Wittgenstein, Philosopher of Cultures

Wittgenstein ein Philosoph der Kulturen

Wittgenstein – filozof kultur

Abstracts

Conference organizers:

Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Vossenkuhl (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)
Prof. Dr. Józef Bremer (Ignatianum Academy in Cracow)
PD Dr. Josef Rothhaupt (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich)

Munich / Cracow, 23rd September, 2014

Prof. Dr. Józef Bremer

Ignatianum Academy
ul. Kopernika 26
PL – 31-501 Kraków
Fax: 48 12/3999 501

zjbremer@cyf-kr.edu.pl

Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Vossenkuhl

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1
D – 80539 München
Telefon 49 89/2180-2386

Vossenkuhl@lmu.de

PD Dr. Josef G. F. Rothhaupt

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1
D – 80539 München
Telefon 49 89/2180-2386

Josef.Rothhaupt@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

[1]
Lars Albinus
Aarhus University (Aarhus, Denmark)
lal(at)cas.au.dk

"Culture is a Monastic Rule"

The German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk has taken a considerable interest in Wittgenstein's concept of culture. The title of his book *Du mußt dein Leben ändern* is a slightly modified quote from Wittgenstein, and he devotes a chapter to another quote, namely that 'Culture is a monastic rule', as Wittgenstein put it in 1948. Sloterdijk argues that Wittgenstein's philosophy was, from the beginning, irreversibly formed by the secessionist movement in fin-de-siècle Vienna, and that he remained a cultural elitist at heart through his whole life. Thus Sloterdijk regards the concept of 'language games' as ascetic instructions *en miniature*, and reads Wittgenstein's late philosophy as a veiled criticism of the so-called culture of his society, that is, 'life forms' among ordinary language users who are blind to their own proclivities. In my presentation I shall argue against this gross misconception of Wittgenstein's inclinations and let my objection serve as a stepping stone for making necessary distinctions between Wittgenstein's views of culture in different phases of his philosophy.

[2]
Marcin Baran
Jesuit University Ignatianum (Cracow, Poland)
marcineksj(at)gmail.com

Lebensform and "Socio-Cultural Background" – the Wittgensteinian Inspirations in the Philosophical Anthropology of Charles Taylor

The contemporary Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor once characterized the main part of his philosophical activity as philosophical anthropology. His philosophical anthropology is, above all, an attempt to overcome what he calls the epistemological construal: i.e. a set of false anthropological beliefs spread by modern Western philosophy – such as the commitment to a disengaged subject, a punctual self, and to social atomism. His critique of these anthropological beliefs draws heavily on, inter alia, Ludwig Wittgenstein's reflections on language and its social nature – especially those in *Philosophical Investigations*. To the disengaged subject and punctual self he opposes the embodied subject, a human agent that cannot be defined except in terms that make its language entirely dependent on some "form of life" corresponding to the social context in which it is inescapably embedded. In this way, Taylor emphasizes the idea of a basic connection between self and community, as something that has been falsely compromised by social atomism.

[3]
Józef Bremer
Jagiellonian University (Cracow, Poland)
Ignatianum Jesuit University (Cracow, Poland)
zjbremer(at)cyf-kr.edu.pl

Wittgenstein's Remarks Concerning the Accessibility of Foreign Cultures

Wittgenstein (1889-1951) was highly disapproving of scholars whom he thought unable to properly acknowledge diversity amongst cultures or take due note of the enormous differences separating them from tribes living in radically heterogeneous cultural environments. The best known and paradigmatic example of his attitude to such differences is to be found in his *Remarks on Frazer's 'Golden Bough'*, where he wrote: "[...] how impossible for him [Frazer, J.B.] to understand a different way of life from the English one of his time". But to cut a long story short, whether Wittgenstein saw this "impossibility" as an intrinsic feature of the task or not is by no means unambiguously clear. To resolve this question, I shall take as my point of departure the socio-anthropological writings of B. Malinowski (1884-1942), who spent several years amongst one of the Pacific island tribes – the Trobriands. In his "field studies", Malinowski focused on the tribe's "form of life": i.e. on their belief in ritual and magic, and on how their customs interlinked with kinship and with their economy. Taking into account Malinowski's own pragmatic conception of language and his notion of the divergent character of scientific and magical forms of belief, I then outline Wittgenstein's notions of "language game", "family resemblance" and "form of life". The usage of these concepts will show in what sense Wittgenstein would have recognized the similarities within and between different cultures and human societies – but, equally, just how far we can understand a human way of life deeply different from our own.

