDowell, in a well-known passage of his *Mind and World*, argues against any such gap between thought and the world, holding that "[w]hen one thinks truly, what one thinks *is* what is the case. So since the world is everything that is the case, [...] there is no gap between thought, as such,

and the world.” (McDowell 1994, 27) Likewise Hornsby, drawing on a notion of ‘thinkables’ (akin to Fregean thoughts) which is sympathetic to McDowell’s, holds that “the identity theory is encapsulated in the simple statement that true thinkables are the same as facts” (Hornsby 1997, 2) and presents an identity theory that opposes the correspondence theory on such grounds (*ibid.*, 6-9). Both McDowell and Hornsby thereby want to advance ‘moderate’ identity theories, taking truth as being contained rather trivialistically in facts *being* true thoughts (in the Fregean sense) rather than in a more ‘robust’ (substantive) identity relation between some truth-bearer and truthmaker (see Dodd 1995, 163-4, on the distinction).

It is to be asked how the *Tractatus* could motivate any such identity conception of truth and, notably, how it could avoid the ‘ontological gap’ drawn on (if only implicitly) by correspondence and renounced by identity theorists. A notion of identity, as mentioned above, is discussed early in the *Tractatus* when Wittgenstein demands that the picture (the proposition) and the state of affairs need to be *identical* with respect to their logical form (see TLP 2.16, 2.161, 2.182). From that recourse to identity, however, only little might be derived to the effect of an identity theory of truth, as identity here may be taken to be what is required and conducive to establishing Wittgenstein’s peculiar *correspondence* theory (recall the above outline thereof).

Further possible bases of an identity theory can be identified much earlier in the text. McDowell, as just noted, finds a basis for his identity conception as early as in §1 TLP, as to which “[t]he world is everything that is the case.” (see also McDowell 1994, 27; McDowell though does not expressly attribute the identity conception to the *Tractatus* itself). And indeed, the very first sections of the *Tractatus* contain much of the pivotal conceptual material for an identity-theoretical outlook.

The basis for its association with an identity theory might be found in the *Tractatus* conception of ‘fact’. Insofar as the *Tractarian* facts are taken to be the ‘worldly’ correspondents – belonging to the realm of reference rather than of sense, and being assigned the role of *truthmakers* – of propositions (see e.g. David 2001, 698; 2002, 135; Dodd 2008, 76), a correspondence theory lends itself quite naturally. Wittgenstein has been interpreted that way and has drawn criticism for assimilating facts thus with constituents of the world (see e.g. Glock 1996, 120). Even if partially correct, such understanding could not amply capture facts as they figure in the *Tractatus*. For: Besides recognizing as facts states of affairs that obtain (TLP 1.1, 2) – which arguably motivates the construal of facts as the worldly correspondents of truth-bearers, Wittgenstein also regards (logical) *pictures* as well as *propositional signs* as facts (see TLP 2.141 and 3.14, respectively; the *Tractatus* is usually construed also as recognizing propositions themselves as facts, see e.g. Glock 1996 *sub* ‘fact’). Their recognition as facts in the theoretical framework of the *Tractatus* is due to a given state of affairs’, its propositional sign’s and according picture’s sharing a common *logical form* (or *structure*, respectively) as well as a *sense* – (only) in virtue of the former does depiction work at all; (only) in virtue of the latter may a fact be regarded a fact (*viz.* as *obtaining*). As such, that recognition can hardly be taken as an expression of a correspondence theory, as (logical) pictures and propositional signs (or propositions) do not usually figure as worldly correspondents. What it seems to reflect, rather, is a more or less ‘robust’ identity theory drawing on the identity of the *Tractarian* kinds of facts – the compounds that constitute the logico-pictorial relationship (states of affairs, propositions, pictures, thoughts) –

with their according sense. In that course, however, the *prima facie* natural construal of *the world* as a realm of reference (that corresponds to propositions) is put into question – as the world, according to the *Tractatus*, is nothing but “the totality of facts.” (TLP 1.1) “Facts, particular things that are the case, belong to the world conceived as everything that is the case. But something that is the case is (is nothing other than) something that can be truly thought, and as such it is located in the realm of sense.” (It is striking that, similar to correspondence-theoretical readings of the *Tractatus*, charges against McDowell as well as Hornsby’s employment of thinkables have been based upon construals of such thinkables and of facts, respectively, as belonging to the Fregean realm of reference instead of sense, see e.g. Dodd 1995, 162, and Engel 2001, 443-4, on the charge against McDowell; Dodd 1997, 225-6, on Hornsby 1997; both McDowell and Hornsby have contradicted such construals, see e.g. McDowell 2005, 83-4; Hornsby 1999, 241-2). Already Frege has been regarded to show an identity-theoretical commitment when claiming that “a fact is a thought that is true.” (Frege 1956, 307) Wittgenstein may be taken to do likewise when regarding true propositions as thoughts as logical pictures of what is the case (see also the qualified agreement thereto in Sullivan 2005).

## Conclusion: correspondence again

Albeit the above understanding of facts and their dissociation from truthmakers may facilitate an association of the *Tractatus* with an identity theory of truth, an – equally dominant, and persistent – outlook towards a correspondence theory in the *Tractatus* can hardly be denied (see only TLP 2.21–2.223, TLP 4.5; see also Glock 2006, 353-5): As Wittgenstein remarks, a picture’s “agreement or disagreement [*Übereinstimmung oder Nichtübereinstimmung*] of its sense with reality constitutes its truth or falsity. In order to tell whether a picture is true or false, we must compare it with reality.” (TLP 2.222–2.223) Attempts at rescuing facts (with their respective sense) from the realm of reference, thus, meet the requirement of sense corresponding with reality, which itself is not taken to belong to the realm of sense; where facts (or the world as their totality) can avoid the charge of establishing the ontological gap, the emphasis on the truth of a picture’s depending on its accordance with reality re-invites it.

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# Rationality and Uncertainty

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## 1. The Limits of the Classical Model of Rationality

Rationality of human practical and cognitive endeavors, both individual and social, is an unquestionable epistemic value. However there are different concepts, definitions and theories, and no one can deny that rational behavior, perceived as a compromise between the means and the ends, is an inherent part of the human nature. It is an objective and indispensable human's feature; all degrees of it or deviations from it are simply irrational. Rationality does not demand special epistemological or ethical justifications but its theories do. As John Searle says: "(...) rationality as such neither requires nor even admits of a justification, because all thought and language, and hence, all argument, presupposes rationality. One can intelligibly debate theories of rationality, but not rationality" (2001; xvi). Actually, philosophical discussions on rationality do not cease to generate special interest in modern times. However, the 20th. century debates on various theories of instrumental and critical rationality showed that this highly evaluated (and perhaps overrated) concept is the ideal and it has not reached full and unquestionable realization. One can present (as Searle does) the classical model of general (idealized) rationality, advocated mainly in continental philosophy and positivistic philosophy of science, as the sum of the following statements: (1) rational actions are caused by agent's self-reflective beliefs as well as desires; (2) rational actions follow special consistent rules; (3) rationality is a cognitive faculty; (4) a wrong course of rational action is apparent; (5) practical reason is all about means, not ends; (6) primary desires of an agent must be consistent with his/her rational beliefs. The model implies that humans, thanks to their explicit desires, act and know reasonably by following exact rules, and trying to achieve their goals through deliberately chosen means with knowing how to use them (in a rational proportion) to, finally, satisfy their wishes, desires and opinions to the full.

There are crucial epistemological assumptions underlying the classical rationality theory. They can be outlined with the following set of theses or postulates: (1) human reason is capable to perform any intellectual tasks irrespective of time, means, and computation; (2) there is a correlation („representativeness", „intelligibility") between reason and world's complexity; (3) humans have access to maximum information and complete true knowledge possessing perfect, unlimited computational power to perform rational reasoning; (4) only the best cognitive and practical solutions are acceptable; (5) the principle „maximize your expected cognitive or practical utility" is fully rational and serves as a criterion of rational-irrational distinctions. In other words, cognitive optimization (omniscience plus omnipotence) is the main feature of rationality.

Many objections have been raised against the above ideal. One of the most convincing is Herbert Simon's theory of bounded rationality. His methodological objections against the principle of "subjective expected utility" implied by the classical model allowed him to say that „bounded rational agents experience limits in formulating and solving complex problems and in processing (receiving, storing, retrieving, transmitting) information". Humans live in the world with many different problem-solving strategies and none of them can be furnished with perfect

and complete knowledge how to deal with the world's complexity. "Rationality could focus on dealing with one or a few problems at a time, with the expectation that when other problems arose there would be time to deal with those too" (Simon 1983; 20). Bounded rationality is not the fault of human behavior, it is inalienable from the human affairs.

Other objections come from the cognitive science experimental research programs. Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky demonstrated that people almost always rely on heuristics, but not on fully rational (algorithmic) inferences or reasoning, and do not imply the complete knowledge because of subjective opinions, incomplete information, common sense etc. Heuristics is biased cognition. It entails unavoidable errors, stereotypes, illusions, and prejudices. Nevertheless it is useful and serves its purpose, and all people (laymen and scholars alike) apply it. This is evident in judgments made where sufficient or proper information is missing and biased cognition is at play (i.e. insensitivity to prior probability or predictability, misconception of chance or illusions of the validity etc.). Finally, people systematically violate standards of rationality when making decisions or solving problems under uncertainty, which makes them partially irrational.

Gerd Gigerenzer's program goes in the same direction. However, he doesn't treat heuristics as biased or false cognition because people rely on it due to the structure of the problem, not on its cognitive inclinations (good or false). Besides, he opposes to conceiving irrationality merely as the fault. Relying on heuristics is not an error; it happens even in serious and cognitively important situations. Paradoxically as it may appear, good decision making frequently requires ignoring part of available information and performing less complex cognitive estimations and predictions. Rational rules may be at the same time rational and irrational. What makes them really reasonable does not depend on the ideal of rationale but their effectiveness. Violations of logical rules in practical rationality are not cognitive illusions. They constitute empirical evidence that fast and frugal heuristics is deeply embedded in human nature. As Gigerenzer says: „The adaptive toolbox contains the building blocks for fast and frugal heuristics. A heuristic is fast if it can solve a problem in little time and frugal if it can solve it with little information. Unlike as-if optimization models, heuristics can find good solutions independent of whether an optimal solution exists. (...) Heuristics work in real-world environments of natural complexity, when an optimal strategy is often unknown or computationally intractable" (2008; 7-8). Most of such heuristics are apparently irrational but, in fact, they are effective in reasoning. They are examples of gut feelings as spontaneous and unconscious (instinct) types of practical rationality. Useful in the risky and poor decisions (e.g. in medical cancer's treatment), gut feelings are reliable in spite of incomplete knowledge and only fragmentary information they encompass. Rationality, as Gigerenzer's research programs present, is a biological adaptive tool not identical with the rules of formal logic or probabilistic calculus; uncertainty is its substantial part.

## 2. What Epistemic Value is Uncertainty?

Biased cognition, violating formal reasoning, intuitive (gut) feelings, incomplete information, ignorance, and intuitive knowledge – all these psychosocial phenomena constitute uncertainty. Formally speaking, uncertainty is simply opposite to certainty and it does not have the same epistemic value. Cartesian-Kantian-Husserlian tradition didn't ascribe any special value to uncertain experience or knowledge, treating them merely as cognitive faults or intellectual mistakes, and, finally, placing them on a very low position (if any) on the epistemic scale. However, uncertainty, viewed as an epistemic value and/or ontological world's feature (introduced specially by Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty and Shannon's mathematical theory of communication), entered the domain of epistemology during the last decades. Probabilistic as well as non-probabilistic research programs concerning information processing systems were successfully put into practice in cognitive psychology, decision theory, management science, sociology of organizations, risk assessment, and studies of disaster and accidents. In Michael Smithon's opinion, all these examples point out to "the emergence of new normative and explanatory paradigms of uncertainty and ignorance in response to the increasing complexity and uncertainty of the artificial environment" (1989; 4). In other words, uncertainty as an epistemic issue emerged more as a consequence of the socio-cultural changes than the effect of inner epistemological disputes.

Epistemological analyses of the "knowledge and the flow of information" paradigm established by Fred Dretske (1981) are lately significantly facilitated by psychological and anthropological studies on human behavior in which uncertainty is a dominant feature. Social psychologists and cross-cultural anthropologists introduced the concept of uncertainty orientation which refers to the individual (and notional as well) differences in how people cope with uncertainty. Their studies focus especially on the spectrum of different attitudes and strategies in which people cope with uncertain situations in the different cultural backgrounds. "At opposite ends of a continuum are those considered uncertainty oriented (UOs) and those considered certainty oriented (COs). UOs are *high* in the desire to *attain* clarity, but *low* in the desire to *maintain* clarity. Their preferred method of handling uncertainty is to seek information and engage to activities that will directly resolved the uncertainty. Such people can be described as having a strong 'need to know'. They are the people who try to understand and discover aspects of the self and the environment about which they are uncertain. In contrast, COs are *low* in the desire to *attain* clarity, but are *high* in the desire to *maintain* clarity. When confronted with uncertainty, COs use indirect methods such as relying on others or heuristics devices such as leadership status, group norms, or source expertise to provide a resolution" (Sorrentino et al. 2008; 52). Widely performed cross-cultural studies show that such uncertain/certain orientations are due to the Eastern-Western cultures and societies. The value of uncertainty depends on so many variables that it isn't the simple opposition to certainty. It doesn't stand in contrast to true, complete and rational knowledge because it is indispensable part of it. Despite the cultural and social differences the role of uncertainty in cognition and knowledge is unquestionable and therefore should be epistemologically analyzed.

## 3. Rationality and Uncertainty Viewed from the Social Epistemology Perspective

Another way of confronting rationality with uncertainty is to pose a question: what is a possible criterion of division between complete and incomplete, proper and improper, certain and uncertain information or knowledge in the area of individual and social experience? Which elements of this wide spectrum are rational and which are not? Is such a criterion rational at all? Within the framework of the classical model of rationality such questions are, despite declarations, unsolvable. However, social epistemology seems to offer reasonable solution. Its approach amounts to treating rationality as one of the leading social practices of achieving satisfactory, not always complete knowledge. In Alvin Goldman's opinion: "(...) there are many social intellectual practices that a wide ranging social epistemology should hope to assess; and the rationality criterion seems incapable of offering insight about them. (...) How would the rationality criterion generate any evaluations or guidance in this area?" (1999; 76). The answer is simple – epistemological efforts ought to be narrowed down only to the critical and reflective analyses, since neither one privileged rationality exists nor no one should simply expect the strict delimitation among rational and irrational endeavors.

Steve Fuller's remarks on bounded rationality concept seem to follow the same line thought. "The key element of the rhetoric of bounded rationality is that trade-offs must always be made between competing intellectual, material and social demands when deciding on a line of research" (2007; 136). This type of rationality is rather the realistic, not overestimated, recognition of human choices and cognitive undertakings. It connects the means with the ends as well as recognizes their historically and socially limited nature. "Rationality is not only a matter of judging the adequacy of the means to their purported ends but also the adequacy of the ends as means to still other ends" (Fuller 2007; 133). Instrumental as well as critical theories of rationality (apart the crucial differences between them) tell us that there are no cognitive and practical ends themselves, intrinsic or ultimate, which would be mysterious and unknown to the subjects. The compromised ends of the choices and undertakings may change even often and quite radically. Despite this fact rationality is still achievable as there are some ends to which people are devoted. No matter what the content of these ends is, it suffices to say that humans deliberately choose the means to achieve them. The real and effective compromises are far from certainty and optimal (complete) knowledge. As social epistemology is, as Fuller says, "a kind of a science accounting that weights the costs and benefits of pursuing alternative epistemic trajectories" (2007, 136), it deals finally with uncertain rational choices. It aims at the recognizing and evaluating the ends and the means for achieving compromised rational undertakings no matter the knowledge which precedes and/or succeeds them. In other words, social epistemology seems to be properly prepared for study the rationality-uncertainty issue since is dealing with the dominant cognitive practices as well as accepted socio-cultural epistemic standards.

Concluding aforementioned theoretical issues and empirical examples, one can formulate a few general descriptive remarks:

1. Uncertainty is part of a wide range of practical and cognitive undertakings, more or less routine, self-reflective, intuitive as well as formal and rigid which all together produce the complex human knowledge.

2. Rationality conceived as bounded regarding its rules and results includes uncertainty, especially, the incomplete information.

3. Since uncertainty characterizes almost all of human cognitive experiences its epistemic value is evident.

However, the rationality-uncertainty issue implies also a few normative aspects and dilemmas which could be formulated in the following, practical end even ethical, questions:

4. Is understanding of apparently complex and obscure facts and information (e.g. among the statistical data or ambiguous news) still achievable in a rational (i.e. self-reflective) way?

5. Would people be really responsible for their decisions under uncertainty, or in the risky situations having been not familiar with the proper information?

6. How could they formulate themselves and, subsequently (as principle of rational beliefs admits), communicate others the doubtful and uncertain results of the intuitive reasoning or imperfect cognition?

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# On the Ontology of Epistemic Discourse

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What is the ontology of our epistemic discourse? Modern logic offers us a way of answering such questions, or at least pretends to do so. The ontology of a language consists of all the existing objects and in a semantical perspective they are the members of the sum total of the ranges of all existential quantifiers in the language. (Of course they are *ipso facto* the values of all universal quantifiers as well.) Quine is here a spokesperson of our logic: to be is (semantically speaking) to be a value of a bound variable.

Moreover, the basic idea of modern logic is that all unanalyzable quantifiers basically range over a single class, the universe of discourse. The idea of a universe of a discourse is the hallmark of the logic of Frege and Russell. All other quantifiers are relativized ones. Their ranges can in the last semantical analysis be treated so as to become subclasses of this single universe of discourse. This is what Quine is expressing when he answers the question "what there is?" by a single word "everything". He would not accept the rejoinder: "But where is 'there'? In which universe of discourse?" Quine's answer is not a tautology. It is for instance a tacit rationale underlying the use of first-order logic in set theory.

On this view of the logical (semantical) structure of language, you do not understand a language unless and until you know what its universe of discourse is. Some of the main early analytic philosophers, including Russell and the early Wittgenstein, thought that our actual logic and language has ultimately just one application, viz. to our actual universe. For them, the universe of discourse consists of all actually existing objects. If so, first and foremost question in philosophy therefore becomes: what are the actually existing objects? Or, rather, what are the epistemologically and semantically identifiable objects that cannot be analyzed away in terms of more basic ones? Here we can see the reason for the preoccupation of Russell (of the 1910-194 vintage) and of the author of *Tractatus* with this question. Interestingly, the two gave essentially the same answer: objects of immediate experience, or in Russellian speak "objects of acquaintance".

On a more realistic view of how language and its logic operate, we can do as scientists do and choose our universe of discourse the denizens of some "system", that is, some part of the universe that is sufficiently isolated from the rest of world to be discussed in its own right. Such systems are what should be meant by philosophers megalomaniac talk about "possible worlds". More businesslike word would be "scenario".

The word "world" is nevertheless appropriate in one respect. The different scenarios have to be independent enough so that we can talk about them without reference to other scenarios. What this means is that we isolate the system causally so that we can disregard the influence of objects and events outside the system. How can we carry out such an isolation? In scientific contexts such an isolation can be accomplished for instance by means of boundary conditions. They are not consequences of the theory which is being applied, nor are they facts discovered empirically as a part of the scientific investigation itself. They are stipulated as it were to separate one application from another one. In uses of logic and language this isolation requirement means that we have to be able to apply nonepistemic and

otherwise nonmodal concepts in a possible scenario without a reference to other scenarios or to relations between scenarios. Otherwise alternative scenarios are not realistic alternatives to the actual world, and the applicability of the logic and language in question evaporates. Admittedly, as an application may be conditional on the boundary conditions that serve to define the particular scenario in question, these conditions themselves are expressed neither by logical nor by ordinary contingent statements, perhaps in Quinean analytic, but not logical terms.

Unfortunately, philosophers have not done their homework and analyzed in realistic terms how the boundary conditions and the rest of the conceptual isolation works. For instance, Quine speaks as if the only applications of language were to the whole actual universe. This is like thinking that all science is part of cosmology, or perhaps thinking of natural science as if it were natural history.

This complicates discussions about ontology. *Prima facie*, each scenario has its own ontology because it has its own universe of discourse. But realistically speaking the universes of discourse involved in different applications of language can overlap or be identical. But how do we actually in our conceptual practice compare the members of such separate universes of discourse with respect to their identity? This question has prompted a literature that is as extensive as it is confused.

In order not to be entangled in this mess let us concentrate here on the logic and semantics of epistemic notions. Their logic is usually taken to be an extension of the received extensional first-order logic. However, semantically speaking we are considering, not one scenario but a number of scenarios at the same time. In such terms, the basic notion of knowing that *S*, in symbols *KS* is analyzable as the truth of *S* in all worlds (scenarios) that are compatible with everything that is known. In other words, the basic logical structure of *knowing that* consists in dichotomy of possible scenarios, a division into those that are excluded by what is known and those that are compatible with it.

A terminological explanation is undoubtedly needed here. It is only for simplicity that I am here speaking impersonally of "what is known" instead of what is known to some particular agent. This does not affect the logical structure of knowledge, however.

If we concentrate our attention to epistemic logic so construed, it may seem that the ontological problem does not arise at all. Epistemic logic is normally treated as an extension of the received first-order logic obtainable simply by adding to it the *knowing that* operator *K*. Treating it in this way means that the universe of discourse is the same as in the unextended logic, whatever that is.

Of course we need also relativized quantifiers ranging over a subclass of our universe of discourse. That subclass consists of known individuals and other objects. In order to specify this class we have to express what is means for an object *b* or a function *f* to be known. The possible-worlds (possible-scenarios) analysis of knowledge provides the obvious answer. It is known who or what *b* is if and only if *b* picks out the same individual in all

the scenarios not excluded by what is known. In symbols this means

$$(1) (\exists x) K(b=x)$$

Here the values of  $x$  are individuals, members of the universe of discourse of an application of epistemic logic. An analysis of the semantics of quantifiers shows that this is more accurately expressed as

$$(2) K(\exists x/K) (b=x)$$

where  $/$  indicates informational independence in the semantical games that provide a semantics for epistemic logic. A telling advantage of this approach is thus that we can treat in the same way knowledge of individuals and knowledge of higher-order entities.

Likewise, a function  $f$  is known if and only if the following holds

$$(3) K(\exists g/K)(\forall x)(f(x)=g(x))$$

which is equivalent with the following:

$$(3^*) K(\forall x) (\exists y/K) (f(x)=y)$$

In order to understand (1) and (2), we must make sense to sense to compare in each possible "world" an individual  $x$  with the different members  $b$  of that possible world for identity. This kind of comparison must depend only on that possible world, which we do not know anything *a priori*. Hence it must make sense and be expressible in language that a given individual  $d$  turns out not to be identical with any individual existing in that world. Then  $x$  does not exist in world, expressed by the truth in that world of

$$(4) \neg(\exists y/K) (x=y)$$

All this is totally unproblematic. But almost trivially we must be able to treat the actual world of a par with others. For one thing, since we are not acquainted with the whole of our actual world, we do not strictly speaking know which possible world we actually living in.

Hence a well-defined individual can fail to exist in the actual world. This conclusion is far from surprising interpretationally. But it has striking ontological consequences. What has been established is that in epistemic discourse

we are inevitably operating with a range of values of certain quantifiers that extends beyond the class of actual objects. They are what might be called knowable (identifiable) individuals. In epistemic discourse we are therefore assuming a dual ontology. Besides actual objects we have to assume an ontology of knowable objects.

This conclusion may seem to be little more than a logician's fantasy. Yet it has a major impact among other things in the history of philosophy. A detailed study is impossible to undertake in single paper, but the outlines of the (hi)story can be indicated. Far from being merely a speculative possibility, an ontology of knowable objects was the basic reality for Aristotle. His substances were knowable objects, and each particular science starts from an assumption of a genus of known and existing objects. The identity of other objects to other than the references of general terms had to be assumed likewise, but their existence had to be proved. Greek geometers operated in effect with quantifiers whose values were knowable ("given") geometrical objects.

Analytic philosophy started form a rejection of the ontology of knowable objects as being the basic one. Instead, the identifiable range of quantifiers was the claim of actually existing objects. Ironically, the pioneering advocate of this rejection, Bertrand Russell ended up indentifying that actualistic ontology at the bottom with the class of objects of acquaintance, thus in effect falling back to the old Aristotelian ontology, except that he entertained the illusion that only actual objects are knowable. Objectively, we nevertheless should not be amused by this entertainment.

In Aristotle's case, the primacy of an epistemic ontology was connected with the idea that we must always know what we are speaking of. It manifests itself in his view that the basic sense of being is being in the sense of identity (being identifiable i.e. knowable). For him,  $b$  could be said to *be* only if we could answer the question: what (who etc.) is  $b$ ? In other words, only if  $b$  were identifiable (known).

In contemporary terms, we might say that epistemic concepts are deeply embedded in our conceptual system, that our ontology must be in part an ontology of knowable entities.

# Scientific Virtues as Understood by Medical Researchers at the Medical University of Vienna

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"My criticism of modern science is that it inhibits freedom of thought."

(Feyerabend, Paul (1975), "How to Defend Society Against Science", in Nigel Warburton (ed.) 2005, *Philosophy. Basic Readings. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, London-New York: Routledge, 367.)

"[Feyerabend] often gives the impression that his opposition to science is not of a cognitive nature but follows rather from a choice of lifestyle, as when he says: 'love becomes impossible for people who insist on "objectivity" i.e. who live entirely in accordance with the spirit of science.' The trouble is that he fails to make a clear distinction between factual judgments and value judgments."

(Sokal, Alain and Bricmont, Jean (1998), "Feyerabend: Anything Goes" (Warburton 2005, 379)

Many philosophers of science claim to be interested only in truth. But is it possible to be interested in truth *alone*? This paper is about scientific virtues. Could the expression 'scientific virtues' not be a contradiction in itself? It could indeed be, since it means science + virtues (i.e. science + something other than science).

If scientific virtues are expected to be the means for individuals to prove themselves in science, the interviews which I have conducted with researchers in the Medical University of Vienna suggest that in a scientific career they are more hindrance than help.

But if we reject this evidence, dismissing it as sociological, and maintaining that within science the philosophical interest is in truth *alone*, then scientific truth can assume only simple forms, since systematic scientific work cannot be accomplished by the individual researcher alone.

## 1. Introduction and Method

In 2010 I interviewed 12 medical researchers at the Medical University of Vienna. These scientists were working in different specializations and were in different phases of their careers, from medical student to professor. They were not specifically asked about the topic of scientific virtues; instead I used a set of interview questions taken from the sociologist Sandra Beaufaÿs' study *How Are Scientists Made? (Wie werden Wissenschaftler gemacht?* 2003 Bielefeld: transcript). The interview questions ask in a very detailed way about the institutional framework of scientific work. But at the same time, the medical researchers' own scientific virtues are evident in these interviews – identifying them was a matter of interpreting the transcripts of the interviews in the light of the implied questions.

One problem is that there are many different scientific virtues to be found in the interviews. These differing virtues relate to different concepts of science: e.g. for laboratory work, you need different virtues from those needed to get a paper published in an important journal. Thus, different dimensions of science are involved. And because of these

different dimensions, 'science' turns out to mean different things.

Science can be:

- scientific (i.e. true) knowledge of a fact;
- a collection of true sentences;
- a scientific theory;
- a method, the scientific way of cognition;
- the scientific community;
- a historical project;
- a job or career.

In order to reduce the number of possible answers about scientific virtues, a closer look was taken at the interviewees' specific research situations. These are described in the interviews. The particular scientific virtues connected to each of these situations were also identified.

## 2. The interviews

I will present now five selected cases taken from the interviews:

### a) Junior Researcher 1

*Situation:* JR1 is a young assistant physician who spent several years involved in scientific research at a renowned US university. Returning to Austria, he took up his present position, with a contract for seven years. If he is to remain at the General Hospital of Vienna throughout this time, he must complete his so-called *Habilitation*, the next step in his qualifications. For this, a certain amount of teaching is required, as well as scientific work. JR1 would like to do this, but he is employed exclusively for clinical work, and has no time to fulfill the other requirements for his professional career.

In the US, JR1 gained a great deal of scientific experience, and it is remarkable that the Medical University of Vienna does not decide to profit from this by providing him with the opportunity to do research.

*Scientific Virtues:* JR1 emphatically says that he likes his present situation. The clinical work offers him the possibility of doing science for his patients (that is: applied science). In the interview JR1 distinguishes between 'small thinkers' and 'big thinkers' in science. Small thinkers address themselves to the smallest experimental details, while big thinkers intend to change the world with their scientific work. JR1 himself rather belongs to the small thinkers; it is possible that he has not been too successful in his scientific career because of his preference for researching intricate scientific questions without worrying much about how to 'sell' his findings to the scientific community.

### b) Professor 1

*Situation:* P1 believes he has been successful. By this he means that today he is in a position to undertake research on every problem he is interested in; he also has the financial means of doing this. But P1 also remembers

what led him to his present situation. After two years of very successful studies in a renowned US university, P1 returned to Austria with a publication in the prestigious journal *Lancet*, and applied for a prize for young researchers. The prize was given to somebody else, and P1 was told: “You do not belong to us.” This sentence still resounds in his ears today, and it seems to have formed P1 so that he sees science rather as a marketplace than as a scientific community.

*Scientific Virtues:* P1’s virtues are those of a pragmatic philosophy, i.e. every scientific finding must have its cash value. He also thinks in a very individualistic way, saying, e.g. “You can either run with the community or start thinking yourself.” Two other concepts are important for P1. The first is that of ‘doing science (not for oneself but) for the people’ – P1 sees himself as a scientist doing applied science, and not as a so-called ‘mouse doctor’. The second concept is that of achievement. P1’s measure of scientific achievement is, ‘How many paradigms have I overturned?’ P1 believes that, in future, scientific achievements will count more and authority (granted to a person by his place in the hierarchy) will count less.

#### c) Professor 2

*Situation:* P2 is a very successful natural scientist who laments that she has not yet published a paper in the journal *Nature*, though she has obtained various prizes and positions in scientific associations.

*Scientific Virtues:* P2 claims that in science you do not know what is right. There may be various schools of thought existing at the same time, each producing ‘true’ data that seems to confirm their own hypothesis. This is why, in her view, there are rules in science, including the rule that at the right moment, the rules must be broken. Since it would be wrong just to follow the existing rules in order to ‘do everything right’, P2 recommends more general rules (or virtues) to the young scientist: 1. social ability; 2. read a lot and learn different methods in order to become a competent participant in scientific conversations; 3. publish regularly, preferably innovative ideas; 4. the success of your publications depends in the first place on their being clear and understandable.

When asked what science is for her, P2 responds that it is a game.

#### d) Professor 3

*Situation:* P3’s character is the very opposite of that of P1. P3 is a natural scientist who always wanted to become a scientist. Even as an 11-year-old boy, he had his own chemistry laboratory in the cellar. He read biographies of famous scientists; the intellectual achievements of physicists impressed him strongly. In his concept of science there are two important elements: 1. Systematic work plays an important role. One generation of scientists should gather knowledge in such a way that the next generation can continue research on this basis. 2. P3 is convinced that intrinsic motivation is needed for scientific work. A young scientist should therefore be able to satisfy his personal curiosity by doing experiments other than those required for the next publication. For P3, a person without intrinsic interest in science is not a real scientist but a mere technician, and P3 would refuse to accept such a person as a PhD student.

After his diploma thesis, for which he was awarded various scientific prizes, P3 received two job offers: one from a renowned institute and another from an institute of poor financial means and no reputation, but which would allow

him to work in an autonomous way; he chose this second institute. Within its shelter, P3 is able to defend his idealistic vision of science as a historical project, and to retain some intellectual freedom for the members of his group, within a wider society which links the funding of scientific projects to detailed experimental plans, so reducing the freedom of scientific curiosity.

*Scientific Virtues:* P3 condemns today’s scientific practice of ‘fishing in dim water’, i.e. only those projects with very promising hypotheses are undertaken; if the hypothesis proves to be true, the scientist becomes rich and famous; if it does not, all work is forgotten, making no contribution to the growth of overall knowledge. This practice wastes billions of euros. In the opinion of P3, the work of his group shows how opportunistic the work of certain other scientific groups has been, to the extent that it may not have been necessary at all.

For P3 the logic of the market is the ‘root of the evil’ that has overtaken science. P3, unlike P1, does not believe that it is necessarily the ideas or findings that have proved themselves in society which survive. Instead, he states that the benefit for society or for the patient is less than the benefit for the private investor.

#### e) Junior Researcher 2

*Situation:* JR2 is a biology graduate who has turned her back on her field of research. Like P3, she wanted to become a scientist even as a child. For her, science meant realizing one’s own ideas and discovering something new. When she entered the institute to do her diploma thesis, JR2 learned that science is not only about discovering new things, but is also about making a scientific career. This was difficult for JR1, because she had come to the institute because of her interest in science, while according to the social system there, she was expected to think about a scientific career.

JR2 found the interpersonal climate in the institute unpleasant. The members of the laboratory group helped one another, but the postdocs and professors were regarded as more important and had their own offices. For the professors, the scientific quality of the whole research team was the most important thing. Consequently, results were published only in the best scientific journals, and then only if they proved the team’s hypotheses.

*Scientific Virtues:* Asked about the character of the scientist considered ideal in her former field of research, JR2 replied that she found it unappealing. This ‘ideal scientist’ she characterized as a highly organized and disciplined person who would also ‘sell his own grandmother’ to achieve his goals. JR2 gave the example of a postdoc who did not supervise the student assigned to him properly. He delegated this duty to a doctoral student. The postdoc thus gained time while the doctoral student was unable to finish her thesis owing to lack of time.

### 3. Interpretation – Conclusion

This is a reflection on the concept of scientific virtues. At the beginning of this presentation, I mentioned two quotations which referred to the difference between a scientific orientation and other values. Paul Feyerabend wanted to identify science with a human virtue, that of thinking, but Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont replied that the scientific orientation should remain pure, if the cognitive dimension of science is not to be endangered.



What, then, could a scientific virtue be? If virtues exist to make human beings more complete, there can be no scientific virtue, because science means to take a part of human existence – its cognitive dimension – and put it above all other dimensions, values and human virtues. And if we really take the concept of scientific virtue seriously, it would negate all other virtues, since they are unscientific.

Nonetheless, some remain convinced that the scientific way is the best way of doing things, so that everything should be done scientifically. This means that scientific values should rule human life. 'Scientific virtues' then would imply taking the part of the individual with which it is participating in science and seeing it as the whole. If this is difficult for a particular person, the difficulty may be blamed on a lack of talent, will or scientific discipline.

Moving from the individual to the social dimension of the problem, if holding on to scientific virtues is difficult for an individual but can nonetheless be accomplished with strong will and strict discipline, how is it possible to keep typical social properties – such as politics, power and organization – out of science in order to keep the idea of science pure?

The examples of my interviews show that persons with 'scientific virtues' have an especially difficult life in the organization of science, while researchers who see science as a market or as a game do significantly better. P3, whose vision of science could have been taken from a

textbook on the theory of science, defends it by enclosing himself in his institute, and JR2, who was interested in nothing but science, even abandoned scientific work, because her values were not compatible with those of institutionalized science.

In summary, it seems the term 'scientific virtue' may be a contradiction in itself. 'Science' is an idea of something that must remain pure, while 'virtue' can only contaminate this pure idea.

The contaminating factors may be a lack of discipline in the individual or general social properties, but the problem may begin much earlier: its roots lie where the philosopher of science claims to be interested only in truth – and nothing else. But what kind of truth can remain pure and uncontaminated? Most probably a simple truth that is not part of another truth (which could be contaminated), or perhaps a truth that can be discovered by just one person, without the help of expensive technical devices and other people.

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# Wittgenstein on Using “I Know”: Objections and Responses

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## I. Introduction

Wittgenstein begins his *On Certainty* with an investigation of Moore's claim that he knows: “Here is a hand”. He sees it as incorrect, and to show this, tries to examine it by considering the conditions for using “I know” in our language. These conditions might be mentioned as follows: That we “know” something which others don't know (see OC, 84, 100, 462); and that when someone says “I know”, it can be asked: “How does he know?” (OC, 550; see also OC, 40, 443, 564), because knowledge is not subjective (OC, 245; see also OC, 12, 21, 42, 90, 245, 438, 551, 555), and so it depends on what evidence shows us (see OC, 504; see also OC, 1, 14-15, 125, 243, 307, 445, 504); and it requires giving grounds, so that these grounds are surer than the assertion (see OC, 1, 125, 243, 307). Another condition may also be added: that making a mistake about what we “know” is meaningful. It is not said that persons who make such claims are infallible, but their being fallible is not because of making a mistake, but because of being demented (OC, 155; see also OC, 71-72, 81). There is also another condition, which is referred to by Marie McGinn: that we can regard what we “know” as a hypothesis, as something that requires support and that can be doubted (McGinn, pp. 112- 113). None of these conditions are met by Moore's propositions.

Some objections have been raised against these conditions for using “I know”. Since Wittgenstein's criticism of Moore's claim “I know” serves as a basis of Wittgenstein's epistemological view, it will be important to reply to these objections. Indeed, the idea of world-picture is related to showing that there are some propositions about which we are certain, while we do not “know” them. I will try to reply to the objections that are raised by two philosophers: Oswald Hanfling and A. J. Ayer.

## II. Hanfling's Objections

Hanfling's objections to Wittgenstein's view that there is a justification for “I know” but there is none for my belief (OC, 175), are as follows:

Firstly, there are cases in which we know something but we have no justification for it. For example, he knows that the battle of Hastings has taken place in 1066, but he would not be able to say how he knows this.

Secondly there are cases in which we believe something, for example, who will win a certain election; but in most circumstances expressing this belief is followed by the expectation of being able to say why we believe this. Hanfling argues that in some cases belief claims require justification, contrary to Wittgenstein's position that the need for justification distinguishes knowledge claims from belief claims. Hanfling holds that the necessity for justification is dependent on the situation in which a claim is made and on the object of the propositional attitude expressed in the claim, regardless whether the attitude is one of knowledge or belief. Furthermore, Hanfling says that Wittgenstein seemingly holds that knowledge entails belief (see OC, 177), but he claims that “such generalizations, apart from being open to refutation, are hardly in accordance with Wittgenstein's attitude to generalization and theory, as

expressed in the *Investigations* and elsewhere” (Hanfling, p. 154).

Moreover, Hanfling believes that Wittgenstein's use of “I know” with regard to Moore's propositions, and also his hesitations, such as, “Haven't I gone wrong and isn't Moore perfectly right?” (OC, 397) indicate that Wittgenstein doesn't hold such a view consistently (ibid, p. 154- 5).

## III. Response to Hanfling's Objections

If Hanfling is right to regard Wittgenstein's assertions not as a theory of knowledge and a kind of generalization, this is not because of there being something wrong with what he says or his being uncertain; but because Wittgenstein's aim is only to clarify the correct usage of the word “knowledge” in our everyday language. Wittgenstein says: “I would like to reserve the expression “I know” for cases in which it is used in normal linguistic exchange” (OC, 260). It seems that he believes that we should not develop a theory of knowledge apart from the way the expression, “I know” is used; but for understanding what knowledge is, we should consider what we call “knowledge” in our language; and it is with a view to this purpose that he refers to those conditions. So it seems to me that Hanfling's objections are not plausible.

In his first counterexample, Hanfling refers to a case in which he knows something, for example about the date of a battle, but he cannot say how he knows it. And his objection is that according to what Wittgenstein says, this case should not be regarded as a case of knowledge, while it really is a piece of knowledge.

But Wittgenstein also sees this case as a piece of knowledge, because what Wittgenstein means by the possibility of giving grounds is not the actual possibility of it for the agent, but the essential possibility of it. For a knowledge-claim to be accepted, the sincerity of the person who makes the claim is not sufficient, “for may I not happen that I *imagine* myself to *know* something?” (OC, 442). It is possible for someone to be mistaken about what he knows. For my knowledge-claims to be accepted, even for myself, it is necessary to know—even in the absence of details—how I know it. For example, I may know that I have gotten it from some authentic source or other, even if I cannot precisely specify the source. If we know nothing at all about the way we have gotten a piece of knowledge, we may well wonder whether we really know it. But the cases that Wittgenstein denies are instances of knowledge, are cases about which it doesn't even make sense to say how they are known.

Hanfling's other objection, that sometimes belief claims do need to be justified, also doesn't seem plausible. Hanfling seems to confuse justification for what I believe with justification for the mere occurrence of the mental state of having a certain belief. Wittgenstein makes the point that my claim that I *believe* something requires no justification, while claims to *know* something generally need justification. For my belief-claims to be accepted by others, I never need justification; it is enough that they believe in my sincerity. We cannot make a mistake about what we “believe”. When we say that we know something, on the other hand, we are claiming that something is a

matter of fact. Saying that one believes something is only to express one's mental state. When one is asked to justify one's belief claim about who will win the election, one is not being asked to justify the claim that one has a belief, but the claim that so-and-so will win the election.

As for Wittgenstein's hesitations, we should not consider them apart from the rest of his assertions. We know that Wittgenstein's hesitations sometimes are only a strategy for improving our understanding of his point. For example, in the case to which Hanfling referred, after asking, "Don't I show that I know it by always drawing its consequences?" (OC, 397), he adds in the next remarks, "But doesn't drawing the consequences only show that I accept this hypothesis?" (OC, 399). It seems that in such cases his hesitations aim only at investigating different aspects of the question to avoid any negligence.

#### IV. Ayer's objection

Ayer raises another objection to Wittgenstein's assertions about the incorrectness of using "I know" in cases such as Moore's. Wittgenstein has referred to this point in PI, too. He says: "... It can't be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I *know* I am in pain..." (PI, 246). It has no meaning other than that I am in pain. Ayer rejects this. He believes that even if it made no sense to say someone is in pain and did not know it, this would only show that being in pain entailed knowing it. And in this case "I know that I am in pain" not only is not senseless but also is true. Although this phrase is not used in normal usage, it does not mean that its content is false.

Ayer uses an example to show what has led Wittgenstein astray here. He says that although people often believe what they say, our conventions about using a sentence with words "I believe that" are such that using them weakens the force of our assertion. For example by saying "I believe that Paris is smaller than London", I commit myself less than by saying "Paris is smaller than London". Yet, it surely doesn't mean that in the second case I do not believe what I say. In many cases, using "I believe" is to show that I do not want to make a claim to knowledge; "Because our conventional practice is not to make a weaker claim when we are in a position to make a stronger one, to say 'I believe' suggests that I lack the confidence to say 'I know'" (Ayer, p. 110). So, in such cases, though using "I believe" is pointless or even misleading, it does not mean that it is not true (ibid, pp. 109-10).

#### V. Response to Ayer's Objection

It is true that Wittgenstein, in some cases, confirms using statements like "I know that I have headache"; indeed, he himself uses them, but, as we will see, in these cases using "I know" is not misleading. But if Ayer holds that this usage, even when it is misleading, is true, I think that two points can be mentioned by way of refutation and defense of Wittgenstein's view.

Firstly, there is a difference between Ayer's example and Moore's cases. In Moore's cases he wants to add "I know" to some certain proposition, while knowledge has some conditions that certainty lacks. It did not apply to Ayer's example, because believing has no special condition other than the conditions of knowledge. In other words, knowledge is a kind of belief, and so, we believe everything that we know. But there is no such relation between knowledge and certainty; rather they belong to different categories,

and knowledge has a condition which certainty lacks (see OC, 308, 175, 18). Thus, certain beliefs are not knowledge; they are not special kinds of knowledge. It was only in the second case that we could say that using "I know" concerning them, although pointless, is nonetheless true.

For Wittgenstein, what essentially makes a proposition to be true or false is completely related to the meaning that is to be understood in a special application. So, in his view, it is entirely wrong to say about an application that it is misleading although at the same time it is true. If what I mean is not in agreement with what is understood—and is natural to be understood—that is, if my statement is misleading, then I have caused others to understand something false, even if what has been meant by me is true. And the important point is that these sentences, in normal linguistic exchanges, represent something which is not true. In Wittgenstein's view, using "I believe" in the case of Ayer's example is also, for the same reason, false. He says about a similar example: "... To say that in strict truth I only believe it, would be wrong. It would be completely *misleading* to say: 'I believe my name is L. W.'..." (OC, 425). It is the employment of a proposition which determines its meaning and its truth. It is because of this that Wittgenstein in *On Certainty* regards a single proposition as true, pointless, or senseless in its different usages. It is basically one of the features of the way Wittgenstein deals with the question of defining concepts that he holds that defining a concept is defining the way it is used in our language. "I believe" is not used in such cases, and so using it in those cases is wrong.

#### VI. Is there any contradiction in Wittgenstein's statements?

Considering the conditions given for using "I know," it follows that using it in cases such as those of Moore makes no sense. What is important here is making sense and not truthfulness (see OC, 390). At the same time, we find sometimes that it is used in our language, and even by Wittgenstein himself. For example, he says about propositions of the kind of Moore's that "I know all that", or elsewhere: "Moore has every right to say he knows there is a tree there in front of him" (OC, 520; see also 288, 291, 396, 549, 552 ...). Do these cases show a contradiction in Wittgenstein's general claim?

It should be said that Wittgenstein distinguishes knowledge from claim to knowledge; and it is the latter which is his main concern in criticizing Moore's claim. Those claims have an ordinary role in their language-game, as described by Wittgenstein, but it seems that Moore presumptuously accords them a "higher position than, simply, the human language-game" (OC, 554), so that they take on a special philosophical import. It's this which is criticized by Wittgenstein.

There is also another application for the word "know". We should distinguish cases in which a word is used in its normal meaning from those in which it is used in a certain situation to pursue a special aim. He says:

One says "I know" where one can also say "I believe" or "I suspect"; where one can find out. (If you bring up against me the case of people's saying "but I must know if I am in pain!", "only you can know what you feel", and similar things, you should consider the occasion and purpose of these phrases. "War is war" is not an example of the law of identity, either) (PI, p.221).

In these cases "know" is not used in its usual meaning, but has the meaning of being aware. What is important is that the participants in our language-games distinguish these two kinds of application of the word. As Wittgenstein notes elsewhere, if "I know" is used in another meaning, e. g. "I don't merely surmise" (OC, 425), or "I have no doubt", then it has none of the conditions mentioned earlier; and also it can be used in the case of Moore's propositions. Wittgenstein's applications are also apparently of this kind.

Of course, what I have said does not amount to a denial of any inconsistency in Wittgenstein's statements; but if there is any inconsistency in his sayings, it is superficial and does not detract from their value.

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# On the Distinction between Hypotheses Open to Examination and Elements of the “World-Picture” in Some of Wittgenstein’s Remarks in *On Certainty*

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In this paper I challenge the claim that Wittgenstein’s remarks in *On Certainty* regarding Moore’s propositions are to be read as providing an epistemological anti-skeptical thesis. First, I will show that the distinction between hypotheses open to examination and elements of the “world-picture” is central to understanding the conceptual clarification that Wittgenstein brings forth in accounting for the relationship between certainty, knowledge and doubt: certainty is not an intrinsic property of knowledge, but rather something connected with the framework that makes knowledge possible. This distinction accounts for a difference in nature between Moore’s propositions and empirical propositions. I suggest that based on the specificities of this distinction, reading Wittgenstein’s remarks as an anti-skeptical thesis is misleading and that the distinction supports an interpretation of Wittgenstein’s remarks as a grammatical investigation that shows that both skeptical and anti-skeptical assertions are incoherent.

I shall refer to some of Wittgenstein’s notes in *On Certainty* directed against G.E. Moore’s strategy in *A Proof of an External World*, where the author tries to argue that there is a world external to our senses by invoking a series of propositions which he claims to know with certainty to be true.

To point out a possible way of justifying the distinction between hypotheses open to examination and elements of the “world-picture”, I will start from the famous example Moore uses to argue on behalf of the existence of the external world: “I know that here is a hand”, uttered with the purpose of showing that doubting such a statement is unreasonable. Wittgenstein agrees that doubting the existence of the external world is senseless, but essentially distances himself from Moore in what the role of this observation is concerned: for Moore, the impossibility of doubt represents the very basis for proving the existence of the external world. In contrast, Wittgenstein holds that the impossibility of doubt implies that both the skeptical doubt and the “certainty” invoked by Moore are nonsensical, or at least they do not accurately render what philosophical reflection tries to deliver through them.

According to Wittgenstein, in order for a proposition to make sense, its opposite also needs to make sense. Thus, it does not make sense to say that one knows something unless it makes sense to say that one might not know it (so, doubting what one claims to know needs to make sense). The concept of doubt and that of knowledge are grammatically connected in this sense. This conceptual relationship is missed out when doubt is generalized: the proposition “I doubt everything” lacks sense, because it does not make sense to doubt something unless alternative possibilities are conceivable. The things that cannot be conceived to be different than they actually are cannot reasonably cause doubt. And one cannot conceive that nothing exists. For example one can say “I doubt today is Monday”, either because one thinks it is a different day, or because one is just not sure which day it is; in other words, doubt makes sense due to the fact that the day of the week which is today is a *contingent* fact of reality – it may be Monday, or Wednesday or Sunday or any other week-

day, and that can be conceived. However, it would not make sense to doubt that today is one of the weekdays. If doubt is applied to everything, there is nothing left for one to be certain of and the very concepts of certainty and doubt appear unintelligible. Wittgenstein insightfully forwards the notion that doubting presupposes certainty:

“If you tried to doubt everything you would not get as far as doubting anything. The game of doubting itself presupposes certainty” (*O.C.*, 115)

In this respect, Moore loses sight of the fact that, if one cannot say (and make sense of) “I doubt I have a hand”, then one cannot make sense of saying “I know I have a hand” either. By “I know I have a hand” it is not knowledge that is expressed; in fact nothing more is said than that “I have a hand” (and this is not a statement we usually make, because in normal circumstances it does not produce any practical effect). A case where uttering “I know I have a hand” could make sense is when one wants to show that one has learnt to use the expression “hand” correctly. In this case, what is communicated is not “I know I have a hand and cannot doubt it”, but rather something like “I know I have a hand and not a tentacle”. Furthermore, the skeptical doubt regarding statements such as “Here is a hand” applies when these statements are connected with some activity. Whereas, according to Wittgenstein, a proposition has meaning only when it is part of a language game. *Per se*, “Here is a hand” does not mean anything. The best proof for this is that, when hearing this sentence out of context, one can doubt one has heard correctly. These words acquire meaning in language games such as the one in which an adult teaches a child to speak or during an anatomy lesson, etc.

Therefore, both Moore and Wittgenstein identify the conceptual relationship between knowledge and doubt (but relate to it differently). What brings them to different conclusions is that Moore erroneously associates certainty with knowledge, whereas for Wittgenstein propositions displaying knowledge claims *belong* to the language game, whereas certainty *grounds* the language game and is a condition of its possibility. In this latter view, the existence of the external world is part of the reference frame of speech, not a hypothesis open to investigation. If any claim of knowledge is open to doubt, then any attempt at justifying these claims can also be doubted. Thus, if Moore’s propositions cannot cause doubt, this does not entail that they are better secured with respect to certainty than other propositions of experience. The difference between the certainty of a proposition like “At this distance from the sun there is a planet” and that of a proposition like “Here is a hand” is not a matter of degree. Rather, although the propositions from the second category have the form of empirical propositions which seem to offer information on the factual world, they are not, in fact, part of the area of knowledge. Their function is to form the *framework* inside which empirical propositions make sense.

What Wittgenstein questions with regards to Moore’s position can also be put like this: often, “I know” means “I have the right grounds for my statement”; in other words, “I

know" is used to express knowledge which can be *objectively* determined – through *verification*. Whereas Moore, when saying "I know here is a hand" or "I know the external world exists" uses them differently, basically making the same mistake the idealists do when saying "I doubt the external world exists". Moore's propositions have a different statute than the propositions in which people usually use "I know". They are part of our *world-picture*, within which we communicate and express knowledge or doubt.

To show that propositions like "Here is a hand" or "I know I have two hands" lie beyond knowledge and doubt, it is, perhaps, important to put forward the idea that certainty and doubt are reflected in practice, in behavior, in performing an action, etc. Behavior confirms that somebody is sure of the existence of certain things; and that is the reason why it does not make sense to assert it (or doubt it!). How would doubting propositions which are part of the world-picture reflect in action? It would be as if, every time one is offered another's hand in making one's acquaintance, one would check to make sure one has a hand before shaking it; or as if, before going to the cinema, one would stop and ask himself or herself: "Does it make sense to go in to see the movie – am I not lacking my sight?".

Thus, doubting things which are part of the reference system does not have consequences in the behavior of the one who doubts (which is not the case with doubting knowledge of such-and-such). If one doubts the durability of a table (or the material it is made of, etc.), this affects one's behavior (for example, one shall not place objects of a certain mass on it). Having two hands is not an observation, in the same sense that a table has a particular durability is. The elements which make up our "world-picture" are not subject to justification, proof or doubt and are neither true nor false.

However, it is important to note that the distinction between hypotheses open to examination and elements of the "world-picture" is a *functional* one. A proposition that is exempt from doubt in some contexts may become subject to doubt in others, and when it does it plays a role within the language game. Some propositions that belong to the reference system may change their status to being propositions of experience (maybe through a "scientific revolution" / shift of paradigm) and vice-versa.

An important aspect here is the possibility of changing the reference system. The common framework that makes rational thought and communication possible dissolves when people doubt fundamental propositions such as "Here is a hand". On these lines, we can imagine the interaction between people who do not share the same reference system (for example, the interaction between a contemporary whose reference system includes the idea that "Earth existed long before my birth" and the leader of a tribe for whom "The world began with my birth" is part of his own – and his community's – world-picture). In this case, arguments are not efficient in reaching consensus, even granted that people are rational, because an argument can only be expressed within a reference system.

The only means of assuring successful communication is for one interlocutor to embrace the other's reference system, but this cannot be achieved through rational discourse and argumentation, but only through *conversion*. Thus, even though the distinction is not absolute, we could, *at a given moment*, identify the propositions that belong to the world-picture and propositions of experience.

To conclude, one of the most important clarifications that Wittgenstein brings based on the distinction between hypotheses open to examination and elements of the "world-picture" is that knowledge and certainty belong to different categories. This insight is the basis for an illuminating picture of the epistemic features of language-games: inasmuch as knowledge claims are revisable within a language-game, questions and doubt regarding them need to rest on a solid, unquestionable background (the "world-picture").

An epistemic picture where certainty is associated with knowledge is assumed in the game that skeptics and anti-skeptics play when questioning or justifying claims to knowledge. Wittgenstein challenges the very presuppositions they both make. The issue with skepticism cannot be dissolved by Moore's strategy of proving the existence of the external world, but by acknowledging that doubting it does not make sense. Moore wrongly assumes that the propositions he uses to prove the existence of the external world are hypotheses (analogous to scientific ones), with such a high degree of certainty that doubting them is unreasonable. But knowledge is possible only where error is possible as well. One cannot indeed doubt those propositions, but not by virtue of their being known for sure, because the "knowledge" people gather is a consequence of experience / empirical examination (through hypotheses, presumptions open to critical debate, confirmed or disconfirmed, etc.), such that it can never be definitively secured. They cannot be doubted because they are not, in fact, knowledge at all. Rather, neither claims of knowledge nor of doubt can be raised with respect to these propositions, because they play a distinctive role – they belong to our "world-picture", making it possible for language to serve its purpose.

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# Rationality, Belief, and Engaged Epistemology

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## Rationality and philosophy

In this article I will present various forms of rationality, conceived as a property of beliefs: procedural, epistemic and agential rationality. I want to demonstrate restrictive character of the criteria adopted by contemporary epistemology for assigning to somebody's beliefs and put emphasis on the empirical contexts (psychological, cognitive, psychopathological), which undermine the possibility of fixing a sharp boundary between rational beliefs and irrational forms of behaviour. By reference to "agential rationality" proposed by Lisa Bortolotti (2008) I try to emphasize the subjective nature of beliefs and outline the current vision of rationality in engaged epistemology and, more broadly, to outline the vision of practical and hermeneutic reason.

Rationality can refer both to the world, things, events, and systems with a specific competence. Difficulties in building a complete theory of rationality lead us to a kind of "hermeneutic rationality" – reconstruction of views and ideas about rationality in both science and society. I agree with Herbert Schnadelbach (1992), who calls for "open" nature of rationality: it is impossible to establish a conclusive binding and necessary rules of rationality. Rationality studies cannot be only limited to the philosophical analysis. One may find new discoveries and creative inspiration, outside philosophy, in sociology, cultural anthropology, psychology, cognitive science and psychopathology. The theory of rationality cannot assume the form of the system. The reality we are talking about is too rich and varied, and therefore its organization and systematization may be presented only by reconstruction a number of types of rationality (rational actions and beliefs).

## Understanding and rationality

Rationality has a limiting character; it imposes restrictions upon actions and beliefs thanks to thus deserving to be called "rational". However, before we assign the subject (or the effects of its activity) a concept "rational", his statements and actions must all aspire to such a name, they must (as Schnadelbach says), be as "possible objects of discursive thematisation." Therefore, he distinguishes between "narrow" and "broader" approach to rationality. In case of a narrow definition of rationality the subject's actions and beliefs succumb to certain standards and criteria of justification. A wider recognition of rationality refers to what is understandable, is synonymous with "intelligibility." Before we can assess someone as rational, we must recognize them as a person whose actions seem to be meaningful. Comprehensible actions and beliefs, however, sometimes may not meet the intersubjective standards and turn out to be only imagination, belief, superstition, or individual intuition.

## Rationality and beliefs

The possibility of assigning beliefs to the person is connected with restrictions which make human actions comprehensible and predictable. If restrictions on beliefs have "a weak" character and serve making contents and behaviour sensible, we can only speak about „intelligibility”,

not about rationality. Then recognizing intentions and motives which directed the person can be both trivial and not very philosophically fruitful. Beliefs can be intelligible to us, even if they seem irrational. The restriction imposed upon beliefs can also have a "stronger" character. Rationality involves itself with a more systematic approach to the content of beliefs, demonstrates a mutual connection between them and their reference to performance. Rationality is essentially normative in nature, and its reference to belief brings about the advantage in the form of understanding beliefs and one's actions. The criteria of rationality usually constitute an ideal that does not reflect the actual beliefs and behaviour of subjects.

## Forms of rationality

In the philosophical literature we find different definitions of rationality. After Bortolotti (2010), I would like to draw the attention to the term "agential rationality", which opposes more popular forms of rationality: procedural and epistemic. Discussion on the forms of rationality aims to show relevant dimensions of thought process and at the same time is a form of reflection on the actual figures of our thinking and action. A special attention to rationality appears in the extreme cases of an irrational action when obvious forms of thinking and behaviour are challenged. Engaged epistemology brings to light complex nature of our beliefs and refers to the practical rationality that operates in highly contextual conditions and manifests itself in the form of habitual action, in our automatic responses, and, at a higher degree more refers to the implicit disposal and attitudes than to beliefs and propositional attitudes.

Assigning rationality to actions and beliefs is connected with the problem of a definition of knowledge and truth. Our discourses assume a claim to rationality and simultaneously indicate fallibility and hypothetical character of formulated theorems. After all the rationality constitutes an actualization of human abilities. In the epistemological discourse we evaluate such effects of agents' activity as ideas, theories or beliefs. The more practical attitude is referring the attribute of the rationality back to persons or systems to which we are assigning this feature.

## Procedural rationality

It is difficult today to assign a feature of rationality to the things themselves, to assume the intelligibility of the world; therefore we often refer rationality to formal properties of beliefs. It is all about the good integration of beliefs with other beliefs, and intentional states. Donald Davidson is aware that fully rational agents may vary according to the accepted norms and values, and insists on something that cannot be based on a disagreement about the facts or standards of thinking. Only the criterion of internal consistency and coherence takes into consideration a subjective approach or one's attitude, and in the breaking of this criterion, we evidently deal with various forms of irrationality (self-deception, wishful thinking, or madness). Beliefs, desires, intentions, and some emotion are determined by their logical relationship to other intentional attitudes. Therefore, Davidson says, "It is only when beliefs are

inconsistent with other beliefs according to principles held by the agent himself—in other words, only when there is an inner inconsistency—that there is a clear case of irrationality." (2004, p. 192)

Good integration of beliefs must correspond with formal standards of human cognitive abilities. However, the concept of rationality as procedural compliance with the principles of deductive reasoning known as *modus ponens*, *modus tollens*, contradictions, etc., along with the basic principles of probability theory that the probability of a conjunction can never be greater than the probability of its conjuncts, seems to be too restrictive and do not reflect our daily ways of defining beliefs.

Donald Davidson (2004) allows the possibility of explaining local and temporal incoherence of thoughts and desires. It is caused by the fact that beliefs can be separated from each other, be in different "compartments" of mind. In the case of a confrontation of conflicting beliefs, which may occur in the disclosure of self-deception, a rational person should make them more consistent. Rationality as a consistency of beliefs is not something we arrive at in empirical way, but it is "background rationality" (Davidson 2004, p. 190) – the assumption about the fundamental rationality of subjects. We can only accept small deviations from the consistency of beliefs; talking about the rationality makes sense if most of the beliefs are reasonably coherent. Serious breakdown of integrity completely deprives the subject of their beliefs; their activity ceases to aspire to that cognitive role.

Is the reality of our ordinary ways of forming and maintaining the thoughts and desires a subject to the procedural criterion of rationality? Will people tolerate situations and apparent violations of rationality (consistency) in the individual decision making? Psychological literature announces a lot of experiments that undermine the coherence and reveals a number of errors of human reasoning. People generally do not search for their own departure from the rationality standards but try to minimize the effects of dissonance in their set of beliefs. In the case of beliefs closely connected with their own self-esteem, or having the nature of superstition, conflicting attitudes can survive, even when subjects are directly confronted with such facts.

It is sometimes hard to establish whether the given behaviour and statements are pointing at some specific belief or desire. People may at the moment claim that they are witty and intelligent, and in the next moment can think just the opposite or someone believes that one's nearest and dearest support their career choices and simultaneously suspects that they are against them. The difficulty of determining the content of beliefs may also relate to general (metaphysical) statements about the world or human nature, especially when the convictions or superstitions come into conflict with the recognized scientific theories or religious beliefs.

The difficulty in making unambiguous decision whether we are dealing with rational beliefs may stem from differences in cognitive styles and cultural experiences. Although Davidson wanted to avoid differences in evaluative attitudes, they can often influence the suspicion of irrationality of others, especially if we do not know the broader background of experience and beliefs of the person.

## Epistemic rationality

We would like our beliefs to be supported by sound evidence. Epistemic rationality defines beliefs as the evi-

dence-based and sensitive to new facts. As Bermudez says:

"Whereas procedural rationality is a matter of inference, of the conclusions that it is appropriate to draw from a given belief or set of beliefs, epistemic rationality is principally a matter of the dynamical relations of how beliefs relate to evidence and how they should be changed in response to changes in the structure of evidence." (Bermudez 2001, p. 468).

Sensitivity to the evidence relates primarily to perceptual beliefs, however it is hard to modify metaphysical or religious beliefs under the influence of the facts. Are we guided in our everyday life by epistemic rationality? Psychological studies show our bias in gathering and assessing facts. There is a tendency to hold beliefs with which we are emotionally connected and which influence our self-esteem, however greater dynamic concerns uncomfortable beliefs, presenting us in bad light. It emphasizes the presence of attribution errors (attributional style), which are person's explanation why things happen. Such theoretical position pays attention to other persons' dispositions, habitual action, and minimalizes the context of action and the influence of external factors. There are several styles of interpretation highlighting the impact of external factors responsible for the existing state of things (externalization), the influence of other people (personalization) or their influence on their own actions (internalization). Motivational factors play a large role in determining the events from the past, in "elaboration" of past events, and the selectivity of attention.

Sensitivity to the facts does not need to lead to a sudden change of view. Formation and elaboration of a reasonable belief system needs a certain balance between its doing justice to the deliverances of our perceptual system, openness to change (the principle of observational adequacy) and little readjustment to the net of beliefs (the principle of conservatism). Davies and Coltheart (2000) refer to two opposing principles that guide the formation of normal beliefs. When the balance between them is disturbed, a mental illness occurs. Davis and Coltheart explain such situations by referring to the principle of conservatism and observational adequacy. The principle of conservatism insists that we should not make too far-reaching changes during belief revision. We should minimize the changes in our beliefs. Quick conversions are not recommended. This principle in its extreme form would inevitably lead to the overall rigidity of belief system and ideological dogmatism. The principle of conservatism should be in a certain balance with the principle of observational adequacy, which is a demand that our beliefs should be consistent with the observed data. Especially when we perceive something surprising. As stated in Stone and Young (1997, p. 349):

"the scientist and non-scientist will always be faced with the challenge of balancing two competing demands: adjusting her or his beliefs so that the maximum amounts of observed data are accounted for, and discounting data, for example as artifactual, so as to preserve the integrity of theory" (Stone and Young 1997, p. 349).

Credibility of facts must be assessed and submitted to appropriate interpretation. Beliefs of scientists and political leaders, their stubborn persistence in their academic or political beliefs, can be properly assessed from a broader historical perspective. The process of collecting evidence and testing hypotheses is dynamic and very complex because the question whether a belief is actually based on



facts is a matter of interpretation. Sadler (1992) stresses the developmental and evolutionary nature of our knowledge (especially therapist's knowledge on patients' behavior) and refers to the term "hermeneutical spiral", a variant of the "hermeneutic circle". Hypotheses are confirmed, rejected or modified as a result of their association with the clinical facts. There is dialectic of gathering data and forming hypotheses. Dialectical relationship between part and whole ultimately determines the nature and a dynamic of our scientific knowledge. From this perspective science does not develop by realization of a program of empirical studies, but also by assuming as obvious the hidden suppositions of the scientific tradition.

### Agential rationality

The subject is rational if it is able to give good reasons for own beliefs and if it acts in accordance with them. "Agential rationality", described by Bortolotti, refers to an active and conscious subject; reasonableness cannot be then separated from a certain amount of self-awareness and action. Behaviours must be to a greater or lesser extent justified and consistent. Practical aspects of beliefs need more visible criteria for justification of beliefs which manifests in the form of observed behaviour.

In practical situations we ascribe beliefs to others on the basis of their behaviour. But behavioural expressions of beliefs and desires reveal their limiting character; especially in the circumstances of discordance between declared beliefs and actual behaviours. These are situations of uncertainty whether the subject really accepts declared beliefs. Procedural rationality draws attention to the coherence between beliefs (desires, intentions); in this case the nub of the matter is a relationship between belief and action. Psychological studies show the difficulty of predicting human behaviours based on their declared attitudes (beliefs). Because we can honestly declare certain beliefs and not be sure yet how we will behave in exceptional circumstances.

Valid justification of our behaviour is also a form of our action. Many convictions can be easily demonstrated in an agent's behaviour, i.e. perceptual belief, but more general beliefs and world views require complex reasons. Everyday choices and opinions and more sophisticated situations of scientific debate and political disputes require reasons and good justification. To attribute beliefs to someone he must accept them as his own, but to assign them a feature of rationality justification must be good enough, compatible with the criteria adopted by the community and formed by explicit deliberations.

### Framework for a rational belief

Not all beliefs can be justified, however, some of which we take as obvious, are "framework propositions" (Wittgenstein). You cannot even say that they are true or false, because we use the concept of knowledge where doubt is possible. They are a precondition of all possible knowledge. As Campbell says:

"They are treated as the background assumptions needed for there to any testing of the correctness of propositions at all" (Campbell 2001, p. 96).

These are the sentences like: "There are many objects in the world", "the Earth had existed *for a long time* before my birth" or "there are chairs and tables in this room". Such beliefs are not, however, according to Wittgenstein, mere assertions of facts, but rather a kind of base necessary for

each test of truth and falsehood. Wittgenstein in his work *On certainty* talks about certain statements of the type: "it is established" that are not false, but a case of mad statement (*Geistorung*). Anyone who says that he was "on the Moon" is not in error; he only expresses a bizarre, mad belief.

To grasp fully the nature of our everyday justifications (rationalizations) needs a comparison with the cases of profoundly irrational beliefs (e.g., delusional). We can assume that delusional beliefs have the status similar to framework propositions but with extraordinary content. If a statement such as: "I'm dead" or "My wife has been swapped by aliens" constitutes a starting point for other beliefs, it may not be the subject of a patient's analysis, it is hard to challenge or to undermine them. Certain core beliefs (e.g. Schreber that he can work miracles, that his body is at the centre of universe of nerves and rays) are the main thread, which develops a network of other beliefs and which cannot be reasonably confirmed or challenged. Cotard and Capgras' delusions could also operate in this way. Paranoid beliefs affect the way patients behave and react. If somebody thinks that he is dead, he stops communicating and cooperating with other people. Delusions perform a role similar to our everyday obvious assumptions. Differences rest on the fact that paranoid beliefs have a very limited character, they are not consistent with the number of other intentional attitudes (in this way do not meet the criteria of procedural rationality). Above all, they are not in general shared and accepted by others. As a result of the appearance of paranoid framework statements a change of primary meaning of words takes place. Accepting a kind of solipsistic perspective does not give a possibility to transfer one's own experience into the intersubjective language; you lose contact with the common horizon of meaning.

### Rationality and engaged epistemology

Possibilities of justification of our beliefs lie in the capacity to endorse the content of beliefs and in defending them with reasons. A person should also refer to intersubjective dimension, we also need to conform the basic norms of good reasoning. The perspective of engagement reveals our emotional relationships and tacit expectations to others and ourselves; it exposes corporal and social background of our accepted beliefs. Ordinary actions and decisions do not have (generally) a reflective nature, and are related to the dispositions and attitudes; they are understandable and obvious for us and other representatives of our community. One can even say that practical rationality (hermeneutic, engaged) is associated with a lack of non-rationality. Rational beliefs are those that appear to violate the rules of rational behaviour and do not deviate from socially and culturally accepted behaviours and forms of expression. The structure of rationality is revealed in a dramatic situation of its collapse: the lack of consistency, inconsistency with facts and evidence, a lack of consistency in action and in inadequate rationalizations.

All the criteria of rationality require their understanding and interpretation. Whether the network of beliefs is sufficiently coherent, and whether the agent is sufficiently sensitive to the facts is a matter of circumstances and content of its belief. Collecting facts and perception is a selective process which depends on subjective preferences and expectations and *post hoc* rationalizations.

Scepticism about the possibility of assigning the criteria of rationality in the form of coherence, sensitivity to the facts and consequences in action or reliable efficiency

does not imply the thesis about the fundamental irrationality and unpredictability of human behaviour. It implies a form of limited rationality and reveals the involvement of our decisions and behaviour in context and emotions. Bill Pollard introduces the term “permissive rationality” that opposes intellectualist vision of human knowledge:

“permissive rationality promises not only to allow us to count many of the actions upon which agents have deliberated as rational, but also to include under that heading habitual actions, and all others over which no prior deliberation has taken place. The real pay-off of this conception of rationality is that it saves us from looking for a rationality-maker, as the reasons theorist does. As a result, we are freed from the need to model rational actions on deliberated actions, which left us open to the charge of intellectualism”. (Pollard 2005, p. 48)

The claim that tacit knowledge exists at the basis of our cognition and action, is consistent with the concept of engaged epistemology (Taylor 2006). I am not able to successfully confirm the belief that I exist, that others have desires. However, this hidden knowledge does not take a form of reasonable assumptions, but is a part of the original (primary) relationship with the world. The basic framework for our beliefs is a body-subject (Merleau-Ponty), whose primordial embodied understanding and involvement with the world cannot be expressed in the form of sentences or propositional attitudes. You cannot describe this type of experience fully in a scientific way, if scientific research already presupposes the feeling of reality and objectivity of the world (Ratcliffe 2008).

Idealized image of rationality strongly present in the history of philosophy and science cannot discourage us in our efforts to build a critical community, which will look for sound justifications for their beliefs. Engaged epistemology

emphasizes implicit assumptions (prejudices, habits) which we find as always present. These are interpretative rules and norms (common sense) accepted by the community and more primordial corporal conditions, anchoring our existence in the world. Rational actors are not constantly scanning the consistency of their nets of beliefs, sensitivity to the facts, the consequences of action or appropriate rationalization. However they are able in certain, usually exceptional and problematic situations to apply their skills of critical evaluation of own assumptions and beliefs.

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# The Knowledge-Action Principle and Isolated Secondhand Knowledge

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## Introduction

Jennifer Lackey, in her (2010a), challenges the sufficiency version of the knowledge-action principle by proposing a set of alleged counterexamples.<sup>1</sup> In this paper, I defend the knowledge-action principle from Lackey's attack. In Section 1, I describe one of Lackey's examples and its setting. For her example to be a genuine counterexample to the sufficiency version of the knowledge-action principle, the following must be true of it: (i) *S* knows the relevant proposition in question, but (ii) *S* is not rational or justified in acting on it. Although there is room for denying (i), the focus here is on (ii). In Section 2, I argue that Lackey fails to establish (ii), and offers two ways of explaining the intuition Lackey relies on.

## 1. Lackey's Alleged Counterexamples to the Knowledge-Action Principle

In arguing against the sufficiency version of knowledge-action principle, Lackey first goes through various formulations of the knowledge-action principle, and summarizes its gist in the sufficiency direction as follows (all page numbers hereafter refer to Lackey (2010a), unless otherwise specified):

KNPR-S\*: It is epistemically appropriate for one to use the proposition that *p* in practical reasoning, to act as if *p*, and to act on *p*, if one knows that *p*. (p. 362)

Then, she proposes a set of alleged counterexamples to KNPR-S\*. For brevity, I mainly discuss one example, but my points below are equally applicable to other examples.

ONCOLOGIST: Eliza is an oncologist at a teaching hospital who has been diagnosing and treating various kinds of cancers for the past twenty years. One of her patients, Lucas, was recently referred to her office because he has been experiencing intense abdominal pain for a couple of weeks. After requesting an ultrasound and MRI, the results of the tests arrived on Eliza's day off; consequently, all of the relevant data were reviewed by Anna, a competent medical student in oncology training at her hospital. Being able to confer for only a very brief period of time prior to Lucas's appointment last week, Anna communicated to Eliza simply that her diagnosis is pancreatic cancer, without offering any of the details of the test results or the reasons underlying her conclusion. On the basis of the reliable and trustworthy testimony that she accepted from Anna – combined with her background knowledge, that if a patient has pancreatic cancer, a highly aggressive combination of radiation and chemotherapy is the necessary course of action – Eliza decided to schedule this treatment for Lucas, which she began administering to him this morning. (p. 364)

Lackey argues that Eliza has the knowledge that Lucas has pancreatic cancer, because every existing account of testimonial knowledge verdicts that she does. It is an instance of what she dubs "isolated secondhand knowledge"; it is secondhand because "the subject in question knows that *p* solely on the basis of another speaker's testimony that *p*"; and it is isolated because "the subject knows nothing (or very little) relevant about the matter other than that *p*" (p. 365). Eliza believes that Lucas has pancreatic cancer merely on the basis of Anna's sincere testimony to that effect. Eliza, of course, has a plethora of knowledge about symptoms of various types of cancers, and, after the brief meeting with Lucas, she also has the knowledge that he is in abdominal pain; but none of this knowledge is enough for knowing that Lucas has cancer of a specific type. The source of Eliza's knowledge, if any, is nothing other than Anna's testimony.

According to Lackey, Eliza is not rational or justified in scheduling or administering a highly aggressive combination of radiation and chemotherapy to Lucas, since it is intuitive that her action is to be criticized and thereby inappropriate. Lackey holds that the inappropriateness involved in the intuition is *epistemic*: "Eliza lacks the appropriate epistemic credentials to schedule and begin administering radiation and chemotherapy to Lucas" (p. 374). Eliza is socially expected to fulfil a certain explanatory duty; she must be able to explain her diagnosis and treatment for Lucas if questions are raised about them. To do this, Lackey claims, it is required that Eliza, on her own, have a specific kind of evidence for Lucas's condition, e.g., data from an ultrasound and MRI, not merely evidence for the reliability of Anne's diagnosis.

Lackey contends that cases in which *S* acts on isolated secondhand knowledge are counterexamples to KNPR-S\*. It, however, is not clear whether KNPR-S\* captures the essence of the knowledge-action principle. All the proponents of the knowledge-action principle formulate it in terms of "rationality" of, "justification" for, or the like, rather than "appropriateness" of, acting on *p*; for example, "*S* knows that *p* only if *S* is rational to act as if *p*" (Fantl & McGrath 2007, p. 559).<sup>2</sup> Then, in order for ONCOLOGIST to be a genuine counterexample to the knowledge-action principle, it must be the case that the intuitive sense of epistemic inappropriateness is non-rationality or unjustifiedness.

## 2. Epistemic Inappropriateness of Eliza's Action

Lackey holds that her examples undermine the move in the argument for the knowledge-action principle proposed by Fantl & McGrath (2002), from *S* knows that *A* is the thing to do to *S* is rational to do *A*.<sup>3</sup> However, this move is not supported by the intuition that it is *appropriate* for *S* to

<sup>1</sup> Lackey (2010b), in much the same way, challenges the sufficiency version of the knowledge norm of assertion, the principle that states that if *S* knows that *p*, then it is epistemically permissible for *S* to assert that *p*. My objections to Lackey's alleged counterexamples to the knowledge-action principle, *mutatis mutandis*, work against those to the knowledge norm of assertion, but my main focus here is on the knowledge-action principle.

<sup>2</sup> See also Hawthorne (2004), Stanley (2005), Hawthorne & Stanley (2008), and Fantl & McGrath (2002, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Lackey concedes that other premises of Fantl & McGrath's argument are true in her examples. I doubt that the premise that *S* knows that if *p*, then *A* is the thing to do is true for her examples, but do not pursue this line of response here.

do *A* when *S* knows that *A* is the thing to do. If any intuition supports it at all, it must be to the effect that necessarily, if *S* knows that *A* is the thing to do, then *S* is *rational* to do *A*. This intuition is different in content from the intuition Lackey appeals to. More importantly, the former intuition directly concerns rationality, whereas the latter intuition does not. Hence, the burden of proof is on Lackey's shoulder; her examples and accompanying intuitions do not undermine Fantl & McGrath's argument for the knowledge-action principle, unless Lackey shows that the intuitive inappropriateness involved in her examples amounts to lack of rationality or justification for action.

I accept that there is an intuitive sense of epistemic inappropriateness in Lackey's examples. Whatever it is, call this sense 'L-epistemic'. Eliza's scheduling or administering the highly aggressive combination of radiation and chemotherapy to Lucas is L-epistemically inappropriate. There are two explanations of L-epistemic inappropriateness that *do not* imply non-rationality or unjustifiedness of Eliza's action.

As far as my intuition is concerned, if someone asks why I judge that it is inappropriate for Eliza to schedule or administer radiation and chemotherapy, my answer is, though not articulated as it should be, that her action is irresponsible. There are two different ways in which actions are epistemically irresponsible. First, if one does  $\phi$  with knowledge of a norm (moral, social, or else) that  $\phi$  is impermissible, then one is to be epistemically blamed for knowingly violating that norm. It is a natural reading of ONCOLOGIST that Eliza knows the professional or institutional norm that a doctor ought not to administer a highly aggressive combination of radiation and chemotherapy to any patient without examining the condition of the patient by herself. On this reading, L-epistemic inappropriateness can be interpreted to be epistemic irresponsibility of knowingly violating the relevant norm. Second, it is part of our ordinary practice of rebuking *S*'s action as irresponsible that if *S* does not but *should* know a norm that  $\phi$  is impermissible, *S* is still held responsible for  $\phi$ -ing. This is well-recognized by philosophers: thus, "[i]n English there is a commonly-used locution to describe the purely negligent agent. We say that although she did not realize at the time that she was violating a norm she should have realized it" (Sverdlik 1993, p. 141).

Lackey suggests that social expectation for Eliza to fulfil her explanatory duty is constitutive of her L-epistemic inappropriateness. I don't find it implausible at an intuitive level that one's expectation for Eliza implies that she should have known the relevant norm concerning her explanatory duty.<sup>4</sup> If the first or the second point (or both) is granted, our intuition of Eliza's L-epistemic inappropriateness can be explained as epistemic irresponsibility in her action. Epistemic responsibility in this sense is far from being a condition for practical justification or rationality; a slightly illegal action, like turning off the car lights during the day, can be rational or justified for *S* even though *S* knows or should know that it is illegal.

This is not the only explanation of our intuition. Examples similar to Lackey's are discussed by Linda Zagzebski (2009) for an entirely different purpose: to illustrate that

even though *S* has knowledge, *S* may still lack the superior epistemic state of understanding.

If my union calls a strike, I may be within my epistemic rights in believing that I should strike, based on the testimony of trusted others, and I may be within my rights in acting upon that belief, but I do not grasp the moral reasons for striking, I lack an important epistemic good. If my Church teaches that abortion is wrong, I may be within my epistemic rights in believing that it is wrong, but if I do not grasp the reasons for the wrongness, I am in an epistemic position inferior to the one I would be in if I did grasp the reasons. But this does not show anything peculiar to moral testimony, since I have argued that testimony in general cannot give us understanding. (p. 147)

Zagzebski focuses only on moral understanding, but her point applies to understanding in general. On her analysis of the examples, *S* knows the relevant proposition by testimony, and is within *S*'s "epistemic rights" in acting on that knowledge. Nevertheless, it is hard to deny that *S*'s action is still intuitively epistemically inappropriate, at least to some extent. Zagzebski, thus, gives a nice clue to construe L-epistemic inappropriateness as lack of understanding.

Here is no place to get into the difficult issues of what understanding is and how it differs from knowledge.<sup>5</sup> It is enough for my purposes here to point out that the essential features of understanding, as Zagzebski elucidates them, are all relevant in Lackey's examples: first, understanding requires the mastery of a *techné*, a practical human art or skill to be found in fields ranging from highly complex and professional, such as medicine and shipbuilding, to mundane, such as cooking and game-playing. Second, understanding requires a grasp of explanatory relations among things. On Zagzebski's account, understanding requires explanation and is distinguished from knowledge, in that knowledge requires justification rather than explanation. Third, but most importantly, unlike knowledge, understanding cannot be transmitted by testimony. For understanding requires *S* herself to grasp the relevant explanatory relations by putting her mind to work.

All these features are prominent in Lackey's examples. They are all cases in which *S* is unable to answer the request for explanation about some technical topic, even though the relevant piece of knowledge is delivered to *S* by testimony. Hence, Eliza knows but does not *understand* that Lucas has pancreatic cancer. Of course, she, *qua* oncologist, understands that what it is for a patient to have pancreatic cancer, and what symptoms and treatments are associated with it. What she lacks, I presume, is local understanding about Lucas's cancer; after all, Eliza has no clue to what is going on in Lucas's body, and its relation to his pancreatic cancer, independently of the testimony. This being said, Eliza's L-epistemic inappropriateness may be explained on account of her lack of understanding. If Zagzebski is right that knowledge (justification) is possible where understanding (explanation) is not, then Lackey's examples are consistent with the idea that *S* is rational or justified in acting on isolated secondhand knowledge, while it is L-epistemically inappropriate for *S* to do so.

<sup>4</sup> For more on epistemic irresponsibility, see Sher (2009). It is enough for my purposes here that there is some intuitive sense of "S should know the norm" in the examples in which *S* doesn't know it; I only intend to give an account of what is behind our intuition of L-epistemic inappropriateness.

<sup>5</sup> For these issues, see Grimm (2006), Kvanvig (2003), and Zagzebski (2001, 2009).

## Conclusion

I have argued that Lackey's examples fail to be genuine counterexamples to the knowledge-action principle. The epistemic inappropriateness Lackey employs is more plausibly construed as epistemic irresponsibility or lack of understanding.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> I thank Jeremy Fantl for helpful discussions and comments I had in writing this paper.

# Scepticism as Intellectual Self-deception

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This paper explores a new way of viewing the strange status of everyday certainties<sup>1</sup> between rules for the use of words and empirical statements and also what is wrong with the sceptic's position. Wittgenstein rightly observes that concerning our everyday certainties we are justified (663)<sup>2</sup> and even obliged (633) to say "I can't be mistaken here". However, the unintelligibility of doubt in those cases is not to be accounted for by a logico-grammatical rule, as he sometimes intimates (71, 155).

Although not logically excluded, the philosophical sceptic's doubt is still unintelligible. But this unintelligibility is more akin to the one that figures in Moorian Paradoxes. A Moorian Paradox is an utterance, like "I think it is raining although it isn't", in which the mental attribute one expresses with the first part of it (here: the belief that it is raining), contradicts the mental attribute one expresses with the second part of it (here: the belief that it is not raining). Because of this one can not sincerely utter Moorian Paradoxes although what one describes with them would be a possible state of affairs: I might think it is raining although it isn't. Analogously the unintelligibility of the sceptic's position also results from two conflicting behavioural criteria for mental attributes: 1) the philosophical sceptic says he is never absolutely certain, 2) but often acts as if he is.

Whenever the second criterion overrides the first, we have to blame the sceptic for either insincerity or deceiving himself. Since the real philosophical sceptic *sincerely* puts forward his view that he knows nothing, he has to be blamed for self-deception. And this self-deception is not a result of wishful thinking, as the spouse that convinces herself that she still loves her husband just because she is afraid of leaving him. Contrasting to the spouses self-deception, which might be called a *volitional* one, the philosophical sceptic's untruthfulness to himself results from misled thought. Therefore the diagnosis of his error should be: *intellectual* self-deception.

Sceptical inclinations can result from two different kinds of intellectual self-deception. The first kind makes one a logical sceptic, who says we *logically* cannot know things. The second kind makes one an empirical sceptic, who claims that it is an empirical truth that we are only very sure about things.

We don't have to show the sceptic that we actually do know things, only that his seemingly innocent claim that he is only very sure about things rests on intellectual self-deception, i.e. that he only *talked himself into* thinking that he is only very sure. Relieved from this intellectual pressure he can then re-enter the game of claiming and ascribing knowledge without a bad conscience. The right way to address the sceptic is to show him that in many cases he cannot, without thereby being either insincere or untruthful to himself, deny a certain mental attribute of himself. The mental attribute is that he *thinks he knows*<sup>3</sup>. It

is precisely this mental attribute that he denies of himself when he makes the logical sceptic's claim that *he* and everyone else *can* at most be very certain about anything or the empirical sceptic's claim that he and everyone else *actually is* at most very certain about anything.

## The logical sceptic

The logical sceptic thinks that our justification for knowledge claims is always insufficient. When someone makes an assertion,  $p_1$ , a question-answer chain can follow, of the form: "How do you know that  $p_1$ ?", "Because  $p_2$ ", "How do you know that  $p_2$ ?", "Because  $p_3$ ", etc. The logical sceptic thinks that this chain *must* stop somewhere and that because of this we are unjustified in holding any of our initial beliefs  $p_1$ . And it is true that this chain stops (189, 192), just not because the question "how do you know that?" cannot be answered any more, but because it cannot intelligibly be asked any more. I will elaborate on this point throughout what follows.

One can roughly distinguish three kinds of knowledge ascriptions or claims with respect to their justification. The first is the one that is justified by "she told him that ..." or "he read it in the newspaper" which could just as well count as justification of only a high degree of certainty, i.e. as answers of the question "why does he think this is probable?". Second, there are knowledge ascriptions or claims which are justified by "she saw it", "she remembers it" or "she was informed about it", i.e. justifications which *imply* the truth of what they justify. Thirdly there are knowledge ascriptions or claims which cannot be justified, like: that the world exists and is older than 100 years, that one has two hands, that one sees a cat, that one can trust one's memories and that what has happened regularly tends to happen again.

If in the question-answer chain the answer given is "Because I saw it", "Because I remember it" or "Because I was informed about it" then the further question "How do you know that?" makes no sense any more.<sup>4</sup> Although from the fact that someone sincerely answers the question this way, it doesn't follow that what he thinks he knows is actually true, his answering this way is enough for making it intelligible how he can *think he knows*.<sup>5</sup> And thus such kinds of answers end the chain of intelligible requests for justification. "I saw it", "I remember it", etc. are claims to knowledge of the third kind. They can also be 'justification' for claims of knowledge of the second kind, but it is misleading to call them justification for knowledge claims, because they are not specifications of evidence for one's claims. Rather than *answering* the question "What is your evidence for that?" responses like "I saw it" or "I remember it" *reject* it. So requests for justification in the sense of 'evidence' are already senseless when asked about claims of knowledge of the second kind.

<sup>1</sup> Like the certainty that chocolate is sweet, what our own name is, that cats don't grow on trees, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers in brackets refer to paragraphs in Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*.

<sup>3</sup> This attribute can not be used by the person that it qualifies. It is the attribute that others use, when they believe that not  $p$  and say of someone "He only thinks he knows that  $p$ " or when they are undecided about whether  $p$  or not and say of someone "He at least thinks he knows that  $p$ ". I could not *in this sense* say of me "I (only/at least) think I know". If I say "I think I know" I usually mean that I am not absolutely certain, but when I turn out to be right I know.

<sup>4</sup> If it was foggy or one has a faulty memory, the question is not senseless, but its intelligibility presupposes some such impediment

<sup>5</sup> And, as said in the beginning, the aim is only and only needs to be to show that *thinking to know* is possible and an everyday phenomenon (and not *knowing*).

For all answers in the third category one can normally not intelligibly require justification: There is for example normally no ‘how one knows’ for one’s knowledge that one has two hands (125).

For claims of knowledge of the first category too, one could normally not intelligibly require justification: In the unexceptional case of someone saying “She told me that p” or “I read in the newspaper that q” etc. where p and q are undisputed, we believe p and q and continue to be of the conviction that they are true until some kind of counter-evidence shows up. So we rely on the truth of p and q. We also generally agree on what we thus rely on<sup>6</sup> and on what would count as counter-evidence. Therefore doubting p or q after being told “She told me that p” or “I read in the newspaper that q”, i.e. doubting knowledge claims of the first category, is also normally unintelligible.

So the logical sceptic misconstrues the structure of the language-game of justification and knowledge. He thinks that because one cannot for ever continue to answer ‘and how do you know that?’-questions, a claim to knowledge must in the end always be unjustified, i.e. that one can logically at most be *very certain* about things. However, the truth is that at the end of this question-answer chain we encounter certainties (i.e. ‘thinking to knows’), for which further justification is not required. Therefore it is a mis-conceived thought that one could not come to think one knows something without having some sort of justification or evidence.

As a result of this mistake the logical sceptic convinces himself that others are untruthful to themselves when they claim to know something, and that he can admit, as one of the few truthful people, that he is only very sure about things and does not know anything. But here he deceives himself; if he were truthful to himself he would have to admit to knowing many things (although this of course doesn’t imply the truth of any of these things (663)). It is only his misconceived theory of knowledge and justification that makes him think otherwise, i.e. he is in the grip of an intellectual self-deception.

## The empirical sceptic

So far it has been shown that the logical impossibility of knowledge cannot be demonstrated by mentioning that justification necessarily comes to an end, because a person does not necessarily need justification to count as someone who (thinks he) knows that p. Presented with this line of thought, someone still in the grip of the sceptical impulse might retreat to the alternative idea that although absolute certainty cannot logically be excluded, it is just that as a matter of fact it is never realised. This idea seems to be unattractive at first sight, because don’t we constantly show in what we say and do that we think we know many things? However, the idea is actually not as far-fetched as it seems, because the empirical sceptic would, just as the logical sceptic, admit that we treat ourselves and others as knowing. He would just see this as self-deception, since in his view we are actually at most very certain about anything.

To find out whether a person is absolutely certain about something one must put her into a situation in which it becomes very crucial that what she thinks is true. If she

says that the book ‘Moby Dick’ is in her desk, the sceptic might for example (cruelly) say he will kill all her friends and relatives and sentence her to a lifelong torture if she wrongly claims to know this, and then ask whether she would still claim it under those circumstances. Those kinds of situations, although admittedly very unlikely to happen, are necessary to test for absolute certainty. Here it might turn out (although it would need to be established empirically) that everyone withdraws his initial claim when being tested in this way. Yet this cannot show that the person who was tested was not absolutely certain *before* being tested, because this kind of test distorts the situation. Specifically, because it makes it *very* important that what one claims is true, which might have an influence on the certainty of the tested person (no matter whether causally or as a reason).

Here we face an indeterminacy between being absolutely sure and only very sure: Are we absolutely certain as long as we don’t encounter such testing situations? Since such a testing situation is necessary for establishing this, the question might have no definite answer. A person that responds to the test by simply repeating her claim without batting an eyelid, can definitely count as absolutely sure, and as *thinking she knows*. But if, in reaction to the test the person starts to waver on her position, the question of whether she would have been absolutely sure if no such situation had affected her has no definite answer, since such a testing situation is necessary for establishing this.

Here, it is not just that we don’t know what the answer is; there really is no answer. It is the same as with the colour of a photo-active material (like a film) before it is exposed to sunlight. If it is necessary for finding out the colour something *has* to view it in sunlight, then, if we know of some stuff that sunlight has a relevant effect on it, it makes no sense to ask what colour it has before it is exposed. Just as it makes no sense to ask for the location an electron has before it has been observed, because observation necessarily effects its location.

With this consideration in mind the weight of the sceptic’s charge that we are generally untruthful to ourselves, can again be taken off of *our* shoulders and put onto *his*. The result of the sceptics’ test can only speak against him, because only when the findings speak against him are they determinate. When people stick to their claims in the test, they thereby show that absolute certainty exists and that they didn’t deceive themselves or others in claiming to know. But from findings that seemingly speak in favour of his position, the sceptic cannot conclude anything, since here, the two options – being absolutely and only very sure – are in superposition.

So the empirical sceptic’s intellectual self-deception is this: He thinks that because he would not be able to stick to his everyday certainties in a testing situation, he must be only very sure about them. But because of the indeterminacy, the rule ‘either absolutely sure or only very’ doesn’t apply here and from him being ‘not absolutely sure’ it doesn’t follow that he is at most ‘only very sure’.

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<sup>6</sup> So normally it is not the case that one person believes p but not q and r, a second believes q but not p and r and a third r but not p and q.

# Relativism and Knowledge Ascriptions

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## 1. Introduction

Invariantist and contextualist views support their semantics of 'know' by appeal to linguistic data from ordinary speakers' use of expressions involving 'know'. MacFarlane (2005, 2011) has pointed out that each of these views makes incorrect predictions concerning some of these uses. As a result, they are committed to attributing some form of semantic blindness to ordinary speakers. But this is supposed to undermine their position. The more data they explain away by appeal to speakers' ignorance of the semantic workings of 'know', the less they can conclude from speakers' usage of 'know' in favour of their semantics of knowledge sentences. In contrast, MacFarlane argues, a relativist semantics can accommodate all of the data. Relativism comes out as the only view that avoids the "double-edged sword" of attributing systematic error to ordinary speakers (MacFarlane, 2005). This is its main motivation.

Relativism about 'know' is the view that, while 'know' invariably expresses the same content across contexts of use, the truth value of sentences of the form 'S knows that p' may still vary along an epistemic dimension: The invariant content is evaluated relative to the epistemic standards salient at a *context of assessment* that may differ from the context in which the sentence is uttered (MacFarlane, 2005). In MacFarlane's jargon: 'S knows that p' may be true at (context of use)  $c_U$  and (context of assessment)  $c_{A1}$  and false at  $c_U$  and  $c_{A2}$ .

MacFarlane (2005, 2011) claims that relativism makes intuitively correct predictions where some or all of its competitors fail. The data he discusses are (a) ordinary speakers' intra-contextual truth ascriptions regarding knowledge claims, (b) inter-contextual truth ascriptions, (c) retraction of knowledge claims, (d) embeddings of knowledge sentences under temporal and modal expressions, (e) belief and (dis)agreement reports. I will leave unquestioned here that relativism correctly predicts (a) – (e). What I wish to focus on is the conclusion MacFarlane draws from this: that relativism avoids the attribution of semantic blindness.

## 2. Sceptical Paradox

The thesis of this paper is that despite their impressive record, relativists must have recourse to semantic blindness attributions to account for the *full* range of data from ordinary speakers' use of knowledge sentences. Consider the following sceptical argument (SA):

(SA) I don't know that I'm not a BIV (i.e., a bodiless brain in a vat who has been caused to have just those sensory experiences I've had).

If I don't know that I'm not a BIV, then I don't know that I have hands.

I don't know that I have hands.

As Stephen Schiffer (1996, 317) remarks, "this argument presents a paradox because it tempts us to say three things that are mutually inconsistent: its first premise is true; its second premise is true; and its conclusion is false."

That is, the following three sentences are mutually inconsistent: "I don't know that I'm not a BIV"; "If I don't know that I'm not a BIV, then I don't know that I have hands"; and "I know that I have hands". Yet each of these sentences strikes us as intuitively true.

A "fully satisfactory" solution, Schiffer continues, must accomplish two things: First, it must explain why (SA) in fact does not present a paradox. And secondly, it must explain why (SA) *seemed* to present a paradox.

Relativists have the resources to provide a satisfactory solution – one which is similar to DeRose's contextualist solution (DeRose 1995). A paradox is "a set of mutually inconsistent propositions each of which enjoys some plausibility when considered on its own" (Schiffer, 1996, 324). Propositions, and sentences, are mutually inconsistent just in case they cannot be true together. Regarding the first part of the solution, relativists can point out that there is no combination of contexts  $c_U$  and  $c_A$  such that each of the following three sentences enjoys some plausibility on its own yet they cannot be true together: "I don't know that I'm not a BIV"; "If I don't know that I'm not a BIV, then I don't know that I have hands"; "I know that I have hands." From any context of assessment with high epistemic standards, call it  $c_{A(High)}$ , the first two are true and plausible, but the third lacks plausibility – it is false at  $c_{A(High)}$ . From any context of assessment with low epistemic standards,  $c_{A(Low)}$ , the second and third are true and plausible, but the first is not. Thus, (SA) does not present a paradox.

Second, relativists can explain why, despite the argument being valid, we were inclined to accept the premises but reject the conclusion. We intuitively assess the conclusion from our everyday context in which low epistemic standards prevail, while we assess the sceptical hypothesis introduced by the premises from a context with extraordinarily high epistemic standards. In (SA), we reason from the premises' truth at  $c_U$  and  $c_{A(High)}$  to the conclusion's falsity at  $c_U$  and  $c_{A(Low)}$ . Yet we are *ignorant of our switching contexts of assessment in moving from premises to conclusion*. Thus we don't realize that our truth judgments of the premises (truth at  $c_U$  and  $c_{A(High)}$ ) are in fact compatible with our falsity judgment of the conclusion (falsity at  $c_U$  and  $c_{A(Low)}$ ).

## 3. Index Blindness

The second part of the relativist solution involves the attribution of error to speakers. We *mistakenly* think (SA) gives rise to paradox because we *mistakenly and unknowingly* switch contexts of assessment midway. This mistake is best explained by appeal to speakers' semantic blindness. But what is this semantic blindness an ignorance of? Relativists couch their view in a broadly Kaplanian (1989) semantic framework in which the derivation of a sentence's semantic value can be understood as a two step process: first the derivation of a content from context, and second the derivation of a truth value from the index (or circumstances of evaluation). On the relativist view, sensitivity to epistemic standards comes in play in the second step. Epistemic standards are a parameter of the index (just like worlds and perhaps times are). So ignorance of the sensitivity of knowledge ascriptions to



epistemic standards amounts to blindness to the sensitivity of knowledge ascriptions to a parameter of the index.

(Index Blindness) Speakers are blind to the fact that the truth value of contents expressed by sentences involving a certain expression ('know') can vary with a particular parameter in the index (epistemic standards).

The attribution of index blindness to ordinary speakers is a cost not only because it prevents relativists from avoiding the "double-edged sword" of attributing speaker error. More importantly, the attribution of index blindness is implausible in light of speakers' competent handling of less controversial forms of dependence of truth value on a parameter in the index. For instance, speakers easily track the time-parameter when presented with little Modus Ponens arguments.

#### 4. Is Cartesian Scepticism the Problem?

Relativists have not in print addressed scepticism nor offered explicitly the solution I have presented. So they might reject this solution, and the attribution of index blindness, by pointing out that with respect to external world scepticism, relativism has no advantages over traditional attempts to come to grips with the sceptical problem – no particular relativist solution is in the offing.

This reply, however, is implausible. The relativist account I have sketched also applies to simple epistemic closure puzzles about parked cars, zebras, and lotteries. Consider for instance Vogel's car park cases, here exemplified as a quick little argument:

(C) I know that my car is parked in the driveway.  
 If I know that my car is parked in the driveway, then I know that it has not been stolen.  


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 I know that my car has not been stolen.

Arguments such as (C) are equally puzzling. Why are we tempted to agree to the premises but to deny the conclusion? The relativist solution to sceptical paradox offers an equally good explanation of why we find (C) puzzling. But if relativists were to reject the solution for arguments about parked cars, zebras and lotteries, they would give up on the everyday data with which they have made their case.

#### 5. Conclusion

I have argued that relativism about knowledge ascriptions is committed to attributing a particular kind of semantic blindness I call index blindness to ordinary speakers (as much as to philosophers who are taken in by sceptical paradoxes and car park puzzles). Yet relativism is in good company: Error-theoretic objections are ripe in the literature on knowledge ascriptions, and all views need to appeal to some form of speaker error to account for some data or other. This fact alone is an invitation to re-evaluate the dialectical force of error-theoretic objections. By way of concluding, I would like to suggest that what we need is clarity about just what kind of blindness, or error, some theory attributes, and criteria for the comparison and evaluation of these kinds of blindness.

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# Structural Values of Scientific Knowledge

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## 1. Introduction

There are recurring debates, often also concerning the commercialization of academic research, about the question of whether scientific knowledge is just useful or also valuable in itself, whether it just possesses “instrumental” value or is also “intrinsically” valuable? The question involves a simple opposition between just two types of values characterized in terms of their underlying structural relationships.

Similar debates about other forms of knowledge, e.g. everyday knowledge, are lacking (except for typically philosophical discussions of knowledge in general). A pragmatic explanation is that everyday knowledge is acquired as a matter of course, while the production of scientific knowledge is costly and thus needs to be especially justified. One could add differences in the nature of forms of knowledge. Yet, my purpose here is restricted to scrutinizing the issues involved in terms of *structural types of values* attributable to knowledge. I shall question and revise the simple opposition between “instrumental” and “intrinsic” value of scientific knowledge.

## 2. On Structural Types of Values

We need some indication of what values are and a specification of their various structural types. Values can be considered as providing commendations or reasons for choosing and acting. Whether the value of something implies that it also ought to be there is a controversial question. Even more controversial is the ontological status of values. For objectivists like myself, they exist; for subjectivists, they do not, there only are human *valuings*. Yet, note that subjectivists can also investigate whether something is being valued “intrinsically” or “instrumentally”.

Values can be divided on substantial grounds into moral values (justice), aesthetic values (beauty) and so on. Our concern, however, is distinctions of structural types of values, based on *factual (structural) relationships*. We meet here with a terminological jungle. So, some stipulations are in order, which I partly derive from C. I. Lewis (1946).

I shall first specify the factual relationship and then name the corresponding value.

- Means-end: A thing is *useful* for some purpose.
- Means-good end: Something has *instrumental value* if it is a means to a good end, which represents a *final value* (not necessarily an intrinsic value).

Source of value:

- in the thing itself: It has *intrinsic value*
- in something else: It has *extrinsic value*

Thus, instrumental value indeed is an extrinsic value, but the usual opposition between “instrumental” and “intrinsic” value conflates the distinctions intrinsic/extrinsic and instrumental (or just useful)/final. This opposition can only be upheld on debatable position that intrinsic values (having their source *in* the things themselves) are the only

final values (possessed by things desirable as ends, *for* themselves). However, there are other types of extrinsic value:

- Part-whole: Something has a *contributory value* if it is part of a greater good whole.
- Experiencing: Something has an *inherent value* if it lends itself to a good experience.
- Maintaining: Something has a *functional value* if it helps maintaining a good state of affairs.
- Necessary condition/part: Something has a *constitutive value* if it is necessary for the good thing maintained or is part of.

The last two items, in particular, are my own stipulations; they could be considered as special cases of instrumental value.

I suppose there would be no end to further or finer distinctions. E.g., one could add (Riggs 2008) other extrinsic values like:

- Motivation/intention: An attitude has *teleological value* if it is intentionally directed toward something valuable.
- Indication: Something has *indicative value* if indicates a state of affairs that is good or worthwhile knowing.

Now, things can be valuable on several grounds or in several respects: they may possess several types of values simultaneously. This my *‘thesis of plurivaluableness’* undercuts to quite some extent any careless disjunctive opposition between “instrumental” and “intrinsic” value.

Yet, what kind of things can possess intrinsic values? Environmentalists deem the preservation of nature insufficiently guaranteed unless one recognizes the “intrinsic value” of animals and ecosystems. Yet, I think (cf. Lemos 1994), that it is not concrete particulars, but states of affairs, which can be bearers of intrinsic value: the thriving of an animal is valuable, not the animal as an individual thing in an undefined state. Similarly, it is also not ideals or particular abstract values that are intrinsically valuable, but rather experiences or else activities which involve them. William Frankena (1973, 89), e.g., writes: “It seems to me that truth is not itself intrinsically good. ... What is good in itself is knowledge of or the belief in truth. The same point may be applied to beauty, harmony, proportion, or the just distribution of goods and evils ... what is intrinsically good is the contemplation or experiencing of them. In themselves, they are inherent rather than intrinsic goods.”

## 3. (Scientifically) Knowing Can Be Intrinsically Valuable

As concerns our present topic, then, it is the state of *knowing* or *having knowledge* that, apart from its *usefulness* or *instrumental value*, can have an *intrinsic value*, when legitimately valued in itself. The piece of knowledge objectively considered, as something that can be communicated, stored and retrieved, could then be accorded an *inherent value*. This all holds for scientific knowledge, too.

In particular, for a scientist *him/herself*, acquiring and possessing new knowledge certainly counts, not only a *final* value, but also an *intrinsic* value. Is it therefore quite subjective? I do not think so. We all can comprehend his/her aspirations and satisfaction, acknowledge this intrinsic value and the inherent value of the knowledge acquired, especially if it also is interesting to us.

Since intrinsicness is only a *structural* characteristic of a value, what is the *substantial* content of this intrinsic value of knowing? It surely is not the same as that of the intrinsic value of other things, e.g. natural animal activities. A brief answer is that the intrinsic value of knowing involves some satisfaction of curiosity, while that of animal activity may include enjoyment of movement. Whether something of intrinsic value morally ought to be striven for or be protected will also depend on such further substantial specifications.

Yet, from moral debates about research involving, e.g., human subjects or animals it is clear that the intrinsic value of scientific knowing cannot be a powerful value: the execution of such controversial research has almost exclusively been defended in terms of the usefulness of the resulting insights, not in terms of their possible intrinsic value.

#### 4. Value Components Versus Structural Values of Knowledge

In dealing with structural values, it may be difficult to keep factual relations and value relations apart. 'X is a means to Y' is an empirically controllable statement of a factual relation. 'X is instrumentally valuable with respect to good end Y' is an evaluative statement; the instrumental value of X *derives* from the value of Y.

There also is a quite different value relationship, namely when one value *is a component of* another (composed) value, maybe even a necessary component. E.g., honesty is a value component of the moral worth of a person. This relationship should not be confused with something being constitutively valuable for something else, which is based on a factual relation. Only in special cases will both relationships obtain at the same time (the instrumental value of a hair-dryer surely is *not* a component of the aesthetic value of the hairdo). What about such relationships in the case of knowledge?

In recent years, quite a number of epistemologies have turned from analyzing knowledge to debating the *value* of knowledge. The usual starting point is the Meno problem, broached in Plato (cf. Pritchard 2007): the question of whether and which possible sense knowledge is more valuable than true belief, where knowledge is traditionally defined as justified true belief (plus possibly some further condition to avoid Gettier problems). In practical affairs at least, it would seem that it makes no difference whether one operates on the basis of knowledge or true belief, that both have the same "instrumental" value. My own rough response to the question is that mere true belief will very likely continue to be in competition with opposing beliefs, while knowledge, since *justified*, ideally has no longer competitors and is in this sense more valuable.

The debate about the value of knowledge, I observed, is largely conducted in a value-theoretical vacuum. Clearly, however, all discussants regard truth as a value, instrumental or other. To me, too, truth is (in perhaps some figurative sense) *constitutively valuable* for both knowledge and mere true belief and its value, in this special case, at

the same time a *necessary value component* of the values of both. These values can be instrumental and inherent; and, like knowing, truly believing can have intrinsic value.

So, as indicated, the difference lies with *justification*: believing what is true with justification, i.e. knowing, is better than without. Justifiedness is *contributively*, if not *constitutionally valuable* in relation to knowledge, and its value is a *necessary component* of the value of knowing. Its value, of course, is questioned by sceptics of diverse sorts. Yet, I should say that justificational procedures are instrumentally valuable with respect to two valuable features, credibility and reliability, of a belief or knowledge claim.

Other important value components of the value of knowledge have to do with substantial aspects, the quality, object or content of knowledge. For instance, we usually and quite significantly make evaluative distinctions between knowledge that is interesting, exciting, worth remembering, and knowledge that is trite, shocking, burdensome.

#### 5. Further Structural Values of Scientific Knowledge

Regarding everyday knowledge (infused today with scientific knowledge), I have noted that we do not seem to have pointed debates about whether it is of "instrumental" or "intrinsic" value. Most of it is *useful* or *instrumentally valuable*. Some of it can (in accordance with the thesis of plurivaluableness) also be *intrinsically valuable*, like knowing the explanation of why something went well or wrong. Also, a great part of it, like knowing departure times for catching a flight, is of *indicative value*.

Much everyday knowledge does not have just the instrumental value of a means for specific goals. Knowledge of one's house or town is of *functional* or even *constitutive value*. It helps, or is necessary for, maintaining valuable routines and practices. Unlike scientific knowledge by itself (as contrasted with scientific practice), such practical knowledge often is a mixture of factual and normative components.

Now, I suggest that scientific knowledge, except for the last-mentioned difference, can also be attributed similar features.

Scientific knowledge clearly is *useful* for a great many purposes, though there remains the ever-nagging question of whether its good practical consequences, its *instrumental values*, outweigh its bad ones.

I suggest that, with respect to the enterprise of science or its disciplinary practices, scientific knowledge can also be attributed a *functional value*. Available scientific knowledge – although in conjunction with expertise in scientific methods and experimental procedures – serves to maintain the practices of science. It thus possesses *functional value*, insofar as these practices are valuable. Their point, their instrumental value, is the production of new knowledge, which cannot yet be of such functional value, but represents a *final value*.

Inasmuch as (valuable) scientific practices could not exist without some scientific knowledge, this knowledge even is of *constitutive value*. Again, we have to add that expertise in methods and technics, and especially the goal-orientedness of scientific research are to be attributed at least equal constitutive values.

Finally, outcomes of scientific experiments and diagnoses clearly can have much *indicative value*. And I add that scientific knowledge can be of *contributory value* for the formation of a person, which can be considered as a *component* of his/her value.

With this account of the (structural) types of values and their relationships within science we depart in some ways from the purist or objectivist view, according to which it is the scientific method which defines what science is. My account involves a richer picture of the constitutively valuable elements: scientific knowledge, too, is constitutively valuable for (new) scientific knowledge.

It thus has a slight similarity with the “new” sociologists of scientific knowledge, radically opposing to the purist view, which regard scientific research as a “typical knowledge-based social activity” (Barnes et al. 1996, 113), always associated with a contingent set of “goals and interests” (ibid., 120). However, they give no special role to the goal of finding the truth. They also do not address anything like the “intrinsic value” of scientific knowledge, except as a subjective element operating as a cause of scientific belief changes.

One could suppose that my discussion of structural types of values scientific knowledge should also deal with the question of weighing them with respect to each other. Yet, one usually does not weigh the functional value of a body of knowledge in one discipline against the inherent value of the knowledge in another. In science policy decisions, substantial considerations play a predominant role.

## 6. Concluding Remarks

We have seen that the simplistic opposition between “instrumental” and “intrinsic” value, often present in debates on scientific knowledge, should be replaced by a differentiated picture of the structural value types involved in it and other forms of knowledge. We have also noted that scientific knowledge, like other things, may possess different types of value at the same time (*thesis of plurivaluableness*). All this can shed some new light on these debates, though without diminishing their practical relevance.

In particular, I have pointed out that scientific knowledge also possesses *functional value* and *constitutive value*. My considerations have included a certain defense of the *intrinsic value of scientific knowing*, along with the *inherent value of scientific knowledge*. I have cautioned against drawing hasty moral conclusions from intrinsic values.

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# Somebody Has to Know – Jennifer Lackey on the Transmission of Epistemic Properties

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## 1. Transmission of epistemic properties

In her book *Learning from Words* Jennifer Lackey argues against the widely accepted thesis of the Transmission of Epistemic Properties. The idea behind this principle is that it is necessary for a speaker A to have knowledge that  $p$  so she can transmit  $p$  via testimony to a hearer B. Lackey uses the metaphor of a bucket brigade as an illustration. (See Lackey 2008, 47) Suppose we are handing over buckets from one person to another. In order to give the next person in the chain a full bucket of water, I must have a full bucket and I must have received such a full bucket. And – as the idea of transmission suggests – the same goes for knowledge. In order to give a hearer knowledge about  $p$ , I must know  $p$  myself. In Lackey's words this "necessity thesis" (hereafter NT) goes like this:

NT: "For every speaker, A, and hearer, B, B knows that  $p$  on the basis of A's testimony that  $p$  only if A knows that  $p$ ." (Lackey 2008, 39, slightly modified, S.K.)

There is also a weaker version of this NT, endorsed by e.g. Michael Dummett, Elizabeth Fricker and Paul Faulkner. In this weaker version it is not necessary that the speaker himself has the relevant knowledge from a source other than the testimony of another person. But nonetheless, the first link in this chain must have the knowledge in question from a non-testimonial source. The epistemic properties of the assertion of the first link in this chain are transmitted through the whole chain like the water in the buckets. Again in Lackey's words:

NT<sub>w</sub> "For every testimonial chain  $A_1, \dots, A_n$ , speaker  $A_n$ , and hearer B, B knows that  $p$  on the basis of  $A_n$ 's testimony that  $p$  only if the first speaker,  $A_1$ , knows that  $p$  in some non-testimonial way." (Lackey 2008, 41, slightly modified, S.K.)

Lackey now argues that there are cases in which a speaker fails to have the knowledge in question but can nonetheless be the source of a hearer's knowledge. Lackey's example for such a case is the *Creationist Teacher*. (See Lackey 2008, 48) Stella, a fourth grade teacher, has a devoutly creationist believe. Her belief that creationism is true provides her with a psychological defeater for the believe in evolutionary theory. But one day she has to teach evolutionary theory to her pupils. She is very correct and thinks that she should not impose her religious beliefs on children. So she consults reliable sources and develops lecture notes which present all the material that is best supported by evidence. In accordance with those notes Stella asserts to her students: "Modern-day *Homo sapiens* evolved from *Homo erectus*". But since Stella has an undefeated psychological defeater for this utterance, she fails to believe and henceforth to know this proposition. Therefore, Stella doesn't have the knowledge in question, but since this defeater is not transmitted and her students are no creationists, they know the proposition in question after the lesson, just from Stella's testimony. Here we have a case, Lackey argues, in which the NT doesn't hold. Because Stella doesn't know the proposition in question but her students clearly know it – therefore knowledge on part of the speaker cannot be necessary for the hearer to gain knowledge through testimony.

## 2. The everyday occurrence of indirect testimony

I will now argue that Stella's testimony in *Creationist Teacher* is a case of indirect testimony and therefore Stella is a part of a testimonial chain.

What is the difference between direct and indirect testimony? It is a case of indirect testimony, if I am testifying something which was asserted to me by another person. Lackey uses the following example: If John said to me that Cody ate the last cookie and someone asked me "Who ate the last cookie?" and I said "John said that it was Cody" then this is a case of indirect testimony. Because I am directly testifying to what John asserted and only indirectly to what Cody did. Lackey argues that the only criterion how to distinguish direct from indirect testimony could be "by the *content* of the proffered statement" (Lackey 2008, 51 original italics). Therefore, if A says " $p$ ", it is a case of direct testimony; if A says "*S said that p*" it is indirect. With this distinction, Stella clearly is directly testifying and the *Creationist Teacher* refutes the NT, because Stella lacks the belief that  $p$  and therefore doesn't know that  $p$ .

But note that Stella is talking about the evolutionary theory throughout her lecture, and it is perfectly normal for her to put some sentence in the form "*S said p*" and other sentences in the form " $p$ " and "*if you grant p, then q*" and so on. Consider that she is giving a lecture about Plato's *Parmenides*. She is talking about the dialog throughout the lecture, even if some of her assertions have the form " $p$ ". In those cases, according to Lackey's distinction, the status of Stella's testimony would oscillate all the time between direct and indirect. But this seems strange to me, because she is not changing the topic of her lecture from "What is" to "What S said" all the time, like the oscillation between direct and indirect testimony suggests. Therefore the line between direct and indirect testimony should be drawn differently, that is by the *justification* of the proffered statement, not by the *content*. Seen this way a testimony is indirect, if I am justifying my assertion with the assertion of another person.

For example: Stella says "Modern-day *Homo sapiens* evolved from *Homo erectus*" and a pupil asks her "What is your reason for saying that?" She will answer something like "I read the relevant books, I talked to an evolutionary biologist, etc." In short, she will justify her assertion that  $p$  with assertions of others. If, on the other hand, someone asked John "Who ate the last cookie?" and John asserted that "Cody ate the last cookie"; when being asked how he came to believe this, John may say something like "I saw him with the cookie in his mouth". This is a case of direct testimony because no other assertions are involved.

There is the obvious possibility that an assertion looks like a direct testimony on first glance, but is in fact an indirect testimony – this is what happens in the *Creationist Teacher*. But it is a common way to assert simply " $p$ " even if the only justification for saying " $p$ " is that "*S said that p*". And it may be the case that one does not even believe that  $p$  is true – Stella can testify what Plato said without being a Platonist. And that's the case in the *Creationist Teacher*.

After Stella's indirect testimony the pupils know  $p$ , although Stella doesn't know it because of her undefeated defeater.

I want to give a short account of how I would describe a transmission of epistemic properties in a case of indirect testimony. Stella clearly has to know what the relevant authorities said about evolution. So to me it seems correct to say that the NT works in indirect testimony, not with respect to " $p$ " but with respect to " $S$  asserted that  $p$ ". So Stella must know what the relevant authorities say in order to be reliable testifiers. So one may endorse the weaker version of the NT for direct testimony:

NT<sub>d</sub>: "For every testimonial chain  $A_1, \dots, A_n$ , speaker  $A_n$ , and hearer  $B$ ,  $B$  knows that  $p$  on the basis of  $A_n$ 's testimony that  $p$  only if the first speaker,  $A_1$ , knows that  $p$  in some non-testimonial way."

And for indirect testimony I propose the following principle:

NT<sub>i</sub>: "For every speaker,  $A$ , and hearer,  $B$ ,  $B$  knows that  $S$  asserted that  $p$  on the basis of  $A$ 's testimony that  $S$  asserted that  $p$  only if  $A$  knows that  $S$  asserted that  $p$ ."

The NT<sub>i</sub> regulates how the links in the testimonial chain are linked and is stronger than the NT<sub>d</sub>. So if Stella asserts that "Modern-day *Homo sapiens* evolved from *Homo erectus*" she is making an indirect testimony, because if she would be asked to justify her assertion, she will refer to assertions of other persons. And then the NT<sub>i</sub> holds: Stella must know that the relevant authorities say that "Modern-day *Homo sapiens* evolved from *Homo erectus*". She must believe it, it must be true and she must be able to justify it. But Stella must not believe "Modern-day *Homo sapiens* evolved from *Homo erectus*" herself, although it will often be the case, that one believes " $p$ " together with " $S$  said  $p$ ". But this is not necessary, it is enough that the first link in the testimonial chain believes and therefore knows it from a non-testimonial source.

As I take it the next obvious objection would be this: So the *Creationist Teacher* is a case of indirect testimony where Stella is part of a testimonial chain. But Lackey also gives an example that shows how even the first link in a testimonial chain doesn't need to have knowledge about  $p$ .

### 3. Ignoring reasons is not an option

The example which should refute such testimonial chain cases is called *Persistent Believer* and goes like this. Millicent has normal visual powers, but she has a reason to not believe her eyesight at the moment, because she participates in a neurosurgeon's experiment. He falsely tells her that the experiment's side effects are causing malfunctions on her visual cortex, while in fact her visual powers are working normally. Lackey goes on by writing: "While she is persuaded that her present visual appearances are an entirely unreliable guide to reality, she continues to place credence in her visual appearances. She ignores her well-supported belief in the incapacitation of her visual faculty; she persists in believing, on the basis of her visual experiences, that a chair is before her, that the neurosurgeon is smiling, and so on." (Lackey 2008, 59) On her way home, Millicent is the only person to see a badger. At home she meets Bradley and tells him that she saw a badger, but she is not telling him about her good reason not to rely on her visual powers. But, Lackey argues, since her defeater is not transmitted, Bradley now knows, that there was a badger and he tells some other person and therefore Millicent is the first link of a testimonial chain. But she has no knowledge about there being a badger because of an undefeated psychological defeater: she is not justified in holding this belief.

I will now argue that Millicent is no part of the testimonial chain in question but Bradley is the first link.

Everybody will agree that Millicent is violating a (if not *the*) central norm of assertion. As Keith DeRose puts it: "There is some very general rule of conversation to the effect that one should assert something only if one is positioned well enough with respect to that proposition to properly assert it." (DeRose 2002, 178). Now the standard specification is to say that only with knowledge a speaker is positioned well enough. Therefore: Assert  $p$  only, if you know that  $p$ . Lackey argues against this Knowledge Norm of Assertion and proposes her Reasonable to Belief Norm of Assertion, roughly: One should assert that  $p$  only if it is reasonable for one to believe that  $p$ . But with neither of those two norms Millicent is justified to assert that she saw a badger. She doesn't know it and it is not reasonable to ignore the neurosurgeon's assertion without any motive. To me it seems questionable that Millicent could be the first link of a testimonial chain (which is about assertions) without even properly asserting.

