

# Objects of comparison

A JUXTAPOSITION OF COMMENTARIES ON WITTMENSTEIN'S METHOD.

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## Abbreviations

BB	The Blue and Brown Books by L. Wittgenstein
CV	Culture and Value by L. Wittgenstein
PI	Philosophical Investigations by L. Wittgenstein
PR	Philosophical Remarks by L. Wittgenstein
TLP	Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus by L. Wittgenstein
SAD	The Struggle Against Dogmatism by O. Kuusela
WM	Wittgenstein's Method: Neglected Aspects by G.P. Baker
WUM	Wittgenstein: Understanding and Meaning (Part I: Essays) by P.M.S. Hacker

## Introduction

Analogical descriptions of grammar stand *on the same level* as the unexamined analogies which they are intended to displace in dissolving particular philosophical problems. [...] Conscious analogies and comparisons are useful tools for curing diseases of the intellect, whereas unconscious ones generate insoluble problems by exercising an imperceptible tyranny over our thinking.<sup>1</sup> – G.P. Baker, *Philosophical Investigations §122: Neglected Aspects* (1991) [2]

When one notices an aspect, one sees things different, and yet, all has remained the same. Around 1991 G.P. Baker departed from the reading of the *Philosophical Investigations* (PI) [14], which he and P.M.S. Hacker (B&H)<sup>2</sup> had developed over the previous decade. With his renowned article, *Philosophical Investigations §122: Neglected Aspects*, Baker sets out to make clear what he believes to be Wittgenstein’s method for dissolving philosophical problems and how this method diverges radically from what he now believed to be a misconceived interpretation, which Hacker continued to defend.<sup>3</sup> Where Hacker asserts that a positive aim of Wittgenstein’s philosophy is to articulate *the* grammatical rules for the correct use of expressions<sup>4</sup> – so that we have the capacity to demarcate sense from nonsense in accordance with these rules –, the later Baker holds that Wittgenstein does not have such an enterprise for philosophy in mind. Concentrating on what Wittgenstein meant by a *perspicuous representation* [übersichtlichen Darstellung] (PI §122), Baker concludes that this fundamentally significant concept should not be regarded, as Hacker assumes, as a *surveyable* arrangement of grammatical rules extracted via conceptual analysis, but that it should be seen as an *object of comparison* [Vergleichsobjekt] (PI §131), through which the workings of our language (PI §109) – via juxtaposition – become perspicuous. Unconscious analogies invalidly enthrall our forms of representation, causing conceptual cramps in our understanding. They need to be made explicit by placing them side by side with other, equally justified, analogies, in an attempt to break the spell the misleading analogy has put on our forms of representation.<sup>5</sup> This crucial change in aspect has led to a fundamental transformation of the interpretation of the PI and Wittgenstein’s philosophy in general. It has motivated many commentators to reinterpret the PI in the spirit of the ‘later Baker’. Moreover, it has provided us with a whole new way of looking at Wittgenstein’s other works and considerations; his thoughts on epistemology, mathematics and psychology, his thoughts on ethics and religion.

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<sup>1</sup>The *italics* in this and following quotations are all present in the original text. When I wish to emphasize, I will use a **bold** font (with restraint). When I wish to rephrase/remove certain parts of a quotation, I will insert [text/...] between straight brackets.

<sup>2</sup>‘B&H’ stands for ‘Baker and Hacker’

<sup>3</sup>Hacker writes in the Introduction of *Wittgenstein: Understanding and Meaning, Part 1: Essays* (WUM) [1]: “The rewritings and new writings that I present here reflect my understanding of Wittgenstein’s philosophy and my interpretations of his text. In view of the deep differences that had emerged between us in our interpretations of Wittgenstein’s philosophy, I must emphasize that Gordon Baker bears no responsibility for the many changes that I have made.” (WUM p.xiv)

<sup>4</sup>Hacker contends that, next to a *negative* role, Wittgenstein avows for a *positive* role for philosophy: “Wittgenstein characterizes the aims of philosophy both positively and negatively. The positive aims are subservient to the negative ones. Positively, philosophy aims to attain an overview of a conceptual field, to **arrange grammatical data** so that the manifold relationships become perspicuous.” (WUM p.284) [1]

<sup>5</sup>This reading will be discussed more extensively in **1.1.2 Object of comparison**.

In this thesis I shall concentrate on the concept of a *perspicuous representation* and discuss the interpretation of the PI put forward by Baker in *Wittgenstein's Method; Neglected Aspects* (WM) [2] and continued with great proficiency by O. Kuusela in *The Struggle Against Dogmatism* (SAD) [8]. In doing so, I will defend their reading of this significant concept and the PI against the fundamentally erroneous commentary provided by P.M.S. Hacker. The aim and, consequently, the method of Wittgenstein's philosophy is at stake here. I wish to provide answers to the following questions: 'What is, according to Wittgenstein, (not) the final end of philosophy?', 'How do we reach that end?', and 'Does philosophy have a positive role to play?'

My strategy is to discuss the interpretations given by Baker, Hacker, and Kuusela in chronological order. In Chapter 1 I shall start with an elucidation of Baker's departure from the commentary of B&H by placing side by side the two distinct readings of a perspicuous representation and provide a further exposition of Baker's last thoughts on Wittgenstein's philosophy and method, which have served as a further justification for the reading of a perspicuous representation as an object of comparison, rather than a surveyable arrangement of grammatical rules. Next, in Chapter 2, I shall discuss Hacker's response to the reading of the 'later Baker' and his reasons for interpreting a perspicuous representation as a *surveyable* arrangement of grammatical rules. In doing so, I will present Hacker's reading of Wittgenstein's philosophical method. In Chapter 3, I will introduce Kuusela's reading of the PI, which is based on Wittgenstein's non-dogmatic notion of philosophy, *i.e.* that philosophy should be devoid of theses. According to Kuusela, Wittgenstein abandons the systematic approach of the TLP for a new method in the PI; allowing for an increase in the flexibility of philosophical thought without the loss of rigor. This interpretation builds heavily on Baker's commentary and gives us all the more reason to place large doubt on the validity of Hacker's interpretation, since Hacker's notion of a perspicuous representation, as an overview of *grammatical facts*, ultimately leads him into a dogmatic trap.