[4]
Marco Brusotti
Technical University Berlin (Berlin, Germany)
Università del Salento (Lecce, Italy)
brusotti@hotmail.com

Language Game and Culture.
Two Related Concepts in Wittgenstein's Philosophy

Occasionally, Wittgenstein identifies 'language game' and 'culture'. The present paper investigates this idea and its limits, as well as its genesis. Particular attention is paid to Wittgenstein's so called 'fictional' or 'imaginary anthropology', and to his critical involvement with various approaches in ethnology and the philosophy of culture, especially with Spengler and Frazer.

[5]

Susan Edwards-McKie

Darwin College Cambridge (Cambridge, Great Britain)

susan.edwards-mckie@cantab.net

Wittgenstein's Wager.
Mathematics, Culture and Human Action

Panofsky's famous 1936 essay on Poussin's painting "Et in Arcadia Ego" is but one reminder of the centrality of the constellation of concepts which, for two millennia, have energised the debates on 'decline' and 'progress'. Building on points made by Panofsky, in the first section I will place Wittgenstein's philosophy of culture within the debate crystalised by Nyiri, von Wright and Janik, arguing that while there are many points of evidence which would align Wittgenstein with a conservatism – Wittgenstein's preference for pre-Modernist music and literature, his distrust of 'technicist' solutions, such as those advocated by Russell to world problems, and his more general, somewhat Spenglerian, attitude of being out of touch with the spirit of his times – the relegation of Wittgenstein's Nachlass to a position outside the Modernist discourse is an error, leading to a dismissal of the importance of his work in the philosophy of mathematics and the philosophy of physics.

Secondly, using a recent Nachlass discovery (Edwards-McKie, 2014) concerning the genesis of *Philosophische Untersuchungen* which highlights Wittgenstein's reflections on quantum mechanics, combined with specific MS connections across the *Nachlass* concerning issues of space and time, and potential and actual infinity, I will construct an argument which shows that the would-be pessimist Wittgenstein offers a characterisation of space and time as that of *unendliche Möglichkeit* of human movement – in contrast, or at least in contradistinction, to a technicist plan for improvement. It is here that the philosopher of culture emerges most strikingly.

[6]
Gottfried Gabriel
Friedrich-Schiller-University (Jena, Germany)
gottfried.gabriel(at)uni-jena.de

Solipsism –
A "Leitmotiv" in Wittgenstein's Life and Philosophy

More and more, it has become clear that a close tie exists between Wittgenstein's life and his philosophy. In particular, several remarks in *Culture and Value* (Wittgenstein 1980), as well as personal entries in his diaries, have proven helpful. Nonetheless, it should be noted that a one-to-one relationship between his life and work does not exist. His being a Jew, for instance, was certainly a subject about which he thought deeply. However, it appears that his interest sprouted from a cultural and historical perspective, combined with his sense of shame at having temporarily neglected his own Jewish heritage.

My paper will highlight the close relationship between Wittgenstein's life and his train of thought, using his treatment of solipsism as an example. The intensity with which Wittgenstein explored this theme hints at an existential and cultural background – one developed further through a comparison of his works with his diary entries. The treatment of solipsism will be presented as an expression of an inner wrestling for the correct view of world and life. I link a revised understanding of the concept of a felicitous life – reflected, in turn, in an altered understanding of language – to the transition from his earlier to his later philosophical thought. The replacement of an analysis of the general form of propositions by the description of language games, and the move away from logical forms towards forms of life, correspond – in practical terms – to a new approach to overcoming alienation. This inquiry takes into account the distinction between 'context of discovery' and 'context of justification', taking Wittgenstein's existential problems with life as central to gaining a better understanding of his efforts, but without conflating issues of authenticity and of truth. In order to arrive at a systematic assessment of Wittgenstein's initial espousal of solipsism (in the *Tractatus*) and his later criticism (in the *Philosophical Investigations*), the various types of solipsism he adopted as benchmarks will be taken into consideration: these include, in particular,

Weininger's ethical solipsism, Schopenhauer's contemplative aesthetic solipsism, and Descartes' methodological solipsism.

[7]
Jakub Gomułka
Pontifical University of John Paul II (Cracow, Poland)
jakub.gomulka(at)gmail.com

Can there be a Non-religious Culture?
A Wittgensteinian Answer and its Plausibility

My lecture will be focused on the question of whether we can distinguish a culture-independent factor responsible for the emergence and persistence of religion within human communities. I will start with some preliminary conceptual clarifications regarding what religion consists of and, first of all, what the term "religion" should be taken to mean. Then I will present the view of D.Z. Phillips – a classical Wittgensteinian philosopher of religion – according to which the currently observable process of secularization of Western societies may result in the total and irreversible decline of any religious form of life. Obviously, there is a range of thinkers who insist on the essentialness of a religious aspect to human nature; I will pick on a couple of examples of such conceptions in order to juxtapose them with Phillips' point of view. Finally, I will raise a question about the plausibility of the latter.

