

9. WITTGENSTEIN AND SCEPTICISM: AN ESSAY IN THE UNITY OF WITTGENSTEIN'S THOUGHT

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ABSTRACT: A unifying perspective to bring to bear on Wittgenstein's thought is that it represents a continual grappling with the problem of formulating a consistent version of scepticism--one that would not succumb to the charge of being self-refuting. His ultimate resolution of this problem hinges upon the precise content to be invested in his famous philosophical doctrine of the priority of *Gezeigt* (showing) over *Gezagt* (saying). I shall argue for a democratic participatory gloss of this doctrine as offering the most satisfactory resolution to the sceptical dilemmas haunting Wittgenstein.

WITTGENSTEIN AND SCEPTICISM I

Recent commentators have argued that a dominant animating impulse behind Wittgenstein's philosophy is the desire to effectively end philosophy [Rorty, 1982, 19-36; Edwards, 1982]. How to end philosophy without leaving any loose ends--without being entrapped in a philosophical strategy oneself--forms one of the major motives of his thought. This is the way Wittgenstein expresses the goal in the *Philosophical Investigations*:

For the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed complete clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should completely disappear. . . . The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to.--The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring itself in question. . . . Instead, we now demonstrate a method by examples; and the series of examples can be broken off.--Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a single problem. . . . There is not a single philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies. [PI I, 133]¹

Wittgenstein in the first and only philosophical book he published during his lifetime--the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*--adopts a rigorous scepticism with regard to the question of what can be acknowledged as meaningful discourse. Wittgenstein believed that it was possible to analyze our ordinary uses of language and to break down our heteroge-

neous and abstract expressions of thought in such a way that they would yield a class of elementary propositions. He further believed that the two crucial features of elementary propositions--that the names they contained named objects and that their configurations of names depicted possible configuration of objects--the so-called picture theory of the proposition--constituted the essence of language itself. Since elementary propositions are configurations of names (and thus possible pictures of states of affairs), and since all propositions are either elementary propositions or truth-functions of elementary propositions, and the totality of propositions is language, one now possesses criteria for demarcating the limits of language and of thought. We are thus able to distinguish sense from nonsense. "Is the specimen either (a) an elementary proposition, consisting of an immediate concatenation of names for objects and functioning as asserting the existence of a determinate state of affairs, or (b) a truth-function of such elementary propositions? If so, it is a genuine piece of language and is the expression of a genuine (even if false) thought. If not, then the utterance is shown to be a piece of nonsense and thus not a thought at all" [Edwards, 1982, 14].

It is important to note, as David Pears has argued by way of underscoring a latent continuity between Wittgenstein's earlier and later work, "the aloofness of this theory of meaning and its detachment from any particular theory of knowledge" [Pears, 1970, 70]. Although Wittgenstein's theory of meaning fixes its outer limit in relation to elementary propositions, a central question remains unformulated and unanswered. Wittgenstein tells us that the *meaning* of elementary proposition can be reliably ascertained by relating the components of elementary propositions to the facts they picture, but he crucially omits to tell us how the configuration of facts in the external world can be *known* so that the task of squaring elementary propositions with them can proceed. In particular, Wittgenstein remains silent concerning the question of whether what is appropriated through the senses has epistemological priority over what is generated from internal imaginative resources or other possible sources of knowledge.²

A philosophically illuminating way for conceiving the relationship between the *Tractatus* and Wittgenstein's later philosophy that is steeped in intimate knowledge of Wittgenstein's biography has been advanced by Peter Winch. Winch quotes Rush Rhees, a disciple, editor and translator of Wittgenstein's works, as having said in discussion that Wittgenstein once remarked that what was wrong with his conception of elementary propositions in the *Tractatus* (his notion that there must be propositions of which no further analysis is possible: They just consist of names in immediate mutual concatenation; these names are immediately correlated with objects which are again in immediate mutual concatenation) was that it confused the "method of projection" with the "lines of projection" [Winch, 1969, 12-14]. Winch tries to clarify this distinction between "method of projection" and "lines of projection" by juxtaposing to it Wittgenstein's discussion of the hidden complexities of the notion of "ostensive definition" in sections 26 to 37 of the *Philosophical Investigations*. "Suppose," Winch says, "we say that an ostensive definition establishes a correlation between a name and an object. Perhaps we think that as it were a string has been attached to the name at one end and to the object at the other end, or that, as it were, a label has been attached to an object. But what has this by itself achieved? Suppose I have a desk and attach various labels to it, as follows: 'medium brown', 'oval', 'desk', 'item of furniture', 'late Victorian', etc. Any of these labels