# 1 Baker's late interpretation of Wittgenstein's method

In the following I will begin with an explanation of the two distinct readings of the concept of a *perspicuous representation*, as a surveyable arrangement of grammatical rules or as an object of comparison, and demonstrate briefly their differences and implications for interpreting Wittgenstein's philosophical method. I will end this chapter with a discussion of Baker's interpretation and his reasons for advocating the reading of a perspicuous representation as an object of comparison.

## 1.1 A perspicuous representation

Baker's departure from the commentary of B&H has its roots<sup>6</sup> in his exegesis of §122 of the *PI*, wherein Wittgenstein formulates his method for dissolving philosophical problems, which have arisen due to a lack of perspicuity in our grammar:

Es ist eine Hauptquelle unseres Unverständnisses, daß wir den Gebrauch unserer Wörter nicht *übersehen*. –Unserer Grammatik fehlt es an Übersichtlichkeit. –Die ***übersichtliche Darstellung*** vermittelt das Verständnis, welches eben darin besteht, daß wir die 'Zusammenhänge sehen'. Daher die Wichtigkeit des Findens und Erfindens von *Zwischengliedern*.

Der Begriff der übersichtlichen Darstellung ist für uns von grundlegender Bedeutung. Er bezeichnet unsere Darstellungsform, die Art, wie wir die Dinge sehen. (Ist dies eine 'Weltanschauung'?) (*PI* §122)

Emphasis is put on the importance of the concept of a *perspicuous representation* [*übersichtlichen Darstellung*]. One might even argue that Wittgenstein's entire method, for destroying metaphysical houses of cards and clearing up the ground of language on which they stood (*PI* §118), revolves around it. Be that as it may, the sense of the concept of a *perspicuous representation* is hard to resolve from the context of §122 alone – surrounding it with a haze which renders it, ironically, rather unclear. In order to arrive at a non-ambiguous conception of what Wittgenstein meant by a perspicuous representation, Baker sets out to disperse the fog by examining the following two vitally dissimilar interpretations: the first being the (i) Bird's-eye View Model and the second being the notion of a perspicuous representation as (ii) an object of comparison.

### 1.1.1 Surveyable arrangement of grammatical rules

First there is the common interpretation, held by Hacker, denoted by the Bird's-eye View Model, which entails that a perspicuous representation should be seen as a *surveyable arrangement* [*übersehbare Zusammenstellung*] of grammatical rules, which in turn constitute complete explanations of *the* correct uses of our words. Where 'surveyable' is held to mean 'capable of being taken in' or 'a synoptic overview'.

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<sup>6</sup>These roots are grounded in the interpretation that is known as the *New Wittgenstein*, of which S. Cavell was a notable contributor [3].

The workings of our language can be conceived of as the geography of an ancient city – consisting of old parts, new parts, muddled ruins, practical additions, meandering cobbled streets, and paved highways – in which we no longer know our way about the motley collection of grammatical rules:

Unsere Sprache kann man ansehen als eine alte Stadt: Ein Gewinkel von Gäßchen und Plätzen, alten und neuen Häusern, und Häusern mit Zubauten aus verschiedenen Zeiten; und dies umgeben von einer Menge neuer Vororte mit geraden und regelmäßigen Straßen und mit einförmigen Häusern. (*PI §18*)

“Ein philosophisches Problem hat die Form: “Ich kenne mich nicht aus.” (*PI §123*)

Philosophical problems arise from an inability to recognize the complexity of grammatical rules underlying our concepts. The rules that govern the uses of words are obscured by the superficial similarities and dissimilarities of the grammatical forms of our language. Expressions like ‘Having a key’ and ‘having a mind’ confuse us into thinking that a mind is an object, that is owned by someone. But when he loses his mind, he cannot go looking for it – which he can, however, when he loses his key. We are in a muddle (*PI §153*). Therefore, philosophical problems result from conceptual confusions. They originate due to the fact that the diverse sets of intricate rules that govern our grammar are lacking in perspicuity and we fail to *command a clear view* of them (*PI §122*). Hence, these sets of grammatical rules – retrieved via conceptual analysis – need to be made explicit by presenting them in a comprehensible manner. A notable example is the colour-octahedron (*PR §221*), which, according to this reading, should be regarded as a surveyable presentation of grammatical rules, such as ‘Reddish-green is nonsense’ and ‘A shade of yellow may be more or less red’. The diagram introduces an *overview* into these grammatical rules and presents them accordingly, so that they can be taken in at a glance and be reproduced with a minimum amount of error. Conceiving the grammar of our language as the geography of an ancient city, a perspicuous representation simply fulfills the role of a comprehensible *map*; guiding us through the convoluted network of grammatical streets and pathways and informing us where we went wrong and how we ought to proceed in the future, as not to get lost.