[8]
Katarzyna Gurczyńska-Sady
Pedagogical University of Cracow (Cracow, Poland)
katarzyna.sady(at)gmail.com

Who Speaks?
An Empty Subject in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein

Wittgenstein's late philosophy can be understood as an instance of a distinctively modern tendency towards reflection on the problem of subjectivity. If we think about the idea that links together all of his now famous analyses of mental phenomena (such as thinking, wanting, hoping, waiting for something, etc.), we come to the conclusion that it is a rejection of a certain view about what the subject is. What is being criticized there is the conception of a human being as a "closed", isolated being. And who, or what, exactly, is that? He or she is the possessor of their own highly inward and intimate "area", where psychological phenomena are taken to occur in the form of processes and acts. On the basis of both his critical analyses and conclusions drawn from them, I shall present Wittgenstein as being forcefully engaged in discussions concerning the status of the subject – as someone who positions himself on the side of those who would view the subject as an open being, dependent on a social network whose centre lies "outside" of the human being itself. In this way, I seek to show that Wittgenstein is best grouped as a thinker with such philosophers as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida, Foucault and Agamben.

[9]

Carl Humphries

Ignatianum Jesuit University (Cracow, Poland)

humgin4(at)interia.pl

Wittgenstein, Culture and Forms of Life

If one distinguishes between texts (possibly) intended for publication and the rest, then characterizing Wittgenstein as a philosopher of culture runs into difficulties: either we consider only texts of the first group, ignoring the others, or we invoke the latter to shed light on the former. The first strategy makes it hard to view him as having a philosophy of culture, as what we encounter more closely resembles an investigation of transcendental limits to human intelligibility than an exploration of cultural concerns. The second strategy allows us to consider remarks that do address such concerns, but only by ignoring Wittgenstein's own decisions about which texts were properly representative of his thinking. A third option is to "detranscendentalize" concepts central to Wittgenstein's later work, such as "practice" and "forms of life", treating these, too, as expressions of a more specific, culturally motivated standpoint, yet this seems reductive. Is there another alternative?

[10]
Axel Hutter
Ludwig-Maximilians-University (Munich, Germany)
Office.Hutter(at)lrz.uni-muenchen.de

"The Foolish Superstition of our Time" – Wittgenstein's Critique of Modernity

My paper seeks a better understanding of Wittgenstein's remark: "Frazer is much more savage than most of his savages, for they are not as far removed from the understanding of a spiritual matter as a twentieth-century Englishman". What does "spiritual" mean in this context?

For Wittgenstein, I will argue, "spirit" is a historical phenomenon that cannot be understood from within the conceptual framework of "progress". (There is a history of art, but no progress in art). Therefore the "savagery" of Frazer is his attempt to apply the concept of progress to the "primitive" state of magical thinking – proving himself to be a typical twentieth-century scientist. Wittgenstein: "The distinction between magic and science can be expressed by saying that in science there is progress, but in magic there isn't".

It is noteworthy that Wittgenstein characterizes his own conception of philosophy as in opposition to the interest in progress and in finding something new: "It is of the essence of our investigation that we do not seek to learn anything new by it. We want to understand something that is already in plain view. For this is what we seem in some sense not to understand".

Conclusion: Wittgenstein's critique of Frazer is a critique of modernity as a civilization defined by its interest in progress and by its lack of any understanding of spiritual matters.

[11]

Urszula Idziak-Smoczyńska

Jagiellonian University (Cracow, Poland)

urszula_idziak(at)poczta.onet.pl

The Confessing Subject.
Ludwig Wittgenstein – a Philosophy of Confession

The aim of my presentation is to reflect upon those passages where Wittgenstein expresses his thoughts about guilt and confession, especially in his remarks collected under the title *Movements of Thought* (edited by Ilse Somavilla). Wittgenstein's remarks about ethics equated with religion furnish a new approach to subjectivity in what is a period of crisis for it. Here we find a subjectivity not only connected to a religious perspective, but also deeply affected by a sense of guilt and a striving for redemption. This point of view does not make Wittgenstein a religious thinker, but it does do something more significant: it shows the religious and Judeo-Christian character of a certain philosophy to come, where modes of existence (to make intentional use of Bruno Latour's expression) will serve as the only way towards truth. And Wittgenstein, moreover, shows how this way must itself begin with a mistake … (MS 110,58/1,2,3).

The question of sin has been extensively studied by prominent Wittgensteinians (both from a biographical perspective, as in the work of Norman Malcolm, Brian McGuinness and Ray Monk, and in substantive terms, as in, for example, Philip R. Shields' *Logic and Sin*).