But, one may reply, the example is not so much about Millicent. The interesting part is about Bradley, who gains knowledge because of the *reliable method* that is being applied by Millicent although she is not justified to put trust into this method. Millicent's method is reliable, therefore Bradley has knowledge and the chain holds.

In a sense, I'd agree – the chain may hold, but Millicent is no part of this chain.

To see this, consider a case like Keith Lehrer's Mr. Truetemp (Lehrer 1990, 163f). He has a perfectly reliable method to learn about the temperature, but no knowledge about it. And consider the case of a parrot that is perfectly reliable in uttering the words "There is a red object" every time there is in fact a red object in front of him.

In both cases, one hesitates to call their assertions an instance of testimony and I feel the same hesitation with respect to *Persistent Believer*. I want to argue that this is because the reliable method alone is not enough for a case of *testimonial* knowledge. To be the first link of a testimonial chain, this is to be a competent speaker, one has to do more "epistemic work"; one must arrive at the reliable method in a reliable way. I'd say in order to be a competent speaker, one must be able to justify the assertion. But none of the three considered asserters is able to do that. But of course, justification means different things in different contexts. A parrot is no language user and therefore lacks even the most basic concepts. Mr. Truetemp isn't applying the right method. If he would be asked to justify his assertion, he would say something like "I don't know, but it's always true!" Nobody would accept this as a justification within the framework of testimony. Finally, Millicent cannot justify her assertion because she violates all relevant norms of assertion. So in terms of reliabilism it is true that Bradley knows about the badger. But he hasn't gained this knowledge through testimony, but through a reliable mechanism, like a badger-detector and Millicent is not part of the testimonial chain. Therefore I conclude that *Persistent Believer* does not refute the NT<sub>w</sub>.

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# Found in Translation: Discrepant Experience and Alternatives to Relativism and Variantism in Philosophy and Art History

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## 1. Rethinking Neglect of Pictorial Images

"Dualisms are distinctions whose components are conceived in terms that make their characteristic relations to one another unintelligible" (Brandom 1994: 615).

Ever since Ludwig Wittgenstein argued in *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* (1979) that "a whole mythology is deposited in our language" and included pictorial images amongst crucial 'language games' (1955) researchers might have taken greater interest in the roles that images play in shaping what is taken as 'given' by interpretations of the arts and the sciences as "two cultures" (C.P. Snow). Similarly, efforts to develop alternatives to invariant paradigms for language and extreme relativist interpretations of the notion of 'language games' on the basis of the idea that all languages (and societies) are incommensurately closed to one another might have taken greater interest in such questions as:

- What roles have theories about art played in the histories of presuppositions 'contextualism and invariantism' share?
- Can focusing on pictorial images (and other forms of expression classified as arts) help to reframe Wittgenstein's arguments that the most crucial issues cannot be expressed in spoken or written languages in ways that would situate disagreement, and the historical contingency of social relationships and collective learning at the heart of epistemology's tasks?

Hayden White (1978: 110) once noted that we can rarely understand what we are being told about things that that happened in a different time unless we can conceive of these in terms of a narrative and/or an image of what we are being told. White (1978: 51-81) has long argued that major differences between sharply opposed utopic and dystopic interpretations of art, science and modernity's histories are due not so much to the events they describe, but to how they embed these events in different types of tropes, narratives or "modes of 'emplotment'". White has focused mainly on "verbal images" (Mitchell 1986) in modern philosophies of history and social theory. But it is striking how many of these "verbal images" are associated with the pictorial images in Francis Haskell's (1993) study of "The Use of Images" in the divergence of Enlightenment and Romantic philosophies of history; and in the volume edited by Claire Farago, *Reframing the Renaissance: visual culture in Europe and Latin America 1450-1650* (1995).

This essay developed in relation to preparing a course to offer entitled, *Rethinking Art, Science and Humanism's Histories*, in the University of Manchester's School of Arts, Histories and Cultures. A key point of departure has been Stephen Toulmin's (1990, 2001) framework for rethinking 'standard' or 'canonical accounts' of in historical, historiographic and philosophical terms. For Toulmin (1990: 13-22, 169-71), 'historical issues' raise questions about the actual contexts of these accounts' iconic people, places and things; 'historiographic issues' raise questions about the circumstances under which these accounts became canonical; and 'philosophical issues' raise questions about

the circumstances under which such opposed options as relativism and invariantism eclipsed alternatives. This framework is extremely useful for many reasons, including that it:

- shows why 'rethinking' something does not make it 'rethought' (Rethinking foregrounds critique, reframing foregrounds constructive alternatives and emphasizes that no solution is for all time – every era must create its constructive options anew),
- stresses that while these are methodologically distinct issues, answers relate to one another in important ways,
- shows why shifting attention away from 'standard accounts' of 'crises over representation' towards supposed settlements is useful for investigating the history of presuppositions shared by some of today's the most influentially opposed theoretical traditions.

Another point of departure in developing the course have been questions raised in *Reframing the Renaissance* (Farago 1995), including those of:

- What roles have pictorial images played in the histories of 'standard accounts' of art and science's histories, and the ways in these represent disagreements and discrepant experiences?
- What is meant by a culturally specific situation" (Farago 1995: 67)?

Amongst others, topics explored by the contributors to *Reframing* include:

- the roles of pictorial symbols in interactions between European colonial agencies and indigenous Amerindian people;
- hybrid images that expressed or eclipsed disagreements and discrepant experiences;
- impacts these images had on early modern visual culture, as well as on the history of arguments that art historians are restricted to vexed options of focusing either on invariable aspects of how pictorial images are made or on the meanings of pictorial images (in ways that often treated different cultures as mutually unintelligible or closed to one another, and disregarded issues of discrepant experiences).

Although these topics are distinct in many important ways, fresh approaches to them are closely related. Farago describes what concerns her as follows.

In the last two decades, the nineteenth century epistemological foundations of art history have been the subject of great debate. Despite some disagreement over the nature of visual images, there is a general consensus on two major issues:...[1] most historians regard as problematic the assumption that all images are at base naturalistic: in fact almost everyone recommends severing the link between images and nature that had been postulated by resemblance theories of representation[; 2] it has been widely claimed that an adequate theory of representation must take into account the culturally specific circumstances in

which visual images function. Yet current theoretical discussions stop short of specifying how we are to define these circumstances. What would be involved in drawing out the implications of our theorizing? How might we establish a relativistic epistemic foundation for art history that adequately defines what 'culturally specific circumstances means?' (Farago 1995: 67).

## 2. Revisiting 'Language Games' in Light of Disagreement and Discrepant Experiences

One of the novel features of the approaches represented in *Reframing* is their emphasis on the importance of focusing on disagreements for addressing these questions. In order to appreciate the novelty of this feature (as well as its wider implications) it is useful to compare Farago's approach with key features of Wittgenstein's (1955) notion of 'language games'. It bears stressing that there are many important similarities. Farago is very concerned to avoid the sorts of presuppositions about "particular mental states" or "mental events inside the heads" of actors, which Wittgenstein and many of his followers in anthropology and art history have opposed (Geertz 1979; Baxandall 1993). In these connections, Farago's approach shares with Wittgenstein what Robert Brandom described as the latter's:

- emphasis on the "normative [social, ethical] character" of all forms of human expression and intentionality,
- "pragmatist commitment to understanding the efficacy of norms in terms of practices,"
- emphasis on the social and historical contingency of norms (Brandom 1994: 55).

These features offer useful points of departure for including disagreement amongst key features of and approach to 'language games' that are *experience far* from our own, and reflecting critically upon problems with what we take as 'given' about the *experience near*. This idea has been expressed in a variety of ways, including in the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1979) and the art historian Michael Baxandall's (1993) approach to *participants* and *observers* understandings and intentions. In these approaches emphasis falls upon trying to illuminate participants' *experience far* orientation from perspectives offered by comparative analogies with the *experience near* of our own understandings as observers. Emphasis in these approaches falls upon disagreement (or contrasts) between expectations based on the *experience near* and what is learnt about the *experience far*, as well as upon implications of such contrasts for critically rethinking what we previously took as 'given' about both. Further – against the grain of both extreme relativism and invariantism – then as now culturally specific situations, agreements and so on are both historically contingent and as real as bricks.

All this relates to contrasts between Wittgenstein and Farago's orientations. *Reframing the Renaissance* focuses particular attention on the relevance of disagreements, discrepant experiences and the roles of pictorial images in expressing or eclipsing these. By contrast there is a striking clash between Wittgenstein's arguments for treating language (and all human activities) as normative practices embedded in particular cultural contexts, and his otherwise highly a-historical attitudes. Toulmin noted that (2001: 8): "the most influential philosopher active in Cambridge in 1945 was Wittgenstein, and his only known comment on history is the solipsistic observation, "What is History

to Me? Mine is the First and Only World" [Wittgenstein 1916," 1961). Thus, although Wittgenstein was extremely critical of claims about altogether context independent truths, he did not explore the "culturally specific situations" (Farago 1995: 70) in which such claims were made. Nor did he explore the historically contingent circumstances under which it became possible for some to support such claims with reference to 'standard' or 'canonical' narratives about human agency and history (Hacker 2008 IWS Keynote).

Another contrast has to do with pictorial images. Farago and her colleagues focus particular attention on the roles of pictorial symbols in expressing and eclipsing discrepant experiences and disagreement. A key theme in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1955) is said to be a "picture theory" of knowledge. But this theory did not lead him to explore the historical circumstances under which pictures came to play key roles in "modelling the senses, modelling the world" and modelling claims to political authority (Crombie 1994). Indeed Wittgenstein systematically avoided relating his work to the sorts of social, political and moral problems that concern *Reframing the Renaissance*, which bring light to the relevance of disagreement for making what is meant by a culturally specific situation explicit, as well as for developing alternatives to options of 'contextualism and invariantism'.

## 3. Reframing Art History and Philosophy's Relationships

One of the reasons why it is useful to bring together Farago and Toulmin's insights is the former's argument that, before even beginning to address the question of what is meant by a culturally specific situation, we need to explore not only the impacts of the roles of pictorial symbols in conflicts between Europeans and Amerindians on early modern visual culture. We also need to explore how these impacts related to the roles that art historical interpretations and theory of art played in the history of utopic and dystopic interpretations of art, science and modernity. While such an exploration lies well beyond this presentation's scope, I can suggest several points of departure for such critical explorations, as well for reframing approaches to the roles of the arts in expressing disagreements, as well as such norms of intersubjective relationships as 'telling the truth' or 'fair play' (Lewis 1969; Rescher 1982; Bohman 2003). In the late 1960s Susan Sonntag wrote that:

The earliest *experience* of art must have been that it was incantatory, magical... (cf. the paintings in the caves at Lascaux...). The earliest *theory* of art, that of Greek philosophers, proposed that art was mimesis, imitation of reality (Sonntag 1964: 3).

Writing on the topic from a philosophical perspective, John Hyman (2006: 61) explains that Plato is said to have introduced the expression "*mimesis* as a whole" and to have defined it as intentionally making an appearance (*phainomenon*, *phantasma*) that resembles something of a certain kind but is not something of that kind itself his principal thought is that the appearance is like the original object but is less real." While today's disputes over 'contextualism and invariantism' clearly differ to those over 'mimesis' of other times and places, revisiting the latter may help illuminate connections between the former and such problems as those motivating one of Hyman's key concerns:

Whereas philosophers and psychologists are fascinated by illusion and by images in the mind or in the eye, artists have more often said that they are inter-



ested in nature, reality, and truth.... But when we discover how differently their intentions were realized in paint, the appearance of unanimity vanishes before our eyes. And this makes it tempting to dismiss these remarks as lazy repetitions of stock phrases, which a sophisticated art theory will debunk.... This is the conclusions many philosophers have reached. They have preferred to believe that the most artists can imitate is the effect of nature on our senses; that truth and reality are outmoded ideas; that daylight is not what it seems; and that simple honesty is for simple folk. The extraordinary claim in Hegel's *Lectures on Fine Art*, that the essential principle of painting is subjectivity of mind, is accepted by the majority of philosophers today. I doubt whether any of this is right (Hyman 2006: xviii).

Interestingly, Hyman's insights may have predecessors of remarkable antiquity (cf. Toulmin 1990; Most 2005; S. Koerner 2004; J.L. Koerner 2004; Skinner 2011). A critical challenge, however, is that these may have been expressed in the arts, earlier, and more systematically, effectively and continuously than in traditions of philosophy or theory.

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# On 'Leaving Religion as It Is'

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In this paper I shall discuss some methodological problems of D. Z. Phillips' philosophy of religion. I shall concentrate on the question: In what sense does his philosophy of religion 'leave everything as it is'? According to many of his critics, there is a tension between (a) Phillips' Wittgensteinian conception of philosophical method, according to which a philosopher only describes the actual use of religious language, and (b) his philosophical accounts of religious beliefs and practices, which do not seem to be merely descriptive. We will see, however, that it is coherent with Phillips' philosophical approach that the majority of religious practices and beliefs could be confused.

## 1. Introduction

My ideal is a certain coolness. A temple providing a setting for the passions without meddling with them. (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 2e.)

D. Z. Phillips (1934-2006) sees this remark as an expression of a Wittgensteinian "contemplative" conception of philosophy. Phillips contrasts this conception with the normative traditions in philosophy. Its task is not to provide a rational foundation to our ways of living and thinking. Instead, the task of philosophy is to do conceptual justice to the variety of the world. Philosophy is a disinterested enquiry, which is neutral with respect to our passions and personal views of life. (Phillips' conception of philosophy is strongly inspired by his former teacher in Swansea, Rush Rhees. See, e.g., Phillips 1999; Phillips 2001; Rhees 1998.)

The contemplative conception of philosophy is not restricted to any specific field, but Phillips' main interests lie in philosophy of religion and ethics. In *Religion and the Hermeneutics of Contemplation* Phillips distinguishes between two main traditions in the modern philosophy of religion. The first of these is "the hermeneutics of suspicion" (Marx, Freud), which sees religion as an illusion. The second is "the hermeneutics of recollection" (Ricouer), which is sympathetic to religion and which holds that there is something real in religion; it tries "to recollect, in the sense of retrieve this 'something' for our age" (Phillips 2001, 1). In contrast to these approaches, Phillips insists that it is not the task of a philosopher to determine the reality of religious beliefs nor to reform them. Instead, philosophy of religion is concerned with the sense of religious beliefs and practices. "The hermeneutics of contemplation" merely aims to clarify what religious beliefs amount to, but it does not arrive at a specific religious (or atheistic) point of view.

Phillips' stance echoes Wittgenstein's view that the task of philosophy is to *describe* the actual use of language. As Wittgenstein says in a well-known remark in *Philosophical Investigations*: "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is." (§124)

A descriptive, religiously neutral and disinterested approach is out of fashion in contemporary analytic philosophy of religion. Nicholas Wolterstorff, an exponent of "reformed epistemology", has claimed that contemporary analytic philosophers of religion have rejected the Enlight-

enment ideal of *Wissenschaft*, which claims that the conception of rationality is common to all men. This conception is replaced by what Wolterstorff calls "perspectival particularism", according to which our world views and religious perspectives shape our conceptions of rationality and affect our ways of doing philosophy. Wolterstorff says that analytic philosophers no longer attempt "to discover some perch above the fray from which they could, qua purely rational beings, practice suspicion and lodge critique" (Wolterstorff 2000, 155).

Although Phillips distinguishes between philosophical inquiry and personal commitment, he is not however adhering to the Enlightenment conception of rationality. Contemplative philosophy does not try to offer neutral criteria of rational beliefs. It does, however, seek a perch above the fray in the sense of offering conceptual elucidation of different perspectives (and rationalities) and trying to do "conceptual justice to them *in their own terms*" (Phillips 2004, 56). This is a different task than the elucidation of a variety of perspectives from the philosopher's own personal (religious or ethical) perspectives. Doing justice to the world *in its all variety* is a central ethical demand for the practice of philosophy. A contemplative philosopher tries to do justice to the different religious and ethical perspectives, including those which are at variance with his or her own personal perspective.

Needless to say the distinction between personal and philosophical in religious and ethical matters raises many kinds of questions. In the following I will point to some problems relating to Phillips' conception of 'description' in the context of the philosophical investigation of religion.

## 2. Describing religious practices

It is somewhat perplexing that although Phillips thinks that philosophy only describes the actual use of language and 'leaves everything as it is', his account of religious beliefs is obviously different from that of many. This is apparent in Phillips' books, for example where he has criticised certain religious beliefs and practices as superstitious. In *The Concept of Prayer* (1965) Phillips argued that prayer is not an attempt to influence God to do something. Further, he rejects the conception of God according to which belief in God is a hypothesis and explanation of the existence of the world. Still further, he has claimed that Christian belief in immortality is not a belief in the continuing existence of an immaterial soul after death (Phillips 1970). It is not difficult to find believers, theologians and Christian philosophers who endorse views which Phillips rejects as misleading and nonsensical. How can Phillips say, then, that his account of religious beliefs is a description of them? (For criticism of this sort, see, e.g., Swinburne 2001, 16; Wolterstorff 2001, 62-63; Moore 2005.)

According to Phillips, this charge is based on a misunderstanding of his work. Those who have accused him of revising the traditional Christian faith have failed to understand the idea of philosophical description.

The ultimate appeal in conceptual enquiry in Wittgensteinian philosophy of religion is the ordinary or common use of religious language. However, this does not mean, according to Phillips, that in describing that use one can

proceed simply by asking religious people what they are doing and saying. One cannot study philosophy of religion "by Gallup poll", for the account given by believers might be confused as well. According to Wittgenstein, Phillips reminds us, the tendency to be in the grip of nonsense can be found everywhere. As language bewitches us all, what believers say about their beliefs is not automatically warranted. Similarly, Phillips says, it would be absurd to give a philosophical account of 'thinking' simply by asking ordinary people what they mean by the term. In clarifying what religious beliefs amount to, reference is not made to the account believers would give if asked. Instead, reference is made to the role the words play in their lives. (Phillips 2004, 6-7.) Thus, the distinction between *the actual use of language* and *giving an account of it* plays a central role here: a religious person may give a confused reflective theoretical/philosophical account of her religious practice, while her practice itself is not confused.

It is worth remembering in this context that for Wittgensteinians philosophical accounts are not theories. In many of Wittgenstein's remarks the notion of 'description' is contrasted to the idea that philosophy offers theories and explanations. He says that in giving an account of a use of a word, a philosopher looks at things that "lie open to view". (See, e.g., 126§; 128§.) "Philosophy states only what everyone admits" (PI 599§).

It is not immediately clear how "what everyone admits" should be understood – especially when one thinks about religious matters. Phillips stresses that he is not denying the differences between various forms of religious beliefs: there is a difference between *genuine* religious differences and conceptual confusions in religious discussions. The task of a philosopher is not to solve these genuine religious differences. (Phillips 2008, 6-7.) By genuine differences Phillips means, as far as I see, e.g., some religious/theological differences between and within Catholicism and Protestantism that are not mixed up with conceptual confusions. Nevertheless, it is compatible with his stance that some theological differences are connected to conceptual confusions, e.g., when theologians use metaphysical theories or terms in giving an account of the content of religious faith.

Now, above we have seen that Phillips contrasts religious practices and reflection on them with each other. However, he complicates things even further. Namely, Phillips claims that not only are there conceptual confusions in the reflective accounts of religious practices, but also practices themselves can be confused. This is somewhat perplexing, for if the ultimate appeal in investigating the meaning of religious words and gestures are practices, how can *the practice itself* be confused? Phillips solves this problem by arguing that the word 'practice' is ambiguous in this context. He uses James Conant's distinction between the grammatical and sociological meaning of 'practice'. The sociological description of practice "simply refers to whatever happens", and that can be confused. In the context of grammatical inquiry, the use of the term is different. It refers to the conceptual character of what is said or done. In the philosophical investigation of meaning the final appeal is made to 'practice' *in the grammatical sense of the word*. In this specific sense a 'practice' cannot be confused. The word refers to "a cluster of language games", and it makes no sense to speak about confused language games. When philosophers describe a practice they bring out "the role of our concepts in the different language games we play, when we are faced by temptations to distort that role". In this context, 'philosophy leaves everything as it is' means that "everything we need to resolve our confusions is already before us, if only we give

it a certain kind of attention". Making explicit the conceptual character of actual uses of language is a demanding task, according to Wittgenstein and Phillips. It is not simply a matter of empirical description of what is said and done. (Phillips 2005b, 199; Phillips 2004 10-11.)

Phillips tells that at the time Wittgenstein wrote the remarks on Frazer he thought it is probable that most rituals are confused. In this context Phillips, following Rhees, suggests that criticism of "the magical conception of a sign" plays an important role in Wittgenstein's treatment of superstitious rituals and beliefs. (This shows one way in which religious practices may be confused.) According to the magical conception, the meaning of a word is given 'all at once' in the sound or the mark: meaning is a kind of intrinsic matter, a power which accompanied the sound or the mark. Phillips argues that the magical conception may contribute to confused accounts of religious practices, but it can also lead to superstition (confused practices). For example, a superstitious belief "I can harm my enemy 'all at once' in the stabbing of his effigy" may be accompanied with a magical conception of a sign, i.e., the conception that the gesture itself has the power to hurt my enemy. In this case, "the mythology in our language" leads to superstition; the practice is itself confused. (Phillips 2005a, 172-178; 2005b, 197-201.)

### 3. Concluding considerations

"Leaving everything as it is" in religious matters does not mean that a philosopher starts from religious believers' own reflections concerning the meaning of their beliefs and practices. Neither does it mean that philosophers *simpliciter* accepts religious practices as they are. In fact, it is coherent with Phillips' thought that most religious practices and traditions are conceptually confused – when 'practice' is taken in the sociological sense of the word. Somewhat surprisingly, then, Phillips' critics may be right in claiming that Phillips' accounts of religious practices and beliefs differ from what the majority of non-philosophically oriented (but superstitious) religious believers say and think of them. We should note, however, that the talk about conceptual confusions should not be thought in terms of meaningful *religious* disagreements. Philosophical confusions have to do with the logic or grammar of language; philosophical and religious considerations belong to the different levels of discourse. Nevertheless, by resolving conceptual confusions philosophy has some critical force in shaping the possibilities for religious life and thought.

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# Epistemic Contextualism and the Problem of (Lost) Disagreement

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## 1. Epistemic contextualism

Linguistic interpretation is context-sensitive through and through. We interpret what others say in light of our (hopefully) shared interests and concerns, and against the background of certain assumptions and purposes. As a result, two utterances of the very same sentence can be interpreted quite differently – depending on context. A well-rehearsed point in the literature by now is that there are (at least) two different ways of dealing with these cases of context-sensitivity: contextualism and relativism.

Whether all kinds of context-sensitivity are amenable to either a contextualist or a relativist treatment is an open question. But contextualist or relativist strategies have been suggested to handle the (alleged) context-sensitivity of so different kinds of cases as knowledge ascriptions, epistemic modals, predicates of personal taste or of moral evaluation, and gradable adjectives. Some examples will help to illustrate the point:

Anna wonders who might have emptied the whiskey bottle. At  $t_1$ , Anna says: "It might have been Barbara." At  $t_2$ , she finds out that Barbara was out of town at the relevant time and now asserts: "It might not have been Barbara" (cf. Kölbel 2008: 21). Next, suppose that when a child John used to say: "Fish sticks are delicious" while later he came to see things differently; so now he says: "Fish sticks are not delicious" (cf. MacFarlane 2007b: 20). Or let us assume that Mary wins a million dollar lottery and Didi remarks to a friend "Mary is rich", while Naomi, being well off herself, says to a friend: "Mary is not rich" (cf. Richard 2004: 218). Also, might not Arvind be perfectly within his rights when he utters: "One ought not to marry outside one's caste" while Barbara might, again, see things differently and say: "It is not the case that one ought not to marry outside one's own caste" (cf. Kölbel 2008: 24)?

The case I will mostly focus on in what follows and that will therefore be discussed in more detail is the case of knowledge ascriptions. Consider the following example – taken with modifications from David Annis. (Annis 1978: 215)

*Case 1:* Susan, Tom and Ann are sitting in a coffee house and talking about medical issues, bragging about their lay medical knowledge. Tom informs them that Polio is caused by a virus. Asked how he knows he answers that he has read it in an apothecary leaflet. Given the circumstances, Susan says: "Tom knows that Polio is caused by a virus."

*Case 2:* Now suppose that the context is an examination for the M.D. degree. Tom answers as before. The examiner, call him John, who expects a lot more of Tom, concludes: "Tom does not know that polio is caused by a virus" – irrespective of the fact that Tom's evidential situation, his respective beliefs, reasons, etc., are exactly the same as before.

The case is not particularly far-fetched. It seems to show that a given knowledge ascription may be true as uttered in one context while the corresponding knowledge denial may be true as uttered in another context – owing to epistemic as well as non-epistemic differences between

the ascribers' conversational contexts: differences in what is at stake, in the purpose or point of the conversation, and so on. Moreover, we can also imagine that Susan and John are talking about whether Tom knows that Polio is caused by a virus. Susan, applying lax standards, claims that he does; John, being a medically trained person himself, denies that he does. Here, too, factors such as the speaker's interests, concerns, intentions and background assumptions help setting a certain *standard* for knowledge, the standard someone has to live up to in order to count as a knower. The higher the standard, the better the putative knower's epistemic position needs to be: he needs to be able to answer more queries, provide better reasons, cite better evidence or more reliable sources, rule out more objections, etc.

What kind of context-sensitivity is at issue here? According to a much discussed proposal, the context-sensitivity of knowledge ascriptions can be traced back to the context-sensitivity of the word "know" which in turn has to be modeled on the case of indexicals (cf. DeRose 2000, Cohen 1999). The word "know" – it is said – is an indexical in exactly the way that "I" or "here" are indexicals. Its denotation depends on context. Others have tried to alternatively model the context-sensitivity of the word "know" on the case of predicative uses of comparative adjectives such as "tall", "rich" or "flat". There is *hidden syntactic structure* in knowledge attributions, too – or so it is claimed. Just as the logical form of "Joe is tall" is – arguably – something like "Joe is tall for a sixth-grader", so the logical form of "Joe knows that P" is something like "Joe knows that P relative to standard S". Although there are differences between the two accounts, I will in what follows subsume them both, as is common, under the label *Indexical Contextualism*.

The problem with *Indexical Contextualism* is that speakers are commonly (unless they are devoted contextualists, that is) ignorant of the semantic facts postulated. A proponent of the indexical account of "know" owes us an explanation of why competent speakers can easily be made to see the context-sensitivity of genuine indexicals but fail to see any alleged context-sensitivity of the word "know". Indexicals wear their context-sensitivity on their sleeves; the word "know" obviously does not. Nor do speakers have the impression of having implicitly referred to a certain epistemic standard. As a consequence, speakers tend to homophonically report on knowledge ascriptions – unless they contain any *obviously* indexical expressions.

This relates to another problem, the problem that I will focus on. If "know" were an indexical or required a hidden argument place in logical form, then speaker A who is employing demanding standards and therefore *denies* that S knows that P and speaker B who is employing relaxed standards and *claims* that S knows that P do not really disagree. For A doesn't deny what B asserts. A expresses something like the following proposition: *S does not know that P relative to high standards* (or on the indexical reading: *S does not know<sub>A</sub> that P* – where *know<sub>A</sub>* is the knowledge relation denoted by A's use of the word "know"). While B expresses something like the following proposition: *S knows that P relative to low standards* (or, again: *S knows<sub>B</sub> that P*). So if "know" were an indexical or required a hidden argument place in logical form, then the

disagreement between A and B would be only apparent. But that is not what we want to say on an intuitive basis – or so it seems.

## 2. Nonindexical contextualism

These problems attest to the fact that the word "know" exhibits a rather subtle form of context-sensitivity (– some even say that they attest to the fact that "know" is not context-sensitive at all). When a speaker makes a knowledge claim of the form "A knows that p", she will not have the impression of having said something about epistemic standards or about her own, private knowledge relation.

Yet maybe that is so because she did NOT say anything about epistemic standards or her own, private knowledge relation. That is the idea behind nonindexical accounts of the context-sensitivity involved. They claim that a knowledge ascription such as "Tom knows that Polio is caused by a virus" expresses the same proposition independently of who utters the sentence and in which context it is uttered (as long as they all talk about the same person, Tom, and the same time, t). The context-sensitivity does not show up at the level of content. That would explain why we tend to homophonically report on knowledge ascriptions. And it would also make room for disagreement: John and Susan disagree in that the one asserts a proposition that the other denies.

How will that help explain the alleged context-sensitivity of knowledge ascriptions? How do we explain the shift in truth-value from one utterance to the next if the same proposition is expressed in both cases? That can be explained on the assumption that the proposition expressed has a truth-value only relative to a further parameter such as an epistemic standard. And as the standard changes, so does the truth-value. Elaborating on David Kaplan's distinction between *contexts of utterance* and *circumstances of evaluation*, the idea can be put thus: In the case of knowledge ascriptions the context of utterance does not affect the proposition expressed in that no reference to an epistemic standard or a particular knowledge relation is part of the proposition expressed. Yet the circumstances of evaluation relevant to determining the truth-value of the ascription comprise more not just the world of the context (as in the traditional Kaplanian model) but also another parameter: an epistemic standard (and maybe other parameters as well; a standard of taste, for example, or a moral standard). Consequently, a knowledge ascription could be true when evaluated relative to epistemic standard  $e_1$ , while false when evaluated relative to epistemic standard  $e_2$ .

Those who favor a non-indexical account of the context-sensitivity involved differ over who's epistemic standard is relevant to determining the truth-value of a given knowledge ascription. The *Nonindexical Contextualist* (cf. MacFarlane 2005, 2007a & 2009) will claim that it is the standard operative in the context of utterance. She agrees with the *Indexical Contextualist* that all the parameters needed to determine the truth-value of an utterance are supplied by the context of utterance. She parts company with the *Indexical Contextualist* in that she denies that context helps determine only the content of the utterance. Although no alleged reference to an epistemic standard or a particular knowledge relation is part of the proposition expressed by a knowledge claim, whether the claim is true or false depends on the *circumstances of evaluation* determined by the *context of utterance*. David Lewis distinguished in a similar vein between a context and an index, an index being an n-tuple of features of context that

may be relevant to truth. He defines the two-place relation of a sentence's being true at a context as follows:

Let us say that sentence  $s$  is true at context  $c$  iff  $s$  is true at  $c$  at the index of the context  $c$ . (Lewis 1980: 31.)

This way of putting the point nicely highlights the two distinct roles context is supposed to play: It has to supply the denotations to indexical terms in sentence  $s$ . It also provides features on which the truth of the whole sentence may depend, such as, arguably, an epistemic standard. Accordingly, utterance truth could be explicated in roughly as follows:

UT–NIC: An utterance of a sentence  $s$  (a sentence of the form "A knows that P") in context  $c$  would be true if the proposition thereby expressed would be true when evaluated relative to circumstances  $(w, e)$ , where  $w$  is the world of  $c$  and  $e$  is the epistemic standard operative in  $c$ .

This view is also known as *Moderate Relativism* (cf. Recanati 2008); one might think of it as a relativist position because it takes truth to be relative to other parameters of the circumstances than just the world of context.<sup>1</sup>

A *Radical Relativist* concerning knowledge ascriptions, on the other hand, will hold that the truth-value of a knowledge ascription depends on the epistemic standard operative in the context of assessment. According to John MacFarlane, who promotes the idea of assessment-sensitivity, the truth-value (or accuracy – as he prefers to call it) of an utterance is relative to and varies with certain parameters of the *context of assessment* (cf. MacFarlane 2005, 2009, forthcoming a; and forthcoming b):

[...] a context of assessment is a situation in which a (past, present, or future, actual or merely possible) use of a sentence might be assessed for truth or falsity. (MacFarlane 2005: 217)

Accordingly, a *Radical Relativist* might favor the following explication of utterance truth:

UT–R: An utterance of a sentence  $s$  (of the form "A knows that P") in context  $c_1$  would be true, as assessed from  $c_2$ , only if the proposition expressed in  $c_1$  would be true when evaluated relative to circumstances  $(w, e_{c_2})$ , where  $w$  is the world of  $c$  and  $e_{c_2}$  is the epistemic standard operative in the context of assessment  $c_2$ .

To sum up: An *Indexical Contextualist* and a *Nonindexical Contextualist* differ over the question of what proposition is expressed in making a knowledge ascription. They do not differ over the question of whose standard is relevant to determining the truth-value of a knowledge ascription. Consequently, they will make the same predictions about the truth-values of knowledge ascriptions. A *Nonindexical Contextualist* and a *Radical Relativist* agree that the proposition expressed by an utterance of "Tom knows that Polio is caused by a virus" is not about an epistemic standard or a particular knowledge relation. They also agree that the utterance has a truth-value only relative to a certain epistemic standard. They disagree, though, over who's standard that is.

<sup>1</sup> For some reason dependency of truth-value on worlds is not considered to be a kind of relativity – presumably because truth *simpliciter* consists in truth at the world of the context. But then, by parity of reasoning, dependency of truth-value on epistemic standards should not be considered to be a kind of relativity either – as long as it is the epistemic standard of the context.

### 3. Disagreement

How exactly does the *Nonindexical Contextualist* (or the *Radical Relativist*) account for disagreement? On closer inspection, the condition that there is a proposition that one person accepts and another one rejects turns out to be neither necessary nor sufficient for disagreement (cf. MacFarlane 2007b). But then, what exactly is the problem supposed to be, anyway?

The epistemic contextualist's as well as the epistemic relativist's claim is premised on the (metaphysical) assumption that there is no single, absolutely right epistemic standard one has to apply in order to determine whether a certain utterance to the effect that someone knows something is true. Rather, it is to a certain extent up to the attributors/assessors to apply whatever epistemic standard it is that best serves their epistemic purpose. And similar considerations apply to the other domains where a contextualist or relativist strategy might seem promising. What motivates a contextualist or relativist treatment is exactly the insight into the "subjectivity" of the discourse in question.

Yet while *Indexical Contextualism* is able to capture the subjectivity pretty well, it "fails to account for the disagreement we perceive in discourse about 'subjective' matter (...)" – or so the relativist claims (MacFarlane 2007: 17). Or, as Max Kölbel puts it: There seem to be cases where speaker A says: "P", and speaker B says: "Not-P", with both of them being faultless in saying what they say – and yet they disagree (cf. Kölbel 2003). These are, presumably, exactly the cases where MacFarlane diagnosis a certain subjectivity in the discourse in question. The problem then is: how do we account for faultless disagreement?

In the remainder of the paper, I will first argue that this is NOT the problem – simply because there is no faultless disagreement (this has been forcefully argued before, see Stojanovic 2007); there is no need to get "subjectivity and disagreement into the same picture" (MacFarlane 2007b: 21). The reason one might have thought otherwise is that speakers make claims of different strength in the kinds of discourse under scrutiny. When they make weaker claims, the discourse is rightly called subjective; but then there is no disagreement. When they make stronger claims there may be disagreement; but then the subjectivity is lost. I will, secondly, argue that *Nonindexical Contextualism* can account for both kinds of cases – yet a much more detailed account of the ways in which speakers can disagree is still pending. Consider the following dialogue (if such it is):

A: Fish sticks are delicious.

B: Fish sticks are not delicious.

A and B seem to disagree, but in saying what they say both also seem faultless. Let us consider how the conversation might continue. Basically, there are two possible ways it might go. A could weaken his original claim by saying something like: "Well, I like them" – and B could do the same. But then there is no real disagreement. They can both agree with what the other says. They are just talking about what they like and dislike.

One might wonder whether that carries over to the case of knowledge ascriptions. I claim that it does; a similar move is available (it takes a course in epistemology to be able to properly articulate it, though.) A might say something like. "I take his reasons to establish that he knows" or "He properly responds to all my challenges." Yet even if he is not able to thus articulate his position, the way he reacts still shows how strong a claim he intends to make. If he

accepts that others see things differently and does not try to win them over, he – presumably – intends to make only the weaker claim.

The *Nonindexical Contextualist* seems to get the truth conditions of the respective utterances exactly right. "I like fish sticks" is offered as a paraphrase of "Fish sticks are delicious." So the truth-conditions of both utterances should be the same. According to *Nonindexical Contextualism*, both utterances are true if and only if the proposition thereby expressed is true when evaluated relative to the world of the context and the speaker's standard.<sup>2</sup> That seems to perfectly capture the subjectivity of the discourse. But since A and B are not really disagreeing (there is only syntactic disagreement, as one might put it, but no real disagreement), there is no need to give an account of disagreement.

Yet there is a second way for A to react to B's utterance. A could stick with his original claim and insist that fish sticks *really are delicious*. (And B could do the same.) Now there seems to be genuine disagreement; but each speaker not longer takes the other one to be faultless. A (and maybe also B) aspires to make a stronger claim. He might do so because he thinks that there is single standard of taste that is most appropriate to the context or purpose at hand. (Mightn't he also think that there is a single, absolutely correct standard of taste? If he were right to do so, neither a relativist nor a contextualist semantics would be applicable. But as said before, the assumption that in the cases discussed there is no single, absolutely right standard is a metaphysical presupposition of the contextualist and the relativist strategy.)

The idea that there is a contextually appropriate standard enjoys a certain plausibility (cf. DeRose 2004). It seems plausible in the case of knowledge ascriptions (given that all the participants in the conversation pursue the same epistemic goal). It seems plausible in other cases, too. Suppose a speaker says

Mary is rich.

in the course of a conversation about Bill Gates and people of that ilk. When would his utterance be true? Given that they were talking about people such as Bill Gates, his utterance would be true if and only if Mary were rich compared to these people. In cases where the participants' shared interests, concerns, etc. determine a standard, comparison class or some such thing, it seems reasonable to suppose that the truth of an utterance depends on whether the contextually determined standard is met. Again, that is what the *Nonindexical Contextualist* would predict.

What if someone were to say: "Mary is not rich"? He might disagree about the facts (about Mary's income and assets); he might also disagree about whether Mary should count as rich relative to the standard set by Bill Gates and the like. That is not particularly problematic for the *Nonindexical Contextualist*. All it shows is that people can disagree about all kinds of things: about the facts, about which standard to apply, about what a certain standard or norm requires, etc. All these cases need to be carefully distinguished – something neither the Relativist nor the Contextualist has done so far.

<sup>2</sup> According to the explication of utterance truth given above the relevant standard is the one operative in the context of utterance. But in the case at hand the *Nonindexical Contextualist* might want to hold that it is the speaker's standard because there is no presumption of (and no need for) a shared standard in the context of utterance.

#### 4. Summing up

Epistemic contextualism rests on the idea that knowledge ascriptions are context-sensitive. The context-sensitivity at issue is commonly modeled on the case either of indexicals or of gradable adjectives in predicative use. I tried to defend an alternative account that is very close to what MacFarlane calls *Nonindexical Contextualism*. It takes the semantic content of knowledge ascriptions not to vary from context to context – at least not due to any contextual sensitivity to epistemic standards. Nonetheless, the truth of a given knowledge ascription is relative to the epistemic standard operative in the context of utterance. I then argued that the problem for *Nonindexical Contextualists* is not of how to account for faultless disagreement, as there is no such thing, but that of providing a detailed account of the different ways in which speakers can genuinely disagree.

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# Epistemic Peer Disagreement and Disagreement among Epistemologists

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Disagreement shows up almost everywhere in our life. Whenever we meet colleagues, friends or strangers and we talk to each other, it usually won't be long until we disagree on a certain topic. We disagree on many things indeed. We disagree, for example, on the content of our respective ordinary visual perception, on the division of a collective bill in a restaurant, on the location of a certain book store in down town, but also on more complicated matters such as morality, politics, religion, art and philosophy. Some of these disagreements can be dissolved rather quickly by easily detectable errors or mistakes, but some of them seem to be rather stable. Among the most stable disagreements are disagreements in philosophy and especially in epistemology.

The epistemology of disagreement deals with all kind of different cases in ordinary life, in more theoretical domains and even in epistemology itself. Out of this vast field of disagreement I will pick up the following two respectively three questions. First, why is epistemology of disagreement important? Second and third, why is disagreement *in* epistemology especially important and how ought we to cope with it?

## 1. Why is epistemology of disagreement important?

To answer this motivating question, we need to answer three further questions: First, with whom can and do we disagree? Second, what kind of disagreement matters or at least, initially seems to matter mostly to epistemology? (Note that this last question is not to be confused with the quite different question what kind of disagreement matters in epistemology. This question I'm going to address in the next section.) And third, which levels of disagreement are to be distinguished? Only in answering these three questions we'll get a better understanding of why epistemology of disagreement is important and with what kinds of problems we are confronted in it.

So, first, with whom can and do we disagree? This question asks after what kinds of different intellectual relations are in principle possible between two disagreeing persons. There are three of them: (i) It might be a disagreement between me and an intellectual inferior, (ii) it might be a disagreement between me and an intellectual superior, and (iii) it might be a disagreement between epistemic peers. To describe these three different kinds of intellectual relations we need at least the following two criteria: first, relative to the question whether *p*, familiarity with the presuppositions, evidence and arguments that bear on *p*; second, relative to the question whether *p*, intelligence, competence and carefulness in assessing the presuppositions, evidence and arguments. Respective different kinds of inequality in both areas can be used to characterize intellectual inferiors and intellectual superiors in comparison with me. For the moment I will not say more about inferiors and superiors because it is the third kind of relation, namely peer disagreement which matters mostly to epistemology.

Why does peer disagreement play such a central role? It poses a serious challenge for epistemology and our conception of epistemic rationality. It puts our conception of epistemic rationality to a severe test and it demands of us

to spell out how we should conceive of the relation between the epistemically rational and the social. Now before going into the details of the challenge triggered by peer disagreement, let's take a closer look on the two central notions involved here: on the notion of an epistemic peer and on the notion of disagreement.

Let's first look on the notion of an epistemic peer. What has to be involved in being an epistemic peer with someone? Following similar proposals by David Christman, Richard Feldman and Jennifer Lackey (cf. Lackey 2010: 302 f.) and adding a decisive point to them, I put tentatively forward the following three necessary conditions:

- (C1) Evidential equality: A and B are evidential equals relative to the question whether *p* when A and B are equally familiar with the presuppositions, evidence and arguments that bear on the question whether *p*.
- (C2) Cognitive equality: A and B are cognitively on a par relative to the question whether *p* when A and B are equally intelligent, competent and careful in their assessment of the presuppositions, evidence and arguments that bear on the question whether *p*.
- (C3) Full disclosure: A and B are in a situation of full disclosure relative to the question whether *p* when A and B have knowingly shared with one another all of their relevant presuppositions, evidence and arguments that bear on the question whether *p*.

When there is both evidential equality and cognitive parity between A and B in circumstances of full disclosure with regard to the question whether *p*, A and B are epistemic peers.

After having explicated what an epistemic peer is, let us distinguish two kinds of disagreement involving epistemic peers: idealized disagreement on the one hand, ordinary disagreement on the other hand. (Here I follow a proposal by Jennifer Lackey 2010: 303 f.)

- (ID) Idealized Disagreement: "A and B disagree in an idealized sense if and only if, relative to the question whether *p*, (1) A and B are aware that they hold differing doxastic attitudes, (2) prior to recognizing that this is so, A and B take themselves to be epistemic peers with respect to this question, and (3) A and B are epistemic peers."
- (OD) Ordinary Disagreement: A and B disagree in an ordinary sense if and only if, relative to the question whether *p*, (1) A and B are aware that they hold differing doxastic attitudes, and (2) prior to recognizing that this is so, A and B take themselves to be epistemic peers with respect to this question which means that they are not aware of any relevant epistemic asymmetry between their situations.

Despite its importance this crucial distinction between idealized and ordinary disagreement is not generally recognized in the literature. In the following I'll focus exclusively on ordinary disagreement, because the fulfillment of the conditions in the idealized case cannot be taken for granted under empirically realistic constraints at least for A and B. So let's suppose that ordinary peer disagreement is at least a good starting point for discuss-

ing and analyzing disagreement in epistemology which will be the topic in the next section.

Before turning to this task, we have to address our third question, namely which levels of disagreement are to be distinguished? (cf. Lynch 2010: 264) Usually disagreements begin with disagreements over the facts. Therefore, let's call this level of disagreement factual disagreement. Very often disagreement over facts turn into disagreements over whose view of those facts is best supported or justified. Let's call this level of disagreement doxastic disagreement. "And sometimes we move still further up what might be called the epistemic ladder: we begin to disagree over how we ought to support our views of the facts, about the sort of evidence that should be admitted, and whose methods more accurately track the truth. When we do that, we are engaged in a truly epistemic disagreement: a disagreement over epistemic principles." (Lynch 2010: 264)

After having distinguished factual, doxastic and epistemic disagreement we see that truly epistemic disagreement is a disagreement over epistemic principles or strategies which should be used to cope with doxastic disagreement among us. Now we are able to face the crucial question of this part of my talk, namely: What's the relation between epistemic peerhood and epistemic disagreement (that is disagreement over epistemic principles or strategies)? Epistemic Disagreement in the form of disagreement over epistemic principles or strategies is, of course, a genuine topic in epistemology. So the experts with regard to this form and level of disagreement have to be epistemologists. Are epistemologists on a par with each other and thus epistemic peers? My thesis is: Epistemologists are not on a par and thus they cannot be epistemic peers in a strict sense. Or, to put it succinctly: epistemologists are not epistemic peers at all. A widely accepted view holds that peer disagreement is an important kind of presupposition to account for epistemic disagreement. To examine my thesis about the nonexistence of epistemic peerhood among epistemologists, we need to turn to the question whether peer disagreement is theoretically apt to account for disagreement in epistemology.

## 2. Why is disagreement in epistemology especially important and how ought we to cope with it?

In the first part of my talk I answered the question what kind of disagreement matters mostly to epistemology. We found out that it is both peer disagreement and epistemic disagreement, which can be taken together as peer disagreement at an epistemic level. The experts to account for this kind of disagreement are obviously epistemologists. Now I have put forward the thesis that epistemologists are not on a par and thus they cannot be epistemic peers at all. To defend this thesis I will turn to the question what kind of disagreement matters in epistemology. Only after having spelt out the specific features of disagreement in epistemology, it will be possible to answer our final question of how to behave epistemically when confronted with this kind of disagreement. So, what are the supposed main features of disagreement in epistemology? I think there are at least two of them: first, disagreement in epistemology seems to be rather stable; second, disagreement in epistemology seems to be merely verbal.

What is the relation between the supposed two main features of disagreement in epistemology? Concerning this question, there are two rather influential views. First, there is what I will call the misunderstanding view, according to which stable disagreements in epistemology depend on

the fact that different philosophers talk past each other and that their alleged opposition is finally to be reduced to merely verbal misunderstandings among them. Second, there is the irreconcilable view, according to which stable disagreements in epistemology go beyond merely verbal misunderstandings and cannot satisfactorily be dissolved even in the long run.

My own proposal tries to maintain what seems to be right in both views and, of course, it tries to avoid what seems to be wrong in them. I call it the diagnostic view. According to my diagnostic view, disagreements in epistemology are only apparently stable, because there are hidden and not easily detectable verbal misunderstandings among seemingly competing epistemologists. This is not to say that the relevant rivalry depends upon merely verbal misunderstandings. On the contrary – it is itself an important philosophical task to give a convincing theoretical diagnosis accounting for the enduring stability of the respective opponents' disagreement.

To defend my diagnostic view, in Kirchberg I will present a little case study about the epistemological disagreement about epistemic justification. Contrary to a received view (cf. Kornblith 2010) and in defense of my diagnostic view, I will try to show that internalists and externalists are not epistemic peers, that they talk past each other, and that nevertheless there is not just a merely verbal misunderstanding between them. There is room for an interesting theoretical diagnosis with regard to the allegedly genuine debate which finally dissolves it.

The enduring stability of the alleged opponents' disagreement over internalism and externalism can be dissolved by my theoretical diagnosis concerning the question of why they talk past each other. It elucidates that there is just an allegedly stable disagreement between internalists and externalists because they analyze different concepts of epistemic justification, they focus on different objects of epistemic appraisal and they pursue divergent, but not necessarily competing theoretical aims. Unfortunately, they themselves seem to be not aware of their different presuppositions. On the one hand, among internalists and externalists there is not just a merely verbal misunderstanding; on the other hand, internalists and externalists are not genuine epistemic peers. So my view avoids the shortcomings of both the misunderstanding view and the irreconcilable view and it preserves what seems to me right in both of them. If I am right, there are three points in favor of my theoretical diagnosis. First, it makes clear that the allegedly stable disagreement between internalism and externalism depends upon a misunderstanding. Second, it shows why the relevant misunderstanding is not merely verbal. And third, it explains the initial plausibility of the seemingly stable disagreement by demonstrating that externalists and internalists are no genuine theoretical rivals at all because they pursue different epistemological aims.

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# Wittgenstein über Leben, Werte und Vernunft

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## 1. Problemstellung

Wittgensteins Werk wird von einem starken Strang aus Bemerkungen zur Lebenssinn- und Wertproblematik durchzogen, der im Kontext der analytischen Tradition sehr auffällig ist. Hans-Johann Glock hat vorgeschlagen, die Spannungen, die zwischen dem sprachphilosophischen Programm, verstanden als eine linguistisch zugespitzte Form des kantischen Kritizismus, und den kulturkritischen, wissenschaftsfeindlichen und moralischen Äußerungen bestehen, durch eine scharfe Trennung der beiden Fragestellungen aufzulösen.<sup>1</sup> Da Letztere irrationale, mystizistische Tendenzen erkennen lassen, können durch die Trennung die sprachphilosophischen Analysen als rationale Unternehmungen sichergestellt werden. Auch wenn er sie als durchgängige Merkmale von Wittgensteins Denken versteht, so begründet Glock seine beiden Thesen vor allem durch die Texte aus dem Umfeld des *Tractatus*. Für die Zeit nach 1929 wird diese Trennung schwieriger.<sup>2</sup>

(1) Wittgenstein gelingt es in seinen späteren Jahren sehr viel besser, die beiden Fragekreise miteinander zu verbinden. Obwohl sich die sprachtheoretischen Anteile des *Tractatus* sowohl genetisch als auch logisch-argumentativ als unabhängige Einheit verstehen lassen,<sup>3</sup> werden sie doch von Wittgenstein zum Mittel der Suche nach dem „unsagbaren Grund“ deklariert. In den späteren Jahren rücken die existentiellen Bemerkungen zwar an den Rand, gleichzeitig wird aber die gesamte Sprachuntersuchung von einer ethischen Fragestellung durchdrungen.

(2) Der existentielle Zug lässt sich zumindest für die späteren Jahre nicht auf einen irrationalen Mystizismus und persönliche Kritik an den Unzulänglichkeiten der zeitgenössischen Propagandisten von Wissenschaftlichkeit und Humanismus (wie Russell oder den Wiener Kreis) reduzieren. Damit ergeben sich auch neue Möglichkeiten zur Bewertung ihrer Rationalität.

Zwei Leistungen schätzt Wittgenstein an Beethovens Musik (MS 183, 72): (1) Sie sei erstens realistisch in ihrem Blick auf die Wirklichkeit (Welt und Leben). (2) Dieser fiktionfreie, „undichterische“ Realismus wird zweitens zur Voraussetzung für so etwas wie *eudaimonia* (Trost, Erlösung) unter den Bedingungen einer kontingenten Existenz. Diese Passage beschreibt das Ideal, das Wittgenstein auch für seine Philosophie anstrebt (MS 109, 202). Beide Zielsetzungen sind Ausdruck der ethischen Formierung seines Denkens. Dass ihm die Umsetzung des zweiten Anliegens auf Grundlage seiner Sprachanalyse nur unzureichend gelingt, ist Wittgenstein allerdings bewusst (MS 110, 13). Wie es dazu kommt, soll hier erörtert werden.

## 2. Philosophie als Einübung einer realistischen Auffassung der Wirklichkeit und als Rückkehr zur ursprünglichen Lebensform

Im Philosophiekonzept der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* lassen sich zwei Zielsetzungen unterscheiden, die Wittgenstein selbst nicht getrennt hat.

„[...] Und wir dürfen keinerlei Theorie aufstellen. Es darf nichts Hypothetisches in unseren Betrachtungen sein. Alle *Erklärung* muß fort, und nur Beschreibung an ihre Stelle treten. Und diese Beschreibung empfängt ihr Licht, d.i. ihren Zweck, von den philosophischen Problemen. Diese sind freilich keine empirischen, sondern sie werden durch eine Einsicht in das Arbeiten unserer Sprache gelöst, und zwar so, daß dieses erkannt wird: entgegen einem Trieb, es mißzuverstehen. Die Probleme werden gelöst, nicht durch das Beibringen neuer Erfahrung, sondern durch Zusammenstellung des längst Bekannten. Die Philosophie ist ein Kampf gegen die Verhexung unseres Verstandes durch die Mittel unserer Sprache.“ (PU 109)

(1) Es ist eine klassische *Aufklärungsszene*, die uns Wittgenstein hier vor Augen stellt. Wie Platons Höhlenbewohner sind die Menschen in ihren allgemein geteilten, falschen Denkgewohnheiten gefangen. Der Ausbruch eines Einzelnen vollzieht sich wie bei Platon (anankazoito exaiphnês, Pol. 515c) durch Zwang (Herausreißen, MS 113, 45 || TS 213, 423).<sup>4</sup> Das Herausgerissenwerden ist nur möglich, wenn der Mensch bereits in „instinktiver Auflehnung gegen die Sprache“ lebt (ebd.). Kulturelle Entfremdung ist damit eine wichtige Voraussetzung für die Philosophie, wie sie Wittgenstein betreibt und nicht ein idiosynkratisches Anhängsel (MS 109, 204-207). Platons Mythenkritik hat ihre Analogie in Wittgensteins Forderung nach einer „undichterischen“ Weltsicht, die auf Fiktionen verzichtet (MS 109, 202, MS 183, 72, MS 110, 210f.).<sup>5</sup> Die Einsicht in die Funktionsweise der Sprache vermittelnden Beschreibungen dienen der Einübung und Aufrechterhaltung der neuen Sichtweise und – im besten Fall – der Bekehrung weiterer Höhlenbewohner. Das platonische *anamnêsis*-Motiv klingt in der Forderung an, dass die Beschreibung nur Bekanntes zusammenstelle. Beschreibung setzt daher einen Akt der Erinnerung (MS 111, 164, MS 112, 235 || TS 213, 415, 419), der Rückbesinnung auf den Sprachgebrauch voraus.

(2) Dieses Motiv der Rückbesinnung auf Bekanntes steht in einer eigentümlichen Spannung zur Idee einer Sprache, die von einer Neigung geformt wurde, die die falschen Denkgewohnheiten kreiert. Hier trifft das Aufklärungsprogramm zudem auf einen *kulturkonservativen* Zug in Wittgensteins Philosophie. Die Rückbesinnung macht nur Sinn, wenn es einmal einen richtigen Sprachgebrauch gegeben hat, der sich auf diese Weise wieder entdecken lässt („Zurück auf den rauen Boden“, PU 107). Dieser Idee

<sup>1</sup> Vgl. Hans-Johann Glock, *Wittgenstein and Reason*, 197, in: James Klagge (Hg.): *Wittgenstein. Biography and Philosophy*, Cambridge 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Das gesteht auch Glock, *Wittgenstein and Reason*, 215, zu.

<sup>3</sup> Vgl. Hans-Johann Glock, *Wittgenstein and Reason*, 202.

<sup>4</sup> Spuren von Wittgensteins Platonlektüre finden sich erstmals wenige Monate früher (MS 111, 13, 31).

<sup>5</sup> Der Text MS 109, 202, bezieht sich auf eine Passage Renan, in dem er die nüchterne Auffassung des Lebensgrundes den reich ausgestalteten Mythologien anderer Völker vom Nachleben der Seele gegenüberstellt (vgl. Ernest Renan, *Histoire du Peuple d'Israël I*, Paris 1887, 41f.).

entspricht ein anderer Aspekt im Bild der Sprachentwicklung. Sprache bildet sich als Teil gemeinschaftlicher menschlicher Praxis aus. Die Methode der Rückbesinnung gründet daher in der These, dass die ersten Grundzüge der Sprache ausschließlich durch das Eintreten in kommunikativ unterlegte menschliche Handlungsweisen erlernt werden.

Das Aufklärungsprogramm fordert, einen nüchternen, fiktionfreien Blick auf die Wirklichkeit einzunehmen, der irrationale Störfaktoren des Denkens erkennt und so unschädlich macht. Wahrheit und Klarheit wären dann Selbstzweck, aber auch praxisrelevant, als Voraussetzung eines Lebens, das hinderliche Illusionen überwunden hat.<sup>6</sup> Das konservative Programm geht einen Schritt weiter, insofern es eine Rückkehr zur ursprünglichen Sprachverwendung nahelegt und damit unterschwellig diese als Norm proklamiert. Ist aber die Lebensform, die sich in diesen Sprachformen widerspiegelt, lebens- und damit erstrebenswert? Ein Sprachspiel wie das der Bauarbeiter in PU 2 funktioniert nur in einer hierarchischen Gesellschaft, deren Legitimität begründungsbedürftig ist. Der konservative Zug bedarf dringend einer Wertereflexion.

### 3. Die Verortung der Wertproblematik

Wittgenstein hat diese Problematik erkannt und reflektiert sie am Beispiel des „Problems des Lebens“ in einer Passage von 1937. Dort verwirft er den „konservativen“ Vorschlag, dass dieses Problem durch eine in die „Form des Lebens“ passende Existenzweise zum Verschwinden gebracht werden kann. Wittgenstein vermutet stattdessen,

„daß wer richtig lebt, das Problem nicht als *Traurigkeit*, also doch nicht als problematisch empfindet, sondern vielmehr als Freude; also gleichsam als einen lichten Äther um sein Leben, nicht als einen fraglichen Hintergrund.“ (MS 118, 17)

Eine Variante dieses Gedankens findet sich auch in MS 110, im Kontext der sogenannten *Bemerkungen zu Frazers „Golden Bough“*. Hier werden Riten gedeutet werden, die sich an Gegenständen festmachen, die für das Leben von großer Wichtigkeit sind:

Man könnte sagen[,] nicht ihre Vereinigung (von Eiche und Mensch) hat zu diesen Riten die *Veranlassung* gegeben, sondern vielleicht ihre Trennung [sondern, in gewissem Sinne ihre Trennung]

Denn das Erwachen des Intellekts geht meiner Trennung von dem ursprünglichen Boden[,] der ursprünglichen Grundlagen des Lebens *vor sich*. (Die Entstehung der Wahl.)

(Die Form des erwachenden Geistes ist die Verehrung.) (MS 110, 298f.)

Wenn wir das aufgeklärte und das konservative Modell von Sprache mit diesen Aussagen zusammenfügen, entsteht folgendes Bild:

Erste Sprachformen entstehen zunächst unreflektiert im Kontext sozialer Praktiken. Die Ablösung aus einem determinierten, „instinktiven“ Gebrauch der Kommunikationsformen vollzieht sich zu einem sehr frühen Zeitpunkt der Sprachentwicklung. Sie äußert sich zum Beispiel in der Möglichkeit, alte Sprachformen in neuen Kontexten zu verwenden (MS 110, 206, 256). Die Ablösung aus dem

Instinktiven hat folgende Konsequenzen: (a) Sie bewirkt ein graduelles<sup>7</sup> Erwachen des Intellekts, das sich in einer Reflexion der Sprachmittel ausdrückt. Die Fähigkeit zur Einsparung der Vielfalt der Ausdrucksmittel ist nur dann unproblematisch, solange nicht versucht wird, die multifunktionale Verwendung zu vereinheitlichen und zu systematisieren. Genau dies geschieht aber in fiktiven Mythologien und in der Metaphysik, die Produkte des „unaufgeklärten“ Intellekts sind. (b) Zum anderen wirft die Ablösung vom instinktiven Agieren die Sinnfrage und damit das Problem der Ethik auf. Denn die Menschen müssen nun ihr Leben durch Entscheidungen gestalten (Wahl). (c) Dies setzt die Erkenntnis von Entscheidungsprinzipien voraus. Im *Vortrag über Ethik* scheint Wittgenstein davon auszugehen, dass diese Wertkriterien Gegenstand einer besonderen Art von Werterfahrung sind.<sup>8</sup> Im oben zitierten Text aus MS 118 wird mit der Transformation der Sinnfrage in „Freude“ zumindest ein Erfolgskriterium für „richtiges Leben“ genannt. In MS 110 beschreibt er sie als geistige Haltung (Verehrung), die offenbar mehrere Aspekte hat. Zum einen hat sie eine kognitive Komponente, insofern sie eine Einsicht in das impliziert, was für unser Leben wichtig ist (Lebensgrundlagen). Genauer gesagt, in diesem Kontext bilden sich Begriffe wie „Wichtigkeit“ in diesem emphatischen Sinn erstmals heraus. Es entstehen Diskurse, in denen „gutes“ und „schlechtes Leben“ eine Rolle spielen. Zum anderen drückt die Haltung offenbar so etwas wie Respekt aus, der sich in der Aufrechterhaltung der Distanz widerspiegelt, die die Voraussetzung für den reflektierenden bewussten Umgang ist. Im Respekt schwingt auch jene Forderung nach „Gerechtigkeit gegenüber den Tatsachen“ mit, die Wittgenstein mit seiner Philosophie erstrebt (MS 110, 184, PU 131). (d) Die Haltung der Verehrung entfaltet sich daher in einer praktischen Vernunft, die die instinktiven befolgten Regelsysteme der Sprache und der Lebensform, in die sie eingebettet ist, reflektiert und bewertet.

### 4. Die Methode der Beschreibung: Die Funktion der Urgeschichte

Es ist wichtig, diese Urgeschichte im Rahmen der Methode der zweckgebundenen Beschreibungen zu betrachten, wie sie eingangs in PU 109 eingeführt worden ist. Die Urgeschichte ist nicht der Versuch, den Wertdiskurs einer naturhistorischen Reduktion zu unterziehen. Eine solche Reduktion wäre im Grunde nichts weiter als eine Art stammesgeschichtlicher Ersatz für die logische Strukturen, die Wittgenstein im *Tractatus* unter den Formen der realen Sprache suchte. Wenn Wittgensteins These richtig ist, dass in der Suche nach einer solchen „tiefen“ Substruktur die irreführende mythisch-metaphysischen Neigung zum Ausdruck kommt, dann muss eine Beschreibung, die mehr ist als nur eine Wiederholung der Sprachformen, eine indirekte Form annehmen, indem sie das Eigene im Fremden, wie z.B. in der oben geschilderten „Urszene“ gespiegelt betrachtet. Vor allem die klassische Form des Sprachspiels ist als ein solches Vergleichsobjekt konzipiert (PU 130f.).<sup>9</sup> Die Beschreibung setzt daher erstens eine hinreichende Einsicht in das „Arbeiten der Sprache“, die untersucht werden soll, voraus. Zweitens bedarf es einer gewissen rhetorischen Ausdruckskraft, die diese Einsicht

<sup>7</sup> Vgl. MS 144, 22, und Vorläufer MS 167, 32f. und 137, 117.

<sup>8</sup> Sie ähneln sehr stark den Vorstellungen, die James und Schleiermacher von „religiöser Erfahrung“ haben.

<sup>9</sup> Die Verwendung des Begriffs des Sprachspiels in PU 130f. spiegelt noch die ältere, strengere Konzeption des Begriffs wider, wie sie im *Braunen Buch* zu ihrem Höhepunkt gekommen ist. In den PU findet sich zwar noch einiges an älterem Material, aber bereits in der Urfassung der PU bildet sich ein neuer Sprachgebrauch heraus, der Wort hauptsächlich als Kennzeichnung des Praxisbezugs von Sprache benutzt (PU 23).

<sup>6</sup> „Die wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung dient dem Leben und das Leben nimmt sie auf“ (Rudolf Carnap u.a., *Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung – Der Wiener Kreis*, in: Kurt R. Fischer (Hg.), *Österreichische Philosophie von Brentano bis Wittgenstein*, Wien 1999, 145). Vgl. auch Harry G. Frankfurt: *On Truth*, New York 2006.

transportiert und plausibel macht. Die Beschreibung ist damit zugleich auf den subjektiven Horizont des Gesprächspartners ausgerichtet – der auch der Philosophie-rende selbst sein kann –, da sie auf seine Zustimmung angewiesen ist. Solche zweckgebundenen Beschreibungen beanspruchen nicht, die absolute Perspektive auf ihren Gegenstand zu eröffnen (PU 132). Sie vermitteln im besten Fall Einsichten in Einzelaspekte, die sich ergänzen.

Trotzdem bringt diese Methode keinen irrationalen Zug in die Philosophie, da sie die Selbstreflexion des geistigen Vermögens möglich macht, die nötig ist, um die falschen Denkgewohnheiten zu identifizieren. Das zu reflektierende geistige Vermögen ist keine abstrakte Größe, sondern trägt die Prägung der Entwicklungen des Lebens und Agierens einer Gemeinschaft in einer bestimmten Umwelt an sich. Die menschliche Rationalität hat sich als Teil dieser Geschichte herausgebildet. Die Einbeziehung der Rationalität in die konkrete Lebensform impliziert aber nicht, dass die Menschen Gefangene dieser Strukturen bleiben müssen. Das gilt selbst für eingefleischte Denkgewohnheiten, die so tief in der kollektiven Vergangenheit der Sprechergemeinschaft eingebettet sind, wie ihre Durchdringung der grundlegenden Sprachstrukturen beweist (MS 113, 45f. || TS 213, 422). Denn selbst diese Denkgewohnheiten sind Schritte im Prozess der Ablösung aus instinktiven Vorgaben. Die Bekehrung des Königs, der glaubt die Welt bestehe erst seit seiner Geburt (MS 174, 20), muss kein willkürlicher Akt sein, weil sie nicht auf Argumenten im konventionellen Sinn beruht, sondern kann durchaus die Form der rationalen Reflexion annehmen.

## 5. Die Grenzen des Wertediskurses

Philosophische Reflexion betrachtet die Sprache in ihrer Einbindung in die Lebensform. Diese Lebensform kann und soll selbst kritisch reflektiert werden. Die Mittel für diese Art von Reflexion und Bewertung finden wir in unserer Sprache in Gestalt der ethischen Diskurse bereits vor. Eine rationale Rekonstruktion und Begründung der Ethik, die von diesen konkreten Gegebenheiten abstrahiert, macht wenig Sinn, da sie kaum in der Lage sein wird, konkrete Lebensformen zu regulieren. Zudem geht eine solche Begründung immer schon von den grundlegenden begrifflichen Unterscheidungen wie „Wichtigkeit“ oder „gut/richtig“ und „schlecht“ aus, die zur menschlichen Naturgeschichte gehören. Umgekehrt gilt aber auch, dass die bloße Tatsache der Existenz eines solchen Diskurses, noch nicht beweist, dass er sinnvoll ist. Der Diskurs über absolute Werte – um die Terminologie des *Vortrags über Ethik* zu gebrauchen – könnte eine unzulässige „metaphysische“ Hypostasierung des Diskurses über relative Werte und Zielsetzungen sein.<sup>10</sup> Wittgenstein muss zeigen können, dass der Wertediskurs eine sinnvolle Funktion in der menschlichen Lebensform hat. Zweckgebundene Beschreibungen wie die oben skizzierte Urgeschichte sind Versuche, das Faktum der Wertung so im Kontext der menschlichen Lebensweise zu lokalisieren, dass folgende Aspekte dieses Sprachgebrauchs „einsichtig“ werden:

Die Bildung von Werturteilen lässt sich prinzipiell von den Hypostasierungen der Metaphysik unterscheiden, insofern die Beschreibung ihnen eine eigenständige Funktion im menschlichen Leben zuweist. Wenn diese Beschreibung erfolgreich ist, wäre sichergestellt, dass ethische Diskurse keine leerlaufenden sprachlichen Räder sein müssen. Hier lässt sich nun ein Problem dieser Methode beobachten, das in Wittgensteins Werk immer wieder zu finden ist. Durch die Lokalisierung des Sprachgebrauchs in primitiven Handlungszusammenhängen entsteht der Eindruck, es gehe vor allem darum, diesen Sprachgebrauch einem rationalen Begründungsdiskurs zu entziehen. Aber erstens haben wir gesehen, dass auch schon in der Urgeschichte die Entstehung wertende Sprache an die Herausbildung des Intellekts gebunden ist. Zweitens impliziert eine solche Verortung nicht, dass sie einer rationalen Kritik entzogen ist. Denn drittens ist zu beachten, dass die primitiven Sprachverwendungsweisen vor allem dem Vergleich mit den Diskursen der realen Sprache dienen.

Hier stellt sich nun die Frage, welchen Wertediskurs Wittgenstein durch seine Beschreibung eigentlich einsichtig machen möchte. Die Urgeschichte bleibt aufgrund ihrer Einfachheit sehr unspezifisch. Ohne ein konkretes Objekt, das sie zu reflektieren hat, bleibt die Beschreibung ein leerer Spiegel. Diskurse brauchen eine Sprachgemeinschaft mit einem geteilten kulturellen und lebensweltlichen Rahmen. Auch wenn er sich zeitlebens immer wieder um einen Zugang zu bestimmten Traditionsströmen im Christentum bemüht hat, lebt Wittgenstein mit dem Grundgefühl, dass es keine Sprachgemeinschaft mehr gibt, die einen lebendigen Wertediskurs führt. Ob dieser Eindruck zu Recht besteht, mag dahin gestellt bleiben. Wittgenstein bietet uns dadurch zumindest einen Überblick über mögliche Pathologien des Wertediskurses. (a) Metaphysik sowie fiktive Mythologien durch Philosophie und nicht genügend reflektierte Religion oder Schriftstellerei sind die harmlosesten Erscheinungen, weil sie die Quelle der Wertdimension nur in falsche Bahnen lenken, aber nicht zum versiegen bringen. (b) Der größte Pessimismus kommt in einer Bemerkung aus dem Jahre 1946 zum Ausdruck, der moderne Lebensstil könne eine Form annehmen, in dem die Dimension der existentiellen Wichtigkeit vollkommen verschwindet (MS 131, 186f.). (c) 1930 äußert sich Wittgenstein noch weniger radikal. Die moderne Gesellschaft habe zwar die Ausdrucksmittel für die Wertdimension verloren, aber nicht den Wert selbst, der – vorläufig! – unaussprechbar weiterdauert (MS 109, 204-206). Daher kommt es, dass Wittgenstein glaubt, nur der realistische Blick auf die Wirklichkeit gelinge ihm, nicht jedoch auf diese Weise auch die Sinndimension sichtbar zu machen (MS 110, 12f.). Die Beschränkung auf diesen nüchternen Realismus und das Zurücktreten der Explizierung des existentiell „Wichtigen“ sind der Ausdruck einer unvermeidlichen Bescheidenheit in einer kulturellen Übergangs- und Krisenzeit, nicht jedoch ein prinzipielle Beschränkung der Philosophie Wittgensteins.

<sup>10</sup> Ein Beispiel für eine mythisch-fiktive Fehlkonstruktion der Ethik ist für Wittgenstein die Idee des Sündenbocks (MS 109, 210).

# Puzzles about Peer Disagreement – A Deontological Solution

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The recent debate concerning the epistemic significance of peer disagreement focuses on discussing the question: how should an epistemic agent revise her belief (degree of belief)<sup>1</sup> that *p* if she recognizes that an *epistemic peer*, who possess the same or equally qualified evidence, comes to a different and incompatible judgment about *p*, namely disbelieves *p* (cf. Kelly 2010, p. 112)? Before discussing several answers to this question, it has to be clarified, what situations of *peer disagreement (after full disclosure)* are. Initially, we clarify the notion of an *epistemic peer* and the notion of *epistemic competence*.

An epistemic agent *S*<sub>2</sub> is an *epistemic peer* of an epistemic agent *S*<sub>1</sub> with respect to a certain set of propositions *P* if and only if *S*<sub>2</sub> is as competent as *S*<sub>1</sub> with respect to intelligence, thoughtfulness, her disposition to seek the truth (cf. Bergmann 2009, p. 342) and her ability to form correct doxastic attitudes toward *P*. *Epistemic competence* of an epistemic agent toward *P* is then determined by her degree of intelligence, thoughtfulness, her disposition to seek the truth and her ability to form correct doxastic attitudes toward *P*. A case of *peer disagreement* is a situation in which at least two epistemic agents *S*<sub>1</sub> and *S*<sub>2</sub>, which are epistemic peers with respect to a certain proposition *p*, form different and incompatible doxastic attitudes toward *p*, even though they possess the same or equally qualified evidence<sup>2</sup> on which their beliefs are based (cf. Kelly 2010, p. 112).

The question of the epistemic significance of peer disagreement emerges, if at least one of the opponents knows that an epistemic peer of him comes to an opposed judgment toward *p* in the light of the same or equally qualified evidence. This is called a situation of *peer disagreement after full disclosure* (cf. Bergmann 2009, p. 336; Feldman 2006, p. 220).

It is widely accepted that an epistemic agent gains higher-order evidence due to the recognition of the fact that an epistemic peer disagrees with her even though their opposed beliefs are based on the same or equally qualified evidence (Christensen 2007, pp. 208ff. and 213; Kelly 2010, p. 128; Feldman 2006, p. 232). But is this higher-order evidence in all cases of peer disagreement after full disclosure strong enough to undermine the status of epistemic justification of a corresponding first-order belief? Supporters of the equal weight view (EWV) would answer this question in the affirmative (cf. Feldman 2006, Christensen 2007).

Suppose that a scientist *S*<sub>1</sub> forms the belief that *p* in virtue of careful observation and analysis of empirical data. Unknown to *S*<sub>1</sub>, another scientist *S*<sub>2</sub>, who is as epistemically competent as *S*<sub>1</sub> forms an opposite opinion by observing the same data, namely *S*<sub>2</sub> disbelieves that *p*. Suppose further that both *S*<sub>1</sub> and *S*<sub>2</sub> are in an externalistic sense epistemically justified in their doxastic attitudes

toward *p*, because their beliefs are based on adequate grounds or are reliably formed etc.. Assume further that *p* is true and the belief of *S*<sub>1</sub> is correct because of its adequate formation or adequate basing on the evidence. In such a situation we would not hesitate to say that *S*<sub>1</sub> knows that *p*. Why should *S*<sub>1</sub>'s recognition of the peer disagreement about *p* (necessarily) call into question the adequateness of the knowledge ascription? Of course, we should require that a scientist, who recognize that an epistemic peer disagrees with him on a certain proposition albeit he has also recognized that they both have access to the same or equally qualified evidence, be less confident in his belief that *p*. But why should it follow that the scientist *S*<sub>1</sub> has to reject the belief that *p* or is not any longer epistemically justified in maintaining this belief? The mere recognition of a peer disagreement should not necessarily affect the ascription of knowledge at least in a primitive sense<sup>3</sup>. Wouldn't we ascribe Kepler knowledge of the proposition that the earth goes around the sun, even though Kepler knows that there are epistemic peers, for instance Tycho Brahe, who have an opposed doxastic attitude toward this proposition and that the opponents have access to the same or equally qualified evidence? The EWV neglects these considerations and claims that an unexcused violation of the following requirement does in fact have a negative significant effect on the status of epistemic justification of a belief in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure:

*Requirement of the EWV:* An epistemic agent, who recognizes that an epistemic peer disagrees with her own opinion on a certain proposition *p* although they have both access to the same or equally qualified evidence, *should* suspend judgment about this proposition, unless she has (epistemically good) reasons to think that either her opponent or she herself have an *epistemic advantage* over the other opponent (cf. Elga 2007, p. 488; Matheson 2009, p. 270; Christensen 2007, p. 212f.; Feldman 2006, p. 235).

Hence, following the proponents of the EWV, if an epistemic agent maintains her belief that *p* without (good) reasons to think that she has an epistemic advantage over her opponent in a case of peer disagreement after full disclosure about *p*, she is blameworthy for holding the belief in question and no longer epistemically justified in this belief.

An *epistemic advantage* may arise from the possessed evidence or from the handling of the evidence (cf. Kelly 2010, p. 112), but we focus on cases of epistemic disagreement after full disclosure, in which no opponent has a (good) reason to think that one of them has an epistemic advantage over the other.

Admittedly, the answer of the EWV is not without intuitive appeal. It seems very plausible to blame an epistemic agent *S*<sub>1</sub> in maintaining her doxastic attitude toward a proposition *p* in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure. But if the violation of the requirement of the EWV is taken to affect the status of epistemic justification of a doxastic attitude toward *p*, the EWV faces at least three pertinent objections.

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this paper it makes no difference whether we talk categorically about a doxastic attitude or quantitatively about degrees of belief.

<sup>2</sup> Some philosophers consider the condition of *possessing the same or equally qualified evidence* as a necessary condition for being an epistemic peer (cf. Matheson 2009, p. 270). This seems counterintuitive for at least one reason. The property of being an epistemic peer to another epistemic agent has nothing to do with the evidence possessed by each of them because the possessed evidence is to a huge part dependent on the circumstances under which the beliefs are formed. Epistemic peerhood should not be in this way sensitive to the circumstances under which the belief is formed.

<sup>3</sup> Primitive knowledge could be understood as something like Sosa's animal knowledge (cf. Sosa 2007, p. 31f.).

First, the requirement to suspend judgment in cases of peer disagreement implies that in the light of a peer disagreement after full disclosure neither of the opponents is able to know the proposition in question (cf. Christensen 2007, p. 214; Elga 2007, p. 484; Feldman 2006, p. 217). Since suspending judgment is the only justified (required) attitude in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure about *p*, the opponents are either not epistemically justified in maintaining their belief or they neither believe *p* nor its negation.

That is a kind of skepticism, which can be avoided by rejecting the assumption that a violation of the requirement of the EWV (necessarily) undermines the status of epistemic justification of a corresponding belief in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure.

Second, sometimes it is epistemically desirable, at least on some level, to maintain a certain doxastic attitude toward a proposition *p* in a case of peer disagreement after full disclosure about *p* (cf. Christensen 2007, p. 215; Elga 2007, p. 485). The EWV has problems to explain that phenomenon. Consider the case of Kepler and Brahe again.

Both disagreed about whether the earth goes around the sun, and they were in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure about this proposition. Nevertheless, Kepler's maintenance of the belief in question has led to several important insights in astronomy.

The EWV is not able to explain why it was epistemically desirable that Kepler retained his belief in the situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure.

One possibility to explain this epistemic desirability is to say that Kepler knew (primitively) that the earth goes around the sun even in that situation because he formed a true first-order belief based on adequate first-order evidence. But to ascribe Kepler a primitive kind of knowledge he had to be epistemically justified in the true belief (at least) in an externalistic sense.

We concede that one's recognition of peer disagreement about a proposition without (good) reasons to think that one have an epistemic advantage over the other opponent inhibits the possibility to gain a justified belief about whether one is justified in the belief that *p*. However, to be justified in a belief that the belief that *p* is justified is not necessary to know (primitively) that *p*.

The third objection to the EWV consists in several counter-examples raised in alternative approaches like the extra weight view or the right reason view (Elga 2007, p. 485f.), which are not without their own intuitive appeal. The three views disagree about which effect the recognition of the peer disagreement has upon the beliefs of the opponents. While the EWV would require to suspend judgment in cases of peer disagreement after full disclosure, the right reason view as well as the extra weight view argues that the status of epistemic justification of a belief that *p* is not (necessarily) affected in such a situation (Elga 2007, p. 486).

The EWV is able to deal with these objections and can stick to its intuitively appealing requirement, if the assumption is rejected that the unexcused violation of the EWV requirement (necessarily) undermines the status of epistemic justification of the opposing doxastic attitudes toward *p* in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure about *p*. In favor of this endeavor one has to distinguish between epistemic and deontological justification. While to be epistemically justified in a belief that *p* is necessary to

know that *p*, the status of deontological justification hinges on the fulfillment of epistemic duties. Furthermore, to be deontologically justified is neither necessary nor sufficient for being epistemically justified (cf. Alston 1988).

We propose that the unexcused violation of the requirement of the EWV in cases of peer disagreement after full disclosure does not (necessarily) affect the status of epistemic justification of the first-order belief, but it affects the status of the deontological justification which an epistemic agent has for holding a certain (first-order) doxastic attitude toward a certain proposition in such a situation.

Furthermore, proponents of the EWV commit a kind of epistemic level confusion (cf. Alston 1980) if they stick to their assumption that the unexcused violation of the EWV requirement (necessarily) affects the status of epistemic justification of a corresponding first-order belief. This assumption (implicitly) presupposes that it is necessary to be epistemically justified in the (second-order) belief that the (first-order) belief that *p* is epistemically justified, for being epistemically justified in a first-order belief that *p*. However, this assumption is too strong at least for proponents of an externalist conception of epistemic justification.

Indeed, if the EWV requirement is considered as an epistemic duty, an unexcused violation of it would allow to blame the epistemic agent and hence undermines the deontological status of justification of the epistemic agent for holding the belief, whereas the status of epistemic justification may be unaffected.

Epistemic duties serve to direct the doxastic behavior of epistemic agents and thereby help them in their pursuit of the fundamental cognitive goal, namely the truth goal. There are epistemic duties which are satisfiable by agents in a nontrivial way and which have epistemically significant impact (cf. Nottelmann 2007).

If an unexcused violation of the requirement of the EWV only affects the deontological status of the first-order belief toward *p* in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure about *p*, the EWV does no longer imply the skeptical thesis of the impossibility to know (primitively) that *p* in such cases. Since to be deontologically justified is not necessary for a belief to be an instance of knowledge (cf. Alston 1988), it is possible that one can be blamed for maintaining a belief that *p* in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure about *p* even though this belief is an instance of (primitive) knowledge.

The higher-order evidence, i.e. the recognition of the peer disagreement about *p*, only undermines the status of epistemic justification of the second-order belief that the first-order belief that *p* is justified. Therefore, it is impossible for an epistemic agent to know or to have an epistemic justified belief that her first-order belief that *p* is epistemically justified in a situation of peer disagreement after full disclosure about *p*.

Furthermore, since primitive knowledge that *p* is not precluded anymore in a case of peer disagreement after full disclosure, proponents of the EWV can explain why the maintenance of a belief, even though it violates the requirement of the EWV, may nevertheless be epistemically desirable.

Moreover, within the deontological approach of the EWV the difficulties with its formerly competing views vanish, because they consider different levels of epistemic evaluation.

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# Das Erkenntnismodell in Wittgensteins *Tractatus*

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Die Relation zwischen erkennendem Subjekt und dem Gegenstand der Erkenntnis spielt eine grundlegende Rolle in Hinsicht auf die Frage nach der Erkenntnis. Wir können uns diese Erkenntnisbeziehung in zwei Bewegungen vorstellen: vom Gegenstand zum Subjekt oder umgekehrt vom Subjekt zum Gegenstand. Wenn wir aber nach dem Grundmodell des Erkennens fragen, kommen wir auf drei Modelle: (1) Abbildmodell (Widerspiegelungsmodell), (2) Herstellungsmodell und (3) Umbildungsmodell. In diesem Vortrag werde ich die Frage nach dem Erkenntnismodell in Wittgensteins *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* stellen.

Die älteste und einfachste Auffassung ist die, dass das Erkennen das *Abbilden* des Gegenstands durch das Subjekt sei: Die Dinge spiegeln sich in unseren Vorstellungen wider. Diese Ansicht ähnelt dem alltäglichen, vorwissenschaftlichen Erkenntnisbegriff. Wird aber die beschriebene Abbildtheorie abgelehnt, so tritt an ihre Stelle eine Art *Schaffenstheorie*, die die kreative Arbeit eines Künstlers zum Muster nimmt. In diesem Modell sind die Gegenstände der Erfahrung von unserem Erkenntnisvermögen als Produkte der Synthese von Intellekt und Inhalt der Anschauung „erzeugt“ bzw. hergestellt. Dies bedeutet, dass das erkennende Subjekt in der Hemisphäre seiner eigenen Ergebnisse verbleibt und die sogenannten „Dinge an sich“ nicht erkennen kann. Eine solche „schöpferische“ Auffassung des Erkenntnisprozesses würde aber zu radikal sein, weil sie die deutliche Trennung zwischen dem Bereich der Erkenntnis (Erfahrung und Wissenschaft) und dem Bereich der Kunst verwischt. Demgegenüber findet man in der Transzendentalphilosophie vielmehr so etwas wie eine *Umbildungstheorie*, die als Kompromiss zwischen Abbild- und Schaffenstheorie aufgefasst werden könnte. Erkenntnis als Umbildung bedeutet, dass der angegebene Inhalt mithilfe der bestimmenden Formen gestaltet werden muss.

Im Zentrum des *Tractatus* steht das Problem der Beziehung zwischen dem Gedanken und der in ihm aufgefassten Wirklichkeit. Wittgenstein stellt diesbezüglich zwei Behauptungen auf; die erste bezieht sich auf den Isomorphismus zwischen Gedanke und Wirklichkeit, die zweite auf die Identität von Denken und Sprache. Einerseits stellt er fest, dass die logische Struktur des Gedankens dem ontologischen Aufbau der Welt isomorph entsprechen muss, d.h. zwischen ihnen besteht in der umkehrbar eindeutigen Abbildung der Struktur der Welt auf die des Gedankens. Andererseits setzt er den Gedanken mit der Sprache gleich. Der Begriff des Gedankens wird hier im logischen Sinne als jeglicher möglicher Wahrheits-träger verstanden. Auch der Begriff der Sprache entspricht nicht der konkreten Sprache, sondern bezieht sich auf mögliche symbolische Ausdrucksweisen. Wir beschäftigen uns hier vor allem mit der erste Behauptung über die isomorphe Abbildung.

Diese (erste) Behauptung führt zu der Annahme, dass zwischen der logischen Struktur der Sprache und dem ontologischen Aufbau der Welt eine notwendige Übereinstimmung bestehen muss. Diese Übereinstimmung wird von Wittgenstein wie folgt beschrieben: „Damit es möglich ist, daß ein Satz wahr oder falsch sei – daß er mit der Wirklichkeit übereinstimme oder nicht – dazu muß im Satze etwas mit der Wirklichkeit *identisch* sein“ (Wittgenstein 1979, 15). Um die Beziehung von Sprache und

Wirklichkeit zu erfassen, muss Wittgenstein eine bestimmte Weltansicht voraussetzen, was er zu Anfang in seinen sogenannten ontologischen Thesen auch macht (TLP 1–2.063).

Diese Beziehung zwischen Sprache und Welt können wir im Sinne der Marburger Schule als eine Art von Relation ( $xRy$ ) bestimmen, wobei einerseits die  $x$ -Variable als sprachliches Relata von der  $y$ -Variable und andererseits umgekehrt die  $y$ -Variable als außersprachliche Relata von der  $x$ -Variable angenommen wird. Zweites Prädikat bleibt ein Konvers des ersten.

Eine derartige Relation kann bei Wittgenstein im weitesten Sinne als *Denotation* verstanden werden. Denotation heißt die Beziehung zwischen einem Zeichen (Denotator) und dem bezeichneten Gegenstand oder Sachverhalt in der außersprachlichen Wirklichkeit (Denotat). Der Bereich des Denotatorsbegriff bleibt aber immer enger als der Bereich der Sprache, weil außer den Zeichen unter anderem die syntaktischen Eigenschaften wie syntaktische Kategorien und die Beziehungen zwischen den Zeichen zur Sprache gehören. Die Sprache enthält nicht nur die Zeichen, sondern auch ihre Eigenschaften und Beziehungen, und obwohl diese keine Denotaten sind, entsprechen sie irgendwie der außersprachlichen Wirklichkeit, wie zum Beispiel die Reihenfolge von Sätzen einer zeitlichen Reihenfolge von Ereignissen entsprechen kann. Die Denotation bleibt somit nur die einfachste Art der Relation zwischen Sprache und Welt. Unsere Frage lautet daher: Welche andere Arten von Relation können noch vorkommen?

In Hinblick auf die Relation von Sprache und Welt können wir bei Wittgenstein folgende denotative Beziehungen zwischen der logischen und ontologischen Kategorien herausstellen: (1) Name und Gegenstand, (2) sinnvoller Satz und mögliche Sachlage und (3) Elementarsatz und Tatsache (cf. Wolniewicz, 95 f.). Jede dieser Beziehungen wird von Wittgenstein wie folgt bezeichnet: (i) „der Name bedeutet Gegenstand“ (TLP 3.203), (ii) „der Satz stellt diese und diese Sachlage dar“ (TLP 3.031), (iii) „Der einfachste Satz, der Elementarsatz, behauptet das Bestehen eines Sachverhaltes“ (TLP 4.21) und (iv) „[d]er Satz ist die Beschreibung eines Sachverhaltes“ (TLP 4.023). Es gibt sodann im *Tractatus* folgende Beziehungen untereinander: Bedeutung, Darstellung, Behauptung und Beschreibung. Diese verschiedenen Beziehungen entsprechen der Vorstellung der streng genommenen Abbildung (cf. Hintikka 1990, 160). Eine Antwort auf die Frage, wie diese Begriffe sich aufeinander beziehen, ist schwer aber zu finden und bleibt außer dem Interesse dieser Texte.

Außerhalb der obengenannten Beziehungen finden wir im *Tractatus* noch eine weitere Auffassung des Zusammenhanges von Subjekt und Wirklichkeit, das in der Abbildung in weiterem Sinne respektive in der Widerspiegelung besteht. Wir fokussieren uns hier auf diese Beziehung. Wittgenstein hat sie im *Tractatus* folgenderweise beschrieben: „[w]ir machen uns Bilder der Tatsachen“ (TLP 2.1). Diese Auffassung gründet auf der Prämisse, dass man das Bild mit der Wirklichkeit vergleichen kann und es sie widerspiegeln soll: „[u]m zu erkennen, ob das Bild wahr oder falsch ist, müssen wir es mit der Wirklichkeit vergleichen“ (TLP 2.223). Wir nehmen sodann an, dass wir die verschiedenen Elemente der Wirklichkeit und

des Abbildes in bestimmter Art und Weise zusammengesetzt auffassen können und erkennen dürfen. Die Widerspiegelung kann sich dann nicht auf die Elemente der Wirklichkeit beziehen, sondern das Bild muss die Anordnung der Tatsache abbilden. Diese Auffassung entspricht dem erstgenannten Modell des Erkennens.

Wittgenstein zerlegt „das Bild“ in zwei Bestandteile: a) in die „Elemente des Bildes“ und (b) in „seine Struktur“ (TLP 2.15). Die Bildelemente können als die *materiellen* Bestandteile des Bildes und die Bildstruktur als *formaler* Bestandteil charakterisiert werden. Die grundlegende Bedeutung hat für Wittgenstein folgende Form: „[w]as das Bild mit der Wirklichkeit gemein haben muß, um sie auf seine Art und Weise – richtig oder falsch – abbilden zu können, ist seine Form der Abbildung“ (TLP 2.17). Das Bild muss also mit der Wirklichkeit die gemeinsame Form der Abbildung haben, denn nur sie stellt die Möglichkeit für diese Kongruenz auf (cf. TLP 2.151), die mathematischerweise in der Isomorphie besteht (Stegmüller 1989, 542; cf. auch Hintikka 1990, 129). Wir können also sagen, dass Wittgensteins Abbildmodell nicht bildhaften oder inhaltlichen, sondern bloß strukturellen Charakter hat.

Wenn wir den Maßstab als ein Verhältnis oder als eine Norm verstehen, dann bereitet uns Wittgensteins Vergleich des Bildes mit der Wirklichkeit und dessen angelegter Maßstab einige Schwierigkeiten (cf. TLP 2.1512). Der Maßstab bedeutet in der Umgangssprache das Verhältnis zwischen der realen Länge einer Distanz und ihrer Darstellung auf einer Karte oder in einem Modell bzw. die Norm einer Beurteilung. In diesem Sinne könnte die Redewendung „einen Maßstab an die Wirklichkeit anlegen“ heißen, dass das Bild die Grundlage zur Beurteilung der Wirklichkeit ist, was sich mit der Darstellungsfunktion des Bildes jedoch in Widersprüche verwickelt. Im *Tractatus* muss aber der Begriff des Maßstabes im Kontext seiner Anlegung an die Wirklichkeit verstanden werden. Seine Auslegung finden wir in Satz 2.15121, wo der „Maßstab“ mit dem messtechnischen oder geodätischen Begriff der „Teilstriche“ verknüpft wird. Der Teilstrich bezeichnet in diesem Kontext die genaue Unterteilung von Maßstäben, Teilkreisen und anderen Messmitteln in Form regelmäßiger, kurzer Striche oder geometrischer Muster. Das heißt, dass das Bild aus Teilstrichen besteht, deren äußerste Punkte den zu messenden Gegenstand berühren sollen.

Mit einer solchen messtechnischen Interpretation kommt jedoch das Problem der strukturellen Abbildung zurück. Die Bilder als Repräsentationen der Gegenstände stehen in isomorpher Relation zu den Gegenständen des abgebildeten Sachverhaltes. Wenn das Bild getreu den gegebenen Sachverhalt abbildet, dann können wir sagen, dass zwischen ihnen ein struktureller Isomorphismus besteht, der mit der wahren Erkenntnis gleichgesetzt werden kann.

Mit dieser Abbildungsrelation tritt überhaupt ein Problem der Bildtheorie der Sprache auf. Wittgenstein fasst den Zusammenhang von Sprache und Welt folgenderweise auf: „[d]er Satz ist ein Bild der Wirklichkeit“ (TLP 4.01). Die Wirklichkeit zerfällt in Dinge (Gegenstände), denen die Namen zugestanden werden: „[e]in Name steht für ein Ding, ein anderer für ein anderes Ding und untereinander sind sie verbunden, so stellt das Ganze – wie ein lebendes Bild – den Sachverhalt vor“ (TLP 4.0311). Die *Namen* erhalten ihre Bedeutungen erst durch ihr Zusammenstehen im Satz (cf. TLP 3.3). Wie die Wirklichkeit in Gegenstände zerfällt, bestehen die Sätze aus den Namen. Ein Satz ist wahr, wenn die Anordnung von Namen eines Satzes dieselbe Struktur hat wie die Anordnung der von den Namen vertretenen Dinge in der Wirklichkeit, also denselben „Sachverhalt“ darstellt. Wenn hingegen die

Dinge in Wirklichkeit einen anderen Sachverhalt als ihre Namen im Satzzeichen aufweisen, wird ein Satz dadurch falsch.

In der Erkenntnis wird jeder sinnvolle und elementare Satz auf die Wirklichkeit bezogen: „[d]ie Wirklichkeit wird mit dem Satz verglichen“ (TLP 4.05) und „[n]ur dadurch kann der Satz wahr oder falsch sein, indem er ein Bild der Wirklichkeit ist“ (TLP 4.06). Der Satz kann infolge solchen Vergleich entweder wahr oder falsch sein. Wittgenstein antwortet aber nicht auf die epistemologische Frage, in welcher Weise diese Relation des Satzes mit der Wirklichkeit möglich ist; er setzt bloß ihre ontologische Möglichkeit voraus.

Ein Vergleich bzw. eine gegenüberstellende Relation bedeutet, dass die Eigenschaften von mindestens zwei Dingen betrachtet werden, um Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede herauszufinden. These 4.05 erklärt jedoch nicht, in welche Richtung der Vergleichsakt verläuft. Erst in These 4.06 finden wir die ausdrückliche Bemerkung über seine Richtung: der Satz soll „ein Bild von der Wirklichkeit“ sein. Der Wahrheitswert eines Satzes hängt von der Wirklichkeit ab. Der Akt der Vergleichung verläuft logisch von der Wirklichkeit zum Satz, d. h. die Wirklichkeit bleibt der Bezugspunkt für diese logische Operation.

Obwohl die Wirklichkeitserkenntnis in der vergleichenden Relation des Satzes mit der Wirklichkeit besteht, kann sie gleichwohl als passives Sinnesdatensammeln oder als passiv beobachtende und Wahrnehmungsberichte sammelnde Entdeckung der vorgefundenen Wirklichkeit nicht aufgefasst werden. Nach Wittgenstein sind die Bilder von uns aktiv gemacht (cf. TLP 2.1). Der sinnvolle Satz kann nicht als Kopie der Wirklichkeit angesehen werden, sondern ist vielmehr seine Antizipation. In der Erkenntnis bilden wir symbolische Bilder in Form von Sätzen, die „an die Wirklichkeit angelegt“ werden (cf. TLP 2.1512). Die Sätze hängen von uns ab, ihr Wahrheitswert aber hängt von der Wirklichkeit ab, bis zu welcher das Bild „reicht“ (cf. TLP 2.1511). Aus diesem Grunde können wir aber nicht sagen, dass diese Auffassung dem schlichten Widerspiegelungsmodell entspricht, weil Bilder respektive ihre logische Struktur von uns passiv nicht aufgenommen werden; Wittgensteins Modell der Erkenntnis ist mehr raffiniert. Vielleicht sollen wir im neukantischen Modell der Umbildung suchen.

Die Umbildungstheorie wurde von den Neukantianern (Rickert, Cassirer) anstelle der abgelehnten Abbildtheorie „angeboten“. Diese Auffassung von Erkenntnis hat Cassirer prägnant wie folgt beschrieben: „[I]n allem begrifflichen Wissen haben wir es nicht mit einer einfachen Wiedergabe zu tun, sondern nur mit einer Gestaltung und inneren Umformung des Stoffes, der sich uns von außen darbietet“ (Cassirer, 1). Die Erkenntnis als Umbildung bedeutet also, dass der angegebene Inhalt mithilfe der bestimmenden Formen gestaltet werden muss. Auf dem Hintergrund dieser Auffassung ergibt sich dann immer die Frage: Versteht Wittgenstein das Erkennen als solche Umbildung?

Der Vergleich zwischen dem Erkenntnisbegriff Wittgensteins und der Erkenntniskritik der Marburger Schule zeigt wesentliche Unterschiede. Wittgensteins Erkenntnislehre setzt einen Dualismus unserer Erfahrungswelt in zwei nah beieinanderliegenden Dimensionen voraus: eine Welt der Originale und eine Welt, die ihre Kopie ist. Zur Welt der Originale gehören die Tatsachen bzw. die Sachverhalte; demnach sind ihre Kopien Bilder. Die Originale sind eine unerschöpfliche Quelle für alle möglichen Widerspiegelungen, also für die Kopien in unserem Bewusst-

sein. Die widerspiegelnde Erkenntnis besteht im Kopieren der originalen Wirklichkeit: Je echter die Kopien der Dinge sind, desto „richtiger“, „objektiver“ etc. ist die Erkenntnis der Welt.

Im Unterschied dazu basiert die Marburger Erkenntnis-kritik auf einer dualismuslosen Relation der Erkenntnis, die aus den beiden genannten Relata besteht. Die Marburger Umbildungstheorie umgeht das aufgrund der Widerspiegelungstheorie unlösbare Problem der „Brücke“ zwischen Wirklichkeit und Bewusstsein, weil sie diese beiden Bezugspunkte der Erkenntnisbeziehung als zusammen verbunden betrachtet. Nach ihrer Auffassung gibt es keine einseitige Einwirkung eines beständigen und widerstandsfähigen Gegenstandes auf das empfängliche/empfangende Subjekt – wie in der Abbildtheorie vorausgesetzt –, sondern eine beidseitige Wechselwirkung von Form und Inhalt. Erkenntnis als Umbildung bedeutet, dass der angegebene Inhalt sich mithilfe der bestimmenden Formen nicht-willkürlich und nicht-beliebig verändert. Die Konsequenz aus dieser Betrachtungsweise ist, dass es keine Kopie einer bereits bestimmten Wirklichkeit im Bewusstsein geben kann, sondern je eine Art vom neuen (kreativen) Produkt ist, das vor dem Erkennen weder außerhalb des Subjekts noch in seinem Inneren vorzufinden wäre.

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# Wittgenstein's Legacy: The Linguistic Turn in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Philosophy

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The legacy of Ludwig Wittgenstein provides reasons to speak about his role in what has come to be called 'Linguistic Turn' of 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy. In all his main works he deals with linguistic meaning; it is key to his philosophical investigations. To show this I first consider 'naming', 'meaning' and the 'world' in his *Philosophical Investigations*.

In trying to interpret Wittgenstein's "language-game" approach, as a process of using words, a practice involving the use of language (*Philosophical Investigations* (henceforth – PI), paragraph (henceforth – p.) 7), I would stress his concentration on the human activity of naming. He says at the beginning of PI that "meaning" is the prime focus of his investigations. Does naming presuppose that there is a fact about the meaning of a name? Does the meaning of a name (word) coincide with the object (world) it denotes?

My suggestion is that Wittgenstein's insight is that the meaning of a name is constituted by, and modified according to, the context of an utterance embedded in the many activities that go to make up a "form of life". A "form of life" is a "part of an activity" (p. 23). It is constituted by our general human culture, and is not a matter of empirical data, it does not need any justification. It expresses itself in, it is accomplished in and through, language. "[T]he speaking of language is part of an activity or of a form of life" (p. 23).

According to Augustine, words as names or signs point to objects in the world (p.1). So, he assumes that there is an essence to language. Wittgenstein interprets this as: "Every word has a meaning" and "The meaning is correlated with the world" and it is, "The object for which the word stands" (p.1). So, here, the meaning of a word is an object in the world. A name points to the object, because the name identifies the object by means of the name, or as being a name's meaning to which we have access.

Names mean. This is their transcendental value, allowing us access to the world. This is a feature of the Christian tradition of philosophy, where language is a primary condition of the possibility of any comprehension of the world, and language is given to us by God. So on this view, a word, the meaning of which is given to us by the Absolute Authority, together with the ability to name, coincides with the object in the world.

It seems that Wittgenstein differentiates name, meaning and object in the world in a more delicate way. It is reminiscent of Gottlob Frege's distinctions between name, sense and reference. According to Frege, we use a name to refer to the object of the world with a certain sense. For Frege we refer to the world by our language with particular sense. Senses constitute a third reality, the status of which is problematic, as is often the case when one multiplies worlds. We assert by saying something about how the world is. So to state how the world is can be achieved by naming. But it is not naming in Augustine's sense. For Wittgenstein naming requires the context of a sentence: "a word had meaning only as part of a sentence" (p. 49).

For Frege, a name has sense in the process of referring to the world. For Wittgenstein – a name has meaning in a language-game. So for him a name is an element of language-game. Thus, for Frege, in a way different from Wittgensteinian, names, senses and referents (the world's objects) do not coincide, but are connected, though this connection was, and still is, open to interpretation in Frege's philosophy, which is not a goal of this paper.

Returning to Wittgenstein, I would say that the elements of a language- game (first of all – names) are not just to be relied on in the activity of 'playing a game'. We do not simply exploit them, as given, fixed elements; static counters in an unchanging game. We have them in virtue of our previous experience and activity. In this way, they support our further experience. The deliverances and the elements of language-games support the next language-game, but it is not that we are merely using them, or that we just rely on them as if they were given to us, fixed, ready to be used, or as if we would inevitably use them as in our previous activity. They are also potentially new samples, might be even come to be new standards (p. 50) which serve future elements of future language-games.

We do not compose the reality or language-game from some set of fixed constituent parts (p. 47). We do not know the parts, the elements of a game, before it is in progress. They appear, we constitute them, in the actual ongoing practices. A language-game 'constitutes' its elements, rather than consists of them.

Language-games are activities. Language is a practice, not a collection of, or set of, data. So we cannot learn language from explanations of it; we learn it through training (p. 5). To name does not mean just to title (p. 26). To learn language does not "consist in giving names to objects" (p. 26). A name gets its meaning in use. 'To mean' means to be accomplished in such use. 'To mean' also means to be significant. Bringing it about that a name means something in a language-game, we awake some segment of reality; a form of life becomes actual.

So the reality of our world and our language practices are woven through with our readiness to develop new activities and make new 'discoveries'. Every situation, every language-game actualizes some form of life, which opens us up, makes available some new part of our life-world. Not a hidden part, previously contingently inaccessible, but rather a freshly constituted set of possibilities. Such actualization is due to the realization in language of meaningful naming. So, to name is to capture some form of life by achieving meaning and meaningfulness. To name means to do something in a language-game. Meaning is constitutive of a form of reality.

Naming makes the "connection of a word with an object" (p. 38) via the constitutive use of a name in the appropriate language-game. When "language goes on holiday," it is different from genuine language. "Language on holiday" and genuine language are two different aspects of the 'life' of our language, of our linguistic practice. The phrase 'language on holiday' points to language which is spoken or taken out of context and thus generates philosophical confusions.

The boundaries of a language-game are not definite. Different language-games are “related to one another in many different ways” (p. 65). This does not mean that different language-games must have something in common, but that they may appear to be similar, setting up complex networks of reciprocal relations (p. 66).

Such an inability to define language-games invites a philosophical approach orientated around, or more favourable to, descriptive rather than (theoretical or) definitional methods. Similarity implies not precision, but a more schematic generality (“family resemblance” – p. 67). The general notion of a language-game is schematic, and the way of using, participating in, and bringing about the game itself provides a sample, which can be schematically defined.

A schema presupposes a realized application of itself which can provide or be taken as a sample. Applications, however, variously differ. So, in one sense, a language-game is like an unformulated definition (p. 75), and I appreciate, by being involved in a language-game, the possibility of expressing my grasp of the game. This is supported by my previous, similar experience, my analogous knowledge of the game. My own (p. 68) grasping of the game, is not identical to others’ grasp, but it is, nonetheless, similar. The possibility of similarity depends on this very feature of impreciseness.

Thus, on Wittgenstein’s picture in participating in a language-game, we name features of the world and the way it is. Meaning brings into being, enables and actualizes our forms of life. In this sense, any language-game, as an ongoing process of constituting meaning, is a form of life. Meanings, which are constituted by our ongoing, developing practices of naming, might be thus considered to be part of the fabric of the world. The language-games of naming bring into being the forms of life into which they are woven.

To draw a parallel between Wittgenstein, Augustine and Frege, in the first instance, names get their significance in the context of their particular language-games; as an action, as a form of life (names are not meanings, meanings are forms of life); secondly, words (names) pick out objects of the world; thirdly, names (signs) refer to the objects in the world (meanings) with a particular sense. In such a way, for Wittgenstein the objects of the world are not given to us, rather, we witness in our language-games some forms of life by the very practice of meaning them, with our words. Forms of life open up portions of reality as actual through language-games. Forms of life can be taken as items of general human culture.

The descriptive character of philosophizing is a consequence of the absence of definitions in Wittgenstein’s approach. Descriptions have specific status in this context. They are not made by an independent observer from outside the language-game. They are not locutions, in Austin’s sense. Their content is realized, is brought to fruition, through the activity of the language-games involved in speaking about such contents (through acting linguistically). The meaning of descriptions comes from their place within concrete language-games, outside of which they fail to have significance at all. This does not rule out the possibility of shifts within language-games, given that each description can become a new sample for a new game. We are alert to the possibility of developing content within particular language-games, being used not just in different language-games, but in order to generate new games. So, participating in language-games, descrip-

tions are co-constitutive of, and help to clarify the meanings of the words which enable our forms of life.

Descriptive philosophy offers therapy; helping to simplify, and clarify, by thus engaging with linguistic meanings.

The above provides evidence for the importance of the so-called ‘linguistic turn’ in 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy. The linguistic turn is connected with methodological and thematic transformations in philosophy, focusing philosophical attention and investigation on to the linguistic aspects of theoretical argumentation. Both the linguistic and pragmatic turns show the complementary character of both theoretical and practical reasons.

The linguistic turn can be divided into 3 stages: 1. interest in the theoretical language of natural science and attempts to reduce to it everyday language; 2. interest in everyday language, understanding its irreducibility to the theoretical one; 3. interest in speech *per se*, rather than some ‘other’ language that is to be deduced from our linguistic practices.

The given stages of the linguistic turn were each initiated, in the first instance, by considerations explored by Wittgenstein. I advocate the view that we ought not to divide his work, or his legacy, into periods. His goal is ever the same: to clarify the meanings of words, and to understand our activity of meaning, only the scope of application of his ideas changes.

In the *Tractatus* he is dealing with the theoretical language of science; in line with the general direction of philosophical investigations of the time, and the first stage of the linguistic turn, according to the given classification. In his *Philosophical Investigations* he applies his ideas to the common language that is to our everyday usage; which corresponds to the then contemporary sub-turn (of linguistic turn) to the analysis of ordinary language, and the further sub-turn to analyzing language in use, speech, rather than some abstract language.

In the same vein, in *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein considers the extent to which our linguistic and meaningful practices are not simply available, but are the product of enabling frameworks that also shape and co-constitute those very language-games. The frameworks are shown in our speech and language-games, but are not definable in those language-games. They are the hinges on which meaningful practices turn.

Meanings of words discover the objects of the outer world as facts in the *Tractatus* (T), and as forms of life in *Philosophical Investigations* (PI). Both are portions or features of reality, but each has a different status. Meanings appear and can be realized in and through the activity of our language-games, as a form, or forms, of life in the *Investigations*, whereas, meanings are verified in empirical experience, as atomic facts, in the *Tractatus*.

Meanings witness forms of life in the *Investigations*, whereas meanings witness facts, in the *Tractatus*. According to the *Investigations*, in language-games we use words to achieve new meaningful forms of life. In the *Tractatus*, the speaker limits the world by the meanings of his or her utterances: capturing the world’s objects by facts. In the *Investigations*, meaning occurs within language-games whose boundaries are not definite but open and flexible. The ‘family resemblance’ between language-games is a matter of imprecise similarity rather than unformulated definition (PI).

According to the *Tractatus*, collections of facts represent reality as a mosaic; elements of which are the facts. Reality does not coincide with factuality, it 'corresponds' to it; we discover reality through facts according to our interests (T).

In this way, Wittgenstein tracks the methodology of contemporary philosophical and scientific investigations, always keeping as his touchstone those goals of his initial philosophy: to understand the meanings of linguistic items.\*

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# The Role of the Uniqueness Thesis in the Epistemology of Disagreement

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## 1. Introduction

The Uniqueness Thesis is the thesis that there is always a unique doxastic attitude which it is rational to have toward a given proposition when in possession of a given body of evidence.<sup>1</sup> This thesis has been assigned an eminent role in the epistemology of disagreement since its formulation by Richard Feldman half a decade ago.<sup>2</sup> The Uniqueness Thesis has the obvious consequence that there can be no rational disagreements between epistemic peers (intellectual equals who have the same evidence).<sup>3</sup> But the Uniqueness Thesis has also been thought to be intimately connected with Conciliationism—the view that a person should suspend judgment (or at least decrease her confidence) when she finds herself in disagreement with an acknowledged epistemic peer.<sup>4,5</sup> This paper will show, however, that the connection between the Uniqueness Thesis and Conciliationism is not nearly as straightforward as epistemologists of disagreement have supposed. Section 2 will explain two ways in which the Uniqueness Thesis has been thought to be connected with Conciliationism. Section 3 will present problems for the first of these two alleged connections, and Section 4 will present a problem for the second of the two connections.

## 2. The Uniqueness Thesis and Conciliationism

Epistemologists of disagreement distinguish “coarse-grained” doxastic attitudes (belief, disbelief, suspension of judgment) from “fine-grained” doxastic attitudes (degrees of belief or “credences”) and, accordingly, recognize the following two kinds of disagreement:

*s* is in *coarse-grained disagreement* with *s\** =<sub>df</sub> *s* and *s\** have different coarse-grained doxastic attitudes toward one and the same proposition.

*s* is in *fine-grained disagreement* with *s\** =<sub>df</sub> *s* and *s\** have different credences toward one and the same proposition.

The distinction between coarse-grained and fine-grained doxastic attitudes also gives rise to two versions of the Uniqueness Thesis:

*Coarse-Grained Uniqueness (CGU)*: For any body of evidence *e* and proposition *p*, there is a coarse-grained doxastic attitude *d* such that, for any person *s* whose total evidence is *e*, it is rational for *s* to have *d* toward *p* and irrational for *s* to have any coarse-grained doxastic attitude other than *d* toward *p*.

*Fine-Grained Uniqueness (FGU)*: For any body of evidence *e* and proposition *p*, there is a credence *c* such that, for any person *s* whose total evidence is *e*, it is rational for *s* to have *c* toward *p* and irrational for *s* to have any credence other than *c* toward *p*.

It is obvious that if CGU is true and if two people have the same total evidence but are in coarse-grained disagreement over a proposition, then at least one of the two holds an irrational coarse-grained attitude toward that proposition. And if FGU is true and if two people have the same total evidence but different credences toward the same proposition, then at least one of the two has an irrational credence toward that proposition. If it is stipulated that “epistemic peers” have the same total evidence, then CGU has the immediate consequence that there can be no rational coarse-grained peer disagreement, and FGU has the immediate consequence that there can be no rational fine-grained peer disagreement.<sup>6</sup>

With these relatively trivial results in mind, epistemologists of disagreement have claimed to find two important connections between the Uniqueness Thesis and Conciliationism. In order to state these alleged connections clearly, we should distinguish two relevant versions of Conciliationism:

*Coarse-Grained Conciliationism (CGC)*: For any persons *s* and *s\** and proposition *p*, if *s* realizes that *s\** is her peer with respect to *p* and that she herself believes *p* while *s\** disbelieves *p*, and if *s* has no independent reason to think that *s\** has made a performance error, then it is irrational for *s* not to suspend judgment on *p*.<sup>7</sup>

*Fine-Grained Conciliationism (FGC)*: For any persons *s* and *s\** and proposition *p*, if *s* realizes that *s\** is her peer with respect to *p* and that *s\**'s credence toward *p* is different from her own, and if *s* has no independent reason to think that *s\** has made a performance error, then it is irrational for *s* not to change her credence toward *p*.<sup>8</sup>

The first alleged connection between Uniqueness and Conciliationism is a support relation running from Uniqueness

<sup>1</sup> Some writers on Uniqueness have been concerned with the “coarse-grained” doxastic attitudes: belief, disbelief, and suspension of judgment. Others have focused on degrees of confidence (or “credences”).

<sup>2</sup> Feldman first formulated the thesis in a manuscript that would become (Feldman 2007). The first published appearance of the Uniqueness Thesis was in (White 2005), but Feldman's manuscript was temporally and causally prior to White's paper. For further discussion of the Uniqueness Thesis as it pertains to the epistemology of disagreement, see (Christensen 2007, 2009), (Kelly 2010), (Conee 2010), (Feldman and Warfield 2010), and (Ballantyne and Coffman forthcoming).

<sup>3</sup> “Epistemic peer” has a technical meaning in the recent literature on the epistemology of disagreement. On one of the most prominent construals, a person *s* and a person *s\** are “epistemic peers” relative to a proposition *p* if and only if *s* and *s\** are equally familiar with the evidence that is relevant to whether *p* is true and are equals with respect to the intellectual virtues (intelligence, reflectiveness, etc.) relevant to weighing the evidence for and against *p*. See (Kelly 2005) for discussion.

<sup>4</sup> A further condition is often included in statements of Conciliationism—namely, that the person has no reasons independent of the disagreement itself to suspect that it is her peer who is making a mistake (e.g. reasons for thinking that her peer inattentive or intoxicated). See (Feldman and Warfield 2010) for discussion.

<sup>5</sup> Alleged connections between the Uniqueness Thesis and Conciliationism are discussed in (Feldman 2007), (Christensen 2007, 2009), (Kelly 2010), and (Feldman and Warfield 2010).

<sup>6</sup> If it is stipulated only that “epistemic peers” have the same evidence relevant to the proposition under dispute, then a further step is needed to secure the same results. It must be assumed that a difference in evidence irrelevant to a proposition can make no difference in the attitudes which it is rational to take toward that proposition.

<sup>7</sup> See (Lackey 2008) for a similar formulation of Conciliationism (what she calls “conformism”).

<sup>8</sup> (Feldman 2006, 2007) advocates Coarse-Grained Conciliationism. (Christensen 2007) and (Elga 2007) advocate Fine-Grained Conciliationism.

ness to Conciliationism. (Feldman 2007) argues for CGU as an intermediate step in securing the truth of CGC. (Christensen 2007) argues for FGU as an intermediate step in securing the truth of FGC.

In both cases the idea is roughly as follows. Given the Uniqueness Thesis, it is guaranteed that when two peers disagree, at least one of them has responded irrationally to their shared evidence. With that in mind, I should not react complacently to the revelation that a peer disagrees with me, assuming that I have no independent reason for thinking it is my peer who has made the error. At least one of us has responded irrationally to our evidence, and I have no good reason for thinking that it isn't / who has done so. It would be hubristic of me to be unwilling to budge; I should suspend judgment on the matter, or at least readjust my credence toward the disputed proposition.

The second alleged connection between Uniqueness and Conciliationism is a commitment relation: it is alleged that proponents of Conciliationism are implicitly committed to the Uniqueness Thesis. (Kelly 2010) presses this claim as follows. If the Uniqueness Thesis were false, then there would be cases in which two peers are in a no-fault disagreement in which their evidence permits each of their doxastic attitudes toward the disputed proposition. If they realize that they are in such a disagreement, then the two peers have no reason to change their doxastic attitudes (by suspending judgment or decreasing credence). This would give us a counterexample to Conciliationism—a revealed peer disagreement in which the peers are not rationally required to conciliate. Thus, the Conciliationist is committed to denying that there can be such no-fault disagreements; the Conciliationist must endorse the Uniqueness Thesis.

### 3. Questioning the Support Relation

There are at least two problems for the idea that the Uniqueness Thesis provides support for Conciliationism. The first is that it is not clear whether the Uniqueness Thesis really contributes in any significant way to the line of reasoning which (Feldman 2007) and (Christensen 2007) use to support Conciliationism. The argument, once again, was that the Uniqueness Thesis guarantees that there is irrationality on the part of at least one of the parties to a peer disagreement, and that therefore a person who finds herself in a peer disagreement should suspend judgment or at least decrease her confidence. But is the Uniqueness Thesis really doing any work here?

Consider first the most obvious sort of coarse-grained peer disagreement: I believe a proposition that my peer disbelieves. When I find myself in such a disagreement with an epistemic peer, I know that one of the two of us has gone wrong (by believing something false), and I have no independent reason for thinking it isn't / who has gone wrong. This calls into question my doxastic attitude, and creates pressure to suspend judgment. But notice that the presence of *irrationality* plays no role in creating this pressure—the presence of *falsity* is enough.

When I find myself in fine-grained disagreement with a peer, neither of us need hold a false belief; we might both believe the proposition in question, but differ in our degree of confidence toward it. Nevertheless, if (as it is plausible to suppose) there is a unique degree to which a body of evidence supports or confirms a given proposition, then at least one of the parties to a fine-grained peer disagreement has failed to proportion her credence to her evi-

dence. The discovery of fine-grained disagreement with a peer thus creates pressure to change one's credence in an effort to achieve well-proportioned credence. Again, irrationality plays no role in creating the pressure to conciliate. While it is true that the Uniqueness Thesis guarantees the irrationality of one of the parties to a peer disagreement, it is by no means clear that this guarantee is playing any significant role in the case for Conciliationism.

A second problem for the idea that the Uniqueness Thesis supports Conciliationism is that the most prominent alternative to Conciliationism is quite compatible with the Uniqueness Thesis. (Kelly 2010) argues for the "Total Evidence View"—the view that "what is reasonable to believe depends on both the original, first-order evidence as well as on the higher-order evidence that is afforded by the fact that one's peers believe as they do."<sup>9</sup> Kelly allows that one's total evidence—first-order plus higher-order evidence—may always recommend a unique doxastic attitude toward any given proposition. But he insists (in opposition to Conciliationism) that there are cases in which the higher-order evidence gained from revelation of peer disagreement "effectively counts for nothing in virtue of being overwhelmed by the first-order considerations."<sup>10</sup> In such cases, the one doxastic attitude licensed by the person's total evidence may be the same as the attitude which she held before learning of the disagreement; no conciliation is required of her. It remains an open question, then, whether establishing the Uniqueness Thesis would be especially helpful in motivating Conciliationism.

### 4. Questioning the Commitment Relation

There is a good deal of plausibility in Kelly's argument that Conciliationism carries a commitment to Uniqueness. Why, after all, should I be required to conciliate if I know that I am in a no-fault peer disagreement in which my doxastic attitude is permitted by my evidence? And mustn't the Conciliationist affirm the Uniqueness Thesis in order to rule out such no-fault disagreements?

There is a problem for Kelly's argument, however. Suppose I learn that I am in a no-fault disagreement with a peer; I believe a proposition  $p$ , and my peer disbelieves  $p$ , though we have both responded rationally to our evidence. Despite the absence of irrationality, once I learn that I am in this situation, I have no good reason to favor  $p$  over its denial (assuming, as usual, that I have no independent reason to accuse my peer of a performance error). For I must admit that I am no more likely to have arrived at the truth concerning  $p$  than my peer is. But since I now have no good reason to favor  $p$  over its denial, I should adopt an attitude that is neutral between the two: I should suspend judgment.

Similarly in a case where I learn that I am in a no-fault fine-grained disagreement with a peer: I have credence  $c_1$  toward  $p$ , while my peer has a different credence  $c_2$  toward  $p$ . Once I learn that I am in this situation, I have no good reason to favor  $c_1$  toward  $p$  over  $c_2$  toward  $p$ . I should therefore be neutral between the two—perhaps by splitting the difference (adopting a credence that is the arithmetic mean between  $c_1$  and  $c_2$ ) or perhaps by adopting a "thick" or "indefinite" credence that is indifferent among  $c_1$ ,  $c_2$ , and all intermediate credences.<sup>11</sup> In any case, I should not dogmatically maintain credence  $c_1$  toward  $p$ ; I must conciliate in some way. In both the coarse-grained and fine-

<sup>9</sup> (Kelly 2010: 142).

<sup>10</sup> (Kelly 2010: 149).

<sup>11</sup> On the idea of a "thick" or "indefinite" credence, see (van Fraassen 1990), (Joyce 2005), and (Sturgeon 2010).



grained cases, the revelation of peer disagreement creates epistemic symmetry between one's original doxastic attitude and one's peer's attitude, and the refusal to conciliate is arguably irrational because it fails to respect such epistemic symmetries.<sup>12</sup>

## 5. Concluding Remarks

It is by no means clear, then, that the Uniqueness Thesis can play the role which epistemologists of disagreement have assigned to it, for the bearing of the Uniqueness Thesis on Conciliationism is not nearly as straightforward as has generally been supposed. Nevertheless, as I observed at the outset, the Uniqueness Thesis does bear immediately on the question whether peers can be in disagreement without irrationality. That is enough to guarantee the Uniqueness Thesis an important role in the epistemology of disagreement, even if it cannot play quite the role that it was thought to play.