could be called 'naming an object', but the mere fact that I have carried out this operation, considered in isolation, says nothing. I have got to understand how the label is being used; its grammar; otherwise I just don't know what has been labelled. In other words, the lines of projection don't do what is required of them; they only function in the context of a method of projection. If I do suppose the correlation between name and object, then it will appear to me that I have got to have the object clearly in view before I can draw the lines. But once I see that it is a method of projection which is important, then as Wittgenstein says, 'the object drops out of consideration as irrelevant' [PI I, 293]. That is, the Tractarian objects are quite unnecessary, an idle wheel, the intrusion of which is masking the true workings of the mechanism" [Winch, 1969, 13].

The upshot of this argument is that reference to physical objects--to what Elizabeth Anscombe has labelled "brute facts" [Anscombe, 1958, 69-72]--is metaphysically (ontologically) otiose. What matters in the way we live our lives, and communicate with others and with ourselves about them, is what Anscombe has called "institutional facts", the multiplicity of man-made contexts (methods of projection) in which we link up the raw furniture of the universe with our ways of talking about them.

Expanding upon the organizing perspective introduced by Winch, I think that the most fruitful way to conceptualize the pattern of unity linking together the *Tractatus* with the intervening works of the nineteen thirties³ and the *Investigations* is in terms of a broadening and deepening scepticism. The doctrine of logical atomism which is integral to Wittgenstein's argument in the *Tractatus* leads to the exclusion of certain regions of experience--the ethical, the esthetic, the religious and the philosophical--as falling outside the scope of rational resolution within language. These areas of experience have been completely "privatized", being confined to inner states of feeling and having no objective translation in the shared resources of language. One might say that the *Investigations* completes the project begun in the *Tractatus*. In the *Tractatus* a good deal of ordinary language can still be salvaged as a vehicle of knowledge and of truth. In the *Investigations*, ordinary discourse itself emerges as problematic in character. There are no external points of reference in terms of which to verify even our typical, everyday assertions, so that with regard to the brute facts of any given situation the agent's institutional description enjoys no logical priority over that of any other observer. The "privatization" of our experience begun in the *Tractatus* is extended in the *Investigations* from the more specialized realms of esthetics, religion, ethics and philosophy to encompass our everyday transactions with the world, staked out and captured by language [Botwinick, 1981, 7-8].

An element of complexity that needs to be restored to this perhaps overly flattened picture of the unity of Wittgenstein's thought is that while the metaphysics of logical atomism is abandoned in the later work, elements of the picture theory of the proposition remain. In support of this view, Anthony Kenny cites the following passage from the *Investigations*:

The agreement, the harmony, of thought and reality consists in this: If I say falsely that something is red, then, for all that, it isn't red. And when I want to explain the word

"red" to someone, in the sentence, 'that is not red', I do it by pointing to something red. [PI I, 429]

However, as Wittgenstein's thought progressed, the picture theory came to be seen as needing to be supplemented by a perspective which emphasized that "the meaning of a word is its use in the language"--or, to use the vocabulary introduced earlier, that lines of projection from objects to words were inert outside of a prior, tacitly ordained context of a method of projection. The fusing of the two perspectives of the picture theory of the proposition and the stress on meaning as a function of use is neatly conveyed in a passage such as the following from the *Investigations*:

Imagine a picture representing a boxer in a particular stance. Now, the picture can be used to tell someone how he should stand, should hold himself; or how he should not hold himself; or how a particular man did stand in such and such a place; and so on. One might (using the language of chemistry) call this picture a proposition-radical. [PI I, 11--no section number is listed for this passage; cited in Kenny, 1977, 225]

Saul Kripke in his recent book on Wittgenstein [Kripke, 1982] also regards the later Wittgenstein as manifesting a more thoroughgoing scepticism than that present in the *Tractatus*. Kripke tries to show how a characteristic and influential argument in the *Investigations*--that against the notion of a private language--constitutes a sceptical response to the challenge articulated in Section 201 of the *Investigations*: "This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule." Kripke illustrates this paradox by a mathematical example. He refers to the word 'plus' and the symbol '+' to denote the well-known mathematical function of addition. Kripke, explicating Wittgenstein, says that "one point is crucial to my 'grasp' of this rule. Although I myself have computed only finitely many sums in the past, the rule determines my answer for infinitely many new sums that I have never previously considered. This is the whole point of the notion that in learning to add I grasp a rule; my past intentions regarding addition determine a unique answer for indefinitely many new cases in the future" [Kripke, 1982, 7-8].

Suppose now that the wielder of this simple arithmetical rule concerning the plus sign is confronted by a "bizarre" sceptic. All of us in our previous instances of learning and applying the rule have dealt only with finite examples. Surely, for each of us there exist problems in addition both of whose arguments exceed numbers we have previously worked with. For the sake of argument, Kripke assumes that $68 + 57$ constitutes a problem in addition that a particular person has not worked with in the past and also that these numbers represent magnitudes greater than the person has dealt with before. It is now open to the sceptic to argue against the person performing the addition problem that the sum of $68 + 57$ is not 125 but 5. The counter-argument would go as follows: Since all the numbers the person doing the addition had previously been involved with were all less than 57, perhaps when the person was saying plus what he meant was quus. "Quus" could be defined as requiring that when dealing with integers which were less than

57 addition should be performed in the normal way; with integers greater than 57 the quus sign always yielded a result of 5.

How could such a sceptic who questioned whether any course of action could be determined by a rule be refuted? According to Kripke, the private language argument found in the *Investigations* constitutes Wittgenstein's answer to this imaginary sceptic. "The impossibility of private language", according to Kripke, "emerges as a corollary of his sceptical solution to his own paradox, as does the impossibility of 'private causation' in Hume. It turns out the sceptical solution does not allow us to speak of a single individual, considered by himself, and in isolation, as ever meaning anything" [Kripke, 1982, 68-9]. Wittgenstein accepts the sceptic's challenge concerning the possibility of communicating in accordance with a rule to the extent of acknowledging that meaning is never individual in character. In the course of jettisoning the concept of individual meaning, Wittgenstein is also deflating our traditional conception of truth. Normally we take the utterance of truth to be the result of a particular action conforming to the intention(s), principles, judgments, etc. present to the mind of the individual actor as he goes about performing a particular action. But if meaning is not appropriated or validated individualistically, neither can truth be what is at stake in the discourse individuals employ to communicate and describe their intentions and achievements. Assertability and utility must take the place of truth. "Wittgenstein replaces the question, 'What must be the case for this sentence to be true?' by two others: first 'Under what conditions may this form of words be appropriately asserted (or denied)?'; second, given an answer to the first question, 'What is the role, and the utility, in our lives of our practice of asserting (or denying) the form of words under these conditions?'" [Kripke, 1982, 73].