According to this reading it is important to note that these representations are always of our grammar; just like fire is always burning. It therefore constitutes a pleonasm to follow ‘a perspicuous representation’ with ‘of our grammar’.<sup>7</sup> Also, in this sense, ‘perspicuous’ is seen as an attributive adjective, which is ascribed only to those arrangements of grammatical rules that can be taken in as a whole. Moreover, a union of two or more perspicuous representations can lead to a more extensive perspicuous representation, provided that the comprehensibility of the resulting representation is warranted under addition. Furthermore, according to this conception, the criterion for correctness of a perspicuous representation is twofold. First, in whether the grammatical rules describe the use of our words correctly and, second, in whether the presentation of our grammar deserves the ascription ‘perspicuous’, *i.e.* whether it helps us know our way

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<sup>7</sup>Note that a picture can also function as a perspicuous representation of grammar, under the condition that *the* correct grammatical rules and their connexions are presented such, that they can be *read of* the picture easily and exactly.

about the rules that govern our grammar. Also, different representations of certain arrangements of the correct descriptions of grammatical rules differ only in a degree of perspicuity, since they all represent the same objects, namely the correct rules of our grammar. And finally, according to this reading, it should be possible for anyone, by means of thorough conceptual analysis, to construct a *complete* map of the correct descriptions of the use of our words regarding a particular area of our language (*e.g.* psychological concepts), which can be employed against conceptual missteps in the future.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.1.2 *Object of comparison*

The second reading, held by Baker, views a perspicuous representation as an *object of comparison* [*Vergleichsobjekt*], which makes perspicuous the workings of our language via juxtaposition. According to this view, philosophical problems arise, not due to a lack of overview of the salient grammatical rules that direct our language, but rather due to an unconscious and misleading *picture* or *simile*, embedded in the forms of our language:

Ein Gleichnis, das in die Formen unserer Sprache aufgenommen ist, bewirkt einen falschen Schein; der beunruhigt uns: “Es ist doch nicht *so!*” – sagen wir. “Aber es muß doch *so sein!*” (*PI* §112)

An analogy – deeply rooted in the *forms of our language* [*Formen unserer Sprache*] – has adopted an ostensibly necessary and false appearance, which holds us in a headlock. We are held captive by a disquieting *aspect* and feel that we cannot turn to our grammar for help, for it is the very source of our troubles (*PI* §115). An example of such a difficulty is given by the use of the word ‘is’ in the following sentence: ‘The rose *is* red and yet it *is* not red, since only red *is* red.’ (*PI* §558) We rack our brains over such apparent paradoxes, trying feverishly to find the *real* meaning of the word ‘is’ (*PI* §105). The form of representation<sup>9</sup> of the word ‘is’ has taken on a disquieting aspect that seems necessary and is therefore unshakable (*PI* §103).

Augustines conception of language in the opening passages of the *PI* is problematic for a similar reason. The root of the idea that ‘Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands.’ is located in a particular *picture* [*Bild*] of the essence of human language (*PI* §1). The problem here is that this picture, which is claimed to describe the entirety of language, can only be held to appropriately describe certain narrowly circumscribed regions of our language. The picture is said to be *misleading*, because its descriptive qualities, which it indeed has for a limited system of communication, have imprudently – and most likely unconsciously – been taken too far in describing the whole of what we call our language (*PI* §3).<sup>10</sup> In this case, the form of representation of the meaning of a word has,

<sup>8</sup>This is assuming that the relevant uses of our words remain the same. If the conceptual terrain changes, however, the map needs to be adjusted accordingly. Nevertheless, if the conceptual terrain does not change, one is able to describe the correct grammatical rules and their connexions *completely*.

<sup>9</sup>A form, mode, or means of representation is to be regarded as ‘a way of looking at things’ (*PI* §50/§104/§122): one represents the phenomena in a certain manner. A ruler, for example, can represent the length of an object in meters, yards, centimeters, inches, *et cetera* (all constitute distinct forms of representation).

<sup>10</sup>It is important to notice that Wittgenstein does not claim that the Augustinian picture of language is wrong; almost the opposite is the case. The language-game of §2 is made to show



as in the previous example, taken on a disquieting aspect – namely *this* Augustinian picture of language and this picture alone. It surrounds the workings of our language with a haze which makes clear vision impossible (*PI* §5).

Our grammar is said to be lacking in perspicuity due to these particular kind of quandaries concerning analogies embedded in the forms of representation. However, instead of challenging the aspect our form of representation has assumed, we construct elaborate philosophical theories and metaphysical doctrines on the bases of this misleading picture. We are overwhelmed by its comparative strength and think that we are perceiving a state of affairs of the highest generality (*PI* §104). The TLP is a noteworthy example of a sophisticated theory based on a disquieting aspect. The ‘author of the TLP’ was held captive by the notion that ‘the general form of propositions’ was given by ‘this is how things are’. He believed to have found the *essence* of the proposition, when however, he was merely describing the aspect the form of representation had adopted, *i.e.* tracing round the frame through which he was looking (*PI* §114).

As to rid ourselves of disquieting aspects, rather than fabricating theoretical edifices in an attempt to *penetrate* the phenomena, we need to turn our whole examination around and direct our attention at the *possibilities* [*Möglichkeiten*] of the phenomena, *i.e.* the different ways by which we can represent our phenomena (*PI* §90/§108). We need to bring our forms of representation out into the open and show them for what they are, namely *objects of comparison* [*Vergleichsobjekte*] that have gone astray and not *preconceived ideas* [*Vorurteile*] to which reality *must* correspond. For only then can we free ourselves from the bondage of a misleading picture and avoid injustice<sup>11</sup> [Ungerechtigkeit] or emptiness [Leere] in our assertions (*PI* §131).