My approach, however, is more concerned with interrogating Wittgenstein's legacy from the standpoint of a theological turn within contemporary philosophical thought – one whose main concern is the quest for the confessing subject.

[12]
Andreas Koritensky
Theological Faculty Paderborn (Paderborn, Germany)
a.koritensky(at)thf-paderborn.de

Leading a Meaningful Life in an Age of Crisis.
The Ethical Dimension in Wittgenstein's Philosophy

Wittgenstein's scattered remarks on ethics in his Nachlass often appear heterogeneous, sometimes idiosyncratic. For an apt interpretation of these remarks it is necessary to find their proper place in Wittgenstein's philosophical enterprise. A pre-academic conception does not assign to philosophy only the discourse of theoretical and practical reason, i.e. understanding the world and identifying the right way of life: it also comprises the exercising of a certain form of life. In most of the ancient philosophies these three tasks cannot be separated. In this paper, the following assumption shall be examined: the ideal of philosophy Wittgenstein has in mind is close to the ancient conception. Nevertheless, he has to recognize that philosophy, together with its social and intellectual contexts, has changed in a way that no longer allows for the old synthesis. Wittgenstein experiences the separation of the three tasks as a deep cultural crisis, and this is the reason why his thoughts take the form of a radical critique of philosophy. Therefore, Wittgenstein approaches ethical problems from two sides: (1) he attempts to understand the idea of ethics, discussing questions from classical ethical discourse, e.g. the cognitive status and foundation of ethical judgments or the existence of a 'telos' in human life; (2) we see him constantly struggling to perform what he considers the right form of life, apparently following two strategies – an attempt to re-enter the Christian tradition and/or a sober philosophical ersatz-form in an age of cultural crisis.

[13]
Markus Lipowicz
Jesuit University Ignatianum (Cracow, Poland)
markus.lipowicz(at)onet.eu

Nietzsche or Wittgenstein?
Two Colliding Ways of Approaching Postmodern Culture

Without a single doubt, Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy seems to be a crucial step in the transition process from modernity to postmodernity. By refuting Christianity as the only source of morality, Nietzsche opened an intellectual gateway for the contemporary radical pluralism of Western culture. This, in turn, led to a decentralization of the axiological and normative social order, which is widely appreciated by postmodern thinkers. Nietzsche therefore announced the necessity of rejecting the Judeo-Christian system of values, "Judea", and readapting "Rome", which Nietzsche understood as the variety of ancient Pre-Christian Greek and Roman value systems. However this anti-Judeo-Christian claim of Nietzsche does not necessary correspond with the thought process of another philosopher, whose output also had a profound intellectual influence on postmodern culture: Ludwig Wittgenstein. It was Jean-François Lyotard, the main founder of academic postmodernism, who referred to Wittgenstein's concept of language games as a major feature of postmodernity, which Lyotard then interpreted as the notorious conflict of incommensurable discourses. And yet it was the same Wittgenstein who claimed that his own thoughts were "one hundred percent Hebraic" – something which obviously stands in direct opposition to Nietzsche's anti-Judaism. Unlike Nietzsche, who ridiculed morality, Wittgenstein proclaimed a deep respect for the idea of a universal moral good – though he never set out to define this term. In this presentation, I will try to indicate the incommensurability of Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's thoughts regarding postmodern culture. On this basis, I will also describe the two colliding ways in which one can understand the postmodern era as an age of fundamental conflict between the cultural heritages that Nietzsche called "Judea" and "Rome".

[14]
Lars Madsen
Aarhus University (Aarhus, Denmark)
LMA@(at)teo.au.dk

Explanation and Impression

In this talk, I argue that the *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* (RFGB) stages central themes from Wittgenstein's philosophical development from the early to the later philosophy. Despite its anthropological theme, RFGB is therefore mainly a work of philosophical significance. Specifically, I argue that Part One of RFGB shows influences from Wittgenstein's early thinking, while Part Two seems more firmly settled in the later philosophy. I intend to show this by linking the concept of 'impression' in RFGB I with 'the mystical' in the *Tractatus* and 'the general inclination of the people' in RFGB II with 'form of life' in the *Philosophical Investigations*. While not unambiguously splitting the remarks in two, these influences do, however, suggest that RFGB is a pivotal work in Wittgenstein's overall philosophical development from logical atomism, where culture was largely irrelevant, towards his socially and culturally inspired later philosophy.

[15]

Volker Munz

Alpen-Adria University (Klagenfurt, Austria)

volker.munz(at)aau.at

Wittgenstein's Socio-Cultural Context around 1900

Even more than 60 years after his death, interest in Wittgenstein's philosophy remains undiminished. Within the last two or three decades, however, we have been able to observe an additional emphasis on the philosopher's personality and socio-cultural background. One way of explaining this development is the assumption that the work of an author, artist, or other intellectual cannot be separated from the person and his or her biographical setting. If this thesis is correct, one also has to take into account the life-world context within which any kind of intellectual oeuvre is embedded. In this paper I try to give a very rough sketch of Wittgenstein's Vienna and its socio-economic and cultural milieu around 1900.