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<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of the idea that credences should respect epistemic symmetries, see (White 2010).

# The Value of Knowledge and Intellectual Virtue

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## 1. Knowledge and true information

There is a difference between knowledge and information. It is significant and crucial, however few philosophers on the scope of epistemology are concerned about it. Linda Zagzebski was maybe the first one that pointed out the distinction of the two, although she did the job not by the way of clarifying the distinction of the two but to criticize any form of epistemological reliabilism (even all externalisms) in the way that these externalisms miss the point of what we said the nature or the virtue of knowledge per se. I think in one sense the nature or the virtue of knowledge Zagzebski referred indicates one value of knowledge our ordinary conversation and usage entailed, and this value distinguishes the meaning of knowledge from the meaning of true and justified information.

Obviously, "To know" is different to "be informed". For "to know", we have a motivation to reach certain propositions we thought are useful or meaningful to us, and we may relate these propositions with some others in a reasonable, perspective or systematic way; however, for "be informed", we just passively receive propositions or we gain certain propositions without much deliberation in which these propositions may be useful to us (no matter how reliable it is). The proposition "Wang collected 19 wins in both MLB 2006 and 2007" seems information but not knowledge to us, in the sense that we just collect this proposition and then exploit it to entertain our friends around us. However, in the case of I am a sport agent; "Wang collected 19 wins in both MLB 2006 and 2007" is surely knowledge but not just information to me, in the sense that I have a motivation to reach this proposition and figure out the relations between this and others to do my work best. I "know" that Wang collected 19 and remind the team to consider his contribution to the New York Yankee. The Yankee of course "knows" Wang's performance, I the sport agent remind the Yankee the fact of 19 just push the Yankee to reconsider this information seriously or tell them the significance of this information. What I want to tell them or remind them is what we said knowledge, not just information. Knowledge then has more elements than information does in our daily usage.

It is less direct that there exists a distinction between the proposition of knowledge and that of information. The content of the two may be totally the same, the difference of the two may be vague; but the distinction of the two is necessary, at least they have different meanings in our daily usage. I think the epistemic reliabilism or externalism is not capable to bring out that point. The result leads to reliabilism any proposition that is just the information be qualified as the knowledge. But we think intuitively that the value of knowledge is more than the value of information, therefore, we need a better account of the knowledge which we are favorable. Linda Zagzebski shows us the alternatives.

## 2. Reliabilism does not give sufficient conditions for knowledge

Zagzebski argues that any purely externalism of knowledge has an implication that what is valuable in an instance of knowledge is the value of the truth that is ac-

quired. For externalists, there are instances to show that the element which converts true belief into knowledge is not accessible to the consciousness of the believer. For example, chicken sexers who can identify the sex of a baby chicken often do their job reliably, even though they themselves are not aware of how they do it, and observers cannot find anything in their behavior that looks like a process. They just hold up the baby chick and then immediately know the answer. It comes to some philosophers such as Richard Foley that the chicken sexers have knowledge about the sex of the chicken. According to the externalist, the claim chicken sexers have knowledge is based on the reliability of their successful work to identify the sex of a baby chick; briefly speaking, their beliefs are produced by a reliable belief-producing mechanism.

Zagzebski admitted that there is something valuable in the ability to tell the sex of chicken: the *mechanism* for determining the sex of chicken. It is valuable because of its tendency to produce beliefs that are true; it is also valuable that chicken sexers usually *do their job well*. However, that chicken sexers do their job well has no additional value because of the *fact* that these were produced by their reliable mechanisms. She introduced an analogue to illustrate this point. Suppose there are mechanisms that always distribute goods fairly. These mechanisms are valuable because of their tendency to produce fair states of affairs. And now suppose further that some mechanism does reliably produce a fair state of affairs accidentally. She asked, is there anything more valuable in that state of affairs than there would have been if it had been produced accidentally? The answer is surely not. There is value in the fair state of affairs themselves. There is also value in the mechanism because of its reliability to produce fair outcomes. However, that state of affairs has no additional value because of the fact that it was produced by that mechanism. In other words, there is value in a true belief, and there is value in the reliable belief producing mechanism, but there is no further value in the fact that true belief was produced by the reliable mechanism. Therefore, she concluded, "Whatever it is that converts true belief into knowledge has value, it cannot be the fact that the belief is produced by a reliable belief-producing mechanism, because there is no value in that fact at all."(Zagzebski, 1996: 302)

It follows that it is not sufficient for the criterion of knowledge reliabilists may propose: knowledge is a true belief that produced by a reliable belief-producing mechanism. Something more should add to the list of criterion, and it is this "something" elicits our intuition that knowledge is more than true belief; knowledge is a more valuable state than true belief; the value of the knowing state is more than the value of the truth that is thereby possessed.

Then, what cause the value we intuitively perceive? She suggested "what is valuable over and above the fairness of the state of affairs itself is probably something about the connection between such a state and certain inner states of the agent, such as his motive in producing it and the fact that he acted intentionally". (1996: 303) The answer to Zagzebski is intellectual virtues. By Zagzebski, a virtue has a motivational component and a component of reliability in attaining the aims of the motivational component. For example, we may think benevolence is the virtue according

to which a person is characteristically motivated to bring about the well-being of others and is reliably successful in doing so. We may suggest that justice is the virtue according to which a person is characteristically motivated to respect others as persons and is reliably successful in treating them that way. Therefore, intellect virtues have the motivation for knowledge and can be reliably success in doing so, and we can find some virtues qualify these criteria. "Open-mindedness"; "wholeheartedness" and "responsibility" Dewey (1933) once suggested are ideals of intellectual virtue.

Intellectual virtues in one view are innate faculties or acquired habits that enable a person to arrive at truth and avoid error in some relevant field. For example: accurate perception; reliable memory, and various kinds of good reasoning. On the other view, intellectual virtues are more like personality traits than cognitive abilities or powers. The instance is the intellectual courage; this is a trait of mind that allows one to persevere in one's idea. I will not explore the concept of intellectual virtue too far. We just find that epistemic reliabilism and any form of externalism are not capable of bring out the value of knowledge. Propositions satisfying conditions of reliabilism cannot bring out the nature or value we think knowledge has. Suppose Apple Daily is a reliable newspaper that always reports news from reliable source and impartial editors. A 16 years old young girl who fully memorizes the materials Apple Daily offers, such as what dress Britney Spears puts on or the direction Lindsay Lohan's car go towards. She believes what Apple says, and beliefs she hold are true and justified by reliabilist's way. Would we admit that 16 years old young girl is a girl of much knowledge? Of course not. What she learned or memorized is true information (as I can find a term to represent what meaning comes from the criteria of epistemic reliabilism), but not knowledge. Let us review the claim of generic reliabilism:

A belief B (p) is epistemically justified for S if and only if B (p) is the outcome of a sufficiently reliable cognitive process, i.e., a process that is sufficiently truth-conducive.<sup>1</sup>

The justification of a belief by a reliably truth-conducive mechanism is acceptable. But there miss something that can transfer true, accepted and justified belief into knowledge. The meaning of a true, accepted and justified belief is just like the meaning of true information. It lacks positive motivation or whatsoever, that we call intellectual virtue. Intellectual virtue then seems an important component leads true belief or information into knowledge we are favorable. Zagzebski then defines knowledge in terms of intellectual virtue: "Knowledge is a state of belief arising out of acts of intellectual virtue." (Zagzebski, 1996: 271) She also gives a definition of the acts of intellectual virtue:

An act of intellectual virtue A is an act that arises from the motivational component of A, is something a person with virtue A would (probably) do in the circumstances, is successful in achieving the end of the A motivation, and is such that the agent acquires a true belief through these features of the act. (Zagzebski, 270)

### 3. Moral models of intellectual virtue are too strong for knowledge

According to John Greco, Zagzebski's account of the intellectual virtue has four features: (a) the intellectual virtue are understood as acquired traits of character, (b) their acquisition is partly under our control, (c) both their possession and exercise are appropriate objects of moral praise, and (d) both their lack and non-exercise can be appropriate objects of moral blame. (Greco, 2002: 295) Hence Greco distinguished Zagzebski and Montmarquet's account of intellectual virtue from Ernest Sosa's perspective and called the former the moral model of intellectual virtue<sup>2</sup>. He argues that all moral model of intellectual virtue are too strong for the account of knowledge.

Greco tried to offer a case to elicit our intuition. The case is about perceptual knowledge: You are crossing the street in good light, you look to your left, and you see that a large truck is moving quickly toward you. It would seem that you know that there is a truck moving toward you independently of any control, either over the ability to perceive such things in general, or over this particular exercise of that ability. Neither is it required that one have a motivation to be open-minded, careful and the like. On the contrary, it would seem that you know that there is a truck coming toward you even if you are motivated not to be open-minded, careful, or the like. (Greco, 2002: 296)

I can't get the point why what I've just seen suddenly becomes my knowledge. Following this thought, the man who lives longer, sleeps lesser, has a reliable perceptual faculty, and undoubtedly accepts all what he just perceived could be the most knowledgeable man in the world, even he fooled around all the day and night. What I have seen should be useful materials for me to handle, or we can say what I have seen becomes true information in reserve for me to use. Only after our active deliberation of true information or materials can we acquire real knowledge in the sense we are favorable.

Greco's version of virtual epistemology is agent reliabilism. He argues that knowledge is true belief produced by the intellectual virtues of the believer, where intellectual virtues are understood to be reliable cognitive abilities or powers, not personal traits and the like Zagzebski advocates. However, if we admit that knowledge is more than true belief, or we think it is necessary to distinguish knowledge from true information, then it is unavoidable to introduce the notion of intellectual virtues in certain moral model Greco didn't like.

### 4. Knowledge and information

I think the meaning of knowledge which satisfies reliabilism's criteria is much like the meaning of true and justified information in our daily usage. However, if we agree that the meaning of knowledge should be much more superior or abundant than that of true information, than we should reconsider the definition of knowledge that reliabilism offers. Undeniably, there are some defects in virtue epistemology; however, in terms of the nature or the value of knowledge, virtue epistemology may provide a better account than others.

<sup>1</sup> Many philosophers use this definition, for example, John Greco, "Virtues in Epistemology", *The Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*; David Armstrong, *Belief, Truth and Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press, 1973); Fred Dretske, "Conclusive Reasons," *Australasian Journal of philosophy* 49(1971).

<sup>2</sup> Another version of intellectual virtue is Ernest Sosa's perspective. He thinks an intellectual virtue is a reliable cognitive ability or power. Coherence-seeking reason is thus an intellectual virtue if reliable, but so are perception, memory, and introspection.

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# Interdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit: Ein Fall für die Theorie des Impliziten Wissens?

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Die Erstellung einer digitalen Edition bedarf einer engen interdisziplinären Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Geisteswissenschaft und der Informationstechnologie. Auf den ersten Blick erscheint der Schritt der Erstellung digitaler Edition nur ein leichtes Umdenken vom Papier zum Bildschirm zu fordern. Er entpuppt sich später aber als viel schwieriger und größer als angenommen. Während der Edition Wittgensteins Korrespondenz wird gerade beim Umgang mit Metadaten offensichtlich, dass Editor/innen und Techniker/innen zwar mit denselben Materialien (Metadaten) arbeiten, aber ihr Verständnis davon unterschiedlich ist.

In diesem Beitrag wollen wir unter der Verwendung der Theorie des Impliziten Wissens zu ergründen versuchen, weshalb es zu diesem Unterschied kommt. Es zeigt sich, die Editor/innen haben bei der Erstellung einer digitalen Edition mehr die Leser/innen im Blickfeld, während die Informatiker/innen das Funktionieren der Programme zum Ziel haben.

## 1. Bestandsaufnahme

Wenn man sich mit einer digitalen Edition beschäftigt und auch (Archiv-)Materialien zu verwalten hat, dann begegnet man früher oder später dem Problem der *Metadaten*. Grundsätzlich sind Metadaten Informationen auf der Metaebene, die etwas auf der Objektebene unter einer gewissen Rücksicht beschreiben. Beispiele für Metadaten umfassen „Titel eines Buches“, „Seitenzahl eines Artikels“, „Dargestellte auf einem Foto“, „Absender eines Briefs“, „Dateiformat eines digitalen Bildes“ oder „XML-Vokabel für die Speicherung von Metadaten“. Bereits an den Beispielen soll erkennbar sein, dass ein Datensatz in einer Metadatenammlung immer aus drei Teilen besteht: Das Subjekt (*subject*), über das etwas ausgesagt wird, ein Prädikat (*predicate*), was traditionell der Paragrafenzahl in den *Regeln für alphabetische Katalogisierung* (RAK; siehe: Kommission des Deutschen Bibliotheksinstituts für Alphabetische Katalogisierung 1983) entspricht und die Rücksicht bezeichnet, unter der das Subjekt betrachtet wird, und das Objekt (*object*), welches die eigentliche Information darstellt. (W3C 2004) Ein vollständiges Beispiel wäre demnach: „Dieses Buch hat den Titel ‚Kritik der reinen Vernunft‘.“ Hierbei bezeichnet „dieses Buch“ das Subjekt, „hat den Titel“ das Prädikat und „Kritik der reinen Vernunft“ das Objekt.

Die Verwaltung und Zur-Verfügung-Stellung der Metadaten, was früher die Zettelkataloge in Bibliothek geleistet haben, werden heute weitgehend von Computern übernommen. Hierfür scheint der digitale Rechner geradezu ideal zu sein: Er kann in wenigen Sekunden Millionen von Datensätzen durchblättern und jene für uns herausfinden, die bestimmte Anforderungen erfüllen. Hierzu geben wir dem Computer ein Befehl, das beispielsweise so lauten könnte: „Suche Subjekte von jenen Datensätzen heraus, die das Prädikat ‚hat den Titel‘ haben und bei denen das Objekt ‚Kritik der reinen Vernunft‘ lautet; suche dann jene Datensätze, die diese Subjekte als Subjekte haben und bei denen das Prädikat ‚Standort‘ heißt und gib von ihnen die Objekte heraus.“ Mit diesem Befehl finden wir die

Standorte aller Bücher, die mit „Kritik der reinen Vernunft“ betitelt werden.

Die Subjekte können bestimmten Typen (z.B. „Buch“, oder „digitales Foto“) zugeordnet werden, und die Typen legen dann die Prädikate fest, welche von dem einzelnen Subjekt ausgesagt werden. Während sich die Prädikate bei dem Typ „Buch“ relativ leicht strukturieren lassen (siehe RAK bzw. MAB; Altenhöner 2009), ist die Ordnung der Metadaten in einer digitalen Briefedition, wie sie *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Gesamtbriefwechsel* (Wittgenstein o.J.) darstellt, komplizierter. Diese Metadaten stellen sowohl Editor/innen als auch Techniker/innen vor Problemen, deren Lösung eine enge interdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit beider Wissenschaftszweige verlangt. Im Folgenden möchten wir diese Schwierigkeiten anhand zweier Beispiele veranschaulichen.

1) *Im Gesamtbriefwechsel gibt es „atypische“ Materialien, deren Metadaten sich nicht einfach in ein gängiges Schema einordnen lassen.*

Der Brief #b1939\_04\_01\_von\_AdrianED<sup>1</sup> ist ein Schreiben von E. D. Adrian an Ludwig Wittgenstein, das Wittgenstein, mit einem Postscript versehen, an Piero Sraffa weitergeschickt hat. Normalerweise hat ein Brief einen oder mehreren Absender und einen oder mehreren Empfänger. Die Editor/innen befürchten, dass die Metadaten, wenn sie ohne weitere Qualifizierung eingegeben werden, besagen würden, dass Adrian und Wittgenstein diesen Brief gemeinsam verfasst und an Wittgenstein und Sraffa geschickt hätten. Für die Techniker/innen stellt dieser Umstand jedoch kein Problem dar, da die Suchoperationen ohne Fehler laufen und der Computer trotz semantischer Ungenauigkeit der Metadaten in der Lage ist, alle Briefe an Sraffa und alle Briefe von Adrian aufzulisten. Nach der Meinung der Techniker/innen muss die Information, dass dieser Brief weitergeleitet worden ist, nicht in die Metadatenammlung aufgenommen werden.

2) *Wichtige Metadaten „stecken“ im Briefformat und gehören daher nicht zu den Metadaten eines Briefs, sollen aber dennoch beschrieben und zugänglich gemacht werden.* Es ist selbstverständlich, dass Personennamen für digitale Editionen besonders wichtig sind. Wenn man beispielsweise wissen will, wie Wittgenstein über Frank Ramsey dachte, so sollte man auch jene Briefe lesen, in denen Ramsey zwar weder Absender noch Empfänger ist aber dennoch erwähnt wird. Während „Absender“ und „Empfänger“ zu den gängigen Metadaten eines Briefs zählen, gehört die Information, dass im Brief von Wittgenstein an seine Schwester Hermine (#b1923\_09\_30\_an\_WittgensteinHermine) auf Ramsey verwiesen wird, nicht zu den Metadaten dieses Briefs. Um diese Information dennoch in die Metadaten aufzunehmen haben die Techniker/innen zuerst vorgeschlagen, ein eigenes Prädikat „erwähnt die folgenden Personen“ zu definieren und die Briefe damit zu beschreiben. Für die Editor/innen aber stellen Informationen dieser Art keine Metadaten im engeren Sinne dar, sondern sind vielmehr Einzelstellenkommentare, die den Leser/innen das Verständnis für die Lektüre erleichtern sollen.

<sup>1</sup> Die Briefe aus dem Wittgenstein o.J. werden mit seiner ID zitiert.

## 2. Die Theorie des Impliziten Wissens

Die Theorie des Impliziten Wissens, von der hier ausgegangen wird, basiert grundsätzlich auf der, die Janik, Seekircher und Markowitsch im Theorieteil ihres Werkes (Janik, Seekircher, Markowitsch 2000) ausgearbeitet haben. Sie stützen sich dabei in erster Linie auf Michael Polanyi und Ludwig Wittgenstein, und haben ihre Theorien für unsere Zwecke fruchtbarer gemacht.

Polanyi war es, der mit seinem Artikel „Tacit Knowing“ (Polanyi 1962) die Theorie des Impliziten Wissens zu einem nicht mehr ignorierbaren Thema machte. Diese Theorie ist auch das Thema Polanyis Hauptwerks *Personal Knowledge* (Polanyi 1978). In diesem Beitrag soll in erster Linie nur das berücksichtigt werden, was für die interdisziplinäre Arbeit von Interesse ist. Eines der zentralen Momente in der Theorie des Impliziten Wissens ist das der *Verinnerlichung*. Nach Polanyie liegt dann implizites Wissen vor, wenn wir etwas verinnerlicht haben. Der Gebrauch eines Stockes durch eine blinde Person oder des Hammers durch einen Handwerker sind Parade-Beispiele für implizites Wissen, wobei dieses Wissen sprachlich nicht immer fassbar sein muss. (Vgl. Janik, Seekircher, Markowitsch 2000, 8ff.) Bemerkenswert ist vor allem, dass das implizite Wissen nicht nur „praktisches Wissen“, sondern das gesamte Spektrum, was als Wissen bezeichnet wird, bis hin zu den rein geistigen Tätigkeiten, abdeckt. Auch in der Mathematik muss man beispielsweise Fertigkeiten erlernen, die nicht rein aus Büchern bezogen werden können, sondern als etwas „Praktisches“ gelernt werden müssen. (Vgl. Janik, Seekircher, Markowitsch (2000), 15) Wichtig in dieser Hinsicht ist auch der *Wissenserwerb*. Wie bereits angedeutet wurde, ist das implizite Wissen in den meisten Fällen nicht sprachlich kommunizierbar. Gerade deshalb ist die Wissensweitergabe von Lehrer/innen zu Schüler/innen so wichtig, weil die „traditionelle Lehrform [...] also impliziten Wissen weitaus näher als die heutige schulische Lernform [kommt.]“ (Janik, Seekircher, Markowitsch 2000, 7f)

Es gibt in der Geschichte immer wieder solche Unterscheidungen, die das implizite Wissen gegenüber aussprechbarem, explizitem Wissen hervorheben. Die älteste davon dürfte die Unterscheidung zwischen der Kunst (*techné*) und Wissenschaft (*epistémé*) sein, die seit der Antike bekannt ist. Natürlich ist bei dieser Unterscheidung hier nicht das gleiche wie jene zwischen dem impliziten und expliziten Wissen gemeint. Dennoch scheint die Theorie des Impliziten Wissens grundsätzlich recht vertraut. Wir kennen im Alltag auch das Phänomen des „Abschauens“: Das Radfahren oder das Binden der Schuhe sind Beispiele für jene Tätigkeiten, die wir durch das Abschauchen gelernt haben. Man erinnert sich auch an den Musikunterricht, wo man nicht einfach sagen kann, wie dieses oder jenes Crescendo zu klingen hat. Sondern die Lehrer/innen müssen es vorgespielt, gezeigt haben, damit die Schüler/innen diese Spielweise verstehen. Zwar kann man das Crescendo-Spielen auch erklären, aber nur dann wird diese Erklärung verständlich, wenn sich die Schüler/innen etwas darunter vorstellen können, also nur dann, wenn es bereits einmal gezeigt worden ist.

Vermutlich im Sprachunterricht wird auch ein nicht geringer Teil durch das Vorzeigen und Abschauchen vermittelt. Diese These scheint *prima facie* nicht intuitiv zu sein, aber für die Übersetzung aus dem Lateinischen ins Deutsche kann man am Übersetzungsprozess so etwas wie das Aneignen eines „Stils“ beobachten, den von den Lehrer/innen zu den Schüler/innen durch das Vorzeigen und Nachahmen, aber nicht durch das Lesen der Übersetzungen übertragen wird. Bei den so genannten lebendigen

Sprachen ist dieses Phänomen natürlich um einiges einfacher zu beobachten.

## 3. Verschiedene Umgang mit Metadaten

Wenn die *Verinnerlichung* das wichtigste Moment des Wissenserwerbs ist und wenn das Vorzeigen und das Nachmachen die wesentlichen Faktoren hierbei sind, dann ist es sehr plausibel zu sagen, dass die Art, wie das Wissen weitergegeben wird, das implizite Wissen selbst prägt. In Handwerksberufen scheint das ganz klar der Fall zu sein: Wer bei einem Lehrmeister A gelernt hat, wendet die Methode von A an, auch wenn es andere und vielleicht sogar bessere Methoden gibt, um das gleiche Ziel zu erreichen. Bei den Musiker/innen ist das noch viel offensichtlicher. Anhand der Interpretation ist es den erfahrenen Hörer/innen möglich, dass sie eine Aufnahme des Donauwalzers der Wiener Schule korrekt zuschreiben. Dass jemand einen Walzer nach der Wiener Schule dirigiert, kommt wohl daher, dass er selbst in die Wiener Schule eingeführt worden ist.

Nicht anders ist es bei der Editionswissenschaft, und dort vor allem bei einer interdisziplinären Zusammenarbeit. Während des Studiums lernen Techniker/innen in ihrem praktischen Ausbildungsteil hauptsächlich, Programme zu schreiben, die „funktionieren“. Aber der Blick liegt hauptsächlich auf dem Quellcode – das heißt, es geht um Konsistenz, aber auch um Begriffe wie „Eleganz“ und „Einfachheit“. Man ist dann eine gute Informatikerin, ein guter Informatiker, wenn man es schafft, schnelle, effiziente Scripts zu schreiben, die vor allem formalen Kriterien genügen. Dadurch, dass man für gewöhnlich als Informatiker/in in vielen Bereichen eingesetzt werden soll, ist eine inhaltliche Ausrichtung mehr oder weniger sekundär – auch die Lehrenden der Informatik bilden für gewöhnlich nicht in einer Sparte aus, sondern wollen Universalist/innen heranzüchten, die mit ihrem Werkzeug perfekt umgehen können.

Bei den Editor/innen verhält es sich auch bereits in ihrer ganzen Schulung anders. Auch wenn sich ihre Ausbildung ebenfalls sehr theoretisch ist, wird eine Trennung nie vollzogen: Jede Person, die an einer Edition arbeitet, ist immer auch jemand, der rezipiert. Auch die Lehrenden sind, schon allein in dem Augenblick, in dem sie beurteilen, Rezipient/innen. Es ist hier immer eine unmittelbare Rückkoppelung zwischen beiden Ebenen gegeben. Weiters besteht ein praktischer Unterschied auch schon im Werkzeug selber: bis dato arbeiteten Editoren/innen so, dass es keine Trennung gab zwischen dem, was und wie sie schreiben, und was die Konsument/innen sehen. Die Arbeit ist einem immer vor Augen. Dass die durch die digitale Technik aufgehoben wird, wird meist übersehen. Vor diesem Hintergrund sind die zwei Schwierigkeiten im Umgang mit Metadaten zu erläutern.

Der weitergeleitete Brief von Adrian an Wittgenstein und später von Wittgenstein an Sraffa ist aus der Sicht der *Datenverarbeitung* ein Problem, das nur durch einen tiefen Eingriff in die Datenstruktur behoben werden kann. Da der Nutzen daraus wohl gering ist, plädieren die Techniker/innen für die Beibehaltung der Datenstruktur. Für die Editor/innen stellen die Metadaten aber ein Verzeichnis der Briefe dar, und da ein Verzeichnis nicht ungenau sein darf, verlangen sie von den Metadaten, dass diese zumindest eine ähnliche Genauigkeit aufweisen wie ihr (vermeintlicher) Pendant einer Print-Ausgabe.

Im Falle von Metadaten, die im Text „stecken“, verhalten sich die Editor/innen und die Techniker/innen auch ihren

Gewohnheiten entsprechend. Wenn in einem Brief eine Person erwähnt wird, dann wird das in einer Print-Ausgabe in die Personenregister aufgenommen. Diese Register dient den Forscher/innen dazu, die Textstellen, für die sie sich interessieren, schneller ausfindig zu machen. Und so denken sie, dass es Metadaten geben müsste, die dem Personenregister entsprechend aufgenommen werden. Für die Techniker/innen, die bei Metadaten (fast) immer an dreistellige Relationen denken, muss für diesen Umstand daher ein neues Prädikat eingeführt werden.

#### 4. Konklusion

Bei der Erstellung und Verwaltung von Metadaten ist interdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit notwendig, die dadurch erschwert werden, dass das Wissen um Metadaten bei unterschiedlichen Disziplinen unterschiedlich ist, denn der implizite Anteil dieses Wissens wird durch ihre Ausbildung wesentlich geprägt. Die Hoffnung ist, wenn man in der Lage ist, diesen impliziten Anteil des Wissens irgendwie explizit oder kommunizierbar zu machen, die interdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit besser funktioniert. Allerdings gibt es auch auf Seiten der einzelnen Disziplinen Ansätze, wie man gewissen Fallen entgegen kann. So versuchen etwa Programmierer/innen, gerade wenn es um die sogenannten Usability geht, ihre Programme nicht mehr selbst zu testen, sondern dieses Prozedere auszulagern.

Aber auch die Editoren/innen müssen versuchen, in der Aufarbeitung der Daten bereits Möglichkeiten und Beschränkungen der Technik zu antizipieren, was nur in

einem intensiven Dialog geschehen kann. Es ist zwar nicht davon auszugehen, dass durch die Kommunikation der impliziten Anteile des Wissens aus einer Editorin eine Technikerin wird, aber das Verständnis für das Anliegen der Kolleg/innen aus anderen Disziplinen hilft sicher bei der Zusammenarbeit.

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# Discrete Mathematical Representing the Value of Knowledge

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In contemporary epistemology the notions “knowledge” and “belief” are considered as propositional attitudes: the formal-logic interconnections between them are studied [Hintikka 1962; 1974]. However it is interesting to make a *complement* to this approach by investigating the *moral-legal value* of knowledge and belief.

To explicate their *moral-legal value*, I use the basic mathematical ethics — two-valued algebra of good and evil (algebra of formal ethics) [Lobovikov 2009; 2009a; 2009b; 2010]. This algebra is based upon the set of acts. By definition, acts are such operations, which are either good, or bad ones. Algebraic operations defined on the set of acts are moral-legal-evaluation functions. Variables of these functions take their values from the set  $\{g, b\}$ . The functions take their values from the same set. Symbols  $g$  and  $b$  stand for moral values of acts: “good” and “bad” respectively. The symbols:  $x$  and  $y$  stand for moral-legal forms of acts. Elementary moral-legal-act forms — independent variables. Compound moral-legal-act forms — moral-legal evaluation-functions of these variables. The *formal-ethical-equivalence* relation between the moral-legal-act forms  $\omega$  and  $\beta$  is defined as follows:  $\omega$  and  $\beta$  are *formally-ethically equivalent* (this is represented by the symbol  $\omega \equiv \beta$ ) if and only if they have identical moral-legal values under any possible combination of moral-legal values of the variables. In the natural language the relation “ $\equiv$ ” is expressed by the words-*homonyms* “is”, “means”, “implies”, etc.

In the indicated algebra, let us introduce and define the *epistemic* operations as moral-legal evaluation-functions (determined by two variables) by means of the below glossary and evaluation-table, where the words “episteme” and “doxa” are used in the ancient Greek meanings.

The *glossary for the following table 1*: Below the symbol  $K^E xy$  stands for the moral-legal evaluation function “ $x$ ’s knowledge (episteme) of  $y$ ” or “making  $y$  a knowledge (episteme) of (for)  $x$ ”. The symbol  $A^E xy$  stands for “making  $y$  admissible (assumable) as episteme for  $x$ ” or “making  $y$  an assumption (hypothesis) of (for)  $x$ ”.  $N^A xy$  stands for “making  $y$  inadmissible (not assumable) as episteme for  $x$ ”.  $N^S xy$  — “ $y$ ’s being not-a-knowledge (not-an-episteme), but ignorance of (for)  $x$ ”.  $D^E xy$  — “ $y$ ’s epistemic neutrality (epistemic indifference) for  $x$ ” or “ $y$ ’s being an opinion (doxa) of (for)  $x$ ”.  $R^E xy$  — “ $y$ ’s being epistemically not-neutral, principled for  $x$ ”.  $K^S yx$  stands for “ $y$ ’s empirical (scientific) knowledge of  $x$ ”. The above-mentioned evaluation-functions are precisely defined by the following table 1.

Table 1. Epistemic binary moral-legal evaluation-functions

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
$x$	$y$	$K^E xy$	$A^E xy$	$N^A xy$	$N^S xy$	$D^E xy$	$R^E xy$	$K^S yx$
$g$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$b$
$g$	$b$	$b$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$b$
$b$	$g$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$b$	$b$	$g$	$g$
$b$	$b$	$b$	$b$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$b$

This evaluation-table gives a possibility precisely to formulate the formal-ethical relationship between the two above-defined types of knowledge: the absolute knowledge (episteme), which is immutable one; and the relative knowledge (empirical one), which undergoes permanent

change. At the level of algebra under review, It is easy to see that from the formal-ethical viewpoint, the two knowledge types (evaluation-functions) are formally-ethically equivalent. In exploited algebra this formal-ethical identity of the two knowledge-types is represented by the following equation.

$$1) K^E xy \equiv K^S yx. \text{ (It is worth emphasizing that in the left and right parts of the equation, } x \text{ and } y \text{ are located differently.)}$$

As to the epistemic logic, there is no formal-logical equivalence between the corresponding statements concerning episteme and experience-knowledge. However there is no real formal-logical inconsistency. (Below I shall demonstrate this by means of a precise formulation of the principle called “Hume’s Guillotine”.) Now let us introduce and define “*belief*” and “*doubt*” as moral-legal evaluation-functions by the below glossary and evaluation-table.

The *glossary for the following table 2*: Below the symbol  $B^F xy$  stands for the moral-legal evaluation-function “ $x$ ’s proper belief, faith (not-revisable, extraordinary one) in  $y$ ”. The symbol  $D^N xy$  stands for “ $x$ ’s doubt, being non-convinced in *not-y*”.  $B^N xy$  stands for “ $x$ ’s proper belief, faith (not-revisable, extraordinary one) in *not-y*”.  $D^T xy$  — “ $x$ ’s doubt, distrust in  $y$ ”.  $S^C xy$  — “ $x$ ’s absolute skepticism (faith neutrality, belief indifference) in relation to  $y$ ”. [In other words,  $S^C xy$  means “ $x$ ’s uniting doubt in  $y$  and doubt in *not-y*”.]  $B^S xy$  — “ $y$ ’s being fideistically principled for  $x$ ” or “non-being of  $y$ ’s faith-neutrality, (belief-indifference) for  $x$ ”.  $B^O yx$  stands for “ $y$ ’s ordinary belief (revisable one) in  $x$ ”. The above-mentioned moral-legal evaluation-functions determined by two variables are precisely defined by the following table 2.

Table 2. Binary moral-legal evaluation-functions “belief” and “doubt”

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
$x$	$y$	$B^F xy$	$D^N xy$	$B^N xy$	$D^T xy$	$S^C xy$	$B^S xy$	$B^O yx$
$g$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$b$
$g$	$b$	$b$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$b$
$b$	$g$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$b$	$b$	$g$	$g$
$b$	$b$	$b$	$b$	$g$	$g$	$b$	$g$	$b$

The evaluation-table 2 gives a possibility precisely to formulate the formal-ethical relationship between the two above-defined types of beliefs: the revisable and the not-revisable (respectively, the ordinary and the extraordinary) ones. The extraordinary absolute faith (confession) is immutable, not-revisable one; but the ordinary relative belief (empirically grounded, revisable one) undergoes permanent change. From the logical empiricism viewpoint, the difference is evident. Nevertheless, at the level of exploited algebra, it is easy to see that from the formal-axiological viewpoint, the two belief-types (moral-legal evaluation-functions) are formally-axiologically equivalent. In algebra under consideration, this formal-ethical identity of the two (performatively different) belief-types is represented by the following equation.

$$2) B^F xy \equiv B^O yx. \text{ (It is worth emphasizing that in the left and right parts of the equation, } x \text{ and } y \text{ are located differently.)}$$

Here it is worth mentioning that, in the epistemic logic, there is no formal-logical equivalence between the corre-



sponding statements concerning revisable (ordinary) and not-revisable (extraordinary) beliefs. However, there is no real formal-logical inconsistency between the formal logic and the formal ethics. To show this convincingly it is necessary to have a precise formal definition of the so-called “Hume’s Guillotine”. (Such a formulation is given below.) Also precise defining “Hume’s Guillotine” is necessary for eliminating illusions of paradoxes, which naturally appear in relation to the following equations.

- 3)  $K^E xy = + = B^F xy$ : knowledge (as episteme) is not-revisable belief and not-revisable belief is knowledge (as episteme); the two are equivalent.
- 4)  $A^E xy = + = D^N xy$ : assuming means doubting in the contrary; assumption is non-being of belief in the contrary.
- 5)  $N^A xy = + = B^N xy$ : not-assuming means non-being of doubt in the contrary; not-assuming is belief in the contrary.
- 6)  $N^K xy = + = D^T xy$ : non-being of knowledge (as episteme) is doubt; doubt is non-being of knowledge (as episteme); ignorance (non-being of knowledge) is non-being of belief.
- 7)  $D^E xy = + = S^C xy$ : opinion (as doxa) implies skepticism and skepticism implies opinion (as doxa).
- 8)  $R^E xy = + = B^P xy$ : non-being of epistemic indifference (epistemic neutrality) is equivalent to non-being of faith-indifference (faith-neutrality).
- 9)  $K^S yx = + = B^R yx$ : empirical (in particular, scientific) knowledge is ordinary (revisable) belief, and ordinary (revisable) belief is empirical (scientific) knowledge; the two are equivalent. (Here it is worth emphasizing that the order of variables in the equation 9 is different from the one in equations 3-8.)

From the viewpoint of ordinary language intuition it is easy to see that, concerning the above equations 1-9, striking psychological impressions of paradoxes naturally arise. However these impressions of paradoxes are linguistic-psychological *illusions* of formal-logic inconsistency. To demonstrate this statement (exterminating the paradox illusions) it is necessary to use a special formal principle. Let us call that special formal principle “Hume’s Guillotine”. Obviously, *this naming is conventional*: David Hume did not formulate the principle in such a way. However there is some particular but important connection with that very small part of text of David Hume’s “Treatise of Human Nature”, which is called “Hume’s Guillotine”. The formal principle submitted in this paper is a result of significant reinterpretation, explication and generalization of that traditional interpretation and vague natural-language formulation of “David Hume’s Guillotine”, which can be found in literature. The here-submitted precise symbolic-language formulation of the formal principle under consideration is the following.

Let @x stand for an act of informing (true or false affirming) that x takes place in reality. The “Guillotine” may be formulated as the following rule (A—B):

(A) From the truth of  $x = + = y$  it does not follow logically that the logical equivalence of @x and @y is true;

(B) From the truth of the logical equivalence of @x and @y it does not follow logically that  $x = + = y$  is true.

The above-mentioned linguistic illusion of the “paradoxical” character of the identity sentences 1-9 is destroyed by the rule (A—B). This rule is an explication of a hitherto unknown aspect of “Hume’s Guillotine” (in its wide sense). I mean the mutual logical autonomy of corresponding facts and values (propositions and evaluations). The rule (A—B) can be universalized in the following way. Let us call this generalization “the rule (Y—Z)”;:

(Y) From  $x = + = y$  it does not logically follow that (@xΨ @y), where the symbol “Ψ” stands for any element of the set of all *binary* formal logical operations;

(Z) From (@xΨ @y) it does not logically follow that  $x = + = y$ , where the symbol “Ψ” stands for any element of the set of all *binary* formal logical operations.

The initial variant of “Hume’s Guillotine” (in its narrow, i.e. purely deontic, normative, sense) may be precisely formulated as follows. Rule (D), in which the symbol “O’x” stands for “*obligatoriness* of x’:

D-1) from @O’x it does not logically follow that @x;

D-2) from @x it does not logically follow that @O’x.

A hitherto unknown maximal generalization of the initial variant of “Hume’s Guillotine” may be precisely formulated, as follows. Rule (Q), in which the symbol “£” stands for any element of the set of all *unary* operations of the formal-ethics algebra:

Q-1) from @(£)x it does not logically follow that @x;

Q-2) from @x it does not logically follow that @(£)x.

By means of the above-formulated precise formal rules it is easy to dissolve the illusion that the above-presented formal-axiological equations 1-9 are paradoxical. The equivalences 1-9 are not formal-logical equivalences of facts (independent from evaluations) but formal-ethical equivalences of moral-legal evaluation-functions (independent from facts).

Precisely to formulate a hitherto unknown formal-ethical law of contraposition of knowledge it is necessary to introduce and define some *unary* operations of algebra of formal ethics. Let us do this by the following glossary and table.

*The glossary for the following table 3:* Below the symbol  $B^1x$  stands for the moral-legal evaluation function “being, existence of x”. (The upper index 1 informs that the function is determined by one variable.)  $N^1x$  stands for the moral-legal evaluation-function “non-being, non-existence of x”.  $M^1x$  – the moral-legal-evaluation-function “matter, material-ness, material-body of x”.  $I^1x$  – “immaterialness, immaterial-body of x”.  $F^1x$  – “finiteness, finite-body of x”.  $U^1x$  – “infiniteness, infinite-body of x”.  $E^1x$  – “knowledge (as an episteme) of (what, whom) x”.  $K^1x$  – “x’s knowledge (as an episteme)”.  $S^1x$  – “x’s empirical (scientific) knowledge”.  $Z^1x$  – “scientific (empirical) knowledge about x”.  $P^1x$  – “x’s power (might)”.  $Y^1x$  – “growth of x”.  $V^1x$  – “x’s sorrow”. These unary moral-legal evaluation-functions are defined by the following table 3.

Table 3. Unary moral-legal operations

x	$B^1x$	$N^1x$	$M^1x$	$I^1x$	$F^1x$	$U^1x$	$E^1x$	$K^1x$	$S^1x$	$Z^1x$	$P^1x$	$Y^1x$	$V^1x$
g	g	b	b	g	b	g	g	b	g	b	g	g	b
b	b	g	g	b	g	b	b	g	b	g	b	b	g

By means of the above-given definitions it is possible to demonstrate the following equations of algebra of formal ethics.

$$10) K^E xy = + = K^E M^1 y M^1 x \text{ (contraposition law).}$$

$$11) K^E xy = + = K^E F^1 y F^1 x \text{ (contraposition law).}$$

$$(DF-1) K^E M^1 y M^1 x = + = K^S yx \text{ (analytical definition of } K^S yx \text{).}$$

$$(DF-2) K^E F^1 y F^1 x = + = K^S yx \text{ (analytical definition of } K^S yx \text{).}$$

$$12) K^E xy = + = K^S yx \text{ (a hitherto unknown equivalence of the two } \textit{knowledge-kinds} \text{).}$$

Moreover as to the above-mentioned two *belief-kinds*, it is possible to demonstrate the following equations of algebra of formal ethics.

$$13) B^F xy = + = B^F M^1 y M^1 x \text{ (contraposition law).}$$

$$14) B^F xy = + = B^F F^1 y F^1 x \text{ (contraposition law).}$$

$$(DF-3) B^F M^1 y M^1 x = + = B^R yx \text{ (analytical definition of } B^R yx \text{).}$$

$$(DF-4) B^F F^1 y F^1 x = + = B^R yx \text{ (analytical definition of } B^R yx \text{).}$$

$$15) B^F xy = + = B^R yx \text{ (a hitherto unknown equivalence of the two } \textit{belief-kinds} \text{).}$$

Let us define the above-introduced *unary* epistemic operations ( $E^1 y$ ,  $K^1 x$ ,  $S^1 y$ ,  $Z^1 x$ ) *analytically*, i.e. by means of corresponding equations of algebra of formal ethics. The *unary* operations:  $E^1 y$ ,  $K^1 x$ ,  $S^1 y$ ,  $Z^1 x$  are obtained from the corresponding *binary* ones by substituting a constant moral value (g or b) for one of the two variables.)

$$(DF-5) E^1 y = + = K^E y \text{ [here } E^1 y \text{ stands for "knowledge (as an episteme) of (what, whom) } y \text{"].}$$

$$(DF-6) K^1 x = + = K^E xg \text{ [here } K^1 x \text{ stands for "x's knowledge as an episteme"].}$$

$$(DF-7) S^1 y = + = K^S yb \text{ [here } S^1 y \text{ stands for "y's empirical (scientific) knowledge"].}$$

$$(DF-8) Z^1 x = + = K^S gx \text{ [here } Z^1 x \text{ stands for scientific "(empirical) knowledge about } x \text{"].}$$

Thus the unary operations  $E^1 y$ ,  $K^1 x$  are particular cases of the binary one  $K^E xy$ . ( $S^1 y$ ,  $Z^1 x$  – particular cases of  $K^S yx$ .) Using the above definitions it is easy to prove the following equations.

$$16) E^1 y = + = B^1 y. \text{ knowledge (as an episteme) of (what, whom) } y \text{ is life (being) of } y.$$

$$17) K^1 x = + = N^1 x. \text{ x's knowledge (as an episteme) is death (non-being) of } x.$$

$$18) Z^1 x = + = N^1 x. \text{ scientific (empirical) knowledge about } x \text{ is death (non-being) of } x.$$

$$19) S^1 y = + = P^1 y. \text{ y's scientific (empirical) knowledge is y's power, might.}$$

$$20) Y^1 K^1 x = + = Y^1 V^1 x. \text{ increasing x's knowledge is increasing x's sorrow.}$$

$$21) Y^1 Z^1 x = + = Y^1 V^1 x. \text{ increasing scientific knowledge about } x \text{ is increasing x's sorrow.}$$

The mathematical representation of episteme and scientific (empirical) knowledge as *different* moral-legal-evaluation-functions makes up their logically consistent synthesis.

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# The Status of Knowledge-how

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## 1. Introduction

Gilbert Ryle (1945, 1949) prominently defended the intuitive distinction between knowledge-that and knowledge-how, between the theoretical knowledge that something is the case and the practical knowledge how to do something. Recently, this distinction has come under renewed scrutiny, in particular by critics of Ryle who argue that knowledge-how is merely a species of knowledge-that (e.g. Stanley & Williamson 2001).<sup>1</sup> This paper spells out an account of knowledge-how which is inspired by a Rylean insight largely neglected in the current debate, the idea that knowledge-how is a normative matter. I propose to model an account of knowledge-how in analogy to Robert Brandom's view of knowledge-that as a normative status (Brandom 1994, 201 ff.). This will allow me to make important distinctions between different forms of knowledge-how and to vindicate Ryle's claim that knowledge-how is "logically prior" to knowledge-that (Ryle 1945, 4).

## 2. Knowledge-that

Brandom's account of knowledge-that is developed within his framework of normative inferentialism. This includes the idea that we can arrive at an account of knowledge-that in terms of an account of *attributions* of knowledge-that. Further, Brandom holds that what would otherwise be taken to be an intentional state should instead be understood as a *normative status*. Ascribing knowledge-that is placing the ascriber within the space of reasons.

Brandom's account can be understood as a counterpart of the traditional JTB-model of knowledge-that, which holds that S knows that p just in case (1) S believes that p, (2) S is justified in believing that p, and (3) p is true.

On this basis, he shows that the kind of status attributed when attributing knowledge-that is both "complex" and "hybrid" (1994, 201). That is, it requires two *modally* distinct normative *statuses*, commitment and entitlement, as well as two *socially* distinct *attitudes*, attributing and undertaking a normative status: Attributing a justified belief is understood as attributing both a commitment and an entitlement to that commitment. And saying that "p" is true is just undertaking a commitment to "p" oneself.

Thus, corresponding to the three conditions of the JTB-model, the idea is that S1 attributes knowledge that p to S2 just in case (1) S1 attributes to S2 the commitment to p, (2) S1 attributes to S2 the entitlement to p, and (3) S1 undertakes the commitment to p herself.

Further, Brandom holds that clause (1) "implicitly contains an *understanding* condition." (Brandom 1995, 897) We can compare a person and a parrot, who both have the "reliable differential responsive disposition" (RDRD) to utter "That's red" in the presence of red things. However, the parrot cannot be said to *know* that the object in question is red. Unlike parrots, persons apply *concepts* and possess an *understanding* of their responses, which consists in mastery of the "*inferential articulation* of those

responses, the role they play in reasoning" (Brandom 1995, 897).

Accordingly, the account given above rests on a further condition, condition (0): S1 attributes to S2 the RDRD to correctly apply the concepts involved in "p".

I will not discuss this account in any more detail here and simply assume that it is at least plausible. Instead, I will turn directly to my proposal of a cognate account of knowledge-how.

## 3. Knowledge-how

One of Ryle's most important insights is that knowledge-how is something normative. To say that people know how to do something is to say that "when they perform these operations, they tend to perform them well, i.e. correctly or efficiently or successfully." (Ryle 1949, 29)

Of course, this encompasses a variety of different cases of knowledge-how and, arguably, a variety of dimensions of normativity. Knowing how to speak a natural language, how to perform a complex ice-skating figure and how to dance the tango are different in important respects. For my present purposes, however, I will follow Ryle and abbreviate the normative dimension involved in knowledge-how with the expression „well“. How this should be spelled out exactly – as correctly, efficiently, successfully, ... – will be bracketed here.

On this basis, I dare to stipulate what I take to be an intuitive characterization of knowledge-how: *Knowledge-how to X is the skill to act in ways Y which count as X-ing well.*

By a skill, I mean an ability which has been acquired by learning. For example, a baby's ability to cry when smacked is no candidate for knowledge-how because it has not been acquired. And the ability to bend one's body in novel ways after several ribs have been removed is also no candidate for knowledge-how because this ability has been acquired, but not by learning.<sup>2</sup>

What I would like to suggest now is that just like the JTB-model of knowledge-that can be transformed into an account of knowledge-that as a normative status, we can also transform my above characterization of knowledge-how into an account of knowledge-how as a normative status. I take this step to be plausible, among other things, in virtue of the fact that the normativity of knowledge-how already indicates that ascribing knowledge-how is placing the ascriber in the normative realm.

## 4. Basic knowledge-how

My proposal is this: S1 ascribes knowledge how to X to S2 just in case (0) S1 ascribes to S2 the RDRD to act in ways Y, (1) S1 ascribes to S2 the commitment to treat acting in ways Y as X-ing well, (2) S1 ascribes to S2 the entitlement to treat acting in ways Y as X-ing well, and (3) S1 herself

<sup>1</sup> I show why this criticism is flawed in several respects in Löwenstein forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> It might be objected that knowledge-how is not an ability at all. I show why alleged counter-examples to this claim fail in Löwenstein forthcoming.

undertakes the commitment that acting in ways Y counts as X-ing well.

I shall now say something about each of these four conditions.

Condition (0) holds that attributing knowledge-how entails attributing the reliable disposition to act in certain ways. What else must be involved concerning those ways of acting is spelled out in the other three conditions.

Condition (1) holds that when knowledge-how is attributed, the ascriber is taken to have certain attitudes towards some of her ways of acting. She must take some of these ways of acting to be instances of exercising the activity in question. For example, my attribution of knowledge how to knit to my grandmother entails that she herself takes certain performances of hers to be good knitting. This can be manifest in such basic phenomena as the fact that when she *intends* to knit well, she performs in *those* ways (rather than in others).

Condition (2) holds that attributing knowledge-how entails attributing an *entitlement* to such an attitude. Depending on the case in question, this entitlement may result from one of two sources. It might stem from a *reason* I take the ascriber to have, like my grandmother having learned how to knit by reading a book. Alternatively, it may be derived merely from my own attribution of reliability and competence to her. In this case, *I* provide the reason for her entitlement.

Finally, condition (3) holds that I cannot attribute knowledge-how to somebody and leave open what attitude *I* take towards her performances. Rather, I myself have to undertake the commitment that the ways in which that person is disposed to act are indeed good exercises of the activity in question.

This form of knowledge-how can be called “basic” because it does not require any assumption about the sapience of the ascriber. Conditions (0), (1) and (2) can be fulfilled, for instance, by dogs that have been trained to catch balls. They fulfill condition (1) because, when trying to catch a ball (X-ing), they perform ball-catching attempts (performances of ways Y) rather than something else. And they fulfill condition (2) because we who attribute knowledge how to catch balls to them also attribute reliability and competence.

To some, it may seem odd to talk of ascribing commitments and entitlements to non-sapient animals. However, the example just given shows that these notions are used in a very weak sense. Trained dogs can fulfill condition (1) *only* in the minimal way spelled out above, not, for example, by explicitly claiming what they would do if they were to catch balls. And they can fulfill condition (2) *only* in the minimal way that they exhibit reliable competence, and not by earning their entitlement through reasoning.

## 5. Sapient knowledge-how

A recurring element in clauses (1) and (2) of the account of basic knowledge-how is “treating acting in ways Y as X-ing well”, that is, a practical attitude towards certain ways of acting. However, when confronted with *sapient* beings such as *persons*, one would not only ascribe *such* attitudes, but full-fledged *contents*. Rather than merely the *attitude* to *treat* acting in ways Y as X-ing well, one would ascribe the *claim* that acting in ways Y *counts* as X-ing well.

This distinction parallels the distinction between parrots and persons who both have the RDRD to utter “That’s red” when in the presence of red things. Just like this RDRD may not be inferentially articulated, the attitude to treat acting in ways Y as X-ing well may not be inferentially articulated either. However, qua *content*, the content that acting in ways Y counts as X-ing well *must* be inferentially articulated. Such contents instead of mere practical attitudes are what distinguishes *sapient* knowledge-how from merely basic knowledge-how. It is the distinction between placing the ascriber within the normative realm broadly construed and placing her within the space of reasons in particular.

To sum up, where S1 takes S2 to be sapient, S1 ascribes knowledge how to X to S2 just in case (0) S1 ascribes to S2 the RDRD to act in ways Y, (1) S1 ascribes to S2 the commitment that acting in ways Y counts as X-ing well, (2) S1 ascribes to S2 the entitlement that acting in ways Y counts as X-ing well, and (3) S1 herself undertakes the commitment that acting in ways Y counts as X-ing well.

## 6. Articulating knowledge-how

However, there is a further distinction to be made within the realm of sapient knowledge-how: It is one thing to ascribe and undertake commitments and entitlements. To be able to *articulate* them is another thing entirely.

For example, in attributing knowledge how to knit to my grandmother, I commit myself to the claim that acting in the ways in question counts as good knitting. But I might not be able to articulate this commitment. I might fail to understand which ways of acting these are and still undertake the commitment that *those* ways – whatever they may be exactly – count as good knitting.

Similarly, my grandmother might herself fail to have any articulate grasp of what it is she is doing when she knits. When I attribute knowledge how to knit to her, I attribute to her the commitment that acting in the ways in question counts as good knitting. What I do *not* attribute to her is the capacity to say things like “moving the needles thus-and-so, doing this and ... counts as good knitting”.

This further competence, the articulation of knowledge-how, is an important one indeed. For example, it is often a crucial competence for teachers of the knowledge-how in question. One way of teaching knowledge-how to X is, first, to say what it is one must do in order to count as X-ing well, and, second, to train exactly that.

However, the most important feature of the articulation of knowledge-how is that it grants actors self-consciousness of the normative practices they engage in. They can reflectively discuss in virtue of what a person’s performances qualify as good exercises of the activity in question. Schematically speaking, they can explicitly claim that or ask if acting in ways Y counts as X-ing well. They can wonder whether or not acting in ways Y’ would count as X-ing well, too, whether ways Y’ are better or worse than ways Y, and so forth.

## 7. Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to show how an account of knowledge-how can be modelled on Brandom’s view of knowledge-that. I have distinguished different forms of knowledge-how and said in which way these are related to the sapience of the actors in question and to their ability to articulate their knowledge. To conclude, let me now make

two short remarks about the relation between knowledge-that and knowledge-how.

First, it might appear that according to the current proposal, knowledge-how turns out to be a species of knowledge-that after all – at least when concerned with sapient beings. Attributions of knowledge-how to X to sapient beings seem to be simply attributions of a species of knowledge-that, namely of knowledge that acting in ways Y counts as X-ing well, for some suitable value of Y.

However, this diagnosis relies only on clauses (1), (2) and (3). There is a crucial further difference between the dispositions involved in clause (0). Attributions of knowledge-that rely on the RDRD to correctly *apply the concepts involved* in the content attributed. By contrast, attributions of knowledge-how rely on the RDRD to *act in the ways mentioned* in that content. Thus, the account proposed here maintains a substantial distinction between knowledge-that and knowledge-how, even if their relationship is an intimate one.

Finally, there is nevertheless a hierarchy within this intimacy. In particular, we can now see clearly why knowledge-how is “logically prior” to knowledge-that, as Ryle remarked (1945, 4). The disposition involved in knowledge-that, the disposition to correctly apply the concepts involved, is itself a paradigm case of knowledge-how. Applying concepts is subject to exactly those intersubjective assessments of correctness spelled out by clauses (1), (2) and (3) of the analysis of attributions of knowledge-how.

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# Measurement and the Contingent A Priori

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## 1. Contingent a priori

In *Naming and Necessity* (NN), Kripke seeks to show that there are contingent statements the truth-value of which can be known a priori. The example that concerns me here is

(A) "S is a meter long"

made by someone who uses the stick S as the standard for one meter. S being the standard meter entails that it is a necessary condition for something x to be one meter long that x and S have same length. But in the instant  $t_0$ , when S was chosen as the standard meter, it could have had a different length. Therefore, S's length (L) was contingent in  $t_0$ . But one meter is just L. Therefore, S was contingently one meter long at  $t_0$ . However, the standard meter's baptizer, after the baptism and without the need of any empirical investigation, knows that the contingent statement (A) is true.

Contrary to what Norman Malcolm (1995) seems to think, the statement "One meter is S's length at  $t_0$ ", in the baptizer's mouth, is not a definition that determines the meaning of "meter" by giving a synonym. Although it is a kind of definition, instead of determining the meaning of "meter", it fixes its reference as S's length at  $t_0$ . In all our counterfactual descriptions using "meter", this word refers to the same entity (it is a "rigid designator"). But that is not the case of "S's length at  $t_0$ ", as we have seen in the explanation of the contingency of (A).<sup>1</sup>

If we accept Kripke's theory of the contingent a priori, we should accept that we can know a priori the measure of anything we can refer to, just by thinking. For instance: I can define (fix the reference) of "winchill" this way:

x is one winchill tall = x is as tall as Winston Churchill when he uttered the famous sentence "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat"

Now I know that Churchill was one winchill tall at that particular moment. And, in the same way, I can know a priori both the weight and volume Churchill had at that same moment as well as the intensity with which his words were uttered, etc.

## 2. Comparison, self-predication, and identity

In the Philosophical Investigations Wittgenstein says:

There is one thing of which one can say neither that it is one meter long nor that it is not one meter long, and that is the standard meter in Paris. But this is, of course, not to ascribe any extraordinary property to it, but only to mark its peculiar role in the language game of measuring with a meter rule. (Wittgenstein 1958, §50)

Wittgenstein's claim is indeed puzzling, as Kripke thinks, for if the standard meter is not one meter long, what else could be it? But here as elsewhere Wittgenstein is trying to lay out differences that run alongside similarities, and it is

less important how those differences are described than actually perceiving them. I'll try to show that Wittgenstein's point can also be made clear by presenting it the other way around, so to speak. This alternative way of presenting the point helps us understand why Wittgenstein's claim seems false to readers such as Kripke.

In NN, immediately after quoting Wittgenstein's passage above, Kripke suggests the following argument:

S is 39'37 inches long.

39'37 inches = 1 meter

Therefore, S is 1 meter long.

According to my interpretation, Wittgenstein holds that to take S as a standard meter is to take S as an object of comparison for a certain of time (and not just at that instant), so that an object has a determinate length in the metric system only if it can be compared (directly or indirectly) to S. But we cannot compare S to itself in order to see whether S is as long as S. Therefore, when used as the standard meter, S does not have any particular length in the metric system. Hence, either S is the standard meter and the fact that it is 39'37 inches long is immaterial, or the fact that S is 39'37 inches long is a good reason to say that it is one meter long but then S is not the standard meter – something else must be.

Objection: we can compare S's length at  $t_0$  to S's length at  $t_1$  by marking S's length on a surface at  $t_0$  and later ( $t_1$ ) comparing S to those marks. But if S does not fit those marks at  $t_1$  and we conclude that S is no more one meter long, then those marks, and not S's length, are the standard meter. Therefore, although this diachronic comparison is possible, this is no reason to say of the standard meter that it is or is not one meter long according to that standard.

Commenting on Wittgenstein's "puzzling" claim Kripke, says that "[p]art of the problem which is bothering Wittgenstein is, of course, that this stick serves as a standard of length and so we can't attribute length to it." (Kripke 1972, p. 54) Nevertheless, Kripke seems to think that nothing incompatible with his arguments can come from a reflection on how something "serves as a standard", especially because he thinks that the standard meter could be S's length at  $t_0$ . He seems to think that the possibility of having objects compared to the standard is not an essential property of a standard.

Objection: Kripke thinks that we can, somehow, compare an object to itself in thought, without having to actually put it next to itself. This objection seems to be corroborated by a certain understanding of the law of identity: every object is identical to itself. It is as if there were something like comparing an object to itself in thought to so as to find out that it has all the properties that it has. Indeed we can verify whether a certain identity statement of the form  $a=b$  is true by finding out whether there is a property that a has and b doesn't. To be sure, if a and b are the same object, then this is a process of comparing an object to itself. But this is different from the case of the standard meter. In this case we want to find out whether a and b are the same object, and not whether an object a has a property that it has. But comparing the standard meter to itself would be to do just that, which is impossible,

<sup>1</sup> The a priori knowledge in question is based on a simple definition, but the statement one knows to be true, according to Kripke, is not analytic.

because it supposes that the same object simultaneously is and is not the standard meter.

Objection 3: the kind of comparison involved here is the same involved not in the verification of a statement having not the form  $a=a$ . It seems that when we perceive an object, we perceive that the object fits itself, not only regarding its length, but regarding to all its properties: it has all the properties that it has.

We seem to have an infallible paradigm of identity in the identity of the thing with itself. I feel like saying: "Here at any rate there can't be a variety of interpretations. If you are seeing a thing you are seeing identity too. [Wittgenstein 1958, §215]

But this is not something we do. When we perceive the object, what we perceive is an object with certain properties, and nothing else.

### 3. Abstracta

Objection: according to Kripke, the comparison involved here is that of  $S$  to an abstract entity, namely,  $S$ 's length at  $t_0$ . But in the absence of something like a platonic eye, how can we compare anything to an abstract entity? One might say that we can perceive such an entity, the length, when it is contingently related to  $S$ , when  $S$  contingently has this length. But how can we make that comparison so as to see that  $S$  does *not* have that length? And if one cannot directly compare a concrete object to a length, but only to another object, then what one does after all is to compare concrete objects, not a concrete object to an abstract entity. In that case, the standard is this other object's length, not  $S$ 's length at  $t_0$ .

We usually expect that the length of our standard of length does not vary over time. But *the fact that it does vary does not prevent it of being used as a standard*, especially when there is nothing else available that varies less. However, our search for invariable standards of length shows that we do have an ideal of standard of length, an idea that regulates our search for better standards of length, viz., the idea of something that does not vary in size over time. Yet we don't have this ideal because we know an ideal standard, but because we do know ordinary mutable standards and we have reasons to wish the immutability of the standards. We hope that  $R$  at  $t_1$  is as long as it was at  $t_0$ , so that we can verify whether  $S$  at  $t_1$  is as long as it was at  $t_0$ . If we discover that  $R$ 's length has changed from  $t_0$  to  $t_1$ , that only can be because we have compared  $R$  to another object,  $T$ , the size of which we hope should not vary from  $t_0$  to  $t_1$  and is as long as  $R$  at  $t_0$ . And so on. At some point in this process, we take some object's length *over time* to be the standard for the length of other objects *at particular instants of time*. We do not – because we cannot – take an object's length at a particular instant of time to be the standard of other objects' length at particular instants of time. Again, it seems that all that we do is to compare concrete objects to each other, not a concrete object to an abstract entity. Besides, even if the possibility of comparing an object's lengths along the time by comparing it with another object could explain how we can compare a concrete object with an abstract entity, such an explanation would be useless for the most important case of our discussion: the supposed attribution of the length one meter to the standard meter. In such a case, one should compare the concrete object,  $S$  at  $t_0$ , to the abstract entity, the meter at  $t_0$ .<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> There are additional difficulties for these *abstracta*. Is  $S$  one meter long because *it is as long as* the meter, the abstract entity? If so, why is the meter

Objection: the meter, the abstract entity, would *have* no length, but it would *be* a certain length, just as a geometrical form has no geometrical form. But then what is it for  $S$  to be one meter long, given that it is not as long as any other entity? Obviously, to say that  $S$  is *as long as*  $S$  at  $t_0$  is to beg the question. What is it for  $S$  to be as long as it is at  $t_0$ ?

### 4. "S is one meter long"

Gert (2002, p. 54) argues that Wittgenstein never intended to deny that one can say of  $S$  that it is one meter long. Imagine that someone wants to steal the standard meter,  $S$ , and that  $S$  is in a room poorly lightened where there are other rods that are standards of other measuring systems. To ensure that he will steal the right one, the robber uses a ruler to measure the sticks and find the one that is one meter long. It seems that in this situation the robber can say of the standard meter that it is one meter long. However, the case here is analogous to the one in which we try to find out whether  $S$ 's length has changed from  $t_0$  to  $t_1$  by making marks on a surface. The standard meter in the robber's process of measuring  $S$  is the ruler, not  $S$ . To see this, suppose that  $S$  shrank and became shorter than the robber's ruler, and that another rod,  $R$ , has also shrunk and became as long as the robber's ruler, the size of which did not change during these events. The robber would then mistakenly steal  $R$ . If  $S$  had been the standard meter all along, then it would have been used by the robber. But it was not.  $S$  was taken as an ordinary object and measured by a common ruler. The robber does conclude (falsely) that  $R$  is the standard meter. But in order to be correctly *called* the standard meter in this context, it is not necessary for  $S$  to be taken as the standard meter. It is enough that it has a certain history, viz., that it was fixed by some convention as the standard meter. *In this sense*, " $S$  is the standard meter" is true even if  $S$  is not as long as the ruler used to check out whether something is a meter long. Being the standard meter, *in this sense*, does not entail having any particular length.

$S$  can continue to be taken as the standard meter by others during the robbery. So in this situation there would be two standard meter, even if only momentarily: the robber's ruler and  $S$ . This shows that Wittgenstein's point is not that one cannot say of a standard meter that it is one meter long according to *some* standard meter, but that we cannot say of an object that *is* the standard meter that it is one meter long according to *the standard fixed by that same object*.

### 5. Metaphysics vs. epistemology

Objection: one thing is the metaphysical question on *what it is to be* a meter long, another entirely different is the question about *how we know* that something is a meter long. We know that  $S$  is a meter long because we know that a certain convention determines that something is a meter long if it is as long as  $S$ , and we know that *without needing to make any comparisons*, based solely on the law of identity, that  $S$  is as long as  $S$ . The confusion in the preceding discussion would be to think that a condition *for*

one meter long? If in order for  $S$  to be one meter long it has to be in a certain relation with *another* entity's length, then why is the same not true of the meter? That would imply an infinite regress. If in order for the meter to be one meter long it does not need to be in a relation with another entity's length, why is this not true of  $S$ ? Besides, taken as an explanation of what it is for an object to have a determinate length in a measurement system, Kripke's explanation, so interpreted, seems circular:  $S$  is one meter long because it is as long as the meter and the meter *is one meter long*.

knowing that *objects* that differ in length from *S* are one meter long, namely, that we would have to compare them to *S*.

But do we not know based solely on the law of identity that *S* at  $t_0$ , for instance, is as long as *S* at  $t_1$ ? What we can indeed know based solely on the law of identity is that *S*, at a certain instant of time  $t$ , is as long as *S* at  $t$ . But, as we have seen, to know by convention that *S* is the standard meter is to know that something is one meter long if it is as long as *S*, *no matter at which instant of time*. Therefore, the objection above is effective only if it is based on the false assumption that the standard meter is *S*'s length at a particular instant of time. This objection seems to rest on the confusion between the question on whether two objects have the same length (or the question on whether the same object has the length it has) with the question on whether an object has a particular length in a measuring system. An answer to the second kind of question, though not to the first, requires a standard of measurement, and a standard is something that, as it were, endures in time, not something located at a particular instant of time. Therefore, the existence of a standard of measurement, in the second kind of case, is not merely an epistemic requirement.

But suppose someone reformulates the objection by saying that being a meter long is being as long as *S* at any instant of time, and that based solely on the law of identity we know that *S*, at any particular instant of time  $t$ , is as long as *S* at  $t$ ; therefore, we know, without needing to make any comparisons, that *S*, at any particular instant of time, is one meter long. The problem is that, so reformulated, this objection entails that the statement “*S* is a meter long” is necessary. There is no possible world in which *S*, at any instant of time  $t$ , is not as long as *S* at  $t$ . Therefore, this objection could not be Kripkean. Nonetheless, Kripkean or not, is it right? First of all, what does the statement

say, according to this objection? It seems to say that *S* has a length that by convention we call ‘a meter’. But that, of course, is not what we mean when we say that *R* is one meter long, for *R is not the standard meter*; it is not the last court of appeal to decide whether something is a meter long. While the statement “*R* is a meter long” is about the contingent relation between the lengths of two objects, one of which is the standard meter, the statement “*S* is a meter long” seems to express a convention. Therefore, although both statements have the same syntactical structure, it seems that they say different things, and not only because their grammatical subjects differ. Thus, although it makes sense to say of *S*, *qua* standard meter, that it is a meter long, *in this sense* we cannot say of anything else that it is a meter long, except if it too is standard meter (which is possible). That is Wittgenstein’s puzzling claim presented the other way around, as it were. And that is why Wittgenstein’s claim seems to be false: there is a sense in which we can truly say of the standard meter that it is a meter long.

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# Kunst als Institution und Ausdruck

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In Wittgensteins Spätphilosophie findet man zwei wichtige Auffassungen des *Sprachspiel*begriffs. Einerseits dienen uns Sprachspiele als Vergleichsobjekte, an denen wir Verhältnisse und den Mechanismus unserer Sprache untersuchen können (PU §130). Andererseits gebraucht Wittgenstein den Ausdruck „Sprachspiel“ auch im Sinne eines Teils unserer Sprache, die aus primitiven Sprachspielen zusammengesetzt ist (PU §7). In dieser Auffassung bildet das Sprachspiel einen Teil unserer Gesamttätigkeit, die Wittgenstein *Lebensform* nennt (PU §23). Zwischen diesen Auffassungen gibt es eine gewisse Spannung: Entweder besteht unsere Sprache aus Sprachspielen, oder es sind Sprachspiele erfundene theoretische Konstrukte, die von Sprachphilosophen errichtet werden, um die Sprache besser zu verstehen. Unsere Exegese wird dadurch kompliziert, dass der Begriff der Lebensform ebenso vieldeutig wie unbestimmt ist.

In seinen Gesprächen über Ästhetik hat Wittgenstein die Auffassung geprägt, dass ästhetische Urteile nur innerhalb eines Sprachspiels verstanden werden dürfen, das er *Kultur* nennt (V&G I.26). Ich möchte argumentieren, dass die Doppeldeutigkeit des Sprachspielbegriffs eine wichtige Rolle in Wittgensteins Ästhetik spielt. Insbesondere gilt: je nachdem, welche Auffassung betont wird, kann man seine Ästhetik als institutionell oder als expressiv interpretieren.

## Abstrakte und konkrete Sprachspiele

Unsere Sprache ist gewiss eine komplizierte gesellschaftliche Institution und sie in ihrer Komplexität zu beschreiben, geht über alle Kräfte. Wir können jedoch partielle Bereiche der Sprache untersuchen und folglich beschreiben. Dazu konstruieren wir vereinfachte Modelle der tatsächlichen Praxis. Diese Aufgabe haben Wittgensteins Sprachspiele als Vergleichsobjekte. Das Sprachspiel aus § 2 der *Untersuchungen* ist stark vereinfacht, und es wäre absurd zu behaupten, dass ein solcher Wortwechsel wirklich stattfinden könnte. Sprachspiele als Vergleichsobjekte sind – und das ist hier wichtig – abstrakte Modelle der wirklichen Tätigkeit.

Im Wesen eines Modells liegt, dass zwischen ihm und dem, was modelliert wird, eine strukturelle Verwandtschaft besteht, die Wittgenstein auch mit dem Begriff der *internen Relation* bezeichnet. Anders gesagt, soll ein Objekt etwas modellieren, dann muss es mit dem Modellierten eine gemeinsame Form haben; zwischen den beiden besteht ein struktureller Isomorphismus.

Sprachspiel als Vergleichsobjekt ist eine Abstraktion von einem konkreten Sprachspiel. Diese Unterscheidung bringt Wittgenstein zum Ausdruck in einer früheren Fassung des § 130 der *Untersuchungen*: „Auch sind unsere exakten Sprachspiele nicht Vorstudien zu einer künftigen Reglementierung unserer tatsächlichen Sprache.“ (Ts 220, 92) Um die Sprache zu untersuchen, konstruieren wir Sprachspiele als Vergleichsobjekte aus der tatsächlichen Sprache, nicht diese Sprache aus exakten Sprachspielen. In heutiger Terminologie: es handelt sich um eine *top-down* Strategie im Kontrast zu der atomistischen *bottom-up* Strategie.

Noch in einem anderen Sinne können wir von einfachen Sprachspielen sprechen. Es gibt primitive, nicht erlernte

Sprachspiele, die in unser Leben, in unserer Lebensform eingebettet sind, wie z.B. vorsprachliche Schmerzäußerungen (BPP II, §194ff.) oder Instinktäußerungen. Erst wenn ein Kind der Sprache gewissermaßen mächtig ist, ist es in der Lage, den Satz „Ich habe Schmerzen.“ zu gebrauchen. So kann man sagen, „unsere Sprachspiel ist ein Ausbau des primitiven Benehmens.“ (Z §545ff.) Ein primitives Sprachspiel wird durch ein komplexes (grammatisches, regelhaftes) Sprachspiel ersetzt. Hier handelt es sich wiederum um eine *bottom-up* Strategie.

## Kultur als Institution

Der Ausgangspunkt dieser Überlegung ist Wittgensteins Kritik an Tolstoi:

Aus Tolstois schlechtem Theoretisieren, das Kunstwerk übertrage ›ein Gefühl‹, könnte man *viel* lernen. – Und doch könnte man es, wenn nicht den Ausdruck eines Gefühls, einen Gefühlsausdruck nennen, oder einen gefühlten Ausdruck. Und man könnte auch sagen, daß die Menschen, die ihn verstehen, gleichermaßen zu ihm ›schwingen‹, auf ihn antworten. Man könnte sagen: Das Kunstwerk will nicht *etwas anderes* übertragen, sondern sich selbst. [...] (VB, 533, 1947)

An dieser Formulierung lassen sich mehrere Züge von Wittgensteins Ästhetik ablesen. Erstens, das Kunstwerk bezeichnet kein Gefühl, sondern ist sein Ausdruck, d.h. *Expression*. Diesen expressiven Zug sparen wir für den nächsten Abschnitt auf. Zweitens, es sind menschliche Reaktionen auf das Kunstwerk, worauf es hier ankommt. Wenn hier von einer Gleichheit oder Identität die Rede sein kann, so handelt es sich um die Identität von Reaktionen auf das Kunstwerk, nicht um die Identität von Gemütszuständen. Oder anders formuliert: Dass Menschen das Kunstwerk verstehen, zeigt sich, indem sie auf eine bestimmte Art und Weise reagieren. In diesem Sinne kann man sagen, sie reagieren *richtig*. Der Begriff der ästhetischen Richtigkeit ist ohne Frage zentral in Wittgensteins Ästhetik. Ein Kunstwerk ist richtig oder korrekt, wenn es gängigen ästhetischen Regeln (z. B. Harmonie, Komposition, ideale Proportionen) gerecht wird.

Die ästhetische Reaktion beschränkt sich nicht auf die Prädikate „schön“ und „hässlich“, welche Wittgenstein eher als Interjektionen versteht (V&G I.9). Es handelt sich um ein komplexes Sprachspiel, das außersprachliche Aktivität einbezieht. Ferner sagt Wittgenstein, dass zu diesem Sprachspiel die ganze Kultur einer Epoche gehört (V&G I.26; Z §164). Eine richtige ästhetische Reaktion auf ein Kunstwerk zustande zu bringen, setzt voraus, mit der (aktuellen) Kultur vertraut zu sein. Der Ausdruck „Kultur“ wird hier erst einmal ganz lose gebraucht; es muss noch untersucht werden, wie ein ästhetisches Urteil in ihr involviert ist. Kultur kann man verstehen als Netz von Zusammenhängen. Das Kunstwerk passt aufgrund seiner Richtigkeit in dieses Netz hinein, und ein ästhetisches Urteil bringt dieses Passen zum Ausdruck (vgl. BPP II, §501).

Unter den Begriffen „zusammenhängen“ oder „zusammenpassen“ kann man ebenso mancherlei verstehen; alles hängt mit allem irgendwie zusammen. Aber Wittgenstein wendet viel Mühe auf, um diese Art von Zusammen-

hängen zu verdeutlichen. In V&G macht er einen Unterschied zwischen der Ursache und dem Motiv oder Grund: „Für das ästhetische Unbehagen gibt es ein ›Warum‹ und nicht eine ›Ursache‹.“ (V&G II.19, siehe auch III.16 und LS §908) Den Begriff „Ursache“ behält Wittgenstein nur der kausalen Ursache vor und argumentiert, dass eine ästhetische Erklärung keine kausale sein kann (V&G II.38). Wir müssen nach einem Grund suchen, und das bedeutet, eine „grammatikalische“ Untersuchung anzustellen, deren Resultat eine Feststellung grammatikalischer Verwandtschaft (Z §437) zwischen dem Kunstwerk und einer ästhetischen Reaktion sein sollte. Zwei Phänomene können also kausal verbunden sein oder unabhängig davon auch eine (innere) Verwandtschaft haben oder – anders ausgedrückt – *zusammenpassen* (siehe LS §75). Der Begriff des Zusammenpassens spielt eine wichtige Rolle in Wittgensteins Philosophie der Psychologie, und ich möchte argumentieren, dass der Unterschied zwischen der Kausalität und dem Zusammenpassen derselbe ist wie der Unterschied zwischen der *externen* und der *internen Relation*.

Mit dem Begriff des Zusammenpassens beabsichtigt Wittgenstein hauptsächlich, einen Gegensatz zu dem Begriff der psychologischen Assoziation aufzubauen. (Siehe BPP I, §337 oder LS §76) Psychologische Assoziation ist kausal (also extern), Zusammenpassen hingegen formal (somit intern) zu verstehen. Dass zwei Phänomene zusammenpassen, erklärt Wittgenstein an zahlreichen Beispielen: der Name Schubert passt zu seinen Werken (PU, 555), Beethovens Gesicht passt zu seiner Neunten Symphonie (BPP I, §338), das Wort „Goethe“ passt zu seiner „Atmosphäre“ und zur braun-gelben Farbe (Ms 131, 149), mein altbekanntes Möbelstück passt in mein Zimmer hinein (BPP I, §339) oder jeder Fleck passt in seine Umgebung (PU §216). Man muss sich im Klaren darüber sein, dass diese Zusammenhänge keine psychologischen (somit kausalen) Assoziationen darstellen, obwohl auch solche zwischen den Phänomenen vorhanden sein können (vgl. LS §76). Die Pointe dessen, dass zwei Dinge zusammenpassen und somit intern verbunden sind, besteht darin, dass sie ein solides Ganzes bilden (BPP I, §341).

Wir untersuchen immer die Natur der ästhetischen Reaktion auf das Kunstwerk. Sie müssen zusammenpassen oder zwischen den beiden muss eine interne Relation bestehen. Nun, diese Reaktion braucht nicht eine verbale zu sein, sie mag eine Gebärde sein oder sogar ein anderes Kunstwerk sein – etwa wie man eine passende Musik zu einem Gedicht findet oder mit einem Tanzschritt auf eine Melodie antwortet.

Nun erhebt sich die Frage, wie man eine richtige ästhetische Reaktion identifiziert und erkennt, oder anders formuliert, wie man ein zusammenpassendes Ganzes von Phänomenen findet. Die Antwort lässt sich aus Wittgensteins Auffassung des Aspektsehens herleiten. Die Wortverbindung „etwas als etwas anderes sehen (oder hören)“ benutzt man häufig in der Kunst, z. B. „Du mußt diese Takte als Einleitung hören.“ (Z §208) Das Aspektsehen, bzw. die Möglichkeit eines Aspektwechsels befindet Wittgenstein sogar als wesentlich für die Ästhetik (LS §634). Die Begriffe des Sehens-als und des Zusammenpassens sind eng verwandt. Wenn etwas als etwas anderes gesehen wird, dann passen sie beide zusammen.<sup>1</sup> Ein Phänomen wird jedoch nicht ständig als ein anderes gesehen. Der Aspekt muss aufleuchten, und in diesem

Aufleuchten des Aspekts nimmt man eine interne Relation wahr (PU II, 549 oder LS §506). Die Richtigkeit einer ästhetischen Reaktion wird also im Aufleuchten des Aspekts und im damit verbundenen Staunen bestätigt (PU II, 528). In einer ästhetischen Reaktion wird ein Aspekt des Kunstwerks ausgedrückt. Im Aspektsehen wird das Gesehene *organisiert*: „Im Aspekt bemerke ich einen Zug der Organisation.“ (LS §515). Ein Phänomen zu organisieren heißt, dass seine Teile auf eine bestimmte Art und Weise – d.h. *richtig* – zusammenpassen. Hier geht es jedoch um das Zusammenpassen von Teilen des Kunstwerks, das eine Basis für das Zusammenpassen zwischen dem Kunstwerk und einer ästhetischen Reaktion bildet. Eine ästhetische Reaktion ist insofern richtig, als sie einen Aspekt des Kunstwerks ausdrückt.<sup>2</sup>

Dass zwischen zwei Phänomenen – zwei Kunstwerken – eine interne Relation besteht, bedeutet, dass sie Teile eines Ganzen darstellen. Sie werden zu einem Gesamtkunstwerk, möchte man beinahe sagen. Auf ein Kunstwerk kann man jedoch verschiedenartig reagieren, es kann mit vielen diversen Phänomenen intern verbunden werden. Diese Reaktion kann ganz einfach („Das ist herrlich!“) oder auch ziemlich kompliziert sein; sie kann etwa eine tiefe Verwandtschaft zwischen zwei Künstlern – z. B. zwischen Brahms und Keller – ausdrücken (Ms 183, 59 oder V&G, S. 50). Ein Netz solcher Zusammenhänge nennt Wittgenstein die *Kultur*. Sie ist das Kunstwerk *in toto* und ausschließlich sie als Ganzes schreibt sich selbst Regeln vor. Ein Objekt wird zum Kunstwerk nur, insofern es ein Aspekt der Kultur ist. Damit wird freilich nicht behauptet, dass ein Kunstwerk allen herkömmlichen Regeln gerecht werden muss, sondern nur dass diese die ästhetische Reaktionen beeinflussen. (Vgl. V&G I.16).

Wenn wir die Kultur als Gesamtkunstwerk auffassen, dann sind die internen Verhältnisse der Kultur alles, was zählt. Deswegen kann man diese Auffassung der Kunst als institutionell bezeichnen.

## Kunst als Ausdruck des Genies

Die oben zitierte Bemerkung Wittgensteins, das Kunstwerk sei ein Gefühlsausdruck, deutet darauf hin, dass etwas der streng institutionellen Auffassung der Kunst mangelt. Große Kunstwerke entstehen aus intensiven Gefühlen und rufen intensive Gefühle hervor, obwohl man nicht behaupten kann, dass diese Gefühle identisch sind oder sein müssen. Dieser Intuition sollte jede Theorie der Kunst gerecht werden.

Die institutionelle Auffassung bedarf eines Rekurses auf das Innere des Menschen in zwei Punkten: Wenn die ästhetische Reaktion einen Aspekt von dem Kunstwerk ausmacht, so wird im Aspektwechsel ein irreduzibel subjektives Element hervorgerufen, das Wittgenstein mit dem Staunen identifiziert. Staunen ist ein Gefühl, das in einem Kunstwerk zum Ausdruck kommen kann. Auch Lachen ist ein Ausdruck von Freude oder düsteres Gesicht ein Ausdruck von Kummer (vgl. V&G I.10). Die Frage ist jedoch, inwiefern man aus denselben Reaktionen auf dieselbe Gefühle schließen kann. Primitive Ausdruckstatbestände von z.B. Schmerz oder Freude sind in unsere Lebensform eingebettet. Für Wittgenstein gilt nicht, gleiche Gefühle implizieren gleiche Ausdrucksbestände, sondern gleiche Ausdruckstatbestände sind der Grund, dass von

<sup>1</sup> In LS §654 schreibt Wittgenstein: „Wenn ich es so sehe, so paßt es wohl dazu, aber nicht *dazu*.“ (Vgl. LS §634 und §655.) Das „so sehen“ ist eine Variation des Aspektsehens.

<sup>2</sup> Die Bedeutung des Aspektsehens und interner Relationen wird von Stefan Majetschak (2007, 60ff.) betont. Durch ein ästhetisches Urteil wird eine interne Relation zwischen dem Kunstwerk und *anderen Objekten* zum Vorschein gebracht. Ich beziehe unter diese Objekte auch ästhetische Reaktionen ein und spreche eher von Phänomenen.

denselben Gefühlen die Rede sein kann. Nun, wenn die Menschen auf das Kunstwerk gleichermaßen antworten, ist dies qua Lebensform der Grund für dieselben Gefühle.

Weiter bringt uns der zweite Punkt. Wenn das Kunstwerk nur einen Aspekt der herrschenden Kultur ausdrücken sollte, dann wäre nicht zu erklären, wie sich die Kultur verwandeln kann. Wittgenstein räumt ein, es gebe Kunstwerke, die nicht nach ihrer Richtigkeit beurteilt werden können, und solche Kunstwerke nennt er „gewaltig“ (V&G I.23). Ein Kunstwerk wird „gewaltig“ genannt aufgrund dessen, dass es einen gewaltigen Teil der Kultur einnimmt und ausmacht. Diese Kunstwerke machen zwar einen Aspekt der Kultur aus, aber sie leisten noch einen anderen Beitrag zu ihr.

Mein Vorschlag ist, dass sie die Kultur um neue Regeln bereichern. Ein Künstler, der „Talent“ hat, um neue Regeln durchzusetzen, ist – im Kantischen Sinne – ein Genie (Ms 162b, 22). „Genie ist das Talent, worin der Charakter sich ausspricht“ (Ms 136, 59a), sagt Wittgenstein. Dieser Verweis auf den Charakter ist der entscheidende Punkt, der über die institutionelle Auffassung der Kunst hinausgeht.<sup>3</sup> Die Kultur um neue Regeln zu bereichern geschieht kaum auf einmal. Neue Regeln sind zunächst nur implizit in Werken genialer Künstler enthalten, und es dauert einige Zeit, bis sie nach ihrer Anerkennung zu einem Teil der Kultur werden. Nachdem dies geschah, wird ein anderes Sprachspiel „Kultur“ gespielt, denn jedes Sprachspiel ist durch seine Regeln definiert.

## Schlussfolgerung

Die Kultur ist in unserer Lebensform eingebettet.<sup>4</sup> Jedes Kind schafft früher oder später, seine primitiven Schmerzäußerungen in komplexe Sprachspiele einzureihen. Man muss jedoch über ein Talent verfügen, um das komplizierte Sprachspiel „Kultur“ zu meistern und um seine außerordentlichen Gefühle in dieses Sprachspiel zu versetzen. Um übliche Gefühle in unserer Sprache auszudrücken, braucht man nicht neue Regeln einzuführen. Demgegenüber kann es dem Künstler passieren, dass die Kultur seinen Ansprüchen nicht genügt, und das eben ist der Grund der Einführung neuer Regeln.

Jeder Künstler muss jedoch den gängigen Regeln der Kultur entgegenkommen. Er darf zwar *einige* Regeln verletzen. Würde er *alle* Regeln der Kultur verletzen, hätten wir keinen Grund, seine Erzeugnisse für Kunstwerke zu halten. Er muss durch sein Kunstwerk doch Aspekte der Kultur ausdrücken, d.h. zwischen dem Kunstwerk und der Kultur muss eine interne Relation, ein integraler Zusammenhang bestehen. In diesem Sinne kann ein Kunstwerk verstanden werden als Modell der Kultur.

Das Kunstwerk steht hier in zwei wesentlichen Verhältnissen – in einem vertikalen Verhältnis zu unserer Lebensform und in einem horizontalen Verhältnis innerhalb des Sprachspiels „Kultur“. Wenn die horizontale Relation akzentuiert wird, ist Wittgensteins Auffassung der Kunst institutionell; heben wir hingegen die vertikale Relation hervor, so kann man die Kunst expressiv verstehen.

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<sup>3</sup> Diese Idee ist ausgeführt in (Özlem 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Im Kontext des *Braunen Buches* stehen die Begriffe der Kultur und der Lebensform sehr nahe. Siehe (Glock 1996, 125).

# Bemerkungen zur Formanalyse von Wittgensteins "Tractatus"

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## 1. Hintergrundannahmen

Die folgenden Überlegungen erfolgen vor dem Hintergrund, dass Wittgenstein immer bestrebt war, seine Philosophie in der Form *sprachlicher Kompositionen* zu präsentieren, wobei sich der Kompositionsstil im Laufe seines Schaffens zum Einen deutlich verändert hat, zum Anderen jedoch eine Vielzahl von Verwandtschaften aufweist. Wittgenstein erweist sich dabei stets zugleich als innovativer Künstler und philosophischer Sprachkritiker. Dieser Zug zur Innovation erfolgt gewissermaßen über die erforderliche Einheit von Inhalt und Form, deren Unterschiede bei einer philosophischen Analyse so weit wie möglich aufgehoben werden sollen. Dies zeigt sich u.a. darin, dass Inhalt und Form in eine selbstbezügliche Beziehung gestellt werden. Das, was der Text scheinbar behauptet, muss zugleich durch die seine Form *gezeigt* werden.

Dies gilt insbesondere auch für Wittgensteins "Tractatus logico-philosophicus". Dieses Werk spricht scheinbar sogleich am Beginn *über* "die Welt". Und doch kann dies nicht so sein, da wir uns immer IN dieser Welt befinden. Damit ist auch der "Tractatus" in dieser Welt, bzw. selbst – zumindest mit Blick auf die philosophische Sprache – *die* (seine) Welt.

Die nachstehenden Bemerkungen beziehen sich anscheinend allein auf die Formaspekte des "Tractatus". Es wird in der Kürze nicht gelingen, diesen Eindruck zu zerstreuen. Es kann daher nur postuliert werden, dass aus der Innenansicht des Werkes heraus diese Formanalyse immer auch eine Inhaltsbestimmung darstellt.

## 2. Fernsicht

Ähnlich der Analyse komplexerer Kunstwerke, z.B. von Sinfonien, stellt sich – soweit überhaupt eine Formanalyse angestrebt wird – häufig die Frage nach dem Analyserahmen. In der tonalen Musik sind dies Fragen nach der Tonart, dem tonalen Zentrum des Stückes, ob das Stück einen Trugschluss aufweist (als einen solchen lässt sich wohl der Satz (6) des "Tractatus" interpretieren), ob Anfang und Ende des Stückes gewissermaßen als eine Klammer des Gesamtstückes aufgefasst werden können. Dabei kann der Anfang einer Sinfonie als der Anfang einer Klammer, die bis zum Ende des ersten Satzes reicht, aber zugleich als der Anfang einer solchen, die bis zum Ende des Gesamtwerks Sinfonie reicht, gedeutet werden. Solche Analysen führen als reine, innere Werkanalysen häufig zu keiner prinzipiellen Entscheidung darüber, welche der Sichtweisen richtig bzw. – wenn mehrere akzeptiert werden – zu bevorzugen ist.

Wenn wir nun aus der Ferne auf den "Tractatus" schauen, so wird man schnell zu folgenden "Hypothesen" geführt:

- Der Text verfügt über einen *Rahmen*, der zudem vom eigentlichen *Textkorpus* unterschieden werden soll. Allerdings ist strittig, was zu diesem Rahmen gehört. Folgende Thesen bieten sich u.a. an:
- a) Wittgensteins *Vorwort* wird für die Konstitution des Rahmens berücksichtigt und der dortige Satz "Was sich überhaupt sagen lässt, lässt sich klar sagen; und wovon man nicht reden kann, darüber muss man schweigen" bildet die Anfangssäule des Rahmens. Da

der zweite Teilsatz bis auf "reden" mit Satz (7) des "Tractatus" "Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen" übereinstimmt, bietet sich dieser als Endbegrenzung des Rahmens an.

- b) Eine Alternative besteht darin, den Rahmen von Vorwort nur bis zum Satz (6.54) reichen zu lassen. Damit fällt der Satz (7) gänzlich heraus.
- Bis auf Satz (7) sind zumindest alle anderen 6 Hauptsätze Sätze von der Form "... ist ...", die irgendwie miteinander vernetzt sind, da auffällt, dass sich gewisse Ausdrücke wiederholen: "der Fall", "Tatsache", "der Gedanke", "Satz", "Wahrheitsfunktion". Insbesondere könnte Satz (1) ("Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist.") eine Art Motiv bilden, von dem aus sich das ganze Werk entfaltet.
- Satz (7) scheint dagegen von sprachlich völlig anderer Art zu sein. Insbesondere sieht es so aus, als ob er sich formal gänzlich von Satz (1) unterscheidet.

Es soll im folgenden gezeigt werden, dass eine *Nahsicht* auf den vorliegenden Gesamttext alle diese Fernbeobachtungen, die häufig leitend für die Lesart des Gesamttextes sind, als zumindest problematisch ausweist.

## 3. Der erste Satz im "Tractatus": "Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist."

Bekanntermaßen hatte schon Frege Schwierigkeiten mit der Lesart dieses Satzes. Und nicht nur das. Er kam zugleich deshalb offenbar mit dem Weiterlesen nicht voran: "Was nun Ihre eigene Schrift anbetrifft, so nehme ich gleich an dem ersten Satze Anstoß. Nicht, dass ich ihn für falsch hielt, sondern weil mir der Sinn unklar ist. 'Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist'. Das 'ist' wird entweder als bloße Copula gebraucht, oder wie das Gleichheitszeichen in dem volleren Sinne von 'ist dasselbe wie'. Während das 'ist' des Nebensatzes offenbar bloße Copula ist, kann ich das 'ist' des Hauptsatzes nur in dem Sinne eines Gleichheitszeichens verstehen. Bis hier ist, glaube ich, kein Zweifel möglich. Aber ist die Gleichung als Definition zu verstehen? Das ist nicht so deutlich."<sup>1</sup>

Frege schlägt vor den Ausdruck "alles, was der Fall ist" entweder (i) als (komplexes) Prädikat "A" und damit als Funktion mit dem Argument "w" "die Welt" aufzufassen: "A(w)". Oder wir haben (ii) einen Identitätssatz der Form "a = b", wobei nach Frege "a" und "b" Eigennamen der Form {bestimmter Artikel + beliebig komplexe Konstruktion im Singular} sein müssten sowie das "ist" durch das Zeichen "=" ausgedrückt würde. Diese Form hat Satz (1) wegen "alles, was der Fall ist" ("b") jedoch *nicht!* Auch scheint "alles, was der Fall ist" nicht so leicht als einstelliges Prädikat aufgefasst werden zu können. Die Variante (ii) scheidet für Wittgenstein ohnehin aus, da er Gleichungssätze – insbesondere wenn sie Elementarsätze sein sollen – für Scheinsätze hält (5.543, 6.2).

Wittgenstein strebt nicht nach einer eindeutigen Formangabe bei seinen (unsinnigen) Sätzen. Ihm geht es eher um sprachliche Kreationen, die es erlauben Originalität, ja zu-

<sup>1</sup> Frege, G.: Brief an Wittgenstein vom 03.04.1920. In: Janik & Berger (1989), 24 f.

weilen Einmaligkeit mit Vernetzungsangeboten an den weiteren Text zu verbinden:

- Die Konstruktion "alles, was der Fall ist" stellt im "Tractatus" ein Unikat dar, sie kommt nie wieder vor. Nahe gelegt wird, "alles, was der Fall ist" mit "die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen" zu identifizieren. Diese Formulierung taucht allerdings auch nur in 1.1 und 1.12 auf.
- Die Konstruktion "[D]ie Welt ist ..." kommt nur 7-mal vor. Nur ein einziges Mal erfüllt diese Konstruktion die genannte Form eines Identitätssatzes mit "Die Welt ist {bestimmter Artikel + Singularkonstruktion}" in der linken Position: "Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge." (1.1)
- Der Ausdruck "die Welt" kommt in einer solchen Konstruktion noch zweimal rechts von "ist" vor: "Die Gesamtheit der bestehenden Sachverhalte ist die Welt" (2.04) und "Die gesamte Wirklichkeit ist die Welt." (2.063).
- Die Phrase "die Welt" tritt letztmalig unmittelbar vor Satz (7) auf: "Er muss diese Sätze überwinden, dann sieht er die Welt richtig" (6.54).

Insbesondere die letzte Beobachtung könnte nun nahe legen, die Formulierung "die Welt" zu verwenden um eine Klammer für den gesamten Text anzunehmen, die von "Die Welt ..." in (1) bis "... die Welt richtig" in (6.54) reicht.

Dies greift allerdings viel zu kurz, da dabei zumindest eine Kettenbildung übersehen wird, die von "Die Welt ist ..." in (1) bis zu "... ist die Welt" in (2.063) reicht. Diese Kette ist jedoch für das Verständnis des "Tractatus" unerlässlich, macht doch Wittgenstein bereits vor dem Übergang zur Bildkonzeption (nicht "Bildtheorie") in (2.1) seine *holistische* Position im Unterschied zu der *semantisch-theoretischen* Position deutlich. Wir erfahren zunächst, dass die Welt die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen ist (1.11) und dass, das was der Fall ist, die Tatsache, das Bestehen von Sachverhalten sei (2). Damit scheint die Welt die Gesamtheit der bestehenden Sachverhalte zu sein. Später erfahren wir zunächst, dass das Bestehen und Nichtbestehen von Sachverhalten die Wirklichkeit sei (2.06). Damit scheint die Wirklichkeit enorm viel größer als die Welt zu sein:

- Die Welt = die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen = die Gesamtheit der bestehenden Sachverhalte
- Die (gesamte) Wirklichkeit = die Gesamtheit der bestehenden *und nichtbestehenden* Sachverhalte.

Dann verblüfft uns Wittgenstein jedoch mit der noch durch den Einschub "gesamte" verstärkten Bemerkung in (2.063): "Die gesamte Wirklichkeit ist die Welt."

Dies ist natürlich die einzig mögliche Auskunft, die uns Wittgenstein als Philosophiekritiker geben kann. Denn es gibt nichts, was "größer" ist als die Welt. Nur der sprachlich irritierte Philosoph kann annehmen, dass es außerhalb der Welt noch Weiteres, wenn vielleicht auch nur Negatives gibt, was zwar nicht zur Welt aber immerhin noch zur Wirklichkeit gehört. Insbesondere wäre es doch für die Ethik vielleicht sinnvoll Gutes selbst dann als wirklich zu erweisen, wenn wir keine Chance haben, es in der Welt aufzufinden.

Diese Verblüffung sollte jedoch rasch verschwinden, wenn wir auf einige weitere Bemerkungen Wittgensteins schauen: "Denn, die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen bestimmt, was der Fall ist und auch, was alles nicht der Fall ist." (1.12) Diese Bemerkung verdeutlicht, dass es von der philosophischen Warte aus unmöglich ist eine lokale, auf "Weltausschnitte" gerichtete und damit theoretische Perspektive einzunehmen und zu sagen: "An dieser Stelle der Welt in nichts." Fälle davon, was nicht der Fall ist, können

nicht unter Verwendung der Negation lokal *gesagt* werden. Die Welt als Ganzes, eben die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, muss *zeigen*, dass eine bestimmte Konfiguration von Dingen, ein Sachverhalt, relativ zur Gesamtwelt logisch möglich ist, jedoch in der Welt nicht vorkommt. Auch können wir aus bestimmten schon bekannten Tatsachen nicht auf das Fehlen anderer Tatsachen schließen, da nicht nur die Tatsachen (1.21), sondern "bereits" die Sachverhalte voneinander unabhängig sind (2.061 und 2.062).

Betrachten wir die Welt philosophisch, wobei sich der Standpunkt des Betrachters immer nur innerhalb der Welt befinden kann, dann betrachten wir die Welt als Ganzes und somit *holistisch*. Hierbei entfällt – der theoretisch immer notwendige – Schritt zur Unterscheidung zwischen bestehenden Sachverhalten – (positiven) Tatsachen (2.06) – und nichtbestehenden Sachverhalten – negativen Tatsachen (2.06). Die Unterscheidung zwischen Welt und Wirklichkeit ist aus der Gesamtheitsperspektive unsinnig. Insbesondere ist die Logik kein Mittel um die Unterteilung in Bestehendes (die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen) und Nichtbestehendes zu rechtfertigen: "Die Logik handelt von jeder Möglichkeit und alle Möglichkeiten sind ihre Tatsachen." (2.0121)

Ein weiteres Argument gegen die mögliche Klammer, die mittels "die Welt" von (1) bis (6.54) reichen könnte, ist die relativ häufige Verwendung der Phrase "die Welt" im Text und der Gebrauch weiterer Formulierungen, in denen "Welt" vorkommt. Die Formulierung "die Welt" findet sich bis zur 5. Stufe: 1.1, 1.2 (2. Stufe), 1.11, 1.13, 2.04, 2.19, 4.26 [2x], 5.61, 5.62, 6.43 [3x], 6.44, 6.54 (3. Stufe), 2.063, 5.526, 5.621, 5.631, 5.641, 6.124, 6.342, 6.373, 6.431, 6.432 (4. Stufe), 2.0211, 4.2211 (5. Stufe). Daneben gibt es die Varianten "der Welt", "eine Welt", "keine Welt", "zur Welt", "meine(r) Welt" (ab 5.6), "gedachte Welt" (2.022), "unsere Welt" (6.1233), "unlogische Welt" (3.031), "Sprache und Welt" (4.014) sowie die Vorkommen in "weltspiegelnde" (5.511), "Weltbeschreibung" (6.341, 6.343, 6.3432) und "Weltanschauung" (6.3671). Außerdem finden sich Textteile, in denen die Verwendung von "Welt" auffällig häufig ist: Zwischen (5.6) und (5.641) (12 Abschnitte) haben wir 17 Vorkommen, wobei nur (5.6331), (5.634) und (5.64) ohne "Welt" auskommen! Die "Welt"-Kette ist in (5.6)–(5.61)–(5.62)–(5.621)–(5.63)–(5.631)–(5.632)–(5.633) durchgehend!<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. Zum Problem der Komposition der Verbindungen der 7 Hauptsätze

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

<sup>2</sup> Darin befinden sich alle Vorkommen von "Weltbeschreibung". Eine weitere Kette mit 9 verschiedenen Vorkommen von "Welt" haben wir in (6.341)–(6.342)–(6.343)–(6.3431)–(6.3432). Solche Ketten sind Kandidaten für Fasern (PU 67), über die sich durch "einander Übergreifen" (PU 66, 67) familienähnliche Fäden im "Tractatus" ausmachen ließen. Der Abschnitt (6.4) weist mit allen Untereinträgen immerhin 14 Vorkommen von "Welt" auf.

Folgendes können wir beobachten:

- Die Verbindung zwischen (1) und (2) geschieht nur partiell, da in (2) "alles" nicht mehr vorkommt.
- Die Verknüpfung zwischen (2) und (3) wird nur über eine Parenthese ("die Tatsache") hergestellt, die zudem in (3) im Plural erscheint. Außerdem tritt dieser Ausdruck zweimal links vom "ist" auf.
- In (3) wird neben "der Gedanke" "Das logische Bild" zusätzlich eingeführt.
- Der Übergang von (3) zu (4) ist der einzige, der exakt der Form von "... ist x" zu "x ist ..." folgt.
- Zwischen (4) und (5) geht "sinnvolle" verloren.
- Die Verbindung zwischen (5) und (6) erfolgt nur über den Ausdruck "Wahrheitsfunktion", da zugleich vom unbestimmten Artikel ("eine") zum bestimmten im Genitiv ("der") gewechselt wird.
- (5) ist der erste Abschnitt, der einen zweiten – allerdings geklammerten – Satz enthält, der zudem eine reflexive Konstruktion ("seiner selbst") aufweist.
- Analog zu (3) wird in (6) eine weitere Einfügung mit Genitivweiterung ("Die allgemeine Form") vorgenommen.
- In (6) erscheint erstmals ein formaler Ausdruck nach dem "ist:"
- Analog zu (5) enthält (6) zwei Sätze, wobei erstmalig auf dieser Stufe ein Demonstrativpronomen ("Dies") auftritt.
- Einerseits wird also vordergründig eine Art begriffliche Kettenbildung suggeriert, die sich beim näheren Hinsehen allerdings nahezu auflöst, weil wir Probleme haben das Bildungsprinzip der Kette auszumachen. Der Übergang von (2) zu (3) wird zuweilen zum Maßstab erhoben. So nimmt Erbacher (2010, 84) für die ersten 6 Abschnitte die Formen "a ist b", "b ist c", "c ist d", "d ist e", "e ist f" und "f ist g" an. Diese Ansicht lässt sich bei näherem Hinschauen nicht aufrechterhalten.

## 5. Der letzte Satz

Der Satz "Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen." scheint nun derart stark von den anderen Sätzen abzuweichen, dass er nicht zum Textkorpus zu gehören scheint. Auch hier bestehen ernste Zweifel:

- Zunächst könnte man einwenden, dass schon der Ausdruck "Wovon" hier zum ersten Mal auftritt, also ein Unikat darstellt. Dies ist jedoch angesichts der Tatsache, dass die Phrase "alles, was der Fall ist" aus (1) nie wieder vorkommt, kein gutes Argument. Der Einschub "die Tatsache" aus (2) hat nur noch eine Wiederholung in (2.16).
- Auch die Verwendung von "man" erscheint ungewöhnlich. Jedoch führt Wittgenstein dieses Wort tief eingebettet bereits in (2.0211) ein und verwendet es im Text dann weitere 107-mal. Diese Methode, bestimmte Ausdrücke bereits frühzeitig zu verwenden, ehe sie gewissermaßen augenfällig werden, ist typisch für Wittgensteins Vorgehen: "Bild" wird bereits in (2.0211) gebraucht, ehe es in (2.1) prononciert erscheint. Die Phrase "das logische Bild" taucht bereits in (2.182) und (2.19) auf um dann letztmalig in (3) auf-

zutreten. Interessant ist hier auch der Aufstieg von der 4. über die 3. zur 1. Stufe. "Wahrheitsfunktion" ist nicht etwa neu in (5), sondern wurde schon in (3.3441) verwendet. Auch das auffällige "Wir" in (2.1) erscheint bereits in (2.0121). "Die allgemeine Form" (6) findet sich bereits in (3.312).

- Die Verwendung von "man" erfolgt fast ausschließlich im Kontext von Modalverben, wobei die Fassungen mit Formen von "können" (66-mal) dominieren. Genau in diesem Kontext erscheint es auch im Satz (7)!
- Die Wendung "von .. sprechen" kommt bereits in (3.221) vor. Neu ist in (7) also das "wovon ... sprechen".
- Von "darüber" gibt es nur noch ein Vorkommen in (5.557) – wieder eine Vorerwähnung.
- "schweigen" hat ebenfalls eine Vorerwähnung allerdings in "stillschweigenden Abmachungen" in (4.002).

Der letzte Satz weicht zwar auf eindrucksvolle Weise zum Teil deutlich von dem voraus gehenden Text ab. Zugleich ist er aber auch auf sichtbare Weise mit dem Text verwoben. Der letzte Satz ist in dieser Hinsicht nicht prinzipiell von dem ersten Satz verschieden. Auch dieser weicht in bestimmter, allerdings anderer Weise signifikant von restlichen Text ab und gibt gleichzeitig den Startschuss für eine eindrucksvolle Sprachkomposition, die sich als komplexes Netzwerk darstellt.

## 6. Ausblick

Eine Quintessenz dieser Formanalyse bildet der Nachweis, das eine dichotomische Unterteilung des Wittgensteinschen Textes in *Rahmen* und *Textkorpus* höchst fragwürdig ist. Analog zu anderen Kunstwerken wie z.B. Sinfonien ist gerade die holistische Bestimmung der Tonalität, die sich nicht in der Angabe der Tonart erschöpfen kann, anzustreben. Dies kann nur über eine detaillierte Formanalyse des Gesamtwerkes erreicht werden, die unvoreingenommen auf die sich zeigenden internen Muster ausgerichtet ist.

Es bleibt bislang eine Vermutung, inwieweit sich sowohl Parallelen als auch Unterschiede in den Kompositionsmustern des "Tractatus" und der "Philosophischen Untersuchungen" aufweisen lassen. Die veränderte Vorgehensweise in der philosophischen Kritik geht sicher mit einem veränderten Kompositionsstil einher. Doch wie will man von vornherein ausschließen, dass sich z.B. familienähnliche Strukturen in beiden Werken finden lassen?

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# Warum der Aal nicht vorkommt – Eine Überlegung zu Wittgensteins „Wörterbuch für Volksschulen“

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In der Korrespondenz zwischen dem Volksschullehrer Ludwig Wittgenstein und dem Verlag Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky wird im April 1925 im Zusammenhang mit Überlegungen zur Herausgabe eines Wörterbuches für den Volksschulunterricht der Begriff „Rechtschreibbuch des täglichen Lebens für Landschulen“ verwendet (Wittgenstein 1977, IX). Ist die solcherart beschriebene Absicht, welche dem intendierten Lehrwerk zugrundegelegt wird, in der Realisierung dieses Schulbehelfes auffindbar?

Der Verfasser lässt die alphabetische Ordnung in seinem Buch mit dem Wort „Aas“ anheben. Der „Aal“ ist dort nicht vorzufinden.

Im Geleitwort stellt Wittgenstein fest: „In das Wörterbuch sollen nur solche, aber alle solche Wörter aufgenommen werden, die österreichischen Volksschülern geläufig sind. Also auch viele gute deutsche Wörter nicht, die in Österreich ungebräuchlich sind.... Die Ausdrücke der Mundart sind nur soweit aufzunehmen, als sie in die gebildete Sprache Eingang gefunden haben, wie zum Bsp. Heferl, Packel, Lacke, u.a.“ (Wittgenstein 1977, XXVIIIf). Diese Auswahlkriterien haben zunächst die Kritik schulbehördlicher Fachleute hervorgerufen. Der niederösterreichische Bezirksschulinspektor Eduard Buxbaum monierte das Fehlen bestimmter Wörter unter Bezugnahme auf den „Kädingschen Häufigkeitsindex“. „Aar“ oder „Pfau“ müssten demnach in einem solchen Volksschulbuch unbedingt Platz finden. Ebenso stellte er „sachliche Fehler“ fest, etwa die Gleichsetzung von „Schulter“ und „Achsel“, welche er unter Berufung auf das Wörterbuch von Friedrich Kluge nicht gelten lassen wollte.

In den Aussagen Wittgensteins und seines Kritikers wird eine Differenz offenbar, die nicht allein mit fachlicher Kompetenz oder gar mit deren Mangel zu begründen ist. Buxbaums Anmerkungen standen auf wissenschaftlichem Grund – gemäß dem Zeitverständnis sowie dem Bedürfnis nach statistisch objektivierbaren Beurteilungskriterien gerade im Bereich der Pädagogik. Wittgenstein sind derartige Kriterien sicher nicht unbekannt gewesen. Was mag ihn dazu veranlasst haben, diese Begründungskriterien in deren Einzigkeitsanspruch hinter sich zu lassen?

Zunächst ist in diesem Zusammenhang festzuhalten, dass Wittgensteins Arbeit eine Pionierleistung darstellte. Der Verlag hält in einem Schreiben an den Verfasser dezierniert fest: „Im Ministerium wurde uns mitgeteilt, daß ein Wörterbuch für Volksschulen vorläufig noch nicht existiert, und daß ein solches jedenfalls den Bedürfnissen der Schulen entgegenkommen würde“ (Wittgenstein 1977, X). Und der Fachmann Buxbaum bemerkt in seiner kritischen Stellungnahme: „Die Verwendung eines geeigneten Wörterbuches ist eine anerkannte Forderung nicht nur der neueren, sondern auch der älteren Volksschulmethodik“ (Wittgenstein 1977, XI). Der vorgesetzte Behördenvertreter und der Volksschullehrer samt seinem Verlag sind sich also in der Beurteilung der Notwendigkeit eines solchen Buches einig. Aber gerade diese Einigkeit im Hinblick auf die Notwendigkeit scheint die Differenz herbeigeführt zu haben. Diese ergibt sich demnach nicht aus der Sache, sondern aus der jener zuvorliegenden Anschauung dieser Sache. Für den Kritiker Buxbaum ist die Verankerung in der aktuellen Vorstellung von Wissenschaftlichkeit die un-

verzichtbare Bedingung. Dies drückt er auch in seiner Bezugnahme auf den „Kädingschen Häufigkeitsindex“ aus. Demgegenüber steht die sich primär der aktuellen Erfahrung bedienende Vorgehensweise des Wörterbuchautors. Er verweist darauf, dass auf dem Markt befindliche große Wörterbücher von der Landbevölkerung nicht angenommen werden, weil sie zu umfangreich, für diese Bevölkerungsschicht zu teuer und für Volksschulkinder zu unhandlich und zu schwer sind. Er beschreibt die Genese des Inhaltes seines eigenen Lehrwerkes als Produkt eines Notbehelfes: er habe nämlich die den Kindern in der 4. und 5. Klasse notwendigen Wörter denselben diktiert, was allerdings zu keiner befriedigenden Lösung geführt habe (Wittgenstein 1977, XXVIIIf). Die nach gut bedachten Kriterien tatsächlich vorgenommene Aufnahme von Mundartwörtern lässt sich zudem auch nicht mit dem die Wissenschaftlichkeit garantierenden „Häufigkeitsindex“ rechtfertigen – es sei denn, dass Wittgenstein gerade in diesen Fällen gleichsam auf einen von ihm selbst in der Praxis erhobenen Index rekurriert, welcher allerdings nicht auf eine wissenschaftlich verankerte Vorstellung von einem gesamten deutschen Sprachgebiet ausgerichtet ist, sondern auf eine ganz bestimmte, sich unter Verwendung gerade dieser Wörter ausdrückende Lebenswirklichkeit. Diese Lebenswirklichkeit in ihrer „Verwörtlichung“ versuchte Wittgenstein anhand der von seinen Schülern in deren Aufsätzen gebrauchten Wörter zu systematisieren, und sowohl im Diktat als auch im gedruckten Wörterbuch stützte er sich auf die Erfahrungen der Kinder, wie sie in deren Aufsätzen zur Evidenz kamen.

Es kann als durchaus angemessen betrachtet werden, dieses Vorgehen im Zusammenhang zu sehen mit Wittgensteins Vorstellung vom Ethos des Lehrerberufes. Gemäß einer späten Überlieferung seitens eines Kollegen hat Wittgenstein den Beruf des Volksschullehrers deshalb angestrebt, weil dieser „ganz anspruchslos“ sei (Leinfellner – Windholz 2005, 107).

Es ist die Frage, ob – wie es Elisabeth Leinfellner tut – diese Bemerkung „ganz anspruchslos“ tatsächlich „scharf kontrastiert“ zu der Aussage Wittgensteins während seiner Kriegsgefangenenzeit, dass er den Wunsch habe, Priester zu werden (Leinfellner – Windholz 2005, 107). Jene Äußerung könnte – nun freilich zu Leinfellners Ansicht scharf kontrastierend – in Zusammenhang gebracht werden mit Wittgensteins intensiver Auseinandersetzung mit Ljew Nikolajewitsch Tolstoj. Die in der „Kurzen Darlegung des Evangeliums“ zum Ausdruck gebrachten Überlegungen des russischen Dichters und Denkers haben Wittgenstein in der Zeit des ersten Weltkrieges stark beschäftigt. In einem solchen Zusammenhang ist es gerechtfertigt, diesen Begriff des „Anspruchslosen“ im Sinne der Tugend der „Temperantia“ zu verstehen. Diese verwirklicht sich gemäß Thomas de Aquino in der Bescheidenheit (Rahner – Vorgrimler 1961, 235). Wenn Wittgenstein versucht, seine Herkunft aus reichem Hause zu verbergen, so erfüllt er damit Forderungen dieser Tugend durch Akte der Bescheidenheit. Die Hinwendung zum Beruf des Volksschullehrers wäre dann genau in diesen Zusammenhängen zu sehen, zumal Wittgenstein darauf Wert legte, dass auch der Ort seiner Tätigkeit durch Bescheidenheit geprägt sei. Über den ihm zuerst zugewiesenen Wallfahrtsort Maria

Schutz sagte er ablehnend: „Ich habe hier einen Springbrunnen und einen Park gesehen, das ist nichts für mich, ich wünsche ganz ländliche Verhältnisse“ (Leinfellner – Windholz 2005, 47). In Trattenbach – einem bäuerlich und kleinindustriell geprägten Dorf – sah er seine Vorstellung verwirklicht. Ein also in diesem Sinne bescheidener Beruf im bescheidenen Ambiente sollte ihn mit den bescheidenen und damit einfachen Menschen verbinden. Diese vielfach manifeste Bescheidenheit ist ein Akt gegen die Eitelkeit, gesetzt von einem Menschen, der noch viel später von sich selbst konstatierte: „Beschmutze alles mit meiner Eitelkeit“ (Wittgenstein 2000, 47).

Wittgenstein suchte – im Gegensatz zu intellektuellen wiener Sommerfrischlern wie Arthur Schnitzler, Sigmund Freud oder auch Karl Wittgenstein, welche sich in Niederösterreichs Gebirgsregionen während der Ferienzeit ihre Stadt auf dem Lande konstruierten – mit der autochthonen Bevölkerung als dienstbereiter Bühnenstaffage und Garant einer inszenierten „Idylle“ – keine angenehme selbstkonstruierte Gegenwelt. Er muss sich klar darüber gewesen sein, dass er aus der ihm gewohnten Umgebung schlechter Menschen in eine ihm bisher ungewohnte Umgebung ebenso schlechter Menschen kommt. Dies lässt sich aus der Bemerkung in einem Brief an Russell vom November 1921 schließen, wo es heißt: „Nicht allein die Trattenbacher sind schlechter, als alle übrigen Menschen“ (Leinfellner – Windholz 2005, 51).

Er steht damit dem Dichter Peter Rosegger nahe, der – aus kleinbäuerlichem Milieu stammend – als wissender Betrachter der Gegebenheiten seiner Herkunft notierte: „Die städtischen Elemente sind beim Bauern gerade gut genug, um seine schlichte Natürlichkeit zu ersticken, jedoch viel zu wenig, um die Bestie in ihm zu zähmen“ (vgl.: Schober 1989, 312f). Sein Angebot war 1902 die Gründung der „Waldschule“ im Geburtsort Alpl in der Steiermark, nicht weit hinter dem Feistritzsattel gelegen, der bei Trattenbach seinen Anstieg nimmt.

Für Wittgenstein kann bezüglich der theoretischen Grundlegung und deren Überführung in die Lebenspraxis Tolstoj als treibendes Vorbild mit Recht angenommen werden (Milkov 2003, 4). Auch dieser hatte sich ja in vielfältigster Hinsicht zurückgezogen – und dies durchaus in der Absicht, den Eitelkeiten des vermeintlich kulturell relevanten großstädtischen Gehabes und Getues den Rücken zu kehren. Dies schloss selbstredend eigenes kulturelles Handeln nicht aus, wie es Tolstojs Gespräche über musikalische Fragen mit dem bedeutenden Theoretiker und Komponisten Sergej Iwanowitsch Tanejew, der oftmals Gast auf dem Gut Jasnaja Poljana war, belegen. Auch Wittgenstein hat als Volksschullehrer die Musik in ihrer höchsten Kunstentfaltung aktiv betrieben. In Puchberg am Schneeberg etwa mit dem dortigen Kollegen Rudolf Koder.

Jasnaja Poljana ist aber gleichsam auch ein Markenname für Tolstojs pädagogische Bemühungen um die Bauernkinder. Dies ist selbstverständlich ebenfalls kulturelles Handeln in relevantester Form. Das dort gehabte unterrichtliche Vorgehen beruhte in einem hohen Maße auf der Vorstellungswelt der Kinder. Dieses Konzept war begründet in Tolstojs Ansicht, dass die Wörter und Phrasen und die mit deren Hilfe erzählten Geschichten nur dann Bedeutung haben, wenn sie in der praktischen Tätigkeit einer Gemeinschaft verankert sind (Milkov 2003, 9). Dieser Bezug auf tatsächlich existenzbegründendes Handeln macht aber auch den Kontrast zu dem deutlich, wovon sich Tolstoj – und mit ihm Wittgenstein – abwendet, nämlich von der Eitelkeit vermeintlich kulturnerrelevanter Urbanität. Der Philosoph Vladimir Segejeweitsch Solowjew – ein Denkgefährte Dostojewskijs ebenso wie Tolstojs – at-

testiert den in dieser Eitelkeit befangenen Menschen die „Leerheit eines Scheinlebens“, für welches der Tod nicht nur unvermeidlich, sondern sogar äußerst erwünscht ist (Solowjew 1985, 34). Und er fragt: „Kann man sich die unendlich fortdauernde Existenz irgendeiner Dame der höheren Gesellschaft oder irgendeines Sportsmannes oder Kartenspielers vorstellen, ohne daß einen entsetzliche Schwermut befele?“ (Solowjew 1985, 34). Diese Menschen setzen permanent Akte der Eitelkeit, deren Endprodukt die Leere ist. Demgegenüber steht Tolstojs Lehre von der Tätigkeit als Realisierung eines aktiven Lebens, in welchem es in letzter Konsequenz kein leeres Gerede geben kann, weil sich auch alles sprachliche Handeln innerhalb dieses tätigen Lebens und seines Flusses abspielt. Erst ein solches Leben, das sich in relevanten Handlungen erfüllt, hat Anspruch auf das Ewige. Für Tolstoj bedeutet ewiges Leben aber ein Leben außerhalb zeitlicher Kriterien.

Wittgenstein stellt im „Tractatus“ fest: „Die Lösung des Rätsels des Lebens in Raum und Zeit liegt *außerhalb* von Raum und Zeit“ (Wittgenstein 1989, § 6.4312).

Das Handeln des Volksschullehrers von Trattenbach darf demnach – Tolstoj folgend – verstanden werden als ein praktisches Solches, welches zutiefst im Zusammenhang mit jener Gemeinschaft zu begreifen ist, innerhalb derer es stattfindet.

Die Anspruchslosigkeit der Gegebenheiten ermöglicht die Akte gegen die Eitelkeit, sie evoziert aber gleichermaßen den Anspruch, die Gegebenheiten des Lebens und damit dieses selbst im Fluß zu halten. Dieses „Im Fluß Halten“ ist ein Akt, welcher auf Bildung beruhen muss, auf einer Bildung, welche sich in diesem Fluß gebildet hat.

Was mag dies alles nun – bezogen auf die Erfahrungen des Volksschullehrers Wittgenstein mit den Verhältnissen in Trattenbach, Haßbach, Puchberg am Schneeberg und Otterthal – bedeuten? Wie spiegelt es sich in seinem „Wörterbuch“ wieder?