Wittgenstein proposes that the threat of injustice and emptiness can be neutralized via a change of *aspect* brought about by juxtaposing the misleading form of representation with another, equally applicable, form of representation.<sup>12</sup> This procedure can bring about a change in aspect, by showing other possible forms of representation, rendering – if successful – the deceptive aspect harmless. The problem concerning the form of representation of the word ‘is’, for example, can be dissolved by reminding ourselves that in some contexts the word ‘is’ is used as an equality sign [=] and in other contexts is used as a copula [∈], denoting set-membership. The adjustment in notation illustrates the two distinct uses of the word ‘is’ in their respective contexts. Our problem is dissolved, not by an in-depth research into what the *real* meaning of the word ‘is’

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that this picture is indeed valuable – that it has descriptive qualities. The problem is that the picture has been taken to describe the entirety of language: The form of representation of the the meaning of a word has taken on a misleading aspect, namely an aspect which is too narrow for the purpose of describing everything we would like to call language. The remark: “Conceive this [the Builder’s language] as a complete primitive language.” (*PI* §2) is meant to provoke conflicting reactions and, thereby, demonstrate the limits of the Augustinian picture of language. [3][5]

<sup>11</sup>G.E.M. Anscombe translates ‘Ungerechtigkeit’ with ‘ineptness’. I believe that ‘injustice’ is a better translation, since our assertions, to which Wittgenstein refers in §131, are not merely nonsensical, but also constitute improper grammatical conduct.

<sup>12</sup>Baker uses the following source, wherein Wittgenstein explains how a change of aspect can be brought about: “Wir ändern nun den Aspekt, indem wir **einem** System des Ausdrucks andere an die Seite stellen. – So kann der Bann, in dem uns eine Analogie hält, gebrochen werden, wenn man ihr eine andere an die Seite stellt, die wir als gleichberechtigt anerkennen.” (*Nachlass*: TS 220, §99) [2] p.30

must consist in – whatever that may be –, but by showing us a different possible way of looking at the word ‘is’, *i.e.* by introducing a new, equally applicable, aspect into our form of representation.

Augustine’s view of language is treated in a similar fashion. Wittgenstein begins to portray the appropriateness and descriptive merit of the Augustinian picture of language by means of the invented language-game of §2 – illustrating its attractive force. Subsequently, using other language-games (*e.g.* §8), he goes on to demonstrate the danger of advocating the – initially appealing – Augustinian picture of language as a basis for a general theory of the meaning, due to the lack of descriptive quality the picture affords in other cases. Wittgenstein then illustrates that philosophical problems can, first, be averted by acknowledging that one is dealing with a matter of depiction, rather than a matter of argument [5]: that, when one contends that ‘Every word in language signifies something’, one has so far said nothing whatever, since one has merely adopted a certain form of representation on which language can be projected (*PI* §13). And secondly, he directs our attention, from the misleading picture, towards other, equally applicable, forms of representation, *e.g.* ‘For a large class of cases – though not for all – the meaning of a word can be explained by its use in language’ (*PI* §43), by again making use of simple analogies and language-games.<sup>13</sup>

The conception of a perspicuous representation as (i) a surveyable arrangement of grammatical rules differs radically from the notion that a perspicuous representation should be regarded as (ii) an object of comparison.<sup>14</sup> First, according to the latter reading (ii), a perspicuous representation need not necessarily be *of* our grammar. As long as it has comparative strength, it can very well be a picture, a (true or false) proposition, a fictional story (*e.g.* a language-game), a different notation, a center of variation, *et cetera*<sup>15</sup>; as long as it brings about that kind of understanding which consists in *seeing connexions* [*Zusammenhänge sehen*] (*PI* §122). Secondly, the adjective ‘perspicuous’ does not denote an intrinsic property of the representation and is therefore not meant attributively. Rather, a representation is characterized to be ‘perspicuous’ because of its function in making our grammar perspicuous: “It is a representation which *makes perspicuous* what is represented.” (*WM* p.42) Thirdly, since the accumulation of two or more analogies does not in general result in a more useful analogy, adding two or more perspicuous representations does not necessarily result in a more extensive perspicuous representation. Also, the criterion of success depends on whether the perspicuous representation gets one to *recognize* [*erkennen*] the misleading picture the form of representation has assumed, in spite of having an urge to misunderstand it (*PI* §109). Consequently, the

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<sup>13</sup>Note that the remark ‘Every word in language signifies something’, *stands on the same level* as the remark ‘For a large class of cases - thought not for all - the meaning of a word can be explained by its use in language’, in the sense that both are merely methods of representation [*Darstellungsweise*][*n*] (*PI* §50/§104)] onto which the object of investigation, *i.e.* in this case ‘the meaning of a word’, can be projected. In light of this, it would be a mistake to contend that Wittgenstein advocates an alternative theory of meaning based on the key slogan ‘Meaning is use’.

<sup>14</sup>For a more extensive list of the differences between the two readings of a perspicuous representation I refer to *WM: Neglected Aspects* by G. Baker (p.28 and p.42).

<sup>15</sup>Even a synoptic arrangement of grammatical rules, retrieved via conceptual analysis, could function as an object of comparison as long as it brings about the desired effect of acknowledgment of the misleading form of representation, thus rendering it harmless.

burden of proof of describing *the* correct grammatical rules for the use of our words has been removed. *Intermediate cases* [*Zwischengliedern*] (*PI* §122), be it fact or fiction, pictorial or grammatical, can all serve to be successful in uprooting a disquieting aspect and hence in throwing light on the workings of our language by way of, not *only* similarities, but also dissimilarities (*PI* §130). Success of a perspicuous representation lies in breaking the spell of deceptive analogies and no longer being troubled by tormenting questions caused by disquieting aspects. Bringing philosophy in a state of peace is the sole merit of an effective perspicuous representation (*PI* §133). Lastly, one *creatively* finds and invents intermediate cases, not systematically: due to fact that the nature of the illness – a certain misleading picture – determines the cure – an analogy designed specifically to uproot that certain misleading picture –, there is no way to systematically prevent us from misunderstanding the forms of our language, since there is no way to find out in advance which misleading aspects the forms of our language might adopt. Every instance of grammatical confusion could in principle require a different remedy. This is the main reason why constructing a map of, presumably, *the* correct grammatical rules of a certain linguistic domain is a futile attempt to guard against future missteps.