[16]

Martin Pilch

Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy (Vienna, Austria)

martin.pilch@bmwfw.gv.at

The Formation of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* – MS 104 as a Main Source for the Understanding of its Composition

Wittgenstein's finally published version of his *Tractatus* – his *Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung* – covers material and thoughts from the years 1913 to 1922. What started as a collaboration in Cambridge with Russell, deeply inspired by Frege's works, soon developed into an independent and critical position.

The main parts of Wittgenstein's early logical system were developed during his period of military service in the First World War. So, for example, the formulations of his famous picture theory of proposition emerged during the time of his stay in Cracow and his serving on the ship "Goplana" – in the autumn of 1914. We can partly follow this development of Wittgenstein's ideas by reading his wartime notebooks. The most important document of this time is manuscript MS 104, containing the so-called *Prototractatus*, normally seen as an early, but fairly complete, version of the *Tractatus*. But the manuscript in fact presents much more interesting information about the actual formation of the *Tractatus* itself when read as a kind of log book of the latter's ongoing process of composition. The actual order of the propositions differs considerably from the published order, and enables us to follow the step by step integration of new propositions into the growing structure of the *Tractatus*.

This talk will give a chronological outline, and an overview, of the surviving pre-*Tractarian* sources and their setup, and will argue for a reading of MS 104 that allows for detailed reconstruction of the textual composition, while at the same time serving as a basis for an interpretation of the wartime notebooks.

[17]

Josef G. F. Rothhaupt

Ludwig-Maximilians-University (Munich, Germany)

Josef.Rothhaupt(at)lrz.uni-muenchen.de

"Remarks on Cultures, etc." – Two Collections of Remarks in or from Wittgenstein's Nachlass

During the period from 1929 to 1951, Wittgenstein himself marked and collected some distinctive remarks to be found in his Nachlass. A detailed philological and philosophical study shows that this corpus of remarks is divided into two parts. The first runs from 1929 to 1931 and consists of those indicated with the sectional marking "○", while the second runs from 1931 to 1951 and consists of those indicated with the sectional marking "│ … │". The first contains all of the *Remarks on Frazer's 'Golden Bough'* corresponding to Part I of the latter and taken from TS211 and MS110 – remarks which appear there in a broader context. And it can also be shown that Part II of the *Remarks on Frazer's 'Golden Bough'*, taken from MS143, belongs to this same context. The selection and extraction of them all forms a significant and extraordinary corpus with a focus on a broad range of cultural themes. Both parts of this collection will be available as a Proto-Edition at the conference in Cracow.

During the period from 1965 to 1966, Georg Henrik von Wright made "A Collection of Remarks by Ludwig Wittgenstein – on Questions Connected with his Life and Work; the Nature of Philosophical Inquiry; Art, Religion and the 'Philosophy of Life'; the I; the Will, and the World; and Various Other General Topics". From this (till now unpublished) selection, G. H. von Wright then again made a selection. This famous selection from a selection from Wittgenstein's Nachlass was published – under the title *Vermischte Bemerkungen. Eine Auswahl aus dem Nachlass / Culture and Value. A Selection from the Posthumous Remains* – first in 1977 (German) and then again in 1980 (German-English). A revised edition was published in 1994 (German-English).

My paper presents and compares these two important collections of "Remarks on Cultures, etc." – that from Ludwig Wittgenstein himself and that made posthumously by Georg Henrik von Wright.

[18]

Wojciech Sady

Pedagogical University of Cracow (Cracow, Poland)

wojciech.sady(at)gmail.com

Wittgenstein's Proto-Theory of Language Games
and Fleck's Theory of Thought Styles

In *Philosophical Investigations* Ludwig Wittgenstein makes out that he is not advancing any kind of theory – that he is only describing how our language-games work. In fact, one can find many general statements about the nature of our language in the book, but they are neither precise nor systematic.

Ludwik Fleck's theory of thought collectives and thought styles agrees in all important respects with Wittgenstein's proto-theory, so it can help to clarify and develop it.