Nachdrücklich muss nochmals darauf verwiesen werden, dass dieses Werk eine Pioniertat darstellte. Dem bis dato Vergleichslosen konnte der Autor mithin nichts Vergleichbares zugrunde legen. Umso mehr war er genötigt, seine Erfahrungen einzubringen. Ein umso größeres Anliegen mag es ihm gewesen sein, seine an Tolstoj geschulten Überzeugungen in diesem Büchlein bedeutsam werden zu lassen. Aus einem solchen Blickwinkel zielen die kritischen Anmerkungen des Fachinspektors Buxbaum daneben. In der praktischen Tätigkeit der von Wittgenstein mit dem Buch bedienten Gesellschaft ist „Aar“ ohne Relevanz, der „Adler“, welcher im Wörterbuch selbstverständlich vorkommt, deckt das Gemeinte und Erfahrene vollkommen und adäquat ab. „Schulter“ und „Achsel“ sind damals in der ländlichen österreichischen Umgangssprache in der Tat Synonyme. „Achsel“ war das zumeist oder überhaupt ausschließlich verwendete Wort und es ist in diesem Zusammenhang anzumerken, dass das ursprünglich aus dem Westgermanischen stammende Wort „Schulter“ relativ spät in die Hochsprache eingedrungen ist. Die diesbezügliche Kritik des Fachinspektors Buxbaum ist rein lexikalisch fundiert – lexikalisch, wie sein mit behördlicher Autorität ausgestatteter Bildungsanspruch. Wittgensteins Bildungsanspruch nähert sich hier aber aus einer anderen Quelle. Diese ist etwas Lebendiges und kaum Kodifizierbares. Später wird er diese Quelle und sein eigenes Verhalten ihr gegenüber mit den Worten umschreiben: „Nur im Fluß des Lebens haben die Worte ihre Bedeutung“ (Wittgenstein 1984, 468).



Bei der Untersuchung seines „Wörterbuches“ kann auch schon der Volksschullehrer Wittgenstein durch einen später niedergeschriebenen Gedanken im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes beim Wort genommen werden. Mag der „Kädingsche Häufigkeitsindex“ seine statistische Richtigkeit beanspruchen – aber der Aal ist nicht nur im Trattenbach, sondern auch im Fluß des Lebens der an dessen Ufern lebenden Menschen nicht heimisch. Und ebenso wird deren Lebensfluß von keinem „Aal“, sondern vom Adler überflogen.

Die von Wittgenstein in seinem Volksschulwörterbuch vorgenommene Begrenzung ist jedoch keineswegs als Beschränkung mißzuverstehen, sondern ist als begleitende Methodik im „Prozeß des Lernens“ (Wittgenstein 1984, 470) zu begreifen, eines Lernens, dessen Prozeßhaftigkeit in gesammelter Erfahrung zu Tage tritt „und nicht durch einen Kurs in der Schule“ (Wittgenstein 1984, 469). So gesehen strömt selbstverständlich jeder Lebensfluß dem Meer entgegen, aber um dieses vorbereitet zu erreichen ist es notwendig, sich den Strömungen des eigenen Lebensflusses gewachsen zu zeigen.

Mit einem Erlaß des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht vom 12. Oktober 1925 wurde Wittgensteins Wörterbuch „zum Unterrichtsgebrauch an allgemeinen Volksschulen und an Bürgerschulen allgemein zugelassen“. Damit wurde das Bestreben des Volksschullehrers sogar noch auf eine höhere schulische Ebene gehoben, da sein Werk nicht nur für den Grundschulunterricht als geeignet erachtet wurde, sondern darüberhinaus noch für einen im damaligen Österreich sehr angesehenen weiterführenden Schultyp.

Auch diese – durchaus eine Qualität darstellende – Tatsache ist im Zusammenhang mit Wittgensteins Vorstellung

vom „ganz Anspruchslosen“ zu betrachten. Und so muss es eine Forderung an die Rezipierenden von Wittgensteins Gedanken sein, dessen „Wörterbuch“ als ein wichtiges Ausdrucksmittel eben dieser seiner Gedanken zu begreifen, an dessen Details manche Kontinuität seines philosophischen Wollens offenbar wird. Eine Beschäftigung mit diesem nur scheinbaren Nebenwerk erweckt zudem das Bedürfnis, sich Gedanken darüber zu machen, welchen Anspruch das „ganz Anspruchslose“ Wittgensteins an uns stellt.

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# „Das gute Österreichische“ – Anmerkungen zu Ludwig Wittgenstein aus dem Blickwinkel der Geschichtswissenschaft

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Ein Mensch steht nicht in einer Tradition, er tritt vielmehr in sie ein (vgl. Flasch 2008, 65). Dies setzt voraus, dass Tradition etwas bereits Vorhandenes ist. So simpel diese Feststellung klingen mag – sie desavouiert doch die Bemühungen von Nachgeborenen, ihnen wertvoll gewordene Persönlichkeiten der Vergangenheit Plätze in der Geschichte *ausschließlich* gemäß eigener Verehrungsbedürfnisse zuzuweisen, damit diese Verehrten in einen stets aktualisierten Kanon hineinpassen. Solch ein von den Nachgeborenen dem jeweils modernen Denken angepasster Kanon beinhaltet zwangsläufig Nivelliert-Heterogenes und sagt über die Bedürfnisse dieser Nachgeborenen mehr aus als über die Kanonisierten, weil er die Bedürfnisse der Kanonisierenden in den Mittelpunkt stellt. Solche Nachgeborene haben im Falle Ludwig Wittgensteins durch dessen Verortung in „Wittgensteins Wien“ Zusammenhänge postuliert, welche den Philosophen einer ganz bestimmten Vorstellung von „modern“ anpassen und damit vergemeinschaftet mit weiteren Persönlichkeiten, welche diese Modernität repräsentieren. Es wird deutlich, dass eine solche Art kanonisierender Platzzuweisung in hohem Maße dazu dient, Phänomene, welche Ergebnisse historischer Prozesse sind, auf einem Punkt zu bündeln, sodass dieser zum „punctum saliens“ wird, zu jenem Ereignis, von welchem aus der Sprung ins „Moderne“ getan wird, der entscheidende Schritt als erwünschter „Fortschritt“ zu begreifen ist.

Aber die Geschichtswissenschaft kennt zwei Begriffe, welche derartige Sicht- und Vorgehensweisen in Frage stellen. Zum Einen: die „longue durée“, das Phänomen des Langwährenden, in welchem verschiedene Entwicklungsprozesse in der für das letztlich Erreichte benötigten Zeit ablaufen. Diese benötigte Zeit ist so lange, wie sie ist, auch wenn spätere Betrachtung sie zu einem Punkt zusammenpressen möchte.

Zum Zweiten: in der österreichischen Geschichtsforschung wird vom „langen 19. Jahrhundert“ gesprochen (Vocelka 2010, 144). Dieses beginnt mit den Abwehrkämpfen gegen Frankreich vor 1800 und schließt mit dem Ende des Habsburgerstaates 1918, in vielen Aspekten sogar erst mit dem Anschluß an Hitlerdeutschland 1938.

Solche Längen in all ihren verschiedenen Geschwindigkeiten sind aber keine Leerstellen der Entwicklung. In ihnen gibt es entscheidende Impulsschläge, welche für Geschehen sorgen. In solchen Dauern geschieht demnach Zusammengehöriges, entsteht aufeinander Bezogenes. Eine Bezugnahme auf diese Dauer ist zum Verständnis jedes in sie eingebetteten Phänomenes notwendig. Denn, so der österreichische Historiker Ernst Hanisch: „Die Kultur einer Gesellschaft entsteht nicht ad hoc. In den Tiefenstrukturen der Werthaltungen fließen kollektive Erfahrungen aus Jahrhunderten. Der Historiker trifft auf das ‚Gefängnis der langen Dauer‘ – auf scheinbar unbewegliche Geschichte“ (Hanisch 1994, 23).

Was aber für die Kultur in toto gilt, das kann auch über deren partielle Erscheinungsformen ausgesagt werden, etwa über eine kulturrelevante Persönlichkeit und deren Biographie. Eine solche kann erschöpfend nicht von einem Punkt aus interpretiert werden. Leben ist ein sich Erstreckendes.

In einer Eintragung Wittgensteins vom 7. November des Jahres 1929 heißt es: „Das gute Österreichische (Grillparzer, Lenau, Bruckner, Labor) ist besonders schwer zu verstehen“ (Wittgenstein 1984, 454). Die Exempla, welche der Philosoph anführt – zwei Literaten, zwei Musiker – repräsentieren etwa 130 Jahre österreichischer Kulturgeschichte und letztendlich genau dieses „lange 19. Jahrhundert“. Darüberhinaus müssen diese vier Persönlichkeiten gerade im Hinblick auf Wittgenstein als Exponenten der geistigen Klimata jener gedehnten Epoche erkannt werden, in deren auch biographischer Exponiertheit sich für Wittgenstein Relevantes offenbart.

Als Beispiel diene das Problem des Selbstmordes in der Familie, mit dem Wittgenstein konfrontiert worden war. Für Grillparzer war der Selbstmord von Mutter und Bruder zweifellos ein tiefprägendes Ereignis. Künstlerisch hat er sich damit in seinem Gedicht „An die vorausgegangenen Lieben“ auseinandergesetzt. Den Text prägt stille Melancholie, er ist aber weit entfernt von Gedanken an die Unerlöstheit der beiden Toten. Grillparzer spricht sie vielmehr als Himmelswesen an. Von ihnen hofft er, dass sie ihm in ihrer Nähe eine stille Kammer zum Dichten und Denken bereiten.

Wenn Wittgenstein meint, das „gute Österreichische“ sei „in gewissem Sinne subtiler als alles andere und seine Wahrheit ist nie auf Seiten der Wahrscheinlichkeit“, so ist genau in diesem grillparzer’schen Text Bestätigendes zu finden. Weitab von verbreiteten Vorstellungen über das Los von Selbstmördern im Jenseits drückt er in subtiler Weise eschatologische Hoffnung aus, offenbart ein katholisch geprägtes religiöses Klima, dessen Denk- und Verhaltensweisen und dessen Hoffnungspotential in der Geschichtswissenschaft mit dem Begriff „Pietas Austriaca“ umschrieben wird (Mayer 2009).

Selbstmord ist in diesem langen Jahrhundert in Österreich ein permanentes Thema, welches seine allerhöchste Eskalation im Kronprinzen Rudolf findet, der sich 1889 im Jagdschloss Mayerling samt seiner geliebten Mary Vetsera ums Leben bringt.

Anders als Grillparzer – nämlich als damals vielgelesener Feuilletonist – behandelte Daniel Spitzer dieses Thema und dessen Ursachen. Als solche führt er u.a. die Politik und verschmähte Liebe an, aber auch einen Guglhupf, der nicht zu seiner vollen Entfaltung kommen wollte, oder, dass jemand zu den Feiertagen seiner Familie eine Überraschung bereiten wollte.

Diese unterschiedlichen Behandlungen jenes Themas erweisen eine selbstverständliche Vorhandenheit desselben durch die ganze Epoche. Die Akte der Selbstvernichtung sind keine plötzlich-explosiven Erscheinungen der „Wiener Moderne“ um 1900. Die spektakulären Fälle dieser Jahre, als deren kulminierendster gerne jener des Otto Weininger angesehen wird, setzen vielmehr eine Reihe fort. Damit manifestieren sie mitnichten den durch die Verhältnisse endlich zum Überlaufen gebrachten kochenden Topf, vielmehr kann festgestellt werden, dass im langen 19. Jahrhundert dieser Topf immer wieder übergelaufen ist.

Mit der Erwähnung von Nikolaus Lenau verweist Wittgenstein auf ein weiteres epochenimmanentes Phänomen mit hohem Gefährdungspotential: den Wahnsinn. Neben diesem Dichter ist es zumal der Komponist Hugo Wolf, an welchem jene Geistesgefährdung des künstlerisch tätigen Menschen, der in seinem Künstlertum das Ästhetische und das Ethische verwirklichen möchte, manifest wird. Aber auch auf anderer Ebene, etwa jener des Erzhauses Habsburg, lernt jenes Zeitalter mit dem Thema in Permanenz des zum Tode kranken Geistes umzugehen.

Lenau ist für Wittgenstein zudem der Dichter des „katholischen Faust“ (Wittgenstein 1984, 497). Diese Einschätzung mag belegen, dass in Wittgensteins Österreich gleichermaßen wie Selbstmord und Geisteskrankheit auch die Gedankenwelt der „Pietas Austriaca“ allgemein thematisch ist. Deren Bedeutung liegt in der Parallelität von religiöser Begründung und Alltagsvorhandenheit. Dies erweist sich etwa in den hierzulande gebräuchlichen Vornamen. Wittgensteins katholische Mutter gibt dafür ein exquisites Beispiel. Ihre Name „Leopoldine“ ist nachgerade grundtypisch als verweiblichte Form des Namens des Markgrafen Leopold III., eines in den habsburgischen Ländern seit Jahrhunderten volkstümlichen Heiligen. Sein Gedenktag am 15. November war eine allgemein wahrgenommene Staats- und Volksaktion, mit populären Vergnügungen und der Wallfahrt der Kaiserfamilie an Leopolds Grab in Klosterneuburg. Die musikalische Ausgestaltung des dort gehaltenen Festgottesdienstes oblag u.a. dem Hoforganisten Anton Bruckner, der somit regelmäßig die berühmte Stiftsorgel spielte. Dies gehörte zu den weithin wahrgenommenen künstlerischen Großereignissen.

Bruckner und Labor sind Wittgensteins musikalische Exponenten des „guten Österreichischen“. Der Erstere wird ihm ab 1929 wiederholt Ausgangspunkt nachhaltiger Überlegungen. Dem Zweiteren ist er richtiggehend familiär verbunden. Die Aufnahme der Beiden in seine beispielhafte Viererreihe zeigt nicht nur, wie wichtig ihm die Musik war. Bedeutsam ist es zudem, dass diese Wichtignahme der Tonkunst sich konkret an Persönlichkeiten zeigt, welche die österreichische Tradition des Schaffens unter den Bedingungen „höchster Kompositionswissenschaft“ – wie dies Joseph Haydn ausdrückte – erfüllten. Die Verschwisterung herausragendsten theoretischen Wissens mit den emotionalen Gestaltungskomponenten zeigt sich am Beispiel Bruckner in der Gefühls- und Könnensuniversalität seiner Werke und daran, dass er Harmonielehre und Kontrapunkt an der Universität Wien als philosophische Lehrfächer etablierte und unterrichtete.

Bruckner und Labor haben denselben Lehrer in der Theorie gehabt: den hochbedeutenden Simon Sechter, bei welchem auch Grillparzer studiert hat.

Allenthalben ist auffällig, dass Wittgenstein für die Beschreibung der musikalischen Seite des „guten Österreichischen“ Komponisten wählt, deren Lebensdaten seinen eigenen überschneidend-nahe sind. Aus dieser Zeitgenossenschaft speist sich sein durch Musik inspiriertes Denken immer wieder und bis ans Lebensende. Daraus Konservativismus abzuleiten greift daneben. Aus der Perspektive des langen 19. Jahrhunderts erweist sich nämlich, dass das, was etwa musikalisch in Österreich nach 1900 geschieht – beispielsweise durch Arnold Schönberg – als diesem langen 19. Jahrhundert angehörig mit all dem, was ihm in dieser Epoche vorangeht zusammengehört, etwa mit Bruckner und Brahms. Zurecht stellt der Historiker Helmut Rumpler demnach fest: „In Wirklichkeit vollzog die Wiener Moderne weder ihrem Geiste nach noch in ihren Formulierungen einen radikalen Bruch mit der Vergangenheit“ (Rumpler 1997, 539).

Wie tief hinein in eine grundsätzliche Lebenshaltung diese anhand der vier Beispiele statuierte Vorstellung vom „guten Österreichischen“ wirkt, kann einer Tagebucheintragung Wittgensteins entnommen werden, welche im Zusammenhang mit einer seiner Beispielfiguren, dem blinden Komponisten und Orgelvirtuosen Josef Labor, auf eine kontrastierend-definierende Aussage hinausläuft: „Labor erzählte mir, Clara Schumann habe in seiner Gegenwart einen Zweifel darüber geäußert, daß ein Blinder das & das in der Musik könne. Labor war offenbar entrüstet darüber & sagte: ‚er kann es aber doch.‘ Und ich dachte: wie charakteristisch bei allem Takt den sie gehabt haben muß eine halb bedauernde halb geringschätzige Bemerkung über einen blinden Musiker zu machen. Das ist schlechtes neunzehntes Jahrhundert, die Ebner-Eschenbach hätte das nie getan“ (Wittgenstein 2000, 37f). Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach mit ihrer als vorbildhaft verstandenen Art eines „savoir vivre“ kann getrost dem „guten Österreichischen“ im wittgenstein’schen Sinne zugerechnet werden.

Als Bemühung um dieses gemäß der Verwirklichung eines „savoir vivre autrichien“ kann auch Wittgensteins Verhalten als Soldat verstanden werden, über welches aus Akten im Österreichischen Kriegsarchiv einiges herauszulesen ist. Er war im 1. Weltkrieg Freiwilliger. Seine Kriegsbereitschaft teilte er mit vielen allerersten Exponenten der österreichischen Kultur, allen voran mit Arnold Schönberg, der mit seiner ehrlichen Begeisterung nicht zurückhielt. Über die hier nicht abhandelbare Problematik solcher Freiwilligkeit hinaus kann auch da in einer schwierigen und tragisch-gefährlichen Lebenssituation der allenthalben doch gegebene Zusammenhang mit einem von den besten Exponenten der Tradition des „guten Österreichischen“ vorgegebenen Lebenshaltung erkennbar werden.

Im „Vormerkblatt für die Qualifikationsbeurteilung“ steht in der Rubrik „kurze Beurteilung betreffs Charakter“ über Wittgenstein: „Sehr intelligent, ernster Charakter, hervorragend tapfer, sehr gehorsam, guter Kamerad.“ Und die Kolumne „Einwirkung auf Untergebene“ vermerkt: „Gegen die Untergebenen sehr wohlwollend und dienstfördernd, insbesondere im Gefechte.“ Die hervorragende Tapferkeit des als solchen beschriebenen „vorzüglichen Aufklärungsoffiziers“ bekundet ein Akt vom 15.7.1917: „Fähnrich Wittgenstein hat während der Kämpfe bei Radziany 10. – 20. I. J. den Dienst als Aufklärungsoffizier in mustergültiger Weise versehen. Auf seinem Platz im schwersten Art. Feuer ausharrend, war es der Bat. nur so möglich, das Feuer auf bedrohte Punkte zu lenken, auf welche der Batt. Ltd. nicht sehen konnte.“

Ja: Auch das ist Wittgenstein, der Mensch.

Dem Historiker sind derartige Quellen wertvoll als Kundgaben von Außenwahrnehmungen, welche eine andere Art subjektiver Anschauung eines Sachverhaltes bieten als etwa Wittgensteins Tagebücher oder die Familienbriefe. Eine solche, tragisch-bedrohliche Lebenssituationen veranschaulichende Quelle vermag im zu suchenden Gesamtzusammenhang mit anderen Belegen – im Falle Wittgensteins auch mit dessen philosophischen Schriften, denen hier die Rolle einer Geschichtsquelle zukommt – auf ein bedachtes Handeln dieses Menschen im Geiste bipolarer Konsequenz respective konsequenter Bipolarität hinzuweisen. In diesem kann eine produktive Verankerung in jenen Traditionslinien erkannt werden, welche Wittgenstein als das „gute Österreichische“ beschreibt.

Der Bipolarität liegen in Österreich, wie es Ernst Hanisch ausdrückt, „zwei formative Phasen“ zugrunde: Barock und Josephinismus (Hanisch 1994, 24). Erstere speist diese

Epoche mit einem Bedürfnis nach und einem Verständnis für repräsentative Form und mit dem Anspruch auf Wissenschaftlichkeit im Sinne gesicherter Anbindung an das religiös Geglaubte – zum Heile des Menschen. Dies geht Hand in Hand mit nach außen und innen gerichteter Lebensfreude und -skepsis.

Die zweite ist aufklärerisch pragmatisch. Ihre Vorstellung von Wissenschaftlichkeit steht im Gegensatz zum Barock, weil keineswegs mehr bemüht um religiöse Anbindungen, sondern um Begründungen aus den Wissenschaften alleine und um ihrer selbst willen – zum Nutzen des Menschen. Die Lebensweisen und deren Ausformungen werden dem Diktat allgemeiner Nützlichkeit unterworfen.

Grillparzer hat sich selbst als „alten Josephiner“ bezeichnet. In seinen Beschäftigungen mit den Werken Calderóns und eigener Adaptierungen dort vorgefundenen Gedankengutes erweist er sich aber ebenso als der Barocktradition zugehörig. In seiner Komödie „Weh dem, der lügt!“ behandelt er zudem das Problem der im Leben zu verwirklichenden Wahrhaftigkeit, ausgehend von einem Bibelzitat, mit religiöser Argumentation, wobei er dem göttlichen Verstehen viel Spielraum läßt.

In seinem Werk und Wesen zeigt sich, wie diese Bipolarität für einen mit und in ihr Lebenden zur Zerreißprobe wird.

Bruckners Kompositionswissenschaft fußt zutiefst in den im barocken Österreich formulierten Theorien. Als Hoforganist ist er aber dem Pragmatismus des Hofbeamtentums verpflichtet.

Für beide Genannte gelten zudem in hohem, wiewohl individuellen Maße die Kriterien der „Pietas Austriaca“, welche ihre Gestaltungskraft auch in beiden „formativen Phasen“ erweist und so auch im langen 19. Jahrhundert weiterwirkt. In diesem stehen demnach auch die Vorstellungen vom Wesen der Begründbarkeit nach wie vor einander gegenüber. Zumal in den philosophisch argumentierenden Kunsttheorien hat „religio“ als Rückbindung an etwas Außenseiendes – und sei es die eigene Kunstreligion – Wichtigkeit.

Die damals so bedeutende Wiener medizinische Schule ließ demgegenüber für ihre Aussagen als Begründung ausschließlich das „Objektive“ schlechthin zu, das keinerlei Rückbindung mehr Bedürftige. Das schloß auch eine Rückbindung an die Kranken aus. Diese Haltung faßt der

legendäre Professorenaufruf zusammen: „Behandlung, Behandlung! Das ist garnichts. Die Diagnose wollen wir!“ (Rumpler 1997, 529f).

All dies hier beispielhaft Genannte und noch mehr – das ist Wittgensteins Österreich, in welchem sich auch das „gute Österreichische“ verwirklicht. Dass der Philosoph im Falle Bruckner ab 1929 zu einer engagierten Auseinandersetzung mit einem von dessen Repräsentanten findet, läßt ihn zu einem Zeugen dafür werden, dass Österreichs langes 19. Jahrhundert tatsächlich weit über das Ende der Habsburgermonarchie hinausreicht, in seiner Person vielleicht sogar bis in die 50er-Jahre des 20. Jahrhunderts.

Hüten wir uns davor, darin grundsätzlich Konservativismus sehen zu wollen. Die Wiener Moderne ist ein Punkt in der Geschichte Österreichs. Aber Tradition ist vielleicht doch mehr. Der österreichische Schriftsteller und graduierte Historiker Heimito von Doderer – ein Zeitgenosse Wittgensteins mit ähnlichem familiären Umfeld bis hin zum Selbstmord einer Schwester, bemerkt denn auch zum Stichwort „Tradition“: „Die Vergangenheit muß derart Macht über uns gewinnen, daß ihr Überdruck uns in die Zukunft schießt wie durch ein Kanonenrohr.“ (Doderer 1964, 243f).

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# Insensitive and Unsafe Knowledge

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## 1. Introduction

Sensitivity and safety are modal concepts of knowledge. A person's belief that *p* is sensitive if and only if in the closest possible world where *p* is false *S* does not believe that *p*. A person's belief that *p* is safe if and only if in most near-by possible worlds in which *S* continues to form her belief that *p* in the same way as in the actual world the belief continues to be true. Robert Nozick claims that sensitivity is a necessary condition for knowledge. Ernest Sosa, Timothy Williamson, and Duncan Pritchard argue among others that safety is necessary for knowledge. I shall contest both views by offering counterexamples of persons, to whom it is highly plausible to ascribe knowledge although their beliefs are neither sensitive nor safe. I conclude that neither sensitivity nor safety is a necessary condition for knowledge and that insensitive and unsafe knowledge exists.

## 2. Sensitivity

Nozick (1981) interprets knowledge modally. He argues that a person knows iff her belief is tracking truth in the correct way. Nozick defines knowledge in a first approximation as following:

*S* knows *p* iff

- (1) *p* is true.
- (2) *S* believes that *p*.
- (3) If *p* weren't true, *S* wouldn't believe that *p*.
- (4) If *p* were true, *S* would believe that *p*.<sup>1</sup>

Premise (3) constitutes the crucial sensitivity condition for knowledge. Therefore, knowledge is *insensitive*, if it is knowledge although condition (3) is not fulfilled. Using possible world terminology, we can state that this is the case, if the following holds:

- (-3) *S* knows *p*, but in the nearest possible world in which *p* isn't true *S* believes *p*.

Condition (4) of Nozick's knowledge definition is contradicted if the following holds:

- (-4) *S* knows *p*, but there is a wide class of near-by possible worlds in which *p* is true and *S* does not believe *p*.

Any knowledge that fulfils condition (-3) is an instance of *insensitive knowledge* and any knowledge that violates condition (3) or condition (4) is a counterexample against Nozick's account of knowledge as tracking the truth.

## 3. Safety

Ernest Sosa (1999) argues that sensitivity cannot explain simple cases of everyday knowledge which has been regarded as one of its advantages. He suggests replacing sensitivity by the alternative modal principle safety, which he defines as following:

Call a belief by *S* that *p* "safe" iff: *S* would believe that *p* only if it were so that *p*. (Alternatively, a belief by *S* that *p* is "safe" iff: *S* would not believe that *p* without it being the case that *p*; or, better, iff: as a matter of fact, though perhaps not as a matter of strict necessity, not easily would *S* believe that *p* without it being the case that *p*.)

*Safety* In order to (be said correctly to) constitute knowledge a belief must be safe (rather than sensitive). (Sosa 1999: 142)

Safety is a modal principle. Therefore, it can be formulated by using possible world terminology. Duncan Pritchard (2007) formulates it as following:

- (SP') *S*'s belief is safe iff in most near-by possible worlds in which *S* continues to form her belief about the target proposition in the same way as in the actual world the belief continues to be true. (Pritchard 2007: 281)<sup>2</sup>

The starting point of Pritchard's (2005 and 2007) epistemic investigation is the common sense claim that knowledge excludes luck. Pritchard (2007) defines a true belief as non-lucky "iff there is *no* wide class of near-by possible worlds in which *S* continues to believe the target proposition, and the relevant initial conditions for the formation of that belief are the same as in the actual world, and yet the belief is false."<sup>3</sup> This concept of non-lucky beliefs is obviously closely related to the safety principle.

John Greco (2007) argues that the safety principle cannot handle all cases of knowledge, which it has to do for capturing the essential aspect of knowledge. In order to meet this objection, Pritchard (2007) refines Sosa's account of safety as following:

- (SP'') *S*'s belief is safe iff in most near-by possible worlds in which *S* continues to form her belief about the target proposition in the same way as in the actual world, and in all very close near-by possible worlds in which *S* continues to form her belief about the target proposition in the same way as in the actual world, the belief continues to be true. (Pritchard 2007: 292)

The contemporary literature indicates that the safety principle can take different forms. Therefore, we have to consider various versions of *unsafe* beliefs.

A belief is *unsafe* according to Sosa's formulation of safety iff the following is true:

- (-SP) *S* believes *p* but *S* would not only believe that *p* if it were so that *p*.

Contradicting Pritchard's formulation of safety, which is based on the notion of possible worlds, means to formulate an *unsafe* belief as following:

- (-SP') *S* believes *p* but not in most near-by possible worlds in which *S* continues to form her belief

<sup>1</sup> See Nozick (1981), 172-177.

<sup>2</sup> Pritchard (2007: 283) also considers strengthening the safety principle by demanding that the agent's belief has to be true not just in *most* of the relevant nearby possible worlds, but in *nearly all* (if not *all*) of them.

<sup>3</sup> Pritchard (2007), 281.

about the target proposition in the same way as in the actual world the belief continues to be true.

A belief is *unsafe* according to Pritchard's modified formulation of safety (SP'') iff the following holds:

(–SP'') S believes p but not in most near-by possible worlds or not in all very close near-by possible world in which S continues to form her belief about the target proposition in the same way as in the actual world the belief continues to be true.

Williamson regards safety as an instance of reliability and assumes that safety is necessary for knowledge but he reverses the orthodox direction of explanation dominant in epistemology.<sup>4</sup> In his "knowledge first" methodology, Williamson takes the simple distinction between knowledge and ignorance as a starting point from which to explain other things, not as something itself to be explained.<sup>5</sup> He argues that we must use our understanding of knowledge to explain safety and not the other way round. Williamson consequently argues that we have to use our understanding of knowledge to determine whether the similarity to a case of error is great enough in a given case to exclude knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

In many cases, someone with no idea of what knowledge is would be unable to determine whether safety obtained. [...] One may have to decide whether safety obtains by first deciding whether knowledge obtains, rather than vice versa. (Williamson 2009: 305)

Williamson concludes that the role of his safety account is not to deliver clear independent predictions as to the truth-values of knowledge claims in particular tricky examples.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4. Insensitive and Unsafe Knowledge

Sensitivity and safety are modal knowledge accounts. In both cases the belief forming process must be connected to truth in a specific way for converting the true belief into knowledge. In this sense, each account has built a tracking condition as a necessary condition into the knowledge definition. Nozick and his followers claim that sensitivity is necessary for knowledge. Sosa, Pritchard, Williamson and others argue that safety is necessary for knowledge. I will now investigate whether it is reasonable to accept knowledge that violates each of these tracking conditions and that is, thus, *insensitive* and *unsafe*.

A person who has insensitive knowledge is someone who holds a true and warranted belief that p, but in the closest possible world, in which p is false, she still believes that p. Such a person can be characterized as someone who is *prejudiced* concerning p in the sense that she would believe that p even if it were false.

S has knowledge that does not fulfil Nozick's condition (4) iff S knows p, but there is a wide class of near-by possible worlds, where p is true and S does not believe p. Such a person can be regarded as *narrow-minded* concerning p, since it is easily possible that S does not believe p although p is true.

S has knowledge that is unsafe according to the Pritchard's formulation of safety iff S knows p but not in most near-by possible worlds in which S continues to form her belief about the target proposition in the same way as

in the actual world the belief is false. Beliefs that are unsafe according to alternative versions of safety have been defined above. Again, such persons can be characterized as prejudiced in the sense that it is easily possible that they hold a belief that p, although p is false.

None of these persons who hold insensitive or unsafe beliefs are ideal reasoners. They violate the epistemic rules to believe what is true and not to believe what is false in one way or the other. Following these epistemic rules can be regarded as possessing epistemic virtues. In this respect the question whether insensitive and/or unsafe knowledge exists can be interpreted as the puzzle whether knowledge without epistemic virtues is possible.

If insensitive and unsafe knowledge exists, then it is *non-ideal* knowledge concerning the process of belief acquisition respectively concerning the epistemic virtue of the believing person. However, we usually accept knowledge that is not ideal in other respects. We admit that justification and warrant come in degrees. We accept infallible knowledge based on justification that entails the truth of the justified belief as well as fallible knowledge that is based on justification that makes truth probable, but not certain. Furthermore, we distinguish different degrees of fallible knowledge with respect to the probability that the justified belief is true and, in this respect, *excellent fallible* knowledge from *poor fallible* knowledge. Infallible knowledge is ideal with respect to justification, but poor fallible knowledge is definitely not. Hence, we usually accept knowledge that is not ideal with respect to justification. So why shouldn't we accept knowledge that is not ideal regarding the belief forming process or regarding the epistemic virtues of the believing person as well?

The current view about knowledge can be characterized by the following two claims: First, we can have ideal and non-ideal knowledge with respect to justification. Second, we cannot have non-ideal knowledge with respect to belief acquisition. It is important to note that *excellent fallible justification* and *non-ideal belief acquisition* are compatible with each other as well as *poor fallible justification* and *ideal belief acquisition*. Those who argue that a correct belief forming process is strictly necessary for knowledge, must admit that a person fails to know that p, if the counterfactual conditional is false, even if the person possesses excellent fallible justification. Hence, the following claim with a counterintuitive taste can be true:

Ci1: S is convinced that p and S has excellent fallible justification that p, but S does not know that p.

The counter-intuitiveness increases, if we take into account that it can be a person's achievement that she has proven p to be true. In this case, the following claim can be true as well:

Ci2: S is convinced that p and S has excellent fallible justification that p and it is S's achievement that she has this justification, but S does not know p.

This second claim Ci2 sounds even more counterintuitive than Ci1.

Ci1 and Ci2 are instances of *excellent justification* and *non-ideal belief acquisition*. They fail to be instances of *knowledge* according to Nozick, Sosa, Pritchard and Williamson, because justification and warrant can come in degrees in a way, that sensitivity or safety cannot.

If one accepts Ci1 and Ci2, then one defends standards of knowledge that can be regarded as very high with respect to the belief forming process. However, this position becomes even more problematic, if one also

<sup>4</sup> For his explanation of relation between knowledge and safety see Williamson (2000), 128.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, v.

<sup>6</sup> See Williamson (2009), 305.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 306.

acknowledges weak standards for knowledge with respect to justification. Nozick for example argues that S knows that p iff S holds a sensitive, true belief that p and S would believe that p, if p were true. Hence, S need not possess any justification beyond this adequate belief forming process for having knowledge at all. Therefore, Nozick is committed to accept Ci1 and Ci2 on the one hand and knowledge without justification on the other hand. Authors like Williamson and maybe Sosa seem to be in a better position, since they regard safety as a necessary but not explicitly as a sufficient condition for knowledge. They have to accept Ci1 and Ci2, but they might deny knowledge that is non-ideal with respect to justification, by rejecting knowledge with non-ideal fallible justification. However, I doubt that they are willing to take this road.

## 5. Conclusion

Persons who hold insensitive and unsafe beliefs are rationally flawed in one way or the other. They are either prejudiced because it is easily possible that they would hold the belief even if it were false or they are narrow-minded since it is easily possible that they would not hold the belief, even if it were true. Prejudiced persons fail to possess the epistemic virtue not to believe what is false, narrow-minded persons do not possess the virtue of believing what is true. If prejudiced or narrow-minded persons can have knowledge, then it must be non-ideal. Those philosophers like Nozick who think that sensitivity is necessary for knowledge or those like Sosa, Williamson or Pritchard who argue that safety is necessary must refute such non-ideal knowledge. However, there is wide agreement that knowledge can be non-ideal and gradual with respect to justification. Hence, we accept knowledge that is non-ideal in one respect, but refute knowledge that is non-ideal in some other. Moreover, ideal and non-ideal justification can co-occur with ideal and non-ideal belief forming

processes. Hence, we must accept poor fallible but sensitive/safe knowledge, but we have to refute excellent fallible but insensitive/unsafe knowledge.

I think this is a counterintuitive consequence. Sensitivity, safety and related accounts like reliable belief forming processes might be *sufficient* for knowledge and they might be necessary for particular forms of knowledge, such as perceptual knowledge, but they are not *necessary* for any kind of knowledge. Knowledge is a vague concept that involves several features such as truth, justification or adequate belief forming processes. Truth might be a necessary condition for knowledge but the way the belief is acquired is not. If one claims that sensitivity or safety is necessary for knowledge, then one is committed to a concept of knowledge that is too restrictive.

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# Playing Not-Bridge: Ramsey and Wittgenstein on Inference

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In September of 1929, Ramsey wrote a short paper in which he characterises philosophy's task as normative, that of setting out via definitions not what we *already* mean by our propositions, but how we *ought* to use them in the future (Ramsey, 1990, pp. 1-7). Philosophy should clarify our thought and language, make us better speakers and thinkers, not by accepting the myth of a perfect logical core awaiting revelation at the heart of language, but by paying special attention to the 'whole idea of understanding, the reference it involves to a multitude of performances any of which may fail and require to be restored' (Ramsey, 1990, p. 7). The opposite of this approach is scholasticism, 'treating what is vague as if it were precise and trying to fit it into an exact logical category' (*ibid.*). For Ramsey, this is the error at the heart of the *Tractatus*, its symptom the view that all the propositions of ordinary language are in perfect logical order and, as a consequence, that illogical thought is impossible. That, claims Ramsey, is 'like saying it is impossible to break the rules of bridge because if you break them you are not playing bridge but as Mr. C. says not-bridge' (*ibid.*).

What to make of that remark: whatever the activity of *inferring* amounts to, it must leave room for instances of illogical inference, just as whatever the activity of *playing a game* amounts to, it must leave room for instances of breaking the rules (what I shall call *contravention*), where in both cases illogical inference and contravention are a *part* of inferring and of game-playing respectively. In some cases (not all), to infer illogically is not to cease to infer, and to commit a contravention at bridge is not to cease to play bridge. Indeed, I shall argue that it is integral to the notion of these activities – playing a game and inferring – that such deviance be possible. Of course, there is a difference between logical and illogical inference, just as there is a difference between legitimate bridge-playing and contravention, but that difference is not captured by a re-description of the activity. Rather, the difference comes out in the relation that a subject stands in to the rules that govern the object of that activity, whether it be bridge or logical inference.

I begin by arguing that the analogy between the activity of playing a game and that of inferring is natural and compelling. That analogy, and the further analogy between committing a contravention in bridge and inferring illogically, makes clear an objection to the *Tractatus*. While I think that objection is a good one, I will also say why the picture is misleading.

Not every case of breaking the rules of bridge is a contravention. When I play poker, I am not also contravening bridge, for I was never playing *bridge*. When whilst learning to play bridge I make mistakes as I go, I am not contravening, for I was not yet *playing* bridge, or any other game. I am contravening in bridge when I purport to be playing bridge according to rules that I recognise as its rules but fail to follow. Purporting to play bridge according to its rules is to commit to a number of undertakings such as: asserting that I have won if the game goes in my favour, purporting to play according to the same rules on future occasions, asserting that another party has won if it goes against me (and not, for instance, calling the game invalid because I was contravening throughout), criticising another's contravention, etc.

The notions of contravention and playing a game are closely tied. While not every case of breaking the rules of

bridge is a case of contravention, it seems that every case of playing bridge is a potential case of contravention. I mean by this that I am only be playing bridge if it is possible for me to contravene the rules, or for someone to accuse me of so doing. I cannot be accused of contravention if I do not understand what it is to proceed in accord with a rule of bridge; similarly, I cannot be playing bridge if I do not know this much.<sup>1</sup> Someone who spent an hour at a bridge table with three bridge players and who called out the first thing that came to his mind on his 'turn', each of which happened to be an appropriate bridge call would not be playing bridge. Likewise, I cannot be accused of contravention if it turned out I thought we were playing poker; and obviously I am not playing bridge in those circumstances. Further, I would say that a computer, programmed to make certain moves, is not *playing* bridge so much as simulating someone's playing the game.

Similar relationships exist in the case of inference. Not every deviation from logic in thought is a case of illogical inference. When I think to myself that 'Socrates is identical' follows from 'Identity has two legs', I am not *inferring* illogically, for I am not inferring at all (at least not if inference must involve contentful thought); and when, while learning to differentiate valid from invalid arguments, I affirm the consequent, I am not inferring *illogically*, but participating in a process of training in order to acquire the notion of logical inference via its eventual practice. As with contravention, I am only thinking illogically if I purport to think in a manner which is subject to logical norms which I recognise as such norms, yet fail to be bound by them. And purporting to think in a manner which is subject to logical norms is to commit to a number of undertakings such as: expecting others to endorse my conclusion if they endorse my premises, committing to infer on future occasions as I have inferred on this one, revising my inference if it is shown to be fallacious, seeking to correct the inferences of others whose arguments are not valid, etc.

While not every case of violating the laws of logic in thought is a case of illogical inference, every case of inference is at least a potential case of illogical inference insofar as I can only be inferring if it were possible for me to be inferring illogically, that is, for someone to point out, rightly or wrongly, that my inference fails to meet the appropriate norms. I cannot be accused of illogical inference if it were the case that I felt myself not to be bound by any logical norms *whatsoever*, if I did not understand that thought aimed at logical coherence. Similarly, I cannot be said to be inferring at all in those circumstances. Someone who accidentally concluded 'p' for 'if q then p, and q' for any p and q simply because that p happened to pop into his head would not be *inferring*. Likewise, I cannot be accused of illogical inference if it turned out that whatever mental activity I am currently engaged is not governed by any logical norms (e.g., if the content of that activity is not assertoric); and obviously I cannot be said to be inferring in those circumstances. Finally, a computer, programmed to derive particular conclusions from particular premises,

<sup>1</sup> Someone who saw me playing what looked to them like bridge, without knowing that I did not know what it was to proceed in accordance with the rules, might describe me as playing bridge. But this description is irrelevant, just as someone's failure to describe me as playing bridge were I to follow all the rules of the game but use bodily gestures instead of cards would be irrelevant to the assessment of what the activity was that I was participating in. See *Philosophical Investigations*, 200.



does not infer since there is no room for its proceeding discordantly with its logic routes.

What kind of inference – analogous with contravention in playing a game – does Ramsey wish to allow? What the *Tractatus* rules out is thought which fails to conform to the form of the world, just as it rules out inference which fails to track the internal relations standing between states of affairs (TLP, 5.13 – 5.132). Mental activities which appear to be thought and inference may fail to be so insofar as they lack the requisite conformity. What is odd about this view is that we, as performers, are isolated from our performances. Take two sentences of ordinary language, ‘*p*’ and ‘*q*’; then our success in inferring ‘*p*’ from ‘*p* & *q*’, is not a matter of our having a grasp of the internal relations that stand between the facts expressed by ‘*p*’ and ‘*q*’, as it is a matter of it turning out that the analysis of our sentences, a procedure that we may never be able to complete, reveals their conformity. What we cannot see is what distinguishes our having a thought, inferring, from our doing something else, from our playing not-bridge when we take ourselves to be playing bridge.

The Tractarian view of inference, and of thought in general, is *externalist*: what mental state a subject is in is dependent upon features of the world external to her, namely the holding of or otherwise of a relation of conformity between the putative inferential relation standing between the propositions that are the contents of her thought, and the internal relations standing between the states of affairs that those propositions express.

As the holding of such a relation is opaque to the subject, the view is open to a general scepticism: since I cannot tell of some particular occasion whether my mental activity is inference or not, I cannot tell on any occasion. While the *Tractatus* may furnish me with a theory of inference, that theory is of no use to me in that there is no sense to be made of my inferential practice being corrigible; knowing that inference is a matter of the contents of my thoughts standing in a particular relation to states of affairs cannot, in the absence of a complete analysis of those contents, translate into knowledge that what I am now doing is inferring (as opposed to some other mental activity). And if I cannot know that, for instance, what now appears to me to be an inference is in fact some other activity, then I cannot correct my practice. So the normative role that Ramsey envisages for philosophy is hopeless.

What Ramsey wishes to rule *in* is the case where we are inferring illogically, the case where we are purporting to infer in accordance with logical norms and yet somehow coming up short. And since purporting to infer in accordance with those norms involves recognition of them, philosophy has a role to play when it suffers a failure – a failure which *can* be discovered – which requires to be restored.

So much for the moral; what of its merit?

For Ramsey, logical inference is bound by the norms which characterise logic. And if philosophy is to play a normative role, it cannot be that *every* case of deviating from the laws of logic fails to be a case of inferring, just as it cannot be that *every* case of contravening at bridge fails to be a case of playing bridge.<sup>2</sup> On the account that I have given, whether one is inferring depends on whether one is proceeding in a particular manner, namely purporting to be bound by the norms which characterise logic (where

‘purporting to do so’ is not to have a *particular* attitude, but rather to commit to various additional undertakings). Whether one is additionally *logically* inferring as opposed to *illogically* inferring, will then be a matter of whether one succeeds or fails in proceeding according to the norms that one purports to be bound by.

One lesson of Wittgenstein’s discussion of rule-following: whatever it is to follow a rule, it cannot be a matter of a particular psychological accompaniment to my participating in an activity, nor of the application of another rule. That I am playing bridge is not a matter of my mental states, nor can my grasp of its rules be such that there is some rule by which alternative interpretations of the rules are excluded. But in the absence of some account of what it is for me to follow the rules in one case and to contravene them in another, the distinction drops away. The position we are left in is not one in which committing a contravention in bridge is a *different* activity from playing it, but rather one in which, at least on the face of it, any agreement about what is to count as playing bridge, as opposed to playing some other game, may be liable to become disagreement at any moment, ‘and so there would be neither accord nor conflict here’ (*Philosophical Investigations*, 201).

These considerations show that while Ramsey’s criticism of the *Tractatus* holds, his conception of inference as an activity the logicity of which is dependent upon the relation one stands in to its rules suffers from the inadequacy of not having considered what standing in that relation might amount to. As a result, his conception of philosophy as normative is unjustified. For unless the philosopher grasps the laws of logic in a manner which transcends the difficulties inherent in Wittgenstein’s rule-following considerations, there can be no *special* role for the philosopher in correcting incorrect inference, for there can be no practice-transcendent notion of *correct* inference. Wittgenstein wrote:

F.P. Ramsey once emphasised in conversation with me that logic was a ‘normative science’. I do not know exactly what he had in mind, but it was doubtless closely related to what only dawned on me later: namely, that in philosophy we often *compare* the use of words with games and calculi which have fixed rules, but cannot say that someone who is using language *must* be playing such a game (*Philosophical Investigations*, 81)

The objection is that the picture – the comparison between inferring and playing a game – is misleading. One way in which it is misleading is via the suggestion that natural languages ‘only approximate to such calculi’ (*Philosophical Investigations*, 81), as though there were an ideal language which was *not* an approximation but a calculus. And indeed, that appears to be Ramsey’s thought, that philosophy sets down what we *ought* to mean by our propositions through a process of revision and perfection.

What appears to be a throwaway comment, as so often with Ramsey, contains an insightful critique of the *Tractatus*, even though the positive picture is underdeveloped. Nonetheless, Ramsey’s comparison of logic to the playing of a game, and the corollary conception of philosophy’s normative task is one that Wittgenstein found compelling, puzzling and ultimately untenable.

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<sup>2</sup> Some cases do take us outside of the activity we are purporting to be involved in. Many will be context sensitive: rugby must be played on a field of particular dimensions, but while I would not say that schoolboys playing in a back garden were not playing rugby, I might agree that one could not hold the World Cup on a field of the wrong size. Other cases will not be context sensitive: one is not playing roulette if the table is fixed.

# From the Multiple-Relation Theory of Judgement to the World as the Totality of Facts. Wittgenstein and the Context Principle

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## 1. An overview of Russell's multiple-relation theory

The multiple-relation theory of judgement Russell developed in the years 1910-1913 is a theory which, instead of conceiving of a judgement as a binary relation between a mind and a mind-independent proposition (which is supposed to exist both if it is true and if it is false), conceives of a judgement as a multigrade relation between a mind and the constituents of the judgement in question. The judgement that Paris is north of London, for example, presupposes that the judging mind is related (by a relation of acquaintance) to the constituents of what is judged, namely 'Paris', 'London' and 'being north of'. Of these *relata*, three are (roughly speaking) particulars and one is a relation (a universal).

An important feature of this theory is that what Russell calls the 'subordinate-relation' in the judgement complex (the relation 'being north of' in our example) does not figure in the complex as relating the particulars, but – Russell says – as a relation *in-itself*, as a *brick* of the complex (and not as the *cement* of it) (Russell 1912, 74). It is necessary for him to rule out the possibility that the subordinate relation actually relates; if this were so, then, in the example above, Paris and London (in *that* order) would be related by the relation 'being north of' and thus would form a (false) objective complex; Russell would thus have trouble accounting for false judgements. On this theory, then, judgemental constituents are not unified with one another independently of the unity provided by the multiple relation of judgement itself. Thus there is no subordinate-complex in a judgement complex, that is, 'what is judged' does not occur in a judgement complex as a unified component; the unified complex is the whole judgement. If the judgement is true then there is a complex formed by the judgemental components (with the exception of the judging mind), if the judgement is false there is no such complex.

## 2. Wittgenstein on propositional articulation in 1913-1914

Wittgenstein's criticism of the multiple-relation theory famously pointed out that the theory allows nonsense judgements (see Wittgenstein 1922, 5.5422, Wittgenstein 1979, 95, 103). The reason can be summarised as follows; as long as one accepts the view that the constituents of a judgement are all *bricks* in the judgement structure, that there is no unity in 'what is judged', then nothing seems to prevent substituting an element, in a judgement complex, for another element, to get a different judgement; nothing seems thus to prevent one from substituting, in the judgement that Paris is north of London, the element 'is north of' for the element 'penholder', to obtain the nonsense judgement that Paris penholder(s) London.

Wittgenstein's contention that Russell allowed nonsense judgments is, I take it, simply a corollary of his general criticism of Russell's treatment of judgemental components as self-subsisting entities (terms), and thus of Russell's

view that there is no unity in what is judged. In the *Notes on Logic* Wittgenstein puts this as follows:

When we say *A* judges that etc., then we have to mention a whole proposition which *A* judges. [...] This shows that a proposition itself must occur in the statement that it is judged; however, for instance, 'not-*p*' may be explained, the question, 'What is negated' must have a meaning (Wittgenstein 1979, 94).

On Wittgenstein's view 'what is judged' must be a unified whole, and cannot be a mere collection – or class – of terms, as the multiple-relation theory claims (see Hanks 2007, 138); 'what is judged' is thus something that can be represented by a *proposition*; in order to successfully develop a theory of judgement, Wittgenstein thinks, it is necessary to give an account of the nature of a proposition; as he says in the *Notes on Logic*: "The epistemological questions concerning the nature of judgement and belief cannot be solved without a correct apprehension of the form of the proposition" (Wittgenstein 1979, 106). Wittgenstein's understanding of the notion of a 'proposition' is not Russell's, however; on the latter's 'realist' conception (abandoned by 1910) a proposition is a non-linguistic complex, a *part* of reality; on Wittgenstein's view, by contrast, a proposition is a symbolic entity, *representative* of reality. To say that a proposition must occur in a judgement thus means that judging is a representational (mental) activity; by judging, one represents something as being the case (a fact).

Wittgenstein's account of propositional articulation in the 1913 *Notes on Logic* divides propositional elements into *two* different kinds, "names and forms" (Wittgenstein 1979, 96); names are representatives of objects, while forms are representatives of the different ways in which objects can be arranged in facts. To represent (judge) that something is the case, symbols for objects (*names*) must be arranged in a certain way, that is, according to a certain *form* (which, though itself a symbol, is *not* a name of an object); the form is precisely the relational element that ties names into a whole (a proposition). It follows from this general characterisation of representation that "[p]ropositions cannot consist of names alone" (Wittgenstein 1979, 96). Names must also be *related* with one another in a certain way in order for the proposition (judgement) to represent a fact, and thus to make sense. A proposition, therefore, cannot be a class of names, but must be a combination of names and a form. But how does Wittgenstein discuss the symbolic role of a propositional form? In the *Notes on Logic* and the 1914 *Notes Dictated to G. E. Moore* Wittgenstein writes:

In 'aRb' it is not the complex that symbolises but the fact that the symbol 'a' stands in a certain relation to the symbol 'b' (Wittgenstein 1979, 96).

What symbolizes in  $\varphi\xi$  is that  $\varphi$  stands to the left of a proper name [...]. What is common to all propositions in which the name of a property [...] occurs is that this name stands to the left of a name-form (Wittgenstein 1979, 116).

A proposition represents reality by virtue of its being a *unified* whole, thus by virtue of combining *names* and a *form*. The passages quoted above, moreover, suggest that the identification of the symbolising role of a form (the relational element in a proposition) involves the identification of the symbolising role of the other propositional constituents (names), because the latter are what is related by the former; so, if names and forms are distinct 'logical types', then logical types are essentially *complementary*, because – as Marco Ruffino puts it – “the determination of a type of symbol already implies the determination of the type (or types) of symbol (or symbols) that together with the former, forms a proposition” (Ruffino 1994, 411). The determination of the symbolising role of a form thus depends on the existence of a propositional context: to identify the role of a form by reference to its combination with other propositional elements (names), in fact, *amounts* to identifying it by reference to the *whole* proposition of which it is a form. We can see here, *in nuce* the context principle, that is, the idea that the symbolic role of a propositional element (an essential part of its meaning) can be identified only within the propositional context in which it occurs; this idea, admittedly, is not fully secure in Wittgenstein's pre-*Tractatus* writings because he seems to employ it only with regard to the notion of a *form* and not with regard to the notion of a *name*.

To recap things so far: on Russell's multiple-relation theory there is no unified object of judgement; the constituents of 'what is judged' are *disunified* from one another (otherwise Russell could not account for false judgements); on Wittgenstein's alternative view, the object of a judgement is a unified (possible) situation – something that can be represented by a proposition; a theory of judgement thus involves, at bottom, a theory of representation. A proposition represents a situation by having elements belonging to different logical types (names and a form) combined with one another. The symbolising role of a form – finally – presupposes the *propositional context* in which names and the form participate.

### 3. Propositional articulation in the *Tractatus*, the context principle, and the world as the totality of facts

Wittgenstein's contextual understanding of the notion of a form in the *Notes on Logic* is eventually extended, in the *Tractatus*, to *all* propositional constituents. In the *Tractatus* a symbolising propositional element is called a *name*, so the notion of a name in the *Tractatus* does not correspond to the *narrow* conception of a name (as a name of a particular) that Wittgenstein presents in the *Notes on Logic*. The representational role of *all* propositional elements presupposes – on the *Tractatus* view – a propositional context, because the identification of the symbolising role of any name cannot be divorced from its possibilities of combination with others to form propositions. A name in fact presupposes “the forms of all the propositions in which it can occur” (Wittgenstein 1922, 3.311); but then understanding a name presupposes the possibility of understanding all the propositions in which the name in question can occur. Every propositional constituent, then, must be contextually understood, that is: its understanding cannot be divorced from the understanding of its possibilities of combination with other expressions in propositions.

By the time of the composition of the *Tractatus*, thus, the contextual understanding of propositional elements becomes a general principle – the context principle, indeed – according to which “only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have meaning” (Wittgenstein 1922, 3.3, see also 3.314), because, as Leonard Linsky writes, “[a] name [...] is a constituent whose logical form consists in its powers of combination with other names to form propositions” (Linsky 1992, 267). Propositions, then, are conceptually prior to names: the minimal unit of meaning is a proposition, and names (with their logical valence) are to be found by looking at the way in which they contribute to propositional meaning.

In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein famously writes that “[t]he world is the totality of facts, not of things” (Wittgenstein 1922, 1.1). The world, Wittgenstein argues, is not a collection of things, but of things combined, related with one another; thus it consists of *facts*. As Colin Johnston argues, the idea here implies that “[w]e do not come across in the world both simples and complexes, rather, what we come across in the first instance are complexes, simples being found only subsequently by [...] 'looking inside the complexes'" (Johnston 2007, 246). This is an *ontological* version of the context principle (see Linsky 1992, 266), namely it is the ontological correlate of the view that propositions are conceptually prior to names, and that names must be identified by reference to their propositional context. As Wittgenstein writes:

It would seem to be a sort of accident, if it turned out that a situation would fit a thing that could already exist entirely on its own. If things can occur in states of affairs, this possibility must be in them from the beginning. [...] [T]here is *no* object that we can imagine excluded from the possibility of combining with others. If I can imagine objects combined in states of affairs, I cannot imagine them excluded from the *possibility* of such combinations (Wittgenstein 1922, 2.0121).

Thus, objects can only be conceived in their possible reciprocal relations, as parts of facts and states of affairs. On Russell's multiple-relation theory, on the other hand, acquaintance with objects (entities) does not presuppose knowledge of their possibilities of combination with others (thus, on this view, they 'could exist entirely on their own', to use Wittgenstein's expression quoted above) (see also Pears 2006, 13-14); judgement is the combination of these objects; the multiple-relation theory can thus be said to imply the view that the world is the totality of *things*.

Against this, and its implication that we can combine judgemental elements so as to violate their logical role – thus generating nonsense judgements – Wittgenstein insists that judgemental (or propositional) components must be identified by reference to their possibility to combine with one another. “The difference in the logical types of names is just that difference in their logical valences which allows certain combinations to adhere together and makes other combinations 'hold aloof' from each other. From this point of view, [...] [it is a] misguided effort to begin with the constituents of the proposition conceived as independent building blocks and to seek the cement that hold them together in the proposition” (Linsky 1992, 267). The multiple-relation theory is a variant of such a 'misguided effort', precisely because it begins with the constituents of the judgement, conceived as independent entities, *bricks* which could exist on their own, and sees judgement as what holds them together.

#### 4. Conclusion

If the reading sketched above is correct, then the contextual understanding of propositional components began to play a role in Wittgenstein's conception of the nature of the proposition well before the composition of the *Tractatus*. The idea that judgemental or propositional elements must be identified by reference to the judgemental or propositional context in which they figure first occurred to Wittgenstein as part of his critical reaction to Russell's theory of judgement, and is deployed in his early account (in 1913 and 1914) of the nature of the proposition. In the *Tractatus*, as shown, this idea, now a general principle about the nature of all propositional elements (names), is pervasive, and represents the lens through which Wittgenstein's overall conception of propositional articulation (and also his view that the world is the totality of facts) must be read.

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# Knowledge, Virtue, and Epistemic Motives

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## 1. Why we should care about an account of epistemic motives

Epistemic motives feature either explicitly or implicitly in some current virtue epistemologies. On the explicit side, Zagzebski (1996) and Fairweather (2001) posit a virtuous motive as a necessary condition on knowledge. On the implicit side, Greco (2001) argues that the only eligible candidates for knowledge are beliefs which arise out of the believer's epistemic norms, and contrasts following a norm with merely acting or believing in accordance with it. The contrast is familiar from ethics, and turns precisely on motivation: following a norm is being motivated by it. More generally, many so called credit theories of knowledge sneak in epistemic motivation through the requirement that knowledge-candidate beliefs be attributable to one *qua* cognitive agent.

Both explicit and implicit champions of epistemic motives, however, leave entirely obscure the conceptual nature of an epistemic motive and assume without argument a psychological picture of epistemic motives as conative states. What's worse, no one so much as touches upon the very plausibility of thinking of beliefs as *motivated* in the first place. Yet it just sounds *prima facie* inappropriate to say that a belief is motivated. So inappropriate, indeed, that epistemologists have reserved the term exclusively for beliefs gone bad. But if it *were* inappropriate to think of beliefs as motivated, clearly any account of knowledge which features motivation would be a non-starter. So we need an account of epistemic motives.

## 2. The concept of an epistemic motive

*What* is an epistemic motive? If we are to take talk of motivation seriously, the epistemic-motive concept should mirror that of a standard motive. Unhappily, philosophers of action have no explicit account of the concept to which we can help ourselves. So, one of the ungrateful tasks for an account of epistemic motives is to articulate at least the intuitive contours of the concept of a motive for *action*. Here are three fairly uncontroversial necessary conditions for a motive, that are implicit in the literature. M is a motive for action A only if:

- (A) M non-deviantly causes A.
- (B) If the agent were to reflect, he could take M as his immediate reason for A.
- (C) M makes a difference to the normative status of A.

The first and second conditions restrict the sort of causes that can be motives. The third captures the normative significance of motives.

Davidson's climber (1973) illustrates the need for the first condition: he wants to let go of the rope to which his partner is harnessed, and does so. But he lets go because the desire makes him so nervous that he loses his grip. The action, in other words, is performed out of nervousness rather than out of the desire, and so the desire isn't the motive.

The second condition captures the intuition that certain causes, even when non-deviant, aren't even in the ballpark for being motives for certain actions. Suppose we see a

man jump in a river where a child is drowning. You say that he did it to save the child's life; I say someone pushed him in. You are citing a *reason* for his action and thereby making sense of it; I am citing a *mere cause*, and thereby putting his behaviour beyond the pale of intentional action. The difference is, in part, a matter of what can and can't be taken up as a consideration in favour of an action. That a child is drowning, is something that the man can take up as his reason for jumping in the water. That he got pushed, by contrast, is just in the wrong ballpark for being taken up as his reason for jumping in the water. (Though, of course, it can be his reason for other actions, such as yelling at whoever pushed him.) This taking up as a consideration in favour of an action just is being motivated by the consideration, as opposed to merely being caused to behave.

The third condition is obvious enough. Suppose I agree that the man jumped to save the child. But you say he did it because he values life; I say he did it because he wanted to make tonight's headlines. Now we are both citing motives. But if you are right, the action is virtuous; if I am, it isn't. What makes the difference is, of course, the motive with which the man in fact jumped in the water.

These three features, although not sufficient for a motive, are intuitively necessary core features of the concept. If we are to take seriously motive-talk in the epistemic context, then, motives for belief should at least have these three core features. So, EM is an epistemic motive for belief Bp only if:

- (A)<sup>o</sup> EM non-deviantly causes Bp.
- (B)<sup>o</sup> If the agent were to reflect, he could take EM as his immediate reason for Bp.
- (C)<sup>o</sup> EM makes a difference to the normative status of Bp.

I now argue that these features yield a cognitive picture of the psychology of epistemic motives.

## 3. Epistemic motives as cognitive states

The two candidates for epistemic motives – as for action-motives – are cognitive and conative states of mind<sup>1</sup>. Now, whatever we might think about action, the belief case is simple enough: it is a psychological platitude that belief is the sort of attitude which is generally responsive to truth-considerations. But accepting this platitude amounts to conceding that our motives for belief are generally cognitive states. Having a belief about the evidence – say, that the lipstick on his collar is conclusive evidence for his infidelity – automatically motivates me to adopt another belief – that he is unfaithful – in the absence of any relevant desire. It is not that I *want* to believe him unfaithful. Indeed, usually one has a desire *not* to believe one's partner unfaithful. This case shows that beliefs (e.g., that he is unfaithful) are at least sometimes motivated by other beliefs (the evidence-belief).

<sup>1</sup> To decide between the two is to settle, in the epistemic context, the Humean – anti-Humean debate from metaethics. Epistemic Humeans would say that motivation is necessarily a matter of having some relevant desire (e.g., for true beliefs, Steglich-Petersen, 2006). The anti-Humean, whom I defend here, denies the need for desire.

This verdict is confirmed when we look at the first requirement on a motive. It should ring bells from the literature on the basing relation (e.g., Alston, 2005: ch. 5): for my belief to be based on the evidence, it is not enough that I have the evidence and form the belief. Rather, I must form the belief *on the basis of* the evidence. The climber equivalent here is that I have evidence, say, that my partner is unfaithful; I form the belief that he is. But the evidence-belief caused in me a desire to get into the headlines (say, we are famous), which in turn caused the belief that he is unfaithful. So I believe not on the basis of the evidence but out of wishful thought, and so the evidence-belief cannot be said to be a motive for the infidelity belief. The case yields two morals. First, it confirms the intuition that beliefs are typically motivated by cognitive states (like the evidence-belief) rather than by conative states (like wishful thought). Second, the deviant case shows that the evidence-belief meets the third condition on a motive – whether I believe out of the evidence-belief makes a difference to the normative status of my belief that he is unfaithful. Even people who disagree that the basing relation is necessary for justification agree that it makes some positive epistemic difference.

So the evidence-belief meets conditions (A)<sup>e</sup> and (C)<sup>e</sup> on an epistemic motive. To deserve the name of a motive, it must also meet (B)<sup>e</sup>. And I think this is plain: if an *evidence*-belief can't be my immediate reason for another belief, it is hard to see what could. This is corroborated when we compare the evidence-belief with a mere cause of the infidelity belief. In the action case, we used being pushed into the water as an example of a cause that could never be a motive for certain actions like jumping in the water. The belief case is the same: even if for some weird reason I believed him unfaithful whenever I got pushed into the water, I clearly can't take up being pushed as my reason for believing him unfaithful.

The parallel with action stops here, however, and at this point yields an argument for the claim that motives for belief are always – rather than just typically – cognitive. For I can take up things like my desire to get into the headlines for all sorts of *actions* (like saving a child), but I can't take this desire as my immediate reason to *believe* him unfaithful<sup>2</sup>. This is another psychological platitude about belief – I cannot consciously take up non-epistemic considerations as my reasons for belief<sup>3</sup>. Moral: if we take talk of epistemic *motives* seriously, and thereby model them on action motives, then we think of motives as something, and *only* something, that the agent can in principle take up as his immediate reason for action/belief, as per condition (B). But then epistemic motives of belief are never conative.

Now, it may sound odd to call beliefs motives – rather than mere causes – of other beliefs, an oddness which I said in section 1, friends of epistemic motives need to defuse. But if the above arguments worked, then I have simultaneously shown motivation talk appropriate in the epistemic context: the evidence-belief deserves the name of a motive simply by virtue of playing, in the epistemic context, the three core roles of a motive for action. What is

more, if someone doesn't want to grant it the name of motive, he cares neither about the distinction between mere causes of belief and reasons for belief, nor about the distinction between positive and negative epistemic status, since both distinctions hinge on motivation. Whoever does care about these distinctions, however, is committed to the appropriateness of calling the evidence-belief a motive.

#### 4. Epistemic motives and knowledge

The sketch presented here is of necessity much too rough. But instead of refining it, I wish to conclude by showing how it advances the debate with which I started, over whether a virtuous motive is a necessary condition for knowledge.

If the argument for the cognitive nature of epistemic motives worked, then at least the sort of motive which current epistemologists have in mind, cannot be a requirement for knowledge. Fairweather and Greco think of epistemic motives as desires, a straightforward conative story. Zagzebski thinks of them as stemming from the love of knowledge. So, on the reasonable assumption that love, though it may have cognitive elements, is not a purely cognitive state, Zagzebski, too, presupposes at least a partly conative notion of a motive.<sup>4</sup> But according to the arguments above, conative states can never be motives for belief – let alone requirements on knowledge – because they cannot be taken up as immediate reasons for belief.

This is not, of course, to say, that the sorts of motives that these authors are after are not important for undertaking or conducting inquiry. Desires and love can be motives for many actions involved in inquiry, because they can be consciously taken up as reasons for many *actions*. But, obviously, a belief needn't be produced by inquiry in order to qualify as knowledge. So virtuous motives, conceived along conative lines, although no doubt an important element in any comprehensive account of epistemic motivation, can't be part of our knowledge concept.

The moral is that if you are absolutely crazy about having virtuous motives in your account of knowledge, you need to think of them along my cognitive lines. The point is clinched by standard 'spontaneous-belief' counterexamples to Zagzebski's account: the light goes out; I form the belief that it has; the belief qualifies as knowledge; but where is the motive? On my account it is easy to say where it is – the motive is a cognitive state – your perceiving darkness. It deserves the name of motive because it plays three core motive roles: it (A)<sup>e</sup> non-deviantly caused the belief, (B)<sup>e</sup> is something that you can take up as your immediate reason for the belief; and (C)<sup>e</sup> it endows the belief with positive epistemic status. Of course, one would still need to show that the motive makes the right normative difference to turn the belief into knowledge, but at least this *sort* of motive is in the right ballpark for a knowledge-requirement.\*

\* Thanks to Martin Kusch and my audience at the 2011 EEN meeting for really helpful comments on earlier drafts, and to Vienna University and the Institute for Philosophy for financial support.

<sup>2</sup> The 'immediate' is important. I can, of course, take it as my reason to perform all sorts of actions in order to *acquire* the belief. See Reisner (2008) for the distinction between reasons for believing and for acquiring a belief.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g., Shah and Velleman (2005).

<sup>4</sup> Love is the *origin* of the virtuous motive, and as such is not straight-out incompatible with an anti-Humean picture of motivation, because that picture is about the *proximate* motive of beliefs. All the same, given that this proximate motive must be cognitive in nature (as per the argument in §3), it cannot itself be motivated by a conative state.

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# The Concept of Testimony

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## 1. Introduction

One main problem of the epistemological discussion about *knowledge by testimony* is the concept of testimony itself. What exactly do we mean, when we speak about testimony in the epistemological sense? Normally we find examples like the following in the literature:

(E-1) John is visiting his friend Paul in his native town Muenster. During a short sightseeing tour Paul tells John something about the cathedral of Muenster – namely, that it was rebuilt after the Second World War in its original manner. Afterwards, John knows this proposition by means of his friend's testimony.

A good deal of people, working on the topic, leaves it at that, suggesting that our intuitions are sufficient to grasp what the concept of testimony is about. However, it is not far reaching to see the threatening vagueness lurking behind such a concept – threatening, as we want to say something about the conditions of justification in this context. But how can we do this, if we do not know what we are talking about? Being precise in defining the justificatory conditions calls for being precise in the definition of the concept itself. The aim of this talk will be a proposal of this definition. But let us start with some attempts of clarification that have already been put forward.

## 2. Formal and Natural Testimony

The most common definition of testimony is the one developed by C.A.J. Coady (see Coady 1992). His account is based on the general assumption that testimony can be regarded as a kind of speech act, primarily as an instance of Searle's so called *assertives* (see Searle 1979, 12). He continues by making a distinction between *formal* and *natural testimony*.

The concept of *formal testimony* is needed in formal settings – most of all in legal ones. The treatment of witnesses and the conditions of testifying in court are legally fixed. Coady's concept of formal testimony is meant to do justice to these requirements (see Coady 1992, 32/33). The concept of *natural testimony* is needed to accommodate the notion of testimony in all situations of daily life. It is also this concept that will concern us further. In accordance with Coady's view, the necessary and sufficient conditions for this term are the following ones:

„A speaker S testifies by making some statement *p* if and only if:

- 1) His stating that *p* is evidence that *p* and is offered as evidence that *p*.
- 2) S has the relevant competence, authority, or credentials to state truly that *p*.
- 3) S's statement that *p* is relevant to some disputed or unresolved question (which may, or may not be, *p*?) and is directed to those who are in need of evidence on the matter" (ibid., 42).

Many other authors engaged in the debate use Coady's definition of natural testimony. Nevertheless, it leads to the difficulty that some cases, though, ordinarily assumed to belong to the scope of the concept, are not covered by this

definition. Obvious examples are diaries. In this case the author does not address a recipient – except for himself – to answer a certain question. There is no dispute to settle and no one is in need of evidence whatsoever.

The problem of Coady's definition is that it is too narrow. Several philosophers have already criticized this (see Graham 1997, Kusch 2004, Welbourne 1994). The reason for the problem is that his concept of the formal setting is working as a kind of *intuition pump* for defining the natural one (see Kusch 2004, 16). The assumption is that Coady unconsciously transferred the much stronger requirements of testimony in the legal context to his concept of natural testimony. And in the latter context they raise the epistemic burden for the testifier to an unrealistic level (see Welbourne 1994, 121, and Graham 1997, 231).

Different proposals were made to modify Coady's definition (see e.g. Graham 1997, 227). In the following I want to present and analyse just one of them – the account of Jennifer Lackey.

## 3. Lackey's Twofold Definition

In developing her own proposal Lackey tries to approach the combination of two main objectives:

- 1) to define a neutral concept of testimony, i.e. one free of possible epistemic functions, and
- 2) to defend the distinction between the speaker's and the hearer's context.

The first point refers to her criticism of Coady's conception. She is of the opinion that he mixes up the epistemic and the metaphysical aspects<sup>1</sup> of the concept (see Lackey 2008, 16f.). Contrary to this, Lackey wants to define a neutral concept which will then be open for further epistemic assessment, i.e. the question whether the testifier's word is a reliable source of information or not. The second aim is related to a general observation of hers with regard to a great deal of definitional difficulties of testimony. Lackey claims that most of them arise as philosophers do not pay attention to the two contexts which are involved, namely the context of the speaker and the one of the hearer (see ibid., 27). The point is that not all conditions of the speaker's context are also necessary from the hearer's perspective and vice versa. Furthermore, Lackey refrains from the concept of evidence as a clarifying item. Alternatively, she stresses the point that the purpose of testifying is an act of communication conveying certain information (see ibid., 28). Taking these preliminary points into account, Lackey's own definition of the concept of testimony runs as follows:

„S testifies that *p* by making an act of communication *a* if and only if (in part) in virtue of *a*'s communicable content, (1) S reasonably intends to convey the information that *p* or (2) *a* is reasonably taken as conveying the information that *p*" (ibid., 35f.).

Obviously Lackey argues in favour of a very broad notion of testimony. I will proceed by showing that her account is

<sup>1</sup> By *metaphysical aspects* Lackey refers to the conditions which must be fulfilled to classify the epistemically neutral act of testifying (see Lackey 2008, 16).



in fact *too broad* to help us understand, how we use the term *testimony* in an epistemological sense.

#### 4. What is wrong with Lackey's Definition?

Searching for the right notion of testimony, one has to bear in mind that one is concerned with a technical term of philosophy. *Testimony* and *testifying* do not – or seldom, namely in legal contexts – refer to acts of ordinary language usage. If asked, 'how do you know that p?', the hearer normally would not answer, 'because S testified that p', but would say something like, 'because S told me that p', or just, 'because S said so'. Ordinary speech does not provide an adequate phrase with a notion of testimony of this kind. The reason for this is that *testimony denotes an epistemic source*. Taking this consideration into account, Lackey's proposal of defining testimony without referring to its epistemic role becomes questionable.

Besides this, an unfavourable vagueness is lurking in her concept, too. In focussing on the communicational act of conveying information as the essential part of the definition it becomes quite unclear whether a precise distinction between the concept of testimony and the one of communication can be found. And this differentiation is a necessary one as, of course, each testimony is a case of communication, but not vice versa! To see this, think of speech acts such as *congratulation* or *expression of thank*. It can be taken for granted that you are communicating in these situations. But it seems obviously wrong to apply the concept of testimony here. Therefore, you need to make a distinction between the much broader concept of communication and the one of testimony.

Lackey's concept, however, allows us to speak about testifying even in such contexts. She also broadens her definition to capture nonverbal behaviour – like nodding – as a possible instance of testimony (see *ibid.*, 25f.). But what kind of content is transmitted in such situations? Think of the following example, discussed by Lackey (see *ibid.*, 28): A friend is asking you whether there is any cake in the kitchen. She sees you nodding and therefore assumes that there is some cake in the kitchen. But, as a matter of fact, you were just moving your head to some music that you were listening to via your earphones which your friend cannot see. You did not even notice her question. So, would you say that you have testified in any sense or conveyed a certain sort of information? It seems not. Now, take the same situation, but with the difference that your nod actually is an answer to the question of your friend. From the speaker's perspective it is clear why the latter case is an instance of testimony while the former is not. But how can the hearer grasp the difference? Lackey says that we should refer to the *communicable content* of the situation. But what is the communicable content of a nod? To get knowledge from a nodding person you have to infer from certain premises what sort of information you can get. Gestures and facial expressions are acts of communication but in the epistemological sense it seems more appropriate to analyse them as a part of *inferential reasoning* than as an instance of testimony.

To sum up, I think that Lackey's definitional proposal has a good starting point in taking the twofold nature of testimony seriously, but ends up with too broad a concept as it is not clear how to make a distinction between communicating in general and testifying in particular any longer.

#### 5. Testimony: Epistemic Source or Speech Act?

In the last section I want to propose an alternative account of how to understand testimony in a twofold way. I think that Lackey is right to highlight this feature of testimony and that the neglect of this was a major source for definitional difficulties up to now. The point is that, on the one hand, a speaker may intend to testify that p although his recipient does not accept his assertion as a testimonial act. For example, the hearer may think that the speaker is not sincere or competent to testify that p. And, on the other hand, a hearer may use an assertion as an epistemic source, even though the relevant speaker did not intend to testify at all – diaries are the obvious example of such a case. Both situations are possible. Additionally, situations, when speaker and hearer agree that an act of testifying took place, remain the default setting of testimony. Accordingly, our concept of testimony should be able to accommodate these three different situations. It seems appropriate, therefore, to define the act of testifying from the speaker's perspective and the act of using an assertion as an epistemic source – namely, as testimony – from the hearer's perspective.

Let us start with the speaker. What are the necessary conditions in his context? The proposal is this (see Mößner 2010, ch. 2.4.1):

S testifies that p if and only if

1. S intends to exert influence on the belief system of the hearer;
2. S offers his assertion as a kind of potential evidence for p;
3. S acts in a sincere manner;
4. S believes that he has the relevant competence to assert that p sincerely;
5. S takes Grice's principle of cooperation into account, i.e. he tries to formulate his assertion in an intelligible manner.

The first condition is related to the relevant intention of the speaker. What is his aim when he testifies that p? Obviously he wants to influence the hearer's belief system. In accordance with this main intention, different kinds of epistemic goals are possible. a) S wants to provide a new proposition; b) S wants to confirm H in believing an existent proposition, or c) S wants to give rise to change a belief hold by H. Now, following one of these goals, the speaker offers a piece of information to the hearer. But how can he make sure that the hearer will trust him and accept his offer? Some formal and epistemic requirements seem to be necessary supplements in this context.

Firstly, S has to formulate his assertion in an intelligible manner. As, of course, the hearer has to understand his assertion before accepting its content. In condition (5) we find this requirement. Here we stick to Paul Grice's principle of cooperation which is meant to ensure the intelligibility of an utterance: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1989, 26).

Secondly, remember that we are talking about testimony as an epistemic source. Conditions (2) to (4) are relevant in this context. When the speaker tells a lie, for sure, he wants to influence the hearer's belief system, too. But, furthermore, he has the intention to deceive the hearer – a case that shall be excluded from the notion of testimony.

Due to this fact the act of testifying is combined with the speaker's sincerity and believed competence with regard to the proposition in question. He offers his assertion that *p* in a sincere manner when he himself believes that *p* is true. As mentioned by Coady (see Coady 1992, 44) this does not mean that *p* is in fact the case, but only that *S* thinks so. Additionally, *S* has to believe that he has the relevant competence in question. In fulfilling both of these conditions the speaker can offer his assertion as a kind of evidence on the asserted fact.

The second context for our concept of testimony is the one of the hearer. As testimony is normally discussed under the heading of an epistemic source, this also seems to be the more common one.

What kind of conditions must obtain so that a recipient is able to learn something from *S*'s assertion? The main difference to the conditions of the speaker's context rests on the fact that it is up to the hearer to assess the testifier in question. The following conditions seem to be appropriate for our notion of testimony as an epistemic source (see Mößner 2010, ch. 2.4.2):

*H* uses an act of communication of the speaker *S* that *p* as an instance of testimony that *p* if and only if:

- 1) *S*'s assertion that *p* is taken by *H* as providing a kind of evidence that *p*;
- 2) *H* believes that *S* is competent to assert truly that *p*;
- 3) *H* believes that *S* is sincere in asserting that *p*.

Typically the hearer does also ascribe a certain intention to the hearer, namely that *S* wants to influence *H*'s belief

system. But this is not a necessary condition, as the example of the usage of diaries shows.

To put my results in a nutshell: Our twofold concept of testimony can accommodate all three mentioned cases. Although a hearer might not accept an assertion as an epistemic link, the speaker can, nonetheless, testify. And a hearer might, respectively, use a piece of information – e.g. a diary – as an epistemic source, although the speaker did not intend to testify. In the default setting of testimony both concepts – the one from the perspective of the speaker and the one from the perspective of the hearer – are applied simultaneously.

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# There Are Facts and There Are Facts: Wittgenstein versus Searle

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In *Making the Social World*, Searle points out the puzzling character of social ontology, the apparent paradox in our understanding of social reality:

How can we give an account of ourselves, with our peculiar human traits – as mindful, rational, speech-act performing, free-will having, social, political human beings – in a world that we know independently consists of mindless, meaningless, physical particles? How can we account for our social and mental existence in a realm of brute physical facts? (2010, ix)

My immediate response to this question is that we can do so because the world we live in is not *merely* a realm of brute physical facts; it does not consist *only* of mindless, meaningless, physical particles; for I am not a mindless, meaningless, physical particle and I am part of what the world consists of. Nor can I, or my thoughts, be reduced to mindless, meaningless, physical particles. And if they can't be thus reduced then there is no paradox about an account of our social and mental existence in a world of brute physical facts.

In saying this, I am not flouting Searle's first condition for the adequacy of accounts of ourselves in our world: I am not postulating two or three worlds or different ontological realms; but am mindful of giving – as he stipulates – 'an account of how we live in exactly one world, and how all of [the] different phenomena, from quarks and gravitational attraction to cocktail parties and governments, are part of that one world' (2010, 3). Before showing that I am not flouting Searle's first condition, let me first turn to his argument for biological naturalism, the view that mental phenomena are emergent, higher-level properties of physical or biological systems; they are caused by lower-level neurophysiological processes in the brain and are themselves features of the brain—that is, they are *realized* in the structure of the brain (1992, 1).

Because there is no scientific knowledge of these processes, Searle's argument relies on an analogy. He claims that just as the relation between the molecular structure of a piston and its solidity is one of causation, so conscious states are caused by lower level neurobiological processes in the brain and are themselves higher level features of the brain. But I see a problem – as have others before me – in taking the relation between the molecular structure of solidity and solidity to be one of causation; for it seems obvious that the molecular structure of solidity constitutes solidity; it doesn't cause it. The molecular configuration of the piston is spatially and temporally co-extensive with its solidity; it does not exist independently of it, and so there is no room here for causation. 'Solidity' is a concept or word we use to refer to what happens when certain molecules attach in a certain way; it is a more economical description of the molecular configuration, not a different-level *phenomenon*. So that giving 'solidity' an ontological status is a category mistake.

And what of collective intentionality? Inasmuch as collective intentionality is a type of intentionality, it must, on Searle's view, be mental (that is, caused by and realized in neurobiology). As says Searle: 'If you understand electrons and elections right you will see why some electrons have to participate in elections. No electrons, no elections' (2011, 2). So that though institutional facts (the products of

collective intentionality; e.g. marriage, academia, the economy) have themselves no physical realization, they still need to bottom out in the entities of physics and chemistry. And what better, or who better, to serve that purpose than human beings? The brute facts, in the case of institutions, are 'actual human beings and the sounds and marks that constitute the linguistic representations' (2010, 109) that generate and maintain normative constraints. These constraints are not always explicitly formulated or enforced, and this is where the Background comes in. Collective intentionality, like all intentionality, is possible only against a Background of nonintentional capacities, practices, habits and presuppositions, some of which constitute sets of power relations. So that where the Background has to do with institutions, its norms function as power mechanisms or *standing Directives* wielded directly or counterfactually by human beings (2010, 158-60). For Wittgenstein too, rule-following is a matter of the 'quiet agreement' of a community of people, but the importance of the individual in Wittgenstein's communal picture does not reside in her having a brain and thus being a biological generator of *standing Directives* or speech-acts. Rather, her quiet agreement needs no bottoming out – which is not to say that brute physical facts are disregarded, but only that they are not regarded as generative or explanatory of social institutions.

In a sense, of course there is no question that society or social institutions are *caused* by human beings: human beings do bring social institutions about; they cause them to exist. And of course human beings have neurobiological structures and processes, and indeed could not create or cause anything at all, or even think, without these. But it doesn't follow from the necessity of such structures and processes for thinking that our thoughts are isomorphic or reducible to them:

... there is no copy in either the physiological or the nervous systems which corresponds to a *particular* thought, or a *particular* idea, or memory (LW I 504; original emphasis).

Even if we knew that a particular area of the brain is changed by hearing *God Save the King* and that destroying this part of the brain prevents one's remembering the occasion, there is no reason to think that the structure produced in the brain represents *God Save the King* better than *Rule Britannia*. (LPP 90)

Thinking about quantum physics, talking about my savings or getting married is not dependent on anything molecular other than in the instrumental sense that I am dependent on molecules, but those molecules – just as any other neurobiological conditions for life – are *enabling*, not *determinant*; where an enabling condition is, as Anthonie Meijers puts it: 'one that makes possible a phenomenon, without determining its actual characteristics' (2000, 158). The conflation of these – recently expressed by William Ramsey as: 'the characterization of any functional architecture that is causally responsible for the system's performance ... as encoding the system's knowledge-base, as implicitly representing the system's know-how' (2007, 3-4) – is what Wittgenstein warned us against. So, yes, Wittgenstein too would say: 'no electrons, no elections', and would agree with Searle that 'mental states, such as my present state of consciousness, are caused by a series of

neurophysiological events in my brain' (1991, 144). But there's a huge leap from that to saying that 'brains cause minds' (1990, 29) or that 'brains attach meaning to minds' (*ibid.*, 26).

This brings us to Searle's second adequacy condition, according to which any account of the mental must respect the basic facts of the structure of the universe and show how it is dependent on, and in various ways derives from, those basic facts (2010, 4) – the basic facts being those given by physics and chemistry, by the 'atomic theory of matter', by evolutionary biology and the other natural sciences. Well, attention is indeed paid by Wittgenstein to what *he* would call 'basic facts' in his account of our being 'mindful, rational, speech-act performing ... social ... human beings' in a material world, as it were, but Wittgenstein's notion of basic facts (at least, his post-Tractarian one) differs from Searle's; it does *not* include anything like the atomic theory of matter, but only facts whose generality and visibility would fail to satisfy the kind of attention Searle thinks ought to be paid to the sciences in our accounts. But why *should* we go micro? Why should we accept Searle's second adequacy condition to the letter, on his terms? Let's briefly see how Wittgenstein relates mind, meaning, sociality etc. to world, and see if that won't do.

On Wittgenstein's view, our mindedness, language, rationality and sociality are impacted by what he calls 'very general facts of nature' (PI p 230) such as the fact that human beings need to eat, sleep, breathe air; that they experience pain and joy and sadness; that they have the visual apparatus they do; that apples fall from trees and cows don't grow on them. A biological fact, such as that the life-span of a human being cannot exceed approximately 125 years, conditions our concept of human life and, more specifically, influences the way we speak about human longevity; so that we cannot sensically speak of a three thousand year-old man unless it be in archeological or science-fictional terms. *On Certainty* fleshes out Wittgenstein's claim in PI that concepts are conditioned by very general facts of nature, by arguing that some of our normative and grammatical rules – which are part of the background (OC 94) or, to use another metaphor, part of the hinges on which knowledge turns (OC 341) – are anchored in regularities of nature. So that sometimes our grammatical and normative rules *are* made to reflect the regular behaviour of things: 'The rule we lay down is the one most strongly *suggested* by the facts of experience' (AWL 84; my emphasis); so that it is through our rules that nature 'makes herself audible'. However, although Wittgenstein is clear that some concepts and grammatical rules are influenced by facts, he is also clear about grammar being autonomous; that is, not *answerable* to nature or to facts.

So that while his acknowledgement of the rootedness of our concepts in the world puts Wittgenstein *outside* the idealist camp, it does not thereby place him in the *realist* camp. There is a difference between saying that certain facts are *favourable* to the formation of certain concepts and saying that our concepts are *dictated* by nature, or (empirically or epistemically) *derived* from nature. The expression '*favourable to*' is meant to show that these facts are not seen as *justifications* but rather, writes Wittgenstein, as 'possible *causes* of the formation of concepts' (PI p. 230; my emphasis) – where 'cause' is not

to be understood as a one-to-one engendering, such as a flower producing a seed, but as an *influencing* or a *conditioning*. And so the fact that our concepts are not *founded* on experience does not mean that they are totally divorced from or impervious to it. Our concepts are not *empty*, but how they are informed by the world is not how realists and empiricists take them to be; they are not rationally or (micro-)causally derived from the world, though they may be *rooted* in it.

So why – when there are other perfectly viable options – must we go micro in any account of ourselves as mindful, social beings? Especially as Searle himself concedes that there is no micro account available:

... a deep understanding of consciousness would require an understanding of how consciousness is caused by, and realized in, brain structures. Right now nobody knows the answers to these questions: how is consciousness caused by brain processes and how is it realized in the brain? (2010, 26)

Why insist that any account of our mindful, speech-act performing, social selves *must* go all the way down when even science is unable to demonstrate that that's the way to go. If attention is to be paid by philosophy to science, shouldn't it be to scientific *results* rather than to scientific hypotheses that seem nourished by a preconception of how things must be? But this doesn't stop Searle from stating what is an hypothesis as unquestionable: '... it is just a plain fact that neuronal processes do cause feelings, and we need to try to understand how' (2005 online).

Even if, *per impossibile*, a micro account were available – I say '*per impossibile*' because it seems to me logically impossible that my mental life can be caused by a configuration of molecules rather than by fully-fledged people, events and things out there in the world: there is no physical or logical room in those molecules for the world. But – again – even if, *per impossibile*, a micro account were available, how would it be more adequate or relevant than a Wittgenstein-type account; how would it be a more *perspicuous presentation* of our human form of life? Water is not relevantly reducible to H<sub>2</sub>O other than in very limited contexts, such as chemistry classes and labs: we do not think of, or refer to, as H<sub>2</sub>O the stuff we go to the beach to splash in, or the stuff we add to our whisky or admire in Monet paintings or pray to the rain god for. Indeed those of us who pray to the rain god have probably never even heard of H<sub>2</sub>O. Moreover, not all H<sub>2</sub>O is water: some H<sub>2</sub>O we call ice; other H<sub>2</sub>O we call steam or vapor<sup>1</sup>. And so if even water is not – except in very limited contexts – *relevantly* reducible to its molecular configuration, why should our meanings, feelings and behaviors be? Why should my awareness that I am enjoying the sun or a Chateau Petrus 82 or that I am slowly losing consciousness be things that I would want to attribute to, or thank my molecules for? Or indeed find relevance or adequacy in *any* account of myself as a minded and social being that would do so?

So to Searle's question about how human beings can create such marvelous features as Declarations and elections, and how they can maintain these in existence once created, I would answer – as he also partly does – through language and practices; but then I would go no further.

<sup>1</sup> I am inspired, here, by Avrum Stroll's excellent 'Reflections on Water' (in his *Sketches of Landscape: Philosophy by Example*. MIT, 1998, 37-73).

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# Counterfactual-Peer Disagreement

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The peer disagreement thought experiment isolates an epistemological puzzle. Holmes and Poirot share evidence about whether  $p$ . Before comparing notes on their respective evaluations of the evidence, Poirot, who is aware that he and Holmes share evidence, counts Holmes as his *epistemic peer*: he judges that he and Holmes are equally likely to evaluate their shared evidence correctly.<sup>1</sup> Poirot then discovers that he and Holmes disagree: Holmes assigns  $p$  a high degree of belief (or *credence*) on the evidence, whereas Poirot assigns it a low one. The only difference between Holmes and Poirot, as far as Poirot can tell, is the way in which each has evaluated the shared evidence. How should Poirot rationally respond? Perhaps by re-assessing his original assumption that Holmes was his peer. But suppose this is not the case here; then the peer-disagreement puzzle arises: Given that Poirot still judges Holmes to be his peer, what is the correct way for Poirot to evaluate the shared evidence about whether  $p$ , *plus* the additional evidence supplied by the peer disagreement itself?

The peer-disagreement scenario assumes that agents share evidence. But often evidence is not shared. In such cases, another problem looms, that of *counterfactual-peer disagreement*: how to respond to the disagreement of someone whom you think would be as likely as you to evaluate the evidence correctly *were you* to share it, and whom you think is as likely to evaluate *his* evidence correctly as you are to evaluate yours correctly? This problem is more intractable and widespread than peer disagreement. I'll suggest a way to mitigate it, but it cannot be completely overcome. The upshot will be an appeal for urgent further research into the problem of counterfactual-peer disagreement.

An *agent's evidence* refers to the set of propositions in which her degree of belief has a high epistemic status. Although evidence is propositional, experiences can provide evidence, for propositions can contain demonstratives expressing experiential content, e.g., *my experience was like that*. Thus any experience may provide evidence.

Evidence-sharing, in the sense needed for peer disagreement, is rare, since this sense must pinpoint disagreements caused *only* by differences in how agents evaluate evidence, not in the evidence itself. In order for Poirot and Holmes to share evidence, both must

- (i) use all and only the same propositions to reason about whether  $p$ ;
  - (ii) grasp each of these propositions;
  - (iii) invest the same credence in each of these propositions.
- (i) excludes disagreements arising because agents reason from different propositions. (ii) excludes disagreements arising because, although both agree that (e.g.) the proposition *Holmes's experience was like that* evidentially affects whether  $p$ , Poirot cannot grasp its referential content and so cannot directly judge its evidential force.<sup>2</sup> (iii) is needed because a difference in the agents' credences in the evidence will, even if they evaluate it identi-

cally, yield differing credences that  $p$ .<sup>3</sup> Thus agents must identify the  $p$ -relevant propositions in which they have a credence *and* their precise credence, plus have introspective access to each credence's epistemic status. If evidence is shared, it is only ever in very simple situations.

Many rightly conclude that, when a disagreement pertains to the moral, political, and religious questions motivating much of the disagreement literature (call them *tough-nut* issues), agents never share all of their evidence. Call this the *evidence-sharing problem*. For part of their evidence will come from experiences which can only be expressed demonstratively, violating condition (ii). This prevents both agents from being able to evaluate all of their combined evidence for themselves, violating condition (i). Condition (iii) will be hard to meet too, because many reasons may prevent an agent from investing the same credence in a proposition he cannot grasp as an agent does who can grasp it.

The evidence-sharing problem is important: if evidence is not shared, peer disagreement doesn't arise, and an account of how to handle it is useless. One might suggest that this is unimportant, that accounts of rational peer disagreement can be applied "roughly". But this strategy is deficient. First, applying an account of rational peer disagreement to a non-peer case will yield distorted results at best. Second, even if an account does prescribe the correct handling of disagreement between evidence-sharers, it doesn't follow that it prescribes even "roughly" the correct handling of disagreement between agents who do not share evidence.

This problem, *counterfactual-peer disagreement*, is thornier than peer disagreement. Imagine that Holmes and Poirot share much evidence about whether  $p$ , but not all. Poirot thinks that Holmes is his *counterfactual-peer*, i.e., that:

- (iv) Holmes is just as likely to evaluate Holmes's evidence correctly as Poirot is to evaluate Poirot's correctly;
- (v) were Poirot and Holmes to share evidence, they would be equally likely to evaluate the shared evidence correctly, which entails that
- (vi) they are equally likely to correctly evaluate whatever evidence they do share.

Counterfactual-peer disagreement is always caused by (A) differences in evidence, and sometimes also by (B) differences in how agents evaluate whatever evidence they share. Peer disagreement isolates only disagreements caused by (B), leaving untouched those caused by (A).

Although counterfactual-peer disagreement is more widespread than peer disagreement and perpetrates tough-nut disagreements, it might take a moment to appreciate. After all, perhaps both agents evaluated their respective evidence correctly, in which case the unshared components of their evidence are to blame for their differ-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Elga's (2007) usage of 'epistemic peer'.

<sup>2</sup> 'Directly': without mediation by Holmes's testimony.

<sup>3</sup> Imagine that both detectives think rain 75% likely given the weather forecast. If Holmes is certain that the forecaster said this, whereas Poirot is half-sure, Poirot's credence in rain should be much less than Holmes's (barring other evidence).

ent credences that  $p$ .<sup>4</sup> Thus both parties may be equally reasonable in spite of the disagreement; what's the problem?

The problem is  $p$ . Holmes has a high credence that  $p$  and Poirot that not- $p$ . If Poirot wants high credences in *truths*, rather than just reasonableness relative to his evidence, he should worry. For the disagreement provides evidence of powerful evidence that  $p$  (Holmes's) which Poirot does not share. Since Holmes is Poirot's counterfactual peer, if Poirot shared Holmes's evidence, his credence that  $p$  would likely be much higher than his own evidence currently warrants. Never mind that Poirot has evidence that not- $p$  which Holmes lacks. If Poirot wants a high credence in the truth about whether  $p$ , he should want Holmes's evidence too.

Thus alongside the woolly problem of peer disagreement looms the woollier problem of counterfactual-peer disagreement. It is woollier because more realistic; because it involves two possible causes, not one; and because, unlike peer disagreement, it infects tough-nut issues. I merely call attention to this underappreciated problem; I don't resolve it. But I'll also deliver hope, arguing that the evidence-sharing problem underlying counterfactual-peer disagreement can be mitigated: Poirot can come *closer* to sharing Holmes's experiential evidence.

Suppose Poirot perfectly shared Holmes's evidence; then he could assess it himself. If so, either he agrees with Holmes's assessment of Holmes's evidence, or he doesn't. If he agrees, then their disagreement will likely be fully explicable in terms of (A), differences in their evidence;<sup>5</sup> now that Poirot has (relatively) complete evidence, his and Holmes's, he may adjust his credence in light of it and rest easy. But if Poirot perfectly shares Holmes's evidence and disagrees with Holmes's assessment of it, then their disagreement is explicable only in terms of (B), differences in how they evaluate evidence, in which case Poirot may apply the right account of peer disagreement (pending discovery thereof!). Summarily: if the evidence-sharing problem could be overcome, then parties to counterfactual-peer disagreements could either resolve the disagreement by sharing evidence, or, if this doesn't bring resolution, focus exclusively on the remaining problem of peer disagreement.

Very well, one might object, but sharing experiential evidence is absurd; condition (ii) on evidence-sharing prevents it. Poirot cannot possibly grasp a proposition like

E Holmes had an experience like that,

in the sense of entertaining the full content of *that*. For grasping it requires phenomenological duplication of Holmes's experience (arguably including the phenomenology of being Holmes).

Two responses. First, it isn't clear that grasping E requires phenomenological duplication of Holmes's experience; it may require only that Poirot have the same type of experience (minus Holmes-phenomenology, *inter alia*). If so, then, if Poirot can have a *similar* experience, he might fulfill criterion (ii). Second, even if grasping E does require that Poirot duplicate Holmes's experience, little hangs on this. I claim only that Poirot can come *closer* to sharing E with Holmes.

Sharing experiential evidence admits of degree. The highest degree may be unrealizable; but if Poirot is aware of having an experience similar to the one referred to by Holmes's evidence E, then he is *closer* to sharing E than Watson, who has had no such experience. Poirot may not grasp E itself, but he grasps a proposition,  $E^*$ , whose content is similar to E's, and is thus better off vis-à-vis condition (ii) than Watson (regarding E). Poirot might rationally be moved to invest the same credence in E as Holmes, or at least a closer credence to Holmes's than before, bringing him closer to fulfilling condition (iii). For if Poirot has a similar experience to Holmes's, he may be rationally entitled to raise his credence in E (the proposition that Holmes had such an experience).<sup>6</sup> Finally, if Poirot's experience resembles Holmes's enough, Poirot comes closer to fulfilling condition (i), for having this experience enables Poirot to reason about whether  $p$  if not from E, then from a proposition expressing similar content,  $E^*$ .

All right, the objector persists. But even if evidence-sharing is degreed, why think that one *can* approach it? In answer, assume that much of the description-defying phenomenology of certain experiences, especially experiences providing evidence for tough-nut opinions, is emotional. Assume further that emotional experience can sometimes legitimately provide evidence. If Poirot can experience emotions relevantly similar to Holmes's experience, he may come closer to grasping E, and thus be able to incorporate E (or  $E^*$ ) in his reasoning about whether  $p$ .

Take the tough-nut proposition

P Unregulated laissez-faire economics is right.

Poirot's credence in P is high, Holmes's low. Assume that Holmes's low credence does not demote him from peerhood for Poirot. They share the evidence

E1 Unregulated laissez-faire economics leads to exploitation.

Poirot thinks that E1 disconfirms P, but less than Holmes does. (Poirot thinks that exploitation results equally from any economic policy and thus disconfirms the rightness of each by only a little.) Holmes, by contrast, thinks that E1 strongly disconfirms P, because he has additional evidence E, where 'that' refers to a phenomenology of witnessing factory-worker exploitation, significantly lowering his credence in P. (Holmes's reasoning: *no* policy can be right which permits such suffering, and if all policies do, then none is right.)

Thus Holmes has evidence which Poirot lacks and which, if Poirot shared it, might dramatically change Poirot's credence in P.<sup>7</sup> The first obstacle to Poirot's sharing E is (ii), grasping E. If grasping E requires identical phenomenology to Holmes's, then Poirot cannot grasp E but might grasp a proposition,  $E^*$ , referring to a similar experience. And if grasping E is compatible with having a similar if not identical experience, all the better. Thus Poirot may approach sharing E (say) by taking measures to witness laissez-faire-induced worker exploitation, or similar suffering which (based on Holmes's testimony) compares with Holmes's experience. Failing this, he might *imagine* such suffering, prompted by (e.g.) memoirs or films, to trigger the emotions he would have were he to

<sup>4</sup> ...assuming, with the disagreement literature, that there is only one correct way to evaluate any evidence.

<sup>5</sup> To tell for certain, Holmes must share Poirot's evidence too, and evaluate it just as Poirot does.

<sup>6</sup> This is especially important for relational as opposed to intrinsic experience-reports (like *my experience of God was like that*, rather than *my experience as of God was like that*).

<sup>7</sup> Although Poirot doesn't share E, he *does* have the evidence that Holmes witnessed laissez-faire-induced suffering. Saying whether the disagreement with Holmes *should* lower Poirot's credence in P, however, presupposes a solution to the counterfactual-peer disagreement problem.

witness it.<sup>8</sup> I suggest that triggering such emotions brings Poirot closer to sharing E by grasping either E or E\*, and thus closer to meeting (i). And if he doubted whether Holmes did have such an experience, thus assigning E lower credence than Holmes and violating (iii), perhaps Poirot's experience will generate trust in Holmes and move his credence in E toward Holmes's.

This suggestion for approaching evidence-sharing doesn't solve the evidence-sharing problem. Counterfactual-peer disagreement haunts us, and in tough-nut cases especially is a real problem, unlike the merely theoretical problem of peer disagreement. I'll thus end by urging further discussion of counterfactual-peer disagreement. Analogously to peer disagreement, two broad approaches suggest themselves. One is *conciliationist*. Poirot lacks some of Holmes's evidence, but Holmes's testimony assures him that there is evidence which strongly favors P. Poirot should thus move his low credence in P toward Holmes's, Holmes being (in Poirot's estimation) just as likely as Poirot to evaluate evidence correctly (and Poirot thinking himself skilled in evidence-handling). Another take, however, suggests that counterfactual-peer disagreement is not evidence for Poirot for P; that Poirot should be *recalcitrant*, maintaining his credence. The reason: although Poirot has evidence that there is evidence (namely, Holmes's) speaking loudly for P, he is also aware of evidence which Holmes *lacks* (namely, Poirot's own) which speaks loudly *against* P. If Holmes shared

Poirot's evidence, Holmes would likely see its force and move his credence toward Poirot's. Surely these two pieces of evidence-of-evidence cancel out, and Poirot should maintain his credence.

It is bad manners to open cans of worms without containing them. Manifold questions remain about both counterfactual-peer disagreement and how my evidence-sharing suggestion might play out in practice. But I offer such questions for future research.

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# Wittgenstein's Anti-Theoretical Stance and Winch's Understanding of Social Sciences

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In his later Philosophy, Wittgenstein renounces theory and advocates doing away with explanation. Many philosophers and theorists ignore or de-emphasize his anti-theoretical recommendation, because they claim to see in Wittgenstein's later philosophy a theoretical perspective (that has an ontological insight into nature of things such as language and rule-following) that is superior to the former philosophical tradition. The aim of this paper is to suggest a way of taking Wittgenstein's admonition seriously and to reconsider Winch's interpretation of Wittgenstein in *The Idea of a Social Science* which has been mediation between Wittgenstein and many social theories. After elucidating the meaning of Wittgenstein's statement on anti-theoretical stance and showing that it is not, as many would think, an alternative theoretical perspective, it will be argued that Winch's conception of philosophy and the way he applies it to issues of social sciences is ultimately quite alien to Wittgenstein's approach.

Traditionally, the specific vocation of philosophy has been to seek the truth about the essence of the world and the ultimate nature of all things. In such an understanding, philosophy is then essentially theoretical, for it is thought to be a cognitive discipline with a genuine subject of its own (Backer and Hacker 2009). Following this conception, many scholars treat Wittgenstein's philosophy as a radically new method for providing a more accurate picture of certain phenomena (such as for example the nature of meaning, mental states, rule-following action) than traditional philosophical perspectives. However, it is my contention that Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations* (PI) calls into question this assumption of philosophical tradition. He rejects vehemently the understanding of philosophy as theoretical. He says: "We may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. All explanation must disappear, and description alone must take its place" (PI 109). Accordingly, Wittgenstein rejects our adoption of a theoretical position in response to the questions such as "What is meaning?", "What does understanding consists in?" and so on.

True, the very idea that "we must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place" (PI 109) seems an unwarranted intellectual restriction. We feel language and mental states are phenomena that cry out for explanation. There must, for example, be some explanation of what language's ability to represent the world consists in, of what thinking is, or of what an intention is. "How could it be possibly wrong or inappropriate to try to elucidate these phenomena, to say what they consist in, or to offer some sort of explanatory account of them?" (McGinn 1997). One wonders if the sort of investigation that Wittgenstein wants us to engage in can satisfy our urge to understand clearly the phenomena such as meaning, thought, understanding, etc.

Wittgenstein recommends doing away with theories because they lead into frustration and philosophical confusion. There are things we know when no one asks us questions, but no longer know them when we are asked to give an account of them. If for example no body asks me "what is time?" I know well enough what it is; but if I am asked what it is and try to explain, I am baffled (McGinn 1997). In this regard, Wittgenstein maintains that the real fault is not in our explanations, but in the very idea that the puzzlement we feel can be removed by means of getting new information. Wittgenstein believes that philosophical problems, which rise out of misunderstanding of our ordinary employment of language, consist in trying to explain the nature of language when no explanation is possible (Stern 1995). The principle aim of his later work was therefore to uncover the mistakes that lead people to formulate philosophical theses. Instead of explanatory theory which supposedly portrays the essence of a phenomenon, Wittgenstein insists on describing it as it presents itself. This is what is meant by Wittgenstein's statement that "the concept of a surveyable representation [*übersichtliche Darstellung*] is of a fundamental significance for us. It characterizes the way we represent things, how we look at matters" (PI 122). Note that the term *Darstellung* can be rendered in English either by presentation or representation. I believe in this context the former is more suitable than the latter, for it fits in Wittgenstein's understanding of philosophy as "purely descriptive" (PI 109) and his rejection of philosophers' craving for generality. Wittgenstein does not say or mean that an *übersichtliche Darstellung* is some special method or perspective which reveals 'the way things really' are. It is simply an admonition to describe (present) the relevant facts without re-presenting (and thereby distorting) them in some preconceived philosophical theory (Pleasants 1999).

It follows, then, that although Wittgenstein claims to renounce *any kind* of theory and advocates doing away with *all* explanation, he is primarily concerned, I argue, with a particular kind of theoretical explanation, namely the one that portrays an ontological picture of phenomena. By his anti-theoretical admonition, he wants to reject the idea of any universal theory capturing the fundamental reality of the human condition. Most philosophers and social theorists completely ignore this anti-theoretical position and attribute to him a number of metaphysical theses concerning language, meaning, rule-following, etc. They attribute to him, for example, the idea that there is truly nothing beyond language, the thesis that reality is in some way intrinsically linguistic (Genova 1995). Contrary to this view, I contend that Wittgenstein offered no theory of language in general and he did not claim to do so. He did not promulgate the view that language is the *primary*, or *only*, reality (Pleasants 1999). In fact, as Pleasants points out, in *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein clearly maintains that

realism, skepticism, idealism and linguistic idealism are equally distorted philosophical perspectives. Wittgenstein makes no grand statements about ontological status of language and his view of philosophy as expressed in the *Philosophical Investigations* leaves no space for any metaphysical assertion such as those above that are so often attributed to him. He refuses any ontological categorization of language because he thought it deeply mistaken and "reificatory" to assume that there is any such entity as "language" *simpliciter* (Pleasants 1999). "We are under the illusion that what is peculiar, profound, essential, in our investigation, resides in trying to grasp the incomparable essence of language" (PI 97).

What is meant by rejection of theory is the "reified" mode of representation. With regard to language, for instance, Wittgenstein rejects the "particular picture of the essence of human language" that Saint Augustine's account gives us, as is quoted at the very beginning of the *Philosophical Investigations* and which he himself advocated in the *Tractatus*. "A philosophical picture, in Wittgenstein's sense, is a theoretical representation which has lost its representational status and has been reified into a peculiarly compelling portrayal of the essence of some phenomenon. Such pictures are really only metaphors, analogies, models, and representations, but they are experienced as knowledge of the essence or reality itself" (Pleasants 1999). Professional philosophers who are committed to the use of such reified modes of representation are self-deluded victims of "grammatical illusions" and "a misunderstanding of the logic of language" (PI 93). Therefore, Wittgenstein describes his method as a kind of philosophical therapy.

Most of those who opt for passing over or rejecting Wittgenstein's anti-theoretical admonition do so, because they believe it involves a performative contradiction and therefore untenable. One to set about proving that there cannot be a philosophical theory; one would need a theory of "theory", which would be self-defeating. To argue that there cannot be a theory on the phenomenon X implies a claim to have a more accurate insight into the true nature of the phenomenon X, for that is what leads one to say why that phenomenon cannot be understood theoretically.

However, contrary to what one might think, in his philosophy of language Wittgenstein is not in the business of replacing a theory of meaning by another one of his own. What Wittgenstein opposes to misunderstanding and false pictures that he examines is not an alternative theory of how language functions but a different *style of thought* which, by its attention to the characteristic structures of our concrete practice of using language, gradually reveals that nothing out of the ordinary is involved (PI 94). "Since everything lies open to view, there is nothing to explain" (PI 126). In challenging the pictures we construct in reflecting on how language functions, Wittgenstein's intention is not to refute doctrines, but to attempt to release us both from particular style of thought and from the philosophical conception that our intellect has allowed to control our imagination.

Therefore, contrary to the common view, in his later writings Wittgenstein provides no philosophical theory at all. True, he expresses many interesting ideas on language, meaning, rule-following, form of life, and so on. However, unlike the reading of Winch, who is widely regarded as the principle exponent of Wittgenstein's authentic social theory, Wittgenstein did not propound a theory of these notions as such and in general in his later writings. This is part of the reason why, I believe, he did not agree with the fact that people attributed logical posi-

tivism to him and associated him with Vienna circle. Wittgenstein avoided philosophical labels. It is in this respect, that he could not consider himself as a phenomenologist, for he said: "There is no such a thing as phenomenology, but there are indeed phenomenological problems" (*Remarks on Colour* 33).

Although Wittgenstein himself showed little interest in social sciences, Winch extended Wittgenstein's philosophy of language to the study of social life in general. It is through Winch that Wittgenstein's philosophy acquired significance for social theory, namely the stress in social theories on centrality of rule, meaning, practice, knowledge, action and agency for the constitution and reproduction of social life. The philosophy of Wittgenstein enabled Winch to make relevant and telling critical points on the practices and assumptions of the then prevailing social sciences. In this regard, Winch is known for his claim that social studies should seek not a causal explanation on the model of natural sciences but a critical mode of "hermeneutical" understanding. Therefore, Winch is typically considered a relativist social scientist who is opposed to explanatory generalization and systematic theory (Pleasants 1999).

However, this view is incomplete, for, like Pleasants, I wish to contend that Winch is also the thinker who produced a theory of social ontology in transcendentalist and universalistic sense. Winch's hermeneutical project is primarily animated by Kantian, not Wittgensteinian conception of philosophy. In his inquiry into the general nature of the human society, Winch begins with the Kantian question: how is any understanding possible? Winch points out that the most suitable way of addressing such a question is a legitimate *a priori* philosophizing. He does not renounce philosophical theory in the manner of Wittgenstein, what he renounces is illegitimate "pseudo-scientific" philosophical theory that is positivistic.

In portraying Wittgenstein as a proto-social theorist, Winch has an interest in generality which is fundamentally alien to Wittgenstein. Although Winch has been heavily criticized over the years, few, if any, have questioned the basic compatibility of his focus on "the nature of social phenomena in general" (Winch 2008) with Wittgenstein's philosophy. In the social-theoretical perspectives on Wittgenstein, very often it has been taken for granted "that Wittgenstein's importance to social theory resides in the extent to which certain of his ideas can be incorporated into theoretical system depicting the essential features of knowledge, action, social structure, etc" (Pleasants 1999). But such a reading of Wittgenstein fails to consider his anti-theoretical attitude and in that respect Winch, who is widely regarded as the main proponent of authentic Wittgensteinian social theory, provides a distorted view of Wittgenstein by universalizing and essentialising the Wittgensteinian notions that have bearing to social theory.

Surely, Winch does not use the term "ontology", and regards his programme as epistemologist. But the examination of his theoretical practice shows that his primary aim is to formulate a theory of social ontology, that is, an account of the general features and conditions of possibility of meaningful social action (Winch 2008). Winch makes it clear that he seeks an account of *being*, that is, "the nature of reality as such and in general", not an account of the means by which we can justifiably claim to *know* what exists. Basing upon his interpretation of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Winch argues that the old-aged problem of the relationship between thought and reality can be resolved through "the solution of confusions about the nature of language in general" and that resolving these confu-

sions requires an analysis of “the *general concept* of following a rule”(Winch 2008). Winch's repeated emphasis on the generality in his inquiry is directly opposed to Wittgenstein's critique of the “craving for generality”.

True, I agree with Winch that social studies cannot avoid “discussion of nature of social phenomena in general” (Winch 2008). But I argue that it is precisely this generality of phenomena that Wittgenstein avoided to deal with. In his interpretation, Winch misses Wittgenstein's distinctive approach to philosophical problems. Wittgenstein proposes to switch the attention away from the construction of theories towards describing the details of our ordinary practice of using language. Such a description is what he calls grammatical method, which is at work in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

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# Anti-Psychologistic Landmarks of Wittgenstein's Philosophy in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

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## 1. Forms of psychologism

The anti-psychologistic reaction that marked the beginnings of analytical and phenomenological philosophy represented an attempt to save the requirements of objectivity, necessity, and universality of the bases of human knowledge as they had been defined in logic and mathematics. The psychologistic threat to transform the ultimate principles of these subjects into empirical laws, which can be ultimately reduced to the laws of psychology, has equally determined the re-thinking of the epistemic groundings of many theories. Therefore, if Frege or Husserl were more interested in defending the independence of logical and mathematical laws from the interference of psychology, authors such as Wittgenstein for instance went further taking away the psychologistic assumptions from fields such as ontology, gnoseology, or epistemology. In this context, a distinction was made among the many forms of psychologism: „(A) logical psychologism i.e., psychologism with regard to logic; (B) psychologism in theory of meaning; (C) psychologism in theory of truth; (D) epistemological psychologism; and (E) psychologism applied to metaphysics.” (Mohanty, 2003, p.115). The logical psychologism transforms logic in a subject subordinate to psychology, as it considers that the laws governing our reasoning are of psychological nature, as the thinking process is a mental one. The psychologism about sense deals with the meaning as the result of mental actions by means of which signs or propositions acquire significance. Meaning is no longer considered objective, but it becomes a consequence of the content of mental states. The psychologism in the theory of truth maintains the dependence of truth on psychic processes (cognitive or perceptive) by means of which we acquire and process the information on the world. The epistemological psychologism highlights the psychological mechanisms that lay at the basis of our knowledge validating it, whereas the metaphysical psychologism considers reality as being constructed “psychologically, idealistically, in our minds and in the infinite mind of God.” (Jacquette, 2003, p. 254) Even if Wittgenstein does not identify rigorously these types of psychologism, in the *Tractatus* he adopts an anti-psychologistic methodological position which will lead to rejecting any attempts at the affirmation of psychologism.

## 2. Anti-psychologistic Arguments in the *Tractatus*

The *Tractatus* begins by renouncing an idealistic vision of the world by means of which reality is no longer a form of manifestation of the mind, irrespective of the fact that we speak about the mind in its individual sense (as in solipsism) or about an abstract mind, as an expression of a transcended force (as in the theories that held that a metaphysical principle would lay at the basis of reality, such as the Absolute Spirit, God, the World of Ideas, etc.). At the basis of what we call world there are individual objects, considered simple (2.02), uncompounded (2.021), unalterable and subsistent (2.0271). In this quality of atoms of the world, the individual objects are the substance of the world (2.021), giving a steady form to this world (2.026). But this does not mean that they can be

thought in isolation, but they must always be thought from the perspective of their relation with other objects (2.0121). This means that objects configure various “states of affairs” (2.01) owing to which they acquire certain determinations (2.031). Objects are not thought from the perspective of their perceptible traits, but from the point of view of their inner properties (2.01231), namely their possibilities of combining with other objects (2.0123). Hence, the existential perspective on objects is replaced by a logical perspective, which deals with the possibility of their existence (2.0121). The emphasis of Wittgenstein's ontology does not longer lay on what gives reality and meaning to the physical world, but on the structure constructed with the configuration of the objects in various states of affairs (2.032). Moreover, on this structure lays the structure of facts (2.034), which represent the states of affairs that exist at a particular time (2). Thus, what we call reality represents nothing else than the infinite possibilities of combining things irrespective of whether they happen or not (2.06). And the configurations among objects that are actualised and do happen, not merely might happen, form the world (1.11). By these distinctions, Wittgenstein renounces the idea that the world would be subjectively constructed or that its operating principles resemble our mind's operating laws as decided by transcendent subject.

Wittgenstein would also lay his anti-psychologistic conception in the theory of knowledge on the anti-psychologistic conception in metaphysics. The theory of picture emphasises rather the processes of logical nature that interfere with the knowledge of external objects than those of a psychological nature, which are irrelevant to philosophy (4.1121). The thought, construed as the picture of facts, is the one that represents on a logical plane the existence or non-existence of a state of affairs (2.11). The elements of the picture not only represent the external objects (2.13), but they are also characterised by the possibility to establish determined relationships among them (2.14). Therefore, the form and structure of the picture become identical with the form and structure of the fact (2.15). This correspondence between the picture and the state of affairs it describes is possible owing to the logical form, by means of which the form of representation becomes identical to the form of reality (2.18). Thus, any interpretation of the picture as a subjective representation of reality is rejected, preferring instead the interpretation from the same logical objective perspective both of the thought and of the picture (2.182). In fact, as Wittgenstein further suggests, the two are identical (3), meaning that any situation is defined by the fact that it can be thought, that is that we can form a picture of such situation (3.001). The thought is not thus analysed from the perspective of psychic processes that lay at the basis of its creation, but from a logical perspective, as a reflection of the relationships existing among the objects of the world that are abstractly determined. It is not the factual content of the thought that is important for the theory of knowledge, says Wittgenstein, but its logical form, which is separated from any other sensory elements. Therefore, the theory of knowledge will be defined as philosophy of psychology (4.1121), meaning that philosophy as an activity deals with clarifying thoughts from the logical point of view (4.112). Should philosophy not be a science of nature (4.111), nor

has the theory of knowledge to transform into a species of naturalism, which should research the way in which our perceptive processes contribute to acquiring knowledge.

The anti-psychologistic conclusions in the theory of knowledge will be extended by Wittgenstein in his theory of language as well. According to Wittgenstein's theory, the proposition represents the sensory expression of the thought (3.1). As an expression of thought, it reflects a state of affairs (4.0311) and it is a picture of reality (4.01). To put it in other words, it occupies the entire logical space determined by the picture (4.42). In this logical space the proposition articulates the relations among its components (3.141). The components of a proposition are names, construed as ultimate elements, "primitive" ones (3.26), which are in a direct-representation relation with the objects they define (3.203). The proposition can be thus understood as a function of the component names (3.318). This means that propositions can be represented from a logical point of view as functions of different variables (4.24). This is the logical form of the proposition where everything that is essential is grasped, meaning invariably in the proposition.

Any proposition, Wittgenstein says, has some accidental features and some essential ones (3.34). The accidental features are given by the grammatical components of the proposition, which, to Wittgenstein, have no significance in determining the meaning of the proposition. The meaning of a proposition depends on its essential features, on that mutual logical structure on which all propositions that convey the same meaning are constructed (3.341). Or, in other words, it is not the mental processes or the representational abilities of the mind that lay at the basis of the meaning of a proposition, but its logical structure that makes it available with a view to catching the relations among objects, by means of names (4.032). The meaning of the proposition is construed in this case as a projection of a possible situation (3.11). The projective character of the proposition originates from the fact that it contains, in its logical structure, the possibility of creating a sense (3.13), meaning that it represents the perceptible projection of a logical situation. Logic becomes thus the "condition of sense" (Hacker, 1996, p. 27). This is also exemplified by means of a musician's performing a musical piece and by a gramophone record (4.0141). Both situations share the same logical form of the musical score and therefore have the same meaning to the listener. Likewise, in terms of language, the reconstitution of the logical form of the actual situations is sought (4.121) and not the reconstitution of reality by means of psychological mechanisms. Nonetheless, this fact cannot be emphasised by analysing day-to-day speech, which disguises thinking by its ways of expression (4.002).

The consequence of such view on language will be the alteration of the understanding of truth. Both the truth and falsity of a proposition are given by the fact that it is a picture (4.06), meaning that it represents the existence or non-existence of the states of affairs (4.1). The truth and falsity do not depend on how we have acquired that particular piece of knowledge, but on the logical form of the actual situation, grasped by the proposition (4.0261). Therefore, we cannot introduce as a criterion of truth the evidence resulted from the way we have acquired that particular piece of knowledge (5.1363).

As propositions are made of elementary propositions, it means that they are functions of truth of the elementary propositions (5), meaning that their value of truth relies on the conditions of truth of the elementary propositions. Such conditions of truth mark the limits of the logical space of the facts described in the proposition (4.463), i.e. they ex-

plain in which situations the state of affairs exists (i.e. it is true) and in which situation the state of affairs does not exist (i.e. it is not true). Thus, the thought appears as the logical representation of some abstract objects which have a certain value of truth. Hence, the theory of truth, despite its preserving the idea of correspondence, as it does in the classical theories, reduced this correspondence to the logical field, insuring thus the truth against all psychologistic interference.

### 3. Conclusion: on methodological anti-psychologism in the *Tractatus*

Moving away from the psychologistic theories becomes clearer in the *Tractatus* by separating psychology from philosophy. When Wittgenstein declares that "Psychology is no more closely related to philosophy than any other natural science" (4.1121), he places psychology among natural sciences, while philosophy is not construed as a science in search of truths and expresses them by laws, but an activity of clarifying the natural sciences field of research (4.113). Therefore, empirical sciences that research the contingent reality are different from the normative subjects, such as logic or mathematics, which describe the logical space necessary to unfold our judgement with respect to the world (6.124). From this perspective, logic is defined as the theory of forms (6.1224) that studies what is necessary and subjected to the laws (6.3), without having a factual content (6.13), whereas mathematics is considered a method of logic (6.2) which mirrors in its relationships what logic shows by means of tautologies (6.22).

Ascertaining that the formal research of knowledge precedes the empirical research leads to the idea that the instruments of logic should be used to discuss the fundamentals of our knowledge. Thus, many of the connections among phenomena or judgements, such as causality (5.1362) or induction (6.363), deemed to belong to the field of logic, hence necessary and objective, prove to be empirical generalisations based on psychological mechanisms. Wittgenstein's conception in the *Tractatus* becomes thus anti-psychologistic not only in intention, but in method as well. The only way to discover the connections between language and the world is to use the instruments of logic. It is only logic that can reflect the "scaffolding of the world" (6.124) and hence delimit what can be said meaningfully in factual sciences.