## 1.2 The therapeutic approach

Baker finds justification for the reading of a perspicuous representation as an object of comparison in Wittgenstein’s conception of philosophy as a discipline solely concerned with dissolving philosophical problems – for the clarity we are aiming at, simply means that philosophical problems should *completely* disappear (*PI* §133) – and the fact that Wittgenstein compares his method for dissolving these philosophical problems – by turning latent nonsense into patent nonsense (*PI* §119/§464/§524) – to the psychoanalytic method of unearthing repressed emotions and encouraging new ways of looking at things (*PI* §144). Moreover, Baker argues that the Bird’s-eye View of a perspicuous representation does not fit Wittgenstein’s method and that it constitutes a grave misunderstanding of Wittgenstein’s philosophy if one would affirm it as the correct interpretation. In the following I wish to defend Baker’s reading of the concept of a perspicuous representation as an object of comparison in light of Wittgenstein’s therapeutic method.

### 1.2.1 *Nothing but problems*

To what end does one philosophize? Wittgenstein contends that in his conception of philosophy the real discovery is the one that gives philosophy *peace* [*Ruhe*]<sup>16</sup>, *i.e.* the insight that brings an end to the need for further philosophical thought. To say that the final end of our philosophical investigations is that we arrive at a state of philosophical tranquility, is to say that philosophy is an affair concerned with the elimination of philosophical unrest. This restlessness takes the form of tormenting quandaries: questions which bring itself into question (*PI* §133).

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<sup>16</sup>Note that a state of peace is quite different from a state of illumination (*e.g.* as can be seen in Plato’s work). This shows that Wittgenstein is not concerned with the accumulation of knowledge, but with the disentanglement of knots we have tied in our understanding. Explanations come to an end (*PI* §1) and the series of examples can be broken off (*PI* 133), when the knots in our thinking have been untied.

We continuously pester ourselves with questions like ‘What is the meaning of a word?’, ‘What is a question?’, ‘What is time?’, ‘What is language?’, ‘What is a proposition?’, (*PI* §1/§24/§89/§92), without ever finding satisfaction in our answers. Nevertheless, we are tempted to ask such questions, because we believe that they will bring us closer to the *essence* of the phenomena we intend to disclose. *The essence is hidden from us* [*Das Wesen ist uns verborgen*] and we are convinced that it can only be made intelligible by a detailed analysis into the nature of the phenomena. The form of our problems – our philosophical unrest – is instigated by our urge to uncover the essence of things (*PI* §92):

“Es ist doch *so* —” sage ich wieder und wieder vor mich hin. Es ist mir, als müßte ich das Wesen der Sache erfassen, wenn ich meinen Blick nur *ganz scharf* auf dies Faktum einstellen, es in den Brennpunkt rücken könnte.  
(*PI* §113)

The level of torment associated with our problems is sustained by our *craving for generality* (BB, p.17 [15]). Yet, instead of being able to directly answer these seemingly fundamental questions, the phenomena take on otherworldly *queer* [*merkwürdiges/seltsame*] appearances, that send us in pursuit of chimeras (*PI* §94). We feel that the now unattainable constitution of the phenomena demands an equally abstract explanation, *i.e.* a metaphysical rendition. This is where it all goes horribly wrong: the metaphysical wheels have been set in motion and, in a sense, the damage has already been done.<sup>17</sup>

Whenever we are tempted – especially in doing philosophy (*PI* §11) – to protest that the, previously regarded mundane, object of investigation seems to be a very peculiar thing indeed, we are likely to have stumbled upon a misunderstanding that will cause philosophical unrest (*PI* §93). At this point Wittgenstein argues that the confusions that arise in these cases are of a grammatical kind and occur when language *goes on a holiday* [*feiert*] (*PI* §38).

Die Verwirrungen, die uns beschäftigen, entstehen gleichsam, wenn die Sprache leertläuft, nicht wenn sie arbeitet. (*PI* §132)

We can convey what was meant by our utterances, ask questions, measure time with a clock, talk about different kinds of language, and verify or refute propositions. However, when we isolate these common phenomena in the form ‘What is the essence of ...?’, they become utterly elusive, since they have been removed from their original place in language and, as it were, no longer do any work. Subsequently, Wittgenstein sees it as the sole task of philosophy to battle these bewitching misunderstandings by means of language, *i.e.* by bringing the words – denoting the phenomena – *back* from their metaphysical to their everyday use (*PI* §109/§116). Therefore, the proposed method to clear away these misunderstandings is not only a grammatical one (*PI* §90), but also a negative one in

<sup>17</sup>Note that the problem occurs in a pre-theoretical phase. Philosophical problems occur *before* one starts to theorize: “‘Philosophie’ könnte man auch das nennen, was *vor* allen neuen Entdeckungen und Erfindungen möglich ist.” (*PI* §126) Wittgenstein does not attack theories, but warns for the dangers one might get into, were one to start theorizing. Wittgenstein’s investigations target the pre-theoretical phase, and questions our motives before we are inclined to provide a general account of a certain phenomena. What does it mean to have a general account of something? ([5], p.266)). The damage is done in an innocent seeming stage: “Der entscheidende Schritt im Taschenspielerkunststück ist getan, und gerade er schien uns unschuldig. (*PI* §308)

the sense that it leaves everything as it is (*PI* §124) and comes into prominence only when philosophical problems arise.