[19]
Walter Schweidler
Catholic University Eichstätt – Ingolstadt (Eichstätt, Germany)
walter.schweidler(at)ku.de

Wittgenstein, Goethe, and the Metonymic Principle

Wittgenstein articulated the proximity of his thoughts to Goethean motives in various ways, including the fundamental devices ("Don't think, but look!") and the central topic (the language game as "Urphänomen") of his later philosophy. Yet the philosophical substance of this relationship still needs to be understood and explicated. In this context, the principle of metonymy (as opposed to metaphorical language) can be of enormous analytical importance. Philosophy, in Wittgenstein's understanding, is something categorically different from the scientific search for what is common in different phenomena – for the *tertium comparationis*; rather, the philosophical attempt is directed at the relation thanks to which a phenomenon (e.g. a philosophical "problem" or "attitude", or even a "tone") counts as typical and exemplary for many others of its kind – i.e. the metonymical connection, the *pars pro toto*. He emphatically rejects any definition of "language games" made on the basis of something all of them could have in common; rather, according to him, they are related to one another ("miteinander verwandt"). He speaks of a "family resemblance" between them, and it is my thesis that it will be very instructive to understand this not in a metaphorical, but in a metonymical way. When we do this, we are immediately led to the field of cultural anthropology as recalled to philosophical relevance by such authors as Merleau-Ponty, Lévi-Strauss and the later Heidegger. It is worthwhile remembering that "family resemblance" among human beings is not a simple reflex of biological descent; it is the result of highly complicated collective forms of life (including exogamy and "totemism"), which do not follow from, but rather use, the biological chains of reproduction as a kind of code. Philosophy in the Wittgensteinian sense is not a theory trying to "explain" that metamorphosis of nature into culture (which with some justification could be characterized by the Goethean term "Wahlverwandtschaft"), but an activity that understands itself as one single but exemplary form of its presentation.

[20]
Chryssi Sidiropoulou
Bogaziçi University (Istanbul, Turkey)
sidiropu(at)boun.edu.tr

A "Perspicuous Representation":
Ritual Practice and the Human Body in Wittgenstein

Wittgenstein's *Remarks on Frazer's 'Golden Bough'* is a text often adduced in discussions of ritual, as well as in connection to Wittgenstein's broadly speaking anti-scientistic stance. Two main points seem to stand out in the relevant literature. (a) In suggesting that ritualistic practices spring from primitive theories, Frazer misrepresented the nature of ritual in human life. On the contrary, ritual is not reducible to any theoretical source. (b) When dealing with ritual – but also in other fields, such as psychoanalysis – one should not fail to acknowledge an important distinction between causes, on the one hand, and reasons, on the other. One would then be able to see that an empirical-causal investigation into the historical origins of ritual practices is largely irrelevant for an understanding of ritual.

In my paper I will discuss these two issues again, focusing especially on the latter. Rejecting emotivist readings of Wittgenstein's view on ritual, I will argue that the notion of a "perspicuous representation" – with all the weight it carries for any effort to understand ourselves – is to be analyzed in connection to the question of whether a radical (cultural) alien is a meaningful possibility for Wittgenstein. My main argument will be that the centrality of the human body mediates a sense of affinity to both Frazer's tribespeople and to any 'cultural other'. This significance of the body can neither be grasped nor form part of any causal scientific account. Consequently, an account of ritual and its significance calls for an inquiry into the way any human conceptual system/form of life intrinsically involves reference to the body and to bodily expression.

[21]

Bożena Sieradzka-Baziur
Ignatianum Jesuit University (Cracow, Poland)
sieradzka4@gmail.com

Some Remarks on the Religious Language
in Selected Texts by Ludwig Wittgenstein

Selected passages on religion taken from texts by Ludwig Wittgenstein will be subjected here to a semantic analysis. A conceptual category of RELIGION will be defined, and it will include the selected lexemes used by that author to present his views on religion. His more extended treatments of this issue will also be analyzed. The article attempts to answer the question of what image of God is presented in Wittgenstein's texts. Another issue explored in the paper relates to why there is also a religious discourse in his texts. The interpretative context for this will take in works by Rainer Maria Rilke and William James. Ludwig Wittgenstein harboured a belief that transcendence was inexpressible, and this raises the question of whether he himself was able to unveil its secret.

[22]
Piotr Sikora
Ignatianum Jesuit University (Cracow, Poland)
pj.sikora(at)gmail.com

Secular Wittgenstein in Religious Shoes

There is a famous remark by Wittgenstein:

"If you ask me whether or not I believe in a Judgment Day, in the sense in which religious people have belief in it, I wouldn't say: 'No. I don't believe there will be such a thing.' It would seem to me utterly crazy to say this. And then I give an explanation: 'I don't believe in ...', but then the religious person never believes what I describe. I can't say. I can't contradict that person."

Given Wittgenstein's "anti-private language" argument, the above remark is to be understood not as an acknowledgment of personal problems with mutual understanding, but rather as an expression of the thesis that whole cultures (the religious and the secular ones) are incommensurable.