In contrast to Winch's historical approach for achieving a purchase on the unity of Wittgenstein's thought which seeks to utilize Wittgenstein's own terms such as "lines of projection" and "method of projection" to account for the transition from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations*, Kripke uses a more abstract, philosophically-motivated vocabulary--which bears an internal relation to Wittgenstein's argument rather than being externally related to certain autobiographical statements that he made--to arrive at similar conclusions. For both Winch and Kripke, the movement from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations* can be most reliably characterized as a movement from a more limited to a more extreme scepticism--from a philosophy that left a safe preserve of statements that were securely anchored in reality to a philosophy that eroded even that preserve. Given that the modifications in Wittgenstein's philosophy all take place within the purview of scepticism, a compelling question to raise is how does he deal with the self-refuting nature of extreme scepticism? Even the *Tractatus* which does allow for a privileged class of statements--the elementary propositions--evokes the question of how one can sustain in the metalanguage of philosophy the destructive arguments that invalidate all save elementary propositions and truth functions of them without having that destructive force turn inward and undermine the philosophical language itself for failure to consist of elementary propositions or truth functions of them. Grappling with the problem of being able both to adhere to scepticism and to state it coherently forms one of the major motive forces of Wittgenstein's philosophy from beginning to end and serves as the point of entry for our discussion of the political dimension of Wittgenstein's thought. We must now address the

question of how Wittgenstein dealt with the problem of formulating a consistent version of scepticism.

WITTGENSTEIN AND SCEPTICISM II

Wittgenstein's approach to the nonstability of a consistent version of scepticism is put very succinctly in a letter to Russell written in 1919: "Now I'm afraid you haven't really got hold of my main contention to which the whole business of logical propositions is only corollary. The main point is the theory of what can be expressed (*gesagt*) by propositions, i.e., by language (and, which comes to the same thing, what can be thought) and what cannot be expressed by propositions, but only shown (*gezeigt*); which I believe is the cardinal problem of philosophy" [cited in Edwards, 1982, 11]. Since the philosophical statements that speak about elementary propositions and the picture theory of the proposition cannot themselves be analyzed into elementary propositions and shown to link up with reality in the direct way required by the picture theory, Wittgenstein takes these philosophical statements to be nonsense. Other types of discourse coming under the category of nonsense for failing to meet the rigorous criteria of meaning established by the *Tractatus* include truths of logic and mathematics, ethics, esthetics and religion.

The *Tractatus* is replete with many statements which testify to Wittgenstein's awareness that the philosophical enterprise he is engaged in is in many ways ironic and self-defeating. Since Wittgenstein believed that "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world" (TLP, 5.6), then those types of understandings such as the notion of elementary propositions and the picture theory of the proposition which point beyond language towards the way language hooks up with reality cannot strictly speaking be stated in language. This insight is stated even more forcefully earlier in the *Tractatus*: "What expresses itself in language, we cannot express by means of language" [4.121; italics in original]. "What can be shown, cannot be said" [4.1212].

With regard to philosophy conceived as a whole, Wittgenstein tries to sidestep the unstability issue by invoking the image of philosophy as activity. "Philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts. . . . Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity. . . . A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations. . . . Philosophy does not result in 'philosophical propositions', but rather in the clarification of propositions. . . . Without philosophy thoughts are, as it were, cloudy and indistinct: its task is to make them clear and to give them sharp boundaries" [TLP, 4.11].

In this passage, Wittgenstein tries to play down the fact that philosophy involves the formulation of arguments in language. By calling philosophy an activity and pointing to its critical, parasitic role with regard to other more primary realms of discourse, Wittgenstein hopes to reconcile the sceptical teaching of the *Tractatus* with the sceptical philosophical statements contained in that work. However, as Wittgenstein's friend, the Cambridge mathematician and philosopher, F.P. Ramsey, is reported to have said, "What you cannot say, you cannot say; and you cannot whistle it either" [cited in Edwards, 1982, 64]. Calling philosophy an activity and denigrating its character as formulated statement is a

form of "whistling" which seems at odds with the philosophical implications of Wittgenstein's own scepticism.

Apparently Wittgenstein himself was dissatisfied with this strategy of reconciliation because at the end of the *Tractatus* he invokes a different set of metaphors to elucidate the relationship between the substantive sceptical doctrine of the *Tractatus* and the steps Wittgenstein has traversed in formulating it.