Philosophy then, as seen by Wittgenstein, gets its *purpose* [*Zweck*] exclusively from philosophical problems and solves them by looking into the workings of our language in such a way as to make us recognize those workings; again in spite of an *urge* to misunderstand them. Hence, philosophy, contrary to the traditional view of a discipline which produces foundational systems of knowledge, is regarded as an activity primarily characterized by having an eliminative role: “Philosophy is not anything over and above the problems and their removal.” ([7] p.9) It would, therefore, be informative to investigate from up close what Wittgenstein thought to be the main *cause* of philosophical problems.

What leads us into temptation? Why do we have the urge to misunderstand the workings of our language? Is it just that we are fooled by the uniform appearance of words (*PI* §11)? Or, should we look even closer at a *deeper* cause for our grammatical misunderstandings (*PI* §111)? Near the end of Part I of the *PI*, Wittgenstein states the following:

Eine Hauptursache philosophischer Krankheiten – einseitige Diät: man nährt sein Denken mit nur einer Art von Beispielen. (*PI* §593)

The misunderstandings we are discussing are primarily caused by the fact that we nourish our thinking with only one kind of picture. Note that it is not an incorrect aspect, which causes our philosophical unrest, but that we invoke *only one* aspect<sup>18</sup> – out of presumably many other possible aspects. Impressed by the aspect’s initial descriptive qualities we believe to have found an essential property of the phenomena of investigation. Our craving for generality is motivated by the comparative strength our form of representation exhibits and we are tempted to predicate of the thing what lies in the *method of representing* [*Darstellungsweise*] it (*PI* §104). Unable to examine the object of investigation *outside* of the disquieting aspect (*PI* §103), we are prone to postulate general properties of our mode of representation onto our object of investigation, which leads us on an apocryphal quest for essences. Our fault becomes apparent – the explicit *form* it adopts – as soon as our formerly regarded mundane object of investigation takes on a rather queer appearance, and as a result we are disposed to plague ourselves with tormenting questions. That we ‘don’t know our way about’ constitutes the *form* of our philosophical problem, not its cause. Philosophical problems are not *caused* by conceptual confusions, but are instances thereof, for philosophical problems have their roots in malignant aspects, *i.e.* initially effective analogies that imprudently and unconsciously have been taken too far.

It is the single purpose of philosophy to make the philosophical problems disappear *completely* (*PI* §133). This suggests that they need to be taken out by their roots. Therefore, one must not limit oneself to deal only with the symptoms of a philosophical problem, *i.e.* conceptual confusions and spurious metaphysical theories. Our problems stem from a deeper, *i.e.* pre-theoretical, level – where our inclinations, prejudices and forms of representation reside:

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<sup>18</sup>Augustine’s picture of language is not wrong, but wronging. Logic seen as an ideal language is not wrong, but wronging. We take our forms of representation too far, because we believe to be perceiving a state of the highest generality; when in fact we are tracing around the frame through which we are looking.

Die Probleme, die durch ein Mißdeuten unserer Sprachformen entstehen, haben den Charakter der *Tiefe*. Es sind tiefe Beunruhigungen; sie wurzeln so tief in uns, wie die **Formen unserer Sprache**, und ihre Bedeutung ist so groß, wie die Wichtigkeit unserer Sprache.—Fragen wir uns: Warum empfinden wir einen grammatischen Witz als *tief*? (Und das ist ja **die philosophische Tiefe**.) (*PI §111*)

If philosophy is nothing but the removal of philosophical problems, then philosophy must, in the end, deal with our one sided diät – a disquieting aspect in our form of representation: “Der *tiefe* Aspekt entschlüpft leicht.” (*PI §387*) –, for this is the *depth* of philosophy. By providing a clear alternative for our one sided diät, an object of comparison operates on the same level of depth as our crude inclinations and prejudices. Furthermore, it shows that our troubles are merely based on *a* method of representing the phenomena and, therefore, succeeds in portraying the insignificance of the problem.

Und auf diese Täuschungen, auf die Problem, fällt nun das Pathos zurück.  
(*PI §110*)

A perspicuous representation, seen as an object of comparison, has the ability to *replace* a misleading form of representation entirely. Accordingly, it can restore perspicuity in our grammar and solve the philosophical problem that beset us completely.

### 1.2.2 *Methods like therapies*

It is undisputed that Wittgenstein deliberately compared his method for dissolving philosophical problems to the practice of psychoanalysis. Moreover, it can hardly go unnoticed that the considerations put forward in the PI are rife with therapeutic lingo. Tormenting philosophical questions, perceived as illnesses, require philosophical *treatment* rather than refined philosophical answers (*PI §255*). This particular philosophical treatment then comes in the form of different methods – by examples, *i.e.* analogies – much akin to different kinds of *therapies* (*PI §133*). Of course, one must note that Wittgenstein uses the practice of psychoanalysis as an illustrative analogy, not as a carbon copy, in clarifying his method and philosophy. Nonetheless, it would be instructive to investigate the scope of this comparison in order to delineate which kind of similarities Wittgenstein has in mind in drawing the comparison.

A psychoanalyst’s objective is to cure his patient by determining the source of the psychological trauma via a dialectical method and getting the patient to acknowledge his malignant mental cramps, as to render them harmless. Wittgenstein proposes a similar technique for the philosopher. “First, the philosopher must converse with the sufferer<sup>19</sup> in order to pinpoint the exact cause for his philosophical unrest; the specific reason why, in this particular case, the sufferer burdens himself with tormenting questions and no longer knows his way about. Secondly, the philosopher needs to make *this* cause explicit to the sufferer, get him to *recognize* [*erkennen*] it, and subsequently demonstrate

<sup>19</sup>Or indeed with himself: “Nearly all my writings are private conversations with myself. Things that I say to myself tête-a-tête.” (*CV 77e*), “The progress between beginning and ending is, accordingly, what Wittgenstein means by grammatical investigations, which since we begin lost [‘I don’t know my way about (*PI §123*)’], may be thought of as a progress of finding ourselves.” ([3], p.287).

that his troubles were merely based on a grammatical illusion [grammatische Täuschung] (*not* on a mistake!) (*PI* §110).