How, though, does Wittgenstein know what he states in his remark? In my paper I'll try to answer that question, and to sketch out how a Wittgensteinian intercultural dialogue is possible.

[23]
Ilse Somavilla
University of Innsbruck (Innsbruck, Austria)
Brenner-Archiv, Innsbruck
Ilse.Somavilla(at)uibk.ac.at

Wittgenstein's Ambivalent Attitude toward Science and Culture

Wittgenstein's ambivalent attitude toward science (and philosophy) can already be observed in the *Tractatus*: both in the preface and towards the end – e.g., at 6.52 and 6.54, and as implicit in his final sentence, 'Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent".

Thus, despite his analytical method and apparently high appreciation of science, he was aware of its limits – as well as of its dangers. This awareness becomes increasingly obvious in the course of his later years, which are, amongst other things, marked by a shift from analysis to description and by a turning to other ways of knowledge than scientific ones: ways of showing, instead of saying (in the sense of verbal and scientific explanations). These alternatives he saw in literature, art and music.

However, even as concerns these fields, he sometimes holds a critical attitude towards culture, above all within the development of the civilization of his century. His resentment of the gradual moral and intellectual decline at the turn of the 20th century leads to a highly suspicious attitude towards any progress in the fields of culture and science – something which he expresses clearly in his preface to the *Philosophical Remarks*, distancing himself from the so-called typical Western scientist, whose spirit he considers 'alien & uncongenial' to his (cf. C&V, 8e).

[24]
Leszek Sosnowski
Jagiellonian University (Cracow, Poland)
leszek.sosnowski(at)uj.edu.pl

Logic and Ethics – A Perspective of Similarity

The philosophy of the *Tractatus* inhabits a fact-value dualism. These two spheres are not, however, independent: axiological problems result from general ontological claims. Hence, this dualism involves relating an axiological (intensional) level to non-axiological (extensional) one. Historically, many prominent positions have sought to locate the problem of value on one or other of the two sides of this distinction. So how does Wittgenstein view this issue?

There are two types of showing in the *Tractatus*: a logical one (concerning sentences) and a mystical one (concerning the transcendental). The first one has a definite form; we are entitled to ask, what form belongs to the second one?

According to Wittgenstein, we can reach the mystical. In remark TLP 4.115, he says: "It will signify what cannot be said, by presenting clearly what can be said." There is a trap here, created by Wittgenstein, who, paradoxically, has become trapped himself. Sticking closely to the remarks of the *Tractatus* itself, we may ask: what form belongs to the mystical? It is clear that the sayable and the unsayable should both – each like the other – be required to have the appropriate form. This requirement, which I call the main principle of the ontology of the *Tractatus*, says that the unsayable (the showable) has to possess its own form, otherwise it would not be "visible". One is entitled to ask a question about the necessity of accepting this second form, which refers to the unsayable. Commentators on the *Tractatus* do not generally go beyond Wittgenstein's own limits, copying his approach to what is unsayable (qua limit, value, or the subject). There may well be a good rationale for this where interpretative exactitude is concerned, but it nevertheless tends to close down discussion once doubts start to appear.

[25]
Wilhelm Vossenkuhl
Ludwig-Maximilians-University (Munich, Germany)
vossenkuhl(at)lmu.de

Open Meanings and Vagueness

While the *Tractatus* proposes a system of exact logical rules, the *Philosophical Investigations* seems to allow for there being vague rules (§100). Vague expressions like, for example, 'heap' or 'bald', have fuzzy boundaries, their extensional meanings being indefinite. Analogously, vague rules would have indefinite boundaries, but could not then be used as standards of correctness in language games. Wittgenstein maintains that the sense of a sentence presupposes a "perfect order" (§98). He therefore cannot allow for there being vague rules. On the other hand, the uses of rules in language games are creative. With every new application, the order pertaining to words in sentences is changed to allow for new uses: i.e. new meanings. Obviously, then, language games are subject to a certain tension – between the need for sentential orders on the one hand, and for there to be enough flexibility to allow for new meanings on the other. As will be argued here, cultures depend on this very tension for – amongst other things – their development and diversity.