There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical. [6.522]

My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as non-sensical, when he has used them--as steps--to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)

He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright. [6.54]

What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence. [7]

This strategy of divestiture of the philosophical statement in the light of the outcome of the substantive philosophical argument will again, I think, not work. Wittgenstein is not whistling anymore, because he forthrightly says that one must throw away the ladder after one has climbed up it. Nevertheless, the philosophical work of disenchantment--forcing us to shed our innocence with regard to the plethora of statements that are made in the world, and recognizing only narrowly circumscribed ranges of statement as making the privileged contact with reality--has already been accomplished by that philosophical ladder which Wittgenstein bids us throw away. The words--Wittgenstein's philosophical words--have already cast their special spell. The impasse Wittgenstein has reached in his argument is reminiscent of the situation of the narrator in Proust's *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu*: ". . . I summoned up all my courage and said to him: 'Tell me, sir, do you, by any chance, know the lady--the ladies of Guermantes?'; and I felt glad because, in pronouncing the name, I had secured a sort of power over it, by the mere act of drawing it up out of my dreams and giving it an objective existence in the world of spoken things". [Proust, 1928, 180; cited by Levenson, 1971, xxix]

It seems to me that confronted with the problem of rendering his version of scepticism consistent, Wittgenstein is faced with a choice. Since the philosophical statements that compose the metaphysics of logical atomism and articulate the picture theory of the proposition cannot themselves be validated in accordance with that metaphysics and that theory, one can attempt to slough off these philosophical statements after one's philosophical theory has been fully laid out by relegating these statements to a realm of what might be called the "higher nonsense". The "lower nonsense" consists of those statements rendered invalid by logical atomism and the picture theory that are truly to be discarded, and the "higher nonsense" consists of what Wittgenstein at 6.522 calls "das Mystiche"--the statements that emerge as problematic because

of his philosophical theory but which one remains committed to--or are otherwise indispensable (as the philosophical statements are)--on other grounds.

However, given that a good deal of the "higher nonsense" contains words and sentences of a transformational sort that can be cherished as we saw from Proust's narrator because of their power-enhancing effects, one could perhaps equally plausibly engage in an act of rezoning on the other side of the great divide that separates intelligible discourse from nonsense. What I am suggesting is that it is possible to trace the transition from the early to the later Wittgenstein in relation to a set of internal factors--namely, the unresolved problematics surrounding the issue of showing versus saying which needs to be invoked in order to render Wittgenstein's scepticism consistent. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein opts for a rezoning to take place on the nonsense side of the great divide between a higher and a lower nonsense. With the work commencing in the nineteen thirties and culminating in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein deploys the resources of rezoning on the intelligible discourse side of the great divide, consigning the category of what amounts to the "higher nonsense" to oblivion. In the new terrain mapped by the *Investigations*, everything can be said as long as the different rules governing different language regions are observed. There are no sanctions higher than--and no court to appeal to beyond--the disparate sets of rules governing different language-games.

The thesis that I am advancing therefore is that it was Wittgenstein's dissatisfaction with working out a consistent version of scepticism evidenced by his successive attempts in the *Tractatus* to carve out an appropriate conceptual niche for his philosophical statements that led him from the nineteen thirties onwards to re-legitimize the realm of ordinary discourse and to make its boundaries coextensive with the philosophically acceptable. In order to make this thesis as convincing as possible, I would like to briefly re-state my case for regarding the *Investigations* as expressing a broader and deeper scepticism from what is present in the *Tractatus*. I shall argue, however, that the dilemma concerning showing versus saying re-surfaces in the *Investigations* and is again not satisfactorily resolved, thus making plausible a political resolution to Wittgenstein's epistemological dilemma.

THE PROBLEM OF FORMULATING A CONSISTENT VERSION OF SCEPTICISM IN THE INVESTIGATIONS

The *Philosophical Investigations* exemplifies an implicit form of radical scepticism. Its scepticism is implicit in the sense that a deceptive tolerance pervades the surface of Wittgenstein's argument which leads one to think that epistemologically "anything goes". But epistemologically "anything goes" only because metaphysically--ontologically--nothing matters. Whether the topic is the laws of logic or the foundations of mathematics--religion or esthetics--the moves that we make in these disparate regions of discourse are ultimately grounded in "the linguistic practices which embody them" [Pears, 179]--and nothing else.