Before one is able to apply the method, though, one must identify the problem to be of a philosophical kind. Symptoms of a philosophical problem were briefly mentioned in the previous section: the *need* to ask questions which bring itself into question, the sudden *queer* appearance of formerly regarded mundane phenomena, and the construction of elaborate metaphysical theories which seem to miss their mark. Once the problem is diagnosed to be of a philosophical kind (and the patient concurs to this assessment) – which constitutes an ability in its own sort –, the philosopher starts to track down its roots by engaging in a one-on-one talk with the patient.<sup>20</sup>

Locating the source of the philosophical problem is described as a quest for bits of plain nonsense the sufferer has acquired in his understanding by running up against the limits of language (*PI* §119). The philosopher needs to *uncover* a bit of *disguised* nonsense. One could contend that it is not the essence that is hidden from us (*PI* §92), but that it is a fragment of nonsense that is obscure. This is the reason why Wittgenstein argues against our inclination to try and *penetrate* the phenomena in a futile attempt to reveal their supposed essential properties. Instead, we must direct our search at bits of nonsense and find out how such latent pieces of nonsense came about. To be cured one must *acknowledge* that one is under the spell of nonsense and abandon the *urge* to find the essence of the phenomena:

“Troubles are like illnesses; you have to accept them: the worst thing you can do is rebel against them.” (*CV* 79e)

The nonsense we want to uncover, is due to an *entanglement* [*Verfangen*] in our preconceived procedure. In applying an aforethought technique, things did not go according to plan. We had foreseen and meant things rather differently and exclaim: “I didn’t mean it like that.” To get clear of this entanglement – how it came about –, is to understand the source of our nonsense (*PI* §125). The philosopher then will try to distill why things did not go according to plan, *i.e.* why our *preconceived ideas* (*PI* §107) or *prejudices* (*PI* §340) faulted, by considering examples of procedures where everything *does* go according to plan; so that we can command a clear view of the aim and functioning of our words (*PI* §5/§122). The illness and the cure are thus both found in our preconceived procedures, *i.e.* our investigations according to certain forms of representation.

Entanglements, and therefore, nonsense arise when we unconsciously confuse the role, the form of representation has in our investigations (*PI* §100). We must come to realize that our troubles are not based on matters of fact, but rather on matters of depiction. The cure is then simply found in directing our attention to other, more lucid, forms of representation, *i.e.* other transparent ways of depicting the phenomena (*PI* §90). Wittgenstein’s therapeutic considerations are thus meant to unearth misleading forms of representation and encourage

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<sup>20</sup>Wittgenstein emphasizes the significance of the dialectical aspect of his method by making use of an interlocutor and going through his philosophical investigations in a pressing rhetorical manner [3]. He batters the reader with controversial requests – “Conceive this as a complete primitive language.” (*PI* §2) –, frantic questions – “But what becomes of logic now? Its rigour seems to be giving way here.—But in that case doesn’t logic altogether disappear?—For how can it lose its rigour?” (*PI* §108)) –, and directly confronts us with the ramifications of our prejudices – “Are you still inclined to call these words “names of objects?”” (*PI* §27).

or persuade different ways of looking at things, rather than as arguments for a particular theoretical position:

Discussion is less a matter of constructing rigorous arguments from secure premises than of making propaganda for alternative points of view. (*WM* p.219)

Ich wollte dies Bild vor seine Augen stellen, und seine *Anerkennung* dieses Bildes besteht darin, daß er nun geneigt ist, einen gegebenen Fall anders zu betrachten: nämlich ihn mit *dieser* Bilderreihe zu vergleichen. Ich habe seine *Anschaungsweise* geändert. (*PI* §144)

By way of simple language-games and clear-cut analogies, he depicts various ways out of a *pre-theoretical* conception, which is shown to lead one nowhere. Once the sufferer acknowledges that his problems are merely based on the *kind of statement* [*Art der Aussagen*] he makes about phenomena (*PI* §90) and that therefore nothing is lost, since hitherto nothing has been said whatever (*PI* §13), he is all the more prone to adopt a transparent form of representation, which does not lead him to ask tormenting philosophical questions, instead.

The success of a philosophical session resides in its ability to clarify the relevant uses of words. When the patient has a clear view of the aim and functioning of his words, the treatment is at an end. A perspicuous representation is, therefore, deemed to be transparent if it introduces perspicuity into the grammar of the sufferer. Therefore, the criterion of *success* of a suggested object of comparison, lies in its ability to clarify the relevant uses of words, not in its being a correct report *of* the uses of words. Hence, a criterion of *correctness* does not apply to the proposed philosophical reflections. Wittgenstein's method only serves those who suffer from misleading aspects – healthy minds are excluded from treatment. Exclusively aimed at neutralizing malignant bits of nonsense that lead us into metaphysics and clearing up the forms of our of language, it does not commit itself to statements about alleged foundations of meaningful language use or propositions regarding *the* correct rules of our grammar.