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# How Many Forms are There in the *Tractatus*?

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## Introduction

It is not an easy task to understand properly and clearly the concept of “forms” that plays a very important role in the *Tractatus*. It does not seem to be the case that interpretations so far have succeeded in this task. In this paper I’d like to go back to a limited question of how we should understand the “forms” in the so-called “picture theory” of the *Tractatus* and to offer an articulation of the “forms”. We hope the articulation to contribute to proper and clear understandings of the basic structure of the *Tractatus*.

## 1. A basic conception of the “picture” in general

Firstly, I like to see the basic conception of the “picture” in the *Tractatus*. Since “[w]hat constitutes a picture is that its elements are related to one another in a determinate way” (TLP2.14), it is said that “[a] picture is a fact” (TLP2.141). This conception will be true of almost all examples that we usually regard as pictures, e.g., maps, musical scores, drawings, chronological tables, standings, line graphs, bar graphs and space-time diagrams, and so on (Notice that there are many ways of articulating a given picture, especially how to identify elements of the picture is not determined in a self-evident way<sup>1</sup>).

And “[i]n a picture objects have the elements of the picture corresponding to them” (TLP2.13, cf., 2.131). This relation of picture’s elements standing for things is called the “pictorial relationship” that “consists of the correlations of the picture’s elements with things” (TLP2.1514). Since “[t]he fact that the elements of a picture are related to one another in a determinate way represent that things are related to one another in the same way” (TLP2.15), a determinate connection of the elements of the picture (i.e., the picture with a structure) depicts a determinate connection of the objects that they stand for (i.e., the state of affairs with a structure).

## 2. An overview

I think that we should distinguish at least following six “forms” in the “picture theory” of the *Tractatus*.

- (a) Representational form (the possibility of a significant connection of the picture’s elements)
- (b) Pictorial form (the possibility of a connection of objects that is symbolized by a representational form)
- (c) Connective form of a state of affairs (the possibility of a connection of objects in a state of affairs)
- (d) Combinatorial form of objects (the possibility of objects occurring in states of affairs)

(e) Categorical form of objects (a formal concept to which objects belong)

(f) The logical form (the totality of logical and internal relations that any pictures have to any pictures, and that any states of affairs have to any states of affairs)

## 3. An articulation of the forms

Next I like to explain the above (a)–(f) along with the text of the *Tractatus*.

(a) Representational form / (b) Pictorial form

Whereas a representational form is the possibility of a significant connection of the picture’s elements, a pictorial form is the possibility of objects symbolized by the representational form. “The fact that the elements of a picture are related to one another in a determinate way represent that things are related to one another in the same way. Let us call this connexion of its elements the structure of the picture, and let us call the possibility of this structure the pictorial form of the picture” (TLP2.15). Here, for the present, the possibility of a significant connection of *the picture’s elements*, which depicts a connection of objects, is called the “pictorial form”.

On the other hand, it is said that “[w]hat a picture must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it – correctly or incorrectly – in the way it does, is its pictorial form” (TLP2.17, cf., 2.151). Therefore, here, the picture and the reality have in common one and the same form, i.e., the pictorial form (cf., TLP2.161, NB20/10/14). But, as is seen above, for the present, the pictorial form is a character that the picture itself has, i.e., the possibility of a connection of the picture’s elements. How does the reality also have it in common?

For example, let us consider a simplified map consisting only of parallels, meridians and contours, then the elements of this map, i.e., parallels, meridians and contours, are connected to each other on the map two-dimensionally. But latitudes, longitudes and altitudes corresponding to such elements of the map are *not* connected to each other two-dimensionally. Whereas the elements of the picture are connected to each other two-dimensionally, the objects corresponding to such elements are not connected to each other in the same way. What the map and the terrain have in common is not the possibility of a two-dimensional connection of the elements of the map, but rather the possibility of a three-dimensional connection of the objects corresponding to them *that is symbolized by the two-dimensional connection*. We can say that the thing like this is true also of other pictures that I mentioned in the (1)st section<sup>2</sup>.

Therefore, we can conclude that *Tractatus* 2.15 and 2.17 use the same phrase “the pictorial form” for two different notions. While the former uses this phrase for the possibility of a significant connection of *the elements of the*

<sup>1</sup> According to how articulated a given picture is, we will commit ourselves to various ontologies. In particular we must notice that it cannot be determined straightforwardly whether we should regard what seem to be elements in a picture as genuine elements of it or as mere indices of elements or of a relation obtaining between elements. For example, some bars in a bar graph can be regarded either as genuine elements or as indices of a relation obtaining between values shown on the vertical and the horizontal lines of it.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, there is a picture in which possibilities of significant connections of its elements and possibilities of connections of reality’s elements depicted by it are identical with each other (cf., TLP2.171), as in the case where “in the law-court in Paris a motor-car accident is represented by means of dolls, etc.” (NB29/9/14). But cases like this are rather exceptions. I hope you think of written or spoken propositions.

*picture*, the latter uses this phrase for the possibility of a significant connection of *the objects* that is symbolized by it. However, this terminological ambiguity can be avoided. That is because Wittgenstein calls the former possibility also the “representational form” (TLP2.173). Thus I call the possibility of a significant connection of the elements of a picture the “representational form” and the possibility of a connection of the objects that is symbolized by it the “pictorial form”.

We like to proceed to clarify these two forms more in detail. The representational form is the possibility of a significant connection of the elements of the picture (the structure of the picture) (TLP2.15). How should we reach to the structure of the picture? The structure of a picture is a determinate significant connection of the elements of the picture (TLP2.15). So, in order to extract the connection itself from the picture, we have only to abstract all the elements of the picture. If we introduce the *operation of substituting* the elements of the picture, then the structure will correspond just to the set of all the (significant) pictures that we can get from the given picture by means of substituting other elements for the original ones. Then all (and only) pictures that have the structure in common with the given picture belong to this set.

It is when we proceed to reach from the structure to its possibility that we can get to the representational form of the picture (TLP2.15). Then, how should we reach from the structure to its possibility? We have only to *substitute also the structure* and to reach to its possibility, i.e., the representational form, just as we reach to the structure by means of substituting the elements<sup>3</sup>. Then the possibility of the structure, i.e., the representational form, will correspond just to the set of all the (significant) pictures that we can get from the given picture by means of substituting not only other elements for the original ones but also other structures for the original one. Then all (and only) pictures that have the representational form in common with the given picture belong to this set.

Thus, it is after we have reached to the representational form of the picture that we can proceed to its pictorial form. This is because *no alternative is available to us except to start from the given picture*. We reach to the pictorial form by means of (i) considering the states of affairs that are depicted by the pictures having the representational form in common with the given picture, and (ii) identifying the pictorial form as the possibility of existences *of such states of affairs*. Therefore the pictorial form is not the possibility *simpliciter* of existences of states of affairs. Rather *of what states of affairs* it is the possibility of existences is contained in the identity conditions of the pictorial form<sup>4</sup>. But the identity condition does not contain *what representational form the pictures have* that depict the states of affairs having that pictorial form in common. Indeed we cannot reach to any pictorial form without passing through a representational form, but what route we have passed through is irrelevant to the identity condition of the pictorial form<sup>5</sup>. In this way, we reach to the pictorial form as the possibility of connections of objects that is presented by any pictures having the given representational form.

<sup>3</sup> In the case of a map, if we regard contours as elements of the picture, then substituting a structure of this picture amounts to changing, say, a way of curving of contours, or intervals between contours.

<sup>4</sup> This guarantees that there are different several pictorial forms (cf., PTLP2.171). In fact, pictorial forms of, say, maps and musical scores will be different from each other.

<sup>5</sup> This guarantees that two different pictures that have different representational forms respectively can have a pictorial form in common (cf., TLP 4.0141).

Thus interpreted, *Tractatus* 2.171 can be understood as asserting the converse of 2.17. Namely, a picture can depict any reality having its *pictorial* form in common. Therefore a map can depict any terrestrial terrain (for its pictorial form is the possibility of three-dimensional connections of latitudes, longitudes and altitudes). And a musical score can depict any piece of music (for its pictorial form is the possibility of temporal connections of various kinds of sound), and so on. After all, 2.171 and 2.17 can be interpreted to assert conjunctively that a picture can depict a reality if and only if the reality has the pictorial form in common with the picture.

(c) Connective form of a state of affairs

“The determinate way in which objects are connected in a state of affairs is the structure of the state of affairs. // Form is the possibility of structure” (TLP2.032-2.033). Since the “state of affairs” is a “combination”, or a “configuration” of objects (TLP2.01, 2.0272) and “in a state of affairs objects stand in a determinate relation to one another” (TLP2.031), the determinate way of objects connecting to one another is the “structure” of the state of affairs and its possibility is the “form” of it. I would like to call the form in this sense the “connective form” of a state of affairs.

The connective form of a state of affairs, which is characterized as the possibility of a connection of objects, seems to be independent of any pictures also in an ontological sense. But it is nothing but the pictorial form. That is because if it is given, it cannot but be given as *being the same as a pictorial form* (via a representational form) (cf., NB25/4/15)<sup>6</sup>. Therefore one and the same possibility of a connection of objects can be said to have two different names, i.e., from a viewpoint of a picture presenting that possibility it is called the “pictorial form” of the picture, and from a viewpoint of the state of affair having that possibility it is called the “connective form” of a state of affairs.

Thus we can say that for a picture to have its pictorial form in common with a reality means for the picture having the form to depict the reality – correctly or incorrectly – (TLP2.17). And here the connective form of the reality can be thought to be literally the same as the pictorial form of the picture.

(d) Combinatorial form of objects / (e) Categorical form of objects

The combinatorial form of objects is characterized, for the present, as “the possibility of [their] occurring in states of affairs” (TLP2.0141). As to the categorical form of objects, though there are a few remarks that mention to it by means of the phrase the “form” (e.g., TLP2.0233), what seems to be decisive is the following remark. “Space, time, and colour (being coloured) are forms of objects” (TLP2.0251).

Wittgenstein counts color among “forms” here. And in another passage, Wittgenstein is described (by Waismann) as making a distinction between “forms” and “predicates”, and then as counting color among “forms” (WVC, p.44). This distinction corresponds just to that of the *Tractatus* between the “formal concept” and the “concept proper” (TLP4.126). Thus I guess that color is regarded as a formal concept on the ground that color is a “form” and a “form” corresponds to a “formal concept”. Moreover I guess that space and time that are treated on a par with

<sup>6</sup> For example, in order to identify the connective form of a terrain right in front of our very eyes, we must identify what connection of what elements the terrain consists in, and this must depend on how to describe the terrain, i.e., what picture having what representational form we adopt.

color in *Tractatus* 2.0251 are also regarded as examples of formal concepts. I adopt the interpretation that what are called “forms of objects” in the remark cited are formal concepts under which the objects fall, and I call the form in this sense the “categorical form” of objects.

The categorical form of objects is linked to the combinatorial form in a way such that all and only objects having the former form in common have also the latter form in common. This can be shown in the following way. The combinatorial form of an object is called its “internal property” (TLP2.0123-2.01231). And all objects having a categorical form in common are said to have also the internal property in common (TLP2.0233). On the other hand, Wittgenstein denies that color and sound can be values of one and the same variable (PR8, MS108, pp.100-101). Therefore two signs designating two objects of two different categorical forms respectively can be concluded to have different syntactical behaviors, i.e., different syntactical combinatorial forms. In particular, there is at least one syntactical connection in which only one of them can occur. If the contraposition of this conclusion is asserted in ontology, then it amounts to the thesis that all and only objects having their combinatorial form in common have also their categorical form in common.

(f) The logical form

While the above five forms ((a)–(e)) concern mainly an internal structure of a connection, or what amounts to the same, a way of elements being related, but I think that the logical form concerns relations obtaining between the connections independently of their internal structures. The *logical form* is the totality of the logical (in particular, truth-functional) and internal relations obtaining between any pictures, and also between any states of affairs depicted by them. The “logical and internal relations” said above are typically exemplified by the relations of “implying”, “contradicting”, “being logically equivalent with” and “being logically independent of”, and so on. It is what the *Tractatus* calls generally the “degree of *probability*” that any propositions give to any propositions (TLP5.15).

This relation obtains between any pictures independently of what the representational and the pictorial forms they have, and therefore it obtains between any states of affairs depicted by the pictures independently of what connective forms they have (TLP4.125). Thus the logical form becomes also the *form of reality*. “What any picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it – correctly or incorrectly – in any way at all, is logical form, i.e., the form of reality” (TP2.18).

So far I have explained briefly the six forms (a)–(f) along with the text of the *Tractatus*. Since an articulation offered here is an important part of the basic structure of the *Tractatus*, we hope the articulation to contribute to proper and clear understandings of the *Tractatus*'s views about language and the world<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> An articulation offered here is not complete. What is lacking obviously is what is called the “logical form” in the following remark: “It was Russell who performed the service of showing that the apparent logical form of a proposition need not be its real one” (TLP4.0031).



# Genre Knowledge in Musical Performance as Intransitive Understanding and the Practising of Rules

Tom Eide Osa, Bergen, Norway

The big band is playing, the bar is open and there is a great atmosphere in the jazz club. Between two numbers, a member of the audience is brought onto the stage and handed a trumpet. This elderly guy takes a seat among the other members of the band and takes part as a musician in the next song. Afterwards, he is given resounding applause and is acclaimed as the old star that he is. The artistic board of a symphony orchestra is to decide whether one of the clarinetists who have been on probation will be offered the vacancy. At a traditional music competition, the participants compete in folk music. A young pupil has his first piano lesson.

The old jazz musician is a recognised expert, the clarinetists are assessed in relation to professional standards, the piano student is so far unaware of the world of music that may be awaiting him. Music's life forms consist of situations like this and other situations in which knowledge as it is manifested in performing music is put into practice, evaluated and learned.

What expertise is it these persons possess? What does it mean to be a highly respected musician in the field of big band jazz or in another area of musical performance? Why do some people become expert? What is it they are capable of? How have they learned what they know? When a pupil starts playing an instrument, what is it he is supposed to learn? And how does he learn it? And what about those who are seen as not very competent – what is it they cannot do?

I will comment on some of these questions by applying ideas taken from Wittgenstein to musical performance. Using Wittgenstein and the Norwegian philosopher Kjell S. Johannessen's elaboration of Wittgenstein, I will outline a view of knowledge in musical performance as the practising of rules and intransitive understanding. This will also shed some light on the issue of genre in musical performance.

Firstly, I would like to remind you that knowledge as manifested in musical performance is primarily expressed non-verbally – in the form of music. The jazz trumpeter and the others demonstrate their knowledge through their playing. Verbal language can be used secondarily to refer to this knowledge, but, for logical reasons, it cannot replace it.

Ways of playing developed at different times and in different places constitute different performing communities or communities of practice – as genres and as more or less specialised styles and local variations. Being able to understand that it is correct to play in just such a way in this precise situation and being capable of practising this way of playing with artistic flair shows that the performer in question manifests knowledge in his musical performance. He understands the game and practises the rules that apply. This knowledge takes the form of more or less absolute rules that are put to work in and give rise to the musical performance.

Wittgenstein writes that someone who is not in his right element can be perceived as a cripple. But if he is in his natural element, everything will blossom and look healthy (Wittgenstein 1980, p. 42e). If the acclaimed jazz trumpeter

were to be placed in a symphony orchestra or as a participant in a traditional music competition – what then? He is familiar with big band jazz, but what about other styles and genres governed by other sets of rules and other ways of practising rules?

Sets of rules for ways of playing at different times and in different places form separate rule-bound discursive formations that are perceived as genres and styles. The rules that constitute genres and styles will be subject to change in various ways (Barret 1997). A genre is more or less characterised by disintegration/turbulence, transgression and resistance to change (Holt 2007, pp. 59-60). Genre knowledge in musical performance is maintained and changed as a result of the ways of playing that are appreciated, desirable and promoted at any given time, at the same time as other ways of playing are undesirable and are actively eradicated or ignored.

The rules form a constitutive framework, while the actual practising of the rules creates musical wholes that are something other and greater than the rules themselves. A good musician, a good performer, is inventive, original and exciting, but he nonetheless follows the rules; the greatest artist is perhaps someone who follows the rules to the letter, but who, in his practising of the rules, creates unique works of art that in retrospect are perceived as paradigmatic role models. Mozart is an example. Usually, it is only someone who can demonstrate full mastery of the prevailing rules who wins acceptance for breaking or changing them.

It is natural to see chess as a classic example of this, as Wittgenstein did. Like music, chess is strongly rule-bound while at the same time allowing for many different ways of practising the rules. But it is not until the rules have been learned through explanation and thorough drilling that you can begin to play in earnest and that opportunities arise to become a virtuoso performer with a highly developed feeling for the rules. For beginners, it will also gradually become clear that there are informal strategies – certain combinations of moves and ways of playing may not actually be prohibited, but they are not smart or expedient if you wish to achieve success in the game. A beginner can become frustrated because, although he has grasped a rule, he simply follows it without understanding it. His application of the rule is still rigid and lacks an overall understanding of the situation.

People who master musical performance at a high level have specific knowledge acquired through specific training; the exercise of aesthetic expertise involves mastering *aesthetic practices* (Johannessen 2004). Those who participate in an aesthetic practice act on the basis of knowledge of the rules of this specific aesthetic practice; they have developed a finely-tuned feeling for the rules that enables them to act correctly. Once you have learned the rules, you become capable of making correct assessments as you gradually learn how to practise the rules on the basis of discretionary judgement:

'In the case of the word "correct" you have a variety of related cases. There is first the case in which you learn the rules. [...] He learns the rules – he is drilled –

as in music you are drilled in harmony and counterpoint. Suppose [...] I learnt all the rules, I might have, on the whole, two sorts of attitude. (1) [He] says: "This is too short." I say: "No. It is right. It is according to the rules." (2) I develop a feeling for the rules. I interpret the rules. I might say: "No. It isn't right. It isn't according to the rules." (Wittgenstein 1966, p. 5).

In the first case, the person in question has learned the rule but lacks the ability displayed in the second case to make a discretionary aesthetic judgement about how to practise the rule. Once you have learned the rules, you acquire an increasingly refined and thereby altered ability to make judgements. Drill-like learning of explicit rules is a precondition if you are to be capable later on of making aesthetical judgements. 'Learning the rules actually changes your judgement. [...] In what we call the Arts a person who has judgement develops' (Wittgenstein 1966, p. 5-6).

Musicians who are familiar with a genre and a style have a rich potential to exploit the rules. Knowledge of the available stock of ways of playing and strategies enables the musician to assess whether one way of playing is compatible with what is seen as a correct or good way of playing – he is capable of making aesthetic judgements '[...] within the framework of a shared culture' (Johannessen 2004, p. 28). To be a person engaged in an aesthetic practice such as musical performance, you must be capable of adopting attitudes that make it possible to make judgements that in turn enable you to practise the rules in question.

So far, I have outlined a diversity of musical performance practices and understood their distinctive nature as the ability to perform music in accordance with the specific rules of the practice in question. Being capable of playing correctly, of handling the rules, presupposes both that you are able to understand an aspect of the situation in question as a particular case that can be placed in a category of similar cases to which the rule in question applies, and that you manifest your understanding of a particular case like this in your practical musical performance.

Wittgenstein uses the expression *intransitive understanding* to refer to situations in which a particular meaning of an expression dawns upon us. In this quote, the example concerns understanding a genre painting:

'If this recognition does not come easily, there is a period of doubt followed by a familiar process of recognition. If on the other hand we take it in at first glance it is difficult to say what the understanding—the recognition say—consists of. There is no one thing that happens that could be called recognition.

If I want to say "I understand it *like that*" then the "*like that*" stands for a translation into a different expression. Or is it a sort of intransitive understanding?' (Wittgenstein 1974, p. 77).

Johannessen (1990) mentions properties that characterise Wittgenstein's intransitive understanding. In intransitive understanding, there is an inner inseparable relation between expression and content, between what is understood and the personal act of understanding. In musical performance, this means hearing and perceiving something immediately; one hears something *like that*, directly and without reflection, autonomously, as itself.

When a folk musician at a traditional music competition plays a *springar*, an old Norwegian country dance, she hears, understands and plays it as a *springar*. For those

who are not familiar with what a *springar* is, or how it sounds or should be played, a first transitive step on the way to understanding what a *springar* is would be to learn that it is dance music, that the intention behind a *springar* is to give something to the dancers – for a folk musician, the most important thing may be to make the dancers want to dance, which is a key constitutive rule for a *springar*.

The intransitive understanding cannot be expressed verbally in a fully satisfactory manner and is not the result of conscious reflection. If the experienced big band musician were asked what his talent consisted of, he would probably not be able to give a satisfactory answer. If he tried to put into words what it is he can do, his statements might be vague or meaningless because they refer to musical phenomena that are difficult to describe in normal verbal language and that will only be understandable to those already in the know. In his explanations, he would probably use his trumpet, sing a bit, play a bit, talk a bit, use gestures, facial expressions, body language, demonstrate and say: 'something like that, yes that's how it is.' His life and identity – his world – have been that of a big band musician; he is part of this world, which for him is natural and real. It is simply not possible to communicate knowledge of this kind in a satisfactory manner. He can play the standard repertoire with verve, creativity and artistry and identify many styles, musicians, songs, orchestras and recordings immediately. If we ask him what it is that enables him to identify right away the song *Splanky* by Count Basie's Orchestra from the 1957 record *The Complete Atomic Basie*, he might answer: 'Because it is them!' His identification of the version of *Splanky* in question is not the result of conscious reflection. His understanding is immediate or intransitive, it is the experience as itself, as knowledge. An attempt can be made to communicate this knowledge transitively by naming and elaborating on the recording in question. But that is not unproblematic, of course. We have no guarantee that the intransitive understanding, and thereby the knowledge, entailed in hearing the song in question *like that* will be communicated by naming it and saying something about it, but it is a start that in the long run can develop into understanding.

Knowledge in musical performance linked to genres and styles consists of being able to listen and play in specific ways that, once internalised and automated, appear natural. This intransitive understanding forms the basis for determining which genre and style-specific rules are to be practised.

Traditionally, this has largely been implicit and taken as given. In recent years, music as a cultural phenomenon has changed rapidly due to factors such as globalisation and increased interest in the local, raising questions about traditional artistic and aesthetical truths, values and hierarchies, and the technological compression of time and space. Digital devices such as computers and smart phones, and Internet applications such as Google, YouTube and Spotify have revolutionised access to music. Music from many eras, places and genres is now available, not just as texts in history books and scores, but in multimodal form consisting of texts, sheet music/images, sound and film files.

The result is increased awareness of genre knowledge in musical performance, and Wittgenstein can help us here to understand this knowledge as intransitive understanding and the practising of rules.

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# Wittgenstein and the Third Person Analysis of Emotion

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## I

Generally, we take 'emotion' as a feeling and it is private to the person who has the experience of that feeling. So, it is subjective to the person who knows his/her emotional experiences through introspection or a kind of internal observation. Accordingly, emotional words are meaningful only through introspection or internal observation. In the arena of western philosophy, we find a widespread interpretation of Wittgenstein's investigation of mental phenomena that Wittgenstein is opposed to the idea of taking mental phenomena that imply private representation, these are only accessible to the person who experiences them; and they are totally unavailable for public investigation (Budd 1989, Malcolm 1986). Moreover, Wittgenstein opposes the line of thinking that emotions or emotional experiences are private to the person who has that experience and according to him, one can 'know' other's emotional experiences, and the emotional expressions play a vital role in knowing other's emotions or emotional experiences.

However, an emotional experience is not something that is hidden within the person who has that emotional experience. It might be the case that one can keep his or her emotional experiences hidden for a short period of time, not permanently. Hence, for Wittgenstein, emotional words do not make reference to private events that they are cut off from the others. It might be the case that one looks within herself or himself, any emotion like, joy or fear or pain and say this is joy or this is pain or this is fear. This does not mean that he/ she gets the meaning of these emotional words from looking within him or herself. The emotional expressions are used in our language as the public manifestations of the emotional experiences and we use emotional words as the public criteria to read off other's emotional experiences. For Wittgenstein, without public criteria there is no way to judge whether one uses a word appropriately or not.

Nevertheless, Wittgenstein held the view that a word gains its meaning from how it is used for a particular purpose and the grammar of our language governs the use of any word in our language. The same word might be used in different language games for different purposes. For example, the word 'brick' can be used in different language games. It might be used in the language game of naming an object or making a request of bringing the same object and so on and so forth. Hence, to understand the meaning of the word 'brick' one has to understand the grammar of the word 'brick' used in different language games with reference to different phenomena. However, during the analysis of emotions from the third person point of view, a lot of attention is granted to the notion of context and to the transposition of the same expression in different language games. Therefore, Wittgenstein uses the grammar of our language as the key in understanding a phenomenon and the term 'grammar' refers to the rules that govern the use of any word.

## II

It is worth noting that since the paper is about emotion only, our target should not be the grammar of our every day language as a whole but we shall very narrowly

concentrate upon the grammar or essence of the word 'emotion' or grammar of the language games of emotion. The word 'grammar' for Wittgenstein is not to be understood as in its usual acceptance. It is the conceptual nature of propositions or expressions that makes the concepts or propositions grammatical. Therefore, he refers to his method of philosophical investigation as a 'conceptual investigation' or 'grammatical investigation' of language and for him, every word is associated with a concept. For example, emotion has an associated concept like the concept of emotion, thinking is associated with the concept of thinking and so on and so forth. Each concept is closely related to the grammar of the associated word.

However, we may not get the essence or grammar of the word 'emotion' by asking the question like 'what is emotion?' or by defining it and explaining it through the definition. It is possible only through the conceptual investigation of the concept of 'emotion' because for Wittgenstein "essence is expressed by grammar"<sup>1</sup> (Wittgenstein 1953, I 371). Therefore, Wittgenstein does not attempt to explain what emotion is rather, he explores what makes emotion sensible or how we make the sense of emotion. It is possible only by understanding the similarities, differences and connections between the various emotional words or expressions. In Wittgensteinian way, like the varieties of games, there are various similarities and differences among the various emotional words. As he says, "I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than 'family resemblances'...And I shall say 'games' form a family"(Wittgenstein 1953, I 67). Following Wittgenstein, let us suppose emotions form a family and to describe the various characteristics of certain emotions is a fundamental part of investigating the concept of emotion.

In tracing the grammar of the word 'emotion', one of the crucial features is how the concept of emotion relates outer and inner. For Wittgenstein, the outer criteria of emotion are the emotional expressions in terms of which the emotions are characterized but the particular relation of the inner with the outer might differ from case to case. Therefore, the characteristics of each emotional word are different from another. For example, anxiety and sorrow are similar because of the similarities in their grammar not because we feel the same in both cases. But, if one says his or her experience of anxiety is similar to that of joy rather than sorrow then we would not mean that he/she experiences the emotion differently from us. But, we might say that she or he means the word 'anxiety' differently from us because he/she misunderstood the grammar of the word 'anxiety'.

To understand the grammar of anxiety implies to know how the word 'anxiety' is used in different ways in different language games. For each language game, there are specific ways of using words in that language game. Let us take two language games like, the language games of 'sadness' and 'eye irritation'. One feels sadness after hearing about his relative's death, but not after cutting onion. But, eye irritation happens after cutting onion, not

<sup>1</sup> Citations of *Philosophical Investigations (part-I)*, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology Vol. I*, and *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology Vol. II* refer to the remarks numbers. And citations taken from *Philosophical Investigations (part-II)* and *The Blue and Brown Books* refer to page numbers.

after his relative's death. In both cases, tear might come in his eyes and thus 'crying' is the common expression within the sets of cutting onion and his relative's death. In the case of his relative's death, the expression 'crying' is viewed as the 'behavior of sadness' and in the case of cutting onion, it becomes the 'behavior of eye-irritation'. In this way, a language game provides the context within which a behavior or an expression is connected with the related concept. Therefore, eye irritation is related to cutting of onion and relative's death is related to the concept of sadness. In terms of language games, we can say relative's death made me sad and cutting of onion irritates my eyes.

### III

However, expression is a central concept of emotions that emotional experiences are reflected in emotional expressions. Emotional expressions are nothing but the verbal and nonverbal behaviors that communicate emotional experiences. Bodily expressions or gestures, facial expressions, behaviors and linguistic expressions all are expressions of emotional states. These expressions provide the evidence for saying a person has the emotion expressed or not. The statement 'I am so sorry' functions as an expressions of a person's emotional state, it is not the description of his emotional experience. We cannot describe other's emotional experiences. A person can describe or capable of introspecting his/ her personal experiences. But, in other's case, the emotional words gain their meanings through the criteria that represented in the public. The expressions of emotions can be natural or cultural expressions. In some way, natural emotional expressions are cultural but cultural expressions are not natural. Nevertheless, if we will discuss only the natural expressions of emotions then the cultural expressions of emotions will be excluded.

In the *Blue Book*, Wittgenstein makes a distinction between 'symptoms' and 'criteria'. According to him, criteria are the observable features that are directly connected to an expression by its meaning rather symptoms are the features that are indirectly connected to the expression by being associated with the criteria in our experience. Hence, we would like to take symptoms of our emotions are the natural expressions and criteria are the cultural learned expressions. And cultural behaviors include both symptoms and criteria. Let us take an example, 'giving smile indicates happiness' is the natural expression of the emotion 'happiness'. Hence, 'Giving smile' is one of the symptoms of feeling happiness. But that does not mean that when one is smiling he/ she is happy. It might be the case that someone is smiling but really he/she is not happy. Similarly, one looks hungry that paleness is in his or her face and asked by someone 'Are you hungry?' He answered, 'Yes'. Therefore, we might say 'paleness' is the symptom of hunger; that does not mean that whenever we find paleness in one's face that will be the cause of hunger. Because of some other reasons paleness might come in one's face like, because of fear or lack of sleep or for any other reasons. Therefore, we will learn the technique of the distinction of the various uses of the expression 'paleness' in different language-games.

Wittgenstein has given emphasis on cultural expressions of emotions and these expressions are the learned behaviors that include attitudes, behaviors, facial expressions, and the tone of voice and so on and so forth. These expressions are conventional in nature and different from natural expressions. In the *Brown Book*, Wittgenstein discusses about four different cases where our expres-

sions are more or less natural, or artificial. These cases are like, "a) weeping, b) raising one's voice when one is angry, c) writing an angry letter, d) ringing the bell for a servant you wish to scold" (Wittgenstein 1958, 103). Sometimes one can use these four natural expressions as artificial means to let others know that he/she feels a certain emotion. Because of sadness one might be crying or weeping and it does not mean that one is crying or weeping means he/she is sad. As Wittgenstein says, "Possibly one could be sad because he is crying, but of course one is not sad that he is crying. It would after all be possible that people made to cry by application of onions would become sad; that they would either become generally depressed, or would start thinking about certain events, and then grieve over them" (Wittgenstein 1980, II 323). Hence for Wittgenstein, there is no more distinction between the natural expressions and using them as artificial means of giving the impression that one feels a certain emotion.

### IV

Therefore, the natural expressions like weeping, groaning, trembling and so on are only the rough indications for our understanding of other's emotions. The mere fact of crying or weeping is not the very indicative of the emotion sadness. Weeping does not tell us whether the person is crying from sad or joy or grief and so on. Then, how we will predict he/she is crying because he/she is sad. According to Joachim Schulte, "In order to understand what they express we need to know more, either about the history of the person in question or about his present state. Knowing about his history and telling on the basis of that and the natural expression observed would amount to telling a plausible causal story. But if this type of knowledge is unavailable or insufficient we shall have to know more about the other person's present state" (Schulte 1993, 132). This 'more' might be the person's attitudes, behaviors, facial expressions, gestures and the tone of voice and so on and so forth.

Thus, the tone of voice, facial expressions, attitudes and behaviors of the person are the special characteristics of emotions to judge whether one tries to feign or really feels a certain emotion. When one cries because of sadness we found a specific tone of expression and also some kind of facial expression and so on. Nevertheless, it is not easy to imitate that kind of tone of voice or facial expression or other behaviors when one tries to feign or pretend that he/she is sad. Wittgenstein claims that the phenomenon of pretence seems to create problems because we are tempted to claim that 'being sad' and 'pretending to be sad' have the same outer manifestation but they have different inner characters. It happens because some of the behaviors and utterances may be the same but the wider patterns in which the two belong are fundamentally different, even if partially overlap.

To conclude, one cannot see or perceive other's emotion but one can know another's emotional experiences. Hence, emotion is not something that is hidden for the third party observers. It is the emotional words or expressions that people use to read off another's emotional experiences. For Wittgenstein, language games occupy an important place when it comes to our observation of emotional expressions. Therefore, it is misleading to call emotional experiences as phenomena, it is better if we put them as the language game of emotion. We can play the language game with the word 'emotion' and each language game has an associated concept. Thus, to study

the concept of emotion is to study how the emotional words are used in different language games.

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# Science vs. Religion: A Wittgensteinian Perspective

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Wittgenstein never talks explicitly about religion anywhere. It is only from the passages here and there on God religious beliefs, rituals, contrast with scientific discourses that we have to extract out his views on religion. The notion of inexpressibility of religious beliefs too is as dominant as values and ethics.

On the apparent incompatibility of religion and science, Wittgenstein refrains from giving any arguments in favor of either simply because both the discourses instead of opposing each other, seems to play their game only with different language games. What religion says is in different words and phrases what sciences say. They use different forms of life altogether. It is because of the similar symbolisms used by both that their discourses appear contradictory to each other. Wittgenstein here gives the example of pictures and contends that it is a fruitless activity to look for the object for which the picture stands for, for a picture may not have any objective denotation, "what makes a picture a religious picture is not its pictorial relationship to some event" (Weinberg 1994, 66). It is how the picture is used in a religious discourse that gives meaning to the picture and entire religious discourse. Thus, the notion of language-games is used in religion as well, which makes a religious discourse different from a scientific, rationality-based account. This calls for a different attitude to be adopted by the seeker when approaching religion. These are not opposite discourses, only different. Just that, different language games are used in two discourses does not make one more valid and sensible over the other.

Thus, for Wittgenstein, there is no inherent conflict between science and religion. He sees the apparent conflict from the glasses of language-games, which make the conflict only superficial. Religion is beyond the empirical-evidence based rationality of the sciences. He advises the reader from branding the religious ones as unreasonable just because these do not conform to the logic of scientific rationality and that their truth, "depends upon further surroundings of it" (Wittgenstein 2007, 59). Thus, it is only after having done a careful tour of the further surroundings of that particular language game in which that religious sentence is being uttered that meaning and sense of that religious statement could be had. As long as the believer has faith in the religious discourse, or authority narrating that discourse, the game is well-played and holds meaning for the believer. By giving the example of Gospels, Wittgenstein remarks in *Culture and Value*, "The historical accounts in the Gospels might, historically speaking, be demonstrably false and yet belief would not lose nothing by this: not, however, because it concerns 'universal truths of reason'! Rather, because historical proof (the historical proof game) is irrelevant to belief. This message (the Gospels) is seized on by men believably (i.e. lovingly)." (Wittgenstein 1980, 53e) The "speculative intelligence" which is hallmark of scientific rationality has nothing to do with this kind of belief as it requires not reason, but faith.

How then the apparent dispute between sciences and religion be settled? This can be first by recognizing that the dispute is only apparent or superficial. In reality, there does not exist any real dispute between the two approaches as both approach reality according to their own different perspective, their own rules and describe whatever they find in the language game particular to them.

There is merely difference between the two language-games that they use, and as argued earlier, difference may not necessarily mean opposition. Secondly, by employing what Wittgenstein has said so many times throughout his works regarding the proper job of philosophy. The difference between the two language-games, and consequently the two approaches, can be settled amicably if philosophy (or people enquiring the two, generally) does not go about devising single theories, rules and laws to describe different phenomena as speculative metaphysicians did in medieval ages. Wittgenstein repeatedly warned that the job of the philosopher is not to devise systems, but clarifying the language – describing how two language-games work! It is not a job of philosophy to impose its findings on the concepts, which do not belong to it and try to explain things in its terms. As he says, "the language-games are rather set up as objects of comparison which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also dissimilarities" (Wittgenstein 2006, 130). Thus, philosopher's task is to unravel the mysteries behind things by clarifying the language they play their language-games in. Both are played by different set of rules, meant for different kind of audiences, with different intentions in mind and in different contexts. It will therefore be a foolhardy to explain one in terms of the other. Richter believes that philosophy could be of an immense help in clarifying the boundaries of two games as philosophy could serve as a tool to clean the religion which has got cluttered with all sorts of ambiguous (in terms of scientific rationality) concepts (Richter 2001, 169).

Though, religion's language-game is strikingly different from scientific discourse and may appear totally antagonistic in face of scientific rationality, still it is not superstition. What makes even a religious discourse meaningful is the coherence of different elements of that language game. Richter brings in the utilitarian aspect of this coherence and remarks that, "Whether an assertion makes sense, and what sense it has, is shown by the work it does, or does not do, in someone's life. There is no combination of words ('proof of God's existence, for instance) that could never have a use in a person's life. Nor is there any that is always used meaningfully" (Richter, Duncan 2001, 174). It is because of these reasons that assertions need to be appreciated and analyzed within their contexts which ideally should consider spatio-temporal facts of the language-users.

*Nature of Religious Beliefs:* Different language-games give a radically different character to the nature of religious beliefs. The nature of religious assertion is such that it cannot be understood by means or tools of other language-games. Wittgenstein gives an example:

"Suppose someone were a believer and said: "I believe in a Last Judgment," and I said; "Well, I'm not so sure. Possibly." You would say that there is an enormous gulf between us. If he said, "There is a German aeroplane overhead," and I said, "Possibly I'm not so sure," you'd say we were fairly near. It isn't a question of my being near him, but on an entirely different plane, which you can express by saying: "You mean something altogether different, Wittgenstein" (Wittgenstein 2007, 53).

Thus, when the two persons converse about matters of religious belief, with one believing in it and the other not, it is not that one is the antagonistic of the other. Wittgenstein wishes to emphasize that by playing different language-games involving one concept, they merely are “talking past each other.” They really do not contradict each other while saying that there is life after death, and the other saying that there is not. Although, not many philosophers share this assumption of Wittgenstein on this matter, Martin believes this could be true since while saying the same thing the believer and non-believer could refer to two different things. And moreover if, “in scientific contexts two people can still contradict each other by the sentences they use even if they refer to different things,” why could it be not possible in the contexts of religious discourses. But he limits this understanding to limited cases only as in many cases there is apparent contradiction found in the assertions of believers and non-believers.

The believer's orthodoxy could be another reason for their non-contradictoriness. Since, as Wittgenstein explicitly states, the believer does not look for nor depend upon evidences for his religious assertions, he may not need to pay heed on whatever the non-believer says as any amount of contradictory evidence is not enough to flinch his unshakable faith in his doctrines.

To substantiate his position further, Wittgenstein brings the notion of frames of reference and asserts that it is the different frames of references looking through which certain sentences make sense to us, while others do not. This is particularly true of evidence-based factual statements of which Wittgenstein says, “the truth of certain empirical propositions belongs to our frame of reference” (Wittgenstein 1969, Aphorism 83). The frame of reference and forms of life both complement each other. It is rather a particular form of life that decides what kind of frame of reference will the individual come to have. A modern, western individual living in California rose in a radically different form of life that of an oriental's will have a frame of reference that will find it illogical to recognize the idol-worshipping of an Indian. That, however, may not be in the case of modern Indian since his form of life, even if it is formed and embellished under the modern, western education, will not be radically different from the general people around.

The chief characteristic of religious belief, as noted by Wittgenstein, is their *unshakeability*. Believers do not merely hold some beliefs, they hold these beliefs with unshakable devotion. This devotion cannot be proved or disproved by the criteria set down by scientific rationality as the beliefs which this devotion give birth to are not evidential, fact-based beliefs. The belief that God exists is different from the belief that Gravity exists which is evidential in character and can be proved or disproved by empirical verification. The former cannot be proved or disproved in this manner. It is for such reasons that the positivist agenda of establishing truth by means of empirical verification was condemned by Wittgenstein. Some truths just can't be proved, but does not rule out their being meaningful.

Thus, Wittgenstein makes a careful distinction between the discourses which need evidence based rationality from those which might not require any proofs. And religious discourse is of the latter sort for in this kind of discourse, as he says in the *Lectures on Religious Belief* that “the best scientific evidence is just nothing.” The role that proofs play in scientific discourses become redundant in religious discourses because the believer goes by not proofs, but faith. Adherence to a particular dogma, creed, and deity is not guided by the practical benefits that may

ensue by such an adherence – an analysis of which can be provided by scientific rationality. Rather this kind of adherence is motivated by the believer's trust in that dogma, creed or deity. Thus, it is fundamentally a different kind of adherence than one is found in scientific discourses. Like believing in the authority of Einstein in the matter of physics, which can be questioned later on if some more convincing and empirically verifiable arguments be given by someone of greater intellectual brilliance than Einstein's. Two hundred years ago, Newton was such an authority, whose every word could be taken for granted in the matter of physical laws. But, Einstein overthrew him and his theories with his more powerful and convincing theories. Who knows two hundred years later, even Einstein's theories get overthrown by yet somebody else? In contrast, believing in some deity, for example, Lord Shiva in the matter of religion is fundamentally different from believing in Einstein. This is because; no amount of argument can be given which can dissuade the believer's belief in Lord Shiva. Even after thousands of thousands of years, people would still believe in Lord Shiva as people are today, and for the same reasons. And this is because their belief is not based on powerful arguments, but faith. In short, not on empirical rationality, but faith. Faith, for Wittgenstein, has its own proof. One, who has faith over something, does not require other means to justify his beliefs. Seeking other proofs is rather the spoiling the whole business.

Wittgenstein makes an interesting *distinction between unreasonable beliefs and not-reasonable beliefs*. Superficially both positions seem to mean the same – pointing to a belief which is *not* reasonable, but Wittgenstein asserts that the believers are not unreasonable, though they are not as reasonable as they should be. For Wittgenstein, “Unreasonable implies, with everyone, rebuke... anyone who reads the Epistles will find it said: not only that it is not reasonable, but that it is folly. Not only is it not reasonable, but it doesn't pretend to be” (Wittgenstein 2007, 58).

For Wittgenstein then, unreasonable is a matter of rebuke, as if, a humiliation, but not-being reasonable is not. Unreasonable would then amount to foolhardy, idiocy, stupidity, silly, perverse and not-being reasonable would mean irrational, illogical, unsound, unscientific etc. Seeing things in this light, then Wittgenstein maintains, of course, religious people are not unreasonable as their thoughts would show which are coherent, sound and have logic in it. It is only that these do not fit into the picture of scientific rationality, but on that score why should we brand them unreasonable in the sense of stupidity.

Religious belief is then a way of life for Wittgenstein which is held by the believer with full commitment and is beyond explanation and evidence. An individual is born and brought up in a particular frame of reference from where he inherits some beliefs, which guides his course throughout his life. He might change this frame of reference, although later but will be adopting than any other frame of life. Thus, one or the other frame of reference will always be there. These will be having their own particular language-games.

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# The Value of Achievement and the Value of Knowledge

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The traditional epistemological concern about the nature of knowledge goes hand in hand with another concern, which has recently regained prominence. It is the quest to show why knowledge is a good thing. Why, many philosophers ask, is knowledge preferable to mere true belief if, in all practical matters, a true means-end belief serves you no less than the state you are in when you know which means will achieve your end? These concerns are obviously connected. The value of anything will depend on its nature: whether what you carry around in your pocket is valuable depends on what you carry around in your pocket.

Contemporary virtue epistemology draws inspiration from parallels between the theoretical domain of belief and knowledge and the practical domain of intention and action. Successful action becomes the model on which to understand success in our epistemic endeavours. The central thesis of John Greco's book *Achieving Knowledge* (Greco 2010) is that knowledge is success from ability. The lucky guess which happens to be true does not amount to knowledge. Although you succeed in what is, let us suppose, your aim, namely to get things right, that you get it right is not due to your cognitive abilities. The archer's lucky shot, which hits the target because a sudden gust of wind diverts it from its given path, is, similarly, not a success due to ability. Successful actions count as achievements only if the agent's success is due to the agent's abilities. According to Greco, the notion of knowledge captures our epistemic achievements. Thereby epistemic achievements participate in a general category we are familiar with from the practical domain. The notions of value and normativity as they apply to beliefs and knowledge are illuminated by their participation in this more general category of achievements.

The idea that knowledge is a kind of achievement not only helps us with the nature question – Greco argues that it gives the right verdict on Gettier cases – it also issues a direct answer to the value question. I want my children to be happy but even more so do I value a state in which their happiness is to some extent due to my own contributions. I want my paper to be published but even more so do I value a state in which its publication is due (in the right way) to my own doing. In general, we value being active participants in the fortunes of our lives over being passive recipients of goods. If we achieve something through effort and due to our abilities we satisfy this need for active involvement. Greco expresses this idea as follows. 'Knowledge is a kind of success from ability, and in general success from ability is both intrinsically valuable and constitutive of human flourishing, which is also intrinsically valuable. Moreover, both success from ability and human flourishing have 'final' value, or value as ends in themselves, independently of any instrumental value they might also have. Therefore, knowledge has value over and above the practical value of true belief' (Greco 2010, 174f).

In my view, Greco makes a double mistake. Luckily, the two mistakes cancel each other out so that the idea that the value of knowledge can be illuminated by the value of achievement can be sustained. Greco's first mistake is to assume that the value of knowing is independent of what it is that is known. Contrary to Greco, I think that sometimes it is good to know and sometimes it is not – it depends, amongst other things, on what it is that is known. Let me

give you some examples of the latter. (A) Some knowledge, like when you will develop your last illness, is bad for you. (B) Some things are simply not your business. For example, there are limits on what you are allowed to know about your neighbours. Keeping a diary about when they go to bed and when they get up does not serve any legitimate epistemic interest. (C) Think about the category of experiences described by knowing what it is like. Knowledge of what it is like to have your fingernails pulled out has nothing to be said for it. (D) Think about all the matters others take interest in. My auntie is interested in what her neighbour reads and in where it was she has last seen her cousin. I understand her concern but I am myself not interested in any of these things. Consider next those matters other people, unrelated to you, are interested in. How much did Mr Wilson, resident of Auckland, have to pay for his roof repair and was it more than what his brother spent on his daughter's wedding? Should I tell you? Would it be good to know this? I don't think so. Consider next all the things no one has ever taken the least interest in. If God would whisper only the tiniest amount of all there is to know in our ears we would die of that roar. I conclude that we do not need to explain why knowledge is always good because, for most things, it is not good to know them.

Nevertheless, I accept a restricted value-of-knowledge problem. What we need to explain is why, when we are interested in a subject matter, and legitimately so, we want to know how things stand and not merely have a true belief about them? Why do we prefer knowing to believing truly in matters of interest? I have defended the idea (Piller 2009) that when we know we believe as we ought to believe and that, generally, when we do something to achieve an end we want to do what we do well because, thereby, we maximize our active involvement in what is going on. I see the conditions of theoretical as well as of practical rationality as determining what it is to believe and to act well. To satisfy these conditions, which I see as independent deontological requirements, is something we want. Thus, I agree with the virtue epistemological method of trying to illuminate the value and normativity of believing and knowing by regarding them as instances of general phenomena which are at home in the practical domain. Knowing that *p* is better than believing truly that *p*, when the question whether *p* or not-*p* is a legitimate concern, because in knowing we believe with justification and, thus, believe as we ought to believe. Thereby we satisfy our concern for active involvement because in doing things well we minimize our dependency on luck in the achievement of our aims. To know is a conditional good; it is conditional on the legitimacy of our interest in the question we are trying to answer.

I said that Greco makes a double mistake. His second mistake is to think that achievements are good. Despite Greco's claim to the contrary, I cannot believe that there is anyone who would really think that every success from ability has something good in it. Think of the achievement of what is distasteful, brutal or, in some other way, horrible. Greco's value claim is intended to contrast the lucky success with the success due to one's abilities. However, the fact that the terrible result is the result of competent agency does not diminish its negative value; to the con-

trary, the intended brutal assault is worse than the accident which, otherwise, has the same disastrous results.

Greco borrows the idea that knowledge is success from ability (or that knowledge is the manifestation of a competence) from Ernest Sosa. For Sosa knowledge is apt belief; apt belief is belief which is accurate because it is adroit. Though agreeing on the nature of knowledge, Sosa, like me, finds Greco's answer to the value question implausible. Let me make my own use of Sosa's archery example to illustrate this point. Think of an archer who practices his skills on the children's playground. Not that he himself is on the children's playground, no, the playground and its children are his target. He himself is 100 yards away. Despite this distance, his arrows, let us assume, nail five-year old Charlie to the climbing frame. The detectives, who investigate this horrible act, will be able to reduce the list of suspects in virtue of the fact that hitting a child from such a distance, if intended, would be a good, actually a truly excellent shot: a good shot and a wicked and horrible act with nothing good in it.

Greco, however, seems unimpressed. He insists, '... knowledge is a kind of success from ability, and in general success from ability is both intrinsically valuable and constitutive of human flourishing, which is also intrinsically valuable.' (Greco 2010, 137) 'I follow Aristotle', he says 'in holding that success from ability is constitutive of human flourishing, which has final value' (Greco 2010, 180). Aristotle, however, was talking about the exercise of the virtues. Greco fails to realize that virtues are not the whole but only a subset of abilities. If one is able to use the faults and weaknesses of one's children to deeply embarrass and humiliate them in front of their peers, such skill is, needless to say, not a virtue.

Greco does not engage with this point. On his behalf, we can turn to Duncan Pritchard who does try to answer our objection. Considering the achievement of something pointless or wicked, Pritchard writes, 'Are even achievements of this sort of final value? Note, however, that the value of achievement thesis, properly construed, is only that achievements have final value *qua* achievements' (2010, 45). Achievements, according to Greco and Pritchard, always contribute something positive to overall states of affairs. It is compatible with this idea that these overall states of affairs containing achievement are overall bad. Furthermore, the laws of how values combine can throw up all sorts of things. Putting some perfectly nice bright red ketchup on the yellow dress will spoil it. Similarly, if I hit the target, which happens to be the child on the playground, then the overall value is lower if I hit it 'virtuously', i.e. because of my skill, than had I hit it accidentally. Pritchard says, 'It is important to recognize that the value of achievement thesis when properly understood is entirely consistent with this possibility' (*ibid*).

As long as we understand that achievements are only good as achievements, Pritchard suggests, we are free from trouble. The badness of horrible acts is compatible, he says, with the idea that achievements are good *qua* achievements. What does it mean to say of something that it is good as such and such?

(1) *The attributive use of 'being good as such'*. Suppose I tell a student, 'There's good and bad news. As a philosophy essay your paper is rather poor. However, as something the reading of which is a complete waste of time with it is, actually, very good.' 'X is good as such and such' often means that X is a good such and such. 'You might think of Idi Amin whatever you want but as a poker player, he was very good.' He was good as a poker player means he was a good poker player.

We have met this idea before. Shooting little Charlie required an excellent shot and was a horrible act with nothing good in it. Peter Geach has famously argued, 'There is no such thing as being just good or bad, there is only being a good or bad so-and-so' (Geach 1956, 34). In Geach's preferred terms 'good' is a logically attributive adjective, whereas adjectives like 'red' are logically predicative. There are good dentists, good strawberries, good lawnmowers, but there is nothing – no property of goodness – in virtue of which they would all be good.

Attributive goodness is not the same as contributory goodness, which is what Greco was after. A good shot is good as a shot but might have nothing that speaks in its favour and everything against. Sosa's views are best seen as taking epistemology to deal in its own notion of attributive goodness. A justified and, in this sense, good belief need not have anything good about it – the subject matter might lack any legitimate interest. 'Silly beliefs about trivial matters can attain the very highest level of justification and knowledge even if these are not beliefs that one should be bothering with, not even if one's concerns are purely epistemic' (Sosa, 2007, 66.)

(2) *The contrastive and, thus, predicative use of 'being good as such'*. Achievements are good as achievements – does not, at first sight, say very much except that achievements are good. Compare 'Friendship is good *qua* friendship'. This means, I guess, no more than that friendship is good. In both cases we use 'good' predicatively. Compare 'Pleasure is good as pleasure'. As in the two previous cases, this says that pleasure is good. Why do we say these apparently trivial things? In identifying something as something we identify its evaluative dimension and we contrast this with its other aspect. Being pleased, let us assume, is being in a certain physiological state. Under this assumption, the statement that being pleased is good *qua* being pleased tells us that being pleased rather than being in its corresponding physiological state is what is of evaluative importance. Let us apply this idea to achievements. Saying that achievements are good as achievements, is identifying the way in which they are good (predicatively). The contrast in this case is with what has been achieved. On this view, hitting the child skilfully has an aspect to it which is good. I find it hard to believe that anyone could, on reflection, believe such a thing.

I conclude that Greco's view is indefensible. Greco was right that we can think about the value of knowledge in terms of the value of achievements. He was wrong, however, to think that achievements are always good. Furthermore, it turns out that knowledge, like achievements, are not generally good either. Two candidates which invoke a parallel between knowledge and achievement, when trying to understand the 'value of knowledge' are still left in play: Sosa's attributive goodness account and the conditional good account.

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# Epistemic Rationality and Consolidated Inequalities in Legal Propositions

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## 1. Descriptive and prescriptive functions of rationality

In Wittgenstein's work there is not a detailed discussion regarding the theme of rationality. However, according to Peg O'Connor, it's possible to develop a Wittgensteinian reflection on this subject on the basis of what he maintained on the question of 'following rules' and on 'certainty' [O'Connor 2002].

The term rationality has been referred to people, beliefs, actions, subjects. Such a concept carries out both *descriptive* and *prescriptive functions*. With reference to people, the concept of rationality has been often applied to describe intellectual qualities such as the ability to use language, for example. In the past, the abilities that defined 'rationality' have been used to make a distinction between humans and animals. However, later this concept has been employed to make a division among humans themselves. In this sense, only those who were able to show some rational ability and to use it in an 'appropriate' way were considered as human beings.

There is historical evidence that women, as well as the inhabitants of conquered territories who were enslaved, have been deemed subjects without rationality. To maintain that someone had lost his or her rational ability and that he or she could not behave in a rational way was equivalent to saying that he or she would have had a different behavior compared with the majority of individuals in the community. It seems to O'Connor that the word 'rational' has involved some discrimination to those who have been considered as devoid of every rational capacity. In particular, those who have been defined in a descriptive sense as rational have imposed and prescribed peculiar beliefs. In a descriptive sense, rational beliefs are actions supported by 'good reasons' that generally produce beliefs that people consider as true. A belief could be considered rational just because it has been originated by a process which seems to be reliable, although this may not be true. In a normative or prescriptive way, a belief is rational only if we can choose or accept it.

## 2. Natural and propositional conditions

In particular, O'Connor observes that our concepts are not always used in the same way within propositions, since we utilize a variety of linguistic games. However, she maintains that every background has at least two dimensions:

- The natural dimension (biological or anthropological); and
- The general regularity that we can observe around us.

In the first dimension, according to O'Connor we can observe the natural condition of the human being. This dimension is not propositional. It concerns what O'Connor called the 'characteristics of the world'. O'Connor tries to avoid using the term 'facts' in this context in order to make no confusion with the concepts used in logic. Wittgenstein describes what O'Connor calls the natural conditions:

'We say we know that in such and such circumstances water boils and does not freeze. Is it possible that we

are wrong about this? Wouldn't an error carry away all our judgments? Moreover: what would stand if that happened? It could happen that someone finds something such that we could later say "Was it just an error"? Whatever may happen in the future, whatever way water may behave in the future, we *know* that so far it has behaved so in uncountable cases. This matter of fact is instilled in the foundation of our language game' [OC, 558].

These things may seem natural to us and we could be incapable of noticing them. If we had perceived them and we had devised questions about them we would have not gone on in our practices; for example, we could think of what would happen if we started to ask questions concerning and to doubt the activity of walking. O'Connor remarks that the formation of concepts is completely linked to these 'natural conditions'. For example, the concept of fixing the price or weight of something would change if one slice of cheese decreased or increased its weight suddenly instead of remaining steady. The conditions which we can call 'natural' give us stability. Such stability is based on an agreement that may seem familiar or shared. For Wittgenstein such an agreement does not concern people's opinions or preferences, but it is something more profound, an agreement within language [PI, 241].

The second dimension of this background consists of those propositions that are considered to be the main ones (hinge propositions) [O'Connor 2002, p. 32]. O'Connor distinguishes among:

- Historical propositions: earth has existed for a long time;
- Discovery propositions: water boils at 100 Celsius degrees;
- Individual certainties: I have a brain;
- Personal-specific certainties: I have lived in Italy for most of my life.

Although hinge propositions look like empirical ones, they should be deemed grammatical propositions. Grammatical propositions have a normative role: they should shape an intelligible description of reality. These propositions prescribe the rules of a linguistic game, while empirical propositions operate in the linguistic game and they are shared rules (or rather, empirical propositions are descriptive propositions).

The Wittgensteinian conception of grammar is not based on the intra-linguistic use of language rules [RFM, 363-162]. He is not just interested in the syntax of language; he also aims to explore the connection between language and life. Grammatical propositions and their normative role could not be rejected from an empirical point of view, whereas an empirical proposition could. On this point O'Connor observes that:

'Whereas conditions do not determine the rules of language games, they determine to a great extent which games are being played. They impose limitations on the possibility of engaging different games with different rules. It is important to recognize that

there is a variety of representation forms and that each form states its own standards of rationality' [O'Connor 2002, p. 34].

O'Connor's reflection on propositions is an introduction to the way in which she will deepen the argument of rationality in our propositions. To this regard, she observes that it is more accurate to speak of 'rationalities' in a plural way instead of considering only one kind of rationality in our propositions. Wittgenstein acknowledges this point, or better that every kind of representation can take place in alternative ways in our propositions. It is possible to believe that  $12 \times 12 = 143$ ; to dismiss this and to deem it just a mistake (without worrying about how someone got this result) is to impose to the others a kind of representation in which the correct result is 144. The attitude which deems the other kinds of rationality wrong, less complete than ours, is grounded on no basis. By means of Wittgenstein's perspective we could observe that the concept of rationality that we have learnt in our life and that we need to use in our propositions does not give us any reason to believe that we should consider the other ways in which the concepts are used as less perfect than ours.

### 3. The inequalities consolidated in the legal propositions

Some people could find the approach described above problematic because it seems to allow relativistic possibilities. However, if we assert that, for example, the concept of rationality can be external to our language and that it is an objective concept, then we will never have the chance to modify it. If we suppose that it is possible to change our concepts, then we do assume these concepts are not external.

O'Connor better explains her feminist approach when she explores a case of violence between a husband and his wife. She observes that in the past it was deemed inconsistent from a legal point of view to discuss episodes of violence within the relationship of marriage, almost an oxymoron. She examines a sentence (in particular, the sentence *State v Bell*, 1977, New Mexico), in which it has been maintained in a case of violence between husband and wife "an husband is from a legal point of view incapable doing violence to his wife; when the relationship between them is formed there is an evident loss of consent of woman" [O'Connor 2002, p.37]. Evident protection of right in different European countries has emerged latterly. For example in the UK it is important to remember about this topic the sentence RVR, 1991 'A husband could be convicted of the rape or attempted rape of his wife where she had withdrawn her consent to sexual intercourse' [599 Regina Respondent Versus R. Appellant, House of Lords, 23 October, 1991].

In particular, on the basis of the *State vs Bell* sentence, it has been presumed that a wife consents to have a sexual relation with her husband even if this happens without her consent, by forcing her. Another explanation of the fact that the violence in a marriage has been often viewed as 'ethical' from a legal point of view is that woman is treated as the property of her husband, as an object to dispose. In this background that may include propositions about unequal 'duties' [Flavin 2001, p. 271-285] of a woman towards her husband, how could a woman ever think that what has happened to her is a violence? According to O'Connor a collective effort has been made to undertake a challenge against the background that brought us to think that sexual violence within married couples can be permitted. However, this challenge has

been undertaken by people shaped in the same background. The women's movement against violence and sexual abuse has proposed to develop a language in which it is possible to provide a meaning to these experiences of mistreatment which is different from the old meanings. To describe these kinds of experience the movements have adopted new meanings for some concepts (such as "marriage duties") and then they have shaped new languages. In fact, now a woman is free to say about herself to other people 'I have been raped by my husband' [O'Connor 2002, p.38], and she can defend herself from such abuse, because it is deemed a specific act of violence. In this sense, according to O'Connor, if we think that there are judgments that we can consider as true, rational and correct once and for all, then we cannot have the possibility to transform the old background and to change it in new ways. In addition to a possible Wittgensteinian interpretation, according to O'Connor, women should not react to this problem (which is present within the background) separately from other people, in their private life. On the contrary, one person should be able to achieve some collective results with her own personal ability, and this could lead us to believe that there is only one way in which we can react 'correctly' to what happens; or better, those who have not achieved some results may think that their own individual actions were wrong or that they are simply incapable of making any action. This negative feeling could bring a woman to stay silent also when she has suffered an abuse. Collective action would give more recognition to some denunciations made by women against abuse [O'Connor 2002]. It is very hard to weaken the old practices, but by working collectively women have transformed concepts and have used them in new ways in order to adapt them to new needs.

The oppression of women in law takes place when the latter is considered complete; or rather when every possibility for there being lacunae has been neglected. The oppression of women continues to be present in law if there is the pretension that completeness is reached in a legal system; in fact, such system cannot foresee every new situation, and for this reason it is by no means complete.

As we have observed, in this case the legal system can discriminate against women if a behavior has been defined to be rational (from a narrower objective point of view) for example that in a marriage a wife should always satisfy the sexual desires of her husband. In the case of a *lacuna* the legal tool should offer support in a novel way, by permitting women to have the same rights as men. However, this does not mean saying that the legal system should be deemed potentially accomplished because in this case it will not be possible to defend emerging new kinds of discrimination of women if law has not predicted how every discrimination can occur.

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# The Principles of Application of Propositional Logic in the Light of Ludwig Wittgenstein's Early Philosophy

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## 1. Application of propositional logic and function of representation

According to Ludwig Wittgenstein's early philosophy, the proper logical notation (*Begriffsschrift*, *Zeichensprache*) (TLP 3.325) is a tool for logical analysis that reveals the whole logically necessary basis of any representation of reality. It means that the proper logical notation expresses every logical relation. Thus, it mirrors logical necessity directly, *on one occasion* (TLP 5.47). In other words, logical analysis is always complete and ultimate – it leaves nothing to further analysis (Dobler 2008, pp. 71-72).

The proper logical notation is a useful system of signs. Signs represent linguistic symbols: propositions or names. In the case of propositional calculus, system of signs is built from propositional variables which represent *elementary propositions* (*Elementarsätze*) (NB 15.10.1914, 28.10.1914; RUL Cassino 19.08.1919; TLP 4.21, 4.25, 4.26, 5).

One can compare the proper logical notation of propositional calculus to a scheme that can be used to show which of the linguistic expressions are elementary propositions. The usage of this scheme is, as Wittgenstein holds, *application of logic* (*Anwendung der Logik*) (TLP 5.557). Since logic expresses only logical necessity, it cannot anticipate its contingent application (TLP 5.557). Thus, until the proper logical notation of propositional calculus is used in logical analysis it cannot express which linguistic expressions are elementary propositions (TLP 5.557, 5.5571).

In this paper  $s, s'$ , etc. are variables that range over set  $S$ , i.e. the set of elementary propositions;  $e, e'$ , etc. are variables that range over set  $E$ , i.e. the set of propositional variables;  $s_1, s_2$ , etc. are definite elementary propositions (for example, *Plato is a philosopher*, *Aristotle is a philosopher*);  $p, q$ , etc. are definite propositional variables.

The necessary condition of application of propositional variables for elementary propositions is the existence of *function of representation* that is a surjection from set  $S$  to set  $E$ ,  $r: S \rightarrow E$ . Therefore, every elementary proposition assigns unique propositional variable and every propositional variable is assigned to some elementary propositions. It seems to be consistent with intuition that standing for elementary propositions is the nature of propositional variables.

However, it is worth emphasizing that  $r$  refers to the possibility of application of propositional variables to elementary propositions. The real application of logic is established by one-to-one relation between elements of  $S$  and elements of  $E$ . As the result, propositional variables are considered not as variables but as abbreviations of definite elementary propositions (for example,  $p$  abbreviates *Plato is a philosopher* and  $q$  abbreviates *Aristotle is a philosopher*).

Nevertheless, the general sense of representation of elementary propositions by propositional variables causes that first of all one should take into account function  $r$ . In other words, since  $r$  specifies the frame of application of

propositional logic in logical analysis of natural language,  $r$  is a starting-point of presented investigations.

## 2. The principle of logical independence of elementary propositions

In virtue of  $r$  it is possible to grasp the fundamental in Wittgenstein's early philosophy *principle of logical independence of elementary propositions* (LI). According to LI, neither truth nor falsehood of one elementary proposition can be inferred from truth or falsehood of another elementary proposition (TLP 4.211, 5.134; Baker 1988, p. 95; Cheung 2004, pp. 97-98; Fogelin 2006, p. 35).

This principle follows from the claim that logical analysis is always complete and ultimate. If everything that is logical, is mirrored by logic, there is no place for hidden logical relations between elementary propositions.

It is worth mentioning that it is also possible to mean by the principle of logical independence the lack of *logical determination* (Correia 2001, pp. 157-151). According to this standpoint, one can hold that there is no logical determination between substitutions of tautologies or contradictions and definite elementary propositions, although substitutions of tautologies are inferred from any elementary proposition and any elementary proposition is inferred from substitutions of contradictions.

However, in this paper logical independence between propositions means simply the lack of logical relations between them. Nevertheless, it seems that in the case of elementary propositions one can express LI with no reference to meta-logical notions like the notion of logical inference.

From the viewpoint of application of logic, logically independent elementary propositions are represented by different propositional variables. Logical independence means that in reference to elementary propositions represented by different propositional variables elementary propositions are possibly true and possibly false. Thus, LI inevitably involves the notion of contingency, which can be expressed by following modal formula:

$$C\Phi \leftrightarrow (\mathcal{P}\Phi \wedge \mathcal{P}\neg\Phi),$$

where  $C$  stands for contingency and  $\mathcal{P}$  stands for possibility.

In reconstruction of LI one need also to take into account the function of valuation of elementary propositions, i.e.  $v: S \rightarrow \{1,0\}$ .

Thus, LI is equivalent to the following formula:

$$\text{LI} \quad \forall_s \exists_e \exists_{e'} \{[(r(s) = e) \wedge (e \neq e')] \leftrightarrow [\mathcal{A}(v(s) = 1) \wedge \mathcal{A}(v(s) = 0)]\}$$

LI should be read: every elementary proposition is represented by propositional variable that differs from another variable if and only if it is possible that valuation of elementary proposition is equal to 1 and it is possible that valuation of elementary proposition is equal to 0.

Since there is a supposition that  $E$  has at least two elements (for example,  $E = \{p, q\}$ ), expression ( $e \neq e$ ) can be omitted. Finally, IL is equivalent to the following formula:

$$\forall s \exists e \{(r(s) = e) \leftrightarrow [\mathcal{A}(v(s) = 1) \wedge \mathcal{A}(v(s) = 0)]\}$$

### 3. The principle of bipolarity of elementary propositions

The last formula expresses another fundamental property of elementary propositions which is known as *bipolarity* (NL, p. 94, pp. 98-99; RUL Nov., 1913, Norway, 1913; Baker 1988, pp. 39, 54, 93; Cheung 2004, p. 97; Glock 1996, pp. 63-64). Therefore, one can call this formula *the principle of bipolarity of elementary propositions* (BP).

Usually, the starting-point of reflection on the notion of bipolarity is the notion of contingency of every significant proposition, i.e. elementary proposition or proposition consisting of elementary propositions which is not the substitution of tautology or contradiction. The notion of contingency is defined as it was mentioned in the previous section. Georg H. von Wright explains:

It is of the essence of the significant proposition that it *can be* true and it *can be* false. 'Can be' here means (logical) possibility. The notion of propositional significance in the *Tractatus* is itself a modal notion (Wright 1982, p. 188).

Finally, the notion of contingency of significant propositions is equal to the notion of bipolarity (Wright 1988, p. 192).

However, it is very important to distinguish between bipolarity and *possibility of negation* (NB 30.10.1914). Although it is true that understanding of proposition, for example, understanding of proposition  $s1$  means understanding of proposition *not-s1*, possibility of joining negation to proposition  $s1$  is not equal to bipolarity of proposition  $s1$ . Nevertheless, one can say that possibility of negation follows from the bipolarity:

What then is the essence of a proposition? Wittgenstein's earliest answer remained unshakable: bipolarity [...] Consequently a proposition is internally related to its negation, and truth and falsity are internally related to each other: to assert that  $p$ , i.e. to say that it is true that  $p$ , is to deny that  $\text{not-}p$ , i.e. to say that it is false that  $\text{not-}p$  (Baker 1988, p. 54).

Although the possibility of negation follows from the bipolarity, bipolarity doesn't follow from the possibility of negation. For example, to say that substitution of tautology is true, is to say that substitution of contradiction is false; however, neither substitution of tautology nor substitution of contradiction is contingently true. Therefore, understanding of proposition and its negation doesn't necessarily mean understanding of bipolar proposition.

Moreover, reconstruction of LI and BP shows that the principle of bipolarity is not a supposition – it is a conclusion of Wittgenstein's investigations. The line of reasoning presented in this paper is as follows: since the aim of logical notation is to express every logical relation, elementary propositions are logically independent; elementary propositions are logically independent if and only if they are bipolar; thus, elementary propositions are bipolar and finally, all significant proposition are contingently true.

Above argumentation seems to explain why does Wittgenstein hold that *The only necessity that exists is logical necessity* (TLP 6.37, 6.375), i.e. necessity expressed by tautologies and contradictions. Although it is possible that propositional variables represent logically necessarily true or logically necessarily false propositions, if one agrees that logic expresses the whole logical necessity, one should also agree that propositional variables represent only contingent propositions; therefore, only substitutions of tautologies are logically necessarily true and only substitutions of contradictions are logically necessarily false.

However, one can hold that there are some other kinds of necessity (for example, physical necessity, epistemological necessity, etc.). Although from the viewpoint of application of logic all elementary propositions are logically contingently true, it is possible that elementary propositions are necessarily true or necessarily false by other means. Notwithstanding, one can argue that since in properly analyzed language all elementary propositions are logically contingently true, it is impossible to think about their alleged necessary truth or necessary falsehood. In other words, other meanings of necessity of elementary propositions are simply illusive.

### 4. Conclusion

To sum up, the purport of presented reasoning can be expressed in following points: firstly, it shows that LI and BP are not independent principles, but in fact, LI is equal to BP; secondly, it reveals the nature of LI and BP as principles of application of propositional logic; thirdly, it provides the continuity of Wittgenstein's early thought from philosophical claim on general aim of logic to statements that concern the usage of logic in logical analysis.

Moreover, it is important to grasp, that LI and BP are not meta-logical rules. It is possible to imagine that someone applies logic in contrary to them. One can say that LI and BP are contingent like all significant propositions, since they simply describe the definite mode of application of logic which is valid only in the light of Wittgenstein's early philosophy. In other words, if one agrees to fulfill Wittgenstein's philosophical claim that logic mirrors every logical relation, one has to apply logic in a certain way.

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RUL 'Extracts from Wittgenstein's letters to Russell' [1912-1920], in NB, p. 120-132.

TLP *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* [German-English parallel text], tr. D.F. Pears, B.F. McGuinness, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961. – References are to numbered sections.

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# Synoptische Hybride – Geometrie als epistemologische Leitwissenschaft bei Bachelard und Wittgenstein

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„Das Bild (Beweisbild) ist ein Instrument des Überzeugens.“  
„(Wie ein optisches Instrument Licht von verschiedenen Quellen auf bestimmte Art in einem Bild zusammenkommen lässt.)“

1934 kritisierte Gaston Bachelard in seiner Studie zum *Neuen wissenschaftlichen Geist* („Le nouvel esprit scientifique“) den Status der euklidischen Geometrie als klassischer naturwissenschaftlicher Leitdisziplin. Bachelard sah die einstellige Anschaulichkeit ihrer grafischen Demonstrationen durch eine diskursive Mehrstelligkeit moderner „pangeometrischer“ Visualisierungen überwunden, die er etwa mit Heisenbergs Differenzierung zwischen Partikel- und Wellenbild begründet. Aber auch die Berechnung des Wasserstoffspektrums durch Balmer und das darauf gegründete Atommodell Nils Bohrs verlangen Bachelard zufolge nach neuen, nach-euklidischen Pangeometrien, deren Objekte wesentlich auf Kontexten und Relationen basieren und deren Visualisierungen als Hybride synthetisch ‚entanschaulicht‘ sind.

Drei Jahre später beginnt Wittgenstein, in seinen posthum unter dem Titel *Bemerkungen über die Grundlagen der Mathematik* veröffentlichten Typoskripten, Überlegungen zur euklidischen Geometrie und vor allem zur Funktionsweise des gezeichneten Beweisbildes zu notieren. Im Unterschied zu Bachelard weist Wittgenstein bereits dem klassischen geometrischen Beweisbild eine hybride Struktur nach, die in der Beweisfunktion des Bildes allerdings von einer synoptischen Wahrnehmung überlagert wird, wie er sie ähnlich bereits in der Auseinandersetzung mit Frazer, Goethe oder den Kompositbildern Galtons diskutierte. Nun kehrt sie unter den Qualitäten der „Übersehbarkeit“ (Synoptik) und „Überzeugung“ (Evidenz) geometrischer Beweiszeichnungen wieder und behauptet Geltung für alle Formen des argumentativen Bildgebrauchs.

Der Vortrag versucht zu zeigen, wie unterschiedlich die beiden in unmittelbarer Zeitgenossenschaft formulierten Überlegungen zum Status der Geometrie das Verhältnis synoptischer Operationen zu hybriden Objekten bewerten und es im Kern der naturwissenschaftlichen Wissensproduktion situieren.

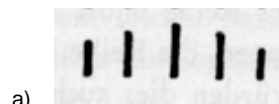
## 1. Evidenz und Hybridität

Wittgenstein geht in den „Bemerkungen über die Grundlagen der Mathematik“ (1937-1944) wiederholt auf die zeichnerischen Demonstrationen der euklidischen Geometrie ein, um an ihnen exemplarisch die Überzeugungsqualitäten bildgestützter Argumentationen zu diskutieren. Das geometrische Beweisbild ist demnach ein Hybrid aus Anschauung und Begriff, weil es einerseits die Singularität der zeichnerischen Demonstration und andererseits die beanspruchte Regelmäßigkeit des Beweisziels vereint. Zwar erscheint die materielle Singularität des Bildes als irrelevant: „Zur Reproduktion eines Beweises soll nichts gehören, was von der Art einer genauen Reproduktion eines Farbtons oder einer Handschrift ist.“ [BGM:143] Denn: „Die Figur ist nicht der Beweis“ [BGM:151], weil der Beweis „keine charakteristische visuelle Gestalt hat“ [BGM:151]. Tatsächlich ist sie jedoch unverzichtbar, weil der Beweis erst auf der Grundlage jeder einzelnen Zeich-

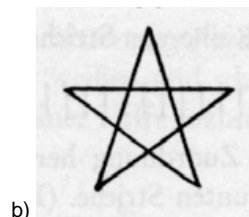
nung überzeugt: „Das ist der Beweis, was uns überzeugt: Das Bild, was uns nicht überzeugt, ist der Beweis auch dann nicht, wenn von ihm gezeigt werden kann, dass es den bewiesenen Satz exemplifiziert.“ [BGM:171]. Noch deutlicher: „Der Beweis muss ein anschaulicher Vorgang sein. Oder auch: der Beweis ist der *anschauliche* Vorgang.“ [BGM:173]

Im Moment des bildlichen Überzeugens reduziert sich diese Hybridität laut Wittgenstein auf die Einstelligkeit bildlicher Evidenz. Solche „einprägsamen Bilder“ verbinden „Übersehbarkeit“ [BGM:174] mit „Überzeugungskraft“ [ebd.], sodass die Hybridität des Beweisbildes in eine synoptische Operation eintritt, wie Wittgenstein in einem zeichnerischen Dreischritt demonstriert:

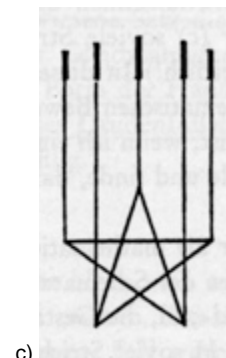
„Wie ist es aber, wenn ich mich davon überzeuge, dass das Schema dieser Striche:



gleichzählig ist mit dem Schema dieser Eckpunkte:



(ich habe die Schemata absichtlich einprägsam gemacht), indem ich zuordne:



“ [BGM:46f.]

Zunächst scheint die Überzeugung aus der Ausführung der singulären Demonstration hervorzugehen: „Und so *prägt* der Beweis durch Ziehen der Projektionslinien einen Vorgang *ein*, den der eins-zu-eins Zuordnung der H[and]. und des D[rudenfußes]. – Aber *überzeugt* er mich nicht auch davon, dass diese Zuordnung *möglich* ist?“ [BGM: 53]. Die anschließende Frage thematisiert die Hybridität des Beweisbildes, dessen heterogene Komponenten Wittgenstein als sein *Wie* und sein *Dass* beschreibt: „Aber kann ich denn nicht sagen, die Figur zeige, *wie* eine solche Zuordnung möglich ist – und muss sie darum nicht

auch zeigen, dass sie möglich ist?“ [BGM:53] Das *Dass* betont die Regelmäßigkeit des Beweises, es ist gleichsam der Übergang des Bildes zur Propositionalität, zu einer Auslegung seines Gehalts in der propositionalen Einheit des Satzes und es impliziert seine Geltung jenseits des Bildes. Das *Wie* steht im Unterschied hierzu, für die visuelle Exemplifikation im Einzelfall, ebenso wie für die Kausalität und Prozessualität eines jeweils singulären Bildvorkommens. Das *Wie* steht also für die Tatsache, dass ich erst „durch das Ziehen der Projektionslinien [...] überzeugt“ [BGM:48] werde, wie Wittgenstein hervorhebt.

Indem Hand und Drudenfuß Namen erhielten, wurden die Figuren der ausgeführten Zeichnung jedoch bereits typologisiert und in eine sprachliche Universalität überführt. Wittgenstein fragt sich nun, ob unter dieser Bedingung nicht auch die Singularität des Bildes verzichtbar und seine Hybridität damit aufgehoben wird: „Was ist dadurch geschehen, dass sie Namen erhalten haben, es wird dadurch etwas über die Art des Gebrauchs dieser Figuren angedeutet. Nämlich – dass man sie auf einen Blick als die und die erkennt. Man zählt dazu nicht ihre Striche oder Ecken, sie sind für uns Gestalttypen, wie Messer und Gabel, wie Buchstaben und Ziffern.“ [BGM:54] Der Gebrauch des Beweisbildes setzt geradezu solche typologisierten Komponenten voraus, die man „auf einen Blick“ erkennt und „unmittelbar wiedergeben“ [s.o.] kann, man denke nur an die Bezeichnung der Elemente eines geometrischen Beweises, an Linien die Radius, Tangente, Diagonale oder Hypotenuse heißen. Und obwohl der sprachlich legendarische Kontext der Beweiszeichnung sie auf diese Weise eindeutig macht, wird die Einmaligkeit konkreter Bildgebungen damit aber nicht wirkungslos: „Ich möchte sagen, es seien in dem Beweis nicht bloß diese individuellen Figuren zugeordnet, sondern die *Formen selbst*. Aber das heißt doch nur, dass ich mir jene Formen gut einpräge; als Paradigmen einpräge.“ [BGM:54] Wittgensteins These ist also, dass die Einprägsamkeit überzeugender Beweisbilder die hybride Differenz zwischen ihrem *Dass* und ihrem *Wie* nivelliert. Synoptische Übersehbarkeit verbindet sich mit argumentativer Überzeugung. Obwohl der Bildgebrauch „Gestalttypen“ und allgemeine Formen etabliert, sind es die jeweils demonstrierten individuellen Formen selbst, die sich laut Wittgenstein als mögliche Paradigmen empfehlen, sobald das Bild überzeugt. „Es fragt sich eben: Was nennen wir ein ‚einprägsames Bild‘? Was ist das Kriterium davon, dass wir es uns eingepägt haben? Oder ist die Antwort hierauf: ‚Dass wir es als Paradigma der Identität benützen!‘?“ [BGM:150]

## 2. Entanschaulichung der Hybride

Bachelard hat in seinem *Neuen wissenschaftlichen Geist* die nichteuklidische Pangeometrie zur epistemologischen Leitdisziplin erhoben, die für „alle neuen Formen des wissenschaftlichen Denkens“ [NWG:14] gilt. Sie soll den Status des „anschauliche[n] Bild[es]“ [NWG:33] in den Naturwissenschaften korrigieren.

Ähnlich wie Wittgenstein an geometrischen Beweiszeichnungen eine Hybridität zwischen dem Begrifflichen und dem Anschaulichen konstatiert, spricht auch Bachelard von einer „merkwürdigen Ambiguität“ und „dualistische[n] Basis jeglicher Wissenschaftsphilosophie“, „eine[r] epistemologische[n] Polarisierung gewissermaßen, dank deren die Phänomene sich jeweils zugleich unter das Rubrum des Pittoresken und des begrifflich Faßbaren stellen, also mit dem Etikett des Realismus und dem des Rationalismus belegt werden können.“ [NWG:9]

Die Pangeometrie ordnet solche Hybride, indem sie versucht „ein systematisches Tableau aller Annahmen zu geben [...]“. Sie geht von einem komplementären Gedanken aus. Die euklidische Geometrie findet sich an ihrem Ort in einem Ensemble: als Spezialfall.“ [NWG:31f.]

Bachelards wissenschaftshistorische Grundthese behauptet diesen Übergang von den anschaulichen Bildern der euklidischen Geometrie, die immer für etwas einfaches zu stehen scheinen, zu den zusammengesetzten Relationsgefügen einer Pangeometrie, die notwendig mit einer „Entanschaulichung“ einhergehen: „Direktes in Indirektes verwandeln, Vermitteltes im Unmittelbaren, Komplexes im Einfachen aufsuchen – genau darin liegt die Revolution, die der Empirismus durch die Wellenmechanik erfährt. [D]ie neuen Doktrinen [...] verlangen von uns, [...] dass wir eine Anschauung durch eine andere ‚entanschaulichen‘, dass wir uns von den anfänglichen Analysen abwenden und das Phänomen als Ergebnis einer Zusammensetzung denken.“ [NWG:89] Die wissenschaftliche Empirie hat demnach notorisch mit der Macht ‚direkter, unmittelbarer und einfacher‘ Phänomene zu tun, deren wirksame Anschaulichkeit sich nur durch eine Auslegung ihrer Hybridität demontieren lässt. Entanschaulichung meint dann einen Prozess der diskursiven Kontextuierung, der pittoreske Einheiten in begrifflich fassbare Hybride verwandelt. Laut Bachelard lässt er sich vor allem an den zeitgenössischen wissenschaftlichen Visualisierungen beobachten: „Nichts ist lehrreicher, wenn es um die Dialektik des Einfachen und des Zusammengesetzten geht, als die experimentellen und theoretischen Forschungen zur Struktur der Spektren und der Atome zu betrachten.“ [NWG:148]

In der Spektroskopie kommt es zu einer bildhaften Aufklärung atomarer Objekte. Im Spektrum des Wasserstoffatoms „erschien zum ersten Mal deutlich die serielle Anordnung der Linien; für dieses Spektrum auch fand man die erste Spektralformel [...]“. Am Anfang stehen also zwei Aussagen, die ihren Gegenstand als einfach bezeichnen: 1. Die mathematische Formel des Wasserstoffatoms ist einfach; 2. die Gestalt, die der ersten Anschauung entspricht, ist einfach. [...] Dieses Wissen bildet gleichsam eine Arbeitsphänomenologie.“ [NWG:148f.] Diese Arbeitsphänomenologie muss jedoch entanschaulicht werden. Ihr Deutungsprozess führt dabei zur Aufhebung jener ‚ersten Anschauung‘, die den Impuls zur Nachfrage vorgegeben hat, so wie das Wasserstoffspektrum „neue Schemata für die gesamte Spektroskopie“ [NWG:155f.] hervorbringt. Der Prozess der Entanschaulichung erzeugt also komplexere visuelle Strukturen und Regelmäßigkeiten: „Es hat den Anschein“, sagt Léon Bloch, „als neigten alle als einfach eingestuft Linien dazu, sich mit zunehmender Feinheit der Spektralanalyse aufzulösen. Die Hyperfeinstruktur wäre danach gerade so wie die Feinstruktur, nicht die Ausnahme, sondern die Regel.“ Diese letzte Feststellung kann gar nicht genug betont werden. Sie bezeichnet unseres Erachtens eine wahrhaft kopernikanische Revolution des Empirismus.“ [NWG:156] Bachelard insistiert deshalb wiederholt auf der wissenschaftlich notwendigen Demontage der einfachen Anschaulichkeit der Bilder – womit unbeabsichtigt ihre notorische Wirksamkeit dargestellt wird. Die Entanschaulichung der Hybride muss deshalb letztlich mißlingen, was den skeptischen Wissenschaftstheoretiker ratlos macht: „Wie wir sehen, handelt es sich stets um dasselbe Problem: Wie sollen wir [...] die Regel mit all ihren Ausnahmen an einem einzigen Beispiel erkennen, das ganz offensichtlich selbst eine Ausnahme darstellt? Oder ganz allgemein: Wie kann das Einfache Illustration für das Umfassende sein?“ [NWG:158] Diese Frage zielt auf die Überzeugungsqualitäten des hybriden

Beweisbildes, die Wittgenstein mit einem synoptischen Effekt erklärt hatte: Das Einfache ist Illustration für das Umfassende, wenn es in seiner Hervorbringung überzeugt und dabei paradigmatisch wird.

Natürlich verdankt sich die Einfachheit eines anschaulichen Bildes einer artifizialen Grundlage, es ist ebenso produziert, wie es neue Produktionen anstößt, die zur Wahrnehmung neuer Einfachheiten führen können. Denn man „entdeckt schließlich eine neue Struktur in den Ausgangsphänomenen oder besser: man *produziert* diese neue Struktur durch überaus wirkungsvolle künstliche Mittel“ [NWG:154]. Diese von Bachelard als Synthese kausalisierte Hybridität soll ohne eine synoptische Operation im Sinne Wittgensteins auskommen.

### 3. Synthese oder Synopse

Statt auf eine synoptische Bildwahrnehmung setzt Bachelard auf Methoden der Synthetisierung neuer Hybride: „In Verbindung gehen heißt neue Eigenschaften hervorbringen. [...] Es ist nutzlos, nach der Erkenntnis des Einfachen an sich, des Seins an sich, zu streben, denn Verbindung und Relation bringen die Eigenschaften hervor [...]“ [NWG:159f.] Was bedeutet es jedoch für den argumentativen und heuristischen Status der wissenschaftlichen Visualisierung, wenn sie *als Bild* selbst erst die genannte Verbindung hervorbringt? Entstehen die neuen Einheiten hierbei diskursiv im Sinne Bachelards oder ikonisch im Sinne Wittgensteins? Soll der Status des Neuen aus der kausalistischen Perspektive einer Synthese oder in der bildlichen Phänomenalität einer Synopse (eines übersichtlichen Entwurfs) beschrieben werden? Bachelard favorisiert eigentlich die erste Option, dokumentiert aber unbeabsichtigt die Geltung der zweiten.

„Als Compton einmal J.J.Thomson in Cambridge besuchte, traf er dort auch G.P. Thomson, der für ein Wochenende gekommen war. Man vertrieb sich die Zeit mit der Betrachtung von Photographien, die mit Hilfe von Elektronenwellen aufgenommen worden waren. Compton bemerkte dazu: 'Es war schon ein dramatisches Ereignis, den großen alten Mann der Wissenschaft, der seine besten Jahre auf den Nachweis des Teilchencharakters der Elektronen verwandt hatte, voller Begeisterung über das Werk seines Sohnes zu sehen, aus dem hervorgeht, dass Elektronen in Bewegung Wellen bilden.' Man kann ermessen, welche philosophische Revolution da vom Vater auf den Sohn stattgefunden hat, eine Revolution, die es erforderlich machte, das Elektron als Ding aufzugeben [...]“ [NWG:172].

Diese revolutionäre Zäsur ist markiert durch die Einprägbarkeit eines neuen Verfahrens der wissenschaftlichen Visualisierung, das argumentativ gebraucht wird, um mit der Einfachheit einer bildlichen Synopse von der Komplexität des abgebildeten Objekts zu überzeugen. Der Kernsatz: „In Verbindung gehen heißt neue Eigenschaften hervorbringen“, muss hier der Überzeugungsqualität des Bildes selbst zugestanden werden. Der Nachweis erfolgt über die synoptische Evidenz des wahrgenommenen Bildes, die auch Bachelard erkennt, deren Erklärung als einer kausal bewirkten Synthese er aber noch einmal psychologisch variiert:

„Juvet hat das sehr treffend zum Ausdruck gebracht: 'Im Erstaunen, das ein neues Bild oder eine neuartige Verknüpfung von Bildern auslöst, müssen wir das

wichtigste Element des Fortschritts in der Physik erblicken, denn das Erstaunen regt die Logik an, die immer recht kühl ist, und zwingt sie, neue Verbindungen herzustellen; aber die eigentliche Ursache für diesen Fortschritt, den Grund für das Erstaunen, müssen wir in den Kraftfeldern suchen, die durch die neuartige Verknüpfung von Bildern in der Vorstellung entstehen und deren Stärke das Glück des Wissenschaftlers ermessen lässt, der sie hat zusammenbringen können.“ [NWG:173]

Bachelards Plädoyer für die diskursiv entanschaulichte Hybridität wissenschaftlicher Visualisierungen, läuft damit letztlich auf eine Anerkennung jener einstelligen Überzeugung hinaus, die Wittgenstein mit der Einprägbarkeit des Bildes beschrieben hatte. Das „Erstaunen“ am „neuen Bild oder einer neuartigen Verknüpfung von Bildern“ ist Ausdruck einer synoptischen Qualität, um dessen Anerkennung Bachelard auch dann nicht herum kommt, wenn er sie psychologisch kausalisiert: „Aber woran erkennt man zunächst den Wert dieser unvermittelten Synthesen? An einer unausprechlichen Klarheit, die unserem Verstand Sicherheit und Glück gibt.“ [NWG:176]

Eine psychologische Erläuterung wollte Wittgenstein vermeiden, indem er seine Überlegungen zum einprägsamen Bild auf die Performativität seiner Wahrnehmung richtete: „Mich interessiert nicht das unmittelbare Einsehen einer Wahrheit, sondern das Phänomen des unmittelbaren Einsehens. Nicht (zwar) als einer besonderen seelischen Erscheinung, sondern als einer Erscheinung im Handeln des Menschen.“ [BGM:241] notiert Wittgenstein zwischen seinen Beweiszeichnungen. Das angesprochene Phänomen ist unmittelbar, weil es einen Moment synoptischer Wahrnehmung beschreibt, in dem die notorische Hybridität des Beweisbildes nivelliert ist. Seinen heuristischen Effekt erläutert Wittgenstein in Anlehnung an Freges Fernrohrmetapher:

„Ja; es ist, als ob die Begriffsbildung unsere Erfahrung in bestimmte Kanäle leitet, so dass man nun die eine Erfahrung mit der anderen auf neue Weise zusammensieht. (Wie ein optisches Instrument Licht von verschiedenen Quellen auf bestimmte Art in einem Bild zusammenkommen lässt.)“ [BGM:241]

Es entsteht ein „neues Bild“ [BGM:64], weil ich „an diese Art der Zusammensetzung gar nicht gedacht.“ [BGM:55] habe, sie also auch nicht gezielt herbeiführen kann. Vielmehr handelt es sich um genuin poetische oder heuristische Qualitäten synoptisch wahrgenommener Hybride („Die neue Lage ist wie aus dem Nichts entstanden. Dort, wo früher nichts war, dort ist jetzt auf einmal etwas.“ [BGM:56]), die letztlich ganze Geometrien modifiziert: „Kann man nicht sagen: die Figur, die dir die Lösung zeigt, beseitigt eine Blindheit; oder auch, sie ändert deine Geometrie? Sie zeigt dir gleichsam eine neue Dimension des Raumes. (Wie wenn man einer Fliege den Weg aus dem Fliegenglas zeigte.)“ [BGM:55f.]

Beide Zeitgenossen verhandeln das Schicksal des wissenschaftlichen Hybridbildes vor dem Hintergrund der euklidischen Geometrie. Während jedoch Bachelard die Einsicht in dessen prinzipielle Hybridität zur generellen Kritik der Anschaulichkeit des Bildes ausbaut, thematisiert Wittgenstein umgekehrt die synoptische Wahrnehmung als den originären Modus bildlichen Überzeugens. Hierzu versucht er das alte Problem der bildlichen Evidenz im Kontext argumentativer und instrumentaler Bildpraktiken neu zu definieren. Das „Phänomen des unmittelbaren

Einsehens“ erscheint dabei als eine spezifische Qualität des Überzeugtseins im Kontext des Bildgebrauchs. Ausgehend von geometrischen Beweiszeichnungen wird sie auch für wissenschaftliche Visualisierungen insgesamt relevant, weil sie eine synoptische Wahrnehmung des Hybridbildes von einer Explanaton seiner synthetischen Erzeugung unterscheidbar macht, synoptische Hybride von synthetischen trennt.

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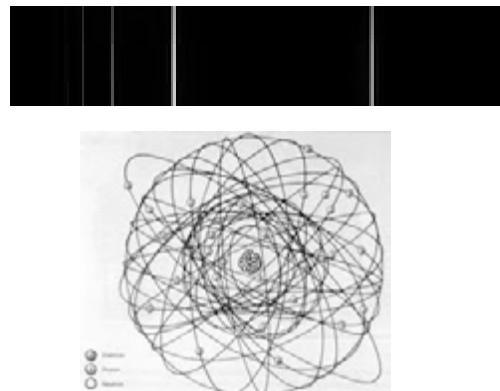
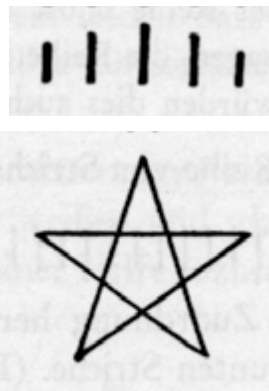
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Synopsis aus den beiden Wittgenstein-Zeichnungen (links oben und unten) sowie Balmers Wasserstoffspektrum (rechts oben) und Bohrs Atommodell (rechts unten).

# Kontext und wahrheitskonditionale Semantik

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I

Kontextualistische Theorien zeichnen sich dadurch aus, dass sie die Rolle des Kontextes für die Klärung von philosophischen Problemen betonen. Damit ist gemeint, dass ohne Berücksichtigung des Kontextes bestimmte philosophische Fragen nicht geklärt werden können. Mit dem Verweis auf die Notwendigkeit, dem Kontext einer Äußerung ebendiese Relevanz zuzugestehen, geht daher auch das Versprechen einher, Lösungen für philosophische Probleme – etwa das Problem des Skeptizismus in der Erkenntnistheorie – zu bieten.

Dass der Kontext in der einen oder anderen Weise relevant ist, wird kaum angezweifelt – vielmehr werden Fragen diskutiert, wie viel Raum man der Kontextabhängigkeit zugesteht und wie man mit der Kontextabhängigkeit umgeht. Beachtet man sprachliche Phänomene wie die Verwendung von so genannten Indexwörtern wie „ich“, „hier“, „dies“, „jetzt“, dann scheinen Zweifel ob der entscheidenden Rolle des Kontextes bei zumindest einigen Ausdrücken zu Recht unangebracht zu sein:

„One great strength of contextualism is that it is uncontroversially correct about some cases. If she says 'I am a woman' while he says 'I am not a woman', it would not normally occur to us even for a moment to think of them as thereby disagreeing, although verbally his sentence is the negation of hers.“ (Williamson 2005)

Allein die Tatsache, dass Indexwörter verwendet werden, scheint Beleg dafür zu sein, dass der Beitrag zumindest einiger Ausdrücke zur Bedeutung von Äußerungen, in denen diese Ausdrücke verwendet werden, vom Kontext abhängt. So ist es dann auch die Kontextsensitivität, die als bestimmende Eigenschaft von Indexwörtern angeführt wird:

„The 'context-dependence' of indexicals is often taken as their defining feature: what an indexicals designates, shifts from context to context.“ (Perry 1997)

Spricht man von der Kontextsensitivität von Indexwörtern, dann meint man damit, dass der semantische Beitrag von Indexwörtern zur Bedeutung der ganzen Äußerung ohne Bezugnahme auf den Kontext nicht geklärt werden kann. Die Eigenschaft der Kontextsensitivität ist es aber auch, die das Unterfangen einer Semantik für natürliche Sprachen selbst in Nöte bringt, denn – um es hier nur kurz anzudeuten – wie ist es überhaupt möglich, kontextunabhängig den semantischen Beitrag eines Ausdrucks zu bestimmen, wenn sich dieser erst im Kontext der Äußerung ergeben soll? Dadurch werden Fragen nach der Notwendigkeit der Sprache zugrundeliegenden Strukturen akut, wie diese Strukturen – sofern vorhanden – die Sprache bestimmen, aber auch auf welche Grundbegriffe man Bezug nimmt, um das Verstehen von Äußerungen zu erklären. Gerade bei der letzten Frage mutet es erstaunlich an, dass Vertreter kontextualistischer Theorien hauptsächlich auf den Begriff der „Wahrheit“ zurückgreifen, wenn es gilt, die Interpretation einer Äußerung zu erklären – wirft doch gerade die Kontextsensitivität von Ausdrücken das Problem auf, wie Wahrheitsbedingungen unabhängig von ihrem Kontext überhaupt spezifiziert werden können. Daher möchte ich mich hier mit der Kompatibilität von

einerseits kontextualistischen Bedeutungstheorien und andererseits der Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung auseinandersetzen, und zwar derart, dass nicht die Auslegung einer bestimmten Lesart dieser Interdependenz mit dem Phänomen der Kontextsensitivität einiger oder aller Ausdrücke konfrontiert wird, sondern ausgehend von der Wahrheitsdefinition Tarskis möchte ich untersuchen, wie das Phänomen der Kontextsensitivität mit einer wahrheitskonditionalen Semantik in Einklang gebracht werden könnte. Dadurch soll gezeigt werden, dass der Rekurs auf die Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung für kontextualistische Theoretiker keinesfalls so selbstverständlich ist wie von manchen Autoren angenommen.

II

Die bekannteste und oft zitierte explizite Formulierung der Idee, das Verstehen eines Satzes in Bezug auf seine Wahrheit zu klären, findet sich im *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* Wittgensteins:

„Einen Satz verstehen, heißt, wissen was der Fall ist, wenn er wahr ist. (Man kann ihn also verstehen, ohne zu wissen, ob er wahr ist.)“ (TLP 4.024)

Zu großer Popularität erlangte die Idee, Verstehen mit Hilfe des Wahrheitsbegriffes zu erklären allerdings erst mit dem Essay Davidsons „Truth and Meaning“ (Davidson 1964). In Anlehnung an die Wahrheitsdefinition Alfred Tarskis entwickelt Davidson eine „Wahrheitstheorie im Stile Tarskis“, die er als Interpretationstheorie verstanden wissen will und um die er eine Theorie für natürliche Sprachen entwickelt. Tarski selbst konzentriert sich unter anderem im wegweisenden Aufsatz „The Semantic Conception of Truth and the Foundations of Semantics“ (1945) auf formale Sprachen, um Inkonsistenzen und Antinomien zu vermeiden. Er wendet in seinen Überlegungen zur Definition des Wahrheitsbegriffes das Prädikat „wahr“ auf Sätze an. Das Ziel seiner Überlegungen ist die Formulierung einer Definition, aus der sich für alle Sätze einer (formalen) Sprache Äquivalenzen der Form

(T) „X ist wahr genau dann wenn p.“

ableiten lassen, wobei für X der Name eines Satzes eingesetzt wird und für p der Satz selbst. Das so explizierte Äquivalenzverhältnis bringt zum Ausdruck, dass eine Behauptung prätendiert, dass das Behauptete auch wahr ist. Ob das Behauptete tatsächlich wahr ist, tangiert die Definition nicht – es werden lediglich die Bedingungen, unter denen ein Satz wahr ist, angegeben. Das Wahrheitsproblem – was Wahrheit eigentlich ist, wie die Wahrheit eines Satzes festgestellt oder überprüft wird, etc. – wird, wie es Tugendhat formuliert, überhaupt nicht berührt:

„Eine Theorie hingegen, die bei der Äquivalenz [...] stehen bleibt, hat das Wahrheitsproblem nicht reduziert, sondern überhaupt nicht berührt.“ (Tugendhat 1976)

Die Trivialität der derart formulierten Wahrheitsdefinition zeigt sich auch daran, dass sie sowohl mit einer Korrespondenztheorie als auch einer Kohärenztheorie der Wahrheit kompatibel ist und keinerlei erkenntnistheoretischen Anspruch erhebt respektive die Wahrheitsbedin-

gungen nicht epistemologisch verankert werden. Worin ihr Nutzen für eine Semantik für natürliche Sprachen bestehen soll, ist zunächst unklar und soll hier auch nicht diskutiert werden, man kann aber das Ignorieren respektive Umgehen dieser Fragen zunächst auch als Vorteil auffassen und die Wahrheitsdefinition Tarskis als Ausgangspunkt für eine Untersuchung kontextualistischer Interpretationstheorien, die ebenfalls auf der Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung aufbauen, heranziehen.

Das heißt, ausgehend von der Wahrheitsdefinition Tarskis soll erörtert werden, wo in der Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung Raum für den Kontext einer Äußerung besteht, der ihre Bedeutung (mit-)bestimmen soll. Kann dieser Raum nicht bestimmt werden, ist es zweifelhaft, ob kontextualistische Theoretiker auf die Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung zurückgreifen können.

### III

Zunächst sei festgestellt, dass ob der minimalistischen Lesart der Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung vom Standpunkt der kontextualistischen Theoretiker aus gesehen die Wahrheitsdefinition Tarskis inadäquat ist, um das Verstehen von Äußerungen natürlicher Sprachen zu erklären. Kontextualistische Theoretiker machen um diese Kritik auch kein Geheimnis:

„If one embraces the contextualist perspective one must give up traditional Davidsonian style semantic theories.“ (Bezuidenhout 2002)

Der Umstand, dass „*Davidsonian style semantic theories*“ nicht empirisch adäquat sind, wird auch mit einer Reihe von Beispielen untermauert. Um eines dieser Beispiele respektive Szenarien zu skizzieren: Pia färbt die Blätter eines braunen Baumes grün und äußert an ihren Nachbarn gerichtet, einem Photographen, den Satz „Die Blätter sind grün“, der wohl intuitiv wahr ist. Richtet sie hingegen den Satz an einen angehenden Botaniker, ist „Die Blätter sind grün“ intuitiv falsch.

Aus Beispielen wie diesem schließen Kontextualisten zweierlei: erstens reicht die Kenntnis der Wahrheitsbedingungen nach dem Schema Tarskis – in diesem Fall

(S1) „Die Blätter sind grün“ ist wahr genau dann wenn die Blätter grün sind.

– nicht, um das Verstehen des Satzes zu erklären, da es das intuitive Verstehen nicht erklärt und zweitens bedarf es, um ebendieses Verstehen zu erklären, den Kontext miteinzubeziehen, was, auf den Beispielsatz angewendet, bedeutet, dass „Die Blätter sind grün“ kontext-sensitiv ist, da die Beiträge der Ausdrücke zur Bedeutung des ganzen Satzes vom Kontext abhängen.<sup>1</sup>

Die hier im Mittelpunkt stehende Frage ist nun, wie der Kontext einer Äußerung als (mit-)entscheidender Faktor der Bedeutung einer Äußerung in die Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung einzuordnen ist. Um die Problematik zu erörtern, werde ich nun mögliche Varianten, das Schema Tarskis um den möglichen Äußerungskontext zu erweitern, diskutieren.

Eine erste Möglichkeit ist, den Kontext einer Äußerung einfach mit der Welt<sup>2</sup>, in der sie wahr oder falsch ist, zusammenfallen zu lassen. Diese Möglichkeit ist jedoch

auszuschließen, da in diesem Fall nicht mehr von divergierenden Kontexten respektive den Beiträgen zur Bedeutung einer Äußerung relativ zum Kontext gesprochen werden könnte – denn es gäbe schlicht keine unterschiedlichen Kontexte, wo die Äußerung eines Satzes einmal dies und einmal jenes relativ zum Kontext bedeuten würde.

Zieht man nun in Betracht, das Wahrheitsprädikat selbst sei kontext-sensitiv, um so den Kontext einer Äußerung in das Schema einzugliedern, ergäben sich für das oben angeführte Beispiel folgende Äquivalenzrelationen:

(S2) „Der Baum ist grün“ ist wahr im Kontext C1 (Botaniker), wenn der Baum grün ist.

(S3) „Der Baum ist grün“ ist wahr im Kontext C2 (Photograph), wenn der Baum grün ist.

Die Bestimmung der jeweiligen Kontexte C1 und C2 wäre nun etwas, das über die bloße Angabe der Äußerung inhärenten Eigenschaften wie Zeit, Ort und Person der Äußerung hinaus geht. Eine derartige Relativierung der Gültigkeit eines Bikonditionals lässt allerdings offen, wie der Kontext die Bedeutung einer Äußerung derart bestimmt, dass folglich noch die These aufrecht gehalten werden könnte, der Kontext bestimme die Bedeutung der Äußerung auf der linken Seite des Bikonditionals – lediglich das Wahrheitsprädikat wäre kontext-sensitiv.

Der wohl am erfolgversprechendste Ansatz ist wohl jener, in dem der Kontext einer Äußerung die Wahrheitsbedingungen bestimmt. In „*Literalism and Contextualism: Some Varieties*“ (Recanati 2005) diskutiert Recanati etwa zwei Arten der Bestimmung von Wahrheitsbedingungen durch den Kontext:

„Predicate transfer and free enrichment are only two among a family of top-down pragmatic processes that affect the intuitive truth-conditions of utterances.“ (Recanati 2005)

Wie auch immer die „pragmatischen Prozesse“ – die Einflüsse des Kontextes auf die Bedeutung einer Äußerung – von statten gehen, hervorzuheben ist hier, dass der Kontext die Wahrheitsbedingungen bestimmt. Was hier gemeint ist, soll wiederum mit einem Beispiel verdeutlicht werden: Äußert jemand den Satz „Es ist ein Löwe auf dem Platz“, dann kann mit dem Ausdruck „Löwe“ sowohl eine Statue gemeint sein als auch ein echter Löwe. Um das entscheiden zu können, bedarf es – so Recanati – „pragmatischer Prozesse“, d.h. des Kontextes der Äußerung respektive wenn die Interdependenz von Wahrheit und Bedeutung als Grundstruktur für die Erklärung der Bedeutung herangezogen werden soll, der durch den Kontext bestimmten Wahrheitsbedingungen. Fraglich ist allerdings, wie die pragmatischen Prozesse – sprich Einflüsse des Kontextes – beschränkt werden. Denn dies scheint notwendig zu sein, denn werden diese nicht beschränkt, besteht die Gefahr, dass die Wahrheitsbedingungen überhaupt nicht mehr angegeben werden können, da stets noch ein zusätzlich relevanter Faktor die Wahrheitsbedingungen (mit-)bestimmen könnte. In Anlehnung an Waismanns Kritik an verifikationistischen Theorien könnte man auch hier von einer „*essential incompleteness*“ sprechen:

„But there is a deeper reason for all that, and this consists in what I venture to call *the essential incompleteness* of an empirical description. To explain more fully: If I had to describe the right hand of mine which I am now holding up, I may say different things of it: I may state its size, its shape, its colour, its tissue, the chemical compound of its bones, its cells, and perhaps add some more particulars; but however far I go,

<sup>1</sup> Ob alle Ausdrücke oder nur einige kontextsensitiv sind, sei hier dahingestellt.

<sup>2</sup> Wird „Kontext“ allerdings mit „möglichen Welten“ oder „circumstances of evaluation“ gleichgesetzt, stellt sich wiederum die Frage nach deren Eingliederung in das Schema.

I shall never reach a point where my description will be completed: logically speaking, it is always possible to extend the description by adding some detail or other.“ (Waismann 1945)

Will man dennoch an der Idee festhalten, dass die Wahrheitsbedingungen einer Äußerung durch den Kontext bestimmt werden, dann müsste man auch Kriterien anführen, wann die Wahrheitsbedingungen der Äußerung auf der linken Seite ausreichend spezifiziert sind. Anders gesagt: Werden die Wahrheitsbedingungen nicht durch den Satz selbst bestimmt, bleibt die Frage offen, welche Wahrheitsbedingungen nun die „passenden“ sind, was die angesprochene der Kriterien notwendig erscheinen lässt. Würde man nun Kriterien für die Korrektheit von Wahrheitsbedingungen bestimmen wollen, hätte man bei erfolgreicher Suche wiederum nur Äquivalenzrelationen, die jenen nach dem Tarski-Schema entsprechen würden, denn exakter kann man Wahrheitsbedingungen einer Äußerung nicht bestimmen.

Eine letzte Möglichkeit wäre noch, den Kontext zwischen den Wahrheitsbedingungen einer Äußerung und der Welt einzubetten. Aber um diese Möglichkeit in Betracht ziehen zu können, müsste der Kontext wiederum bestimmt sein, was erneut die Frage nach einer Beschränkung der Kontextsensitivität aufwirft sowie die Frage, wie die Relation zwischen Kontext und Wahrheitsbedingungen aufzufassen ist.

#### IV

Keinesfalls möchte ich hier dafür argumentieren, Tarskis Wahrheitsdefinition ohne Adaptionen als Interpretationstheorie aufzufassen. Auch soll die durchaus berechtigte Kritik an minimalistischen Positionen nicht geschmälert werden. Fasst man Tarskis Definition der Wahrheit allerdings als *neutrale* Interpretation des Zusammenhangs von Wahrheit und Interpretation auf, dann spricht nichts dagegen, ebendiese Definition als Kriterium für Varianten der wahrheitskonditionalen Semantiken heranzuziehen. Wie die Versuche einer Eingliederung des Kontextes gezeigt haben, erscheint es dann jedoch problematisch, wie kontextualistische Theorien der Bedeutung auf diese Interdependenz zurückgreifen können.

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# Der Komplex „MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I)“ als Wittgensteins Buch „Lsrpmhmlsrhxsv Yvoviqfntvn“

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## 1. Die beiden Teile von Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I)

Das „Big Typescript“ darf keinesfalls als ein fertiges ausgereiftes Buch Wittgensteins angesehen werden, sondern stellt für Wittgenstein selbst ein großes geordnetes Bemerkungsarchiv dar, ist für Wittgenstein eine umfassende Materialsammlung und bildet erst die Grundlage für die Erstellung eines Buches. (Siehe Rothhaupt 2008, 280-306) Wittgenstein beginnt gleich danach auch tatsächlich unter Verwendung dieser „großen Maschinschrift“ sein Buch zu schreiben, indem er zunächst in der zweiten Hälfte von 1933 MS114(II) und anschließend in der ersten Hälfte 1934 MS115(I) verfasst. Zum umfassenden, adäquaten Verständnis der Genese von Wittgensteins Buch MS 114(II)+MS115(I) ist die Kenntnis bestimmter philologischer Sachverhalte und Parameter unabdingbar. Gerade für vollständige Kenntnisnahme und adäquate Interpretation von philologischen und topographischen Parametern besteht bei der Erforschung des Nachlasses von Ludwig Wittgenstein – hier des Doppelmanuskripts MS114(II)+MS115(I) – noch erheblicher Nachholbedarf.

Sowohl der Manuskriptband MS114 als auch der Manuskriptband MS115 ist jeweils in zwei Hälften zu zerteilen. Bei MS114, in Wittgensteins eigener Betitelung mit „X. Philosophische Grammatik“, bildet MS114(I), 1v-31r (mit Blattzählung und damit Recto- und Versoseitenzählung) den ersten Manuskriptteil und MS114(II), 1-228 (mit neu beginnender Seitenzählung) den zweiten Manuskriptteil. Der erste Teil gehört nicht zu Wittgensteins Buch, sondern enthält Bemerkungen, die vom 27.5.1932 bis zum 5.6.1932 niedergeschrieben sind, anschließend in Auswahl auch in Typoskript TS211 diktiert wurden und damit dann auch in Auswahl in TS212, also ins „Proto-Big Typescript“, und TS213, also ins „Big Typescript“, gelangten. Der zweite Teil von MS114 ist der erste Buchteil. Bei MS115, in Wittgensteins eigener Betitelung mit „Philosophische Bemerkungen, XI. Fortsetzung von Band X.“, bildet MS 115(I), 1-117 den ersten Manuskriptteil und MS115(II), 118-292 den zweiten Manuskriptteil. Der erste Teil von MS115 stellt den zweiten Teil des Buches dar. Und beim zweiten Teil von MS115 handelt es sich um den „Versuch einer Umarbeitung“ eines Teiles vom *Brown Book* in eine deutsche Fassung. So ist also – nun erst einmal – MS114(II) + MS115(I) als Wittgensteins Buch anzusehen.

Aus vorhandenen Datumsangaben in MS114 und MS115 kann man folgenden möglichen Entstehungszeitraum abstecken. Dieses Buch ist sicher nach dem 5.6.1932, dem letzten Datum in MS114(I), und sicher vor „Ende August 1936“, der vorhandenen Datierung zu Beginn von MS115(II) entstanden. Da sich zusätzlich zu Beginn von MS115(I) noch die Datierung 14.12.1933 findet, steht fest, dass der erste Buchteil vor und der zweite Buchteil nach diesem Datum entstanden ist. Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) entstand als „Umarbeitung“, so die Überschrift zu Beginn des ersten Buchteils.

## 2. „Philosophische Grammatik“ oder „Philosophische Bemerkungen“

Nun sind aber weitere wichtige Sachverhalte zu konstatieren, die noch genauere Auskunft über Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) liefern. Vielen ist nicht bekannt oder nicht bewusst, dass MS114(II)+MS115(I) (inklusive MS140(I)) postum von Rush Rhees, einem der Nachlassverwalter Wittgensteins, als Herausgeber ediert und publiziert wurde. Es handelt sich dabei nämlich um den ersten Teil der Veröffentlichung *Philosophische Grammatik* (Erstveröffentlichung 1969). Nach der Veröffentlichung wurde – angestoßen insbesondere durch den kritischen Artikel „From the Big Typescript to the *Philosophical Grammar*“ von Anthony Kenny – diese von Rhees besorgte Veröffentlichung *Philosophische Grammatik* vehement kritisiert. (Kenny 1976 und 1984) Mag auch Kritik an dieser Publikation als gesamter angebracht sein, so ist sie für die von Rhees erarbeitete Rekonstruktion als Teil I der postumen Veröffentlichung, nämlich für das Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I), nicht angebracht. Vielmehr handelt es sich dabei um eine recht gut gelungene Ausgabe von diesem Buch Wittgensteins. Ob der Titel „Philosophische Grammatik“ für Rhees' Buch-Edition allgemein angebracht ist, muß bezweifelt werden. Wittgenstein selbst hatte zwar, wie Rhees in seinen „Anmerkungen des Herausgebers“ zur Veröffentlichung *Philosophische Grammatik* richtig anführt, am 1.7.1931 in MS110,254 folgende Bemerkung eingetragen: „J (Mein Buch könnte auch heißen: Philosophische Grammatik. Dieser Titel hätte zwar den Geruch eines Lehrbuchtitels aber das macht ja nichts, da das Buch hinter ihm steht.)“ Diese Bemerkung wurde aber etwa zwei Jahre vor der Entstehung von MS114(II) + MS115(I) verfasst und ist zudem von Wittgenstein selbst mit der negativ wertenden Sektionsmarkierung „J“ für „schlecht“ bzw. für „schwach“ versehen. Der Titel „Philosophische Grammatik“ ist aber mit Sicherheit nicht auf Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) zu beziehen. Verführung zu diesem Benennungsfehler ist auch die Tatsache, dass Manuskript MS114 zu Beginn des ersten Teils den Titel „Philosophische Grammatik“ trägt. Wichtig zu sehen ist aber, dass dieser Manuskripttitel nicht auch auf den zweiten Teil von MS114 zu beziehen ist. Vielmehr gehört der Titel noch zur Manuskriptenreihe von MS105 bis MS114(I), also von Band I bis Band X(I). Auch MS113, also Band IX, trägt den Titel „Philosophische Grammatik.“ und MS112, also Band VIII, hat den Titel „Bemerkungen zur philosophischen Grammatik.“ Als Titel für Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) ist vielmehr „Philosophische Bemerkungen“ zu veranschlagen, denn so heißt es zu Beginn von MS115(I), also Band XI als „Fortsetzung von Band X.“



### 3. Zwei codierte Notate zu Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I)

Nicht nur das philologisch gesicherte Konstatieren des richtigen Buchtitels von MS114(II)+MS115(I), nämlich „Philosophische Bemerkungen“, ist von allergrößter und weitreichender Bedeutung. Eine detaillierte Nachlassforschung fördert zusätzliche neue Einsichten zu Tage. So wurden etwa zwei weitere markante Tatsachen ebenfalls bis jetzt nicht adäquat veranschlagt, nämlich die beiden zu Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) gehörenden Notate in Codeschrift. Das erste fast vollständig codierte Notat befindet sich in MS114,0v noch vor dem ersten Manuskriptteil auf der Versoseite des Vorsatzblattes, beginnt nichtcodiert und wechselt dann mitten im Satz in codierte Schrift. Das ganze Notat lautet in Umschrift folgendermaßen:

Im Falle meines Todes vor der Fertigstellung oder Veröffentlichung dieses Buches [Beginn der Codierung] sollen meine Aufzeichnungen fragmentarisch veröffentlicht werden unter dem Titel: „Philosophische Bemerkungen“ [in Code: „Lsrpmhmlsrhxsxv Yvoviqfntvn“ und mit der Widmung: „FRANCIS SKINNER zu geeignet“. Er ist, wenn diese Bemerkung nach meinem Tode gelesen wird, von meiner Absicht in Kenntnis zu setzen, an die Adresse: Trinity College Cambridge. [Ende der Codierung]

Wittgenstein spricht also ausdrücklich von seinem „Buch“. Es ist klar, dass sich diese Aussage nicht auf MS114(I) beziehen kann, sondern nur auf MS114(II) und alsdann auch auf die Fortsetzung davon in MS115(I) zu beziehen ist. Das zum Zeitpunkt dieses codierten Eintrags noch unvollendete Buch, wollte Ludwig Wittgenstein also nicht nur fertigstellen, sondern auch veröffentlichen. Und das bis dahin nur teilweise ausgeführte Buch war ihm so bedeutsam und wichtig, dass er es – im Falle seines plötzlichen Todes – fragmentarisch publiziert wissen wollte; und zwar mit der Widmung an seinen Freund Francis Skinner – falls dieser nichts dagegen einzuwenden gehabt hätte. Als Buchtitel für die fragmentarische Veröffentlichung gibt Wittgenstein explizit „Philosophische Bemerkungen“ an, wie es dann ja auch zu Beginn von MS115 heißt. Durch die Ansidlung dieser Codebemerkung vor dem ersten Manuskriptteil von MS114 wurde ihre richtige und wichtige Zuordnung zum zweiten Manuskriptteil von MS114 und damit zu Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) als ganzem bei der Erforschung des Wittgensteinschen Nachlasses bisher nicht gesehen bzw. nicht vorgenommen.

Ein zweites codiertes Notat, das wiederum zweifelsfrei Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) zuzuordnen ist, befindet sich auf der Versoseite des Vorsatzblattes von MS115,0v, ist also genau zwischen dem ersten Buchteil MS114(II) und dem zweiten Buchteil MS115(I) angesiedelt. In Umschrift lautet dieses Notat:

Dieses Buch kann allerdings gekürzt werden, aber es ist sehr schwer es richtig zu kürzen. Diese Bemerkung bezieht sich nicht auf den „Versuch einer Umarbeitung“.

Wiederum spricht Wittgenstein ausdrücklich von diesem seinem „Buch“. Er spricht davon, dass es gekürzt werden kann, auch wenn dies sehr schwer zu realisieren ist. Er deutet damit eine Arbeitsaufgabe an, die erst noch zu realisieren ist. Die Formulierung legt zudem nahe, dass dieses Buch zum Zeitpunkt dieses codierten Eintrags bereits fertiggestellt war. Gestützt wird diese Annahme alsdann durch den letztsatz dieses Notates, der klar und deutlich festhält, dass sich das zuvor Gesagte nicht

auf den „Versuch einer Umarbeitung“, also auf MS115(II),118-292 als dem zweiten Manuskriptteil bezieht. Berücksichtigt man nun präzise die Einordnung dieser Aussage in den genetischen Kontext des Wittgensteinschen Nachlasses, so wird deutlich, dass dieses Codenotat überhaupt erst während der Ausarbeitung bzw. nach der anschließenden Verwerfung von MS115(II) entstanden sein kann. Wittgenstein hatte nämlich „Ende August 36“ diesen zweiten Manuskriptteil unter dem Titel „Philosophische Untersuchungen. Versuch einer Umarbeitung.“ bei MS115(II),118 begonnen. Es handelt sich dabei um den Versuch der Umarbeitung des in englischer Sprache abgefassten *Brown Book*, der Typoskriptfassung von Wittgensteins Diktat an Francis Skinner und Alice Ambrose 1934/35, in eine deutschsprachige Fassung. Diesen Umarbeitungsversuch bricht Wittgenstein dann aber bei MS115(II),292 ab und kommentiert dies eben dort abschließend mit den Worten: „Dieser ‚Versuch einer Umarbeitung‘ von Seite 118 bis hierher ist nichts wert.“ Also ist die codierte Bemerkung auf der Versoseite des Vorsatzblattes in MS115 nach „Ende August 36“ entstanden. Zieht man einen Brief vom 20.11.1936, den Ludwig Wittgenstein von Skjolden in Norwegen an George Edward Moore in Cambridge schickte, heran, so kann der Abbruch dieser Umarbeitung exakt angegeben werden. Dass Wittgenstein Moore kundtut „I'm writing now a new version“ besagt – für die überwiegende Mehrheit in der Wittgensteinschen Nachlassforschung –, dass er Manuskript MS142, also die (irreführend) so genannte „Urfassung“ seines Buchprojektes *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, zu schreiben begonnen hat. Es wird aber auch deutlich – und dies wurde bisher in der Nachlassforschung vollkommen übersehen –, dass Wittgensteins codierte Bemerkung auf dem Vorsatzblatt von MS115,0v sicher erst nach August 1936 und ggf. sogar erst nach Oktober 1936 niedergeschrieben wurde. Und so zeigt sich, dass Wittgenstein zu dieser Zeit – also mindestens zwei bis zweieinhalb Jahre nach der Abfassung seines Buches MS114(II)+MS115(I) – immer noch an diesem Buch festhält; wenn auch mit der Absicht, dass es gekürzt werden kann. Als Resümee kann hier festgehalten werden: MS115(II), also der Versuch einer deutschsprachigen Umarbeitung des *Brown Book*, wird verworfen, nicht aber die MS114(II)+MS115(I) bzw. MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I) – Wittgensteins „Buch“.