Wittgenstein is finally able to establish a charmed circle of secure knowledge invulnerable to logical attack--the original project of empiricism inaugurated in England by Hobbes and elaborated in a more sophisticated fashion by Hume--simply because for Wittgenstein this

charmed circle is co-extensive with the realm of ordinary language itself. The "outside" has been turned "inside". (There is no longer any "outside".) There is no level of certainty beyond what is secured by linguistic convention within particular regions of discourse. Wittgenstein emasculates all special philosophical concepts and makes all forms of activity--all forms of life, including the philosophical--metaphysically equal and uniformly levelled by the irremediable opacity of language.

Wittgenstein needs to invoke a doctrine of showing versus saying in the *Investigations* in order to render his philosophical case more coherent. Wittgenstein argues that the notion of language-game yields the appropriate sanction for correct linguistic usage in each sphere of discourse.

Our mistake is to look for an explanation where we look at what happens as a "proto-phenomenon". That is, where we ought to have said: This language-game is played.

The question is not one of explaining a language-game by means of our experiences, but of noting a language-game.
[PI I, 654-55]

Wittgenstein also says that "we may not advance any kind of theory. . . . We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place . . ." [PI I, 109]. "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is" [PI I, 124].

Given the pivotal role assigned to the concept of a language-game in guiding the philosopher in performing his therapeutic task, a crucial question becomes what status to assign to those statements I have just marshalled out of Wittgenstein (and others like them I could have cited) which stake out the central philosophical role assigned to "language-games?" Are these statements merely illustrative--'descriptive', in Wittgenstein's word--of how the philosophical language-game is played, then why should they be normative--why should they provide the controlling model--for analyzing and restoring coherence to non-philosophical regions of discourse? In what sense can Wittgenstein's many statements in the *Investigations* about how philosophy should be practiced legitimately obtrude upon other regions of discourse and set them in order when incoherencies of various sorts threaten?

Wittgenstein's response to questions of this sort--his invocation of the doctrine of "showing" in the *Investigations*--is I think suggested by statements such as the following: "Meaning it is not a process which accompanies a word. For no process could have the consequences of meaning" [PI II, 218]. "This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if 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 I, 201].

The first statement I have cited points to the deep grammar of the family of language-games in which the word 'mean' is ordinarily employed, a statement which shows that meaning is inseparable from the

process of grouping certain words into sentences or into any other type of articulable cluster and pronouncing them either internally to oneself or publicly to others. If the depth grammar of the word "meaning" is examined in the multiple, related language-games in which it is typically used, we notice that meaning is communicated almost as a by-product of the actions of speaking, writing, etc. It is not a separable, isolable component of the process, but something established through speaking, writing, etc.

Similarly, with regard to the second example cited above: Wittgenstein wants to dissolve the paradox pertaining to following a rule which is a variation on Hume's problem of induction--and which, as we have seen, Kripke made central to his interpretation of the *Investigations*--by scrutinizing the depth grammar of the phrases "to accord with a rule" and "to conflict with a rule" in the language-games where these phrases are most frequently employed. The paradox surrounding following a rule where every course of action can be made to accord with it after the manner summarized from Kripke earlier in this paper can be dissolved when we recall that the phrase "to accord with a rule" normally forms part of a contrasting pair whose opposite number is "to conflict with a rule". But if everything can be made out to accord with a rule the same kind of sceptical attack can also lead to everything being made out to conflict with a rule. The point is that the contrastive force of this pair of terms will have been destroyed by the sceptical argument mentioned by Wittgenstein. Since the sceptical argument violates how the phrases "to accord with a rule" and "to conflict with a rule" function in their original language settings, the philosophical argument is discredited and the sceptic is refuted.