[26]
Thomas Wallgren
University of Helsinki (Helsinki, Finland)
thomas.wallgren(at)helsinki.fi

Transforming Modern Enlightenment: On Wittgenstein's Epochal Significance, in the Light of G. H. von Wright's Work as His Editor

In the first section, I present, in outline, the idea that Wittgenstein is of epochal importance to philosophy, and to modern culture more generally, thanks to the neo-Socratic vision of emancipatory enlightenment that emerges out of his philosophical work after the mid-1930s. The key idea here is that through Wittgenstein's effort to solve the core problems in philosophy as defined by Frege and Russell, his understanding of the aims and method of philosophy are transformed. This transformation brings with it a transformation of the understanding we may have of what reason is, what liberating power it can have, and of how we can understand the idea of a culture committed to enlightenment. In the second section, I present what may be called the "availability problem" in the study of Wittgenstein: in the reception of his thought it has often been assumed that the many books published under his name can justifiably be seen as "works" by Wittgenstein, and that the remarks found in them can be interpreted as presenting Wittgenstein's views, ideas and arguments. Closer scrutiny shows that these presumptions do not help us to get access to Wittgenstein's work. Instead, they stand in the way of any understanding of what is of real importance there. In the third section, I turn to the history of the publication of books that carry Wittgenstein's name as the author. The key role played in this history by Wittgenstein's literary executors, Elisabeth Anscombe, Rush Rhees and Georg Henrik von Wright, is evident. In a discussion of Georg Henrik von Wright's role as the editor of *Vermischte Bemerkungen* and *Über Gewissheit,* I seek to explain my large claims in the first section and make them plausible, at least as hypotheses that merit further study.

[27]
Peter K. Westergaard
University of Copenhagen (Copenhagen, Denmark)
pkwest(at)hum.ku.dk

On the Ketner and Eigsti Edition of
Wittgenstein's *Remarks on Frazer's 'The Golden Bough'*
– Catalogue Signature / Box "WITTGENSTEIN 143", WWA, Helsinki

In recent years, Wittgenstein's *Bemerkungen über Frazers 'The Golden Bough'* has become the subject of increased scrutiny. Themes of debate include Rush Rhees' publication and editions of the text, the content of the remarks, their date, and how they relate to G. E. Moore's notes on Wittgenstein's Cambridge lectures from 1930–33. The discussions have touched upon questions concerning the internal relations between the two parts of *Bemerkungen*, and not least issues relating to the differences between Rhees' two editions of *Bemerkungen*, in *Synthese* and *The Human World* respectively. And finally, there is the question of whether Part II of *Bemerkungen*, which consists of thirteen "loose sheets of varying size" (MS 143), was ever intended as a single text or in fact consists of two shorter but separate disquisitions. The debate has given rise to the suggestion that a new and critical edition of the *Bemerkungen* is needed, despite a number of corrections to the text as it appears in the latest edition of *Philosophical Occasions*. This suggestion is, however, by no means new, as becomes clear when we inspect the content of the box with the catalogue signature "WITTGENSTEIN 143" at the von Wright and Wittgenstein Archives (WWA), Helsinki. This box contains twelve letters, all relating to what one could call the Ketner and Eigsti edition of Wittgenstein's *Bemerkungen über Frazers 'The Golden Bough'*, the text of which is also contained in box "WITTGENSTEIN 143", both in the original German and in English translation. This edition is evidently familiar to some. In his 1990 book *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality*, Stanley J. Tambiah writes by way of introduction: "I am very much in debt to Kenneth Laine Ketner for permitting me to make lavish use of the translation prepared by him and James Eigsti entitled Ludwig Wittgenstein, Remarks on Frazer's Philosophical Anthropology". Later, in a note, Tambiah writes: "I have been fortunate in

having access to the fuller translation made from the relevant portions of Cornell vols. 12, 88b and 89b by Kenneth Laine Ketner and James Lerio Eigsti, and entitled Ludwig Wittgenstein, Remarks on Frazer's Philosophical Anthropology. All my quotations are taken from this translation, which is not yet published. Ketner and Eigsti have also translated from Cornell vol. 68 certain further notes on The Golden Bough written by Wittgenstein."

In my paper I shall outline why the Ketner and Eigsti edition of *Bemerkungen über Frazers 'The Golden Bough'* is not more widely known, drawing attention in passing to some of its characteristics. This outline presentation takes as its point of departure the material contained in the box "WITTGENSTEIN 143" at the von Wright and Wittgenstein Archives (WWA), in particular the above-mentioned correspondence, consisting of twelve letters that passed between Ketner and Eigsti, Anscombe, Rhees, and von Wright. The presentation will also indirectly throw light on a number of issues concerning the editorial principles applied in publishing Wittgenstein's remarks.

[28]
Ireneusz Ziemiński
Szczecin University (Szczecin, Poland)
zieminre(at)univ.szczecin.pl

Wittgenstein on Eternal Life

Eternal life can be understood in at least two ways – either as infinite existence after death, or as experiencing eternal earthly life. Wittgenstein believed that the first model of eternity (afterlife) is a troublesome idea, because we are unable to understand what the concepts of "bodily resurrection" or "immortal soul" could actually mean. However, we are able to attach positive meaning to the idea of eternity on Earth: it is the experience of people who have discovered the meaning of life, free from fear of the future. Their life can be compared to a timeless existence in the present, which is a form of eternity.