### 4. MS140(I),1-39 als „Zweite Umarbeitung im großen Format“

Ein weiterer bedeutender Sachverhalt ist zu den Besonderheiten der Quellenlage für Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I) zu rechnen, nämlich die teilweise Umarbeitung des ersten Buchteils MS114(II),1-56 in das aus losen Blättern bestehende Manuskript MS140, exakt in MS140(I),1-39. Zu Beginn von MS114(II) findet sich nicht nur die Überschrift „Umarbeitung“, sondern zusätzlich der Vermerk „Zweite Umarbeitung im großen Format“. Und mit dieser „zweiten Umarbeitung“, mit diesem „großen Format“ ist eindeutig MS140(I),1-39 gemeint.

Wie gehört nun Manuskript MS140(I),1-39 genauerhin zu Wittgensteins Buch „Philosophische Bemerkungen“, also zum Komplex MS114(II)+MS115(I)? Dass MS140(I) letztlich nicht als eine begonnene, dann aber nicht zu Ende geführte, also nur rudimentär vorhandene „Zweite Umarbeitung“ anzusehen ist, sondern als „Zweite Umarbeitung“ den Beginn des Buches MS114(II)+MS115(I) betreffend gewertet werden muss, lässt sich daran erkennen, dass am Ende von MS140(I),39 explizit die mit Rotstift geschriebene Referenz „Fortstg. M X 56“ – für „Fortsetzung Manuskript Band X Seite 56“ – vorhanden ist.

Genaugenommen ist Wittgensteins Buch „Philosophische Bemerkungen“ also mit MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I) zu bezeichnen bzw. MS114(II)+MS115(I) meint „inklusive MS140(I)“. Und seit wann gehört nun Manuskript MS140(I),1-39 genauerhin zu Wittgensteins Buch MS114(II)+MS115(I)? Die Beantwortung dieser Frage hängt in erster Linie von der Datierung der Entstehung von MS140(I) ab. Dieses Einzelblättermanuskript besteht nämlich selbst wieder aus zwei Manuskriptteilen: MS140(I),1-39 einerseits und MS140(II),40 andererseits. Beim ersten MS140-Teil handelt es sich um die „Zweite Umarbeitung im großen Format“; beim zweiten MS140-Teil handelt es sich um den Entwurf des Beginns von MS142, von „Philosophische Untersuchungen“, der so genannten „Urfassung“ von Wittgensteins Buchprojekt *Philosophische Untersuchungen*. Der in Frage kommende Entstehungszeitraum für die „Zweite Umarbeitung im großen Format“ umfasst mehrere Jahre; er reicht von der zweiten Hälfte des Jahres 1933, jener Zeit in welchem MS114(II) entstand bis zur Jahreswende 1935/36, jenem Zeitpunkt an welchem Wittgenstein letztmals persönlichen Kontakt mit Moritz Schlick hatte.<sup>1</sup> Schlick wurde am 22.6.1936 in Wien erschossen. Für den Beginn dieses Zeitraums herrscht Klarheit, denn bevor MS114(II) nicht verfasst ist kann es auch nicht in MS140(I) umgearbeitet werden. Für das Ende dieses Zeitraums ist die Person Moritz Schlick insofern wichtig, als sich im Nachlass von Schlick eine Typoskriptfassung von MS140(I) befindet. Dieses Dokument umfasst insgesamt 57 Seiten und bietet den Text von MS140(I),1-39 – inklusive der darin als MS114(II),28-40 und MS114(II),180-184 hinzuzufügenden Textteile und der per Referenzvermerke vorgesehenen Bemerkungsvorschüben. Da also auch der Textteil von MS114(II),180-184 in diesem Typoskript einbezogen wurde, also Textpassagen mitverwendet wurden, welche Wittgenstein kurz (exakt 44 Seiten) vor dem Ende des ersten Buchteils MS114(II),228 bzw. vor dem – auf 14.12.1933 datierten – Anfang des zweiten Buchteils MS115(I),1 entstanden, kann gefolgert werden, dass diese Typoskriptfassung von MS140(I),1-39 nicht vor dem vierten Quartal 1933 entstanden sein kann. Zu dieser Datierungsfrage lässt sich zudem noch eine präzisere Angabe machen, nämlich: Ab MS114(II),181ff finden sich Bemerkungen, die aus dem Notizbuch MS145,13ff stammen. Da MS145 am „14/10.33“, also am 14.10.1933, begonnen wurde, kann die Referenz „№ S. 180 kl. Format ff“ in MS140(I),38 nicht vor diesem Zeitpunkt eingefügt worden sein. Folglich können Typoskriptfassungen von MS140(I), die ja eben jenen per Referenzvermerk zur Einfügung in MS140(I) vorgesehenen Textteil aus MS114(II),180-184 an der richtigen Stelle enthalten, nicht davor entstanden sein.

Da sich eine Typoskriptfassung von MS140(I) im Schlick-Nachlass befindet, kann weiter gefolgert werden, dass es spätestens vor Schlicks tragischem Tod am 22.6.1936 entstanden sein muss. Durch das per Referenzvermerk vorhandene Einbeziehen der Textpassage von MS114(II),180-184 in den Text von MS140(I), der ja erst kurz nach dem 14.10.1933 in MS145 entstanden ist, kann ausgeschlossen werden, dass die Typoskriptfassungen von MS140(I) zu diesem Zeitpunkt – September bzw. Anfang Oktober 1933 – schon existiert haben. MS140(I) selbst könnte Wittgenstein jedoch während des Istrienaufenthaltes erstellt haben – vorausgesetzt man nimmt an, dass der Referenzvermerk in MS140(I),38 erst später nachgetragen wurde. Veranschlagt könnte man aber problemlos den Beginn des Buches MS114(II)+MS115(I),

etwa MS114(II),1-(mindstens)56, während Wittgensteins gemeinsamer Arbeit in Italien im September 1933. Die „Zweite Umarbeitung“ von MS140(I),1-39 wäre dann entweder anschließend auch gleich in Istrien verfertigt oder erst danach verfasst worden.

## 5. MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I) als Wittgensteins „Volume I“ und Transfer von MS114(II)+MS115(I) in MS142 bzw. über TS228 in TS227

Mit diesen neu gewonnenen Erkenntnissen ergeben sich alsdann auch völlig neue Möglichkeiten – ja Erfordernisse – die bisher angenommene Standardauffassung der Genese des Wittgensteinschen Nachlasses allgemein und der Genese der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* speziell neu zu bedenken und umfassender zu rekonstruieren. Hier soll und kann kein endgültiges Urteil darüber gefällt werden, welches die von Wittgenstein 1938 vorgesehenen Buchbände sind – dies ist einer eigenen Publikation vorbehalten. Hier werden lediglich exemplarisch einige Möglichkeiten angedeutet, welche Manuskripte bzw. Typoskripte als „Volumes“ in Frage kommen.

Wider die herrschende Standardauffassung kann nicht die PU-Urfassung bzw. die PU-Frühaufassung TS220, sondern MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I) als das „Fragment“ angesehen werden. Dieses Buch Wittgensteins ist damit Volume I der von ihm 1938 geplanten Veröffentlichungen. Der Titel dieses ersten Bandes lautet „Philosophische Bemerkungen“ – wie es ja auch im Vorstandsprotokoll bei der Cambridge University Press im Jahre 1938 vermerkt ist. Folglich ist damit auch das Vorwort TS225 diesem Buch zuzurechnen. Anstatt TS220 ist MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I) Wittgensteins „Fragment [s]eines letzten Versuchs, [s]eine philosophischen Gedanken in eine Reihe zu ordnen“ (TS225), denn es hat „den Vorzug, verhältnismässig leicht einen Begriff von [s]einer Methode vermitteln zu können.“ (TS225) TS220 könnte dann eher als Volume II der Veröffentlichungen angesehen werden. Dafür kommen aber auch MS116(I)+MS116(II) in Betracht, denn besonders diese beiden Manuskriptteile in MS116 kann man mit guten Gründen als „Masse von Bemerkungen“ auffassen. (Siehe Rothhaupt 1999 und 2006)

Auch in der Genese des Nachlasses in den 40er Jahren spielt Wittgensteins Buch MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I) eine wichtige Rolle. Welche Bedeutung es etwa für die Komposition der so genannten „PU-Schlussfassung“ hat, wird bis jetzt in der Forschung nicht zur Kenntnis genommen. So wurde beispielsweise in den 40er Jahren von Wittgenstein das Buch MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I) insofern weiterverwendet als sehr viele Bemerkungen daraus an andere prominente Stellen seines Nachlasses weitertransferiert wurden. Insbesondere in die so genannte „PU-Schlussfassung“ TS227 gelangte über Typoskript TS228 eine große Zahl bedeutender Bemerkungen aus dem Buch MS140(I)+MS114(II)+MS115(I).

<sup>1</sup> Diese Information habe ich Juha Manninen zu verdanken. Er teilte mir mit, dass Wittgenstein Schlick am 26.12., am 29.12.1935 und am 1.1.1936 in Wien getroffen hatte.

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# The Transcendental “Foundation” of Meaning in Experience: A Reading of Wittgenstein’s *On Certainty*

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According to one standard story in Wittgenstein scholarship, Wittgenstein moved away from a distinct “early” position which considered logic transcendentally, as underlying meaning and mirroring the world,<sup>1</sup> toward a “late” position which denied in principle any claim to transcendental. But close examination of the so-called “third Wittgenstein” suggest reasons to question this once prevalent view. In this paper, I suggest that Wittgenstein’s remarks in *On Certainty* invite a broadly “transcendental” reading, and that the conception of knowledge, meaning and experience expressed in that work should be understood *phenomenologically*.

Unlike the Tractarian account of meaning, oriented toward a priori *formal* possibilities and, according to Wittgenstein’s own later assessment in the *Investigations*, “not meant to concern itself whether what actually happens is this or that” (Wittgenstein 2001, §89), meaning in the later work is considered in its intimate relation to everyday practice, understood as *use* and *experience*. The *Investigations* insist, “it is difficult as it were to keep our heads up,—to see that we must stick to the subjects of our everyday thinking, and not go astray and imagine that we have to describe extreme subtleties, which in turn we are after all quite unable to describe with the means at our disposal” (Wittgenstein 2001, §§102, 106).

But much of Wittgenstein’s subsequent unpublished writing seems focused on describing just such underlying “subtleties.” Wittgenstein’s language of riverbeds, grounds, and foundations signals a reexamination of the role of the transcendental, this time in light of a different, mature conception of language, meaning, and—importantly—the immediacy of everyday experience. But whereas in the *Tractatus* meaning was analyzed to a level of atomic, transcendental-logical “objects,” the existence of which was not directly accessible to experience, in *On Certainty* that which makes propositional knowledge possible is conceived in terms of the interrelated activities of our *Lebensform*—the certainties about our experienced world that our language games reflect and presuppose. These certainties are transcendental, in that they are conditions for the possibility of a meaningful world, and thus at a level prior to that of meaningful propositions. In his very last writings, Wittgenstein considers such “lived” certainties to be at the very core of our form of life.

But, as Joachim Schulte has noted, this transcendental level is no traditional, foundational bedrock: “The foundations he speaks of are human actions—a much more mobile and changeable medium than that envisaged by the standard foundational model” (Schulte 2005, 66–67). This medium is transcendental and “foundational,” insofar as it must be logically prior to the propositional knowledge it makes possible. But if such pure *praxis* is not within the purview of propositional knowledge, and not a fixed bedrock but a fluid system, how are we to understand it, and what are we to make of the underlying level of a form of life “prior” to knowledge and meaning? The key, I think, is to understand the focus of Wittgenstein’s transcendental remarks not empirically, but *phenomenologically*. At the

heart of the various certainties Wittgenstein alludes to lies a common—though unfixed—conception of experience, one that begins from a sort of *phenomenology*. A phenomenological conception of experience, as understood here, means experience observed in its lived immediacy, before it is captured and presented in a propositional form and thereby treated as a component of knowledge.

When I walk outside and experience that it is raining, I do not experience the proposition “It is raining.” We do not *experience* propositions. We talk, write, and theorize about them. Meanings are analyzed at the level of facts and propositions—in the realm of language—but they are ultimately dependent upon activities of our lived experience. The fact that we almost always already have language to cover a given situation, and that upon reflection we can see that this has (almost) always already given categorial structure to our experience, does not change the status of the most primary aspect of that experience; It just makes it harder to see.

In his final writings, Wittgenstein focuses upon this underlying, pre-linguistic level in order to adequately explain the relation of (propositional) meaning to experience, a relation which, although fluid, nonetheless possesses a general formal structure. We do indeed constantly give form to our lived experience in language—putting it into propositions—but this does not mean that, as “naively experienced,” it was already a predicative form of knowledge; to consider it as such is, for Wittgenstein, to misunderstand the relationship of propositions to experience: “People... have always learned from *experience*; and we can see from their *actions* that they believe certain things definitely, whether they express this belief or not” (Wittgenstein 1972, §284). One important theme in the *Investigations* is that meaning is, in effect, *always already there* in our everyday language games. In *On Certainty*, while not rebuking that claim, Wittgenstein comes to think that there must be some logically prior certainty which guarantees this very “always already there” character. Thus he returns to a transcendental analysis, not to discover hidden or ideal meanings, but to make plain that which first makes meaning (and thus meaningful experience) possible. In *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein shows how we can heed the *Investigations* call “back to the rough ground” by acknowledging the raw experiences of our *Lebensform* that underlie the predicative schemata in which we categorize and talk about them.

It might seem at first that such a move simply dodges the real question; that it amounts to naive talk about experience in ignorance of Kantian categorial insights or a return to the “myth of the given.” But this would be the case only if we were considering experience as the *direct* vehicle for meaning, which is precisely what is being rejected. Experiences are not mere carriers for content expressed in propositions. Wittgenstein is considering the relation of experience to language *transcendentally*: It is not a matter of a “translation” of *empirical* parts to be put together as a whole in a linguistic register, but rather of a recognition of the (phenomeno-)logical necessity of an *experiential* givenness as a condition for the possibility of any meaning whatsoever. This is a *transcendental*

<sup>1</sup> For our very limited purposes here, we can define the transcendental in a roughly Kantian sense, as, for a given X, “the notion of a necessary a priori condition (or conditions) for the possibility of X.”

grounding of language in the activities of a *Lebensform*, and this latter is not to be *conceptualized* empirically or semantically, but *acknowledged* as immediate experience, i.e. phenomenologically. Far from rejecting Kant's Copernican insight, then, this constitutes a recognition of the fact that, in William Brenner's words,

the solution to the problem [of the correspondence of language to reality] would have to be a broadly 'Kantian' one, in that the 'correspondence' in question would be transcendental rather than empirical – that is, not itself the sort of correspondence with reality that makes true thoughts true but rather the *prior* relationship to reality that makes true or false thoughts possible. (Brenner 2005, 122)

For Wittgenstein, this correspondence is something which makes knowledge possible, but which itself has no neatly enumerable content: "Now, can one enumerate what one knows (like Moore)? Straight off, I believe not.—For otherwise the expression 'I know' gets misused. And through this misuse a peculiar and extremely important state of mind [*Geisteszustand*] seems to be revealed" (Wittgenstein 1972, §6, translation modified). What is "revealed" here, on our reading, is something pre-linguistic; pre-predicative, although this is a point we only recognize through reflection, not "*ohne weiteres*." But what is thereby recognized is nonetheless present *directly* in experience; only this "it" is not an object; in recognizing it we recognize our *relation* to the world, the *structure* of our experience. It is not a matter of empirical science, but of transcendental, logical necessity, and recognizing this is made all the more difficult in that there is only a shifting boundary between the structure and the structured:

It might be imagined that some propositions, of the form of experiential propositions [*Erfahrungssätze*], were hardened and functioned as channels for such experiential propositions as were not hardened but fluid; and that this relation altered with time, in that fluid propositions hardened, and hard ones became fluid. [...] But if someone were to say 'So logic too is a science of experience' he would be wrong. Yet this is right: the same proposition may get treated at one time as something to test by experience, at another as a rule of testing. (Wittgenstein 1972, §§96, 98, translation modified)

What makes knowledge and meaning possible is not itself a type of knowledge, and *this* is not an experiential claim, despite the fact that when we attempt to capture this insight, we refer to the very same objects treated by the empirical scientist. The insight, however, is transcendental and *logical* insight, *based on* experience but not equivalent to the objects of which it consists, as Kant noted (albeit in a slightly different context) already in the first *Critique*: "the difference between the transcendental and the empirical therefore belongs only to the critique of cognitions and does not concern their relation to their object (Kant 1998, A56-57/B80-81). What is at issue in *On Certainty* are thus not so much "empirical propositions" (the standard translation for *Erfahrungssätze*) in the sense of empirical science, but logical, grammatical certainties in relation to *experience*: "My life shows that I know or am certain that there is a chair over there, or a door, and so on..." (Wittgenstein 1972, §7, my emphasis). Such certainties are a part of our *Lebensform*, and must be logically prior to propositional knowledge, because the ultimate justification for a proposition cannot come from yet another proposition: "It needs to be *shewn* that no mistake was possible. Giving the assurance "I know" doesn't suffice. For it is after all only an

assurance that I can't be making a mistake, and it needs to be *objectively* established that I am not making a mistake about *that*" (Wittgenstein 1972, §15).

I take this to be not a semantic, not an empirical, but a transcendental and ultimately a *phenomenological* point. For Wittgenstein, we can only *describe* certainties by putting them in propositional form. But when we do so we tend to assimilate the transcendental point to an naturalistic-empirical one—a tendency reflected in the English translation—when what is really at issue is not something registered through third-person empirical observation, not something which can be judged true or false, but own, first-person *doing*: "Giving grounds, however, justifying the evidence comes to an end;—but the end is not certain propositions' striking us immediately as true, i.e. it is not a kind of *seeing* on our part; it is our *acting*, which lies at the bottom of the language-game" (Wittgenstein 1972, §204).

Let us turn to one of Wittgenstein's own examples. "My difficulty can also be shewn like this: I am sitting talking to a friend. Suddenly I say: 'I knew all along that you were so-and-so.' Is that really just a superfluous, though true, remark? I feel as if these words were like 'Good morning' said to someone in the middle of a conversation" (Wittgenstein 1972, §464, my emphasis). The proposition in this hypothetical example is not something I would normally consider knowledge at all. It is rather part of the very framework which allows me to engage in a particular language game where meanings occur. This framework is not itself something about which we ask questions of truth and falsity, but *not* because it is not "real" or not a part of my experience; rather because it is *so intimately* a part of my everyday experience that it is never subject to doubt: it is part of the basic system of activities and everyday practices upon which all language games, including doubting, must be based. If I could be wrong about this in ordinary circumstances, I could no longer trust my own experience at all, and my entire system of knowledge would collapse: "in order to make a mistake, a man must already judge in conformity with mankind" (Wittgenstein 1972, §156); "if you tried to doubt everything you would not get as far as doubting anything. The game of doubting itself presupposes certainty" (Wittgenstein 1972, §115). Although I am of course capable of asserting "I knew all along that you were so-and-so," my assertion would take the form of a meaningful proposition, a knowledge claim, whereas the importance behind the claim is not a matter of its content, but of the structure of certainty in experience which makes meaning content possible.

Wittgenstein's conception of certainty, I have suggested, is best conceived as based upon the structural correlation of our pre-predicative practices. But as the above example shows, this transcendental level cannot play a direct, content-providing role in the formation of meanings. Though certainty is transcendently necessary for meaning, meaning itself goes no deeper than language for Wittgenstein, and thus at the pre-predicative level, at the "bedrock" of our language games, there is *literally* nothing more to be questioned. Justifications do come to an end, precisely where language runs out: in our first-person experience. We are apt to confuse these transcendental observations regarding experience with "straightforward" scientific-empirical ones, but the propositions of *On Certainty* remind us that what lies at the heart of our language games is neither language nor knowledge; that what makes life meaningful is not reducible to the meanings expressed in propositions.

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# Das Swamping-Argument: Grundgedanke und Reichweite

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## 1. Einleitung

Die meisten haben die Intuition, dass Wissen mehr wert sei als bloße wahre Meinung. Das Swamping-Argument ist nun ein systematischer Versuch, diese Intuition zu widerlegen. Doch welche axiologische These wird mit diesem Argument tatsächlich widerlegt und welche Prämissen werden im Argument vorausgesetzt? Es greift auf eine bestimmte Klasse von Wissensanalysen zurück und zeigt, dass diese gemeinsam mit anderen Behauptungen zu einem Widerspruch führt. Der paradigmatische Fall dafür war anfangs ein prozess-reliabilistisches Verständnis von Wissen als wahrer Meinung, die durch einen zuverlässigen Prozess entstanden ist. Ein epistemischer Prozess ist demgemäß genau dann zuverlässig, wenn er normalerweise, d.h. in der überwiegenden Anzahl von Fällen, Tokens wahrer Meinungen produziert. Das Swamping-Argument scheint nun einen Beweis dafür zu liefern, dass Wissen, in einem prozess-reliabilistischen Sinn verstanden, gar keinen epistemischen Mehrwert gegenüber bloßer wahrer Meinung haben kann.

In diesem Paper möchte ich die tatsächliche Reichweite des Swamping-Arguments verständlicher machen, welche einerseits unter gewissen Rücksichten enger ist als in seinen häufig simplifizierten Darstellungen, andererseits aber auch weiter, da dieses Argument keineswegs nur Erkenntnistheorien rein reliabilistischer Provenienz axiologisch bedroht.

Ich werde dabei so vorgehen, dass ich in einem ersten Schritt zunächst das klassische Swamping-Argument in einer Halbformalisierung darstelle. Daran anknüpfend werde ich die Voraussetzungen seiner Geltung klarer herausarbeiten. In einem weiteren Schritt werde ich zeigen, dass die Reichweite des Swamping-Argumentes weit über rein reliabilistische Erkenntnistheorien hinausgeht. Da es nicht meine Absicht ist, in diesem Paper eine erschöpfende Analyse von Wissen zu liefern, werde ich die Gettier-Problematik einfach ausblenden und Wissen als wahre Meinung, die durch einen zuverlässigen Prozess entstanden ist, bzw. allgemeiner, als wahre gerechtfertigte Meinung, charakterisieren.

## 2. Das Swamping-Argument in der klassischen Formulierung

Die normative Kraft der Herkunftsquelle von Meinungen scheint so stark zu sein, dass wir intuitiv einer wahren Meinung, die aus einem zuverlässigen epistemischen Prozess stammt, *prima facie* einen höheren Wert zuschreiben als einer bloßen wahren Meinung. Doch ist diese Intuition auch haltbar? Denn gleichermaßen ist auch unter Epistemologen die Intuition weit verbreitet, dass Wahrheit, oder genauer das Erzielen von wahren Meinungen, unser fundamentales und letztendlich unser einziges epistemisches Ziel sei.

Das Swamping-Argument in einer allerdings noch wenig elaborierten Ausformulierung geht vor allem auf Richard Swinburne (Swinburne 1999) und später Linda Zagzebski (Zagzebski 2003) zurück. Sie motivieren das Argument mit intuitiv einsichtigen Beispielfällen. Sie vergleichen jeweils zwei Produkte, die im einen Fall durch einen zuverlässigen

Fertigungsprozess und im anderen Fall durch einen unzuverlässigen erzeugt worden sind. Beide Produkte (bei Swinburne ist es ein Schreibtisch, bei Zagzebski eine Tasse Espresso) haben die gleichen intrinsischen Eigenschaften, d.h. sie weisen hinsichtlich ihrer Qualität, Quantität usw. keine Unterschiede auf. Da jedoch beide Produkte die gleichen intrinsischen Eigenschaften haben, so schließen sowohl Swinburne als auch Zagzebski, hätten sie unabhängig von ihrer Ätiologie auch den gleichen Wert – sofern das Produkt als Produkt eben das einzige Ziel sei. Der Herstellungsprozess als solcher füge dem Produkt keinen weiteren Wert hinzu. Wenn z.B. zwei Tassen Espresso in ihren Eigenschaften exakt gleich beschaffen seien, wenn sie in Menge, Geschmack, Aroma, Temperatur etc. keinen Unterschied aufweisen würden, sollte es für uns auch hinsichtlich der Wahl einer dieser Tassen keinen Unterschied machen, welche aus einer zuverlässigen und welche aus einer unzuverlässigen Espresso-Maschine stamme. Dies gelte unabhängig davon, dass wir zuverlässige Espresso-Maschinen selbstverständlich höher als unzuverlässige schätzen. Der Mehrwert der zuverlässigen Produktion werde sogleich „weggeschwemmt“, nachdem das Produkt in seiner Güte einmal feststehe. Ätiologische Werte gingen in ihrem Produkt ohne Hinzufügung eines Mehrwertes auf. Sie verhielten sich parasitär, wenn das einzige Ziel nur in der Güte des Produkts bestünde. Analog dazu habe eben auch eine wahre Meinung, die in zuverlässiger Weise gebildet worden ist, keinen Mehrwert gegenüber ihrem Pendant einer bloßen wahren Meinung.

Die Argumente anhand solcher Beispiele sind freilich noch wenig elaboriert und versuchen eher durch einleuchtende Analogien intuitiv zu zeigen, dass ein Mehrwert der zuverlässig erzeugten Produkte nicht existieren kann, wenn die intrinsischen Eigenschaften der Vergleichspaare exakt die gleichen sind. Aus all diesen Beispielen geht ebenso wenig klar hervor, ob, warum und wie die Ergebnisse allgemein auch auf epistemische Werte übertragbar sind.

Das Swamping-Argument in seiner klassischen Formulierung schließt direkt an das Menon-Problem an. Dort untersucht Platon die Frage, ob denn ein Führer, der eine bloße wahre Meinung über den Weg nach Larissa habe, nicht ein genauso guter Führer wäre wie einer, der diesen Weg wisse. Während Platon dieses Problem jedoch hinsichtlich eines praktischen Mehrwertes untersucht, geht das Swamping-Argument diesem hinsichtlich eines rein epistemischen Mehrwertes nach. Es geht also nicht um einen praktischen Wert oder einen moralischen Wert oder irgendeinen sonstigen Wert, auch nicht um einen sogenannten „Alles-in-allem-Wert“. Die Frage wird zudem auf einen Wertevergleich derselben propositionalen Gehalte eingeschränkt. Dieser Vergleich setzt zudem voraus, dass sowohl das epistemische Subjekt als auch die Stärken seiner Überzeugung im Fall von Wissen und bloßer wahrer Meinung dieselben sind. Die Mehrwertfrage lautet also exakter so: Ist das Wissen von S, dass p, *ceteris paribus* epistemisch mehr wert als die bloße wahre Meinung von S, dass p?

Der Rekurs auf einen praktischen o.a. Mehrwert von Wissen gegenüber wahrer Überzeugung kann zwar grundsätzlich *nicht* die These des epistemischen Mehrwerts rechtfertigen, trägt aber sehr wohl zur Erklärung bei,

warum wir dies oft so verneinen. Eben weil wir praktische o.a. Werte mit epistemischen verwechseln. Das Swamping-Argument operiert jedoch innerhalb eines geschlossenen epistemischen Systems, in dem es um rein epistemische Werte geht und andere Wertkategorien darin keine Rolle spielen.

Der Geltungsbereich des Swamping-Arguments wird also auf Paare von Wissen und bloßer wahrer Meinung mit jeweils gleichen propositionalen Gehalten, gleichem epistemischem Subjekt, gleichen Graden von Überzeugungsstärken und einer Wissenskonzeption prozess-reliabilistischer Provenienz eingeschränkt.

Die Grundversion des Swamping-Arguments gegen die epistemische Mehrwertbehauptung solcher reliabilistischer Wissenskonzeptionen lässt sich in einer simplifizierten Form nun folgendermaßen darstellen:

- (1) Wahre Meinung (Wahrheit) ist der einzige epistemische fundamentale Wert.
- (2) Das Wissen von S, dass p, ist gleich der wahren Meinung von S, dass p, die durch einen zuverlässigen epistemischen Prozess gebildet wurde.
- (3) Wahre Meinung (Wahrheit) ist der einzige epistemische Wert, der von einem epistemischen Prozess erzielt wird.
- (4) Also: Das Wissen von S, dass p, hat gegenüber einer bloßen wahren Meinung von S, dass p, keinen epistemischen Mehrwert.

Wenn man also dem epistemischen Wahrheitsmonismus und der prozess-reliabilistische Konzeption von Wissen zustimmt, dann muss man auch die kontraintuitive Konsequenz akzeptieren, dass Wissen nicht allgemein epistemisch mehr wert ist als bloße wahre Meinung.

### 3. Das Swamping-Argument: Grundgedanke und eigentlicher Kern

Doch welcher Grundgedanke steckt im Swamping-Argument? Was ist dessen eigentlicher Kern? Was ist sein Geltungsbereich? Und warum ist die Reichweite des Swamping-Arguments viel weiter als ursprünglich angenommen?

Ganz allgemein hat Rechtfertigung eine bestimmte Funktion. Sie soll die Wahrscheinlichkeit dafür, dass die Meinung des Subjektes auch wahr ist, gegenüber ungerichteten Meinungen erhöhen. Rechtfertigung hat also die epistemologische Funktion, wahrheitszutraglich zu sein. Dies gilt sowohl für externalistische als auch für internalistische Wissenskonzeptionen. Diese Wahrheitszutraglichkeit der Rechtfertigung kann grundsätzlich in Form eines objektiven statistischen Likelihood ausgedrückt werden. Dies gilt zunächst unabhängig von der Frage, ob und wie dieser tatsächlich ermittelt werden kann. Wenn der epistemische Wahrheitsmonismus wahr ist, dann gilt für den epistemischen Wert eines jeden beliebigen epistemischen Guts, dass er auf den Wert von Wahrheit (bzw. wahrer Meinung) zurückführbar ist. Pritchard (Pritchard 2010) deutet diese Beziehung als instrumentelle. Epistemische Güter wie reliable Meinungsbildungsprozesse, oder allgemeiner epistemische Rechtfertigung, haben einen instrumentellen Charakter i.w.S., insofern sie stets auf wahre Meinungen gerichtet sind.

So verstanden unterliegen dann aber nicht nur reliabilistische Konzeptionen von Wissen, sondern ganz allgemein alle Wissensanalysen, die Wahrheit und nur

Wahrheit als einziges epistemisches Gut zulassen, dem Swamping-Problem.

Innerhalb eines geschlossenen epistemischen Systems mit dem monistischen Ziel wahrer Meinungen und unter Wahrung des Prinzips der Nicht-Additivität ergibt sich nun die folgende Formulierung des Swamping-Arguments:

- (1) *These des epistemischen Wahrheitsmonismus:* Wahre Meinung (Wahrheit) ist der einzige epistemisch fundamentale Wert. Der epistemische Wert, der einer Meinung durch eine epistemische Eigenschaft außer Wahrheit zukommt, verhält sich zum epistemischen Gut wahrer Meinung (Wahrheit) instrumentell i.w.S. und kann durch eine objektive statistische Wahrscheinlichkeit ausgedrückt werden.
- (2) *Prinzip der Nicht-Additivität:* Wenn der Wert einer Eigenschaft eines Trägers nur instrumentell i.w.S. hinsichtlich eines Wertes ist, der in diesem Träger *bereits vollständig vorhanden* ist, dann wird kein zusätzlicher Wert generiert.
- (3) *Wissensdefinition:* Das Wissen von S, dass p, ist die wahre gerechtfertigte Meinung von S, dass p.
- (4) *Widerlegung der Mehrwert-These:* Das Wissen von S, dass p, ist epistemisch nicht mehr wert als die bloße wahre Meinung von S, dass p.

Wie kann man nun den Zusammenhang zwischen der instrumentellen Eigenschaft und dem objektiven statistischen Likelihood von Wahrheit näher bestimmen? Eine Proposition ist entweder wahr oder falsch. Analog dazu ist eine Überzeugung, dass p, entweder wahr oder falsch. Dementsprechend ist der objektive Likelihood einer *aktualen* Proposition, wenn sie wahr ist, gleich 1, eben weil sie bereits wahr ist, und 0, wenn sie falsch ist. Wenn man vom objektiven statistischen Likelihood von Wahrheit von Überzeugungen aus zuverlässigen Prozessen spricht, bezieht man sich zunächst auf *potenzielle* Überzeugungen, die von solchen Prozessen hervorgebracht werden können und die in der überwiegenden Anzahl von Fällen wahr sind.

Nun könnte jemand einwenden, dass es sich im Fall der aktuellen wahren Meinung um eine objektive Wahrscheinlichkeit, im Fall der gerechtfertigten wahren Meinung jedoch um eine subjektive Wahrscheinlichkeit handelt. Dazu ist anzumerken, dass das epistemische Subjekt jeder gerechtfertigten Meinung eine subjektive Wahrscheinlichkeit zuordnen kann, welche die vom Subjekt eingeschätzte Chance angibt, mit welcher die gerechtfertigte Meinung auch wahr ist. Diese Rechtfertigung kann man aber auch einer Klasse von Rechtfertigungen zuordnen, welche *objektiv* mit einer bestimmten Wahrscheinlichkeit zu wahren Meinungen führen. Und wenn die bereits aktuelle gerechtfertigte wahre Meinung eine Instanz einer solchen Klasse ist, hatte auch sie diese objektive Wahrscheinlichkeit, wahr zu sein.

Daraus leitet sich nun die folgende Regel ab: Wenn das Ereignis einer wahren Überzeugung aktuell eingetreten ist, hat es eine Wahrscheinlichkeit von 1. Die Tatsache, dass diese Überzeugung aus einem epistemisch zuverlässigen Prozess stammt, kann dieser Wahrscheinlichkeit keinen höheren Grad hinzufügen, da jede Wahrscheinlichkeit definitionsgemäß stets einen reellen Wert zwischen 0 und 1 hat.

Dieses Ergebnis korrespondiert mit dem *Prinzip der Nicht-Additivität*: Wenn eine Eigenschaft eines Gegenstandes in diesem vollständig vorhanden ist, kann diese



durch ein weiteres Hinzufügen der gleichen Eigenschaft nicht mehr vermehrt werden.

Kvanvig kritisiert in „The Swamping Problem Redux: Pith and Gist“ (Kvanvig 2010) Pritchard’s Interpretation (Pritchard 2010) der Relation zwischen Rechtfertigung i.w.S. und Wissen als instrumentelle Relation. Kvanvig selbst spricht vom objektiven statistischen Likelihood der Wahrheit. Ich glaube aber, dass diese beiden Sichtweisen nicht so weit auseinanderliegen, als dass man sie nicht miteinander in Einklang bringen könnte. Der statistische Likelihood der Wahrheit ist eine objektive Eigenschaft der Rechtfertigung, eine Propensität, welche den Grad der Wahrscheinlichkeit angibt, mit welcher die Rechtfertigung das epistemische Subjekt zu wahren Überzeugungen führt. Gleichermaßen ist die epistemische Rechtfertigung aus der Sicht des epistemischen Subjekts ein geeignetes Instrument, um das Ziel wahrer Überzeugungen zu erreichen. Der Likelihood von Wahrheit der epistemischen Rechtfertigung ist demgemäß ein statistisches Maß dafür, in welchem Ausmaß das Instrument der Rechtfertigung zu wahren Überzeugungen führt. Rechtfertigung ist also ein epistemisches Gut, das funktional letztendlich auf Wahrheit oder wahre Meinung gerichtet ist.

Beim *Prinzip der Nicht-Additivität* geht es um die Vermeidung von Doppelzählungen von Eigenschaften bzw. Werten. Für alle Klassen von epistemischen Rechtfertigungen, die letztlich auf einen statistischen Likelihood von Wahrheit zurückgeführt werden können, gilt in wahrheitstheoretischer Notation der folgende Zusammenhang: Die Wahrscheinlichkeit, genauer der objektive statistische Likelihood, dass eine epistemische Rechtfertigung – wie z.B. in einem externalistischen Sinn durch einen reliablen kognitiven Prozess – zu einer wahren Meinung führt, dass p, sei  $0 \leq \delta \leq 1$ .

$$P(TBp \vee JTBp) = P(TBp) + P(JTBp) - P(TBp \wedge JTBp)$$

$$P(TBp \vee JTBp) = 1 + \delta - \delta = 1 = P(TBp)$$

TBp wahre Meinung, dass p

JTBp wahre gerechtfertigte Meinung, dass p

Dieses *Prinzip der Nicht-Additivität* von abhängigen Eigenschaften lässt sich im folgenden *Prinzip des Eigenschaft-Parasitismus* nochmals reformulieren:

Wenn der Wert einer Eigenschaft P\* eines Gegenstandes parasitär auf den Wert einer anderen Eigenschaft P dieses Gegenstandes ist, dann ist die Summe der Werte der Eigenschaften P\* und P nicht größer als der Wert von P.

Wenn Wissen als wahre gerechtfertigte Meinung und epistemische Rechtfertigung mit objektivem Likelihood von Wahrheit *identifiziert* wird und wenn Wahrheit bzw. wahre Meinungen das einzige epistemisch fundamentale Ziel ist, dann ist es logisch unmöglich, dass Wissen einen epistemischen Mehrwert gegenüber wahrer Meinung aufweist. Auch eine beliebige Anti-Gettier-Bedingung, die einer epistemisch wahrheitsmonistischen Doktrin unterliegt, kann an dieser Diagnose nichts ändern. Dies gilt gleichermaßen für alle wahrheitsmonistischen internalistischen Wissenskonzeptionen. Nun könnte man gegen diese Konklusion des Swamping-Arguments den Einwand erheben, dass es über das Erzielen wahrer Meinungen hinaus „[...] in vielen Fällen ein *intrinsisches Bedürfnis des Erkennens von Begründungszusammenhängen*, die eine (wahre) Meinung *reflektiv rechtfertigt*, [...]“ (Brendel 2009)

gibt. Selbst wenn man eingesteht, dass eine solche reaktive Wertschätzung rational ist und in diesen Fällen tatsächlich ein epistemischer Mehrwert existiert, und es außerdem kein Einwand gegen die wahrheitsmonistische Prämisse ist, so ist Folgendes anzumerken. Ein epistemischer Mehrwert betrifft hier nicht einen Mehrwert von Wissen, dass p, gegenüber einer bloß wahren Meinung, dass p, sondern es geht im Falle des Erkennens von Begründungszusammenhängen, dass p, um eine Mehrzahl von (wahren) Meta-Meinungen (q,r,s,...) gegenüber der bloßen wahren Meinung, dass p. In diesem Fall entsteht der epistemische Mehrwert durch die höhere Anzahl von wahren Meta-Meinungen. Es sei nochmals angemerkt, dass es beim Swamping-Argument um einen epistemischen Wertvergleich von Wissen und wahrer Meinung bei gleichem propositionalem Gehalt geht.

#### 4. Schlussbetrachtungen

Doch was oder wer, so können wir fragen, kann einen epistemischen Mehrwert von Wissen begründen? Vorausgesetzt, unser epistemisches System ist geschlossen und das Ziel unserer epistemischen Tätigkeiten erschöpft sich in der Wahrheit und nur der Wahrheit, oder weniger pathetisch ausgedrückt, in der Erreichung und der Unterhaltung wahrer Meinungen, fällt die Antwort ermutigend aus. Dann hat Wissen gegenüber bloßer wahrer Meinung *notwendigerweise* keinen epistemischen Mehrwert. Dies gilt insbesondere für alle wahrheitsmonistischen Wissenskonzeptionen reliabilistischer Provenienz. Nach dem oben Gesagten gilt dies aber genauso für alle anderen wahrheitsmonistischen Wissenskonzeptionen internalistischer und externalistischer Herkunft. Will man einen epistemischen Mehrwert begründen, muss man also entweder die epistemische Geschlossenheit aufbrechen und auch praktische oder andere Werte zulassen. Oder man gibt die wahrheitsmonistische Position zugunsten liberalerer pluralistischer Konzepte auf.

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# Wittgensteinian Contextualism and Cartesian Skepticism

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## 1. The Cartesian skeptical paradox

The feature of Cartesian-style sceptical arguments is that we cannot know some empirical propositions (such as “I know that I have a body”, or “There are external objects”) as we may be dreaming, hallucinating, deceived by a demon, or be “brains-in-the-vat” (BIVs—i.e., disembodied brains floating in a vat connected to supercomputers). Therefore, as we are unable to refute these skeptical hypotheses, we are also unable to know propositions that we would otherwise accept as being true if we could rule-out these scenarios.

Cartesian arguments are extremely powerful as they rest on the *Closure principle for knowledge*. According to this principle, knowledge is “closed” under known entailment. Roughly speaking, this principle states that if an agent knows a proposition (e.g., that she has two hands), and competently deduces from this proposition a second proposition (e.g., that having hands entails that she is not a BIV), then she also knows the second proposition (that she is not a BIV). More formally:

*The “Closure” Principle*

If S knows that  $p$ , and S competently deduces from  $p$  that  $q$ , thereby coming to believe that  $q$  on this basis, while retaining her knowledge that  $p$ , then S knows that  $q$ <sup>1</sup>.

Now, let’s take a skeptical hypothesis, SH, such as the BIV hypothesis mentioned above, and M, a “mundane” (Vogel, 1999, 157) proposition like “I know that I have two hands” that would entail the falsity of a skeptical hypothesis. We can then state the structure of Cartesian skeptical arguments as follows:

(S1) I do not know not-SH

(S2) If I do not know not-SH, then I do not know M

(SC) I do not know M

where (S2) is motivated by appeal to the closure principle (and where it is also reasonably assumed that I do know that M entails not-SH).

The radical skeptical consequence that we can draw from this and similar arguments is that our everyday knowledge is impossible.

## 2. Wittgenstein on hinges

A way of dealing with “Cartesian style” skepticism is to deny the premise S1) of the skeptical argument, thus affirming *contra* the skeptic that we can know the falsity of the relevant skeptical hypothesis.

For instance, in his “*A defence of commonsense*” (1925, henceforth DCS) and “*Proof of the external world*” (1939, henceforth PEW), G. E. Moore famously argued that we can have knowledge of the “commonsense view of the world”, that is of propositions such as “I have a body”, “There are external objects” or “The earth existed long

before my birth” and that this knowledge would offer a direct response against skeptical worries.

Wittgenstein wrote the remarks published posthumously as *On Certainty* (1969, henceforth OC) under the influence of DCS and PEW, and in particular in the context of conversations he had about these papers with his friend and pupil Norman Malcolm.

As I have briefly mentioned above, Moore’s affirmation that he knows for certain the “obvious truisms” of commonsense and the premises of his ‘proof’ is pivotal in his anti-skeptical strategy; his knowledge-claims would allow him to refute the skeptic. But with regard to Moore’s truisms, Wittgenstein introduces a concept that is at the same time pivotal to understanding his anti-skeptical strategy and extremely elusive; these propositions are, in his words, “hinges”. Wittgenstein uses this metaphor in different occasions; for example, in OC 341-3, where he writes

The question that we raise and our doubts depend on the fact that some propositions are exempt from doubt, are as it were the hinges on which those turn [...] that is to say, it belongs to the logic of our scientific investigations that certain things are in deed not doubted [...] If I want the door to turn, the hinges must stay put.

That is to say, Moore-style propositions are just apparently normal empirical contingent claims, but on closer inspection they perform a different, more basic role in our epistemic practices. And so, differently from empirical propositions, they are neither grounded nor ungrounded. Moreover, they are constitutively immune from any coherent doubt and they cannot be known, at least not as everyday empirical propositions.

## 3. Williams’ “Wittgensteinian Contextualism”

One of the dominant “OC inspired” anti-skeptical proposal in the contemporary debate on radical skepticism is Michael Williams’s “Wittgensteinian contextualism”, which he has proposed in his book *Unnatural Doubts* and in a number of other more recent works (Williams 1991, 2001 2004a, 2004b, 2005).

Williams’ anti-skeptical strategy starts from Wittgenstein’s remarks about the fact that every doubt, in order to be considered a real doubt, presupposes some unquestionable, prior commitments as a sort of condition of possibility of doubting itself. Moreover, in some other remarks of OC, Wittgenstein stresses the importance of the context of inquiry, hence stating that without a precise context no justification, nor coherent questioning or doubting, is possible. Williams generalizes this part of Wittgenstein’s argument in the following way: in each epistemic context, there is necessarily a set of ‘hinge’ beliefs which will hold fast and which is therefore immune to epistemic evaluation in that context.

Williams names the doubts that are excluded from any particular inquiry *methodological constraints*, while he names the unquestionable presuppositions that make any

<sup>1</sup> This is essentially the formulation of the Closure principle defended by Williamson (2000, 117) and Hawthorne (2005, 29).

specific inquiry possible, his reading of the Wittgensteinian “hinge propositions”, *methodological necessities*.

Even a Moore-style proposition such as “I know this is a hand” is a methodological necessity only under certain circumstances, while it may lose its “hinge” status under different ones. Williams draws this consequence from Wittgenstein’s reflections about the abnormal circumstances in which a doubt about Moore-style propositions can be legitimately held. Yet he extends this principle to include every of our epistemic practices as he holds that every context will treat certain beliefs as hinges and that they, in turn, will determine inferential structure (what, quoting Wittgenstein, “stand fast” for us). When we doubt the “methodological necessities” of a practice, then, we are simply switching from a context of inquiry to another. For instance, an historical inquiry about whether, say, Napoleon won at Austerlitz presupposes “hinge commitments” such as “The world existed long before my birth”; in this context, to take for granted this “hinge” is not only a matter of practical rationality, but a condition of possibility of the inquiry itself. Thus, in the context of historical investigation to doubt a Moore-style proposition such as “The world existed long before my birth” would be constitutively illegitimate; but once we start doubting this proposition, for instance asking whether the universe has been in existence for more than 5 minutes, we are simply switching from a context of inquiry to another, that is from the historical context to the skeptical one.

This is exactly what happens with the Cartesian skeptic according to Williams: by doubting the “hinges” of our most common epistemic practices, the skeptic is simply leading us from a context in which it is legitimate to hold these hinges fast without question toward a philosophical context in which everything can be doubtful.

But Williams claims that the skeptical move cannot affect our common-day practices, whose contexts are defined by Moore-style propositions such as “I know that the earth existed long before my birth” or “I know that this is my body”. At most, what the Cartesian skeptic is able to show us is that, in the more demanding context of philosophical reflection, we do not know, strictly speaking, anything at all.

A consequence of this thought is that, even if legitimate and constitutively unsolvable at a philosophical level, the Cartesian skeptical paradox would not affect our common-day practices as they belong to different contexts, with completely different methodological necessities or “hinges”. Moreover, the same propositions that we cannot claim to know at a philosophical level are known to be true, albeit tacitly, in other contexts, even if they lack evidential support. Evidential support is something that they cannot constitutively possess, insofar as any hinge has to be taken for granted whenever we are involved in any epistemic practice. On Williams’s account, any practice would then rest on ungrounded presuppositions, “methodological necessities” that are not opened to doubt as to doubt them would result in the impossibility of pursuing the epistemic practice at issue.

There are many problems that Williams’s “Wittgensteinian contextualism” has to face, both as a plausible interpretation of Wittgenstein’s thought and as a viable anti-skeptical strategy. First the skeptical enterprise is, on Williams’ account, both completely legitimate and constitutively unsolvable. This cannot be, of course, a correct interpretation of Wittgenstein’s anti-skeptical strategy because for him hinges are not strictly speaking knowable or doubtful and the Cartesian skeptic is simply treating

as hypotheses something, the hinges, that cannot and do not have to fulfill the requirements of a knowledge claim. This is the reason why the Cartesian skeptic enterprise is, on Wittgenstein’s account, senseless and hence illegitimate. That is, as has been pointed out by Danielle Moyal-Sharrock (Moyal-Sharrock, 2005, 2010), for Wittgenstein there can be no context in which we could legitimately question or justify our basic certainties, for the impossibility of doubting or justifying them is *conceptual*, not contextual. I will return to this issue in the next section, while presenting the “non-propositional” reading of OC.

Another problem that Williams’ proposal has to face is that to admit that the Cartesian skeptical problem is unsolvable at a philosophical level amounts to the admission of a philosophical impasse rather than a solution or dissolution of the skeptical problem. In other words, if Cartesian skepticism persists as an unsolvable problem at a philosophical level, then Williams’s proposal would lead, at most, to the recognition of skepticism as a sort of philosophical “incurable disease”; and it is far from obvious which sort of intellectual comfort his views can give us. Thus, Williams does not provide a response to or dissolution of the Cartesian paradox, but would be at most able to show how our ordinary knowledge-claims are in some sense preserved by the Cartesian challenge. And this cannot count as a viable anti-skeptical strategy at all.

#### 4. Hinges and rules of grammar

According to another interpretative line of the “hinge strategy” (see Moyal-Sharrock 2005, 2010) we should take seriously the Wittgensteinian idea for which our “hinge” commitments would “lie beyond being justified and unjustified; as it were, as something animal.” (OC 359).

In order to understand this point, consider the following entry:

And now if I were to say “It is my unshakeable conviction that etc”, this means in the present case too that *I have not consciously arrived at the conviction by following a particular line of thought* [my italics], but that it is anchored in all my questions and answers, so anchored that I cannot touch it (OC 103).

This remark highlights the particular kind of relationship we entertain with “hinges”. Our taking them for granted is not based on justification or grounds; for instance, “I cannot say that I have good grounds for the opinion that cats do not grow on trees or that I had a father and a mother” (OC 282). That is, we hold these beliefs unreflectively, and they seem to be at odds with ordinary knowledge-claims as they are not the result of any inquiry and they cannot be supported by any kind of evidence.

This is so because “hinge propositions”, differently from empirical claims are *unquestionable, indubitable and nonhypothetical* (Moyal-Sharrock, 2005, 85). Their role in the “language-game” of knowledge seems of a more basic nature as to take them for granted is a condition of the possibility of a meaningful inquiry (OC 308). So, even if they have the *form* of empirical propositions, they play a more basic, peculiar role in the system of our empirical propositions (OC 136). To understand this point, just consider the following entry:

‘A is a physical object is a piece of instruction which we give only to someone who doesn’t yet understand either what ‘A’ means or what “physical object” means. Thus it is instruction about the use of words, and ‘physical object’ is a *logical concept*. (Like color,

quantity...). And that is why no such proposition as “There are physical objects” can be formulated... (OC 36, my italics).

Thus, hinges would be the rules that underpin our “language-games”; they can be instinctive, as in the case of the Moore-style propositions, or acquired for instance via training or repeated exposure, as in the case of hinges such as “My name is N.C.S.” or “I live in such-and-such a place’. In any case, they would define and describe, *senso lato*, ways of acting; a non-propositional *know-how*.

This would have two promising anti-skeptical implications.

First, following this account of the “hinge proposition” strategy, Cartesian-style skepticism would be the result of a *categorical mistake*. That is, Cartesian skeptical arguments, even if *prima facie* compelling, would rest on this basic misleading assumption: the Cartesian skeptic would be simply treating hinges as beliefs while in fact they are not. This would help us to *dissolve*, rather than to solve, the skeptical problem; while a solution would claim, *contra* the skeptic, that we can know the denials of skeptical scenarios, dissolution of the skeptical problem will show how the skeptical enterprise is based on a conceptual misunderstanding.

A second and more important consequence of this account is that it will not affect closure. Recall our formulation of the closure principle:

If S knows that *p*, and S competently deduces from *p* that *q*, thereby coming to believe that *q* on this basis while retaining her knowledge that *p*, then S knows that *q*.

As Duncan Pritchard points out (forthcoming a, forthcoming b), one of the important aspects of this principle is that the *belief* in the consequent proposition should be acquired on the basis of the relevant competent deduction. But, as we have seen, “hinges” are not the expressions of a propositional attitude such as a *belief in*; rather, they are the expression of a non-propositional know-how. Thus, the very fact that we, strictly speaking, do not know the denials of skeptical scenarios would be then compatible with closure; for hinges are not beliefs, so they are not in the market for knowledge.

## 5. Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have argued that the “Wittgenstein-inspired” contextualist strategy offered by Michael Williams is not a sound interpretation of Wittgenstein’s thought and, more importantly, is not a viable anti-skeptical strategy either. Nonetheless, Wittgenstein’s “hinge propositions” strategy, correctly understood and developed, can help us to dissolve the skeptical problem by showing how it rests on nothing but a categorical mistake.

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# Sind Rotempfindungen rötlich? Der Farbenrelationalismus und Wittgensteins Privatsprachenüberlegung

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## 1. Der Relationalismus und das Problem der Realität der Farben

Bereits seit den Anfängen der modernen Naturwissenschaften behaupteten Anhänger einer wissenschaftlichen Weltanschauung das Bestehen einer Spannung zwischen den Ergebnissen physikalischer Theoriebildung und unseren alltäglichen Denkweisen. Der amerikanische Philosoph Wilfrid Sellars (u. a. 2000, Kap. IX) sah es als die wichtigste Aufgabe der modernen Philosophie an, diese Spannung zwischen dem lebensweltlichen und dem wissenschaftlichen Weltbild aufzulösen.

Sie kann am Beispiel der Farben zum Ausdruck gebracht werden. Und in dieser Weise wurde sie historisch tatsächlich artikuliert, unter anderem von den bedeutenden Naturforschern Isaac Newton und Galileo Galilei (siehe Hacker 1991, Kap. 1; Hyman 2006, S. 11ff.; Stroud 2002, S. 69ff.). Es ist eine durchaus natürliche Reaktion auf die Konfrontation mit den Ergebnissen der modernen Mechanik, die Farben den uns umgebenden Gegenständen absprechen zu wollen (Boghossian et al. 1989, S. 82, 97). Doch damit leugnet man zugleich etwas im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes offenes Sichtliches. Man kann dieses Problem in dem folgenden Trilemma darstellen:

1. Die Naturwissenschaften beschreiben die Wirklichkeit vollständig.
2. Die Farben der Dinge sind nicht Teil oder vereinbar mit der naturwissenschaftlichen Beschreibung der Wirklichkeit.
3. Einige Dinge haben wirklich bestimmte Farben.

Es scheint nun so, dass man nur zwei dieser Thesen konsistent behaupten kann. In der Debatte der analytischen Philosophie des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts wurde jede dieser Thesen bereits angegriffen. Üblicherweise teilt man die hier diskutierten Auffassungen in Formen des Realismus und des Irrealismus. Diese Unterscheidung orientiert sich daran, ob Farben existieren oder nicht, nicht aber daran, wie Farben eigentlich zu charakterisieren sind. Jonathan Cohen (2009, S. 12ff.) hat in jüngerer Zeit vorgeschlagen, die Unterscheidung zwischen relationalen und nichtrelationalen Eigenschaften als grundlegend für die Einteilung der möglichen Antworten auf das Problem der Realität der Farben zu nutzen. So ist seine Einteilung jener Antworten primär an dem ontologischen Status orientiert, die von der jeweiligen philosophischen Auffassung der Farben zugesprochen wird (ebd., S. 13).

Eine relationale Eigenschaft, etwa eine Schwester zu sein, ist eine Eigenschaft, die ihrem Träger durch eine Relation zu einem anderen Objekt zukommt (Cohen 2004, S. 452). Eine nichtrelationale Eigenschaft, etwa quadratisch zu sein, ist hingegen eine, die ihrem Träger zugeschrieben werden kann, ohne dass eine solche Relation behauptet wird (ebd.). Cohens (2004; 2009, TI. I) These ist nun, dass Farben relationale Eigenschaften sind. Und zwar sind sie durch Relationen zu möglichen Beobachtern von Farben konstituiert (Cohen 2004, S. 452). In diesem Beitrag möchte ich einen Einwand gegen Cohens These formulieren, der in hohem Maße auf Wittgensteins be-

kannter Überlegung zur Möglichkeit einer privaten Sprache basiert.

## 2. Der Einwand gegen die These des Relationalismus aus der normalen Sprache

Cohen (2004, S. 476) bringt seine These in dieser Weise zum Ausdruck: „color properties are of the form *red for S in C*“. Ich werde diese These im Folgenden so verstehen, dass Cohen den Satz „X ist rot.“ als „X sieht für S unter K rot aus.“ erläutern möchte, wobei für „S“ bestimmte Arten von Beobachtern und für K eine Disjunktion von Mengen aus Arten von Bedingungen einzusetzen sind.

Nun kann der Ausdruck „rot“ in dem erläuternden Satz offenbar nicht dieselbe Bedeutung haben wie derselbe Ausdruck in dem erläuterten Satz. Denn dann geriete die Erläuterung in einen unerwünschten Regress. Zudem wäre nicht leicht einsehbar, wie die einzelnen Glieder dieses Regresses denkbar sein sollten. Natürlich kann etwa eine weiße Wand für mich im roten Licht rot aussehen. Aber wie muss wiederum der Beobachter beschaffen sein, für den mein Wahrnehmungsbild der Wand rot aussehen kann?

So muss Cohen einen relationalen und einen nichtrelationalen Gebrauch des Wortes „rot“ akzeptieren. Die damit zu bezeichnenden Eigenschaften werde ich im Folgenden „relationalrot“ und „nichtrelationalrot“ nennen. Nach Cohens These sind mögliche Träger der Eigenschaft relationalrot etwa Bücher, Glasperlen oder der Himmel. Nichtrelationalrot ist nun aber eine Eigenschaft, die nur den Elementen unserer Sinneseindrücke zukommt. Dies wird von Cohens (2004, S. 454) Aussagen zumindest nahe gelegt und scheint aus der folgenden Erwägung heraus unvermeidlich. Wenn unser Farbprädikat „rot“ sich auf Relationalrot bezieht, dann bezieht es sich offenbar auf eine Eigenschaft, die man nicht sehen kann. Denn ich kann zwar sehen, in welcher Nichtrelationalfarbe mir ein Buch erscheint, nicht aber dass mir das Buch in der Weise erscheint, wie sie Beobachtern von meiner Art unter den gerade herrschenden Bedingungen erscheint. Das heißt aber, dass es über das Relationalrote hinaus offenbar noch die Eigenschaft Nichtrelationalrot gibt, die uns in unserer Wahrnehmung zugänglich, aber keine Eigenschaft irgendeines wahrgenommenen Dinges ist. Man könnte sagen, dass wir die Eigenschaft in unserer Wahrnehmung auf die Dinge projizieren (Boghossian et al. 1989, S. 96ff.; vgl. Wittgenstein 1984, § 276). Und ebendies ist nach Cohen die Basis für die eigentlich relationalen Farbeigenschaften.

Der Begriff des Nichtrelationalroten, welchen Cohen für das Aufstellen seiner These benötigt, ist also der Begriff einer Eigenschaft, die nur jedem privat zugänglich ist. Das heißt, ein Relationalist in Bezug auf die Farben muss annehmen, dass es einige Begriffe gibt, die sich auf etwas prinzipiell Privates beziehen. Diese Annahme ist der Gegenstand der Kritik von Ludwig Wittgensteins berühmter Privatsprachenüberlegung in den Paragraphen 243 bis 315 der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*.

Unter einer privaten Sprache versteht Wittgenstein (1984, § 243) eine Sprache, deren Wörter „sich auf das beziehen, wovon nur der Sprechende wissen kann“. Eine private Sprache im Sinne Wittgensteins ist nicht einfach eine Sprache, die nur von einer Person gesprochen wird. Vielmehr handelt es sich um eine Sprache, deren Wörter prinzipiell nur für die Person, die sie nutzt, um die eigenen Empfindungen und Wahrnehmungserlebnisse zu registrieren, verständlich sein können (Hacker 1997, 271f.). Eine andere Person kann den Nutzer einer privaten Sprache zwar beim Nutzen derselben beobachten (Wittgenstein 1984, § 258); doch die Bedeutung der verwendenden Zeichen kann ihr niemals vermittelt werden (ebd., § 243).

Wenn meine bisherigen Überlegungen zutreffen, dann muss Cohen mit seiner These behaupten, dass ein Teil unserer Farbensprache eine solche private Sprache bildet. Zwar bezieht sich der von Cohen attestierte Begriff des Relationalroten auf eine allgemein zugängliche Eigenschaft materieller und anderer Objekte. Doch der Begriff des Nichtrelationalroten, die wir, um Cohens These nicht in einen Regress münden zu lassen, benötigen, um zum Ausdruck zu bringen, wie diese Objekte für uns aussehen, ist der Begriff einer Eigenschaft, die allein in unserer Wahrnehmung von Objekten existiert, nicht aber diese zu ihrem Träger hat (Wittgenstein 1984, § 272-279).

Wittgenstein (1984, § 243, 253) unterscheidet zwei Weisen, auf welche man sagen wollen könnte, dass Empfindungen privat sind (Hacker 1997, S. 254): Im epistemischen Sinne von „privat“ könnte man meinen, dass nur der Träger einer Empfindung wissen kann, ob er eine bestimmte Empfindung hat. Im ontologischen Sinne könnte man sagen, dass der Träger einer Empfindung nur seine Empfindung, während ein anderer nur eine andere Empfindung haben kann. Diese Unterscheidung lässt sich auf den Fall des Sehens von Farben übertragen. In dem einen Sinne könnte man sagen wollen, dass nur der einzelne Beobachter wissen kann, was für eine Farbe er sieht (Wittgenstein 1984, § 272). In dem anderen Sinne kann man sagen, dass jeder Beobachter sein eigenes Rot sieht, während ein anderer stets nur dessen Rot sehen kann (ebd., § 273).

Die epistemische Form der These der Privatheit von Nichtrelationalrot scheint nun „in einer Weise falsch, in einer anderen unsinnig“ zu sein (Wittgenstein 1984, § 246). Im normalen Gebrauch des Wortes „wissen“ wissen andere durchaus manchmal, wie etwas für mich aussieht. Und es ist in diesem Gebrauch sinnlos davon zu sprechen, ich wüsste, dass etwas für mich gerade rot aussieht. Natürlich bin ich die verlässlichste Quelle für Informationen darüber, wie mir etwas visuell erscheint. Aber nicht weil ich dies ganz besonders sicher weiß, sondern weil in unserem Sprachspiel des visuellen Erscheinens, Aussehens, des Habens von Eindrücken meine Aussagen darüber, wie ich etwas sehe, die Basis für jegliche Zuschreibungen der entsprechenden Art sind (analog zu ebd., § 248; Hacker zieht die gleiche Analogie: 1991, Kap. 6, Abschn. 4; ebenso Johnston: 1993, Kap. 2).

Wie verhält es sich nun mit der These, dass nur ich meinen nichtrelationalroten Anblick von einem relationalroten Objekt haben kann, während ein anderer seinen Anblick desselben hat (vgl. ebd., § 253)? In einem banalen Sinne ist diese These sicherlich zutreffend. Denn die Sätze „Für Georg sieht das Buch rot aus.“ und „Für Hans sieht das Buch rot aus.“ bezeichnen zwei verschiedene Sachverhalte. Doch gewöhnlich unterscheiden wir Anblicke nicht dadurch, wer sie hat, sondern mit der Angabe, von was sie ein Anblick sind. Mit anderen Worten, Georg und Hans können in manchen Situationen genau dasselbe

gesehen haben; ein Umstand, der etwas für die Bestätigung von Zeugenaussagen durch andere Zeugen sehr wichtig ist. Und in dem beschriebenen Fall könnte es gerade zutreffen, dass Hans und Georg denselben Anblick haben.

### 3. Der Einwand gegen den Relationalismus aus dem Normativität der Sprache

Ein zweiter Einwand gegen Cohens These schließt sich direkt an diese von Wittgenstein herkommenden Erwägungen aus unserer normalen Sprache an. Nach Cohens Denkweise bezieht sich der Begriff des Nichtrelationalroten nicht auf die Dinge, die wir gewöhnlich „rot“ nennen, sondern auf unsere Wahrnehmung dieser Dinge selbst (vgl. ebd., § 256; Kienzler 2007, S. 110). Man stelle sich nun vor, dass jemand ein Tagebuch darüber führen möchte, wann ihm etwas nichtrelationalrot erscheint (vgl. Wittgenstein 1984, § 258).

Die äußerlichen Handlungen eines solchen Vorganges könnte man ohne weiteres beschreiben (Kienzler 2007, S. 113). Aus Gründen der Einfachheit einer solchen Beschreibung nehmen wir an, dass der Tagebuch Führende sich auf das Vorbeifahren roter Wagen vor seinem Fenster beschränkt. Immer wenn nun ein Wagen an seinem Fenster vorbei fährt, der ihm nichtrelationalrot erscheint, dann schreibt er ein „N“ mit der Uhrzeit in sein Tagebuch. Dieser Tagebuchschreibende würde den meisten vielleicht kauzig erscheinen, doch nichts scheint inkohärent an der Geschichte zu sein, in der er die Hauptrolle spielt.

Welche Bedeutung hat nun das Zeichen „N“? Das heißt, wie ist dieses Zeichen korrekt zu gebrauchen? Diese Frage muss derjenige, der die gesehenen Farben als private Eigenschaft ansehen möchte, beantworten können. Denn die beschriebene sprachliche Praxis soll offenbar irgendeinen Sinn haben. Wenn man ihr keinen geben kann, gibt es keinen Begriff des Nichtrelationalroten, wie ihn Cohen braucht, um seinen Begriff des Relationalroten zu erläutern. Zudem bedarf es irgendeiner Rechtfertigung dafür, dass ein so Denkender „Nichtrelationalrot“ als den Namen einer Farbe ansehen möchte (analog zu Wittgenstein 1984, § 261).

In dem Versuch, diese Frage zu beantworten, könnte man nun sagen, dass der Tagebuchschreibende sich eben innerlich vornimmt, das Zeichen „N“ als Name des ihm zugänglichen Sinneseindrucks zu gebrauchen (vgl. Wittgenstein 1984, § 262), welchen er gewöhnlich im Betrachten von relationalroten Dingen hat. Aber dann müsste man angeben können, was er sich hier vornimmt; und in der Beschreibung dessen, was er sich vornimmt, würde der Gebrauch des Wortes allgemeinverständlich erläutert werden müssen.

Es würde ebenfalls nichts nützen, zu antworten, dass sich derjenige, der sich diesen Begriff bildet, eine Tabelle in der Vorstellung erschafft, durch welche die Regeln für den Gebrauch des Wortes für die Eigenschaft des Nichtrelationalroten sich ergeben (vgl. Wittgenstein 1984, § 265). Denn eine vorgestellte Tabelle muss entweder anhand des korrekten Gebrauchs des Zeichens vorgestellt sein, was ein Kriterium für die Korrektheit dieses Gebrauchs voraussetzt, oder sie nützt nichts für die Festlegung des Gebrauchs des Zeichens (ebd., §§ 265-268).

Weiterhin könnte man nicht sagen, dass die Erinnerung an die bisherigen Vorkommnisse des nichtrelationalroten Erscheinens von etwas dem Tagebuchschreiber als Kriterium für den korrekten Gebrauch von „N“ dienen kann.

Er müsste prinzipiell in der Lage sein, falsche und richtige Erinnerungen an dieses Seherlebnis zu unterscheiden. Und dazu müsste er bereits wissen, wofür das Zeichen „N“ steht (Wittgenstein 1984, § 265).

Schließlich würde selbst das Finden einer empirischen Verknüpfung zwischen dem Schreiben des Zeichens „N“ durch den Tagebuchschreiber und etwa bestimmten Erregungen in den visuellen Zentren seines Gehirns nicht die Bedeutung des Zeichens festlegen (vgl. Wittgenstein 1984, § 270), da diese Verknüpfung offenbar nicht Teil dessen ist, was wir in der Beschreibung dessen, was wir wahrnehmen, beschreiben. So scheint es unter den von Cohen gemachten Voraussetzungen nicht möglich, die Farbbegriffe zu erläutern.

#### 4. Zusammenfassung und Ausblick

Die erste dieser zwei von Wittgensteins Überlegungen extrahierten Einwände sollte nahe legen, dass die Vorstellung einer reinen Wahrnehmungsfarbe, (entgegen Cohens Meinung: 2004, Abschn. 4) kein Fundament in unserem normalen Gebrauch der Farbbegriffe hat. Die zweite sollte zeigen, dass die für die Einsichtigkeit von Cohens These notwendige Idee von Farbbegriffen, die etwas rein Privates bezeichnen, absurd ist. Wenn man diesen Argumentationsweisen folgt, wird man Cohens Relationalismus in Bezug auf die Farben ablehnen müssen. Denn er basiert auf der Idee, dass man mit einem Farbausdruck in Wittgensteins (1984, § 277) Worten „einmal mit einem Wort die Allen bekannte Farbe“ meine und „einmal: den ‚visuellen Eindruck‘, den *ich jetzt* erhalte“ (für eine allgemeine Kritik dieser Idee siehe Hanfling 2007).

Cohens These des Relationalismus in Bezug auf die Farben ist, wenn diese Überlegungen korrekt sind, nicht einfach falsch. Wer meint, dass Farben relationale Eigenschaften im definierten Sinne sind, der hat entweder völlig andere Begriffe für die Farben oder verwendet unsere

Farbbegriffe grundlegend falsch. Im ersten Fall wäre seine These uninteressant für das Problem der Realität der Farben. Im zweiten Fall wäre seine These sinnlos. Demnach sollte man also eine der nichtrelationalistischen Lösungen (siehe Cohen 2009, S. 13) des Problems der Realität der Farben vorziehen.

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# Expressivismus und der (relative) Wert des Wissens

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## 1. Einführung

In der Metaethik stellt der Expressivismus eine bekannte und viel diskutierte Position dar. Die mit dieser Position verbundene Grundannahme besagt, dass ethische Behauptungen nicht als bloße Beschreibungen der Welt verstanden werden dürfen, sondern Ausdruck jener Pro-Einstellungen sind, die wir gegenüber bestimmten Weisen, die Welt zu repräsentieren – im Fall von ethischen Aussagen sind das vor allem Handlungen, Charaktere, Regeln, soziale Strukturen usw. – für gewöhnlich einnehmen. Im Gegensatz zum moralischen Nihilisten leugnet der metaethische Expressivist nicht die Legitimität alltagsethischer Diskurse; er bezweifelt jedoch, dass ethische Aussagen *ontologische* Verpflichtungen beinhalten, ganz gleich, ob es sich dabei um natürliche oder nicht-natürliche Tatsachen handelt.

Gegenwärtig wird von verschiedenen Autoren die Auffassung vertreten, dass sich diese expressivistische Sichtweise auch für erkenntnistheoretische Fragestellungen fruchtbar machen lässt (vgl. Chrisman 2007, 2010; Field 1998, 2009; Gibbard 2003 ch. 10; Heller 1999; Kappel 2010, 2011). Analog zur metaethischen Position geht der *epistemische* Expressivist davon aus, dass erkenntnistheoretische Behauptungen als eine Form der Bewertung betrachtet werden müssen, die sich auf die Position des erkennenden Subjekts und den damit verbundenen wahren Überzeugungen beziehen. Derartige Bewertungen sind selbst nicht als faktiv zu betrachten, sondern Ausdruck eben jener Pro-Einstellungen, die wir gegenüber bestimmten Weisen, die Welt in *erkenntnistheoretischer Hinsicht* zu repräsentieren – gemeint sind hier vor allem Überzeugungen, Rechtfertigungen oder verschiedene Formen von Evidenzen –, besitzen.

In der Regel werden drei grundlegende Motivationen für einen solchen *epistemischen* Expressivismus angeführt: (i) Nach expressivistischer Auffassung kann die Bedeutung epistemischer Behauptungen weder in invariantistischer noch in kontextualistischer Weise angemessen erklärt werden. Stattdessen verspricht der Expressivismus eine *nicht-deskriptive* Analyse von Wissens-Zuschreibungen, bei der grundsätzliche Schwierigkeiten beider Seiten vermieden werden. (ii) Expressivisten stehen nicht vor dem Problem, die merkwürdige Eigenart (*queerness*) epistemischer Tatsachen rechtfertigen zu müssen. Da epistemische Bewertungen keine ontologischen Verpflichtungen beinhalten, erübrigt sich die Frage nach dem ontologischen Status entsprechender Tatsachen. (iii) Darüber hinaus ist man der Ansicht, dass sich unter expressivistischer Perspektive verständlich machen lässt, was genau *epistemische Werte* sind. Nicht nur ist es so, dass die expressivistische Sichtweise mit einer Reihe von Wertintuitionen verträglich ist. Vielmehr soll sie in der Lage sein, die Rolle, die Wissen im epistemischen Diskurs spielt, besser als alle anderen Ansätze erklären zu können.

Der Vortrag setzt sich hauptsächlich mit der zuletzt genannten Motivation auseinander. Wie erklärt der Expressivist das Vorhandensein epistemischer Werte? Was berechtigt ihn zu der Annahme, dass sein Vorschlag besonders gut geeignet ist, die Rolle von Wissen zu erklären? Die allgemeine Stoßrichtung meiner Ausführungen ist

kritischer Natur. Im Zentrum stehen zwei unterschiedlich gelagerte Probleme der expressivistischen Erklärung epistemischer Werte. Im ersten Schritt wird dafür argumentiert, dass eine Übertragung der expressivistischen Grundidee in den Bereich der Erkenntnistheorie aufgrund eines bestimmten Arguments zu scheitern droht, wobei Er widerungen vonseiten der Expressivisten wenig überzeugend sind. Im zweiten Schritt greife ich die vorgeschlagene expressivistische Erklärung des Werts von Wissen an (vgl. hierzu: Kappel 2010). Abschließend wird im eher konstruktiven Teil des Vortrags ein alternativer Erklärungsansatz vorgestellt, demzufolge epistemische Werte als *relative Werte* zu analysieren sind. Meiner Ansicht nach lassen sich in diesem Rahmen gewisse Grundannahmen der expressivistischen Herangehensweise bewahren, ohne dass man dadurch den zuvor genannten Einwänden ausgesetzt ist.

## 2. Die Übertragbarkeit der expressivistischen Grundidee und das Argument der Inkohärenz des Bewertungsstandpunkts

Der ethische Expressivismus stellt eine *meta-normative* Theorie dar, die einerseits zugesteht, dass moralische Behauptungen auf unterster Stufe die Eigenschaft besitzen, wahr oder falsch zu sein, andererseits jedoch die Rede von solchen Eigenschaften für völlig unschuldig hält, da sich auf höherer Stufe – nämlich auf normativer Bewertungsebene – zeigen lässt, dass damit keine ontologischen Verpflichtungen in Bezug auf irgendwelche moralische Tatsachen verbunden sind. Um eine solche expressivistische Position kohärent vertreten zu können, bedarf es des Aufstiegs in eine höher-stufige Betrachtungsebene, von der aus die metaethische Bewertung vorgenommen wird. Diese höher-stufige Bewertungsebene steht in einer *externen* Beziehung zum alltagsethischen Diskurs, da auf dieser Ebene keinerlei Verpflichtungen im Hinblick auf einen konkreten ethischen Standpunkt bestehen.

Die Tatsache, dass die expressivistische Position mit dem Einnehmen einer externen Perspektive verbunden ist, bei der wie eben angedeutet keine Verpflichtungen im Hinblick auf einen spezifischen Standpunkt der Bewertung bestehen, hat verschiedene Autoren daran zweifeln lassen (vgl. Kvanvig 2003; Cuneo 2007; Lynch 2009), dass sich ein solcher Expressivismus im epistemischen Bereich kohärent vertreten lässt. Obgleich die betreffenden Einwände unterschiedliche Aspekte betonen, lässt sich der zentrale Kritikpunkt wie folgt verdeutlichen: Eine Übertragung der expressivistischen Erklärungsstrategie scheitert daran, dass im Rahmen erkenntnistheoretischer Bewertungsprozesse nicht von den *Zielen unserer Erkenntnisbemühungen* abstrahiert werden kann. Epistemische Bewertungen sind – so die gängige Annahme – nur *relativ* zu den Zielen unserer Erkenntnisbemühungen gerechtfertigt. Wenn jedoch diese Behauptung zutreffend ist, kann es im epistemischen Bereich keine externe (meta-normative) Perspektive im Sinne eines *distanzierten* Standpunkts der Bewertung kognitiver Aktivitäten geben. Dieser Vorbehalt gegenüber einer epistemischen Transformation der expressivistischen Sichtweise lässt sich mithilfe des folgenden Arguments weiter präzisieren (vgl. hierzu: Lynch 2009):



### Das Argument der Inkohärenz des Bewertungsstandpunkts

- (P<sub>1</sub>) Der epistemische Expressivismus stellt eine meta-erkenntnistheoretische Position bezüglich der Art der Bewertung (erststufiger) kognitiver Aktivitäten dar.
- (P<sub>2</sub>) Eine solche Position ist nur dann kohärent, wenn auf der Meta-Ebene eine Distanzierung vom epistemischen Standpunkt der Bewertung (erststufiger) kognitiver Aktivitäten erfolgt.
- (P<sub>3</sub>) Eine Distanzierung vom epistemischen Bewertungsstandpunkt ist nur dann gegeben, wenn von Zielen der Erkenntnisbemühungen abgesehen wird.
- (P<sub>4</sub>) Wir können im Rahmen der erkenntnistheoretischen Untersuchung nicht von den Zielen der Erkenntnisbemühungen absehen.

Aufgrund von (P<sub>1</sub>) – (P<sub>4</sub>) gilt:

- (K) Der epistemische Expressivismus stellt keine kohärente Position dar.

Eine naheliegende Zurückweisung dieses Arguments bestünde darin, Prämisse (P<sub>4</sub>) anzugreifen, indem man beispielsweise behauptet, dass epistemische Bewertungen nicht von den Zielen unserer Erkenntnisbemühungen, sondern von anderen (z.B. rein praktischen) Zielen oder Werten abhängen (vgl. Zagzebski 2009). Doch in diesem Punkt sind sich Expressivisten mit ihren Skeptikern vollkommen einig: Genuin erkenntnistheoretische Bewertungen erfolgen *nicht* von einem in epistemischer Hinsicht distanzierter Standpunkt. Stattdessen schlagen Vertreter des epistemischen Expressivismus vor, Prämisse (P<sub>2</sub>) zu unterminieren (Carter & Chrisman *forthcoming*; Kappel 2011). Demnach wäre es ein Missverständnis, zu glauben, der expressivistische Meta-Standpunkt sei – was die Ziele unserer Erkenntnisbemühungen angeht – keinerlei Verpflichtungen unterworfen. Bezweifelt wird lediglich eine ganz bestimmte *meta-normative Interpretation* des „Habens“ dieser Ziele, nämlich die Annahme, dass die damit verbundenen Verpflichtungen ontologischer Natur sind, d.h. dass man mit der Unterstellung solcher Ziele auf die (objektive) Existenz epistemischer Werte verpflichtet ist.

Meine Erwiderung bezüglich einer derartigen Entkräftung des angeführten Arguments erstreckt sich auf zwei Punkte: Einerseits scheint überhaupt nicht klar zu sein, was es im expressivistischen Zusammenhang heißt, dass etwas ein Ziel unserer Erkenntnisbemühungen ist. Und selbst wenn sich dieses Problem klären ließe, bliebe immer noch offen, worin diese Ziele bestehen bzw. welche Verpflichtungen daraus erwachsen. Expressivisten scheinen anzunehmen, dass das Erlangen wahrer Überzeugungen das primäre Ziel unserer Erkenntnisbemühungen ist. Gegen einen solchen Wahrheitszielmonismus sprechen jedoch zahlreiche Argumente (vgl. Schmechtig 2009).

Auf der anderen Seite ist unverständlich, wie im Rahmen einer expressivistischen Konzeption von erkenntnistheoretischen Zielen, die ausdrücklich auf unabhängige Tatsachen verzichtet, aus der Erfüllung dieser Ziele ein *objektives Kriterium für die Art der Angemessenheit* der betreffenden Pro-Einstellungen (Werthaltungen) hervorgehen soll. Dass ein solches objektives Kriterium für die Angemessenheit von Werthaltungen nicht unabhängig von den Zielen unserer Erkenntnisbemühungen zu erlangen ist, scheint aber – so jedenfalls der zweite von mir diskutierte Einwand – eine unabdingbare Voraussetzung dafür zu sein, dass epistemische Bewertungsprozesse nur relativ zu diesen Zielen bestimmbar sind.

### 3. Die expressivistische Erklärung des Wertes des Wissens

Der epistemische Expressivismus lässt sich sowohl indirekt, in Bezug auf Pro-Einstellungen, welche die Rechtfertigung kognitiver Aktivität betreffen, als auch direkt, in Bezug auf Wissens-Zuschreibungen vertreten. Gemäß der zweiten, direkten Variante (Kappel 2010) stellen Äußerungen der Form „S weiß, dass p“ eine Bewertung der epistemischen Position von S dar, die damit im Einklang stehen muss, dass derjenige, der mit einer solchen Äußerung Wissen zuschreibt, im Akt der Zuschreibung bestimmte *Wissens-Normen* zugrundelegt. Hinter dieser Behauptung verbergen sich zwei grundsätzliche Annahmen: (a) Es wird allgemein angenommen, dass die Rolle, die Wissen im praktischen Leben spielt, nur unter Bezugnahme auf bestimmte Wissens-Normen erklärt werden kann. Wenn eine Person A einer anderen Person S mit einem Token der Form „S weiß, dass p“ Wissen zuschreibt, dann folgt A in der Bewertung der epistemischen Position von S einer oder mehreren Wissens-Normen. (b) Das Befolgen einer derartigen Wissens-Norm beinhaltet selbst eine Pro-Einstellung (Werthaltung) gegenüber dieser Norm. Wobei gleichzeitig unterstellt wird, dass diejenige Pro-Einstellung, die bei der Befolgung einer Wissens-Norm zum Zuge kommt, strikt von Pro-Einstellungen zu unterscheiden ist, die bei anderen Arten der epistemischen Bewertung eine Rolle spielen.

Der vorliegende Ansatz macht meiner Ansicht nach auf zwei wichtige Punkte einer allgemeinen Erklärung epistemischer Werte aufmerksam: Erstens wird völlig zu Recht betont, dass sich epistemische Werte nicht unabhängig von der Rolle erklären lassen, die sie im Rahmen einer bestimmten Erkenntnispraxis spielen. Zweitens ist es zutreffend, dass bei der Analyse epistemischer Werte die Frage nach der Angemessenheit entsprechender Pro-Einstellungen von zentraler Bedeutung ist.

Nichtsdestotrotz glaube ich, dass die expressivistische Erklärungsstrategie aus wenigsten drei Gründen nicht überzeugend ist: *Erstens* lässt sie im Unklaren, was genau unter einer epistemischen Norm zu verstehen ist bzw. wie die notorischen Schwierigkeiten, die bei der *Formulierung* solcher Normen auftreten, in den Griff zu bekommen sind (vgl. hierzu: Schmechtig 2010b). (ii) *Zweitens* scheint der expressivistische Ansatz anzunehmen, dass sich das Befolgen epistemischer Normen *rein subjektiv* anhand der jeweiligen Art von Pro-Einstellungen analysieren lässt. Demgegenüber argumentiere ich dafür, dass es neben verhaltenswirksamen (subjektiv transparenten) epistemischen Normen auch so etwas wie *objektive Meta-Standards* gibt, die im expressivistischen Erklärungsansatz komplett ausgeblendet werden. *Drittens* ist schließlich festzuhalten, dass mit der expressivistischen Sichtweise generell eine gewisse *Engführung auf nicht-axiologische* (rein deontische) Aspekte der Analyse epistemischer Bewertungen verbunden ist, die der Vielfalt unserer epistemischen Alltagspraxis nicht gerecht wird. Nicht in allen Fällen lassen sich die Angemessenheitsbedingungen epistemischer Werthaltungen auf das Befolgen (verhaltenswirksamer) epistemischer Normen zurückführen.

Der Expressivismus besitzt zudem ein grundlegendes *methodisches* Problem, das er mit vielen anderen Ansätzen der Erklärung epistemischer Werte teilt: Man meint, bedenkenlos über epistemische Werte reden zu können, ohne sich darüber im Klaren zu sein, was Werte *überhaupt* sind. Demgegenüber plädiere ich für eine umgekehrte Herangehensweise.

#### 4. Epistemische Werte als relative Werte

Im Gegensatz zur üblichen Vorgehensweise soll zunächst einmal eine *allgemeine Definition von Werten* vorgeschlagen werden, auf der dann aufbauend eine Charakterisierung epistemischer Werte gegeben wird. Ausgangspunkt ist eine Annahme, die ich mit den meisten Expressivisten teile, und die besagt, dass etwas genau dann ein Wert ist, wenn es *angemessen* ist, es wertzuschätzen:

(W) Es ist ein Wert / gut, dass p, gdw. es ein S gibt,<sup>1</sup> so dass:

- (i) S (unter geeigneten Umständen)  $\psi$  mit Inhalt p haben würde;
- (ii)  $\psi$  eine Pro-Einstellung ist;
- (iii) es angemessen ist,  $\psi$  mit dem Inhalt p zu haben.

Im Anschluss daran lassen sich epistemische Werte als paradigmatische Fälle von *relativen* Werten bestimmen. Relativ wertvoll ist etwas, das in einer *bestimmten Hinsicht* gut ist. Nach dieser Konzeption ist die Angemessenheitsbeziehung (Bedingung W-iii) auf einen Wertmaßstab hin zu relativieren:

(RW) Es ist gut in *Hinsicht H*, dass p, gdw. es ein S gibt, so dass:

- (i) S (unter geeigneten Umständen)  $\psi$  mit Inhalt p haben würde;
- (ii)  $\psi$  eine Pro-Einstellung ist;
- (iii) es angemessen-in-Hinsicht-H ist, eine Proeinstellung  $\psi$  mit dem Inhalt p zu haben.

Im Gegensatz zur expressivistischen Strategie gehe ich davon aus, dass sich *Angemessenheit in epistemischer Hinsicht* nicht als eine Relation zwischen Pro-Einstellungen und Normen, sondern als eine (schwach normative) Beziehung zwischen Pro-Einstellungen und Gründen, die für diese Pro-Einstellungen sprechen, aufzufassen ist:

(RW-iii) Es ist angemessen-in-Hinsicht-H, eine Proeinstellung  $\psi$  mit dem Inhalt p zu haben, gdw. es einen guten Grund des Typs H gibt, der dafür spricht, die Proeinstellung  $\psi$  mit Inhalt p zu haben.

Diese generelle Festlegung lässt sich dann auf epistemische Werte übertragen:

(RW-iii)\* Es ist in epistemischer Hinsicht angemessen, es wertzuschätzen, dass p, gdw. es gute epistemische Gründe dafür gibt.

Nimmt man abschließend hinzu, dass ein epistemischer Grund, eine bestimmte kognitive Aktivität oder einen kognitiven Zustand wertzuschätzen, genau dann vorliegt, wenn dieser zeigt, dass diese Aktivität oder dieser Zustand den *Zielen* unserer Erkenntnispraxis dienlich ist, dann lässt sich aus der oben angeführten allgemeinen Definition von Werten, die folgende Bestimmung *epistemischer Werte* ableiten:

(EW) Es ist epistemisch (in epistemischer Hinsicht) gut, dass p, gdw. es ein S gibt, so dass:

- (i) S (unter geeigneten Umständen)  $\psi$  mit Inhalt p haben würde;
- (ii)  $\psi$  eine Pro-Einstellung ist; und
- (iii) p dem Ziel oder den Zielen unserer Erkenntnispraxis dienlich ist.

Diese Charakterisierung erlaubt es mir, wichtige Einsichten der expressivistischen Sichtweise zu bewahren, ohne selbst eine solche Position vertreten zu müssen.

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<sup>1</sup> Der Ausdruck „Es ist ein Wert / es ist gut, dass“ wird hier als ein Operator verstanden, der auf den Inhalt einer Wertaussage (die Proposition „dass p“) angewandt wird. Entsprechend sind solche propositionalen Wertaussagen als grundlegendes Definiendum anzusehen. Neben diesem Typ von Wertaussagen finden sich allerdings noch zwei weitere, nämlich nominale („N ist gut.“) und adverbiale Wertaussagen („x ist ein gutes N.“). Es bleibt an dieser Stelle offen, inwiefern sich diese auf propositionale Wertaussagen abbilden lassen.

# After all, we are satisfied that the earth is round (OC 299). A Wittgensteinian Defence of Searle's Notion of the *Background*

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## 1.

It is a familiar Davidsonian insight that the meaning of propositional attitudes depends on a network of other propositional attitudes which, together, constitute a coherent structure of beliefs, desires, intentions, and other world-directed mental states (intentional attitudes). Unless there are good reasons to assume that a creature possesses a mental framework like this, the ascription of discrete intentional states to that creature remains metaphoric – which is the case, so Davidson's story goes, unless we are concerned with full-fledged language users. In his account of intentionality, Searle has made use of this argumentative line, claiming that the content of an intentional state derives its meaning from its location in a *Network* of other intentional states, in which it stands in mutual referential relations. Searle maintains Davidson's holism with regard to the intelligibility of intentional states, in that the relevant subsidiary parts of the Network determine the conditions of satisfaction of individual intentional states, thereby enabling a creature to entertain contentful intentional states, at all (cf. also OC 225, 410). The intention to run for the Presidency of the United States, for example, depends on there being other related intentional states, such as the belief that one is amongst those who can be elected, the desire to be nominated by one's party, the belief that one can win more votes on this agenda rather than another, and so forth. In short, one must know what one is doing. It takes the appreciation of quite a lot of interrelated detail before running for President (cf. Searle 1983, ). Understanding the intention of such a person requires following the different threads of the Network until one has gained sufficient detail to make sense of it. However, sometimes explanations come to an end before they are satisfied. This is where the Network becomes self-referential, where no further propositional attitude is held that could serve to contextualise the one(s) in question. One has reached the point from which one set off. All there is left, is to shrug and say, "This is simply what I do" (PI 217). The meaning of such bedrock intentional states cannot be made intelligible by reference to further intentional states the person might hold, on pain of a circularity of interpretations. If all that someone does, and indeed, also believes, and all necessary capacities (such as perceiving, moving etc.) were articulable as sets of intentional states and instructions for acting, their semantic content would still require interpretation. Searching for the meaning of intentional states within the realm of content-possessing attitudes only replaces one interpretation with another (cf. Searle 1983, 152, and PI 202). Thus, if particular fundamental intentional states are to spell out the basis of someone's intentional take on the world, they must rest on something that is itself non-intentional, but provides the preconditions for intentionality.

## 2.

Here, the Background comes into play. Searle's *Hypothesis of the Background* is tailor-made to ground the conditions of satisfaction of intentional states – i.e. what makes them 'successful' representations – without further reference to intentional states. Accordingly, the Network of

intentional states rests on a set of 'preintentional' mental capacities constituting the suspension point of intentionality: "The Background is 'preintentional' in the sense that though not a form or forms of Intentionality, it is nonetheless a precondition or set of preconditions of Intentionality." (Searle 1983, 143) Searle distinguishes between a 'deep', biological Background, which is common to all human beings and subsumes the capacities one is endowed with *qua* belonging to the human species, and a 'local', socioculturally constituted part, which is constituted by habituated ways of acting that have been acquired by being exposed to the practices and institutions of one's social environment. The Background – at least as far as the local part is concerned – is, Searle claims, essentially *mental*, i.e., it is not adequately redescribable by appeal to physical viz. bodily abilities alone, though this ought to be understood as a "transcendental" or "metaphysical" claim. Neither should the Background be thought of as an assemblage of unconscious intentional states. Rather, it consists in a "set of skills, stances, preintentional assumptions and presuppositions, practices, and habits" that are "realized in human brains and bodies." (1983, 154)

This however is a somewhat awkward move that has given rise to two objections to Searle's original account. The first draws attention to the ontological status the background supposedly has. Searle holds that once a technique or practice, such as skiing or cycling is acquired, one stops consciously following explicit instructions and "the body takes over" in exercising it (1983, 151). Bringing the body into play in this manner seems to be at odds with the above claim that the Background is essentially mental. On the contrary, this formulation seems to suggest that background skills and capacities are characteristically bodily in that they can be exercised without conscious thinking on the part of the subject (cf. Stroud 1991). Second, although *ex hypothesis* the Background cannot possibly entail intentional states (after all, its function is to provide their non-intentionally grounding), Searle continues to speak of 'preintentional' assumptions and presuppositions as substantial ingredients of the Background. But spelling the Background out in terms of propositional attitudes, such as "I believe that the earth is round," is at best metaphoric (as Searle himself admits), at worst contradictory. So are there any possible candidates among mental states left as possible foundations of the local background? Obviously, these do not consist in further mental states, not even in content-less, but temporally extended states, such as certain feelings or moods, and not even if these are non-intentional (cf. Searle 1983, ch. 1).

## 3.

Fortunately, this is not the end of the story of the Background, but the beginning. Given the cases by which he exemplifies inarticulate background knowledge, Searle's puzzle about the Background resembles the confusion about rules and hinge propositions the Later Wittgenstein faces in *Philosophical Investigations (PI)* and *On Certainty (OC)*. Here, Wittgenstein investigates the 'nature' and origin of that knowledge of rules and fundamental ('hinge')

propositions that provides the ground of practice-informed behaviour. It is helpful here to highlight two points, first, the functional embedment of hinge propositions, viz. beliefs in individual acting and intersubjective practice, and second, the way in which they are acquired. In both respects, Wittgenstein's approach to the knowledge of hinge propositions, and his stance towards the knowledge of how to follow rules, complement Searle's *Hypothesis of the Background*. What status hinge propositions actually have and so to which degree error is possible, is not a matter of what is present in a specific instance of individual performance, but of a profound agreement and sometimes situational negotiation within a shared practice.

Wittgenstein's discussion of how we (come to) know the matters that are expressed by hinge propositions draws on issues he has already discussed in the rule-following passages of *PI*. In *PI* 150, he remarks on the kinship of knowing a rule and understanding a rule with the mastery of a technique to the extent that one is capable of exercising technique without explicit instructions (such as that provided by the tables in a rule-book). In *OC*, this claim is extended to certainty and, with restrictions, to belief. All of them differ from intentional states *within* the Network in that they lack a specific temporal extension (*PI* p. 59 note), receive their justification from a different source other than from accurately representing a state of affairs. My belief that the cat is on the mat arises in certain situations, and ceases (or ought to cease) to exist once the grounds to hold it have ceased to exist, (I stop wondering about the cat, or the belief is falsified). My belief that cats don't grow on trees, in contrast, is not acquired on the basis of having good reasons and I could not point to a particular timespan during which I hold it (*OC* 282). Beliefs of the first kind occur on the surface of someone's mind, so to speak, when focusing on limited parts of the world. Beliefs such as the latter in contrast do not represent at all, but stand on a level that first and foremost lays out the ground for entertaining attitudes towards the world in that they form the framework of beliefs, the point of reference with respect to which less fundamental beliefs can be judged right or wrong. As a hinge enables the operation of a door but is not itself moved, hinge propositions are not themselves negotiable within the respective language-game they underlie because they first and foremost make it work.

Hinge propositions are thoroughly woven into the worldview of the participants in a language-game, such that a change in hinge propositions would alter the whole language-game in which they are taken for granted, and so cause severe commotions on previously believed firm ground. However, though hinge beliefs thus permeate any language-game, they need not ever come to (each of) their participants' attention. That is, they need never take the form of an explicit intentional state, even though they can be articulated as such. Rather, their presence becomes evident in the various ways they are acted on, and in the network of 'surface' attitudes held and judgments made within the thus constituted framework. By analogy, in order to be able to operate a door one need not have considered its mechanics, and *a fortiori*, one need never consider those hinges which sustain the function of the mechanism.

At this point, hinge propositions display a twofold analogy with rules, first, regarding their ontological status, and second, regarding their role in a given practice. Which rules a person follows and which hinge beliefs she holds, become evident in her behaviour. What makes a particular action count as an instance of following a rule or as based on/related to a hinge belief is the existence of an according practice in which the action is embedded and the person's participation in that in virtue of understanding of the rule,

viz. holding the belief in question. However, this is not to say that a given instance considered in isolation would suffice to determine the underlying rules/hinge beliefs (*PI* 198-202). There is not a distinctive feature about the agent, or his performance, whose presence would permit a steadfast verification that he is or is not following a rule, whether this is assumed to be a feeling, a bodily occurrence, or an implicit intention. In some cases, the rules or hinge beliefs underlying a person's performance are articulable by the agent, but, as Wittgenstein points out in *PI* (e.g. 201, 217, 219) and *OC* (e.g. 152, 166, 189, 422, 434), this eventually comes down to pointing to what one has always been simply doing or believing (*PI* 217). Most hinge propositions are, analogously, believed without being ever articulated, without 'implicitly' being present as beliefs to an agent's mind – maybe not even in his unconscious (*OC* 152ff., 282ff.). As explained earlier, this is what distinguishes them from 'surface' or situationally bound beliefs – and this, too, squares with Searle's rejection of the unconscious as a genuinely mental realm where such knowledge might be stored.

Second, hinge beliefs resemble rules in the way in which they are acquired. Wittgenstein's remarks in this context bear on an agent's first introduction into normatively governed practices, e.g. his native language. Crucially, learning in neither case does not necessarily involve verbalising the hinge beliefs or rules that are learned and thus giving them a propositional shape (*OC*). On the contrary, especially deeply anchored rules/hinge propositions (e.g. that the table I write on is solid, that the mug of beer I lift is heavy etc.) tend only later to become a matter for reflection. Learning in both cases, however, requires not only the existence of a particular practice, but social interaction (between teacher and learner), fundamental trust (the child believes its teachers), and a number of basic cognitive (e.g. reidentification, discrimination, spatiotemporal orientation) and social skills (e.g. understanding and obeying orders, imitation skills). Most importantly, it requires regularity and agreement in behaviour on similar occasions among different people, that is, a shared understanding of the world resting on common practices and on what Wittgenstein calls the 'common behaviour of mankind' (*PI* 206), a shared form of life (*PI* 241n.). This is echoed by Searle's claim that the participation in shared practices – and thus the existence of a local Background – relies on there being common capacities, needs and dispositions in the deep Background, as well as institutions, conventions and customs in a shared social world.

But even in the most common cases in which a practice is learned using explicit instructions, the rules recede into the background the more progress the learner makes, where they remain as long as the practice can be exercised, 'just like that'. Rules here function analogously to training wheels (Dreyfus) – once one is able to cycle, one doesn't need them anymore (even though one might keep them in the garage for future occasions). Instead, one develops a feeling for how to do things – the body takes over.

## Conclusion

Background knowledge – as far as hinge propositions and rules are concerned – is thus best explicable in terms of knowing-how, knowing what the world is like, and knowing how to do things. The hinge propositions and rules underlying a language-game function analogously to the standard meter. Just as the standard meter has itself no particular length, yet enables the length of other items in the world to be measured, so do hinges provide the

frameworks enabling a variety of language-games and practices, by constituting the measure of what is and is not the case within the language-games so defined, without themselves being measurable in the same categories. Together, an individual's background, and Background, of hinge beliefs and rules pre-structure a world-view emerging from a shared practice (*PI* 242, *OC* 288-299). Mastering rules and acquiring hinges is not a matter of cognitive achievement, but happens *en passant* through our inculcations into the practices that constitute our form of life. We can thus confidently say that the Background is both, mental and bodily; preintentional and articulable as pre-suppositions and assumptions; that it permeates the Network of intentional states without being part of it. So approached, Searle's *Background* refers to the bedrock of individual behaviour – and this resides in shared know-how, or practice (*OC* 422).

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# Hume's Anti-Sceptical Dissolution of the Problem of Induction

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## 1. Introduction

Kripke famously compared Wittgenstein's remarks on rule-following with Hume's considerations on inductive causal reasoning. His account of Wittgenstein's aims and methods has come under serious attack by the proponents of elucidatory and therapeutic readings of Wittgenstein. His account of Hume's work, however, has not been equally challenged in the relevant literature. In this paper, I suggest that it too is in need of a re-assessment. I claim that it is possible to read Hume's considerations as an *anti-sceptical dissolution* of the apparent problem.

## 2. Kripke's view of Wittgenstein and Hume

In his *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*, Kripke introduces a sceptic who challenges our confidence that we know what we meant by our words in the past. The sceptical hypothesis is this: what I meant in the past by the word „plus“ was not the function *plus* but some other weird function *quus* which is nevertheless coherent with all my past performances of using the word „plus“. Kripke continues by examining different strategies to prove this hypothesis wrong. The only way to do that, he says, is to find „some fact about my past usage that can be cited to refute it“ (Kripke 1982, 9). Alas, this fact cannot be found: neither facts about my former behaviour, nor facts about my mental history, nor facts about any properties or dispositions I might have in the present seem to determine that I meant *plus* rather than *quus*. The conclusion Kripke draws is that „the sceptical argument remains unanswered. There can be no such thing as meaning anything by any word.“ (p. 55)

In the second part of the book, Kripke presents the „skeptical solution“ to the sceptical paradox. He compares the rule-following problem to the problems of causation and induction that Hume was dealing with, and claims that Hume's and Wittgenstein's arguments share a common structure.

Hume is taken by Kripke to have shown that our inductive inferences, and accordingly our beliefs in causal relations, are not founded on argument (since there simply are no conclusive arguments to sustain them), but custom, a psychological mechanism responsible for the fact that after having experienced one event *a* regularly being followed by another event *b*, we naturally expect *b* when confronted with *a*. (57) Kripke describes how the meaning of causal claims is to be understood correspondingly. „To say of a particular event *a* that it caused another event *b* is to place these two events under two types, *A* and *B*, which we expect to be constantly conjoined in the future as they were in the past.“ (67).

Since this analysis is given in terms of types of events, it follows that there is no sense in talking about two events considered in isolation, with the rest of the universe removed, as standing in causal relation to each other. „This Humean conclusion might be called: the impossibility of private causation.“ (68) Causal claims are, according to Kripke, never actually true („the causal relation is fictive“ (68),) but merely assertable: given that we have observed a particular constant conjunction, we are entitled to assert that the one event causes the other.

Wittgenstein ultimately presents a solution structurally analogous to Hume's, Kripke claims. According to him, Wittgenstein's strategy consists in rejecting a truth-conditional theory of meaning in favor of assertion-conditions. Thereby Wittgenstein could admit to the sceptic that there is no fact of the matter whether I mean *plus* or *quus*, but nevertheless explain how our talk of meaning and rule-following has some unproblematic use by granting that assertions that someone means something are legitimized in certain roughly specifiable circumstances. These assertions necessarily make reference to a community, just as Hume's causal claims make reference to a regularity.

## 3. Another Wittgenstein

Critics of Kripke's account have argued that this picture not only distorts the original Wittgenstein, but that it is confused and mistaken in itself – which can be shown by considering what the original Wittgenstein actually has to say about the matter. The basic idea is this: There is no real paradox. The apparent paradox is due to several misconceptions related to our conception of what it is to follow a rule. There is therefore no problem that requires a solution. Rather, the problem has to be dissolved by clarifying concepts. What Wittgenstein does in the relevant paragraphs in the PI is making grammatical remarks concerning the family of concepts including *rule*, *following a rule*, *understanding a rule*, *meaning*, *a rule determining its application*, *one being forced by a rule*, etc. In the course of this, he rejects several philosophical misconceptions about the matter like „the suggestion that a rule determines an action as being in accord with it only in virtue of an interpretation“ (Baker and Hacker 1984, 20) Or as Baker writes: „Our thought is dominated by mechanical pictures. We conceive of a system of rules as a huge machine in motion... These pictures have a baleful influence.“ (Baker 1981, 54)

The recipe against them is to remind us of several „familiar aspects of our practice of explaining and using the expressions 'rule' and 'to follow a rule'“ (Baker 1981, 57). Wittgenstein brings us to see that „following a rule is an activity, a *Praxis*“ (Baker/Hacker 1984, 20, cf. PU 198, 202), which means that the concept is properly applied to „recurrent action in appropriate contexts, action which *counts* as following the rule.“ (ibid.) Obviously, certain conditions have to obtain in order for such practices to be possible. If people didn't share certain patterns of behaviour and responses to training, regular practices and rule-following would not be possible.

One way to express the shift of perspective effected by Wittgenstein's grammatical remarks is this: The concept of a rule with all its correlates comes into play only in a context in which there already are certain regular activities being performed which can then be described, evaluated and coordinated by the use of those concepts.

Once we have thus clarified our concepts, the sceptic loses his foothold: his scepticism is just an expression of misunderstandings of what we actually mean by talk about rule-following. The practice of justifying applications of a rule, in this picture, also gets into play only on the basis of existing rule-following practices. There is no sense in

asking for other justifications than the ones we actually give when asked to justify particular applications of rules.

Pears emphasizes that although Kripke gives a distorted picture of Wittgenstein's view, there is an important insight revealed in his interpretation: it is correct that the standards by which to assess and justify instances of rule-following are entirely internal to our practice. Kripke's account, however, strikingly differs in the assessment of this insight. As Pears writes:

„Kripke's verdict is that the best available resources [the internal ones] are not really adequate. That is not the verdict of Wittgenstein, who argued that the quest for external resources is the result of a misunderstanding.“ (Pears 1988, 443)

The external standpoint is merely imaginary. It is not only unattainable, but philosophically pointless to aspire, since everything that is philosophically interesting concerns our actual concepts, so it has to be investigated from within the practice.

#### 4. Another Hume

I will now suggest a quite analogous criticism of Kripke's interpretation of Hume.

The first thing to notice is that there are good reasons to doubt that Hume endorsed scepticism about inductive inference and causation. He makes use of induction throughout his work and, quite generally, favors the method of natural science which relies on inductive inferences to posit causal relations in the world, and he does not seem to think that those claims are merely assertable rather than true.

If Hume is an anti-sceptic in regard to causation, of what kind is his anti-scepticism? Does it just consist in a flight to naturalism or common sense, as some interpreters have suggested? I think that in Hume's work on causation and induction, we find all the elements necessary to conduct a dissolution of the problem in a way parallel to Wittgenstein's dissolution of the problem of rule-following. Here is what I have in mind.

Firstly, Hume criticizes the sceptical worries in a way that enables us to see them as based on confusions. In section 4 of the *Enquiry*, Hume rejects three assumptions regarding our knowledge of causal relations. First, that it is a priori; second, that it is gained by direct experience of causal relations; and third, that it is, or could be, arrived at by deductive reasoning from past experience. What is more, in section 7 Hume argues against the claim that our actual notion of cause involves an idea of necessary connection.

By showing that all these claims are false, Hume rejects certain pictures of what inductive inferences consist in. Today it is quite obvious that knowledge of causal relations is not a priori. By seeing this clearly, we learn something about the nature of that sort of inference. That causal relations are not in fact necessary relations constitutes a related insight into our practice of making and assessing causal claims. I will come back to that. The idea that we could arrive at causal claims by following deductive arguments starting from the experience of regularities is equally misguided. Induction is, sort of trivially, different from deduction.

Secondly, Hume, like Wittgenstein, acknowledges the importance of certain natural preconditions for our practice of causal reasoning: our natural inclination to expect like effects from like causes, the principle he calls custom. Purely naturalist interpretations notwithstanding, who claim that Hume was begging the question of justification by giving a causal account of our inferences, it is perfectly possible to see this principle of custom as a framework condition of the practice, just as the fact that we all show similar reactions when trained to follow certain rules is a framework condition of all our rule-following practices.

Hume thirdly offers grammatical remarks that are apt to clarify our concept of cause and its correlates. Here are three kinds of claims that I regard as descriptions of rules

- i. The uniformity principle which states that "similar sensible qualities will always be conjoined with similar secret powers" (EHU 4, 21). It expresses the general form of all of our inferences from experience.
- ii. The definitions of 'cause'. Presented as the upshot of his considerations on induction and the idea of necessary connection in the *Enquiry*, Hume presents his two definitions of cause: they give criteria for when to call one event the cause of another; one criterion is that there is a regularity, the other is the existence of the associative mechanism in our minds (cf. EHU 7, 29).
- iii. The "rules by which to judge of causes and effects". In the *Treatise*, Hume formulates eight "general rules" for evaluating and correcting our immediate causal judgements. (T 1.3.13.11, T 1.3.15) which can be seen as refinements of the general principle stated above.

I think that what Hume is doing in these three cases is describing rules instead of making potentially controversial factual claims. By describing these rules, he gives us a certain picture of our own practice – which is, admittedly, not entirely adequate. Nevertheless, this alternative picture is precisely what we need for the dissolution of the problem of justification. If we see causal inference in this way, as a practice guided by this kind of rules, we not only understand that our actual concept of cause does not involve a claim to necessity. Furthermore, it gets clear that there is no point in asking for further justification for our causal inferences than the ones that involve application of these and similar rules.

In what way exactly does this picture differ from Kripke's? We might give a similar answer as in regard to Wittgenstein. Kripke correctly takes Hume to have shown that inferring and assessing causal claims is a practice whose standards of correctness are internal to it.

Kripke is wrong, however, to suppose that this position must amount to scepticism, and that the actual rules of inductive inference are just second-best, compared to some other standard of justification or truth. It is this practice with that gives the meaning to our concept of cause in the first place. What sense does it make, one might ask, to say as Kripke does, that "the common notion of one event 'producing' another [...] is in jeopardy. It appears that there is no such relation, that the causal relation is fictive." (Kripke 1982, 68).

If it is true that our actual criteria for accepting causal claims are the ones Hume hints at, all having to do with different regularities, then that in fact *is* our common notion of one event 'producing' another. Any other notion Kripke might have in mind is a philosophical misconception – those are the real fictions. Hume saw quite clearly that the

use of the word 'producing' is especially apt to invoke misleading pictures lacking in intelligible meaning:

"if a cause be defined, that which produces any thing; it is easy to observe, that producing is synonymous to causing. [...] what is meant by these words, by which? Had it been said, that a cause is that after which any thing constantly exists; we should have understood the terms. For this is, indeed, all we know of the matter. And this constancy forms the very essence of necessity, nor have we any other idea of it." (EHU 8, 25, footnote)

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# The Contextualist Promise

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I

I take the basic idea of epistemological contextualism to be expressed in the following thesis: It is possible that a person S knows that p relative to one context whereas the person does not know that p relative to another context although the epistemic subject truly believes that p in both cases and her evidential situation is the same. And I take the invariantist about knowledge to deny that contention.

An example might illustrate and motivate the contextualist position: Carla believes truly that John was at home on September 1<sup>st</sup> because Peter called her the following day and told her so. Surely, in this ordinary situation Carla has knowledge. A month later Carla is asked to testify as a witness in court. John is accused of having killed his wife in their commonly shared apartment on September 1<sup>st</sup>. A lot hinges on the question whether John was at home that day or not. Carla tells her story. John's attorney brings up the possibility that Peter might not have told the truth. In that situation Carla's evidence is not good enough to justify a verdict. Carla no longer knows that John was at home on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Why should one adopt a contextualist position? There are two main reasons to do so. On the one hand contextualism fits well with cases like the Carla-example. On the other hand contextualism seems to promise well in solving the skeptical puzzle.<sup>1</sup> The latter is what I am interested in here. Can the specific version of contextualism I want to focus on keep that promise? In order to answer that question we have to ask what the skeptical puzzle consists in and what kind of solution to that puzzle is at issue.

Almost everyone agrees that we know a lot about the external world. Yet, once we are entering a debate with the skeptic the following skeptical argument seems compelling – at least if one is not convinced from the outset that knowledge does not presuppose evidence:

1. In order to know that one has a hand, one has to be evidentially justified in believing this to be the case.
2. But one is justified in believing to have a hand only if one is evidentially justified in believing that one is not a cleverly deceived handless brain in a vat.
3. However, one is not evidentially justified in denying such a skeptical hypothesis.
4. Therefore, one does not know that one has a hand.

We are puzzled. How can it be, that on the one hand we know a lot while on the other hand the skeptical argument looks so convincing?

Contextualism seems to offer a neat solution to this puzzlement by arguing as follows: Within ordinary contexts our standards for knowledge are such that one of the premises is false. Yet, within a debate with the skeptic he somehow manages to raise the standards such that the premises are all true and the argument is beyond reproach. One brand of contextualism arguing this way is a certain version of the contextualist relevant alternatives approach. According to this theory knowledge presup-

poses evidential justification in every context and the first premise is true no matter what context we are in. Furthermore, it is also the case that we are never evidentially justified in denying skeptical hypotheses since there is absolutely no evidence that we are not brains in a vat. The third premise of the skeptical argument is always true too. Yet, evidential justification and thereby knowledge is a context-relative matter. In order for someone to be justified in believing p to be the case it is necessary that she be justified in denying all *relevant* alternatives<sup>2</sup> to p. But it is not necessary that one be able to rule out all *possible* alternatives. The relevance of an alternative in turn is context-sensitive. And it seems fairly obvious that within ordinary contexts skeptical hypotheses are irrelevant. When two people at the market are discussing whether there are cucumbers on the shelves it is inappropriate for the customer to put the seller's positive knowledge claim into doubt by asking whether he is able to rule out the possibility that they are all just brains in a vat. With respect to situations such as these the second premise of the skeptical argument has to be rejected. However, the defendant of the relevant alternatives approach (for short: the relevantist) continues, in skeptical contexts in which we are philosophizing about our epistemic access to an external world in general we tend to be quite cooperative and we are willing to consider skeptical hypotheses to be relevant after all.<sup>3</sup>

As convincing as this solution to the skeptical puzzle might look at first sight, I do not think that it can stand closer scrutiny. Instead, I want to argue that skeptical hypotheses are always relevant (II). Since my argument essentially hinges on the general validity of a certain closure principle for justification under justified entailment, I will thereafter reject a well-known alleged counter-example to that principle (III). The upshot of the entire discussion amounts to this: If your reason for being a contextualist about knowledge is that you think that the relevant alternatives approach sketched above offers a convincing solution to the skeptical puzzle, you should reconsider that motivation (IV).

II

One part of the relevantist's solution consists in denying that skeptical hypotheses are relevant in ordinary contexts. However, there is a straightforward argument to the contrary:

- (i) For every context: In order to be justified in believing that I have a hand I have to be justified in believing: if I have a hand, then I am not a cleverly deceived handless being.
- (ii) For every context: If I am justified in believing that I have a hand *and* if I am justified in believing that this entails that I am not a cleverly deceived handless being then I am justified in believing that I am not a cleverly deceived handless being.

<sup>2</sup> A proposition q is an alternative to a proposition p if it is impossible that p and q be both true. An alternative q to a proposition p is a relevant alternative if and only if a justification for p presupposes a justification for non-q.

<sup>3</sup> Rheinwald (2004) is defending this view. Austin (1962) holds this position as far as the irrelevance of skeptical hypotheses in ordinary contexts is concerned.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Brady/Pritchard (2005): 162.

(iii) For every context: In order to be justified in believing that I have a hand I have to be justified in believing that I am not a cleverly deceived handless being.

Premise (i) is quite plausible. Justification presupposes understanding. And understanding what it means to have a real hand implies understanding that this entails that one is not erroneously believing that one has a hand. And this understanding in turn provides conceptual evidence for the view that having a hand implies not being a handless brain in a vat.<sup>4</sup>

Now, premise (ii) might be more controversial since it presupposes the general validity of the following closure principle for justification:

(CJ) If S is justified (in context C) in believing that p and if S is justified (in context C) in believing that p entails q, then S is justified (in context C) in believing that q.

Although this might be obvious, it is important to notice with respect to what follows that the entailment relation in CJ does not hold if p is true and q is false.

Why should we accept CJ? One reason lending prima facie plausibility is that there is a huge number of cases in which the principle obviously holds.

Another rationale can be spelled out as follows: Given the way the entailment relation has been specified, the following principle seems plausible: I am justified in believing that p entails q only if I am justified in believing that it is not the case that p is true and q is false. Otherwise I am not even capable of ruling out one of the clear cases in which the entailment relation does not hold. Differently put we get the following principle of justified entailment:

(PJE) If I am justified in believing that p entails q, then I am justified in believing that p is false or q is true.

Furthermore, the following principle of justified disjunction is intuitively plausible as well:

(PJD) If I am justified in believing that p or q is the case then it is not the case that I am justified in believing that p is false although I am not justified in believing that q is true.

Suppose that I have no reason to believe that Clara has eaten the cake. Furthermore, I have every reason to believe that Peter has not eaten the cake. How could I then possibly be justified in believing that one of the two has eaten it? Maybe I know that no other person could have been the culprit. But then, since I already know that Peter was not the perpetrator, I am certainly justified in believing that Clara is to blame.

Now, both principles taken together, but only taken together,<sup>5</sup> imply CJ as can be seen by the following argument (with “J” for “I am justified in believing ...” and “→” for the sentential operator “... entails...”):

<sup>4</sup> If you deny this, the argument still holds for all of us who are justified in believing that having a hand entails not being a brain in a vat.

<sup>5</sup> Does the principle of justified entailment (PJE) by itself imply CJ? That is not the case.  $J(p \supset q) \supset J(\neg p \vee q)$  can be true if  $J(\neg p \vee q)$  is true. At the same time it is possible that  $Jq$  is false while  $Jp$  and  $J(p \supset q)$  are true. Now, you may ask how it is possible that  $\neg Jq$  and  $Jp$  while  $J(\neg p \vee q)$ . This cannot be if  $J(\neg p \vee q)$  implies  $\neg(Jp \ \& \ \neg Jq)$ . But this is an instance of the principle of justified disjunction.

Does the principle of justified disjunction (PJD) by itself imply CJ? That is not the case either.  $J(\neg p \vee q) \supset \neg(Jp \ \& \ \neg Jq)$  can be true if  $J(\neg p \vee q)$  is false. At the same time it is possible that  $Jq$  is false while  $Jp$  and  $J(p \supset q)$  are true. Of course, that  $J(\neg p \vee q)$  is false but  $J(p \supset q)$  is true cannot be maintained if one also accepts the principle of justified entailment. But this just shows that the principle of justified disjunction does not by itself imply CJ.

{(PJE)}	(1) $J(p \rightarrow q) \supset J(\neg p \vee q)$	(PJE)
{(PJD)}	(2) $J(\neg p \vee q) \supset \neg(Jp \ \& \ \neg Jq)$	(PJD)
{(PJE),(PJD)}	(3) $J(p \rightarrow q) \supset \neg(Jp \ \& \ \neg Jq)$	(1),(2) by transitivity
{(A1)}	(4) $J(p \rightarrow q)$	assumption (A1)
{(PJE),(PJD),(A1)}	(5) $\neg(Jp \ \& \ \neg Jq)$	(3),(4) by modus ponens
{(A2)}	(6) $Jp$	assumption (A2)
{(PJE),(PJD),(A1),(A2)}	(7) $Jq$	(5),(6) by logic
{(PJE),(PJD)}	(8) $Jp \supset (J(p \rightarrow q) \supset Jq)$	(4),(6),(7) by cond.
{(PJE), (PJD)}	(CJ) $(Jp \ \& \ J(p \rightarrow q)) \supset Jq$	(8) by law of importation

Of course, the two reasons in favor of CJ are no knock-down-arguments. But they shift the burden of proof onto those, like the relevantist, who deny the universal validity of the closure principle. They have to provide us with a convincing case in which closure of justification under justified entailment does not hold. Are there such counter-examples?

### III

This cannot be the place to discuss all counter-examples that are to be found in the appropriate literature.<sup>6</sup> I therefore want to focus on one case that seems to accommodate well with the general idea of the relevant alternatives approach: Dretske’s famous zebra-example.<sup>7</sup>

Dretske presents his example as a case against closure of knowledge under known entailment. And he does not understand justification in terms of evidential justification.<sup>8</sup> In what follows, however, I take the liberty to discuss his example as a case against closure concerning evidential justification. I am interested in it only in so far as it could be used to sustain the relevantist’s position.

Dretske’s story goes as follows: A father visits the local zoo with his son. They are standing in front of a pen with zebras. Seeing a black-and-white striped, horse-like animal the father says to his son that there is a zebra. It is plausible to suppose that the visual evidence justifies the father’s belief. The father is also justified in believing that zebras are not cleverly painted mules. But, since a cleverly painted mule would look exactly like the animal in the pen the father is not justified in believing that the animal is not a cleverly painted mule. It therefore looks as if the following three propositions hold:

- (a) The father is justified in believing that there is a zebra.
- (b) The father is justified in believing: if it is a zebra, then it is not a cleverly painted mule.
- (c) The father is not justified in believing that the animal is not a cleverly painted mule.

We seem to be confronted with a plausible case against CJ. Yet, I think that this evaluation of the example is problematic. Following the only interpretation according to

<sup>6</sup> For an extended discussion see Schmoranzer (2010): chapter II.

<sup>7</sup> Dretske (1970).

<sup>8</sup> Dretske (1971).

which it has any chance of being plausible it is  $\alpha$ ) still unconvincing and  $\beta$ ) useless for the relevantist.<sup>9</sup>

Let us ask first what evidence is supposed to justify the zebra-hypothesis. It is that zebras look exactly like the animal in the pen. Yet, *and this is crucial*, this visual evidence speaks in favor of the zebra-hypothesis only if the father has some general background information about how likely it is that – in zoos – something looking like a zebra usually is a zebra. He has to know something like “Zoo authorities normally do not exhibit painted animals”.