Similar strategies of argument are deployed by Wittgenstein in the notebooks which he was working on in the last few months of his life, and which have since been published under the title, *On Certainty*. "Moore's mistake lies in this--countering the assertion that one cannot know that, by saying 'I know it'" [OC, 521]. "A doubt that doubted everything would not be doubt" [OC, 450]. "Doubt itself rests only on what is beyond doubt" [OC, 519]. "Do I want to say then that certainty resides in the nature of the language-games?" [OC, 457]. In these passages, Wittgenstein criticizes Moore for the approach he adopts in refuting the Cartesian doubts. Moore is wrong in attempting to answer the sceptic's mistrust of his senses by a display of a common sense-inspired confidence in the evidence of his own senses. His resorting to the opposite extreme from the sceptic suggests that he accepts the frame of reference established by the sceptic. To extreme doubt Moore counterposes extreme confidence. But according to Wittgenstein, the very formulation of the sceptic's doubt concerning the evidence of his senses is misplaced. It involves an illegitimate extension of the term "doubt" from the original language-games in which it is at home to alien contexts and uses. In the typical language-games in which the term doubt is employed, it forms part of a contrastive pair of terms--together with certainty. In everyday situations, for example, I typically doubt if I left my shoes in a certain place--not whether material objects exist. In the familiar language-games in which the terms 'certainty' and 'doubt' are employed, they are correlative with each other. Certainty is usually not so sweeping in an everyday context that it rules out the possibility of doubt. Neither is doubt so total that it excludes the possibility of attaining knowledge or assurance about a particular state of affairs. Both the sceptical philosophers who raise doubts about central features of

our ordinary experience and Moore's extravagantly affirmative rejoinder have illegitimately extended the vocabulary of certainty and doubt which is very useful and makes a good deal of sense when employed internally in relation to particular language-games--such as locating a pair of shoes--to an external use--in relation to whole language-games themselves--and it is this characteristic which generates the traditional epistemological puzzles.

All of the examples I have cited from Wittgenstein's later work manifest his doctrine of showing versus saying and also suggest why he thinks the doctrine is more successfully embodied in these cases than it is in his earlier work. By analyzing how the language-game works in each particular case, Wittgenstein thinks that he has shown rather than stated what has gone wrong to generate the philosophical puzzle and the therapy that needs to be applied to restore language to a condition of health.

It appears that Wittgenstein has succumbed to the myth of the given. Now all regions of discourse are officially declared to be within the semantic pale--no region is consigned at the outset to the realm of nonsense--and the depth grammar of troublesome words, phrases and sentences is also a given which is disclosed by minute examination of the language-games in which these words, phrases and sentences are typically employed. Because there is a double given here--the different regions which periodically give rise to perplexities and the depth grammar revealed by close scrutiny of the language-games deployed within particular language regions⁴--Wittgenstein believes that he has successfully evaded the necessity of stating and generalizing his sceptical principles. Through the proliferation of examples culled from diverse regions of discourse and disparate language-games, he has dramatized scepticism, as it were, without having to confront the necessity of stating it.

It is precisely here, however, that I believe Wittgenstein has committed a blunder which is reminiscent of his earlier self-acknowledged error of confusing the "lines of projection" with the "method of projection". The double structure of the given which Wittgenstein discerns still does not license him to extrapolate from the practice of one language region--philosophy--to all other language-games.⁵ The concepts of language regions and language-games after all are originally at home in a philosophical setting. They were fashioned to help resolve some of the perplexity growing out of Wittgenstein's first formulation of his scepticism. Their extension to other spheres of discourse outside philosophy is not a function of natural necessity--but a deliberate act. What is suggested by Wittgenstein's initial image of separate regions of discourse governed by their disparate language-games are self-contained, Foucauldian mini-epistemes. There is nothing inevitable about their all being orchestrated together through the extension of the philosophical technique of unraveling the implicit rules of language-games to their separate domains. This imperialistic take-over did not have to take place. Its occurrence is neither vouchsafed nor legitimized by the double structure of necessity Wittgenstein points to in the linguistic landscape around him.