Why is that? Imagine a case in which a Martian lands in the zoo. Before he arrives he has been shown a picture of a zebra subscribed “zebra or cleverly painted mule”. And the Martian has been told that zebras and mules are of different kinds. Furthermore, the Martian has absolutely no idea about the frequency of cleverly painted mules and zebras on earth or in earthly zoos. Now, seeing the animal in the pen he would neither be justified in believing that it is a zebra. Nor would he be justified in believing that it is a cleverly painted mule. Appearance in itself gives him no clue to favor any one of the two hypotheses. That is why he should abstain from judging.<sup>10</sup> If on the other hand, the Martian knew that it is unlikely that zoos exhibit painted animals, the situation would be different. Then he would be allowed to take the appearance as indicator of the fact that the animal is a zebra.

What goes for the Martian goes for the father as well. He is justified in believing that the animal is a zebra only if he has some background information speaking against the hypothesis that it is a cleverly painted mule. This information is a *precondition* in order for the visual evidence to substantiate the zebra-hypothesis.<sup>11</sup> Dretske seems to admit this when he writes:

„You have some general uniformities on which you rely, regularities to which you give expression by such remarks as „That isn’t very likely“ or „Why should the zoo authorities do that?“ Granted, the hypothesis [i.e. that it is a painted mule] (if we may call it that) is not very plausible, given what we know about people and zoos. But the question here is not whether this alternative is plausible, not whether it is more or less plausible than that there are real zebras in the pen, but whether *you know* that this alternative hypothesis is false. I don’t think you do.“ (Italics Dretske)<sup>12</sup>

Given that Dretske already grants the father knowledge concerning the zebra-hypothesis, the passage should be interpreted as follows: The father is justified in believing that the animal is a zebra to an extent that is sufficient for knowledge. Say that he is justified+. But he is only justified in believing that the animal is not a painted mule to a lesser extent which is not sufficient for knowledge. Say that he is only justified–. The example should therefore be evaluated as follows:

- (a\*) The father is justified+ in believing that there is a zebra.
- (b\*) The father is justified+ in believing: if it is a zebra, then it is not a cleverly painted mule.
- (c\*) The father is not justified+ in believing that the animal is not a cleverly painted mule – even though he is justified– to do so.

But this interpretation of the example is problematic for two reasons. First: As things stand right now, the relevantist has to admit two things. On the one hand he has to say that the zebra-hypothesis is justified to a greater extent than the negation of the mule-hypothesis. On the other hand he has to accept that it is a precondition for the visual justification of the zebra-hypothesis that there is some justification speaking against the mule-hypothesis.<sup>13</sup> Yet, if a justification for the proposition that  $p$  presupposes a justification for the proposition that  $q$ , then the justification for  $p$  cannot be any better than the justification for  $q$ . Suppose I was using a tape measure to identify the length of my desk. In order for me to be justified in believing that my desk is 2 meters long I have to be justified in believing that the measuring device is reliable. But I cannot be more certain of the length of my desk than I may be confident that the measuring device is correct.<sup>14</sup> The proposed interpretation of Dretske’s zebra-example is therefore unconvincing.

Second: Even if it was convincing, the evaluation of the example would be of no use for the relevantist. It would not speak against the following weaker closure principle:

- (CJ–) If one is justified+ that  $p$  and if one is justified+ that  $p$  entails  $q$ , then one is *at least* justified– that  $q$ .

Relying on this principle the skeptic can still stick to the claim that, no matter what context we are in, it is always necessary that we be *to some extent* justified in believing that skeptical hypotheses are false. But the relevantist already admitted that we are not in the least justified in dismissing skeptical hypotheses because there is absolutely no evidence against them. Therefore, he also has to admit that our external world beliefs are never justified. His promise to save our everyday certainties from skepticism could not be kept.

## IV

To sum up: One reason to hold a contextualist position of the relevantist sort could consist in the belief that the relevantist view presented here seems to promise well in solving the skeptical puzzle. According to that approach, skeptical alternatives are relevant and have to be ruled out only in skeptical but not in ordinary contexts.

I argued that this solution is unconvincing. Given the plausibility of a certain version of the closure principle for justification under justified entailment one can show that skeptical hypotheses are always relevant. The alleged zebra-counter-example to that principle turned out to be implausible and of no use for the relevantist.

Where does this leave us in the contextualism-versus-invariantism-debate? If your motivation to be a contextualist consists in believing the relevant alternatives approach to offer a neat solution to the skeptical puzzle, you should reconsider that motivation. This does not mean that the approach has conclusively been discredited. There may be

<sup>9</sup> In what follows I try to be as charitable as possible. I have to admit that I do not find the example plausible at all. Consider the following dialogue between the father and his son: Father: “Look, there is a zebra. You can tell by its stripes.” Son: “Oh, but it could be a cleverly painted mule.” Father: “You are right, we are not justified in believing that it is not a painted mule since it would look exactly the same. Still, since it has black and white stripes I am justified in believing that it is a zebra.” The father’s reply is extremely awkward. To explain this awkwardness by means of an unwarranted assertibility maneuver à la Dretske (2005): 17f. is not convincing. I here agree with Hawthorne (2005): 30.

<sup>10</sup> Can we not say that both hypotheses are justified? Then we would have a situation in which  $Jp, J(p \supset q)$  and  $J\neg q$  and we would have to deny the following even more plausible principle:  $Jp \ \& \ J(p \supset q) \supset \neg J\neg q$ .

<sup>11</sup> The idea that visual justification presupposes certain independent general background information can be found in Wright (2002): 335f.

<sup>12</sup> Dretske (1970): 1016.

<sup>13</sup> That was the lesson learned from the Martian example.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Wright (2005): 255.

other, more convincing examples against the closure principle.<sup>15</sup> This does not mean either that other contextualist positions fare no better in keeping the contextualist promise. Finally, even if those approaches turn out not to solve the skeptical puzzle either, this does not force one to adopt an invariantist stance. For one thing, the question remains which position best explains cases like the Carla example. Furthermore, there is reason to doubt whether invariantists have a better solution to the skeptical puzzle than their contextualist opponents. I conjecture that they have not and that skepticism is not the pitch on which the struggle between contextualism and invariantism will be decided.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> If one assumes degrees of evidential justification, there is a vexing "degree"-problem for CJ. Suppose that the kind of evidential justification necessary for knowledge has to have a degree of more than  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Furthermore, suppose that p is justified to a degree of  $\frac{6}{10}$  and  $p \supset q$  is justified to a degree of  $\frac{6}{10}$ . Then q may be justified only to a degree of less than  $\frac{1}{2}$ . The skeptic might reply that in the situation at hand  $p \supset q$  is certain and justified to a degree of 1.

A different reply would go as follows: Even if CJ cannot be held hostage any more in order to defend the general relevance of skeptical hypotheses, the skeptic could argue as follows by means of a slightly different principle: (i) For every context: I am justified in believing that I have a hand only if I am justified in believing that I have a hand and that this entails that I am not a handless brain in a vat. (ii) For every context: If I am justified in believing that I have a hand and that having a hand entails that I am not a handless brain in a vat, then I am justified in believing that I am not a handless brain in a vat. (iii) For every context: If I am justified in believing that I have a hand, then I am justified in believing that I am not a handless brain in a vat. Now, the first premise might be more controversial than its counterpart in the original argument (see section II). But I maintain that it can still be defended. Justification for p presupposes a justification for p and the obvious semantic implications. The second premise presupposes the universal validity of the following principle:  $J(p \ \& \ (p \supset q)) \supset Jq$ . With respect to this principle the "degree"-problem does not arise. And Dretske's example is unconvincing as far as this principle is concerned too.

<sup>16</sup> In memory of my teacher Rosemarie Rheinwald. I thank Nikola Kompa, Flavia Mormann and Ansgar Seide for comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

# On the Evolution of Notions of Reasonable Disagreement in Scholastic Thought

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17<sup>th</sup> century scholasticism is ripe with elaborate and pluralistic accounts of rational assertability and reasonable disagreement. This may come as a surprise to all who still believe in the enlightenment verdict of a uniformly “dark” and oppressive Counter-Reformation spirit. On the other hand, the existence of rival schools (*viae*) of medieval scholastic thought can create the impression that reasonable disagreement between equally well-informed observers was already accepted in the Middle Ages. It will be shown that both preconceptions are wrong or at least severely one-sided. Complex analyses of rational assertability and reasonable disagreement matured slowly in the scholastic tradition. Not before the 17<sup>th</sup> century was the scholastic notion of *probabilis*, the key concept of this study, consciously and widely defined in a way that entailed the considered rational assertability of a probable sentence.

Of course, the existence of very elaborate accounts of rational assertability and reasonable disagreement in Baroque scholasticism should not be misunderstood as proof of complete open-mindedness. Baroque scholastics regarded many things as “improbable”, from heretic beliefs to heliocentric astronomy, which nowadays are regarded as rationally assertable or true. We should therefore distinguish between matter and form in questions of rational assertability. One can be wrong about material questions of rational assertability, for instance by holding erroneous views about the rational assertability of particular propositions, and at the same time have an advanced understanding of the form, which means concepts and structure, of rational assertability and reasonable disagreement. I will argue that this is true of Baroque scholasticism. The last scholastics excelled in conceptual insights that have their equal only in modern analytical philosophy.

## 1. “Probable” as Predicate of Rational Assertability: Medieval Beginnings

Rational assertability (or rational tenability) and reasonable disagreement are modern terms. Since the present paper uses these concepts with reference to scholasticism it has to be shown which scholastic notions fulfilled similar functions. The key term in this respect was “probable” (*probabilis*). The medieval understanding of “the probable” derived from ancient sources, most notably from Aristotle and Cicero. One meaning of probability originating from Aristotle was “what frequently happens”. Nevertheless, most medieval definitions regard propositions as probable if they are held by “the wise or the many”, usually meaning by a considerable number of well-trained, trustworthy and intelligent people. This understanding of probability is related to Aristotle’s notion of *endoxon*, i.e. commonly held belief. Aquinas (2007: 35) definition is characteristic in this respect:

“[P]ropositions are called probable because they are more known to the wise or to the multitude”.

Although *probabilis* could have a bewildering variety of meanings, it seems safe to say that the term most often served as a tag for propositions with strong evidential support (i.e., as a predicate of logical or evidential prob-

ability, given that expert opinions count as evidence). For this reason “the probable” became a yardstick for practical rationality and epistemic legitimacy from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onward because the scholastics recognized that many problems of theology, the applied sciences, and moral action depended on merely probable assumptions.

One of the most remarkable features of scholastic probability discourse was the claim that two or more logically incompatible propositions (for example, a proposition and its negation) could be probable at the same time. Such two-sided or many-sided probability, as I will call it, follows naturally from the medieval understanding of *endoxon*. Since notable groups of scholastic experts often held conflicting opinions, all such opinions were probable. This does not mean, however, that all such opinions were accepted as rationally assertable. Usually, a scholastic author would regard his favorite opinion as more probable (*probabilior*, *probabilius*) than others which he nevertheless considered probable. In many cases this meant that the author regarded only the most probable proposition as rationally assertable. The probability of the less probable (but still probable) propositions merely indicated that they were bolstered by some good reasons, held by good experts, and remained worthy of consideration. In such cases, *probabilis* became a synonym for “plausible” or “readily believable” (see Kantola 1994: 28), which is less than “rationally believable”.

On the strength of these observations we may conclude that *probabilis* did *not* generally denote rational assertability in medieval scholasticism. In particular, medieval definitions of probability did (to my knowledge) not explicitly state that probable opinions have to be rationally assertable. On the other hand, it should also be recognized that *probabilis* did at least sometimes indicate rational assertability in the Middle Ages. However, this characterization leads to an immediate problem. It remains to be shown how *probabilis* can be interpreted so that rational assertability in the face of an equally or more probable counter-opinion becomes possible. Modern epistemologists often assume that two logically incompatible propositions A and B cannot both be rationally assertable. This assumption usually refers to the perspective of a single person, arguing: If A and B would both be rationally assertable, a reasonable person could assert either A or B (but of course not both simultaneously). This is not possible because the person (given she has probabilistic beliefs about A and B) must believe one of the following: “A is more probable than B”, “A is less probable than B”, or “A and B are equally probable”. In the first two cases the person could assent to at most one of the propositions. In the last case the person must suspend assent to A or B. Hence, in no case could both A and B be assertable by a reasonable person. No doubt, this seems to be a convincing conclusion, but it presupposes a perspective which the scholastics did not share. Rational assertability on the basis of two-sided probability was not predicated of one and the same person in the scholastic tradition. Two-sided rational assertability meant assertability by different persons, in particular by equally well-educated, informed and intelligent others. Such persons are called epistemic peers today. Each epistemic peer, of course, would from

his point of view regard the proposition he believes as more probable than its negation. In this way, two incompatible propositions could without epistemic fault each be believed by different epistemic peers. This understanding of rational assertability dovetails naturally with the Aristotelian definition of *endoxon*. If the epistemic peers were reliable, experienced and knowledgeable persons (i.e., members of the community of “the wise”) their opinions could easily be conceived as *probabilis* in the strong sense of rational assertability. It may suffice to quote one example in order to show that two- or many-sided probability was in some cases understood in this sense. Marsilius of Inghen (ca. 1330-1396) held the following open-minded position concerning opinions about the subject matter of theology (quoted from Roseman 2007: 132):

„I have listed these opinions in detail, so that – given the fact that they are all probable in the minds of those positing them – anyone may choose the opinion which he deems more probable.“

Marsilius clearly considers all the mentioned opinions as rationally assertable and probable.

## 2. Scholastic Probability in the Baroque: The First Half of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

Scholastic probability discourse took a decisive shift after 1577, when Bartolomé de Medina, a Dominican professor at the famous University of Salamanca, postulated the legitimacy of following – that is, acting on – a less probable and less safe opinion. A less safe opinion is one with a potentially greater amount of sinfulness. An opinion is less probable, on the other hand, if some rival opinion has a greater probability, i.e. if stronger reasons speak for its truth. However, the less probable opinion is still thought to remain probable in this context, leading to a case of two-sided probability where one side is more probable than the other.

Medina’s *doctrina probabilistis* (later simply called probabilism) spread like wildfire among Catholic moral theologians. In its wake an explicit understanding of probability as “supported by weighty reasons (or authority)” spread in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Here is an example from the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Balduin 1628: lib. 1, cap. 9):

“Opinions are probable if they are supported by a reason of some moment (*alicuius momenti*) or by weighty authority.”

The significant differences between such definitions and the older Aristotelian ones were recognized at the time. The Jesuit Juan de Salas (1607: tract. 8, disp. 1, sec. 5, n. 43) calls the mentioned definitions “theological” and distinguishes them from definitions stemming from Aristotle’s *Organon* (or ethics). According to the “theological” definitions *probabilis* is not a predicate of rational assertability. Not all opinions with weighty reasons on their side will be rationally assertable.

For the practice of the *doctrina probabilistis* this meant that the range of practically acceptable opinions (acceptable as premises of action) became enormous. An agent did not need to wonder whether to regard an opinion as rationally assertable by an epistemic peer. It was sufficient to know some strong reasons that withstood criticism, or some decent defenders of an opinion. Therefore, it is understandable why conservative moralists regarded the *doctrina* and its weak definition of probability as highway to laxism, the indulgent toleration of morally questionable opinions. Thyrso Gonzalez, Superior General of the Jesuit

Order and one of the most prominent critics of the *doctrina* in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, pointed towards the quoted weak definitions of probability in his analysis of what had gone wrong with Jesuit morality.

## 3. Scholastic Probability in the Baroque: The Second Half of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

In the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Thyrso Gonzalez and many other conservative theologians retained the reasons-based paradigm of probability but insisted on rational assertability as mark of probability, assuming that only one of two rival opinions could be rationally assertable. The opposite camp, headed by Jesuits like Anthony Terill, Martin de Esparza and others, defended the *doctrina*’s licenses by showing how two-sided rational assertability could be conceived in the face of counter-arguments

Terill (1669: q. 2, ass. 2, n. 7) explicitly alludes to rational defensibility in his definition of a probable “motive” (i.e., reason for holding true):

“A surely probable motive (*motivum certo probabile*) is a motive that suffices [...] to defend a thesis with common approval and to the satisfaction of the learned against very strong arguments, which can be brought forward by the weightiest authorities and the most expert persons in a field.”

This definition shows that the scholastic understanding of two-sided probability had become explicitly reflective of rational assertability or defensibility around the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, this trend was not peculiar to champions of the *doctrina probabilistis* like Terill and Fabri. Staunch enemies of the *doctrina*, such as Thyrso Gonzalez, also insisted on rational assertability as key element in definitions of probability. Gonzalez assumed that this requirement reduces the number of eligible opinions and thus hedges against laxism. He adds that only the most probable opinion in a set of rival opinions is rationally assertable and thus eligible as a premise for action. Clearly, if only the most probable opinion is rationally assertable, and rational assertability is required for probability, I cannot regard a less probable opinion as probable. Hence, the claims of the *doctrina probabilistis* seem to unravel. The problem with this conclusion is, as we have already seen, the selection of a point of view. Certainly, I cannot regard as rationally assertable from my point of view what I consider as less probable than its negation. However, I may assume that an epistemic peer could regard the very same proposition as rationally assertable from his point of view.

## 4. Doxastic Voluntarism and Incommensurable Evidence

Anthony Terill and Martin de Esparza accepted rational assertability in the definition of probability not in order to restrict belief to the most probable alternative but to buttress the *doctrina probabilistis*. For this reason they carefully explained how choice among a plurality of rationally assertable opinions is possible. In contrast to the received understanding of the *doctrina* they considered such choice to be one of belief and not only of a premise of action. They assumed in other words that epistemically as well as practically reasonable persons can choose to assent to any one from a multitude of rival rationally assertable propositions. This assumption gives rise to a version of doxastic voluntarism. Doxastic voluntarism has

a long history in scholasticism, too rich to be told here. However, if a survey from the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the Jesuit Ignacio de Camargo is to be trusted, no medieval scholastic claimed that we can and may directly decide to believe propositions that are equally probable or less probable than their negation (see Schüssler 2009). The radical doxastic voluntarism of some Baroque scholastics was a novelty in the scholastic tradition

Terill and Esparza justified their approach with an argument and a distinction. The strength of reasons can either be measured with a single yardstick, similar to physical measures, or not. In the first case Esparza and Terill (1669: q. 8, ass. 2, n. 22) called the reasons similar, equal or commensurable (*similis, aequalis, commensurabilis*). They agreed that rational assent is possible if the reasons for both sides are on a par but not similar or commensurable in the mentioned sense. In such cases they spoke of heterogeneous, dissimilar or unequal reasons (*heterogenea, dissimilis, inaequalis*). Esparza (1685: appendix, art. 112) assumes parity of dissimilar reasons on both sides if the reasons for both sides “mutually exceed each other”. Mutual excess means that the reasons for one side appear stronger in some respects and the reasons for the other side prevail in other respects, while a common measure for comparing those respects does not exist (or is unknown). In modern terminology we would call such reasons incommensurable but Pareto equivalent.

Terill (1669: q. 8, n. 2) illustrates this approach with an example from science. He points out how two rival scientific theories may exceed each other in different respects. One may, for example, be better confirmed by experiments, whereas the other has more metaphysical ex-

planatory power. (We would rather focus on theoretical simplicity or fertility today but for the rest the problem is familiar). Terill maintains that these two aspects for the comparison of theories lack a common measure. Reasonable observers can therefore prefer either theory, although no theory is definitely superior to the other. The rival theories can also be believed by epistemic peers (of course not both by the same peer), despite being on a par with respect to reasons for assent.

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# Mapping of the Epistemic Gap: From the Range of Proposition to the Open Texture of Concepts

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„Lässt sich das entgleitende Erlebnis [Augenblick] festhalten im Zeichen?“ put down Friedrich Waismann in the course of discussions with Wittgenstein at the beginning of the thirties. (Waismann 2003, 313) This question points at an obstacle implicit in verificationism espoused by Vienna Circle about that time. Although members of Schlick's circle tried to solve the difficulty by means of *Protokollsätze* their results have not been much convincing (see e.g. discussion between Carnap and Neurath in *Erkenntnis* 3) and finally the whole effort has been discredited by Quine's attack on dogmas. It seems that between our knowledge of reality and its linguistic expression gapes a deep abyss. In its darkness we are not able to distinguish between an expression of reality and an expression of an experience of reality. Or, using Russell's terminology, we cannot differentiate knowledge by acquaintance from knowledge by description because "knowledge of acquaintance" is at the same time somehow describable knowledge. In following I am going to map edges of this epistemic gap in a frame of Waismann's writings that are not only a source and exposition of Wittgenstein's volatile thoughts but also a testimony of a creative movement that Waismann undertook from the verificationist position to an original critique of it.

Although Carnap refers to "Wittgenstein's principle of verifiability" (Carnap 1963, 45) it was actually Waismann who first published the watchword of verificationism: "*Kann auf keine Weise angegeben werden, wann ein Satz wahr ist, so hat der Satz überhaupt keinen Sinn; denn der Sinn eines Satzes ist die Methode seiner Verifikation.*" (Waismann 1930/1931, 229) Indeed, when the author of *Tractatus* expounds an understanding a proposition as knowing what is the case if the proposition is true he says nothing about a way we obtain the knowledge whether it is true. (comp. TLP 4.024) Though Wittgenstein shortly concerned with verificationism in the early thirties he seems to be evading the epistemic gap overcoming of which would presuppose to determine the method of verification, e.g. as a set of sense experiences. In his own notes of that time we find contemplations of an immediate experience that could be a solid ground to which the whole meaningful language must ultimately refer. But this immediate is blurry, ungraspable and permanently flowing. An attempt to express it as "all is in flux" is according to Wittgenstein nonsensical because we are not able to imagine that things could be otherwise. (comp. e.g. Wittgenstein 1994, 92, 128, 132; Wittgenstein 2000, 302) Thus the epistemic gap of verificationism has been opened.

Turning back to *Tractatus*, can we really imagine the conception of a meaningful proposition as a truth-function of elementary propositions without the verificationist's claim to a sense experience as an epistemic connection to reality? When Waismann reconstructs a way Wittgenstein has come to an idea of elementary propositions he takes a criterion of verifiability for granted: on the assumption that an analysis of a proposition into truth-functions of other propositions reveals the only right principle of the formation of a proposition then a truth-value of such a proposition would be depended solely on the truth-values of its arguments. But they would be also truth-functions of their arguments and so on. The analysis would lead to infinity and any proposition could never be compared with reality. And here Waismann

develops his argument by joining the meaningfulness of a proposition with the verification by comparison with the facts: "*Wenn man auf dem Standpunkt steht, dass der Sinn eines Satzes in dem Verfahren liegt, durch das er zu verifizieren ist, zu verifizieren durch Vergleich mit den Tatsachen, so müsste man sagen, dass der Satz gar nicht zu verstehen ist.*" (p. 275) Nevertheless because it is obvious that we understand propositions of our everyday language the analysis must reach some logically simple propositions that cannot be dissected as truth-functions of other propositions. (Waismann 1939/1940, 274-275)

Unlike ordinary propositions these elementary propositions are independent of each other and so simple that fit closely to reality without any epistemic gap, or as Waismann put it: an elementary proposition leaves reality no range, *Spielraum*. Before we will pursue elementary propositions let us focus on this notion because it seems to be useful for mapping the gap between an ordinary proposition and reality it describes. The term "*Spielraum*", which is usually translated in English as "range" or "scope", we can find already in *Tractatus* but only at two places:

TLP 4.463 Die Wahrheitsbedingungen bestimmen den Spielraum, der den Tatsachen durch den Satz gelassen wird. (Der Satz, das Bild, das Modell, sind im negativen Sinne wie ein fester Körper, der die Bewegungsfreiheit der anderen beschränkt; im positiven Sinne, wie der von fester Substanz begrenzter Raum, worin ein Körper Platz hat.)

Die Tautologie lässt der Wirklichkeit den ganzen – unendlichen – logischen Raum; die Kontradiktion erfüllt den ganzen logischen Raum und lässt der Wirklichkeit keinen Punkt. Keine von beiden kann daher die Wirklichkeit irgendwie bestimmen.

TLP 5.5262 Es verändert ja die Wahr- oder Falschheit jedes Satzes etwas am allgemeinen Bau der Welt. Und der Spielraum, welcher ihrem Bau durch die Gesamtheit der Elementarsätze gelassen wird, ist eben derjenige, welchen die ganz allgemeinen Sätze begrenzen. (Wenn ein Elementarsatz wahr ist, so ist damit doch jedenfalls Ein Elementarsatz mehr wahr.)

Let us supplement these passages by a less enigmatic exposition from Waismann: a proposition as a truth-function does not fix reality, it does not express a fact but a range or a scope of facts (*Spielraum, Bereich von Tatsachen*). That means proposition depicts a set of possible combinations of states of affairs and asserts that one of these possibilities is realized in reality. A proposition only prepares the frame and constructs a conceptual scaffold within which reality can freely vary. ("*Unsere Sprache verfährt wie ein Zeichner, der von einem Gegenstand nur eine Skizze entwirft.*" p. 277) A range consists of truth-grounds of a proposition, i.e. of those particular truth-possibilities of the truth-table for which the proposition is true. We can arrive at a tautology by stepwise widening the range or at a contradiction by narrowing it. Thus the distance of a proposition from a tautology can be given. One proposition entails another when the range of the latter is wholly contained in the range of the former. (comp. Waismann 1939/1940, 267, 269, 277, 281-282)



Using a principle of a range of proposition Waismann elaborated a logical conception of probability that was an inspiration for later Carnap's research. Let us just shortly outline the idea: Waismann first introduces "a measure for the magnitude of a range" that can be assigned to a proposition on the basis of a stipulation. Then the probability that the measurable proposition  $p$  gives to the measurable proposition  $q$  is the magnitude of the common range of  $p$  and  $q$  in proportion to the magnitude of the range of  $q$ . Probability is so a measure of the logical proximity or deductive nexus of two propositions: when  $p$  entails  $q$  the degree of measure is 1, when  $p$  contradicts  $q$ , the degree is 0. (Waismann 1930/1931)

On the contrary an elementary proposition should have no range, it should leave nothing indeterminate. An elementary proposition completely depicts a state of affairs, i.e. a certain combination of objects, it asserts its existence and is true when the state of affairs exists. An elementary proposition is a concatenation of logically proper names that go proxy for simple objects. It can be false in only one way, when a combination of these objects is different than a nexus of their names. (comp. TLP 4.21f.) An elementary proposition is not a truth-function of other propositions and its truth-value is in a truth-table assigned independently. One elementary proposition cannot contradict nor be deduced from another (comp. TLP 4.211, 5.134) Thus these mutually logically independent atoms which author of *Tractatus* presupposed behind a structure of our everyday language seem to fill the epistemic gap up.

But as mentioned above the conception of elementary propositions presupposes that the truth-functional analysis is the only right way how to penetrate the nature of our language and it finally leads to verificationism anyway. If we try to span the epistemic gap between our everyday language and reality with abstract atoms and we cannot anchor them to one or other edge they fall in the bottomless depths. And Wittgenstein was not able to give any example of an elementary proposition that would at least indicate how a bridge over the gap is constructed. Even such primitive forms of our ordinary language as "this is green" cannot be treated as logically independent elements. They also leave reality a range which is wide open in two senses: on one hand, the range of "this is green" contains other ranges, e.g. the range of "this is not red" etc., on the other hand, we can use this sentence in so many different situations that the borderline of its range stays indeterminate and its meaning is vague. It seems that we are just going around on the abyss's edge caught in a vicious circle. Wittgenstein himself, after short toying with verificationism which presupposed a certain kind of reductionism, e.g. phenomenalism, abandoned an idea of language as universe based on combinations of elementary propositions.

A course of subsequent Wittgenstein thoughts led to analyses of meaningfulness of linguistic expressions as the use of the expressions within a maze of language games. Instead of following this well known path we will continue mapping edges of the epistemic gap in Waismann's later writings. Alike Wittgenstein also Waismann attempted to fill in the gap with grammatical rules following of which we can safely get over from language to reality we experience. But

while Wittgenstein anchors these rules of grammar in *Lebensform*, Waismann appeals to the adoption of them which is based on the free agreement because they cannot be derived from something deeper, except of other rules, and the laying down of them is the endpoint. (see e.g. Waismann 1939/1940, 289) Yet these rules do not form only one bridge between language and knowledge but many and of different types and at distinct places. Waismann, similarly to Wittgenstein and his language games, tries to sketch the view that leads to "a sort of many-level-theory of language in which every sort of statement has its own sort of logic". (Waismann 1945, 133)

According to Waismann (see esp. Waismann 1945; 1953) language is divided into different domains or strata. Each language stratum has its own system of logical or grammatical rules, its specific conception of truth and its own method or web of verification. Concepts of respective strata have the diverse nature etc. A logical structure with its rules of inference is consistent within a particular stratum but there is "the looseness of inferences" across different strata and it prevents to translate propositions of one stratum into propositions of another. Thus it is not possible to verify completely e.g. material object statements by means of propositions about sense-data, hypotheses by means of observation statements or interpret human action only as physical events etc. It is the task for logicians, in Waismann's view, to examine a way in which different strata are interconnected and analyze possibilities of inferences from one stratum to other.

Furthermore, empirical concepts of various language strata, in contrast to exact concepts of arithmetic or geometry, have the open texture (*Porosität der Begriffe*) that makes the complete verification impossible. Although we usually use most of our empirical concepts according to determinate rules we have not rules ready for all imaginable possibilities because we cannot foresee all the circumstances in which a proposition contains these concepts will be true or false. The open texture of concept is a possibility of vagueness: though we can dispose of vagueness by laying down a particular rule for using of the concept in concrete situation the possibility of vagueness in other yet unknown circumstances remains.

We have seen that the epistemic gap of verificationism, which we also detected as a range of a proposition within the truth-functional theory of language, has become declared and evident in the Waismann's later criticism of the principle of verification in a form of the open texture of concepts. The aim of the exposition has been to map edges of this gap between knowledge of reality and its linguistic expression. It has been shown that bridges we build over the gap must be under the permanent reconstruction. A cause does not lie in that our language would not be ideal or sublime but it lies in the incompleteness to which our knowledge is doomed. When we use language we should be constantly aware of that we are walking tightrope over the bottomless abyss of our nescience.

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# Inferential Contextualism and Externalism – You Better Be an Inferential Contextualist If You Want to Be an Externalist

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## 1. Williams' diagnostic approach to scepticism

In the face of the problems connected with classical attempts to respond to the challenge of Cartesian scepticism, Michael Williams puts forward an *indirect* or *diagnostic* approach to scepticism, the aim being to uncover the epistemological presuppositions of the sceptical arguments. His main thesis is that the sceptical arguments presuppose theoretical ideas that are not as intuitive or natural as they appear<sup>1</sup> and that we are by no means bound to accept. So the aim of his theoretical diagnosis is not to refute scepticism once and for all, but to shift the burden of argument (Williams 1996, xvii).

According to Williams, the decisive theoretical presupposition of the sceptical arguments is the following thesis:

*Epistemological Realism (ER)*<sup>2</sup>: “[B]eliefs have an *intrinsic epistemological status*”, i.e. “our beliefs arrange themselves into broad, theoretically coherent classes according to certain *natural* relations of epistemological priority

According to this thesis, our beliefs have their epistemological statuses because of their natures and independently of specifications of particular contexts of inquiry (cf. Williams 1988, 419). An example of this thesis that we often encounter in foundationalist theories of justification is the claim that we have privileged access to our immediate sense impressions and that beliefs concerning our sense impressions are therefore epistemically prior to beliefs about the external world. All our beliefs about the external world, the foundationalist claims, have to be justificationaly grounded on beliefs about sense impressions.

With this theoretical presupposition in play, the sceptic has an easy argument for his sceptical conclusion: The Cartesian dream hypothesis or the evil deceiver scenario show that our beliefs about the external world are radically underdetermined by our beliefs about sense impressions so that the former cannot be justificationaly based on the latter (Williams 2001, 75 f.). The only way out, Williams claims, is to deny the sceptic's presupposition (ER) in order to prevent him from stating his underdetermination argument.

In order to shift the burden of argument to the sceptic, Williams develops a contextualist theory of justification based on the thesis that there are *no* objective relations of epistemic priority between beliefs or classes of beliefs.<sup>3</sup> This complete negation of objective relations of epistemic priority leads Williams to the conclusion that the epistemological status of a proposition is not only dependent on contextual factors, but that independently of all contextual

influences a proposition has no epistemic status at all (Williams 1996, 119).

All in all, these considerations result in a contextualist theory of justification according to which the standards of knowledge attribution are not objective, but are dependent on contextually variable factors. Most importantly, a context is generated by what Williams calls a set of *methodological necessities*, i.e., a set of legitimate presuppositions that are not currently under scrutiny. As Williams points out, methodological necessities are needed to determine the subject of an investigation. For example, the proposition that the Earth existed hundred years ago is a methodological necessity of contexts of historical investigation:

Thus, introducing sceptical doubts about whether the Earth really existed a hundred years (or five minutes) ago does not lead to a more careful way of doing history: it changes the subject, from history to epistemology. (Williams 1996, 122)

So if a methodological necessity of a context is questioned, the focus of the investigation gets lost. It is not in principle impossible to question a proposition that is a methodological necessity, but it always amounts to a change of context.<sup>4</sup>

Against this background, Williams' answer to scepticism can be summed up as follows: Sceptical arguments against our knowledge of propositions about the external world take place in a context with certain methodological necessities of its own. As Williams argues at length, the sceptic needs the presupposition of the epistemic priority of beliefs about sense experiences over beliefs about the external world in order to establish his sceptical conclusion.<sup>5</sup> But this is by far not the only context that is relevant: In contexts of everyday life or of the special sciences, other methodological necessities are in play. In those contexts, our knowledge claims are often legitimate. So the sceptical conclusion is restricted in a very important way:

The sceptic takes himself to have discovered, under the conditions of philosophical reflection, that knowledge of the world is impossible. But in fact, the most he had discovered is that knowledge of the world is *impossible under the conditions of philosophical reflection*. (Williams 1996, 130; italics are his)

In order to be able to generalize the sceptical results of his context, the sceptic had to show that the arrangement of our beliefs according to relations of epistemic priority is objective, i.e. context-independent. This is exactly the thesis (ER) that Williams denies.

<sup>1</sup> By *intuitive* or *natural ideas* Williams means ideas that can be understood “[...] without prior indoctrination in contentious theoretical ideas [...]” (Williams 1996, xv) and that “[...] almost any reflective person can understand and be moved by.” (Williams 2001, 58)

<sup>2</sup> „Epistemological Realism“ is often used as a label for the view that we have knowledge of an objective reality. This is not what Williams has in mind here. He rather means “a form of extreme realism with respect to the typical objects of epistemological theorizing” (Williams 1999, 58).

<sup>3</sup> While his arguments against the sceptic are spelled out in detail in Williams 1996, Williams develops his own account in particular in his 2001.

<sup>4</sup> This is what Williams calls *recontextualization* (Williams 2001, 227). One shortcoming of his account is that he does not explicitly specify under which conditions such a move is legitimate or even required. For a detailed account of those conditions, see my 2011, ch. VII.

<sup>5</sup> See n. 4 above.

## 2. The externalist element of inferential contextualism<sup>6</sup>

As might have become clear, an important part of the contextualist answer to scepticism is an externalist element. According to Williams, we sometimes know the methodological necessities of an everyday context although we are not able to back them up with evidence. In case we know them, this is due to the fulfillment of some externalist condition.<sup>7</sup>

But if externalism plays such an important role in the contextualist story, it can be asked if not externalism alone suffices to avert scepticism, which would render inferential contextualism a dispensable part of the anti-sceptical argument:

After all, what Williams seems to be arguing is that one can know the denials of radical sceptical hypotheses by the lights of an externalist theory of knowledge just so long as one is in a context in which such anti-sceptical propositions are not at issue but merely presupposed. The problem, however, is that if we can make sense of the idea that we know these propositions at all, in any sense, then it seems unnecessary to further incorporate the additional inferential contextualist caveat. (Pritchard 2005, 213 f.; italics are his)

To see why inferential contextualism is not dispensable in the way Pritchard proposes, we first have to take a look at a downside of most externalist accounts.

## 3. Externalism and second-order scepticism

Externalist accounts of knowledge are often motivated by the challenge to explain how we can know a lot of everyday propositions (for example that we have two hands, that the bank is open on Saturdays etc.) although we are not able to exclude sceptical hypotheses. The idea is that we know many everyday propositions not because we can back them up with evidence, but because we meet some externalist condition of knowledge.

Let us take Pritchard's externalist account of knowledge as an example. Pritchard takes a condition that he calls "super safety" as a necessary condition of knowledge:

An agent has a super-safe belief in the contingent proposition  $\phi$  if, and only if, that agent has a true belief in  $\phi$  and her belief in  $\phi$  'tracks' the truth as to whether  $\phi$  across a wide-range of near-by possible worlds (i.e., where  $\phi$  is true, she believes it; where  $\phi$  is false, she does not believe it). (Pritchard 2002a, 297)

Without going into detail, the idea can be explicated as follows: We live in a world in which no Cartesian hypothesis is true. We are *not* brains in vats or victims of an evil deceiver. I believe that I have two hands. There are near-by possible worlds in which the proposition that I have two hands is false because I have lost them in an accident. But in those worlds I do not believe this proposition because I

see that I don't have hands, I can remember the accident etc. So my belief that I have two hands tracks the truth: I do not have that belief in near-by worlds in which it is false. But what about sceptical possibilities? In a world in which I am deceived by Descartes' evil deceiver I still believe that I have two hands although this is false. But this world, the story goes, is (modally spoken) too far away to count as "near-by". So a false belief in an "evil deceiver"-world is, according to the definition above, not relevant for the question if my belief tracks the truth.

The problem of such an account (and of most externalist accounts) is that it cannot be brought forward against the sceptic without looking awkwardly question-begging: *If* our world is a non-deceiver world, my belief that I have two hands is true and even tracks the truth. As Williams points out, the sceptic will not be impressed by a conditional conclusion like that:

To show that knowledge is possible is to give ourselves reasons to think that we are in a position to know things; and if we are taken by an externalist account of knowledge, this means giving ourselves reasons to think that we are in a position to meet the relevant external conditions. The radical sceptic therefore shifts his point of attack from questions of whether we can know things to the question of whether we can have any justification for thinking that we do. The sceptical obstacles to knowledge simply reassert themselves at second order. (Williams 1996, 97 f.)<sup>8</sup>

Let us now see how the inferential contextualist can handle this problem.

## 4. Inferential contextualism and the generality of the sceptical questions

As Barry Stroud remarks, one of the most salient features of the sceptical questions is that they are *highly general*:

The traditional Cartesian examination aims at an assessment of all our knowledge of the world all at once [...]. If all our knowledge of the world around us is in question all at once we cannot then help ourselves to some independently reliable information about the world, as we usually do, to settle the question whether our present course of experience is or is not on this occasion a reliable guide to the way things are. (Stroud 1984, 209)

This is the reason why the sceptical challenge cannot be met by presupposing some knowledge about the world we are living in, let alone about the non-occurrence of a sceptical possibility. What leads to the problem of externalist accounts stated above is exactly this desire to gain an understanding of human knowledge about the external world in general.

Let us now take a look back at the main thesis of inferential contextualism:

(C) There are no objective relations of epistemic priority between beliefs or classes of beliefs.

As we have seen above, a consequence of this is that independently of all contextual factors a proposition has no epistemic status at all. So for a proposition to have an epistemic status, it has to be determined which propositions "stand fast" in the respective context and "what has to

<sup>6</sup> The term „inferential contextualism“ was coined by Duncan Pritchard to distinguish Williams' contextualism from the "semantic" contextualism put forward by Keith DeRose and David Lewis. It alludes to the fact that Williams individuates contexts in terms of their inferential structure. See Pritchard 2002b, 36 f.

<sup>7</sup> The definition of externalism applied here is Williams': "As I see things, the crucial feature of an externalist account of knowledge is that it denies, with respect to some essential conditions on knowing, that knowing that P requires knowledge or justifiably believing that those conditions are fulfilled." (Williams 1996, 96)

<sup>8</sup> A more detailed version of this critique of externalist accounts is presented by Stroud 1989. It has to be stressed that Pritchard shares this worry. See Pritchard 2005, 218.

be tested by what” (Wittgenstein 1969, § 125). Without this, there is no fact of the matter as to how a belief can be backed up with evidence. As will become clear in a moment, this poses crucial restrictions on the generality of the sceptical questions.

Methodological necessities, the propositions that stand fast in a context, are very similar to what Ludwig Wittgenstein calls *hinge propositions*.<sup>9</sup> In some well-known remarks in *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein highlights the importance of hinge propositions in epistemological contexts. He thereby gives a very insightful account of the point at issue here:

[T]he questions that we raise and our doubts depend upon the fact that some propositions are exempt from doubt, are as it were like hinges on which those turn.

That is to say, it belongs to the logic of our scientific investigations that certain things are *in deed* not doubted.

But it isn't that the situation is like this: We just *can't* investigate everything, and for that reason we are forced to rest content with assumption. If I want the door to turn, the hinges must stay put.

(Wittgenstein 1969, §§ 341-343; italics are his)

Seen from a contextualist perspective, relying on background assumptions that cannot be backed up with evidence is not an excusable symptom of the weakness of our epistemic position but a necessary condition of propositions having an epistemic status at all (cf. Williams 1996, 221). If the sceptic tries to question all our knowledge at once without exempting some propositions from doubt, he tries the impossible: To examine the epistemic status of propositions that have no epistemic status because there are no propositions that stand fast.<sup>10</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

There are good news and bad news if you adopt the main thesis of inferential contextualism. The bad news is that the hope for an understanding of human knowledge in general as described by Stroud will never be fulfilled. The good news is that inferential contextualism furnishes a reason why it is pointless to aim for such an understanding: If propositions have an epistemic status only in relation to a set of propositions that are exempted from doubt, the highly general questions of the sceptic are ill-founded. On the other hand, if you are an advocate of epistemological realism, there seems to be no possibility to prevent the sceptic from asking his highly general questions. So if you want to incorporate an externalist element into your answer to scepticism, you better be an inferential contextualist.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> To be sure, it is not clear if Wittgenstein advocates an externalist account of the knowledge of hinge propositions in the way that Williams holds it for methodological necessities. For a very interesting discussion of this delicate matter, see Pritchard 2001.

<sup>10</sup> To be more precise, we have to distinguish between two levels of sceptical arguments. On the one hand, the sceptic can claim to play by the rules of the contextualist in that he exempts our beliefs about our own sense impressions from doubt. He then argues in the way described in sect. 1 to the conclusion that we have no justified beliefs about the external world. But as indicated in sect. 1, this does not lead to a general sceptical conclusion unless (ER) is presupposed. On the other hand, the sceptic can try to argue at second-order level against the externalist element of the contextualist account in the way described in sect. 3. The sceptical argument then consists in pointing out that justification on the basis of propositions that are not backed up with evidence is not satisfactory from an epistemological point of view. This is where the contextualist argument of this section comes in.

<sup>11</sup> I thank Sebastian Schmoranz and the participants of the „Kolloquium zur Theoretischen Philosophie“ at the University of Münster in summer term 2011 for helpful remarks.

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# Protecting *Tractatus* from Isomorphism: Zur projektiven Beziehung zwischen Elementarsätzen und Sachverhalten

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## Einleitung

Es kann manchmal interessant sein, Kritik an Übereinstimmungen zu üben. Beispielsweise lässt sich feststellen, dass sich vielzitierte und einflussreiche Autoren, u.a., Stenius, Black, Stegmüller, Hacker, Glock, die sich zur Philosophie des *Tractatus* äußern, darüber einig sind, dass die mathematische Technik der isomorphen Abbildung systematisch für das Verständnis des *Tractatus* benutzt werden kann oder sogar muss. Diese Art der einheitlichen Betrachtung ist zu rechtfertigen, wenn wir davon ausgehen, dass diese Technik das Verhältnis zwischen Elementarsätzen und den Sachverhalten, die sie wahr machen können, gut modellieren oder spiegeln kann. Das heißt: Mit einem isomorphen Mapping zwischen Strukturen, nämlich Elementarsätzen und Sachverhalten, ist es möglich, dass die Namen in den Sätzen die Gegenstände des Sachverhaltes strukturerhaltend injektiv, surjektiv und funktionell abbilden können. Dadurch wird Zweideutigkeit, Synonymie und unvollständige Bedeckung der Objekte des Sachverhaltes durch Namen per Definition verhindert. Außerdem haben wir durch diese Verwendung des Isomorphismus die Bewahrung der Form des Sachverhaltes in dem abbildenden Satz, d.h. eine Art der „surrogativen“ Abbildung, die die Bildtheorie des *Tractatus* kennzeichnet: „Der Satz ist ein Bild der Wirklichkeit. Der Satz ist ein Modell der Wirklichkeit, so wie wir sie uns denken“ (TLP 4.01). Der Erfolg dieser Betrachtung durch den Isomorphismus der berühmten Bildtheorie (TLP 2.1-2.225) der frühen Philosophie Wittgensteins scheint unschlagbar zu sein, da wir dadurch sozusagen genauer ansehen können, was nach der Perspektive des *Tractatus* mit den Elementarsätzen nach der vollständigen Analyse auf dem Boden der Sprache geschieht (vgl. TLP 3.25).

Der *Tractatus* vertritt eine strenge Art semantischer Kompositionalität der Sprache, genauer formuliert: Der Sinn und die Wahrheit von irgendwelcher Komplexität müsste auf den Sinn und die Wahrheit der Elementarsätzen, die sie ausmachen, reduziert werden können. Deshalb benötigen wir Elementarsätze, deren Mannigfaltigkeit der Mannigfaltigkeit der abgebildeten Sachverhalte entsprechen kann. Die logische Form, die Möglichkeit der Artikulation ihrer einfachen Bestandteile, und die Mannigfaltigkeit der Elementarsätze und der abgebildeten Sachverhalte müssen gleich sein. Diese Ontologie im *Tractatus* entspricht den Bedingungen der Abbildungen, die von seiner Bildtheorie gezeigt werden (TLP 2.1-2.225), nämlich: Eine Abbildung muss ein Komplex sein, eine Tatsache. Es gibt sozusagen kein einfaches Bild; es muss in einer Beziehung zum anderen Komplex stehen; beides muss dieselbe logische Mannigfaltigkeit haben, das heißt, am Satz muss gerade soviel zu unterscheiden sein, wie am Sachverhalt, den er abbilden kann; es muss ebenso einen Begriff der Richtung geben, die die Symmetrie in der Darstellungsbeziehung verhindern kann. Um diesen Punkt zu treffen, verwendet Wittgenstein den Begriff von Vertretung oder Ersetzbarkeit, d.h. die Bestandteile der Darstellung stehen für die Bestandteile der dargestellten Komplexe. Sie vertreten im Satz die Bestandteile der Sachverhalte. Nur ein organisierter Komplex kann für eine Darstellung gehalten werden. Wittgenstein nennt diese Artikulation der Bestandteile die Struktur des Bildes und ihre

Möglichkeit die Form der Abbildung oder logische Form. Zum Schluss haben wir den letzten Schritt der Bildtheorie: Die logische Form des Bildes und des Abgebildeten müssen identisch sein, so dass das Eine Darstellung des Anderen sein kann.

Es ist nicht schwierig zu verstehen, was Wittgenstein mit der letzten Bedingung vorhat. Wenn ein Bild mit der Wirklichkeit die logische Form gemein hat, gewinnen wir eine Art von „Surrogation“, besser formuliert, die Konservierung der Relationen eines Bereiches in einem anderen Bereich, indem eine konservative Vertretung ihrer Bestandteile stattfindet. Es muss ersichtlich sein, dass die beiden Bereiche oder Komplexe den gleichen kombinatorischen Horizont haben, die gleichen Möglichkeiten der Kombination, die gleiche logische Form, dass dieselben Relationen zwischen ihren Bestandteilen bestehen.

## Entwicklung

Ich vertrete hier die Deutung, dass die beiden am häufigsten benutzten Interpretationen, nämlich die wesentliche Harmonie und die Anwendung der Technik des Isomorphismus, scheitern, wenn sie davon ausgehen, dass eine ontologische Unterscheidung zwischen der Welt und der Sprache besteht. Der Holismus der Tatsachen in der Welt im *Tractatus* leugnet einen solchen Unterschied. Die Betrachtung der Welt und der Sprache als zwei ontologisch verschiedene Entitäten ist im *Tractatus* irreführend. Welt und Sprache sind eher zwei verschiedene Redeweisen über dieselben Tatsachen, die die Wirklichkeit ausmachen, weil die Welt zerfällt in Tatsachen (TLP 1.2). „Wie im Märchen die zwei Jünglinge, ihre Pferde und ihre Lilien. Sie sind alle in gewissem Sinne Eins“ (TLP 4.014). Die wesentliche Harmonie scheint, trivial zu werden, weil beide, strikt genommen, gleich sind. Im *Tractatus* gilt es, dass die Sprache durchaus ontologisch ist und die Welt sprachlich.

Das Bestehen auf die systematische Anwendung der Technik des Isomorphismus in der Begrifflichkeit des *Tractatus* wäre vor allem dann noch fragwürdiger, wenn wir die Beziehung zwischen dieser Anwendung zu seinen metaphysischen Wurzeln betonen. Diese führt nämlich dazu, dass einige begriffliche Schwierigkeiten entstehen.

Ich halte das Werk von Stenius für den Vater dieser Anwendung. Es ist auffällig, dass diese eben in dem Jahrzehnt entstehen, in dem diese Technik Verbreitung gefunden hat.

“Wittgenstein’s use of the notion of representation (*Abbildung*) and related concepts is not free from a certain amount of ambiguity, and I do not think it possible to grasp exactly what idea he connects with them. I shall therefore adopt the following method of analysis. First I shall define an exact concept of ‘representation’ called isomorphic representation. Then I shall interpret Wittgenstein’s statements about pictures with reference to this sort of depicting. In this way we obtain a model that satisfies many of Wittgenstein’s statements on the subject. This model can be used as a system of reference for the analysis of Witt-

genstein's application of the concept of a picture in his theory of language." (91).

Ebenso können wir diese Anwendung in dem einflussreichen Werk von Black finden:

„We can derive the following simple formula for the form of an atomic fact: an atomic fact composed of the objects a, b, c, has the same logical form as one composed of the objects d, e, f, if and only if there is a one-one correlation between the first and second group such that the correlated objects are isomorphic. That is to say, atomic facts are isomorphic if and only if they are composed of the same number of mutually isomorphic elements. Hence, the logical forms of objects uniquely determine the logical forms of the atomic facts in which they can combine." (68f).

Inzwischen können wir die Entwicklungen und Übernahmen dieser Anwendung in anderen wichtigen Arbeiten finden, wie:

„Darstellung ist möglich durch einen logischen Isomorphismus, eine Übereinstimmung in der Form zwischen dem, was darstellt und dem, was dargestellt wird.“ (Glock, *Wittgenstein Lexikon*, „Bildtheorie“, 86)

„Die logische Form, die Sätzen und dem, was sie abbilden, müssen gemeinsam sein (Ausdrückbarkeit der Harmonie zwischen Denken und Wirklichkeit)“ (*id. ib.* 309, „Sagen und Zeigen“).

Was erlangen wir, wenn wir den Isomorphismus, das heißt, diese strukturerhaltende eins-zu-eins-Zuordnung zwischen Komplexen in Betracht ziehen? In der Tat sind die positiven Ergebnisse dieser Interpretation attraktiv genug, um diese liebgewordene Anwendung zu fördern und zu rechtfertigen. Durch diese Anwendung gewinnen wir eine gewisse technische Instrumentalität mit deutlicheren Kriterien der Identität und Anwendbarkeit dieser strukturerhaltenden eins-zu-eins-Zuordnung. Das ist klarer, als es im *Tractatus* mit dem Begriff der Projektion zu verstehen ist. Dazu kommt auch, dass wir ein detaillierteres Verständnis der Modelle in seiner Bildtheorie gewinnen können.

Allerdings könnten wir ebenso fragen, ob wir etwas verlieren können, wenn wir auf dieser technischeren Interpretation bestehen, vor allem wenn die metaphysische Züge des *Tractatus* zur Diskussion stehen, beispielsweise, die Existenz der ewigen Gegenstände, die einen absoluten logischen Raum der Möglichkeiten bestimmen, oder die Existenz der wesentlich einfachen Namen, die die voneinander unabhängigen Elementarsätze ausmachen. Die Antwort auf die Frage nach den Verlusten zeigt uns, dass wir von der Begrifflichkeit des *Tractatus* mehr verlieren, als uns lieb sein kann. Es könnte dadurch nämlich seine metaphysische Ebene irrelevant werden. Eine vorläufige Aufstellung der Verluste führt zu dem Schluss, dass wir, wenn wir doch diesen technischen Begriff im *Tractatus* zur Modellierung seiner Bildlichkeit behalten wollten, ihn mit mehr Bedacht übernehmen müssten.

Erstens wäre es fragwürdig, den Isomorphismus auf den *Tractatus* anzuwenden, weil es anachronistisch wäre. Wittgenstein hat nie, weder vor noch nach dem *Tractatus*, einen solchen Terminus benutzt. Es ist auch auffällig, dass es auch im *Tractatus* selbst keine Worte dafür gibt. Man kann sogar in Zweifel ziehen, ob er die technische Kenntnis darüber hatte und ihre Anwendung in der Algebra. Isomorphe Modellierungen sind relativ neue Techniken in der Mathematik, die, beispielsweise, erst in den 60-Jahren durch die Entstehung der „Theory of Categories“ populär

geworden sind. Es gilt als eine algebraische Methode der systematischen Umformung der abstrakten Strukturen.

Zweites Problem: Auch wenn der Isomorphismus zwischen Strukturen begrifflich gut ausdrücken kann, was Wittgenstein mit der Projektion der Elementarsätze in die Sachverhalte meint, übersieht man, was diese Technik mit dem metaphysischen Verständnis des *Tractatus* machen würde. Sie würde die metaphysische Ebene zur Bestimmung des Sinnes eines Satzes irrelevant machen. Zum Beispiel würde es keinen Grund für die ontologische Forderung geben, dass wir über ewige Gegenstände verfügen müssen, damit die Sätze einen bestimmten Sinn hätten. Und dies deshalb, weil, wenn wir Mappings zwischen Strukturen betrachten, die Elemente des modellierten Bereiches einfach willkürlich ausgewählt werden dürfen, so dass die Relationen und Eigenschaften der dargestellten Struktur ohne Probleme konserviert werden können. Diese willkürliche Auswahl nach pragmatischen Zielen weist auf die Möglichkeit einer Metasprache hin, die im *Tractatus* verboten ist. Außerdem würde die Konservierung des Möglichkeitshorizonts zwischen den Elementen der Sätze und der Sachverhalte (die für den *Tractatus* unentbehrlich ist) nicht mehr für eine Instanz einer essentiellen Harmonie zwischen Sprache und Welt gehalten werden müssen, woraufhin 5.4711 aber hinzudeuten scheint. Denn diese Konservierung kann durch die isomorphe Bewahrung zwischen Strukturen geliefert werden. Die beiden traditionellen Interpretationen, die Technik des Isomorphismus und die essentielle Harmonie, sind miteinander nicht strikt inkompatibel, aber, wenn sie zusammengestellt werden, würden sie redundant sein. Die Anwendung des Isomorphismus auf den *Tractatus* gilt als eine Garantie per definitionem dafür, was der junge Wittgenstein zu wollen schien: Eine Struktur (hier, die Sprache) wurde auf eine andere (hier, die Welt) in eine eins-zu-eins-Relation projiziert, so dass die Relationen oder die Möglichkeit der Artikulation der Elemente von Einer (Objekten) von den Elementen der Anderen (Namen) konserviert würden. Trotzdem glaube ich, dass die Frage nach der Modellierung der Welt durch die Sprache, die die Basis für die beiden Interpretationen ist, eine falsche Frage ist, denn es gibt streng genommen keinen ontologischen Unterschied zwischen Sprache und Welt im *Tractatus*. Die Welt wird durchaus von Tatsachen ausgemacht. Es gibt nichts als die Sprache als eine unabhängige Struktur, die isomorph oder per Harmonie der Wesen auf die Welt projiziert wird. Welt und Sprache sind nicht zu trennen oder zu unterscheiden. Sie sind Tatsachen, die von einfachen Gegenständen ausgemacht sind, die den exhaustiven Horizont der Möglichkeiten (logischer Raum) bestimmen. Dies würde ein Hinweis auf einen gewissen Holismus im *Tractatus* sein.

Tatsächlich drückt die mathematische Technik des Isomorphismus gut aus, was Wittgenstein mit der Bildtheorie wollte, nämlich: (i) In der elementaren Ebene der Sprache kommt keine Zweideutigkeit vor, das heißt, es besteht nicht die Möglichkeit, dass ein Name zwei Bedeutungen hat. Das wird vom Isomorphismus geliefert, weil es um eine Funktion geht. (ii) Auf der elementaren Ebene der Sprache kommt keine Synonymie vor, das heißt, es besteht nicht die Möglichkeit, dass ein Objekt zwei Namen hat. Das ist durch das Ausschließen der Identität von einer geeigneten Notation gezeigt (TLP 5.53\* und 3.325). Im *Tractatus* ist es unsinnig zu sagen, dass „x=y“, und ist es trivial zu sagen, dass es nicht der Fall ist, dass „x=y“. Wenn es zwei Namen gibt, dann bedeutet das daher, dass es zwei Objekte gibt. Das wird durch den injektiven Aspekt der isomorphen Abbildung geliefert. (iii) Es kann ebenso nicht sein, dass ein Gegenstand im abgebildeten Sachver-

halt keinen Namen hat, das heißt, dass alle Gegenstände einen Namen haben müssen. Es muss irgendwie eine vollständige Bedeckung der Objekte des Sachverhaltes durch die Namen in dem Elementarsatz geben. Das ist durch den Isomorphismus geliefert, weil es um eine ein-zu-eins-Funktion geht.

## Konklusion

In der folgenden Liste können wir das größte Problem mit dieser Anwendung, das Übersehen der Metaphysik des *Tractatus*, übersichtlich darstellen. Dieses kann in andere untergeordnete Probleme geteilt werden:

*Begriffliche oder technische Probleme:* a) Die Invertierbarkeit der Bijektion im Isomorphismus. Wenn ein Komplex A einen Komplex B abbildet, B muss nicht ebenso A abbilden. Es muss hier eine Asymmetrie durch Vertretung der Elemente geben; b) Wenn es eine Symmetrie gäbe, hätten wir die Möglichkeit einer a priori wahren Karte. Wenn wir ein Modell haben, wissen wir noch nicht, ob der dargestellte Sachverhalt eine Tatsache ist. Bilder müssen nämlich Tatsachen sein; c) Die Idee von einem Isomorphismus der Namen, wie von Black dargestellt, macht im *Tractatus* keinen Sinn, weil wir dafür Komplexität benötigen, und echte Namen im *Tractatus* müssen einfach sein.

*Die Entleerung der Metaphysik (robust, aber zentral):* a) mit dem Isomorphismus haben wir nicht mehr wesentliche Einfachheit, sondern eine gewisse pragmatische. Es wäre der Kontext der Anwendung der Darstellung, der bestimmen würde, welche und wie oft die einfachen Elemente auftreten würden; b) wir würden nicht mehr ewige oder unzerstörbare Objekte benötigen, denn irgendwelche Elemente in einer Struktur könnten im Prinzip für dargestellte oder darstellende Elemente gehalten werden; c) wir würden nicht mehr einen absoluten und ewigen logischen Raum brauchen. Wir könnten über komplementäre oder ausschließende Räume der Möglichkeiten verfügen, die unabhängig oder in einem System organisiert vorkommen können. d) wir hätten eine Willkürlichkeit der internen Be-

ziehung, denn die Projektion im Isomorphismus würde sich nach Auswahlen, Neigungen, pragmatischen oder kontextuellen Zielen vollziehen; e) Im Isomorphismus benötigen wir die Metasprache, die im *Tractatus* strikt verboten ist.

*Übersehen der Ethik und des Holismus des Tractatus:* a) Holismus: „Bilder (Sätze) sind Tatsachen“ (2.141). „Die Welt zerfällt in Tatsachen“ (1.2). Streng genommen, gibt es keinen ontologischen Unterschied zwischen Welt und Sprache im *Tractatus*. Diese Deutung macht das Verständnis der Ethik natürlicher: Es gibt keine Hierarchie oder Teilung der Welt. Die sprachlichen Modelle sind in der Welt. Sie gehören zu den Tatsachen der Welt. Die sprachlichen Modelle werden in der Welt durchgeführt. Die Tatsachen sind immer potentielle Karten oder Modelle. Wir haben nicht die Welt, sondern eine ontologische Redeweise über die Tatsachen. Wir haben nicht die Sprache, sondern eine sprachliche Redeweise über die Tatsachen. Wir haben nur Tatsachen, die den gleichen Wert haben und der gleichen Ebene entsprechen. b) Normativität: Mit dem Isomorphismus verlieren wir den Begriff eines Paradigmas für die ganze Sprache, die wichtig für den *Tractatus*, aber dieser mathematischen Technik völlig fremd ist; c) Die negative Einstellung zur traditionellen Philosophie ist ebenso entleert. Es scheint uns, dass es keinen Sinn macht, Isomorphismus in einem Zusammenhang anzuwenden, in dem wir die unantastbare und definitive Lösung aller Probleme der Philosophie im Wesentlichen erwarten.

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# A Language of One's Own? Language-Games in Feminist Philosophy of Language

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In their article "Wittgenstein and Irigaray: Gender and Philosophy in a Language (Game) of Difference", Davidson and Smith apply Wittgenstein's expression "language-games" toward defending the French philosopher Luce Irigaray's critics who claim her call to establish a "female" language is grounded in a biologically essentialist understanding of "woman". By describing and discussing the relationship between language-games and two other expressions of Wittgenstein's, "family resemblance" and "form(s) of life", Davidson and Smith clear the ground for comparing Wittgenstein's non-essentialism with Irigaray's project. It is primarily, however, the connection between language-games and form(s) of life I would like to focus on for it is in connecting these two terms that Davidson and Smith meet with difficulties. Although Davidson and Smith discuss Wittgenstein's writings first and then move on to Irigaray, I will begin by presenting their description of Irigaray's project and some difficulties her project has met with. Next I will discuss Davidson and Smith's use of Wittgenstein's terms and show how their conception of language-game, especially its connection to form(s) of life, causes problems for their defence of Irigaray. Finally, I will refer to Irigaray herself and Virginia Woolf to substantiate where and how Davidson and Smith's defence of Irigaray fails.

## 1. Irigaray's project and critics

According to Smith and Davidson, a Wittgensteinian perspective applied to Irigaray entails asking "what language-game(s) she is engaging with/in". (Davidson and Smith, 84) To this they answer that she is interested in

"uncovering the causes of women's oppression and in trying to change the way that women are conceptualized so that they can be valued as sexed subjects in their own right and not as a man's counterpart, or as lesser men." (Davidson & Smith, 84)

And for Irigaray the locus of this oppression is the current symbolic order which also includes language. Since Irigaray thus sees language as a source of female oppression, changing language is a way to eliminate this oppression at its source. Davidson and Smith write,

"One can interpret Irigaray's project as an attempt to develop a specifically feminine language-game. ... Irigaray argues that the main problem for women has been the *lack of a language of their own* or at least the impossibility of speaking of women's experience within the hegemony of masculine linguistic structures. ... Rather than attempting to build upon already existing language-games, she seeks through her writings to create a new and specifically feminine linguistic space." (Davidson & Smith, 84)

Regarding critics who charge Irigaray with biological essentialism, Davidson and Smith provide us with many

passages from Irigaray which are difficult not to understand as having such an essentialist point of departure. The most telling of these passages is perhaps,

"... the most appropriate content for the universal is sexual difference. Indeed this content is both real and universal. Sexual difference is an immediate natural given and it is a really and irreducible component of the universal. The whole of humankind is composed of women and men and nothing else. ..." (Irigaray, 47)

This, in addition to Irigaray connecting the new "female" language to the female body, gives the impression that by sexual difference she means biological, bodily difference. Davidson and Smith write,

"Feminist theorists unhappy with Irigaray's constant references to the female body often say that Irigaray's entire project is deeply flawed, constructed on a theoretical foundation informed by a biologically essentialist view of women." (Davidson & Smith, 80)

## 2. Language-games generally and in the Brown Book and *Philosophical Investigations*

In general, Wittgenstein's expression language-game is strongly tied to arguments for anti-essentialism, i.e. that language is not a unity. Our use of a word has many faces and forms a family of resemblances. In answer to an interlocutor in PI §65 who claims Wittgenstein has not yet said what language-games share which allows him to call them language, Wittgenstein in PI §67 writes that language-games share a family resemblance. We can thus use a word differently in different contexts and for different purposes with no unitary thread of meaning running through these uses. The word's meaning depends on the context and purpose of its use, upon the language-game in which it is used.

And here we come to a break between how Wittgenstein uses language-games in the Brown Book (BrB) and how he uses language-games in *Philosophical Investigations* (PI). In his preface to *The Blue and Brown Books*, Rush Rhees points out, quoting Wittgenstein, that in the Brown Book (BrB) Wittgenstein does not regard the language-games he describes "as incomplete parts of a language, but as languages complete in themselves". (Wittgenstein 1965: ix, 81) Although in both BrB and PI language-games "are not stages in the exposition of a more complicated language", they are both "stages in a discussion leading up to the "big question" of what language is (in par. 65)." (Wittgenstein 1965: xi) In this respect, another difference between PI and BrB, one which Rhees does not mention, is that where we find the idea of family resemblance in both BrB and PI, we only find form(s) of life in PI.

### 3. Language-games, language and form(s) of life

In their article, Davidson and Smith seem to use language-game in the BrB fashion, as a language complete in itself. This might explain why they often seem to use “language-game” interchangeably with “language”. We see this in the quote above from page 84 (from needing a “specifically feminine language-game” to needing “a language of their own”) and several other places in their text. E.g. with

“to concentrate attention on the role of language-games in determining meaning and reference can appear to be idealist, to overstate language’s autonomy and influence.” (Davidson & Smith, 78)

and again in the same paragraph

“The term “form(s) of life” is a way of designating the embeddedness of language-games in their wider cultural and natural environment such that “[t]o imagine a language is to imagine a form of life” (Wittgenstein 1988, 23).” (Davidson & Smith: 78)

Note Wittgenstein does *not* write that to imagine a *language-game* is to imagine a form of life, but rather to imagine a *language* is to imagine a form of life. As we saw above, the BrB use of language-game as languages complete in themselves does not relate language-games to form(s) of life. They also cite the wrong § number. Their quote is actually from §19. §23 reads:

“And hence the term “language-game” is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or a form of life.”

In §23 “language-game” and “language” are not the same and it is clear that language-game is being used heuristically to help the reader see language use as connected to what we do, how we live. In §19 Wittgenstein is *not* claiming that the language-game he presents there actually represents a form of life. I think rather that he is asking: Is this language-game *really* something we can imagine as a form of life? Can we really “...imagine a language consisting only of orders and reports in battle. —Or a language consisting only of questions and expressions for answering yes and no.”(PI, §19)?

When we understand language-game as it is used in PI, as a metaphor for how we use words within different contexts and activities and that these are not themselves form(s) of life, but only aspects of human form(s) of life, we have the information we need to see where Davidson and Smith go wrong. If, as Davidson and Smith claim, the language Irigaray employs engages with a language-game concerned with revealing the sources of female oppression, not a language-game of e.g. “the quasi-scientific objectivism of socio-biology” (Davison & Smith, 77)), within such a context her words are no longer biological essentialist as many of her critics maintain. Her words can rather be understood as liberating by giving women a say in the words used to define them. They write:

“...within feminist language-games, “woman” is not a symbol dependent upon the discovery and excavation of an underlying identity, but an indication of a variable and emergent collection of relations among women.” (Davidson & Smith, 77)

However, if such language-games already exist, it would indicate that women *have* found means of expression within the current language. And given that, in PI, language, *not* language-games, is connected with human form(s) of life, it would mean that women *do* participate in current linguistic forms and thus language is *not* wholly masculine as indicated in the quote from page 84 above. The only way one can use language-games in defence of Irigaray’s project, as Davidson and Smith present it, is to show that Irigaray’s use of words referring to the female body and anatomy is not biologically essentialist. When they understand language-games according to the BrB, Davidson and Smith confuse language-games with language and turn Irigaray into a linguistic essentialist, i.e. that our current language is wholly masculine and that, even within current conditions, it is actually possible for women to have a language of their own. Although women can and do develop their own uses of words, these would according to the PI be called language-games and would not express a female form of life, but rather female experience in the wider form of life of which they are a part. This form of life includes males and females as well as children, animals, cities, woods, mountains, oceans, etc. If our language is an expression our form of life, it is an expression of the lives of those who use language. The only way, according to the Wittgenstein of the PI, women could have a language of their own, as described by Davidson and Smith, is if they lived only amongst their own gender or if only women were capable of speech.

### 4. Woolf and Irigaray, a language together

Virginia Woolf, in this sense, is more of a Wittgensteinian of the PI variety than Davidson and Smith. In *A Room of One's Own* she considers the theme women and fiction through various contexts and activities: the library she could enter only when accompanied by a man, the sumptuous luncheons at men’s colleges and the plain dinner at a women’s, their mothers’ inability to endow a college, the empty state of women’s purses and lack of a room of their own, the number of books written by men, even more that has been written about women, Shakespeare’s sister, and the successes and failures of women poets and novelist. A conclusion she makes regarding woman and fiction is that yes, women must find their own voices, but this must be as individuals and not in isolation as woman. I quote her at length

“[I]t is fatal for any one who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or a woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly. It is fatal for a woman to lay the least stress on any grievance; to plead even with justice any cause; in any way to speak consciously as a woman. And fatal is no figure of speech; for anything written with that conscious bias is doomed to death. It ceases to be fertilised. ... Some collaboration has to take place in the mind between the woman and the man before the act of creation can be accomplished. ... The whole of the mind must lie wide open if we are to get the sense that the writer is communicating his experience with perfect fullness. There must be freedom and there must be peace.” (Woolf, 108)

In her 1996 work *i love to you*, Irigaray also sees the importance for both genders to have a language, retain their subjectivity, and not to subordinate the other's language to their own. In the phrase "i love to you", the "to" is a guarantee that the "you" toward which it is aimed is not reduced to an object. Irigaray writes, "The "to" is also a barrier against alienating the other's freedom in my subjectivity, my world, my language." (Irigaray, 110) But how then do women and men communicate if they are each thus linguistically enclosed within the subjectivity of their gender? Here the real communication is something between the two genders, where they meet as non-reduced intentionalities. For Irigaray "Man and woman, faithful to their identity, do not have the same intentionality, as they are not the same gender, and do not occupy the same genealogical position. But they can make commitments to act together according to terms of agreement that render their intentionalities compatible ...". (Irigaray, 112). Although perhaps not wholly in line with the PI understanding of the relationship between language and form(s) of life, it does at least echo one of Wittgenstein's uses of form(s) of life in PI:

"—It is what human beings *say* which is true and false; and they agree in the *language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions, but in form of life." (PI, §241)\*

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# Wittgenstein über Werte

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Wittgensteins Distanzierung von Fragen der Ethik und von Werten als Gegenstand philosophischer Diskussion hat er im *Tractatus* dezidiert dargelegt:

Der Sinn der Welt muß außerhalb ihrer liegen. In der Welt ist alles, wie es ist, und geschieht alles, wie es geschieht; es gibt *in* ihr keinen Wert – und wenn es ihn gäbe, so hätte er keinen Wert. Wenn es einen Wert gibt, der Wert hat, so muß er außerhalb alles Geschehens und So-Seins liegen. Denn alles Geschehen und So-Sein ist zufällig. Was es nichtzufällig macht, kann nicht *in* der Welt liegen, denn sonst wäre dies wieder zufällig. Es muß außerhalb der Welt liegen.“ (TLP, 6.41)

Da es in der Welt keinen Wert gibt, kann es auch keine Sätze der Ethik geben, denn Sätze – vorausgesetzt, sie sind sinnvoll – beziehen sich auf die Tatsachenwelt und können daher „nichts Höheres ausdrücken.“ (TLP, 6.42)

Seine Weigerung, Fragen der Ethik und Religion innerhalb der Philosophie zu behandeln, hat Wittgenstein bekannterweise jedoch nicht zeit seines Lebens durchgehalten.

Abgesehen von der Erörterung dieser Thematik in seinen persönlichen Aufzeichnungen, insbesondere denen in verschlüsselter Schrift geführten, ist vor allem der *Vortrag über Ethik* zu nennen, wo er sozusagen eine „Ausnahme“ wagte, um über Fragen der Ethik zu sprechen, die er in den Jahren zuvor definitiv aus der Philosophie ausgeklammert haben wollte.

Bereits zu Beginn seines Vortrags, den er laut derzeitigem Stand der Forschung am 17.11.1929 vor den Heretics in Cambridge hielt, wies Wittgenstein auf die Wichtigkeit des von ihm gewählten Themas hin, äußerte gleichzeitig aber seine Bedenken, den Weg und das Ziel seiner Rede für alle verständlich zu machen. Mit Bezug auf George Edward Moore's Definition der Ethik als „die allgemeine Untersuchung dessen, was gut ist“, könne man nach Wittgensteins Ansicht Ethik ebenso als „die Untersuchung dessen, was Wert hat, bzw. dessen, was wirklich wichtig ist“ beschreiben. (VE, 10). Außerdem wolle er die Ethik in „etwas weiterem Sinne gebrauchen“, d.h. mit Einbeziehung der Ästhetik – womit die Nähe zu seiner bereits im *Tractatus* festgelegten Aussage „Ethik und Ästhetik sind Eins“ (6.421) gegeben ist. Dieser Gedanke des Zusammenhangs zwischen Ethik und Ästhetik kommt in frühen sowie späteren Schriften Wittgensteins vor, zieht sich ähnlich seiner Auffassung vom Zusammenhang zwischen Ethik und Religion sowie der Trennung des Sagbaren vom Unsagbaren durch seine Aufzeichnungen gleich einem roten Faden.

Der *Vortrag über Ethik* steht zeitlich gewissermaßen in der Mitte zwischen dem „frühen“ und dem „späten“ Wittgenstein – wie in der Rezeption häufig unterschieden wird. Anstelle dieser, meiner Ansicht nach im Hinblick auf die vorhin genannten gleichbleibenden Gedankengänge nicht ganz berechtigten Unterteilung, würde ich in diesem Zusammenhang eher zwischen Wittgenstein, dem Verfasser der philosophischen Schriften und Wittgenstein, dem Verfasser der persönlichen Schriften unterscheiden, wobei auch hier der *Vortrag über Ethik* sozusagen eine „Mittelstellung“ innehat. Denn in diesem spricht Wittgenstein

zwar ein bedeutendes philosophisches Problem an, doch nicht auf wissenschaftliche, analysierende Art und Weise, sondern aus persönlichem Erleben heraus.

Es ist ein Versuch, um die rational nicht erfassbare und aus seiner Philosophie ausgeklammerte Thematik der Ethik auf irgendeine Weise dennoch zu erörtern, ein Versuch, den er mit Hilfe dreier Beispiele persönlicher Erlebnisse wagte, bei denen ihm laut eigenen Worten das verständlich wurde, was das Wesen der Ethik ausmachen könne.

Entscheidend für den Unterschied zwischen Fragen, die Welt der Tatsachen betreffend und jenen, den Bereich außerhalb der Tatsachen, damit Ethik und Religion betreffend, ist die Unterscheidung zwischen relativen und absoluten Werten. Zu sagen, man fühle sich sicher im Haus, wenn es draußen regnet, oder dies sei die richtige Straße nach Granchester, seien Beispiele für relative, auf eine bestimmte Situation oder einen bestimmten Zweck (im Tataschenraum) bezogene, dem allgemeinen Hausverstand verständliche Werte.

Ganz anders verhält es sich hingegen mit absoluten Werten, also Werten, Ethik und Religion zugehörig. Die dafür gegebenen Beispiele wie „Ich bin in Sicherheit, egal was passiert“ oder dies ist „die absolut richtige Straße“, zeigen die Unsinnigkeit dieser Sätze bzw. den Missbrauch der Sprache auf.

Die Schwierigkeit ethischer Richtlinien liege darin, dass es keinen Sachverhalt gibt, der die „Zwangsgewalt eines absoluten Richters“ besäße. (VE, 14)

Nur durch persönlich erlebte Erfahrungen wurde Wittgenstein die Vorstellung von absoluten Werten bewusst. Im Erlebnis des Staunens über die Existenz der Welt wurde ihm das Ethische bzw. der absolute Wert des Staunens bewusst – im Gegensatz zu einem Staunen im relativen Sinn, das sich auf etwas Sensationelles, noch nie Dagewesenes bezieht und sich vom Staunen über Selbstverständliches grundlegend unterscheidet. Da man Ungewöhnliches stets wissenschaftlich zu erklären versucht, sieht Wittgenstein in den Wissenschaften eine Gefahr, die Fähigkeit zum Staunen zu zerstören bzw. unempfänglich für Staunenswertes zu machen – insbesondere im Hinblick auf täglich Erlebtes und als für selbstverständlich Empfundenes wie eben auch die Existenz der Welt.

„Nicht *wie* die Welt ist, ist das Mystische, sondern *daß* sie ist“ heißt es bereits im *Tractatus* 6.44, und weiters: „Das Gefühl der Welt als Ganzes ist das mystische“ (TLP, 6.45).

Relative Werte ordnet Wittgenstein auf derselben Stufe wie wissenschaftliche Sätze sowie jegliche wahren Aussagen ein, die sich artikulieren lassen. Es gibt nach ihm keine Sätze, die in absolutem Sinn erhaben oder wichtig sind.

Aufgrund dieses entscheidenden Unterschieds zu Fakten lässt Ethik sich nicht erklären oder beschreiben; unsere Wörter – Wittgenstein stützt sich auf Gleichnisse – seien Gefäße, die nichts weiter enthielten als natürliche Bedeutung und natürlichen Sinn, daher relativen Wert und relativen Sinn. Die Ethik hingegen ist übernatürlich und dadurch durch „natürliche“ Wörter, „natürliche“ Sprache

nicht darstellbar. Die Folge ist, dass alle Sätze über Ethik in Unsinn münden; diese Unsinnigkeit, so Wittgenstein, sei aber gerade das Charakteristische aller religiösen und ethischen Ausdrücke.

Im Dezember 1930, also ca. einen Monat nach dem *Vortrag über Ethik*, diskutierte Wittgenstein mit Mitgliedern des Wiener Kreises erneut Fragen der Ethik, Religion und der Werte. Dabei brachte er wiederum seine Ablehnung gegenüber jeder Form einer Erklärung oder Theorie über diese Thematik zum Ausdruck. Auch wenn die Theorie wahr wäre, würde sie ihn nicht interessieren. „Das Ethische kann man nicht lehren. Wenn ich einem anderen erst durch eine Theorie das Wesen des Ethischen erklären könnte, so hätte das Ethische gar keinen Wert.“ (WWK, 116f.) Und er wies darauf hin, im *Vortrag über Ethik* bewusst in der ersten Person gesprochen zu haben, denn nur als Persönlichkeit konnte er diese Thematik erörtern, nicht als Wissenschaftler mit dem Anspruch auf eine Theorie über Ethik. Damit stand er ganz im Gegensatz zu Schlick, der in seinem Buch *Die Ethik als Tatsachenswissenschaft* schrieb, dass die letzten Wertungen „in der Wirklichkeit des menschlichen Bewußtseins bestehende Tatsachen“ seien, und „selbst wenn die Ethik eine Normwissenschaft wäre, hörte sie daher nicht auf, eine Wissenschaft von *Tatsachen* zu sein.“ (zit. nach WWK, 116).

Nach Wittgensteins Ansicht könne man nur beschreiben, „daß vorgezogen wird“, nicht aber, dass das Vorgezogene wertvoller sei. Ebenso müsse die Soziologie nur unsere Handlungen und unsere Wertungen beschreiben, d.h. „nur berichten, was geschieht.“ (ebenda, 115f.)

Die Diskrepanz zwischen Schlick und Wittgenstein zeigt sich auch hinsichtlich der zwei Auffassungen vom Wesen des Guten in der theologischen Ethik. Während Schlick diejenige Deutung, nach der Gott das Gute deshalb wolle, weil es gut sei, für die tiefere hält, betrachtet Wittgensteins dies als die flachere Deutung. Nach ihm sei die tiefere Deutung diejenige, die nach keiner Begründung oder Erklärung fragt, somit in dem Satz „Gut ist, was Gott befiehlt“ enthalten ist. (WWK, 115)

In weiteren Gesprächen mit dem Wiener Kreis über Werte bekundet er dieselbe Haltung gegenüber jeder Form von Begründung: „Was immer man mir sagen mag, ich würde es ablehnen, und zwar nicht darum, weil die Erklärung falsch ist, sondern weil sie eine *Erklärung* ist.“ (WWK, S. 116)

Wie aus neu aufgefundenen Tagebüchern Ludwig Hänsels aus der Zeit der Kriegsgefangenschaft mit Wittgenstein bei Montecassino hervorgeht, diskutierten die beiden auch über Werte wie „das Gute“. Dieses Gute, so Hänsel, war Wittgenstein der „Glückszustand“; es gebe drei Gruppen der ethischen Ziele:

- 1.) Ein zu erwerbendes Gut (konsekutiver Wert) irdischer oder jenseitiger Besitz
- 2.) Ein unmittelbar gegebenes Gut. Befriedigung des Triebes oder Ekstase (und das will W., auch die Musik ist ihm Rauschmittel, Versunkenheit, Zauber und sein Gutsein ist ihm Musik). Die 3. Gruppe verzichtet auf die Ziele als Güter des Besitzes oder des Zustandes, will Ordnung, Gesetz: Philister oder Kant. Ihr parallel eine 4. Gruppe will Vollkommenheit (Würde oder Heiligkeit) Motiv (Stolz). (*Hänsels Tagebücher 1918/19*)

Verglichen mit Wittgensteins Äußerungen über das Gute in seinen persönlichen und philosophischen Schriften lässt sich seine Vorstellung von „gut“ in den folgenden drei Punkten fassen:

1. im Glückszustand, wie er ihn in den *Tagebüchern 1914-1916* als ein Leben „nicht in der Zeit, sondern in der Gegenwart“ beschreibt. Außerdem sah Wittgenstein den Glückszustand bzw. das glückliche Leben im Verzicht auf irdische Güter, als ein Leben in der Erkenntnis, im Geiste. Die Befriedigung des Triebes, wie es Hänsel formuliert, würde im Gegensatz dazu stehen; Versunkenheit in der Musik wie auch in jedem anderen Objekt der Kunst entspräche hingegen dem Enthobensein von Triebhaftigkeit und ist dem Zustand des reinen Subjekts des Erkennens in der ästhetischen Kontemplation zu vergleichen, wie von Schopenhauer in seiner Metaphysik des Schönen dargestellt. Aus der darin enthaltenen ethischen Komponente ist Wittgensteins Vorstellung von „Gutsein“ durch die Musik zu erklären.

2. in dem von Hänsel als Punkt 4 angeführten Streben nach Vollkommenheit, das sich bei Wittgenstein in der Orientierung an einem Ethos mit dem Anspruch der Vollkommenheit im Schreiben wie im Handeln äußert. Inwieweit dabei auch Stolz als Motiv hineinspielt, wird von Hänsel nicht weiter berichtet, doch kann man annehmen, dass Wittgenstein damit auf seine, von ihm gehasste und bekämpfte Eitelkeit, anspielte.

3. in religiöser Hinsicht auf Gottes Pläne bzw. dessen Willen bezogen, der ohne Hinterfragung als „gut“ zu sehen und zu akzeptieren sei.

„Wenn etwas Gut ist so ist es auch Göttlich. Damit ist seltsamerweise meine Ethik zusammengefasst“, notierte Wittgenstein am 10.11.1929 in verschlüsselter Schrift im MS 107. Wie weit diese Auffassung in seinem Denken zurückgeht, wird nicht nur aus seinen Bemerkungen über die Betrachtung *sub specie aeternitatis* (TB, 7.10.16 und TLP, 6.45) deutlich, sondern auch aus den Tagebuch-Aufzeichnungen seiner Schwester Hermine, die 1917 notierte: „Ludwig sagt Religion u. Ethik hängen absolut zusammen.“

Abgesehen von den ohnehin spärlichen Äußerungen über das Gute verhielt sich Wittgenstein in der begrifflichen Festlegung und philosophischen Erörterung von Werten insgesamt äußerst vorsichtig. Dies gilt, wie erörtert, für alle Fragen ethischer und religiöser Thematik, wobei sich vom Anfang bis zum Ende seines Philosophierens die Spannung zwischen rationaler Erkenntnis und damit nicht zu beantwortenden Fragen und Versuchen einer Annäherung beobachten lässt. Dabei zeigt sich eine unterschiedliche Befassung mit dem „Unaussprechlichen“ – je nach seinen philosophischen Schriften, und je nach seinen persönlichen, tagebuchartigen Aufzeichnungen: Das heißt, eine Distanz innerhalb des philosophischen Diskurses, und eine Annäherung aus seinem persönlichen Erleben heraus (zumeist in Code geschrieben), weshalb man von unterschiedlichen Textsorten im Oeuvre Wittgensteins sprechen kann. Aus Hänsels Tagebüchern geht hervor, dass zwischen ihm und Wittgenstein dessen persönlicher Zugang zur „Welt außerhalb der Tatsachen“ zur Sprache kam. Da dieser nicht rationaler Art war, Hänsel jedoch im Glauben nach rationaler Begründung suchte, kam es zu oftmals heftigen Kontroversen zwischen den beiden. Paradoxerweise verlangte gerade Hänsel, als sozusagen überzeugter Katholik, nach Beweisen im Glauben, während Wittgenstein – ein lebenslang Suchender und Zweifelnder – sich hinsichtlich des Glaubens ohne Hinterfragung blind hineinstürzen, den „Sprung ins Ungewisse“ im Sinne Kierkegaards, wagen wollte. Ein Wagnis, das er einmal folgendermaßen beschrieb: „Der ehrliche religiöse Denker ist wie ein Seiltänzer. Er geht, dem Anscheine nach, beinahe nur auf der Luft. Sein Grund/Boden ist der

schmalste, der sich denken läßt. Und doch läßt sich auf ihm wirklich gehen.“ (MS 137 67b, 5.7.1948)

In seinen philosophischen Aufzeichnungen blieb er hingegen sachlich-nüchtern und zog die Grenze zwischen den Möglichkeiten wissenschaftlicher und ethisch-religiöser Aussagen bereits in den frühen Tagebüchern und im *Tractatus*. Seine Haltung gegenüber dem Glauben zeigt sich zu der Zeit als eine mystisch-panentheistische, offenbar von Schopenhauer und Spinoza geprägte. Nur in den auf den linken, in verschlüsselter Schrift festgehaltenen Notizen der Kriegstagebücher, wird allmählich eine christlich-religiöse Annäherung sichtbar, die auf den Einfluss von Tolstois Schrift *Kurze Darlegung des Evangelium* zurückzuführen ist und Wittgensteins Beziehung zum Glauben über Jahre hinweg bestimmt hat. Deutlich wird dies auch in Hänsels Tagebüchern der Kriegsgefangenschaft, also fünf Jahre, nachdem Wittgenstein auf Tolstois Schrift gestoßen war. Und Hänsel scheint der Erste gewesen zu sein, der mit Wittgenstein ausführlich Tolstois Interpretation der Evangelien diskutierte. Der in den verschlüsselten Aufzeichnungen feststellbare Einfluss von Tolstoi macht sich allmählich auch in dem in Normalschrift gehaltenen philosophischen Teil bemerkbar. Sprach Wittgenstein vorher noch von einem allen Wesen gemeinsamen Geist, und einem „fremden Willen“, den zu erfüllen ein glückliches Leben verspricht, so wird dieser Wille nun mit Gott bzw. dem Sinn der Welt identifiziert, der nicht in der Welt, sondern außerhalb ihrer liegt. (Vgl. TB, 11.6.16) Von Tolstoi her rührt auch die Betonung auf dem Geist bzw. auf dem Streben nach einem Leben in der Erkenntnis. Weitere wesentliche Aspekte, die bei Tolstoi vorkommen und in Wittgensteins philosophischen Tagebüchern behandelt werden, sind die Rechtfertigung eines guten und glücklichen Lebens (das gemäß dem „Willen des Vaters“ ein vernünftiges Leben ist) – eines Lebens im Gegenwärtigen, außerhalb der Zeit. „Nur wer nicht in der Zeit, sondern in der Gegenwart lebt, ist glücklich“, notierte Wittgenstein am 8.7.1916.

Soweit aus den verschlüsselten und auch philosophischen Tagebüchern der Kriegsjahre hervorgeht, verstand Wittgenstein unter einem glücklichen Leben das gute und ethische Leben, das er im Anklang an Dostojewski als „Zweck des Daseins“ (6.7.1916) sah und das sich sozusagen von selbst rechtfertigt – der „Not der Welt zum Trotz“ (13.8.1916). Dass Wittgenstein dieses glückliche Leben im „Guten und Schönen“, also im ethischen und ästhetischen Leben gewährleistet sah, kommt auch in Hänsels Aufzeichnungen seiner Gespräche mit Wittgenstein zum Ausdruck: Wittgenstein sprach zu ihm sogar von einem „Rauschzustand“, den er beim Anhören von Musik verspürte, von Augenblicken, die er als „Goldkörner im Mist“ bezeichnete – Augenblicke, die im Sinne Schopenhauers den Menschen aus dem Zustand des Leids entheben, da sie ihn von allen persönlichen Relationen zur Umwelt, von triebhaften Äußerungen des Willens befreien.

Wittgensteins bekannte Gabe zur Begeisterung, seine Leidenschaftlichkeit bis zum Dionysischen, hat Hänsel, wie auch Paul Engelmann<sup>1</sup>, bereits sehr früh erkannt.

„Er ist durchaus lyrisch, liebt Rausch und Ekstase“, notierte Hänsel am 22.6.1919.

Vielleicht lässt sich daraus auch Wittgensteins Neigung für eine intuitive, non-verbale Betrachtungsweise und seine ambivalente, zuweilen ablehnende Haltung gegen-

über einem nüchtern-rationalen Zugang erklären, die sich, wie erörtert, insbesondere hinsichtlich ethischer Probleme und von Fragen der Werte zeigt. Allgemeingeltende Richtlinien könne es nach Wittgenstein nicht geben – es kommt stets auf den Einzelnen in einer bestimmten Situation oder um Phänomene einer bestimmten Epoche an. Der Irrtum, allgemein gültige Werte anzunehmen, zeige sich in den laufenden geistig-kulturellen Veränderungen, mit denen immer wieder eine Verschiebung in der Auffassung von Werten verbunden ist. „Das Trinken, zu einer Zeit symbolisch ist zu einer anderen Zeit Suff“ (DB, 24) – mit diesem lapidaren Satz beschreibt er dieses Phänomen, um etwas später fortzusetzen: „Unsere Zeit ist wirklich eine Zeit der Umwertung aller Werte. (Die Prozedur der Menschheit biegt um eine Ecke & was früher die Richtung nach oben war ist jetzt die Richtung nach unten etc.) Hat Nietzsche das im Sinne gehabt was jetzt geschieht & besteht sein Verdienst darin es vorausgeahnt & ein Wort dafür gefunden zu haben?“ (DB, 53f.)

Wie sehr Wittgenstein eine Wertlehre im wissenschaftlichen Sinne noch in späten Jahren ablehnte, geht auch aus seinen kritischen Anmerkungen zu einem Aufsatz Ludwig Hänsels mit dem Titel „Wertgefühl und Wert“ (1949) hervor. Darin versucht Hänsel, die Wertphilosophie nach drei Problembereichen zu diskutieren: Werte als Güter, Werte als Haltungen und Werte als Phänomene. Diesen Bereichen ordnet er jeweils Schulen zu – dem ersten die Gegenstandstheorie seines Lehrers Alexius von Meinong sowie die neuthomistischen und neu-aristotelischen Wertlehren, dem zweiten die neukantianischen und im weitesten Sinne des Wortes die „neu-idealistischen“ Schulen, dem dritten Bereich die Phänomenologie, z.B. des frühen Max Scheler. (Berger, in Hänsel, 348). Hänsels eigene Gedankengänge stehen dabei mit dem dritten Problembereich in engstem Zusammenhang. Im Sinne von Meinongs Gegenstandstheorie versucht er ein objektives Wertefundament zu skizzieren, das von einem erlebenden Subjekt umgesetzt und damit auch verwirklicht wird (ebenda, 348), womit er auf Wittgensteins harte Kritik stößt: „Wenn das Philosophie ist, dann sollten die Menschen ein für allemal auf sie verzichten.“

Indem Hänsel in seiner Zusammenfassung den Eindruck erweckt, als gäbe es in einer „psychologisch-anthropologischen Fassung“ verwertbare Ergebnisse, steht er in krassem Gegensatz zu Wittgenstein, nach dessen Auffassung es keine wissenschaftlichen Ergebnisse hinsichtlich einer Bestimmung von Werten geben kann. (Vgl. ebenda, 349)

Abgesehen von seiner Distanzierung jedweder Theorien über Ethik und Werte aufgrund der sich dabei erweisenden Grenzen der Sprache hinsichtlich des über die Tatsachenwelt hinausgehenden Bereichs, scheint Wittgensteins Distanzierung von diesen Problemen auch mit seiner Ernüchterung aufgrund des geistig-kulturellen sowie moralischen Niedergangs des fin de siècle in Zusammenhang zu stehen. Am 18.1.1949 hielt er fest:

Mein eigenes Denken über Kunst & Werte ist weit desillusionierter, als es das der Menschen vor 100 Jahren sein *konnte*. Und doch heißt das nicht, dass es deswegen richtiger ist. Es heißt nur, daß im Vordergrund meines Geistes Untergänge sind, die nicht im *Vordergrund* jener waren. (MS 138, 4a, zit. nach VB, 151)

<sup>1</sup> „W. war der leidenschaftlichste Mensch, den ich gekannt habe, und durch die persönliche Kenntnis dieses Menschen habe ich die Worte der Bettina von Arnim, von der ich vorher schon überzeugt war, auch erlebt: Die Leidenschaft ist ja der einzige Schlüssel zur Welt.“ (Wittgenstein – Engelmann, 150)

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# Truth- and Content-Relativism about ‘might’

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## 1. Epistemic Modality

I will focus on the epistemic modal ‘might’ as in

1. Miguel might be in Bristol on Sunday.

(1) says that a certain body of information, the *modal base*, does not rule out that

0. Miguel is in Bristol on Sunday.

Generally, the application of ‘might’ to a sentence *S* (*‘might(S)’* for short) says that the truth of *S* is compatible with the modal base.

Contextualism about ‘might’ is the thesis that

- C* for any sentence *S*, the meaning of *might(S)* depends on the context in which it is uttered.

To specify this idea, the context-dependency of the modal base needs be explicated. Usually, this is done in terms of David Kaplan’s semantics of indexicals (Kaplan 1989).

## 2. Contextualism about ‘might’

The contextualist distinguishes between the character of a sentence *might(S)*, and the content of its utterance. I focus on a simple variant of contextualism according to which

- C’* for any sentence *S*, the content of an utterance of *might(S)* is that the truth of *S* is compatible with the knowledge of the speaker of the utterance.

Naomi’s utterance of (1) in some context  $c_0$  accordingly says that her knowledge does not rule out (0). When Karel utters (1) in a different context  $c_1$ , the content of his utterance is that the truth of (0) is compatible with his knowledge.

These contents now are evaluated against the circumstances determined by the respective contexts of utterance. Assume that as things are in  $c_0$ , Miguel recently told Naomi of his plan to attend a workshop at Bristol this Sunday. Assume further that Karel has just run into Miguel on Market Street. Hence, what Naomi says by her utterance of (1) in  $c_0$  is true, whereas Karel’s utterance of the same sentence in  $c_1$ .

Notice that on this contextualist semantics, the content of an utterance is fully determined in a context, and likewise are the circumstances of evaluation, such that the truth value of an utterance is absolute. This feature of the contextualist account limits its explanatory power, as the subsequent section will show.

## 3. Contextualism and Retraction

Assume that Karel tells Naomi about his meeting with Miguel. Naomi may react in two ways that both seem equally natural. On one hand, she may utter

2. But he might have been in Bristol.

The contextualist has no difficulties to account for the felicity of this utterance. On his analysis, Naomi’s utterance of (1) in  $c_0$  remains true even if in other contexts, other

speakers know things incompatible with (0). Therefore, it is natural for Naomi to stand by her initial utterance even in this different context  $c_2$ , when she has learned that he was not in Bristol that Sunday.

On the other hand, though, there is no room for the contextualist to explain why Naomi could equally well retract what she said in :

3. OK, I was wrong.

Since according to contextualism, what Naomi said by her utterance of (1) is true absolutely, it is true also in this different context  $c_3$  when Naomi utters (3).

The contextualist cannot explain why this latter utterance seems natural. A different semantics is needed of the epistemic modal ‘might’, one that allows speakers to retract earlier utterances.

## 4. Truth-Relativism about ‘might’

Contextualism about ‘might’ has proved wanting. It cannot explain how speakers may naturally retract utterances they made in other contexts. The reason for this is that on the contextualist account, the truth of an utterance is absolute: if true in one context then it is true in all contexts.

However, utterance truth seems less stable. In  $c_3$ , Karel provides Naomi with new knowledge. She realizes that what she said in  $c_0$  was false. Thus, one and the same utterance seems true from one perspective but false from another.

Such considerations motivate a truth-relativist account of epistemic modals (MacFarlane 2005, Egan et al. 2005). Whereas the contextualist focused on the context of utterance, the truth-relativist also considers the perspective of whoever evaluates an utterance for truth. Since this usually takes place in other situations than the context of utterance itself, the truth-relativist allows for contexts of *assessment*.

*TR* For any sentence *S*, whether what is said by an utterance of *might(S)* is true or not, varies between contexts of assessment.

The truth-relativist rejects the contextualist’s analogy between ‘might’ and indexicals. The content of *might(S)* does not depend on the context of utterance, nor on any context of assessment. Instead, what is said by an utterance of (1) is that Miguel might be in Bristol on Sunday, period.

To motivate such underspecified content, truth-relativism allies with *temporalism* (MacFarlane 2005). An utterance of ‘Socrates is sitting’ may be true at noon but false at midnight. Time is a circumstance of evaluation. Analogously, what is said by an utterance of (1) is true in the context of utterance, but false from the perspective of an assessor.



## 5. The Truth-Relativist Explanation of Retraction

Truth-relativism suggests the following solution to the puzzle of section 3.  $c_2$  and  $c_3$  make up two different contexts of assessment, across which what Naomi said in  $c_0$  varies its truth value. Since in  $c_2$  it is true, she is entitled to utter (2). But, equally well she may utter (3), in a different context  $c_3$  where what she said in  $c_0$  is false.

To allow for this, the truth relativist needs to adjust the contextualist picture again. Naomi's utterance of (2) or (3) may take place at the same world and time but still seem equally felicitous. For the content of an utterance of (1) to change truth-value across contexts of assessment the circumstances of evaluation need be more finely grained as on Kaplan's initial picture. Accordingly, the truth-relativist extends the circumstances of evaluation by a parameter that specifies the modal base of 'might'.

Given this machinery, the truth-relativist sets out to explain the case of the preceding section. Naomi may equally well utter (2) and (3), he argues, because she can take two different perspectives on her previous utterance. The contexts  $c_2$  and  $c_3$  make up contexts of assessment in which what is said in  $c_0$  is evaluated against different circumstances of evaluation. The circumstances of  $c_3$ , on one hand, determine a modal base: the information available to Naomi in  $c_3$ . Thus, the truth relativist argues, her utterance in  $c_0$  becomes false. This is why Naomi's utterance of (3) in  $c_3$  appears natural.  $c_2$ , on the other hand, restricts the modal base to Naomi's own information at the time of  $c_0$  and thus renders true her utterance of (1), and felicitous her utterance of (2).

## 6. Truth and Tense

According to truth-relativism, tense shifts the time of evaluation away from the time of utterance. (2) is a past tense sentence, of the semantic structure *past*(1). An utterance of (2) at some time  $t_u$  therefore is true just in case the content expressed by (an utterance of) (1) is true at some time  $t_p < t_u$ .

On the truth-relativist picture of the preceding section, any utterance of (1) says merely that Miguel might be in Bristol on Sunday. The modal base against which this invariant content is evaluated, however, is that of the context of assessment, especially, that of the time of assessment. Therefore, truth-relativism renders vacuous the past tense of (2) (von Fintel and Gillies 2007, p. 87). Naomi's utterance of (2) in  $c_2$  is true only if at the time of  $c_2$ , it is true that (1). At the time of  $c_2$ , however, that is after Karel's disclosure, (1) is false according to the truth-relativist. In the end, this is how in the preceding section he explains the felicity of Naomi's utterance of (3). Consequently, his semantics cannot account for the felicity of Naomi's utterance of (2).

## 7. Time and Truth

Truth-relativism faces a further problem. Notice that contexts can be ordered linearly according to their time, and speakers generally gain knowledge over time. Thus, truth-relativism about 'might' implies that the more time lies between an utterance and its assessment, the more likely it is that the utterance is false.

The opposite is the case (von Fintel and Gillies 2007, p. 86). Assume that Naomi's utterance of (1) took place on October 6, 2009. If Karel tells her about his meeting the

following day, (3) is a natural response. Still natural, although slightly odd, it would appear a year later. Now assume that not until 2040, Naomi finds out about their meeting. According to the truth relativist, her utterance of (3) would now be just as natural as it was back in October 2009. However, it seems much more plausible that aged Naomi shrugs her shoulders and murmurs something along the lines of (2). Truth-relativism does not provide a satisfactory semantics of 'might'.

## 8. Content Relativism

In view of the inadequacy of both the contextualist and the truth-relativist semantics of epistemic modals, von Fintel and Gillies (2007) propose an alternative account. Their idea is that a single utterance, such as that of (2) by Naomi in context  $c_2$ , is interpreted differently from different perspectives. The speaker of the utterance, moreover, intends all these interpretations to be equally correct. Therefore, what is said by an utterance is a genuinely relative matter.

The proposal can be specified as a variant of *content-relativism* (Cappelen 2008). The content relativist extends Kaplan's picture by contexts of *interpretation*. The content of an utterance is again thought of as function of context and character. But now, the character of *might*( $S$ ) is paraphrased in a way that makes the content relative.

*CR* For any sentence  $S$ , the content of an utterance of *might*( $S$ ) is that the truth of  $S$  is compatible with the body of information intended by the interpreter.

According to content-relativism, the modal base need not be the interpreter's knowledge. The interpreter may well decide to exclude information available to her from the modal base as well as include knowledge that she assumes others to have.

Moreover, a context of interpretation does not determine the circumstances of evaluation. What is said by an utterance in a context  $c_i$  as interpreted in  $c_j$  is evaluated against the circumstances set by  $c_j$ .

These two features of content-relativism provide a neat explanation as to why Naomi's utterance of (3) is felicitous. In  $c_3$ , Naomi adds to the modal base her knowledge about Karel's and Miguel's meeting. Thus, she interprets her utterance of (1) in  $c_0$  as saying, amongst other things, that Miguel's presence in Bristol on Sunday is compatible with Karel seeing him at Market Street. Since furthermore, this content is evaluated against the circumstances of evaluation of  $c_0$ , it is false. Therefore, Naomi is entitled to retract what she said, which she does by her utterance of (3).

Thus, the content-relativist semantics as developed in this section solves the problem of section 3 that proved the inadequacy of the original contextualist account. In the remaining section I will argue that content-relativism also provides the right answer to the cases of sections 6 and 7, and therefore proves superior to a truth-relativist semantics.

## 9. Time, Truth and Content

First, let me show how content-relativism deals with excessive distances of time between an utterance and its interpretation.

For this, its formulation of the preceding section needs further specification. A given utterance cannot be interpreted in any arbitrary context. Instead, its inter-

pretation is restricted to situations that are broadly compatible with the speaker's intentions.

This modification allows for a simple solution to the problem of section 7. When Naomi utters (1) in 2009, she does not intend this to be interpreted thirty years later. Thus, the situation in 2040 when aged Naomi is told about Karel and Miguel's meeting is not an admissible context of interpretation. It is for this reason that it seems unnatural for Naomi in 2040 to retract her 2009 utterance.

## 10. Tense Revisited

Truth-relativism failed to account for the felicity of Naomi's utterance of (2) because the truth-relativist semantics overwrites the sentence's past tense. The truth-relativist cannot allow the time of evaluation of (2) to shift to the time of  $c_0$  since he wants the content to be evaluated against the circumstances of  $c_2$ .

Content-relativism about 'might' allows for temporal operators. The contexts of interpretation determine merely the content of an utterance. Thus, they do not interfere with operators that work upon the circumstances of evaluation. For any sentence  $S$ , utterances of *might*( $S$ ) and *past*(*might*( $S$ )) therefore have the same content if interpreted in the same context  $c$ . The time of its evaluation, however, is shifted by the *past* operator from the time of  $c$  to some earlier time.

In the context  $c_2$  of the example (section 3), Naomi interprets her utterance of (1) in  $c_0$  as saying that her knowledge is compatible with the truth of (0). Since (2) is of the form *past*(1), her utterance of it in  $c_2$  says the same. However, due to the past tense of (2) this content is evaluated against the time of  $c_0$ , when Naomi did not know of Karel's and Miguel's meeting. Therefore, Naomi says something true with her utterance of (2) in  $c_2$  and the content-relativist has no difficulties to explain its felicity.

The content-relativist thus accounts for Naomi's utterance in  $c_2$ ; the truth-relativist cannot follow. It is essential to his view that the circumstances of evaluation depend on the context of assessment. Thus, he cannot avoid Naomi's utterance of (1) in  $c_2$  to be evaluated against the circumstances, and especially against the time of  $c_2$ . Consequently, truth-relativism cannot explain the felicity of Naomi's utterance of (2) in  $c_2$ .

## Conclusion

I conclude that the truth-relativist semantics of 'might' is incapable of explaining the felicity of Naomi's utterance of (2). The content-relativist semantics of section 8, however, refined by the restriction to admissible contexts of section 9, accounts for all the cases discussed. On balance, therefore, content-relativism about 'might' is more adequate than the truth-relativist semantics of section 4.

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# Invariantism and Presuppositions

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## 1. Introduction

One of the general requirements in recent theorising on knowledge attributions seems to be that ordinary language intuitions concerning the verb “knows” ought not to be ignored. Apparently, this assessment is shared by contextualists, sensitive invariantists and (at least some) strict invariantists alike (cf. Brown 2006, DeRose 2009, Hawthorne 2004, Lewis 1996, Stanley 2005). The postulation of systematic error of competent speakers in their use of “knows” is usually regarded as a rather serious theoretical flaw, unless there is some general conversational mechanism that can be used to explain that confusion. The problem is that the ordinary language intuitions regarding “knows” listed under (1) seem to clash:<sup>1</sup> While (1a) suggests a certain variability of “knows”, (1b) and (1c) seem to favour invariantist treatments of “knows” (cf. MacFarlane 2008 for a summary).

### (1) *Ordinary language intuitions*

- a. The acceptability of knowledge attributions depends on context.
- b. Knowledge attributions can be embedded.
- c. Knowledge attributions can be retracted.

Let us look at (1a) first. I cannot deal with all kinds of variability that have been postulated in the literature, here, so I will focus on the ascriber dependence of “knows” advocated by contextualists.<sup>2</sup> According to that thesis, the acceptability of a knowledge attribution of the form “*x* knows *p* (at time *t*)” depends on the epistemic standards (i.e. relevant not-*p*-possibilities, “what is at stake”, and maybe other things) of the context of utterance. Contextualists characteristically claim that the extension of “knows” depends on the context of utterance. Thus, the truth value of “*x* knows *p* (at *t*)” might vary with the context in which it is uttered, even if the value of all overt variables remains fixed. For instance, (2) can be true in an everyday context (*C1*), but false in a context in which the possibility of cleverly disguised mules is discussed (*C2*).<sup>3</sup>

- (2) Fred knows that the animals in the pen are zebras.

As far as Epistemic Contextualism (EC) is concerned, the proposition expressed by (2) in *C1* is different from the one expressed by (2) in *C2*. The step from different propositions to different truth values is unproblematic and so is the explanation of the contextualist reading of (1a): (2) is acceptable in *C1* because it is true in *C1* and (2) is not acceptable in *C2* because it is false in *C2*.

Strict Invariantists reject the contextualists’ characteristic claim, defending the thesis that the semantic value of “knows” is invariant instead. (2) is either true in both *C1* and *C2* or else false in both. Therefore, invariantists cannot explain (1a) via varying truth conditions. They have to come up with an alternative explanation or reject the

variability intuition. I want to pursue the first option in this paper.

Before I do that, let us have a brief look at (1b) and (1c). Assume that Bill sincerely uttered (2) in *C1* and that the time of *C1* is yesterday at 10 o’ clock. Apparently, I can embed Bill’s utterance in a variety of ways, two of which are listed under (3):

- (3) a. Yesterday, Bill said that Fred knows that the animals in the pen are Zebras.
- b. Yesterday, Bill believed that Fred knows that the animals in the pen are Zebras.

In contrast to time, the epistemic standards of the context of utterance do not seem to be relevant for the acceptability of (3a). Obviously, the indexical expression *yesterday* depends for its extension on the context of utterance: tomorrow I cannot use *yesterday* to refer to Bill’s utterance. Intuitively, no such restrictions seem to apply in the case of “knows”. (3) suggests that “knows” can be embedded in any context, regardless of whether the standards required to satisfy “knows” are higher in the reporting context.

Now assume that Bill and I are discussing whether Fred knows the animals to be Zebras. Bill has just mentioned the possibility of painted mules, so we are in a context like *C2*. I respond: “Wait, didn’t you claim that Fred knows that the animals in the pen are Zebras just yesterday?” What could Bill possibly respond?

- (4) a. I did, but now I come to think of it, I guess I was wrong.
- b. What? I never said that! Obviously, he only knows as long as we do not consider the possibility of painted mules.

There is quite some intuitive pull towards (4a), while (4b) seems rather odd. Note, however, that EC predicts that (4b) is true. Furthermore, according to EC, (3a) and (3b) can only be true in contexts with the same (or lower) standards as in the reported context. Much has been written about these observations (cf. DeRose 2009, Hawthorne 2004, Stanley 2005) and I do not want to commit myself to any specific answer to that problem, here. Suffice it to say that EC needs to come up with some story about why (3) and (4a) seem so plausible. Another option is to reject (1b) and (1c), e.g. by claiming that competent speakers are semantically blind to metalinguistic features of “knows”.

It is easy to see that invariantism does not have any trouble with examples (3) and (4a). The intuitions mentioned are just what is predicted by a theory which claims that the semantic contribution of “knows” is invariant. In the remainder of this paper, I want to propose an invariantist analysis of the contextualist reading of (1a). It will rely on the notion of presuppositions, so let me briefly introduce some definitions.

## 2. Presuppositions and EC

There are two conceptions of presuppositions: *semantic* and *pragmatic* presuppositions. According to the semantic conception, “one sentence presupposes another just in

<sup>1</sup> There are, of course, further intuitions, for instance about the factivity of knowledge attributions or about certain forms of disagreement. None of these needs to worry us here.

<sup>2</sup> For a variability connected to “what is at stake” in the context of the epistemic subject see Hawthorne 2004 or Stanley 2005. Assessment variability is postulated by MacFarlane (2008).

<sup>3</sup> I assume that *t* is provided by context.

case the latter must be true in order that the former have a truth value at all” (Stalnaker 1973: 447). An illustrative example for this kind of presupposition is the infamous “present king of France”. Consider (5):

- (5) a. The present king of France wears a wig.  
 b. The present king of France does not wear a wig.  
 c. There exists one and only one present king of France.

Both (5a) and (5b) depend for their truth value on (5c). In case (5c) is false, (5a) is without truth value or false, depending on your favourite analysis of non-referring definite descriptions. The same holds for (5b). A semantic presupposition is a relation between sentences.

A pragmatic presupposition, on the other hand, is a relation between a speaker and a proposition:

“A speaker presupposes that  $p$  at a given moment in a conversation just in case he is disposed to act, in his linguistic behavior, as if he takes the truth of  $p$  for granted, and as if he assumes that his audience recognizes that he is doing so.” (Stalnaker 1973: 448)

Lewis seems to have a similar notion in mind, when he writes that “[a]t any stage in a well-run conversation, a certain amount is presupposed [...] whether sincerely or just ‘for the sake of the argument’” (Lewis 1979: 339). Pragmatic presuppositions are usually tied to something like the general Gricean idea of a purpose of a given conversation, which can be furthered by certain rational communicative behaviour of the participants to the conversation (cf. Grice 1989). Presupposing propositions is just one part of this behaviour. We are hardly ever in a position to make all propositions we take for granted explicit, and we do not have to. We just presuppose them. A proposition  $p$  is *common ground*, roughly, in case all participants to a conversation presuppose  $p$  in the sense explicated above and believe that all others do so, and believe that all others believe that all others do so, etc. (see Stalnaker 2002: 716)

David Lewis (1996) and Michael Blome-Tillmann (2009) both make use of the notion of presuppositions in their accounts of knowledge attributions. According to their brand of contextualism, for a subject  $x$  to know  $p$ , the subject’s evidence must eliminate *every* not- $p$ -possibility  $w$ , except for those that are properly ignored in the context of ascription  $C$ . Lewisian style contextualists claim that “knows” works analogous to a universal quantifier and that proper ignoring restricts the domain of quantification. What makes the account contextualist is that it is the ignorings of the ascriber “not [ $x$ ’s] own ignorings, that matter to what we can truly say about [ $x$ ’s] knowledge” (Lewis 1996: 561). Thus, the domain of the universal quantifier is determined, in part, by the context of utterance from which the contextualists’ characteristic claim – the extension of “knows” depends on the context of utterance – follows immediately.

Proper ignoring is connected to presuppositions in the sense that “[i]f  $w$  is compatible with the speakers’ pragmatic presuppositions in  $C$ , then  $w$  cannot be properly ignored in  $C$ ” (Blome-Tillmann 2009: 248, see also Lewis 1996: 554).<sup>4</sup> So, by presupposing some propositions rather than others, ascribers of knowledge, voluntarily or not, influence the extension of the knowledge relation. In this way, the contextualists’ reading of (1a) becomes a phenomenon of semantics.

I claim that (1a) is really a matter of pragmatics and that invariantists can make use of pragmatic presuppositions in order to explain (1a) without being committed to the semantic claim of EC.

### 3. An invariantist presuppositional account

The basic idea is as follows: There is only one knowledge relation and it is invariantly expressed by the verb “knows” in sentences of the relevant form. In order to satisfy this relation,  $x$ ’s epistemic situation must be such that all relevant not- $p$ -alternatives are eliminated. What is relevant is not influenced by whatever ascribers of knowledge might presuppose. Still, invariantists can defend (1a) in case acceptability is disentangled from truth conditions: What is presupposed in a conversation influences the acceptability of knowledge attributions, but not their truth conditions.

Think of it this way: the participants to a conversation might presuppose, for the sake of the argument, that there is a present king of France. This would make certain utterances involving the present king of France acceptable, for the purpose of this specific conversation. But pragmatically presupposing that there is a present king of France does not make a present king of France spring into existence and it does not affect the actual reference of the term “the present king of France”, either.

Likewise, I claim, for knowledge attributions and relevant alternatives: Presupposing that some not- $p$ -possibility  $w$  is a relevant alternative does not make it a relevant alternative. However, if  $w$  is common ground in a conversation and, thus, treated as if it were true, then of course, in case  $x$ ’s epistemic situation does not eliminate  $w$ ,  $x$  cannot acceptably be ascribed knowledge that  $p$ . That is because a proposition treated as if it were true is quite naturally treated as if it were relevant even if, in fact, it is not. It is in this sense that I claim that “ $x$  knows  $p$ ” might be true but unacceptable.

The same apparatus can be used to explain why speakers can acceptably but falsely attribute knowledge. Speakers might refuse to accommodate a possibility  $w$  although, in fact, they should. They mistakenly assume that  $w$  is too far-fetched to be relevant for  $x$ ’s knowledge that  $p$ . Analogously, imagine that we are unwilling to accommodate (5c) although, unbeknownst to us, five minutes ago a king of France was crowned.

Why are we so confused about “knows”? Maybe “knows” is a vague predicate and, maybe, in borderline cases like the contextualist examples, competent speakers are in doubt about what alternatives are in fact relevant in order to truthfully ascribe knowledge. So, depending on the purpose of the conversation, we sometimes presuppose anti-sceptical propositions, i.e. propositions that entail the falsity of the sceptical scenario considered – thus attributing knowledge to  $x$  – and sometimes we do not – thus denying that  $x$  knows. This accounts for (1a). But still, in semantic terms, either  $x$  knows  $p$  or she does not. Whether she does, depends on which alternatives are in fact relevant and on whether  $x$ ’s situation is such that they are eliminated. It does not depend on what we are presupposing. Thus “knows” is semantically invariant, which accounts for (1b) and (1c).

<sup>4</sup> There are important differences between the two accounts, but they do not matter here.

#### 4. Conclusion

Obviously, this is only a rough sketch and many points deserve a more thoroughgoing investigation. This will have to be done elsewhere. In case the strategy just outlined succeeds, however, my presuppositional brand of invariantism gives a better explanation of the conversational dynamics of knowledge attributions than contextualism does. It can accommodate all intuitions in (1) by recourse to general conversational mechanisms. It also fits nicely with other intuitions, e.g. about certain kinds of disagreement, that could not be addressed here. EC, on the other hand, has problems accounting for (1b) and (1c). Of course, these might be solved in some way or other, but even in case they will be, EC is not explanatorily superior to presuppositional invariantism.

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# Kontextualismus, Indexikalität und versteckte Parameter

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Der kontextuellen Theorie der Wissenszuschreibungen zufolge beschränkt sich die Kontextsensitivität von Wissenssätzen nicht darauf, dass indexikalische Wissenssätze in unterschiedlichen Äußerungskontexten unterschiedliche Bedeutungen, also Wahrheitswerte, haben können, sondern Wissenssätze sollen auch in dem Sinne kontextsensitiv sein, dass sich ihre Wahrheitsbedingungen von Kontext zu Kontext ändern können, dass mit dem gleichen Wissenssatz in unterschiedlichen Kontexten unterschiedliche Wissensbegriffe verbunden sind, so dass auch nicht indexikalische Wissenssätze in unterschiedlichen Kontexten unterschiedliche Wissensaussagen ausdrücken können.

In der folgenden Arbeit wird dafür argumentiert, dass der vermeintliche Eindruck einer nicht indexikalischen Kontextsensitivität von Wissenssätzen und der Kontextsensitivität des Wissensbegriffs selbst im Wesentlichen aus zwei Quellen gespeist wird: Erstens werden mit dem Wissensbegriff verbundene versteckte Parameter nicht explizit gemacht und ihre Bewertung unanalysiert dem Kontext überlassen. Zweitens (und das ist mit dem Übersehen versteckter Parameter verbunden) wird die Rolle der Wissensgemeinschaft, die bestimmt, welche epistemischen Kriteriensysteme als wissenskonstituierend gelten, nicht explizit gemacht und ihre Berücksichtigung unanalysiert dem Kontext zugeschrieben.

## 1. Kontextualismus

Einer weit verbreiteten Auffassung zufolge, die Unger 1984 und DeRose 1992 benennen, sind Wissenssätze der Art „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ kontextsensitiv in folgendem Sinne:

We may, following Peter Unger, call the view I want to investigate a "contextual" theory of knowledge attributions: it is a theory according to which the truth conditions of sentences of the form "S knows that  $p$ " or "S does not know that  $p$ " vary in certain ways according to the context in which the sentences are uttered. (DeRose 1992, 914)

Die Kontextsensitivität beschränkt sich in der kontextuellen Theorie der Wissenszuschreibungen also nicht darauf, dass Sätze in unterschiedlichen Äußerungskontexten unterschiedliche Bedeutungen, also Wahrheitswerte, haben können, sondern diese Sätze haben in unterschiedlichen Kontexten auch unterschiedliche Wahrheitsbedingungen, also unterschiedlichen Sinn. Diese Sätze stehen damit in unterschiedlichen Kontexten für unterschiedliche Aussagen: Dass sie für unterschiedliche Aussagen stehen, ist dabei nicht dadurch bedingt, dass der Sinn der Bezeichnung für das epistemische Subjekt oder der Sinn des vermeintlichen Wissenssatzes sich von Kontext zu Kontext verändern, sondern dadurch, dass der Wissensbegriff selbst sich in Abhängigkeit vom jeweiligen Verwendungskontext ändert.

Ich will im Folgenden die Auffassung vertreten, dass die Postulierung unterschiedlicher Wissensbegriffe für unterschiedliche Verwendungskontexte nur deshalb als unausweichlich erscheint, weil angenommen wird, der Satz „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ sei vollständiger Ausdruck einer Wissensaussage. Dieser Satz drückt noch keine Wissensaussage aus, wenn nicht der Kontext bestimmt ist, in dem er geäußert wird. Ohne Äußerung, als linguistische Entität, wird

mit „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ keine Aussage ausgedrückt, ist der Sinn dieses Satzes also keine Aussage. Damit dieser Satz als Sinn eine Aussage ausdrückt, muss er auf eine Äußerungssituation bezogen sein.

## 2. Indexikalität und der Sinn von Sätzen

In einer analogen Problemstellung für indexikalische Sätze entscheidet sich Kripke dafür, dass zum Sinn des indexikalischen Satzes, der einen Zeitindex enthält, der Aussprachezeitpunkt dieses Satzes gehöre (Kripke 2008, 202). Die Rede von der Zugehörigkeit des Aussprachezeitpunktes zum Sinn des indexikalischen Satzes „Heute regnet es“ bleibt aber ziemlich nebulös, denn der Satz „Heute regnet es“ hat keinen Sinn, drückt keine Aussage aus. Wozu soll dann der Aussprachezeitpunkt gehören, wenn er zum Sinn des Satzes gehören soll, es aber keinen solchen Sinn gibt? Und dieser Satz ist außerdem neben dem durch „heute“ ausgedrückten Zeitparameter auf einen weiteren, in der gegebenen Formulierung verdeckten, Parameter relativiert, nämlich einen Ortsparameter. Ohne die Angabe, wie der Wahrheitswert des Satzes auf einen Ortsparameter relativiert ist, bleibt dieser Satz unbestimmt, drückt keine Aussage aus. Bezüglich des Satzes „Heute regnet es“ könnte der versteckte Ortsparameter in unterschiedlicher Weise explizit gemacht werden, z. B. in „Heute regnet es irgendwo“, „Heute regnet es überall“, „Heute regnet es in Jena“ etc. Ein solcher Ortsparameter könnte indexikalisch z. B. durch „hier“ ausgedrückt werden. Genauer müsste man formulieren, dass der Satz „Heute regnet es hier“ gemeinsam mit der Angabe des Aussprachezeitpunktes (oder allgemeiner des Zeitbezugs von „heute“) und der Angabe eines Ortsbezugs für „hier“ einen Sinn, nämlich eine Aussage ausdrückt. Und dieser Zusammenhang des Satzes „Heute regnet es hier“ mit dem Zeitbezug von „heute“ und dem Ortsbezug von „hier“ ist in einem Satz auszudrücken, der dann als Sinn tatsächlich eine Aussage hat. Ein solcher Satz könnte folgendermaßen formuliert sein: „Der Satz ‚Heute regnet es‘ ist mit dem Zeitbezug 28.4.2011 für ‚heute‘ und dem Ortsbezug Jena für ‚hier‘ wahr.“ Dieser (metasprachliche) Satz drückt nun tatsächlich eine Aussage aus und ist unabhängig vom Aussprachekontext bzw. Bewertungskontext wahr oder falsch, je nachdem, ob es am 28.4.2011 in Jena regnet oder nicht regnet. Der indexikalische Satz „Heute regnet es hier“ ist kein Aussagesatz, sondern lediglich ein Schema zur Bildung von Aussagesätzen, die dadurch entstehen, dass in dem Relationsausdruck „Der Satz ‚Heute regnet es‘ ist mit dem Zeitbezug  $t$  für ‚heute‘ und dem Ortsbezug  $o$  für ‚hier‘ wahr“ die Variablen  $t$  und  $o$  durch entsprechende Konstanten ersetzt werden.

## 3. Verdeckte Parameter und Kontextualismus

Wenn im Falle des Wissensprädikats, wie es in Sätzen wie „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ vorkommt, von einem Kontextualisten behauptet wird

I don't contradict an earlier claim to know that I might have made before the doubt was raised and before the issue was so important because, in an important sense, I don't mean the same thing by "know" as I

meant in the earlier claim: While "know" is being used with the same character, it is not being used with the same content. Or so the contextualist will claim. (De-Rose 1992, 921)

so ist dies Ausdruck dafür, dass mit „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ neben den Parametern  $x$  für das epistemische Subjekt und  $p$  für den Inhalt der epistemischen Einstellung weitere verdeckte Parameter verbunden sind, die außerdem noch indexikalisch gedeutet werden können. Das wird auch in der folgenden Auffassung Baumanns zum Kontextualismus von Wissenssätzen deutlich:

I will take contextualism to be, broadly speaking, the following thesis: The truth-value of knowledge ascriptions of the form "S knows that p" (and of related forms, of course) may (but need not) change with the speaker's context (or the thinker's context, for that matter). That is, it may change from speaker to speaker or between different contexts one and the same speaker finds herself in. To choose what is perhaps the most overused example in this context: In one (an ordinary) context it might be true to say or think that Jack knows that he has hands, but in another (sceptical) context it might not be true. (Baumann 2005, 229 f.)

Das Baumannsche Beispiel macht deutlich, dass der Wissensbegriff auf epistemische Standards relativiert ist. Nun wird in "S knows that p" der jeweilige epistemische Standard nicht bezeichnet, sondern bleibt ein verdeckter Parameter. Und insofern drückt dieser Satz keine (vollständige) Aussage aus. Dieser Satz drückt erst eine Aussage aus, wenn der epistemische Standard, der der Charakterisierung des epistemischen Zustandes von  $x$  als Wissen zugrunde liegt, fixiert wird. Dies kann durch explizite Angabe des Standards geschehen oder dadurch, dass dieser Standard indexikalisch durch den Kontext der Äußerung dieses Wissenssatzes bestimmt wird, analog dazu, wie bei indexikalischen Sätzen der konkrete Wert für den Index durch die Aussprachesituation bestimmt werden kann.

Auch die mit den genannten Beispielen begründete Kontextualität von „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ ( $K(x, p)$ ) ist kein Beleg dafür, dass der Wissensbegriff kontextuell bestimmt ist, also in unterschiedlichen Kontexten mit unterschiedlichen Wahrheitsbedingungen verknüpft wird, sondern verweist darauf, dass der Wissensbegriff mit den in  $K(x, p)$  aufgewiesenen Parametern epistemisches Subjekt  $x$  und gewusster Satz  $p$  noch unvollständig charakterisiert ist, dass zum vollständigen Ausdruck des Wissensbegriffs weitere Parameter mit dem Wissensprädikator  $K$  verbunden werden müssen, die in  $K(x, p)$  nicht syntaktisch ausgedrückt sind, aber durchaus syntaktisch expliziten Ausdruck finden können, um mit einem mit Hilfe dieser Parameter formulierten Wissenssatz tatsächlich eine Wissensaussage auszudrücken.

Einige dieser in  $K(x, p)$  noch verdeckten Parameter sind offensichtlich, wie die Zeit zu der gilt, dass  $x$   $p$  weiß<sup>1</sup> und die Relativierung des Wissens von  $x$  auf ein System von Wissenskriterien, bezüglich dessen das epistemische Subjekt den Satz  $p$  epistemisch begründet. Aber, wie das Beispiel Baumanns zu Jacks Wissen, er habe Hände, zeigt, sind das nicht die einzigen Parameter, die in die

Formulierung vollständiger Wissenssätze einfließen müssen und die Relationsglieder darstellen, auf die der Wissensbegriff relativiert ist. Denn trotz gleicher Begründung des vorgeblich gewussten Satzes  $p$  bezüglich des gleichen Systems von Begründungskriterien könnte eine Wissenssituation vorliegen und auch nicht vorliegen. Ob Wissen vorliegt, ist auch auf die Wissensgemeinschaft  $w$  relativiert, hängt davon ab, ob das epistemische Subjekt den Satz  $p$  bezüglich eines Kriteriensystems  $s$  begründet hat, das von der Wissensgemeinschaft  $w$  als wissenskonstituierend anerkannt wird. Und auch diese Anerkennung eines Kriteriensystems  $s$  durch eine Wissensgemeinschaft  $w$  ist wieder zeitrelativiert. So kann es sein, dass  $x$  den Satz  $p$  in  $t$  bezüglich  $s$  im Sinne der von der Wissensgemeinschaft  $w$  zur Zeit  $t_1$  als wissenskonstituierend akzeptierten Kriteriensysteme weiß, diesen Satz in  $t$  bezüglich der von  $w$  in  $t_2$  als wissenskonstituierend akzeptierten Kriteriensystemen nicht weiß, da  $s$  zur Zeit  $t_2$  nicht zu den von  $w$  als wissenskonstituierend anerkannten Kriteriensystemen gehört, aber zu den von  $w$  zu  $t_1$  akzeptierten Kriteriensystemen gehört. Im genannten Beispiel ist der Wissensbegriff im ersten Kontext (in dem Wissen des Besitzen von Händen konzediert wird) auf eine nicht-skeptische Wissensgemeinschaft relativiert, während der Wissensbegriff im zweiten Kontext auf eine skeptische Wissensgemeinschaft relativiert ist. Das könnten unterschiedliche Wissensgemeinschaften sein, oder aber die gleiche Wissensgemeinschaft zu unterschiedlichen Zeiten.

#### 4. Parameter für Wissensaussagen

Eine vollständige Formulierung des Wissensbegriffs muss also mit bedeutend mehr Parametern verbunden werden, als dies sowohl umgangssprachlich als auch in traditionellen logischen und philosophischen Analysen geschieht. Unseren bisherigen Überlegungen folgend müssen das zumindest die folgenden Parameter sein:

- $x$  epistemisches Subjekts
- $p$  Satz, der Gegenstand der epistemischen Einstellung ist
- $t$  Zeit, zu der die epistemische Einstellung besteht
- $s$  Kriteriensystem, bezüglich dessen  $p$  durch  $x$  in  $t$  begründet wird
- $w$  Wissensgemeinschaft, durch die bewertet wird, ob  $s$  als wissenskonstituierend akzeptiert wird
- $v$  Zeit, zu der  $w$  das System  $s$  unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Wissenskonstituierung bewertet

Die Reihenfolge, in der diese Parameter im Wissensprädikat erscheinen ist dabei beliebig, an die umgangssprachliche Verwendung angenähert könnte man das Wissensprädikat folgendermaßen formulieren:

$K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$ :

„ $x$  weiß  $p$  zur Zeit  $t$  bezüglich des Begründungssystems  $s$  im Sinne der von der Wissensgemeinschaft  $w$  zur Zeit  $v$  als wissenskonstituierend akzeptierten Kriterien“.

Das Wissensprädikat hat hier eine Formulierung erfahren, die als überaus kompliziert erscheinen kann, wenn man sie mit der üblichen Formulierung „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ vergleicht. Aber Kompliziertheitserwägungen können nicht Adäquatheitserwägungen ersetzen. Und unter Adäquatheitsgesichtspunkten haben wir im Gegensatz zu „ $x$  weiß, dass  $p$ “ in  $K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$  ein Prädikat, mit dem wahr-

<sup>1</sup> Wenn wir uns auf einen Zeitparameter beziehen, so darf natürlich nicht unerwähnt bleiben, dass es sehr unterschiedliche mögliche Zeitparameter gibt, auf die man sich in epistemischen Sätzen beziehen kann. Neben unterschiedlichen Zeitpunktparametern wie „zum Zeitpunkt  $t$ “, „ab dem Zeitpunkt  $t$ “ etc. stehen verschiedenartige Zeitintervallparameter „im gesamten Intervall  $t$ “, „in mindestens einem Teilintervall von  $t$ “. Wir wollen uns hier immer auf den gleichen Zeitparameter beziehen.

heitswertdefinite Wissensaussagen ausgedrückt werden können, wenn die in ihm vorkommenden Variablen durch entsprechende Konstanten ersetzt werden.

Derartige Wissenssätze sind nun durchaus nicht mehr kontextsensitiv, allerdings können Kontexte dazu dienen, die Parameter des Prädikats  $K$ , falls diese indexikalisch gegeben sind, zu fixieren. Und auch wenn diese Fixierung in unterschiedlichen Kontexten unterschiedlich ausfallen kann, haben wir es in allen Kontexten stets mit dem gleichen Wissensbegriff zu tun. Nicht der Wissensbegriff in der von uns eingeführten Weise ist also kontextrelevant, jedoch könnte seine Anwendung durch den Kontext bestimmt sein, muss es aber nicht, wenn die mit dem Wissensbegriff verbundenen Parameter nicht indexikalisch gegeben werden, sondern durch Konstanten ersetzt wurden oder durch Quantifikation nicht mehr für unterschiedliche Einsetzungen von Konstanten und entsprechende unterschiedliche Wertebestimmungen frei sind.<sup>2</sup>

## 5. Bedingungen für das Zutreffen von Wissensaussagen

Wir wollen jetzt einige epistemische Prädikate einführen, die für eine präzisere Analyse des von uns angeführten parameterrelativierten Wissensbegriffs geeignet sind:

$B(x, p, t)$  „ $x$  glaubt (hält für wahr) den Satz  $p$  in  $t$ “

$E(x, p, t, s)$  „ $x$  verfügt in  $t$  über eine Begründung für  $p$  bezüglich des Kriteriensystems  $s$ “

$A(w, s, t)$  „Die Wissensgemeinschaft  $w$  akzeptiert in  $t$  das Kriteriensystem  $s$  als wissenschaftlich“

Im Sinne der Standardanalyse des Wissens kann das Zutreffen der Prädikate  $B(x, p, t)$ ,  $E(x, p, t, s)$  und die Wahrheit von  $p$  als notwendige Bedingung für das Zutreffen der Wissensaussage  $K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$  bestimmt werden. Was die Standardanalyse nicht explizit macht, ist, dass auch das Zutreffen von  $A(w, s, v)$  notwendige Bedingung für das Zutreffen von  $K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$  ist. Wir können also folgendes Bedeutungspostulat für den Wissensbegriff  $K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$  annehmen:

$$P. \quad K(x, p, t, s, w, v) \supset B(x, p, t) \wedge E(x, p, t, s) \wedge A(w, s, v) \wedge p$$

Dieses Postulat zeigt, dass die Standardanalyse des Wissens als begründeter wahrer Glaube prinzipiell defizitär ist, weil sie nicht die Rolle der Wissensgemeinschaft für die Bestimmung des Begründungsverfahrens für den vermeintlichen Wissenssatz berücksichtigt.

Gerade auf der Variabilität des Prädikats  $A(w, s, v)$  beruht aber die Variabilität des Wissensbegriffs  $K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$  bei unveränderten Wahrheitswerten für  $B(x, p, t)$ ,  $E(x, p, t, s)$  und  $p$ . Dass die üblicherweise für die kontextualistische Wissensauffassung angeführten Beispiele scheinbar darauf hindeuten, dass in unterschiedlichen Kontexten unterschiedliche Wissensbegriffe auftreten, ist darin begründet, dass die Rolle der Wissensgemeinschaft für das Zutreffen von Wissensaussagen nicht explizit gemacht wird und unberücksichtigt bleibt. Es entsteht dann der (irrig) Eindruck, man habe es in Fällen, in denen Wissenssätzen sich auf unterschiedliche Wissensgemeinschaften (bzw. auf die gleiche Wissensgemeinschaft, aber zu unterschiedlichen Zeiten) beziehen, mit unterschiedlichen Wissensbegriffen zu tun, da die aus der Standardanalyse herrührenden Wissensbestimmungen unverändert bleiben und im Sinne der Standardanalyse zur gleichen Wissenszuschreibung führen müssten, wenn nicht der Wissensbegriff selbst geändert ist.

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<sup>2</sup> Im Extremfall könnte man durch Quantifizierung aller Einsetzungsmöglichkeiten für die Parameter des Wissensprädikats eine Aussagenkonstante  $K^0$  bilden:

$$K^0 =_{df} \exists x \exists p \exists t \exists s \exists w \exists v K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$$

Die Konstante  $K^0$  steht dann offensichtlich für die Aussage „Es gibt Wissen“ bzw. „Etwas wird gewusst“. Für die Behandlung des Wissensprädikats in der epistemischen Logik ist eine derart extreme Beseitigung von Einsetzungsmöglichkeiten für Parameter natürlich wenig ergiebig. Sinnvoll wäre die Zurückführung des von uns eingeführten sechsstelligen Wissensprädikats auf ein zweistelliges Wissensprädikat  $K^2(x, p)$ :

$$K^2(x, p) =_{df} \exists t \exists s \exists w \exists v K(x, p, t, s, w, v)$$

$K^2(x, p)$  hat zwar die gleiche Struktur wie das üblicherweise in der epistemischen Logik benutzte Prädikat  $K(x, p)$ , unterscheidet sich aber von diesem wesentlich dadurch, dass durch die angegebene Definition explizit angegeben ist, wie zur Wertbestimmung für  $K^2(x, p)$  mögliche Werte für die Parameter  $t, s, w$  und  $v$  herangezogen werden müssen. Insofern ist  $K^2(x, p)$  weiter auf diese quantifizierten Parameter relativiert, im Gegensatz zu  $K(x, p)$ , wo es eher dem Erraten überlassen bleibt, welche versteckten Parameter für die Wertbestimmung heranzuziehen sind. (Vgl. Stelzner 1984, 33–39, 75–79.)



# Thought-Style and World-Picture – On Similarities between Fleck and Wittgenstein

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## 1. Introduction

In this paper I will compare two philosophers who do not seem to have much in common at first sight: Ludwik Fleck and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Fleck was, first of all, a Polish doctor and microbiologist who lived at roughly the same time as Wittgenstein and who, despite of his profession, was interested enough in the theory of science to develop his own theory of scientific development which is strongly opposed to the views of the Vienna Circle and anticipates Thomas S. Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in many ways. It was Kuhn himself who has drawn our attention to Fleck by referring to him in his preface, and yet it was not until recently that Fleck has been attended to more widely (e.g. Egloff 2005 or Griesbeck et al. 2008).

Until now, only a few authors have related Wittgenstein and Fleck to one another. For instance, Allan Janik points out that both philosophers have been – or are at least very likely to have been – influenced by Oswald Spengler (cf. Janik 2006), while Werner Kogge focuses on the significance of *Aspektsehen* in Wittgenstein's and Fleck's philosophical positions (cf. Kogge 2008). I will follow a different path and point to the parallels between the two philosophers' epistemological considerations. Although Fleck focuses on the sciences, he emphasises more than once that he understands his theory of *thought-style* and *thought-collective* as being applicable to epistemology in general and not only to the theory of science in particular. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, also deals with epistemological issues, especially in the manuscripts that have been published under the title *On Certainty* (OC), and although the way in which he does so differs immensely from Fleck's approach we can actually detect more overlaps in their positions than we might expect.

In this paper I will consider Fleck's major work *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* [*Entstehung und Entwicklung einer wissenschaftlichen Tatsache*] (G&D) together with several essays that were first published in German (CR) or Polish journals (SOP, PE, PSS, LSK). As far as Wittgenstein is concerned, I will focus on the manuscripts that have posthumously been published under the title of *On Certainty* (OC) and, if necessary, the *Philosophical Investigations* (PI). In regard to OC, we have to keep in mind that, because it is not a "work" by Wittgenstein, it is less authoritative than the works by Fleck.

## 2. Thought-Style and World-Picture

Before we can compare different aspects of the concept of the *thought-style* [Denkstil] with the concept of the *world-picture* [Weltbild] we have to obtain a basic understanding of what Fleck and Wittgenstein meant by them. I will therefore outline them briefly.

In G&D, Fleck defines thought-style as

"directed perception, with corresponding mental and objective assimilation [sachliches Verarbeiten] of what has been so perceived. It is characterized by common features in the problems of interest to a thought collective [Denkkollektiv], by the judgement which the

thought collective considers evident, and by the methods which it applies as a means of cognition." (G&D 99 [in the original partly in italics]).

According to Fleck, the thought-style determines the way in which we, as members of a thought-collective that is the carrier of a thought-style, perceive and conceive the world. In this context, he explicitly refers to gestalt psychology and distinguishes between visual, auditory and olfactory shapes as "entireties, which thrust themselves upon sensory perception" (LSK 131). These entireties, he argues, are constructed "from cultural and historical themes" (LSK 136). For the largest part, they are created by a thought-collective: "We look with our own eyes, but we see with the eyes of the collective body" (LSK 137). The ability to perceive a gestalt also entails the inability to perceive anything inconsistent with it. Hence, a person can only perceive those entireties which are in line with his or her thought-style (G&D 92). Another passage in G&D defines the thought-style as "the entirety of intellectual preparedness or readiness for one particular way of seeing and acting and no other" (G&D 64). This definition points out that in Fleck's view not only our cognition of, but also our *action* within the world depends on our thought-style. The thought-style of a thought-collective becomes manifest in its language, institutions and objects just as clothing, houses, tools etc. (LSK 148).

In OC Wittgenstein is concerned with the notions of knowledge, certainty and doubt. In analysing them he applies the concept of the world-picture in seven of his remarks (OC 93, 94, 95, 162, 167, 233, 262). Since this is not a great number, we have to keep in mind that Wittgenstein has used the concept of the world-picture in a very suggestive way and might not have wanted to put too much emphasis on it (cf. Kober 1993: 150). However, many of his remarks can be subsumed and clearly laid out under the concept of the world-picture, which turns it into a key concept of OC. The world-picture can be understood as the totality of convictions that we tacitly assume to be certain. These certainties are not necessarily expressed linguistically, but indirectly through our actions. They outline the framework of our judging and reasoning: if we tried to doubt them, we would lose ground. Thus, Wittgenstein calls the world-picture "the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false" (OC 94).

At this point it becomes clear that the two concepts are essentially different: while the concept of the thought-style refers to the process of cognition and the disposition of conceiving the world in a particular (and no other) way, the concept of the world-picture stands for a complex net or "nest" (OC 225) of certainties which are interwoven with practices. At first sight, the two concepts appear to be so basically different from each other that a comparison between them seems to be inappropriate, if not impossible. However, we have to consider that in Fleck's theory the thought-style is inseparably connected to a system of knowledge [Wissenssystem] (G&D 102; Fleck also calls it "system of opinion" [Meinungssystem, G&D 38] and "edifice of knowledge" [Wissensgebäude, G&D 69]), and this system can be juxtaposed to Wittgenstein's world-

picture very well. The fact that, in contrast to Wittgenstein, Fleck focuses on the thought-style rather than on the corresponding system of knowledge makes it very clear, though, that he is primarily concerned with the process of cognition rather than with the structure of the system.

### 3. Similarities

This brief outline should suffice here to serve as a background against which I will now outline the similarities between Fleck's and Wittgenstein's epistemological views. In this paper, however, I cannot deal with all aspects of similarity between Fleck and Wittgenstein in detail but have to confine myself to four selected aspects of which I will give a brief account. I will close this paper by pointing to four further aspects.

#### (a) Community

Fleck's thought-style as well as Wittgenstein's world-picture is necessarily bound to a community. Hence, both philosophers put much emphasis on the social aspect of knowledge or certainty respectively. In Fleck's theory, thought-collectives as carriers of thought-styles can vary in size and scope; they can contain only two individuals or encompass a scientific community, a religious group or even a whole culture, and they often overlap (G&D 107). On the other hand, although Wittgenstein does not accentuate the social nature of the world-picture to the same degree as Fleck does, it is rather clear that he wants it to be understood as being collectivistic: the world-picture is, we can conclude, the "common ground" (von Wright 1982: 176) of individuals in a "community which is bound together by science and education" (OC 298). In order to be able to communicate with others, verbally or non-verbally, we have to share this common ground. In contrast to Fleck, Wittgenstein focuses on a larger (cultural) community rather than on smaller groups of individuals within it.

#### (b) Training

To see the world according to a thought-style or a world-picture it is necessary to be trained. In Fleck's theory, a thought-style is always based on education and tradition. In G&D, he describes the process of admission to a scientific community: it starts with an "apprenticeship period" [Lehrlingszeit] (G&D 104), the novice is given an "initiation" [Einführungswiehe] (G&D: 54) until finally "the Holy Ghost as it were descends upon the novice, who will now be able to see what has hitherto been invisible to him" (G&D 104). Fleck refers to this process also by using the term "training" [Dressieren] (G&D 48; LSK 137). To adopt the thought-style of daily life, however, no *Einführungswiehe* is necessary but a child picks it up inevitably due to education, norms, language and traditional behaviour. This is very similar to the view of Wittgenstein who yet does not use the term *Dressieren* but *Abrichtung* (PI 6; both terms are translated as "training"). Wittgenstein emphasises that this training is for the most part practical rather than theoretical: a child learns, for instance, to sit on a chair even before it learns that chairs actually exist (OC 476). This significance of practical training is also accentuated by Fleck who repeatedly points out that certain skills cannot be learnt through verbal descriptions alone (SOP 60, 64, 66), although textbooks are not irrelevant (G&D 55 et seqq.). Textbooks and teaching are also part of Wittgenstein's training (OC 162, 170, 263, 600).

#### (c) Foundations

According to OC, our justifications have an end (563). Yet "the end is not an ungrounded presupposition: it is an ungrounded way of acting" (OC 110). Like the language-game, the world-picture "is there – like our life" (OC 559). It is not placed on a firm foundation but rather resembles a "system in which consequences and premises give one another *mutual support*" (OC 142), or a building whose "foundation-walls are carried by the whole house" (OC 248). Correspondingly, also Fleck's "edifice of knowledge" is not placed on a foundation but maintained by a constant interaction between active and passive elements of knowledge (G&D 51). Like a world-picture, it cannot be completely justified. Neither the world-picture nor the knowledge system that corresponds to a thought-style has a fixed structure. Fleck illustrates that it is restructured again and again within a thought-collective (G&D 95; PSS 117) and resembles a "network in continuous fluctuation" [Netzwerk in fortwährender Fluktuation] (G&D 79). This strongly reminds us of Wittgenstein's metaphor of a riverbed which is on the one hand shaped but on the other hand constantly being modified (OC 96 et seqq.).

#### (d) Truth

According to both Fleck and Wittgenstein truth is always linked to a community: a proposition is true if and only if it is held to be true by the members of a certain group of individuals. Yet both philosophers deny that truth depends on convention. Fleck explicitly distances himself from such a position (G&D 100; SOP 66). In his theory, the members of a thought-collective hold the same propositions to be true because they share the same thought-style and can conceive the world only in accordance with it. For him, truth is "stylized thought constraint" [stilgemäßer Denzwang] (G&D 100). In the PI, Wittgenstein also rejects the consensus theory of truth: individuals do not come to an agreement about what they hold to be true, but "they agree in the *language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life" (PI 241). If they agree, this implies that they hold the same propositions to be true because their reasons and judgements are based on the same world-picture. If they do not agree, however, they cannot speak of the truth or falsity of a proposition in a sensible way because they lack a common frame of reference. Therefore, it does not make sense to claim that a particular world-picture or system of knowledge is true (or false) because it tallies (or does not tally) with the facts. Wittgenstein would counter that "the very thing that is in question is what 'tallying' is here" (OC 199). Fleck considers the system of knowledge a free creation of culture: "It resembles a traditional myth" (CR 47), and also Wittgenstein compares the world-picture with mythology (OC 95, 97).

There are even more significant similarities between Fleck's and Wittgenstein's epistemological views which I would at least like to mention here: first, both philosophers deal with the circularity in regard to our interpretation of experience. This *Beharrungstendenz* ["tenacity", G&D 38] plays a major role in Fleck's theory and can also be found in OC (145, 291). Second, both refer to the significance of "*simplicity or symmetry*" [Einfachheit oder Symmetrie] (OC 92) or "*simplicity, vividness*" [Einfachheit, Anschaulichkeit] (G&D 115). Third, both point out that individuals who have different thought-styles or world-pictures are most likely to have severe communication problems, and that these

differences can in the worst case lead to (perhaps even physical) combat (G&D 185 et seqq., PE 105, OC 609-612). Finally, both assume that language, community and world-picture/thought-style are inseparably interwoven with each other. In regard to Wittgenstein, I refer to Michael Kober who has already demonstrated this point (1993: 154). Fleck, on the other hand, emphasises this interconnection when he declares that “words and customs already suffice to form a collective bond [...] The very structure of language presents a compelling philosophy characteristic of that community, and even a single word can represent a complex theory” (G&D 42).

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# Is Scepticism Part of an Acceptable Extraordinary Language Game?

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Consider this conjecture C1: Empiricism is an interesting, successful, Extraordinary Way of Living (EWL), with its corresponding Extraordinary Linguistic System (ELS). It is similar to Physics both in this respect., and in having surprising consequences: Sceptical doubt. (I am avoiding Wittgenstein's terminology, to avoid exegetical complications)

The general suggestion that Empiricism (E) is a *putative* EWL is uncontroversial. But our conjecture that it is an interesting and valuable one is, of course, strongly contested.

Either C1 is undecided, or we can show that is true or false. If it is undecided, we are left with mere intuition, and a principle of charity.

If C1 can be shown to be false, there are various remaining tasks:

- Showing that its sentences, when interpreted in the OLS – the only relevant linguistic system left – are bizarre or nonsensical.
- Showing how empiricists have been seduced into making these errors. This is a worthwhile closing-down and tidying-up activity, and a therapy for confused philosophers.
- Investigating how the subject matter that empiricists thought they were investigating is in fact involved in our OWoL. Are, for example, some of the sentences that they worried about attempts to express in propositional form patterns of absolutely unquestioned behaviour in our society – *hinges* on which our OWoL turns?

If, however, C1 can be shown to be true, then successfully demonstrating that its sentences, inappropriately interpreted in the Ordinary Linguistic System (OLS), are bizarre or nonsensical, is, while easy, as predictably irrelevant as it would be for the sentences of Physics. The ease of this demonstration strongly suggests that empiricists are *intending* their activity to be extraordinary, and thus that any criticism of it must focus on C1, rather than the sentences themselves. It is, after all, commonplace for sceptical philosophers to remark, as an aside, that ordinarily people do not frame anti-sceptical propositions; they simply *behave* as though they are not sceptics. They do not frame such sentences to their doctor as: "I know that I am in pain". The actions precede, and substitute for, propositions. It is also common to say that to take the sceptical consequences of E seriously outside your study is to invite cognitive dissonance, making your ordinary life impossible.

In summary, showing that sceptical sentences are bizarre or nonsense in OLS is a *secondary* activity. What is *primary* is C1. So we now consider firstly whether the *possibility* that E is an EWoL can be ruled out, and secondly, failing this, whether there are positive reasons to rule it *in*.

C1: Is, or is not, Empiricism a viable, interesting, successful, valuable, Extraordinary Way of Living (EWoL), with its own Extraordinary Linguistic System (ELS) – on the model of Physics?

Empiricism, as a putative EWoL which leads to scepticism, needs to be assessed. We now outline the four steps of an assessment:

*Step 1:* Roughly what kind of EWoL does E appear to be? (It could be *sui generis*, or roughly scientific, or even poetic)

*Step 2:* (Weak Assessment) Does E, as a putative EWoL seem plausible? Do we intuit – feel – that it is a serious, sensible, meaningful, pursuit, or do we sense that it is silly – that the Emperor has no clothes?

*Step 3:* (Strong Negative Assessment) Can we find, and apply, criteria that *disqualify* an EWoL of this, or of *any*, kind? In other words, can we find criteria of impossibility, whose application might result in us having no need to proceed further?

*Step 4:* (Positive Assessment) Can we find, and apply, criteria for establishing a non-disqualified EWoL of this kind, or of any kind, as *promising, worth pursuing or adopting*?

**Step 1:** Roughly what kind of EWoL does E appear to be, or does it appear to be *sui generis*?

A familiar view, used positively and negatively, is that E is some kind of *theory* – about the relationship between people, their perceptions, and the World ( $R_{PPW}$ ). If so, it is making very general empirical claims. So we propose not only that E is in some way *theoretical*, but also more boldly propose that sceptical claims are surprising consequences of an empiricist *research programme*, based on a hard core of propositions. This research programme has many other consequences which are not surprising, and which, on the contrary, help us to understand various particular cases of the  $R_{PPW}$ . We thus propose that this area of activity – this putative EWoL and ELS – should, at Step 4, be assessed as broadly scientific. This helpfully determines the appropriate positive criteria for our assessment. If our proposal appears odd, we take some comfort from the fact that science was once called 'Natural Philosophy'.

E is considered by philosophers to be in competition with at least one *other such theory*: Naïve Realism.

*Are such theories needed?* We want generalisations about  $R_{PPW}$ , but the OWoL makes no attempt to form them. It is utilitarian and piecemeal. Cooks and welders do not need a Caloric or a Kinetic theory of heat.

*Step 2:* (Weak Assessment) Does E, as a putative EWoL, seem plausible?

On the one hand E has a distinguished list of investigators, typically known for their critical attitude, their care with words, and their important contributions to other intellectual EWoL. They are identifiable enough to have a special name: Empiricists. They use a special vocabulary; they also use some words from OLS, but so does Physics. On the other hand, E has some *very odd* consequences.

*Step 3: Disqualificatory Criteria* (Strong Assessment) Can we find, and apply, criteria that *disqualify* an EWoL of this, or of *any*, kind? There is a short and unpromising list of candidates:

*Criterion 1: Verificationism:* An EWoL is only genuine if the words in its ELS can be formed into statements which are directly testable and verifiable. *Response:* Discredited.

*Criterion 2: Explicit Definitions:* An EWoL is only genuine if the words in its ELS can be given clear explicit definitions which pin down their meanings. *Response:* This criterion is unrealistic. Firstly, in the OWoL a family-resemblance word like 'game' cannot be given a clear verbal definition. Secondly, to define 'red' all we can do is open a colour chart at the page next to 'red', and point. In both cases the meanings are the agreed uses by the community, and cannot be verbally "pinned down".

*Criterion 3: Usefulness:* An EWoL is only genuine if people supposedly engaged in it can explain to those that are not what it is for – what practical, concrete, difference it will make to their lives. If it is useless, it is bogus. *Response:* Why? What about poetry? This is a barbaric criterion.

*Criterion 4: What We Do:* We – our community of users – do not doubt that the Sun will rise tomorrow; we don't even frame the sentence; we just behave accordingly. *Response:* As already discussed, what the ordinary community think and do is irrelevant to this assessment.

*Criterion 5: Intuition:* Scepticism seems rather silly. *Response:* See Step 2.

We might suspect that no general disqualificatory criterion could possibly exist, since it would need, by definition if it is to operate fairly, to be offered from a standpoint which is outside all Ways of Living. We conclude that by no criterion is Empiricism disqualified as a putative EWoL and ELS. This is a significant step, but not being disqualified is not the same as being qualified. The final step is crucial.

*Step 4: Qualificatory Criteria (Strong Assessment)* Can we find, and apply, criteria for establishing a non-disqualified EWoL of this kind, or of any kind, as promising, as worth pursuing or adopting?

The absence of justifiable criteria for disqualifying empiricism/scepticism as an EWoL is a significant victory in a battle, but not winning the war. There could be various putative EWoL which, while not disqualified, are nonetheless not qualified, because they are unpromising, apparently not worth pursuing or adopting. What are some candidates for accepted Qualificatory Criteria which EWoL of this kind might reasonably be expected to satisfy?

Suppose, as already mentioned, that we tentatively propose that Philosophical Empiricism has at least some features in common with a scientific research programme. This may seem improbable, but at least it has the advantage that we can benefit from the philosopher of science's study of methods, which provides, for a research programme (RP), some ready-made criteria for success. Broadly, an EWoL of this theoretical kind, identified by a hard core, should satisfy two criteria: The weak criterion of being explanatory, and the strong criterion of showing some signs of being progressive, ideally relative to its competitors (especially if has been worked on for hundreds of years!), such that we have some reason to think that its explanations are true.

*Explanatory:* The RP should replace the ordinary surface particularity of things with an inevitably partly hidden generality. It should make phenomena fall into previously unnoticed patterns. If it has competitor RPs, then it should be simpler than them. In brief, it should explain things.

*Progressive:* The RP should:

- a. Be self-consistent (more than its competitors).
- b. Be consistent with other well-established theories.
- c. Capture the successes of its competitors.
- d. Make testable successful novel fact predictions.
- e. Identify inconsistencies in an existing, competing, RP, which indicate that it is degenerating – displaying increasing numbers of special cases, exceptions, and such-like defensive manoeuvres. Show that these inconsistencies do not arise in the new RP.

*Step 5: Applying the Qualificatory Criteria*

*How can Empiricism be described as a RP?(The Empiricist Research Programme ERP)*

Investigators, after unusually reflecting on the phenomena, have decided that there is a need for a better general theory to explain the relationship between people, their perceptions, and the World ( $R_{PPW}$ ). In the OWoL in this area of phenomena people use a complex, sophisticated, set of categories, with qualifiers, which does a pretty good job communicating and recording – a job commensurate with our ordinary needs: Certain/doubtful, prove, know, evidence, true/false, believe, reasonable/unreasonable, justified/unjustified, possible/impossible, can/cannot, red ("That is red"). Many of these are initially, for convenience, *digital* in use, but are then qualified with 'quite', 'very', 'a bit', in order to try to cover complications that arise in further use.

Empiricist investigators, in their EWoL, think they can do better. They have, for example, rejected some OWoL categories as inappropriately digital, and devised new extraordinary classificatory categories, some explicitly analog. The new set is conjectured to mark Natural Classifications better than competitors. Some of the words that refer to these categories are new, others are unfortunately ordinary words given new meanings: Objective/subjective, conjecture, degree of support (objective), evidence, degree of belief (subjective), certain, doubt, fallible (defeasible), sensation (qualia; subjective), red object, sensation I have when I look at a red object, object (objective), World, property, brain, mind. Using these words, empiricist investigators frame conjectures (not presuppositions), which are the general propositions which form their RP's hard core. They propose that these conjectures are going to be more consistent with the full range of our experiences than any competing hard core.

*Hard Core (Selection):* We have sensations, which are subjective. Sensations cannot be described in public language. When different people look at a ripe tomato, they all call it 'red', regardless of any variety in their sensations. A person's claims about 'objects' are always defeasible. Things in the World need not be similar to people's sensations. Evidence tells against a general principle of uniformity in Nature; we have no good reasons to suppose that the events we have experienced are typical of all such events. We have only indirect evidence for the existence of other minds.

From their hard core, investigators derive various consequences, which they compare with experience. Close to the level of experiential testing, these consequences can be translated into OLS.

The analogy with what physicists have done is particularly helpful here. For example, the change from having no general theory of heat, to Caloric theory, to Kinetic theory, has no impact on the language and behaviour of cooks and welders, who continue to "put heat into objects, share the heat, keep the heat in, boil, melt", and so on. For another example, consider the role of *imagining* in thought-experiments: Hard core propositions often need to be imagined, because they are far from everyday experience; imagined thought-experiments help us to clarify our ideas.

*What are the ERP's competitors? Naïve Realism: Hard Core:* We experience objects. Things are mostly as they seem. When we look at a ripe tomato, we all see red. We know for certain, on the basis of the available evidence, that the Sun will rise tomorrow, and that other people have minds like ours.

*Applying the Positive Criteria to the ERP*

The ERP is explanatory. It is self-consistent. It is consistent with well-established theories both Physics, which suggest that the World is very different from our sensations of it, and in Psychology and Neuroscience, which suggest that our brain generates fallible models of the World on the basis of sensory data. It fits with the Biologist's difficulty in deciding whether other animals are conscious. It has many routine consequences which fit with ordinary experience, such as that we cannot explain to a blind man what colour is, and that people who suppose that the events they have experienced are typical of all such events, are from time to time be proved wrong. It makes testable successful novel fact predictions, such as that the same object in the World can cause very different sensations in different people (Kinaesthesia).

BUT

Some of the consequences of ERP are very counter-intuitive: Sceptical doubts. But, after all, some consequences of our Physics theories are very counter-intuitive.

# Wittgenstein, Quine, and Future Epistemology

Grzegorz Trela, Cracow, Poland

L. Wittgenstein and W.v.O. Quine (not only in my opinion, I think) were the most important epistemologists in contemporary philosophy. In my short presentation I would like to compare Wittgenstein's scepticism to Quine's naturalism.

One of the most commonly known philosophical problems related to scepticism is whether we can rightly claim to know if physical objects exist regardless of our perception, if the world was not created five minutes ago and so forth.

Wittgenstein's most extended discussion on these issues has been presented in *On Certainty* (1969). He begins with the kinds of examples invoked by G.E. Moore in his attempt to combat scepticism, such as 'Here is a hand' and 'The Earth has existed for a long time before my birth' (this was the concept of G.E. Moore). It is a misconception to find it relevant, in its form, to the traditional question of scepticism. The central use of 'to know/ knowledge' is connected with those propositions where testing is possible. Hence, one who uses it in connection with the propositions which help define our worldview (as is in fact done only in philosophy and not in ordinary life) has extended the word to a situation where procedures do not exist for assessing either the first-order claim or the claim to have knowledge of it. This is not to say that the word 'know' is unintelligibly and wrongly used in the philosophical debate. We can sympathize with the sceptical impulse, which springs from awareness of the fact that our language games are not based on grounds which compel us to them or guarantee their continued success. But we can also sympathize with the anti-sceptical position which insists on accepting these central propositions in order to underpin our being able to do any thinking at all, so that claims to doubt them are empty.

The problem of our knowledge of the external world is traditionally stated as one of how a self with private mental states can come to have knowledge of the external world. Quine's restatement is strikingly more naturalistic:

I am a physical object sitting in a physical world. Some of the forces of this physical world impinge on my surface. Light rays strike my retinas; molecules bombard my eardrums and fingertips. I strike back, emanating concentric air waves. These waves take the form of a torrent of discourse about tables, people, molecules, light rays, retinas, air waves, prime numbers, infinite classes, joy and sorrow, good and evil. (Quine, *The Ways of Paradox and Other Essays*, p. 215)

In its traditional statement the problem lies in how, starting with 'experience' in the form of immediately given impressions or sense-data, we justify our claims to know objects such as tables, chairs or molecules. This vantage point was that of a first philosophy, intended as providing a foundation of certainty for the sciences by standing outside of them and legitimizing their accomplishments. Quine rejects this formulation. His naturalized epistemology rephrases the problem as one of how we learn to talk about or refer to objects (ordinary as well as scientific). What conditions are leading to that reference? How is scientific discourse possible?

The traditional accounts of the linkage between 'experience' and our knowledge vary from mentalistic concepts, like that of Hume, in which all our ideas are copies of sense impressions, to more neutral linguistic formulations, in which cognitive claims are to be translated into observation sentences. On Quine's holistic account, one cannot deal with the empirical content of sentences, much less of terms – the linguistic correlates of ideas – one by one, either via definition, translation or some other sort of linkage. In order to study the relation between knowledge and science, and the observation sentences it is necessary to trace the psychological and linguistic development of the knower, that is, the potential user of scientific language. Observation sentences serve as both the starting point in human language learning as well as the empirical grounds for science. Presently, the problem of knowledge is how we can proceed to talking about tables, chairs, molecules, neutrinos, sets and numbers, starting with observation sentences. One of the reasons for carrying out the epistemological research by studying the roots of reference is simply the failure of the above-mentioned traditional empiricists' programme. Another one is that it enables to dispense with mentalistic notions such as 'experience' or 'observation'. Instead, two components can be relied on which are already a part of the naturalist's ontology, i.e. a physical happening at the nerve endings, the neural input or stimulus; and the linguistic entity, observation sentence. These two components serve as naturalistic surrogates for 'experience' and 'observation'. On Quine's empiricist and behaviourist account, observation sentences are those that can be learned independently of other language acquisition. They are the sentences that can be learned purely by ostension and as such they are causally most proximate to the stimulus. This account is not vulnerable to attacks on the notion of observation as being dependent on the theories one holds, since observation sentences are precisely those which are learnable without any background information. Another point of difference with empiricists concerns is the alleged certainty or incorrigibility of observation. Though Quine's observation sentences are assented to with a minimum of background information and are thus included among those sentences less likely to be revised, they are not in principle immune from revision.

Then, unlike traditional epistemology, Quine's epistemology is naturalistic: we cannot stand apart from our place as a part of the nature and make philosophical judgments. This is a part of the theme that philosophy is continuous with science, science being the part of the nature most suitable for knowing itself.

The above information is well known by everybody. In my speech I would like to show the future philosophical investigation (a special future epistemology) to be placed between these two *complementary perspectives*.

# Wittgenstein's Light on Anthropology

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## 1. Introduction

Ludwig Wittgenstein is a philosopher with immense impact on modern and contemporary thought. The influence and the diversity of his work verify the ability that he undoubtedly possessed -as a *Hegelian personality*- to sense and identify the future directions of the currents in his time and lead the way.

Social and Cultural Anthropology are cognitive fields certainly affected by Wittgenstein's later philosophy. Clifford Geertz, a leading figure in postmodern Interpretive Cultural Anthropology, recognizes Wittgenstein as his mentor, advocating the primacy of language and context. (Geertz 2000) "Human beings" Geertz says "through their cultural narratives weave their own web of meaning". Notions and terms central in Wittgenstein's second philosophy, such as: life forms, language-games, context, rules, usage, meaning, private language define the theoretical framework and serve as interpretive tools in contemporary anthropological research.

## 2. Wittgenstein and Otherness

Meaning analysis in second Wittgenstein implores analysis of actual linguistic usage and its incorporation in human activity. This can be achieved through the exploration of the way words are used in different language games: "I shall also call the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, the "language-game". (Wittgenstein 1968: 5e)

Language-games are played by certain rules, with a practical and social dimension, different and specific for each game. "When you are playing ping-pong you mustn't use a tennis racket" Wittgenstein said to O'Drury in 1938. (O.C. Drury 1984: 140)

It is the subjects, the members of this linguistic community that construct meaning in their everyday use of language. "Commanding, questioning, recounting, chatting, are as much a part of our natural history as walking, eating, drinking, playing" (Wittgenstein 1968: 12e) Wittgenstein admits a common human nature that allows the existence of a common language in all cultures and the ability to communicate. He does not reduce social behavior merely to the natural though, as it is the context of a society and the culture produced that allows for the development of language-games.

Communication is achieved based on public criteria, as according to Wittgenstein, there does not exist such a thing as 'private language'.<sup>1</sup> In a fragmented, almost postmodern way he writes:

Imagine someone pointing to his cheek with an expression of pain and saying "abracadabra!"- We ask "What do you mean?" And he answers "I meant toothache". - You at once think to yourself: How can one 'mean toothache' by that word? Or what did it mean to mean pain by that word? (Wittgenstein 1968, 168e)

Ontological structures are projections of primarily given language structures. (Augeles 2002: 260-267) "You learned the concept *pain* when you learned language." says Wittgenstein. (Wittgenstein 1968: 118e) Based on expressed indications and behaviour, Ludwig Wittgenstein, particularly in his late philosophy, opted for individual case treatment and description; declaring thus an aversion for generalizations, definitions, scientific explanations.

Applying Wittgenstein's philosophy in otherness and pain means in fact to consider the Other holistically - not as a brain or as a body, but as a *person* in pain. (M.R. Bennett & P.M.S. Hacker 2003) A person situated in a social and linguistic context, never in a vacuum, never isolated or extracted from her /his surroundings. Being himself a patient, Wittgenstein writes: "No pain can be greater than the one you can find in a single human being; feeling lost, this is the greatest pain of all." (Wittgenstein 1958)

Wittgenstein, in his analysis of how we ascribe pain to others, clearly shows that ascriptions of consciousness and pain to others have, as a *precondition*, that we have an attitude to these others: that they are of a *type*, of a certain life form which *may be conscious and be in pain*.

## 3. Wittgenstein and Difference

Wittgenstein's openness to difference is profound. "The foreigner will probably pronounce a sentence differently if he conceives it differently; [...] (In Russian one says: 'stone red' instead of 'a stone is red'; do they feel the copula to be missing in the sense, or attach it in thought?)" (Wittgenstein 1968: 8e,10e) His concern about the foreign, the different, denotes the width of his mind horizon and in it, the incessant presence of the alternative.

The philosopher's critique on James Frazer's *Golden Bough* is a clear indication of the former. The unprecedented of the *anthropology of the anthropologist* constitutes an almost prophetic conception on Wittgenstein's behalf, of the hermeneutical problems and the conditions for understanding the ethnological material- issues and questions to be centrally raised later, by the postmodern critique. "How narrow Frazer's spiritual life is! That is, what incapacity to understand a life different from the life in his contemporary England!" (Wittgenstein 1982: 4)

Frazer's double distance from the object of his study constituted a problematic issue in his work. Wittgenstein thought it unreasonable for anyone to infer on *primitive* lives based on a Western *Weltanschauung* or attempt a rationalization for or against a certain life form.

Primitive men, Wittgenstein claims, dance not in order to provoke rain but so as to express their hope or their wish in a way different from ours. "Magic lies on the idea of symbolism and language. Representation of a desire/wish is eo ipso the representation of its realisation. Thus, magic presents a wish: expresses a wish" (Wittgenstein 1982: 4). Rain dance is a language-game belonging to a life form; it is a need of both the community and the individual, of man as a ritual being.

<sup>1</sup> Unless it's about "...Sounds which no one else understands but which I 'appear to understand' and might be called *private language*" (Wittgenstein 1968: 94e).



The religious practices or life of the king-priest are of a nature no different from any authentically religious practice of our days, like confession, for instance. The latter can be neither explained nor, not explained (Wittgenstein 1982: 3)

One might say: 'Each point of view has its own charm' but that would be wrong. What is fair is to say that every perspective is of importance for the person who thinks of it as important [...] in this respect, 'Each perspective is of equal weight'. (Wittgenstein 1982: 8)

Aligning with Spengler, Wittgenstein considers cultures to be organic structures. History is not linear, due to the multitude of civilisations, each of which bears their own beliefs, passions, their own life, will, emotion and death. "Each in its own deepest essence being different from the others [...] just like each species of plants has its own blossom and fruit, a specific type of growth and decline" (Spengler 1926, 21).

When it comes to Wittgenstein's remarks on ethics, the most typical and important feature is their sparsity. Paul Ernst was a source of inspiration for late Wittgenstein, who being in agreement with his views, regards ethics, aesthetics and religion non-explicable, just understandable.

The view of a common human nature; of linguistic, religious, cultural and ethical equality; of relativism -as lack of a dogmatic attitude- and of resistance to the *only one, objective truth*; negation of the predetermined and acceptance of the different, all the above compose later Wittgenstein's position towards the *estranged*, the *foreign*. A predisposition so open that resembles – and at times exceeds – that of the anthropologist's.

#### 4. Wittgenstein and Anthropology

Wittgenstein's late philosophy has proven and is proving essential for postmodern social and cultural anthropology. According to Veena Das, the Wittgensteinian concept of language that acquires substance and meaning only within the context of existing life forms, helps explain the inability of expression and verbalization of certain incidents recorded in ethnography. Incidents of unbelievable cruelty and violence, that have caused indescribable pain, cannot even be uttered as there is a deep moral energy in the refusal to represent some violations of the human body, for these violations are seen as being against nature, as defining the limits of life itself and being almost beyond recognizable life forms:

Some forms of life are seen as not belonging to life proper. Was it a man or a machine that plunged a knife into the private parts of a woman after raping her? Were those men or animals who went around killing and collecting penises as signs of their prowess? (Das 1998: 182)

Veena Das echoing Wittgenstein (Cavell 1997: 94), says that it would be a mistake to think of pain as essentially incommunicable: "To say 'I am in pain' is to ask for acknowledgement from the other, just as denial of another's pain is not an intellectual failure but a spiritual failure, one that puts our future at stake."

Except for Das, Stanley Cavell (Cavell 1989: 29-77) and before him, Clifford Geertz and Peter Winch paved the way for anthropology's acquaintance with Wittgenstein and adoption of his philosophical views. Issues such as the idea of culture as possibility, horizontal (ethnological) and vertical (biological) limits of life forms, everyday notions

viewed under the prism of relativism and the complexity of the inner regarding questions of faith or pain, were "introduced to anthropology affecting ethnography" (Das 1998: 171).

"What *we (the philosophers)* do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use" (Wittgenstein 1968: 48e) Wittgenstein's approach on everyday life proves of use value for anthropology. It offers the advantage of presenting society as being constantly under formation, rather than as static and given. Instead of seeking active agents /subjects at great historical moments, one can look for and locate them at small, everyday moments of resistance.

Daniel mentions such an example: in 1977 in India, the time of riots and attacks against the Tamils, a Sinhala woman managed to save a Tamil co-passenger, a stranger, just by performing a simple everyday act: by touching his hand in a familiar way – as if they were a couple – when the mob had invaded the train to violently grab and put to death all the Tamils. (Daniel 1997: 211). This quiet expression of everyday familiarity articulated a powerful word, defending in practice the right to life. Or, it simply sent the right, false message playing by the rules of the culture-game.

"If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: "This is simply what I do"" (Wittgenstein 1968: 85e). In this picture Veena Das places the reflection of the ethnographic process 'in the darkness of our time': "In anthropology the target is: when I reach bedrock, not to be turned by the resistance of the *Other*, yet allow the *other* knowledge to leave its mark on me" (Das 1998: 193)

Later Wittgenstein welcomes multitude, does not judge the different and removes guilt from insecurity: "One can only describe and say: this is human life" (Wittgenstein 1982: 3).

#### 5. Conclusion

Philosophers might get trapped, regarding philosophy as a form of cosmic or metaphysical theology, in systems that have lost contact with real life. Philosophy without application is pure meditation, devoid of flesh and blood, dry and brittle. When it comes to philosophical anthropology human nature, societies, institutions and cultures cannot be de-contextualised or cut off from the oxygen the living, throbbing reality offers.

Similarly, without the philosophical background and theoretical grounding, socio-cultural anthropology would be merely diminished to journalism, reporting scattered, incoherent, random information without the ability to proceed to solid, meaningful inferences.

*Philosophical or empirical anthropology?* would be a fictitious dilemma, similar to the mind-body dualism that Wittgenstein rejects. The philosophical and the empirical in anthropology cannot go each without the other; the former cannot exist in the void, without actuality, without body where it can draw from, be it sensations, experience, feedback in general. The second is blind without the light coming from a bright thinking mind, it gets disorientated and lost. Wittgenstein's late philosophy fortunately sheds ample light able to properly enlighten the wandering anthropologists as they bravely explore the dark caves of humanity.

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# Special Propositions in *On Certainty*: An Epistemic Analysis through Senseless and Nonsense

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## 1. The realm of certainty

In *On Certainty* Wittgenstein constructs a tripartite classification of the propositions —i.e. sentences in certain uses—, as follows:

First, empirical propositions, whose meaning and truth value depend upon the context in which we use them. That is the case of "I know this is my hand" when a victim utters it after being unharmed in an explosion.

Second, propositions, which we may call dogmatic, that lack meaning in any related context. This is the case of "I know this is my hand" when it is introduced in a philosophical conversation with the aim of refuting the sceptic.

Third, propositions that seem to be empirical but that, in certain contexts, become hinge, special or grammatical propositions. Such is the case of "I know this is my hand" when we use it in the context of a philosophical analysis about what the discussion with the sceptic shows.

Empirical propositions present no problem of interpretation when they are pronounced in the appropriate circumstances, since then they make full sense, i.e., they are meaningful. Dogmatic sentences can also be straightforwardly evaluated, since according to Wittgenstein they are clearly absurd. The problem arises, however, in relation to the so-called hinge or special propositions.

To understand the way Wittgenstein solves the question of meaning in relation to the special propositions, I suggest we turn to a distinction that he drew in *Tractatus* between three types of proposition: meaningful (*sinnvoll*), nonsensical or absurd (*unsinnig*), and senseless (*sinnlos*). Examples of meaningful propositions are any proposition that belongs to the natural science corpus and any proposition that belongs to ordinary language. Examples of nonsensical propositions are the propositions that compose *Tractatus* as well as any other proposition belonging to metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics. Examples of senseless propositions are logical tautologies and their contradictory negations.

In my opinion, the tripartite distinction drawn by *Tractatus* between meaningful, nonsensical, and senseless propositions may help to understand some features of the special propositions that attracted Wittgenstein's attention in the notes that make up *On Certainty*. There, Wittgenstein tackled the sphere of certainty when reflecting upon the conditions of intelligibility for some propositions. He discovered that the same sentence can have different conditions of intelligibility, depending on the context in which the sentence is uttered. Thus, whether a proposition like "I know this is my hand" makes sense or not depends upon the circumstances in which it is pronounced:

I) If we introduce this sentence in a daily conversation as an empirical observation—for example, if a victim utters these words after opening a package containing a bomb—, then it will be meaningful, and will have a truth value ascribed to it. This will be a perfectly legitimate application of this sentence. It will thus be a meaningful proposition in an empirical context.

II) However, if we pronounce the sentence in a philosophical discussion, and interpret it as if it were an empirical proposition—as both the sceptic and G. E. Moore do—, the proposition becomes nonsense. It is thus particular applications of the sentence in particular contexts—which I have here referred to as dogmatical applications—which convert this type of propositions in nonsensical.

III) Finally, if we use the sentence in the context of a philosophical discussion and we interpret it as a special proposition or a grammatical rule—as Wittgenstein does—, then—according to my thesis—it will, strictly speaking, lose its empirical sense, and acquire features that resemble, on the one hand, the senseless propositions and, on the other, the nonsensical propositions.

Following the interpretative hypothesis that I have presented, some features that define special propositions in *On Certainty* are common to the definition of senseless propositions in *Tractatus*. To illuminate them, I shall explore the comparison between the role of special propositions in *On Certainty* and the role of characteristically senseless propositions in the *Tractatus* in section 2. I will deal with the analysis of the kind of features that allow for a comparison between special propositions and nonsensical sentences in section 3.

## 2. Resemblance between senseless propositions in *TLP* and special propositions in *OC*

In *Tractatus* Wittgenstein explained that logical propositions did not have sense. Logical propositions are not absurd, but senseless, that is, they lack any meaning at all. This assertion becomes clear when we remember his definition of logical propositions as tautological and certain. Nothing of what may happen in the world can ever affect them, whether in confirmation or refutation of them. Logical propositions do not convey any information but say nothing. They lack semantic content.

We can now apply the definition of logical propositions to our understanding of special propositions in *On Certainty*. In *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein claims that logical propositions are certain and tautological, lack semantic content, do not convey any information, and must therefore be considered meaningless. In a similar fashion, in *On Certainty* Wittgenstein considers that special propositions form a certain and unchangeable structure, do not transmit any information either, and can therefore also be considered meaningless—always taking into account that their being meaningless ultimately depends on their being uttered in a particular context.

Up to here we have resumed some of the similarities between logical and special propositions, which might lead us to understand the latter as being senseless. If we pursued this path, we should then have to try to think of something like a senseless certainty! But we must be very careful at this point. These reflections might lead us to believe that the role of special propositions in *On Certainty* is similar to the role that logical propositions played in an earlier period of Wittgenstein's intellectual development.

However, we should not be too tempted by the advantages of such an identification since there are important differences between both types of sentences. In my opinion, these differences exhibit precisely the extent to which the propositional treatment of the realm of certainty poses insurmountable difficulties.

One of the differences is Wittgenstein's emphasis that the fact that special propositions are certain does not imply that they are either true or false. The implication of this assertion is that the special propositions in *On Certainty* are not tautologies in the sense in which logical propositions in *Tractatus* are. At the end of his life, then, Wittgenstein was convinced that a discussion about truth or falsehood did not apply in the case of special propositions. However, if we rule out the possibility of special propositions' being true or false, it will not be possible to consider them "propositions" in a strict sense since according to the standard definition a proposition is a linguistic expression that can bear a truth value. This, of course, has to do with the fact that, by the time Wittgenstein wrote the notes that make up *On Certainty*, he had already abandoned that definition. For the so-called second Wittgenstein, having a truth-value is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for being a proposition —there are many kinds of language games and truth and falsehood do not apply to all of them, for example, questions, exclamations, orders, or prayers. Having abandoned the old notion of proposition, special propositions can still be called "propositions", despite the fact that they are neither true nor false. But —and this is my point— being neither true nor false, they cannot not resemble tautologies, at least, in the sense in which the latter are conceived in *Tractatus*. A second feature that urges caution when comparing the two notions from different periods of Wittgenstein's career is the following: while logical propositions are not usually employed in the context of learning, some special propositions can be used for that purpose. Thus, while it does not make sense to tell a child "It rains or it does not rain" to teach her something about rain, we can teach her something if we say "This is a hand".

Of course, saying to a child "Either it is raining or it is not raining" could be part of a programme to inculcate in her the practice of classical logic. Furthermore, it could be a way to teach her how to use the words "or" and "not", that is, a way to teach her the grammar of our language. In this case, there would be no significant difference with the pedagogical use of "This is my hand". Thus, both sentences are nonsensical if pronounced as empirical propositions (circumstance II) but convey information about the way we use certain terms —i.e. the logical connectives— if we utter them to illuminate a particular language game (circumstance III). In our previous considerations we assumed that special propositions are meaningless and do not convey any information. We can now verify that special propositions do not lack sense and are not meaningless, but convey information about the way we use certain terms. Again, this difference highlights a key role of the special propositions, which does not fit well with their characterization as simple "propositions".

### 3. Resemblance between nonsensical propositions in *TLP* and special propositions in *OC*. A middle path interpretation

The non-propositional character of certainty is shown by the idea that the so-called special propositions do not depict facts about the world but regulate the rules of our language. They say something about how we think, about

our symbology. This idea helps me to deepen the relationship between special and nonsensical propositions.

In recent years, a fierce dispute has arisen among scholars over the nature of nonsense in *Tractatus*:

1) The Traditional interpretation sustains that nonsensical propositions violate the rules of logical syntax and the limits of meaning. They do not say anything nor do they show anything about the form or the content of the world. This approach emphasises that the term 'Unsinn' is used to exclude different things for different reasons. To welcome this polarity, Hacker (1986, 22) talks of: a) Overt nonsense: it does not require any operation to be discovered to be such. b) Covert nonsense: it violates the principles of the logical syntax of language in a way that is not evident in daily language to an untrained mind. Hacker defends that there are two types of covert nonsense: b.i) Absolute nonsense: pseudopropositions like "Err to ja" or, in the Wittgensteinian scheme of thought, many philosophical propositions that talk about aesthetics, ethics, religion, or personal identity. b.ii) Illuminating nonsense: pseudopropositions that stand out because they manage to express some kind of insight into the workings of logical syntax. *Tractatus'* philosophical pseudopropositions are interesting nonsense because they illuminate what can't be said, but can only be shown. They express correctly something which is ineffable; they are correct unsayables, but correct nonetheless.

2) The New interpretation maintains that no nonsense proposition is really a proposition. Philosophical sentences like "Objects are simple" or "No one can have my thought" are nonsense in the same way as "Err to ja". Nonsense never conveys insight; no nonsense provides comprehension, captation or elucidation at all. There is thus no useful, important, interesting, profound or ineffable nonsense. None of them, say, *illuminates*.

In relation to the debate between the traditional and new positions, my analysis of the extent to which special propositions in *On Certainty* resemble nonsensical propositions in *Tractatus* leads to the following conclusions. I have argued, firstly, that the propositions that are certain to us are important or valuably correct. In particular, that when the proposition "I know that this is my hand" works as a special proposition, it resembles insightful nonsense (a nonsense of the type b. ii). My thesis captures the idea that in *On Certainty* Wittgenstein points out that special propositions do not say anything about the world; they do not yield knowledge, they yield a kind of understanding of the world. I think this description of special propositions in *On Certainty* helps to illuminate the status of insightful, valuable, or interesting nonsense in *Tractatus*. The latter express insights into the workings of logical syntax, they say something about how we think, about our symbology; they show something about how language is possible, and about what underpins it. From my point of view, hinge propositions are nonsensical but convey valuable and illuminating insights into what makes language possible — when philosophy helps us to notice their existence. The role of such special propositions in *On Certainty* could therefore be related to the role of insightful or illuminating nonsense in *Tractatus*. On the status of philosophical propositions, *On Certainty* closes the circle that *Tractatus* had opened.

Secondly, let us remember that —paragraph 1, circumstance II— the same sentence ("I know that this is my hand") in another application (the same sentence in another use) was for Wittgenstein a case of absolute nonsense (a nonsense of the type b.i). So the dogmatic

use of the sentence “I know that this is my hand”, intended as a sort of Moorian proof against the sceptic, is a clearly absurd language use.

In conclusion, my argument identifies which aspects of special propositions remind us of the nature of absolute nonsense and which other features instead make them more akin to illuminating nonsense. In consequence, my interpretation occupies the middle ground between the traditional and the new interpretations of *Tractatus* in this regard. For I accept, on the one hand, that there are two types of nonsense, while I also think, on the other, that one group of propositions (the special propositions that are central to Wittgenstein’s concern in *On Certainty*) share features with both types; in other words, that depending on the context of application, one and the same sentence (for example, “I know that this is my hand”) can be interpreted as being absolute nonsense (i.e., a dogmatic use of an antiseptical proof) or as being an insightful nonsense (i.e., a proper philosophical use that lets us discover the realm of certainty and reflect upon it.)

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# Die Kontext-Idee von § 43 der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* in Anwendung auf die Wissenschaftssprache

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„Man kann für eine große Klasse von Fällen der Benützung des Wortes „Bedeutung“, wenn auch nicht für alle Fälle seiner Benützung – dieses Wort so erklären: Die Bedeutung eines Wortes ist sein Gebrauch in der Sprache.“

*Philosophische Untersuchungen*, § 43)

Die Anwendung von PU43 auf die Wissenschaftssprache wird für folgende 5 Anwendungsfälle besprochen: 1. Klassische Mechanik, 2. Quantenmechanik, 3. Relativitätstheorie, 4. Euklidische Geometrie, 5. Mengenlehre;

## 1. Kontext: Klassische Mechanik

Bedeutung von „*physikalisches Objekt*“ [„PO“]:

Die Bedeutung von „*physikalisches Objekt*“ im Kontext der klassischen Mechanik kann durch die folgenden fünf Bedingungen genauer bestimmt werden.

### (1) Kants Kriterium

„Ein jedes Ding ... steht unter dem Grundsatz der durchgängigen Bestimmung nach welchen ihm von allen möglichen Prädikaten der Dinge, so fern sie mit ihren Gegenteilen verglichen werden, eins zukommen muss“. (durchgehende Bestimmung von PO = Wertdefinitheit von PO) (Kant (1787, KRV) B 600)

### (2) PO ist Träger von essentiellen Eigenschaften wie Masse, geometrische Figur, Ladung, die Galilei-invariant sind.

Die Eigenschaften eines physikalischen Objekts PO sind Galilei-invariant genau dann, wenn sie sich bei folgenden vier Veränderungen 10 Parameter nicht ändern:

- PO (oder das Laboratorium mit PO) wird an einen anderen Ort verlegt (3 Parameter) wegen 3 möglichen Richtungen)
- PO (oder das Lab) wird anders orientiert (3 Parameter)
- PO (oder das Lab) bewegt sich mit beliebiger Geschwindigkeit (3 Parameter)
- Die Veränderungen (a)–(c) mit PO (mit dem Lab) werden früher oder später durchgeführt. M.a.W.: Die Uhren im Lab werden (beliebig) verstellt (1 Parameter).

Jedoch ändern sich andere Eigenschaften von PO, wenn man oben beschriebene Veränderungen mit PO (mit dem Lab) durchführt.

Diese heißen nicht-essentielle Eigenschaften. Es war nun eine fundamentale Entdeckung der klassischen Mechanik, dass eine vollständige Beschreibung der Veränderungen (a)–(c) durch nicht-essentielle Eigenschaften (also solchen, die nicht Galilei-invariant sind) möglich ist. D. h. dass eine vollständige Beschreibung jeder Bewegung von PO durch die Angabe der nicht-essentiellen Eigenschaften Ort und Impuls von PO zur Eindeutigkeit der Beschreibung von PO führt.

Diese Eindeutigkeit ist allerdings erkauft durch 3 Voraussetzungen der klassischen Mechanik, die in der Galilei-Invarianz stecken:

- Es gibt eine absolute Zeit in allen Inertialsystemen, d. h. die Zeitmessung ist in allen Inertialsystemen dieselbe.
- Gleichzeitigkeit bedeutet dasselbe in allen Inertialsystemen
- Und als Folge: Die räumliche Distanz von zwei gleichzeitigen Ereignissen ist dieselbe in allen Inertialsystemen. D. h. dass nach der Galilei-Invarianz alle drei: Zeitmessung, Gleichzeitigkeit und räumliche Distanz invariante Eigenschaften von PO unter Transformationen in Inertialsystemen sind (für eine ausführliche Darstellung cf. Mittelstaedt/Weingartner (2005, LNT) p. 120 ff.).

### (3) Undurchdringlichkeit von PO

PO ist undurchdringlich (bzw. wird in der Klass. Mechanik als undurchdringlich angenommen) in dem Sinne, dass an einer Raum-Zeit-Stelle nur ein PO vorhanden sein kann.

### (4) Reidentifizierbarkeit durch die Zeit

Ein dynamisches Gesetz verbindet PO's Zustand Z1 ( $p, y, t_1$ ) mit PO's Zustand Z2 ( $p, y, t_2$ ). Dadurch wird eine zeitliche Entwicklung des Zustandes Z ( $p, q, t$ ) beschrieben und eine eindeutige Trajektorie von PO angegeben.

### (5) Beobachter-Invarianz

Alle Beobachter (wo immer sie sind) kommen zu den gleichen Beobachterresultaten über das PO.

Abschließend können wir sagen: Im Kontext der klassischen Mechanik wird die Bedeutung von „PO“ durch die Bedingungen (1)–(5) bestimmt oder implizit definiert. Die durch (1)–(5) erreichte Bestimmung der Bedeutung ist nicht in allen Aspekten eindeutig. Beispielsweise wird auch ein euklidischer Raum vorausgesetzt, der weitere Bedingungen nötig macht (cf. 4 unten).

Oder mit Wittgenstein: Die Bedeutung von „*physikalisches Objekt*“ ist seine Verwendung oder sein Gebrauch in der Sprache der klassischen Mechanik.

Wie wir aber in den nächsten Abschnitten 2 und 3 sehen werden, ist dadurch die Bedeutung von „*physikalisches Objekt*“ nicht generell für alle Fälle festgelegt. In der Sprache der Quantenmechanik und der Relativitätstheorie ergibt sich eine andere Bedeutung von „PO“ als in der Sprache der klassischen Mechanik. Wittgenstein würde hier von verschiedenen Sprachspielen reden. Man muss jedoch bedenken, dass diese Sprachspiele in der Anwendung auf die Physik nicht gleichberechtigt sind. Die „Sprachspiele“ der Quantenmechanik und der Relativitätstheorie sind experimentell untermauerte Korrekturen des „Sprachspiels“ der klassischen Mechanik.

## 2. Kontext: Quantenmechanik

Bedeutung von „PO“:

- (1) Im Gegensatz zur Klassischen Mechanik gilt hier keine allgemeine Wertdefiniertheit von PO. Das Kant'sche Kriterium ist also nicht allgemeingültig.
- (2) Es gibt keine vollständige Beschreibung der Bewegung von PO durch Ort und Impuls. Nach der Heisenberg'schen Unschärfebeziehung sind Ort und Impuls inkommensurable Größen. Die Bewegung von Teilchen, die die Schrödinger Gleichung beschreibt ist wesentlich unvollständig, da sie nur objektive Eigenschaften, d. h. solche die gegenseitig kommensurabel sind, berücksichtigt.
- (3) Für die physikalischen Objekte der Mikrowelt, wie etwa der Elementarteilchen, gibt es keine Individualität. Das ist so wegen der sogenannten Permutationsinvarianz, Permutationsinvarianz heißt, dass ein Austausch von Elementarteilchen *derselben Art* (ein Austausch von 2 Elektronen, von 2 Neutronen... etc.) kein physikalisches Gesetz tangiert bzw. ändert. Anders ausgedrückt: Permutationsinvarianz heißt, dass *verschiedene individuelle* Teilchen derselben Art durch Gesetze nicht unterschieden werden.
- (4) Es gibt keine allgemeine Reidentifikation von Teilchen ausgehend von einem Zustand kaum die Schrödinger Gleichung zwar eine Trajektorie beschreiben, man ist aber bei der zweiten Zustandsmessung (wegen der Permutationsinvarianz) nicht sicher ob es sich um das gleiche Teilchen handelt.

## 3. Kontext: Spezielle (SR) und Allgemeine (GR) Relativitätstheorie

Bedeutung von „PO“:

- (1) Wie im Kontext der Quantenmechanik gilt auch sowohl in SR als auch in GR keine allgemeine Wertdefiniertheit von PO
- (2) Es gibt keine vollständige Beschreibung der Bewegung von PO durch die sich ändernden nicht-essentiellen Eigenschaften von Ort und Impuls.
- (3) Im Gegensatz zur Klassischen Mechanik sind in SR und GR nicht einmal die essentiellen Eigenschaften von PO wie Masse, Länge, Form und Gestalt invariant gegenüber Bewegungen von PO. Invariante Eigenschaften sind die Ladung und kombinierte Eigenschaften wie das Linienelement. Die Voraussetzungen für die Galilei-Invarianz (siehe oben 4.1, 2d) gelten hiernicht mehr.
- (4) In SR und GR gilt keine allgemeine Reidentifizierbarkeit des PO durch die Zeit hindurch.
- (5) In SR und GR gilt auch keine allgemeine Beobachter-Invarianz: Beobachter verschiedener Referenzsysteme können zu verschiedenen Beobachtungsergebnissen über dasselbe Objekt (PO) kommen (cf. Mittelstaedt / Weingartner (2005, LNT) p. 121 ff. und p. 124 ff.).

## 4. Kontext: Euklidische Geometrie

Bedeutung von „Maßstab“:

Legt der Kontext: Euklidische Geometrie die Bedeutung des in der Klassischen Mechanik verwendeten sprachlichen Terminus „Maßstab“ fest? Oder bestimmen gewisse kontingente Eigenschaften von dem in der klassischen Mechanik verwendeten Maßstäben, die Auswahl der Geometrie?

Diese Frage ist nicht ganz einfach zu beantworten. In gewisser Weise gilt beides (d.h. das „oder“ ist nicht ausschließend).

Nach Helmholtz ist die *Distanz* (der Abstand) zwischen zwei Punkten der grundlegende Begriff der Geometrie. Um eine Distanz in Euklidischen dreidimensionalen Raum zu messen, muss man diese Distanz mit einer Einheit (Einheitslänge) vergleichen. Dies bestimmt einen Maßstab derart, dass dieser Maßstab (d. h. ein physikalischer Körper) von der Distanz zur Einheitslänge bewegt werden kann. Dabei muss dieser Maßstab die Eigenschaft haben, sich während des Transports nicht zu verändern. Deshalb ist die freie Beweglichkeit eines starren Maßstabs eine notwendige Bedingung für die Messung von Distanzen im dreidimensionalen euklidischen Raum (der durch die Gesetze und Theoreme der Euklidischen Geometrie beschrieben wird). In diesem Sinne wird die Bedeutung von dem Terminus „Maßstab“ durch seinen Gebrauch in der Euklidischen Geometrie als notwendige Bedingung für die Messung von Distanzen festgelegt.

Andererseits hat Helmholtz zwei Theoreme bewiesen, die zeigen, dass die kontingente Bedingungen von starren, frei im Raum beweglichen Maßstäben gewisser Größe, die Geometrie „auswählen“. Die für die gegenwärtige Überlegung wichtigen zwei Korrolasien der Helmholtz'schen Theoreme sind folgende:

- K1 Gegeben seien genügend kleine, starre Körper, die frei im Raum beweglich sind. Dann ist die Geometrie des Raumes, die mit diesen starren Körpern (als Maßstäben) messbar ist, die Riemann'sche Geometrie.
- K2 Gegeben seien starre Körper von endlicher Ausdehnung, die frei im Raum beweglich sind. Dann ist die Geometrie des Raumes, die mit diesen starren Körpern (als Maßstäben) messbar ist, eine Geometrie gleicher Krümmung, d. h. eine euklidische, elliptische oder hyperbolische Geometrie.

Denn noch bestimmen gewisse kontingente Eigenschaften der für die Messung im euklidischen Raum notwendigen Maßstäbe auch die Art der Geometrie. Kann man dies nun mit Wittgensteins Idee der Gebrauchsformel (PU 43) in Einklang bringen? Wittgenstein könnte vielleicht sagen, dass durch das „Sprachspiel“ der Tätigkeit des Messens die Eigenschaften von den dabei verwendeten Maßstäben und damit die Bedeutung des in der Sprache verwendeten Terminus „Maßstab“ bestimmt wird. Der Zusammenhang der kontingenten Eigenschaften der Maßstäbe mit der Auswahl der Geometrie wird allerdings dadurch nicht erklärt. Und dieser Zusammenhang ist wohl eine geniale Entdeckung von Helmholtz, die Wittgenstein nicht gekannt hat.

Die *Kontingenz* dieser Eigenschaften (d. h. der Starrheit bei freier Beweglichkeit im Raum) muss besonders betont werden. Denn sie ist wie durch SR und GR gezeigt wurde nicht generell erfüllt. Maßstäbe, die mit großer Geschwindigkeit (nahe der Lichtgeschwindigkeit) bewegt werden, bleiben nicht starr, sondern werden hinsichtlich der Länge in der Bewegungsrichtung verkürzt.

## 5. Kontext: Mengenlehre

*Bedeutung von „E“ (Element-sein):*

Wird die Bedeutung von „E“ (Element-sein) durch die Axiome der Mengenlehre im Sinne einer impliziten Definition vollständig bestimmt? Als Mengenlehren können dabei die Axiome des Systems der Mengenlehre von Zermelo-Fraenkel (ZF) oder des Systems der Mengenlehre von Neumann-Bernays-Gödel (NBG) verwendet werden. Die gleiche Frage kann auch gestellt werden, in Bezug auf die Erweiterungen dieser Systeme durch die Hinzunahme des Auswahlaxioms (In einer schwächeren oder strengeren Fassung) und der Kontinuum-Hypothese.

Die Antwort auf beide Fragen ist: Nein. Skolem hatte schon 1922 Gründe dafür angeführt, dass Grundbegriffe der Mathematik und Logik durch die betreffenden Axiome nicht vollständig bestimmt sein können (cf. Skolem (1929, GFM) § 7). Gödel hat in seinem Nachwort von 1965 zu 'The Consistency of the Continuum Hypothesis' (cf. Gödel (1940, CCH) p. 70) betont, dass nach dem Unabhängigkeitsbeweis von Cohen und in bezug auf die Hinzufügung strengerer Unendlichkeitsaxiome große Freiheiten hinsichtlich der Werte von  $2^{\aleph_\alpha}$  oder hinsichtlich einer ganzen Hierarchie von Unendlichkeitsaxiomen besteht. Alle diese Fragen werden jedenfalls nicht eindeutig bestimmt durch jene Bedeutung die das E durch die bisherigen Axiome von ZF und NBG implizit bekommen hat und auch nicht durch zusätzliche strengere.

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# On Wittgenstein on Certainty

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1. In the preface to *On Certainty* Anscombe and von Wright say that in 1949 Malcolm suggested to Wittgenstein to think again about Moore's "Defense of Common Sense" (1925) and "Proof of an External World" (1939). Malcolm himself had written on the issue in "Defending Common Sense" (1949). In the preface to the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein quotes Nestroy saying that there is usually very little progress in philosophy. But I think some progress has been made from Moore and Malcolm to Wittgenstein regarding skepticism. There is more awareness of practice and perspective and this opens the discussion in novel ways. But it also gives rise to new problems, in particular regarding morality and cultural relativity. I will introduce conceptions of inner and outer relativity and of relative and hierarchical systematicity, and this will lead me to criticize one-sided therapy readings. Rule following should not be too blind.

2. The progress I see consists in a certain opening-up of horizon and discussion and is the result of the introduction of language games and basic practices. Languages and practices change over time and there is more than one of them. Such plurality also fits our time. We now do not only have Descartes' dream scenario or the much earlier butterfly dream of Zhuangzi, but we also have experiments with rubber-hands and ideas about brains in vats and whole visions about a Matrix. Things can be imagined to change gradually. You could be placed into a vat tomorrow, so that your memories would still be true and only new impressions wrong. Maybe this happened to you already yesterday, last week, or ten years ago. Thus gradual change can be imagined and it is not an all-or-nothing game any more.

3. The new picture Wittgenstein offers gives up ideas of strict hierarchy (H) and clear precision of rules and application. It gives up what I call "H-systematicity". In its place it emphasizes mutual dependency between rules and application, leading to what I call "inner relativity" and "R-systematicity". Thus Wittgenstein talks of houses carrying their foundations (*On Certainty* 248). Everything depends on everything else within the system. "What stands fast does so, not because it is intrinsically obvious or convincing; it is rather held fast by what lies around it." *Was feststeht, tut dies nicht, weil es an sich offenbar oder einleuchtend ist, sondern es wird von dem, was darum herum liegt, festgehalten* (OC 144). "I have arrived at the rock bottom of my convictions. And one might almost say that these foundation-walls are carried by the whole house." *Ich bin auf dem Boden meiner Überzeugungen angelangt. Und von dieser Grundmauer könnte man beinahe sagen, sie werde vom ganzen Haus getragen* (OC 248). There is an inner relativity resulting from mutual dependency between everything and everything else within the system. Similarly Quine uses the metaphor of a Roman arch in which the stones support each other, and he argues that statements and beliefs are merely more or less central or peripheral. Wittgenstein talks of rivers, sandbanks, and riverbeds, all of which change gradually, such that, although there are still distinctions in terms of stability, these distinctions are only a matter of degree. There can be asymmetry, but there is no strict hierarchy. Within a system of beliefs and practices there is mutual dependency. The foundations (*Grundmauer*) carry the house, and the house (*das ganze Haus*) "carries" the

foundations by keeping them in place through its mere weight. All parts support and depend on each other. A river carries water and the water brings sand and shapes the river (OC 96-9). This leads to "inner relativity".

According to Wittgenstein, to know our ways within a system and to participate in its practices we rely on our basic animal instincts and our sensitivities. (About the latter, see Alice Crary 2007.) Due to the relevance of such sensitivity also aesthetic aspects play a role here. (For a discussion of aesthetic aspects regarding meaning, see Wenzel 2010.) All this leads to what I think of as "openness". Instead of strict hierarchies based on axioms and derived propositions, or rules and meta-rules, we have to accept the fact that we live with such inner relativities and mutual dependencies within our system. (For a defense of the idea of indeterminacy as constitutive of our psychological lives, see ter Hark 2004.)

Wittgenstein's continued considerations of alternative possibilities and variations of our situation and practice make Moore's approach seem overly narrow and fixed. Thus Rush Rhees observes that "the notion of a language game is not closed" (Rhees 9). Indeed, we can observe that there is a time index to language games: "a language game does change with time" *Andererseits ändert sich das Sprachspiel mit der Zeit* (OC 256); and there is also a space index: "I am in England. – Everything around me tells me so" *Ich bin in England. – Alles um mich herum sagt es mir* (OC 421). Thus indices introduce limitations, because "everything around me" is not really everything there is. When Wittgenstein writes: "I have no reason to doubt this. 'Everything speaks in its favor and nothing against it'" *Zum Zweifeln fehlen mir die Gründe! 'Es spricht alles dafür, und nichts dagegen'* (OC 4, my translation), then he (intentionally) leaves room for doubt, because, again, "everything" in this context is not really everything there is. It is only everything we have encountered so far.

4. In his 1925 paper, Moore gave a list of basic statements that he thought we all "know, with certainty, to be true" (106). These are statements about our own body, things around us, other bodies, the earth, our perceptions, expectations, beliefs, and such. Although nobody knows their exact analyses, they are "unambiguous" and we all understand their meanings (111). Doubting them, he argued, would introduce ambiguity and self-contradiction. But Moore got involved in sense-data analysis (128-132) and he thought, differently from Russell, it seems to me, that the existence of the external world is not just our best hypothesis. He wanted more, and certainly he did not like ambiguity. In his 1939 paper he analyzed the Kantian expressions "the existence of things outside of us" (147) and "things external to our minds" (149); and he did not find them very clear and offered his own famous proof of the existence of the external world by holding up his hands and saying: "Here is one hand ... and here is another" (166). *This* he thought he knows for sure, even though he admitted that he cannot give a proof. (Kant actually had thought to have given a proof in his Refutation of Idealism, in terms of self-consciousness, time and space, the categories, and apperception. But Moore, unfortunately, did not say anything about this.)

How does Wittgenstein compare with this? I think he was impressed by Moore's honesty and sincerity but not

by his conception of statements and ambiguity. For Wittgenstein statements have meaning only in contexts, and these are more varied and indeterminate in his view than in Moore's. Contextual "inner relativity" and openness surface more in Wittgenstein, and he has less trust in abstract argument and deduction. When you carry, so to speak, a word, or statement, from one context to another, it will change its face and assume a slightly different meaning. Hence abstract argument and deduction easily go wrong.

5. But such inner relativity leads to problems of what I want to call "outer relativity". Outer relativity arises when different systems with their language games and practices meet. Whereas inner relativity is based on mutual *dependency within a single* system, outer relativity is marked by mutual *independence between different* systems. You do it your way, I do it my way (or we do it our way). You have your language game and your practice, I have mine (or we have ours). Unfortunately, this easily gives rise to conflict, and it seems to me Wittgenstein does not much address this problem.

The question I want to pose therefore is this: Which system would fare better and be more suitable (or maybe even be morally better) when different cultures and world views come into contact with each other, one that is based more on inner relativity (R) or one that is based more on hierarchy and ideas of precision and completeness (H)? Thus we have turned Wittgenstein's descriptive picture into a question about normativity. We ask whether it is enough to point to our basic practices when asked for justification. Can we just say that this is simply what we do? What I mean by "normativity" here is not only the nature of norms as taught by others, how to count or how to use certain words. About that Wittgenstein had already written with respect to rule-following. The normativity I have in mind here is moral normativity, the question of what we should do when meeting another person with a background unknown to us and when moral conflict arises. How should we behave in such a situation? Here the norms are not readily available.

Medina 2004 has argued that Wittgenstein's reflections about enculturation and internalization of norms go beyond Quine's naturalism. They allow us to see for instance how chimpanzees can be said to learn how to follow rules (86). Ter Hark 2004 has even suggested specific traces from Darwin's *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* in Wittgenstein's reflections about facial expressions. All this is helpful, but I think it is too much limited to behavioristic and descriptive aspects. What is missing is the moral aspect. There are situations when we reflect about what to do regarding other people, and in such situations we take ourselves to be responsible for what we do. This act of taking responsibility involves considerations of autonomy. It requires abstraction, idealization, and reflexive awareness of rules. It requires visions of ideal situations. This, I think, goes beyond R-systematicity and cannot fully be grasped by mere description and behaviorism. It is in this context that H-systematicity matters, at least tentatively, reflectively, and in regulative ways, and this, it seems to me, is missing in Wittgenstein and his emphasis on what I have called R-systematicity. Situations of moral conflict are often new and unfamiliar to us, and when finding ourselves in such situations we cannot simply rely on our habits and familiar practices. This would not solve intercultural or inter-religious conflicts. To the contrary, it would make them worse.

6. One can find in Wittgenstein certain aesthetic and ethical elements. There is sensitivity for the particular situation and hesitancy in passing judgment. This can be good and commendable, especially when meeting other cultures, or an individual that comes from a social background unfamiliar to us. But two problems arise. First, the demand on sensitivity can be too high. Second, it is questionable whether such sensitivity and awareness of language games and practices would be enough, and whether old ideas of hierarchy and precision can be given up. I doubt this. I think we always need ideas of exactness, rules, and hierarchy, especially when meeting people from unfamiliar cultures. After all, we cannot learn all the practices and languages of different cultures. We cannot live in Kirchberg am Wechsel, Paris, and Taipei, or in New York City, Mahabalipuram, and the Amazon rainforest at the same time. This is simply impossible. We cannot be habituated and sensitive to all these cultures and forms of life. We cannot all learn Chinese, French, and Tamil, and be sensitive to all the nuances of using words and of reading facial expressions. But sometimes we do meet people from such places and have to interact with them. Thus relying on practice is not enough. Germans living in Japan will easily find that many things are expected not to be said directly, or even not at all. But Japanese don't see it this way. They easily read between the lines. Besides the problem of understanding, there is also the problem of evaluation. We don't assume that all practices are equally good and commendable. We compare them and for such comparison dialog and criteria are necessary, for which in turn ideas of H-systematicity are needed in various reflective and regulative ways. Such ideas can be useful to avoid conflict, to avoid blind reliance on one's own practice (R) as well as blind attempts to turn the other, unfamiliar system (be it R or H) upside down, by force, or war. Rule-following should not be that blind. Instead, hypothetical and reflective thinking and argumentation are necessary, and drill (*Abrichtung*, as Wittgenstein often saw teaching) is not enough.

7. These considerations cast a new light on recent therapy readings. Mere therapy, the view that our metaphysical ideas about hierarchy, essence, and precision are misguided and that we should be cured of them, might turn out to be one-sided, if not false, no matter whether Wittgenstein meant his considerations this way or not. Thus I think the therapy reading should not be overdone. And what metaphysics is meant here? Kantian categories for instance are not as fixed and determinate as one might think. They are vague and in need of application (schematization). So are Kantian concepts of time and space, original synthetic apperception, sensibility and understanding. Kant already was aware of the infinite regress problem in rule applications and he spoke of *Mutterwitz* (mother wit) and *Abrichtung* (drill) in this context (A 133-4). But this did not stop him from undertaking the project of transcendental philosophy. His theory of judgments of taste is even more open in many ways, despite of its systematic character. Thus I think there is no need for therapy here. Maybe we instead need a counter therapy for such fashionable therapy-readings. Also the idea of wider concepts of rationality that encompasses sensitivity and emotions, although it has much to recommend itself, should not be carried too far.

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# A Note on a Remark: 'The atmosphere of a word is its use'

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## Introduction

With the well-known *dictum* from the *Investigations*, 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language' (PI §43), Wittgenstein presents one of the central tenets of his philosophy from the early 1930s. In 1933–34 he wrote in *The Yellow Book*: 'I have suggested substituting for "meaning of a word", "use of a word", because *use of a word* comprises a large part of what is meant by "the meaning of a word". Understanding a word will thus come to knowing its use, its applications. The use of a word is what is defined by rules, just as the use of the king of chess is defined by rules' (AWL 48). A year before his death in 1951, he wrote: 'A meaning of a word is one form of use. For it is this that we learn when the word is first assimilated into our language. Hence there exists a correspondence between the concepts of meaning and rule' (MS 172, 19). In the late forties, while still maintaining this position, Wittgenstein went on to point out several weaknesses in it. He writes: 'Not every *use*, you want to say, is a meaning' (LWPP I, §289). Another thing that the *dictum* also neglects is that a correctly used word is often accompanied by gestures and facial expressions that bring new meanings into play, which are not immediately conveyed by the correct use of the word alone. In addition, the phrase 'the use of a word' can easily mislead us into overlooking that there is not just one use for each word, but many different uses (LWPP I, §290). Moreover, the statement might also make us forget that two words can have the same meaning even though they do not share the same way of being used. And last but not least the formulation conceals a crucial aspect of our use of words, namely the impression and the experience ('Worterlebnis') (PI lxi, 216) associated with the use of a word. In short, as a 'narrow' theory of meaning, which defines a word's meaning and use as a kind of 'quasi-technical' following of rules, this formulation tends to ignore the aspect of how we experience a word when using it, and the impression it makes on us – considerations that came to preoccupy Wittgenstein in his latter years. In the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein asks: 'When I pronounce this word while reading with expression it is completely filled with its meaning. – "How can this be, if meaning is the use of the word?"' (PI lxi, 215). – In other words, Wittgenstein is aware that his familiar *dictum* is not exhaustive. Indeed: 'There are many uncertainties with this concept of meaning' (LWPP I, §273). Consequently, in some contexts Wittgenstein saw the need to supplement this tenet with an additional formulation. 'I have said that the meaning of a word is its use. But this requires an important addition' (MS 180b, 4r). But does Wittgenstein actually go on to provide any such additions? I wish to suggest and outline an argument that one remark in MS 169 could be regarded as precisely such an 'important addition'. This addition is formulated in the context of a critique of William James' so-called 'pneumatic conception' of meaning, according to which a word's meaning (the meaning of 'if') consists in a certain feeling (an 'if-feeling') that accompanies the use of the word ('if') (PI llvi, 182). In 1949 Wittgenstein wrote: 'Is the if-feeling the correlate of an expression? – Not *solely*. It is the correlate of meaning and of the expression. The atmosphere of a word is its use [Die Atmosphäre des Worte ist seine Verwendung]' (LWPP II, 38). I want to suggest that it is the final sentence of this remark ('The

atmosphere of a word is its use') that we can regard as an addition to Wittgenstein's familiar *dictum* of the *Investigations* ('The meaning of a word is its use') so as to extend the latter to encompass also the experience we have in using a word.

## 1. 'Different atmosphere'

As indicated, Wittgenstein uses the term 'atmosphere' primarily in the context of his critique of James' 'pneumatic conception' of meaning. Although the term is also applied in other circumstances, it is introduced primarily as a means to highlight what is wrong with James' account of meaning. Wittgenstein sums up the problems in two remarks in the *Investigations*, each of which emphasises a particular aspect: 'When we do philosophy, we should like to hypostatize feelings where there are none. They serve to explain our thoughts to us' (PI §598). And later: '((Interpreting "understanding" as atmosphere; as a mental act. One can construct an atmosphere to attach to anything. [...]))' (PI §609). Here Wittgenstein draws our attention to the fact that, in our efforts to clarify concepts, phenomena, or uses of language, we encounter certain temptations and inclinations. In our efforts to describe and clarify something, there is a danger that we might unwittingly *either* render independent an element of feeling that is entailed in our relationship to the subject or to our description of the subject, *or* that we might actually produce or elicit such a feeling or 'characteristic atmosphere' (PI §607). These temptations do not spring from nowhere, for a stock of impressions and feelings is implicated in and associated with any subject that we handle in thought and in any use of language. Wittgenstein says that, in our philosophical work, we are inclined to decouple these experiences or feelings from the subject or particular language use and then to appeal to them separately, as basis for an explanation of that particular subject matter or language use. But the experience or the feeling is not constitutive of the subject or of the meaningful use of language. The feeling itself is a correlate of the language use. In short, using and speaking a language entails operating within a certain affective horizon, but it is the use of words and not this affective horizon that constitutes the primary precondition for the meaningful use of language. In general terms: 'Why should I say that the "expression" derives its meaning from the feeling behind it, – and not from the circumstances of the language game in which it is used. [...] We labour under the queer temptation to describe our language and its use, introducing into our description an element of which we ourselves say that it is not part of the language. It is a peculiar phenomenon of iridescence which seems to fool us' (MS 151, 29-30). 'The picture of the special atmosphere' (PI §607). Wittgenstein offers many examples of this phenomenon, pointing to James' 'pneumatic conception' as a typical and prominent case. James is 'inclined to interpret a distinction in use as a difference in feeling' (MS 116, 328). We are familiar with parts of the argumentation from Part II section vi of the *Investigations*, where Wittgenstein introduces James' position and the distinction he makes between the 'substantive parts' and the 'transitive parts' of the stream of thought by saying: 'Suppose someone said: every familiar word, in a book for example, actually carries an atmosphere with it in our

minds, a "corona" of lightly indicated uses' (PI IIvi, 181). Parallel to this critique, the term also occurs in the phrase 'psychological atmosphere' in Wittgenstein's consideration of the 'prototypical' or 'pre-linguistic' (Z §541) attitudes involved in, or that underlie, certain uses of language. He writes: 'I am inclined to speak of a lifeless thing as lacking something. I see life definitely as a plus, as something added to a lifeless thing. (Psychological atmosphere)' (Z §128). In addition, he uses the term 'atmosphere' in its familiar, everyday sense, where it refers to the relationship or the feeling that subsists between people in a given situation or in a given place. 'Arrived in Cambridge today. Everything about the place disgusts me. The stiffness, the artificiality, the smugness of the people. I find the university atmosphere repulsive' (MS 132, 85). 'Moving in different circles. Different atmosphere' (MS 150, 43). Finally, 'atmosphere' is used in Wittgenstein's account of what is involved in 'experiencing a word'. And it is precisely this use to which I want to draw attention. For the term 'atmosphere' is introduced to help clarify that language does not consist exclusively in a 'quasi-technical' following of rules. Speaking a language is part of an activity or of a form of life, which embodies and involves a particular stock of feelings. For in the late forties, Wittgenstein was also interested in the aspect of the experience or the impressions one has in using language, an aspect he seeks to capture with the term 'atmosphere'. In somewhat different and more general terms: 'We can imagine a language in which the *feeling* that is associated with our words plays no part in usage; in which there is no understanding of the character or the soul of a word. The words are conveyed to us rather like the symbols of a chemical sign-language and possess no aura. When e.g. a command is given, we interpret the symbols according to rules, tables and in actions. An impression, like that of a painted picture, never arises, and there is no composing of poetry in this language' (TS 230, 14 (§ 52)).

## 2. 'Experiencing a word'

Wittgenstein's interest in the experience of a word is apparent in a number of contexts in which the term 'atmosphere' occurs. For example, he offers a general 'natural history' description, which suggests that our relation to language is such as to make us susceptible to the experience of a word. The fact that words elicit certain impressions and feelings is simply how things are. And the reason why, for example, the words of a poet touch us is that they are linked to the stream of life – 'A poet's words can pierce us. And that is of course causally connected with the use that they have in our life. And it is also connected with the way in which, conformably to this use, we let our thoughts roam up and down in the familiar surroundings of the words' (Z §155) – but it is also a result of the special relationship we have with language. We live our lives in and through language. We are at home in it. We are our language. We are so intimately connected with language that the mere entertaining of an indecent thought can cause us shame (RPP I §891). Examples such as these illustrate what we mean when we say that a word or phrase can contain 'a whole world'. "'Farewell", "A whole world of pain is contained in these words." How *can* it be contained in them? – It is bound up with them. The words are like an acorn from which an *oak tree* can grow' (CV 52). In addition to this, Wittgenstein points out that words often appear to us in such a way that we can be misled into thinking that their meanings are somehow inherent to the words themselves. For when we actually use a word, we often have the impression that its meaning is contained in the word itself. Words have the appearance of being

meaningful in themselves, independent of their use. Or, as Wittgenstein puts it in the *Investigations*: 'The familiar physiognomy of a word, the feeling that it has taken up its meaning into itself, that it is an actual likeness of its meaning' (PI IIxi, 218). He illustrates this feature of a word's appearance by referring to how we perceive the name Schubert. We experience the name as more than just a label for a person. For us, the name Schubert appears to embody its referent: "'I feel as if the name 'Schubert' fitted Schubert's works and face'" (PI IIxi, 215). We experience the name as 'a gesture' or as 'an architectonic form' (RPP I §341). By pointing out this 'meaning-absorbing' feature of the way words appear to us, Wittgenstein shows us something about how we experience words in general, what kind of impression words make on us. We see them as an embodiment or manifestation of what they refer to. In a remark from 1949, he again makes use of the term 'atmosphere': 'The name Schubert, shadowed around by the gestures of his face, of his works. – So there is an atmosphere after all? – But one cannot think of it as separate from him. The name S. is surrounded *in that manner*, at least if we are talking about the composer. But these surroundings seem to be fused with the name itself, with this word' (LWPP II, 4).

In the descriptions of this mode of experiencing words, it is pointed out, in the context of the analogy between 'understanding a sentence' and 'understanding a theme in music' (PI §527), that there are parallels between the way we understand and experience a word and the way we experience others people's behaviour and facial expressions. How we understand and experience a word is often as direct and intense as our experience of the expression on another person's face. Our impression and understanding of other people and our meaningful use of language with all its rich associations are closely related phenomena. Wittgenstein says that 'every word has a *face*' (MS 131, 140), a 'particular physiognomy' (BB 174). In TS 229 he writes: 'Every word – one wants to say – can of course have a different character in a different context, and yet it always has *one* character – one face. For it looks at us. – One really could think of each word as a small face, the written word could be a face. And one could also imagine the entire sentence as a kind of group picture' (TS 229, 265 (§988)). Thus a word's meaning and its impact on us are strongly reminiscent of the impression left on us by a facial expression or the feeling aroused in us by another person's gaze. And as in other situations, here as well the context is crucial to the nature of the meaning, the impression and the experience. 'The glance which a word in a certain context casts at us. Of course, the way in which it looks at us depends on the surroundings in which it is located' (LWPP I, §366). Or, as he also says in a somewhat more impressionistic yet summary fashion in MS 169: '– Because only this word <has> this sound, this tone, this grammar. So does the word "Beethoven" have a Beethoven-feeling? It is a look, with which *this* word looks at me. But one cannot separate the look from the face. – with a quite particular expression' (LWPP II, 3).

## 3. 'The word has an atmosphere'

If we now accept the account sketched out here of Wittgenstein's uses of the term 'atmosphere' in his late remarks, and if we also accept Wittgenstein's suggestion of a connection between the term and the descriptions of experiencing a word, then it seems plausible that we can regard the remark 'the atmosphere of a word is its use' as a supplement or 'an important addition' to the central *dictum* 'the meaning of the word is its use' (PI §43), where

his primary concern is the *rule*-governed use of words; it is a supplement or 'important addition' that embeds the experience of a word into his theoretical account of meaning, or that places the former in relation to the latter. Or to put it another way, in addition to specifying 'meaning as use', we have to keep in mind that '[i]t's as if the word that I understand had a definite slight aroma that corresponds to my understanding of it. As if two familiar words were distinguished for me not merely by their sound or their appearance, but by an atmosphere' (RPP I, §243). Alternatively: "The word has an atmosphere." – A figurative expression; but quite comprehensible in certain contexts. For example, the word "knoif" has a different atmosphere from the word "knife" (LWPP I §726). And it is for precisely this reason that 'The atmosphere of a word is its use' (LWPP II, 38) can serve as an 'important addition' to the earlier *dictum* of Wittgenstein's theory of meaning. Let me add that, to the extent that we accept the argument sketched above and regard the remark, with its emphasis on our experience of a word, as supplemental, then it follows that there are two facets to Wittgenstein's position with regard to James. For, on the one hand, Wittgenstein points out that there are difficulties and misconceptions in James' description of meaning as the feeling that accompanies a word, while on the other, he wants to retain James' emphasis on a relationship between language and feeling, because neglecting such a connection would be tantamount to saying 'that part of the time we act as mere automatons' (BB 157). In other words, at the same time as criticising James, Wittgenstein acknowledges one of the notable points that James makes in his *Principles of Psychology*, namely that 'no word in an understood sentence comes to consciousness as a mere noise. We feel its meaning as it passes' (WJPP I, 281). – Finally, a simple and very different question: might it not be possible to view this emphasis on the aspect of experiencing a word in the late remarks as a return to and elaboration of a topic that was already hinted at in a comment in the *Notebooks*, where in 1915 he wrote that 'words are probes; some reach very deep; some only to a little depth'? (NB 39)

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# Individualistic strategies to deal with PI §202

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1. Imagine that everything we do would be correct: *Performance* (the actual use of the expression) would be no different from *correctness* (the correct use of the expression; cf. Kripke 1982, 24). Two problems would arise. On the one hand we could not explain linguistic errors. On the other hand there seems to be some conceptual difficulty with the idea that *every* linguistic action could be correct: We speak of correctness only if not everything is allowed. In other words, there must be some actions that are not correct, if we are to speak of correctness at all. And without a distinction between correct and incorrect use, there is no meaning. For these reasons, we have to avoid the equation of performance and correctness.

This is the background of both PI §201 and §202. Wittgenstein writes:

[I]f everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here. (PI §201)

[T]o think one is obeying a rule is not to obey a rule. Hence it is not possible to obey a rule 'privately': otherwise thinking one was obeying a rule would be the same thing as obeying it. (PI §202)

Why does Wittgenstein seem to think that there is a special problem for semantic individualism?<sup>1</sup> Here is a short reconstruction:

A dangerous equation of performance and correctness would be present if the following conditional is always true:

1. If the speaker acts, then she acts correctly.

Furthermore, Wittgenstein seems to make the following assumption:

2. If the speaker acts, then the speaker thinks implicitly that she acts correctly.<sup>2</sup>

This can only be assumed for situations without intentional mistakes. The step from 2 to 1 is made possible by this conditional:

3. If the speaker thinks implicitly that she acts correctly, then she acts correctly.

Insofar as 1 leads to the paradox of PI §201, and 2 is plausible for situations without intentional mistakes, 3 must be false in at least some situations. Whatever constitutes the difference between correct and incorrect use, it cannot be my performance alone, nor my thinking, that my performance is correct.

Given my assumption that "privately" is to be read as "individual", Wittgenstein claims that semantic individualism cannot avoid 3, because it seems to be not possible for the individual speaker to discriminate between correct and incorrect uses of expressions.

More precisely, it's helpful to ask two questions:

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of argument – not for exegetical reasons – I take "privately" to refer to an individualistic usage of expressions: Otherwise there would be no obvious reason to read §202 as an objection to semantic individualism.

<sup>2</sup> The "implicitly" means this: Of course, not every action is accompanied with the conscious thought that *this action is correct*. But if we would ask the speaker whether she thinks that she was acting correctly, normally she would affirm to our question.

- I. Is it possible for the individual speaker to discriminate between correct and incorrect uses of expressions?
- II. Is it possible to discriminate between correct and incorrect uses of expressions for the individual speaker?

Next, Section 2 argues that individualism is not worse than communitarianism at answering question I., and Sections 3 and 4 sketch an individualistic strategy to answer question II.

2. Let us take a look at the communitarian approach, and let us talk about non-expert-concepts. *Colour*-terms are most likely of this kind: The whole language community has authority over these concepts. So the communal use of these concepts determines the content of them. It is plausible to sketch this idea thus: What "blue" means depends on how the expression is used, and the use consists in the application of "blue" to coloured things in different shades of blue. The exact content of "blue" is of course dependent on the exact borders to other colours. There may be vagueness involved, but still there are enough clear cases – say, between blue and green. Now, it is not very likely that every speaker picks out the same borderline cases as belonging to the extension of "blue" or the extension of "green"; but the use of every single speaker is still relevant to the communal content of the expression. (This is different with expert-concepts, like *arthritis*.) So common use is determined by individual use. And as long as no individual observes the term's use by *all* individuals, it is imaginable that no single speaker knows the *exact* common use, and thus no single speaker knows the exact conditions of correctness.

In this picture, it is not possible for the individual speaker to discriminate between correct and incorrect uses of expressions. It is only possible from an external perspective to judge about the correctness of language uses. I will show in the following sections that the individualist can use this externalist perspective too; if the communitarian cannot give a positive answer to question I. above, the individualist does not need to answer it affirmatively either.

There is an obvious objection to this picture. The single speaker may be unsure confronting a borderline case or he even may be wrong. But in general, we are justified in our use of the expressions. So even if one speaker mistakenly calls something blue which is not blue, he is still participating in the common use of "blue".

Why, in this communitarian picture, is the individual speaker justified in his beliefs about the correctness of his language uses (even if these beliefs are false from time to time)? Either this justification is internalist or externalist: If it is externalist and we (from an external perspective) judge him to be a reliable language user, of course the speaker is a reliable language user in the individualistic picture as well. Individualism and communitarianism are both theoretical comments: The language use of individuals is not more or less idiosyncratic in the one or the other picture. So there is no superficial difference between the individualistic speaker and the communitarian speaker: Both of

them use the expressions as they think it is correct to use them.

So what is the difference if the justification is internalist? The internal justification for believing that his language uses are correct is based on the speaker's belief that he is a competent speaker, that communication obviously works good enough, and that normally nobody corrects him in his language use. My point, again, is: There is no difference in the individualistic view. The speaker believes that he is competent, communication works, and corrections are rare. Of course individualism has to explain how communication is possible if the authority lies in the hand of the single speaker, but communitarianism has to explain communication as well (cf. Wirth 2009, §2).

So what's the moral here? If the communitarian thinks that the single speaker is justified in his belief that he uses his expressions correctly in most cases, this justification is based on facts about the speaker that are given in the individualistic scenario too. The individualistic answer to question I. of Section 1. is the same as the communitarian answer.

3. What about question II.? In what follows I will call the individualistic attempt at answering question II. the *externalist strategy* (referring again to *epistemic externalism* of course). How is it possible to externally discriminate between correct and incorrect uses of expressions for a particular speaker? One answer is the *optimal conditions account*:

(OCA) The use of the expression is correct iff. the speaker would use the expression in the same way if the conditions were optimal.

As far as I can see the OCA (or some variant of it) is the most plausible way of eliminating possible errors from semantic performance. The main idea is that performance stripped of errors is correct performance – and correct performance is sufficient for defining correctness. There are many questions about the specification of those optimal conditions (for example, it seems clear that these conditions cannot be specified in purely non-semantic, non-normative and non-intentional vocabulary; cf. Boghossian 1989, §§25f.), and space does not permit to account for all worries. But there are two reasons to take the OCA as an illustration: First, the OCA is not committed to semantic individualism. Second, the solution to the rule-following-paradox is not easy anyway: For individuating correct behaviour you have to exclude errors. And it is not clear how you can do this without evoking optimal conditions.

The externalist strategy can use the OCA in this way: Given that we know (from the external point of view) whether optimal conditions occur, we can compare the speaker's actual use of the expression with his use under optimal conditions. So although he might *think* that his use is correct, whether his use really *is* correct is still independent of his (actual) judgement. And why is it correct? Because, were conditions optimal, he would not use the expression differently. So the externalist strategy can avoid the problem of §202 by using the OCA.

4. Even if the externalist strategy can ensure that *thinking that I am using an expression correctly* is not sufficient for *using it correctly*, there is still room for the underlying worry of §201: However the speaker uses the expression normally, it is his use under optimal conditions that defines

which use is correct. Hence under optimal conditions *performance* is sufficient for *correctness*. Hence we cannot speak of correctness.

It is useful to combine the OCA with a dispositional account in the following way: Not every action that follows a disposition is correct, but under optimal conditions it is. There are two important details: It is not always clear whether we are forced to act as the disposition urges us to, and it is not always clear if every potential use of the expression is covered by a disposition.

With this we can distinguish three situations. *First*, we feel a disposition to apply the expression to an object, and we are free to decide whether we apply the expression. If optimal conditions occur, the reasonable comment to this situation is that if we feel the disposition and we follow it, we are using the expression correctly. But as long as we are able to decide whether we apply the expression or not, we can still make a mistake, although all other possible errors are excluded. In this situation, not every course of action is correct – the equation of performance and correctness is avoided.

*Second*, we feel the disposition and we have to apply the expression. Obviously, we are not free to act however we want to act. Under optimal conditions there is only one correct reaction, and this is the reaction we will show.

*Third*, we don't feel the disposition. This situation seems to be the problematic one: If we don't feel the disposition to apply the expression (let's say *table*), and if we don't feel the disposition to classify the object in question as a non-table, we are free, under optimal conditions, to call it a *table* or not to call it a *table*.

It is important to note how special this situation is: Under normal circumstances we are confronted with familiar objects, i.e. with objects that are typical and with contexts that are typical for applying the expression. We all have the disposition to call typical tables *tables*. Under normal circumstances situations of the third kind do not occur. So imagine an object we are *not* disposed to call a table *and* not disposed to judge that it is *not* a table. Imagine a wooden door hanging horizontally from the ceiling in a way that leaves it open to use it as a table. (Maybe you would be disposed to call it a table, but imagine someone who is not disposed this way.) Individualism claims that the single speaker has the authority over the expression – so this is a situation where under optimal conditions the speaker can decide to call it a table or not, and in both cases he would act correctly. Is this a dangerous equation of performance and correctness?

There are two solutions for the semantic individualist:

- A. The situation would be dangerous only if there was nothing the speaker could do wrong. But still he can act incorrectly: Instead of calling the object a *table* he could call it a *spoon*.
- B. It seems reasonable to classify the linguistic action of the speaker in such a special situation not as a *performance*. Instead we could say: The speaker does not *use* the expression in this case, but he *forms* it. In some situations such actions are the grounding of a future use (as in the case of baptisms). And in some situations we *change* the content of an expression by such actions.

I am not sure which solution is best, but it seems plausible to expect that at least one will be successful.



So the discussion of the three situations leads to the following conclusion: Even under optimal conditions, there is no equation of performance and correctness. So the OCA is indeed useful for the semantic individualist to avoid the troubles of §201 and §202.

5. To sum up: We have to discriminate between correct and incorrect uses of expressions, and in PI §202 Wittgenstein claims that this is not possible for the individual speaker: Either she cannot do it by herself, or we cannot do it for her. In Section 2. I tried to show that in the individualistic picture she can do it to the same amount as in the communitarian picture. And in Sections 3. and 4. I tried to show that we can do it for her. Without deciding whether the internalist or the externalist strategy is more important, I conclude that semantic individualism can deal with §202.

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# Justification and Truth: A Virtue Account

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## The Problem

What is the proper relation between justification and truth? One widespread answer is that justification is an instrumental means to the end of truth. A less widespread but still popular view is that justification aims at truth. Both of these views seem to make plausible claims about justification, yet there are objections to both sorts of views.

The view that justification is instrumental in obtaining true beliefs has been criticized on the grounds that it reduces justified belief to true belief. If only those beliefs that maximize true belief are justified, then it seems that all and only true beliefs are justified. Lehrer and Cohen (1985) have further argued that justification may not make a belief likely to be true, so justification is not always a means to truth. There is also a problem with the value of knowledge on this view; if the value of justification derives exclusively from its ability to reliably produce true beliefs, knowledge cannot be more valuable than true belief. This is the "value problem" for reliabilism; once one has true belief, justification cannot add any further value to that state.<sup>1</sup> The view that justification is teleologically aimed at truth has received less scrutiny. However, Wayne Riggs has argued that even a teleological account of justification cannot explain the value of knowledge over that of true belief; for one may instantiate the truth-aimed state, and also believe the truth, without having knowledge. Thus if the value of justification comes only from its being truth-aimed, one cannot explain why knowledge is more valuable than accidentally true belief accompanied by a truth-aimed state.

## The *Telos/Skopos* Distinction

I will develop this distinction within a virtue epistemology, but the same distinction might be used within other epistemological frameworks. (I take as my model versions of virtue epistemology (like that advanced by Linda Zagzebski (1996)) which develop parallels between the moral and intellectual virtues.) On such a model the possession and exercise of the intellectual virtues is the basis of the justification of individual beliefs. So rather than asking, "How does justification aim at truth?" we might more fruitfully ask, "In what sense do intellectually virtuous people aim at truth?"

To answer this question we need to differentiate between two types of aims. Taking a distinction from the Stoic moral virtues, we may distinguish between the *telos* and the *skopos* of a virtuous individual. The *telos* of an individual is her overall aim – living well or achieving *eudaimonia*. As a virtuous individual lives her life, she will decide to take on many projects and short-term goals. These goals are the immediate targets of her actions – her *skopoi*.

The characterization of moral virtues as having both a *telos* and a *skopos* comes from the Stoics identification of the virtues with stochastic skills. As Brad Inwood (1986, 549) explains, "Stochastic crafts are those, like rhetoric and medicine, in which the achievement of the stated aim of the craft can and must be distinguished from the question whether the craft is being practiced perfectly." Thus we might think of doctor practicing the skill of medicine. Her target (*skopos*) in acting is to save the life of the patient. However, despite her best efforts, her patient may still die. But his death does not undermine the fact that she is a good doctor, or undermine the fact that she was exercising the skill of doctoring in treating him. These facts depend on her performance, not on the outcomes, and are the true overall aim (*telos*) of the doctor.

Medical *Skopos*: To bring the patient back to health.

Medical *Telos*: To practice medicine well.

With the *skopos* and *telos* thus specified, we can see that it is possible for the doctor to succeed in obtaining her *telos* while failing to obtain an individual *skopos*.

The Stoics choose stochastic skills as a model for moral virtue because they are concerned that the virtues should depend only on what is up to us (Long 1967). Thus our overall *telos* cannot depend on things outside our control. We ought to act in ways we think will accomplish good ends, but we should also recognize that we may not be able to bring about those results. For example, Tania, might be moved to by her virtue of generosity to take on the goal of helping a homeless man. She makes aiding him a *skopos*, and she aims at that goal in her attempts to find food and housing for him. However, her attempts might fail; he might refuse assistance. Her failure to reach her *skopos*, though frustrating to her, does not stop her from achieving her *telos* of living well, nor does it stop her from developing her specific virtue of generosity.

Moral *Skopos*: To help the homeless man.

Moral *Telos*: To practice generosity.

The Stoics characterize moral virtue is the skill of living. Tania may fully develop and exhibit the stochastic skill of living a generous life even if she fails to achieve her specific *skopos*.

We can extend the distinction between *telos* and *skopos* to intellectual virtues as well. One epistemic goal is to believe truths and avoid falsehoods. Since this is the goal of our individual acts of belief, truth is a *skopos*, not a *telos*. The *telos* of our epistemic lives is to believe well (or rationally), just as the *telos* of our moral lives is to live well (or morally). This *telos* is achieved by the possession and practice of intellectual virtues. Our virtue of intellectual courage may lead us to hold onto our own beliefs even

<sup>1</sup> See Zagzebski's "Value Problem" (2000, 2003), Kvanvig's (2003) "Swamping problem", Riggs (2002a, 2002b), and DePaul (2001).

though others vehemently disagree with us. Our immediate target, or *skopos*, in doing this is to hold onto our belief only if it is true. Sometimes what we believe, even as the result of exercising our intellectual virtues, may turn out to be false. In these instances we fail to achieve our *skopos* since we do not achieve true belief.

**Intellectual *Skopos*:** To believe the truth about a particular proposition.

**Intellectual *Telos*:** To practice the intellectual virtues.

Even though truth is an important epistemic goal, it is not the only thing of epistemic importance. We may still be intellectually virtuous, and practice those virtues in accordance with our overall *telos* of living well, even if we fail to reach our *skopos* of truth about a particular question.

It is important to be clear about the exact form of the *skopoi*. Start with the medical *skopos* of bringing the patient back to health. Of course the doctor would be happy if the patient were to make a spontaneous recovery. But that is not her target; if it were, there is little action she could take. The doctor wants to be *the cause* of the patient's return to health. Similarly with Tania and her generous action. She aims to be *the cause* of amelioration of the homeless man's plight.

What about the intellectual *skopos* of believing the truth? It too aims not just at a state, but at bringing about that state. The *skopos* is not just the truth, but *believing* the truth, and in a way that is creditable to the believer. Doing this constitutes knowledge on "credit accounts" of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> The core commitment of these accounts is that one can know only if one believes the truth *because of* one's exercise of the intellectual virtues. Thus, if we accept the credit view of knowledge, we may say that the *skopos* of individual beliefs is knowledge. Knowledge is not our *telos*, for we may aim at it without reaching it; but knowledge is the goal of our individual beliefs and epistemic acts.

### Benefits of the *Telos/Skopos* Distinction

*Knowledge is More Valuable than True Belief:* Wayne Riggs (2002b) has argued we should learn a lesson from the Value Problem; if we limit ourselves to claiming that only truth has value and limit ourselves to holding that value can only be transmitted instrumentally, we cannot explain why knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief. This is the problem of value monism; if truth is the only source of value then it seems that nothing can be more valuable than truth. The Stoic picture joins the credit account in avoiding this problem by making room for values other than truth and for mechanisms of value transmission other than the instrumental.

This distinction will also hold for that special interesting class of true beliefs that are not knowledge: Gettier beliefs. Gettier beliefs are valuable insofar as they are true. They are also valuable as a result of being produced by the exercise of an intellectual virtue. However, Gettier beliefs will be less valuable than instances of knowledge because the truth of the belief is not attributable to the exercise of the intellectual virtues; this disconnect undermines the credit that is present in cases of knowledge.

*Justified False Belief is More Valuable than Unjustified False Belief:* The ability to explain the value of knowledge over true belief is a benefit of any credit account of knowledge. However the value of justified false belief may be difficult to explain on a credit account. If the value of credit explains the value of knowledge, what then explains the value of justification? The Stoic view has a clear answer to this question. For in addition to the value of truth and the value of credit, we must look at the value of the practice of the intellectual virtues themselves. This is the *telos* of our epistemic lives and so is valuable in a way that is entirely independent of truth. On a Stoic conception, the good life must not depend on anything that is not within our control; otherwise our *telos* as humans might be beyond our grasp. Just as the value of the moral virtue of generosity does not depend on actually succeeding in helping those we aim to help, the value of the intellectual virtues does not depend on our reaching the truth. Instead, the value of the intellectual virtues is independent of truth; as such it is available to explain the value of justified beliefs even when they are false. They are still the result of exercising one's intellectual virtues. Thus they are more valuable than unjustified false beliefs which do not exhibit intellectual virtues.

*Justification Must have a Direct Connection to Truth in Cases of Knowledge:* Truth is required for knowledge. More than this, in an instance of knowledge the truth must be connected to justification in the right way in order to satisfy the credit account of knowledge. But only in instances of knowledge. When there is no knowledge, justification and truth may be unrelated. (Yes both truth and justification can provide independent value, as in Gettier beliefs.)

*The Life of Intellectual Virtue Retains an Important Role for Truth:* Once the distinction between the *telos* and *skopos* is developed and truth is not part of the overall *telos*, it might seem that truth drops out as an unimportant element of the life of virtue. This is not the case. The intellectually virtuous person cares about reaching the truth, and rationally acts so as to get the truth. This is the point of a *skopos*, and is parallel to the other types of *skopoi* discussed. If the patient dies, this death need not reflect directly on the skill of the doctor; but being a good doctor entails that she will do her best to improve her patient's health. Similarly with the intellectual virtues. The distinction between the *skopos* and *telos* does not get a believer off the hook; one ought to care about reaching the truth, and be disappointed upon discovering one's errors. Thus, even though truth is not part of the overall *telos* of human life, it is still an important element in a life of intellectual virtue.

*Intellectual Virtues are Distinct from Moral Virtues:* Once we see that the value of the intellectual virtues come from the role they play in an overall life of virtue, the distinction between the moral and intellectual virtues may seem to be undermined. If each is just one element of our overall *telos*, why divide them into groups and distinguish between them? This distinction can be preserved by noting that the exercises of the intellectual virtues will be unified in having similar *skopoi*. They will each be aimed at achieving true beliefs, varying only by the beliefs in question. The moral virtues, on the other hand will each take as their *skopoi* the performance of particular moral actions. This distinction between types of virtues will allow the continuation of the distinction between epistemic and moral values, goals, and goods.

<sup>2</sup> For different developments of this account see Greco (2003, 2010), Zagzebski (1996), Lehrer (2000), Riggs (2002b), and Sosa (2007)

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In memoriam Elisabeth und Werner Leinfellner

Die Gedenkschrift zu Ehren von Elisabeth und Werner Leinfellner spannt einen Bogen von aktuellen philosophischen Diskursen zum Werk und Leben des 2010 verstorbenen Wissenschaftler-Ehepaares. Für viele sind beide untrennbar mit der Österreichischen Ludwig Wittgenstein Gesellschaft (ÖLWG) und dem Internationalen Wittgenstein Symposien in Kirchberg am Wechsel verbunden. Die Artikel in diesem Band befassen sich mit aktueller Wittgensteinforschung und der Sprachkritik (Mauthner und Wittgenstein) ebenso wie dem Wirken von Elisabeth und Werner Leinfellner. Darüber hinaus geben sie Einblicke in das Werden der ÖLWG und das österreichische Geistesleben in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jhdts. Mitarbeiter des Buches: Marco Bastianelli, Christian Erbacher, Johann Götschl, Peter Kampits, Christian Kanzian, Peter Keicher, Eckehart Köhler, Camilla R. Nielsen, Klaus Puhl, Mary Snell-Hornby, Ilse Somavilla, Joseph Wang, Anja Weiberg, Paul Weingartner und Franz M. Wuketits. Herausgeber sind Sascha Windholz und Walter Feigl.

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