If then the notions of language regions and language-games are extended from philosophy to other regions of discourse--so that they are remade in philosophy's image--if this move is not self-evidently jus-

tifiable in terms of the double-barreled structure of necessity Wittgenstein discerns--then he cannot resort to the vocabulary of showing, in contrast to saying, to ward off the dilemmas associated with formulating a consistent version of scepticism. He must be able to justify in an explicit idiom why the vocabulary appropriate to philosophy is licensed to establish an imperium over other regions of language and thought. If Wittgenstein is cutting other language regions and language-games down to size through the application of his linguistic therapy--if this is scepticism in action--why are the philosophic language-games allowed to loom larger than the rest? Wittgenstein cannot say that philosophy is merely being deployed in action--that there is no doctrine that is being advanced here because, as we have seen, the extension of the imperium of philosophy to encompass other areas of language and thought takes him beyond what is strictly validated by his double-barreled structure of necessity. The scepticism at this point is being directed towards all other language regions except philosophy.

Wittgenstein thus appears to be impaled on the horns of a dilemma. In order to avoid the problem of having to formulate a non-self-refuting version of scepticism, he dramatizes scepticism by eliciting through the proliferation of examples the informal rules that govern usage in disparate language regions and language-games. But in dramatizing scepticism, Wittgenstein has also dramatized the dilemmas of scepticism, because the concepts of language regions and language-games are, after all, philosophical tools that are being extended beyond the hope of reasoned justification to encompass other regions of discourse. If the sceptical insights of philosophy are true but cannot be unraveled into a reasoned idiom of discourse--if philosophical reflection genuinely contributes towards catapulting its devotees out of philosophy into a sphere of action--then perhaps what is salvageable in negotiating the transitions from thought to action is the structuring of whatever field of action one chooses to engage in along egalitarian, participatory lines--according (at least initially) equal epistemological weight to each participant in the common enterprise. One could not tease out from this removal to a practical sphere of a central motif of philosophy anything resembling a philosophical principle. But if Wittgenstein is right in his critique of philosophical activity, this is as it should be. Philosophy offers a false hope of transcendence which can only be redeemed by the integration of philosophically-inclined individuals into more traditional forms of social life. If these individuals then try to structure those forms in the sceptical image of philosophical reflection by organizing them in a participatory manner, then their aspirations and their practice conform to what propels ordinary men and women to do what they do in fashioning their separate life styles. What emerges, at best, is a pragmatic sort of justification which moves in a virtuous circle--continually relating idea to act and using each as a touchstone for the other.⁶

ENDNOTES

¹ All references to the *Philosophical Investigations* in this essay will be by section number in Part One of the work and by page number in Part Two of the book.

² Pears, however, goes on to add, "It is clear that he did not include the propositions of religion and morality among factual propositions, and so his neutrality about the point of origin of the system of

factual propositions was certainly not intended to allow for the possibility that some of them might be non-empirical. What proves he was not a positivist is his attitude to the propositions of religion and morality after he excluded them from factual discourse". I will have more to say on this last point later on.

³ The works dating from the nineteen thirties--even though a number of them were translated and published as late as the nineteen sixties and seventies--are the following: *Philosophical Remarks* (1975); *Philosophical Grammar* (1977); *The Blue and Brown Books* (1958); G.E. Moore, "Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33" (1954 & 1955); *Ludwig Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis* (1967).

⁴ The relationship between "language regions" and "language-games" can be formulated as follows: there are usually a plurality of language-games within particular language regions.

⁵ One cannot respond in defense of Wittgenstein at this point by saying that philosophy as a second-order discipline is necessarily parasitic upon other regions of discourse for its exercise, and that this extrapolation therefore does not constitute an illegitimate extension of philosophical method to other domains. Many other distinctive language regions such as the sciences (as analyzed in both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*, for example), have features that can be transferred--legitimately or illegitimately--to other regions and have the potential for remaking them in their own image. It is the very conceptualization of philosophy as a parasitic, second-order discipline which licenses the spread of philosophical terminology and technique to all other regions of discourse which is at issue in the argument in the text.

⁶ See my "A Neo-Pragmatist Defense of Democratic Participation", *Journal of Social Philosophy* (forthcoming) for a pragmatic elaboration of the argument of this paper.

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