## 2 A positive role for philosophy

Even though the bifurcation of the two commentaries is readily apparent, there are a few instances on which Baker and Hacker actually do agree. First, Hacker concurs to the fact that Wittgenstein indeed compared his method for dissolving philosophical problems to the practice of therapy. Nonetheless, since Wittgenstein only explicitly relates his philosophy to the method of psychoanalysis sporadically, Hacker is weary of taking the comparison too far. Even though it may be illuminating in some respects, it might also lead one to disregard important elements of Wittgenstein's philosophy that do not fit the psychotherapeutic straitjacket. Secondly, Hacker also agrees that Wittgenstein's philosophy is primarily characterized by having a negative role. According to both commentators, Wittgenstein's philosophy only comes into prominence where philosophical problems arise; only when language is idling, not when it is working (*PI* §123). The manner in which these problems are subsequently dissolved is, however, a subject of much animosity. Although, the primary role for philosophy is a negative one, Hacker contends that these philosophical problems are dissolved by providing an overview of the conceptual field, which constitutes a positive role for philosophy. Finally, both commentators acknowledge that Wittgenstein did not (intend to) advance a theory or postulate hypotheses. Wittgenstein's philosophical method simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything (*PI* §126). The interpretations, however, differ widely in how Wittgenstein's method is able to solve philosophical problems, without the need to provide any foundations of language. What it means for Wittgenstein to advance a thesis in philosophy (*PI* §128) is a subject of much debate.

In this chapter I shall discuss the arguments Hacker raises against the new conception of Baker, *i.e.* the therapeutic interpretation of the PI, and, with that, the reading of a perspicuous representation as an object of comparison. These arguments will subsequently be dealt with in section 3.2. Next to that, I will discuss the reading of a perspicuous representation, held by Hacker, as a surveyable overview of grammatical rules in more detail and demonstrate the implications it has for the interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophical method.

### 2.1 Hacker's response to Baker's late interpretation

Before Hacker starts with an attack on the therapeutic reading, he sets the stage by characterizing Baker's conception in what he believes to be its distinctive features. I will discuss these characteristics in the following section and provide Hacker's arguments against them. Note that we are regarding Hacker's interpretation of Baker's conception. Even though I believe that Hacker has not done justice in portraying Baker's therapeutic conception of Wittgenstein's philosophy accurately, I will – for the moment – take his interpretation of Baker for granted.<sup>21</sup>

First and foremost, Baker\* holds that Wittgenstein's philosophical method is not merely comparable to Freudian psychoanalysis, but that it is in fact *modeled* onto the practice of therapy. The practice of therapy thus determines the *form* of the philosophical method, rather than that it serves as an elucidatory analogy which helps to highlight only certain features of the philosophical

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<sup>21</sup>To avoid confusion, I have differentiated between Baker and the author 'Baker with asterisk' – Baker\*. The latter should be read as 'Baker as interpreted by Hacker'.

method. Hacker argues that, although it is apparent that Wittgenstein compares his philosophical method to the practice of therapy, the comparison is only made on remarkably few occasions and in limited respects (*PI* §133/*PI* §255). Throughout the 693 sections of the *PI*, ‘psychoanalysis’ is not even mentioned at all and ‘therapy’ is only mentioned once – to explicate that there is not *a* method, but different methods, like different therapies.<sup>22</sup> The practice of therapy should, therefore, not be taken as a basis for a radical reinterpretation, which only makes sense in light of a dictating therapeutic model. Hacker simply accuses Baker\* of taking the proposed therapeutic analogy too far. According to Hacker, however, Wittgenstein merely draws the comparison to make clear that philosophy is nothing but the resolution of philosophical problems and the dissolving of philosophical confusions.

Philosophy is then therapeutic in so far as it restores the bewildered to an optimal intellectual state of good sense – akin to good health (here lies the analogy with therapy). ([6], p.100)

Hacker goes on to argue that the misunderstandings of the *bewildered* have their roots in conceptual confusions. Our understanding has become entangled in the convoluted network of our grammatical rules (*PI* §125). To get clear of this entanglement we must assemble reminders, which help us recognize the use of our words (*PI* §127). These grammatical facts need to be tabulated in such a surveyable manner as to help us understand our conceptual confusions and prevent us from running our head up against the limits of language, *i.e.* the bounds of sense (*PI* §119). The philosopher sets out to describe the logical geography of the problematic conceptual field in a Rylean analytic fashion – this constitutes a *positive* achievement, and thus, a positive role for philosophy.

Secondly, Baker\* argues, since *individuals* are the sufferers of philosophical torment, the philosophical method is intrinsically person-relative. The subjects for philosophical treatment are persons, not schools of thought. The philosophical treatment has no business in disputing great philosophical traditions such as Platonism, idealism, Cartesian dualism, behaviorism, *et cetera*, but instead focusses on the psychological quarrels of a handful of patients, *e.g.* Augustine, Frege, Russell, and ‘the author of the TLP’. Hacker contends that the view that places individuals at the center of philosophical treatment, implies that Wittgenstein was only concerned with the intellectual well-being of a circle of close friends and acquaintances; which is, of course, an absurd notion to defend. Wittgenstein’s philosophical investigations have violently pulled the rug from under many philosophical traditions and schools of thought. His ambition was to destroy elaborate, yet nonsensical, metaphysical houses of cards *and* clear the ground of language on which they stood (*PI* §118). Reducing Wittgenstein’s influence to a couple of tormented minds, would disregard the destructive significance of his philosophical considerations for the great tradition of Western philosophy. It would deny for example the widespread philosophical confusion due to the archetypical erroneous Augustinian conception of language and Wittgenstein’s achievements regarding the whole of philosophy of mind; where the *private language argument* still goes on to echo indefinitely.

Thirdly, according to Baker\*, the responsibility for philosophical confusion is shifted to the patient. By way of a talk-cure, the philosopher’s aim is to un-

<sup>22</sup>Wittgenstein mentions psychoanalysis in The Big Typescript; but it does not occur in the final version of the *PI*.

cover the individuals urges, prejudices and cravings; for these lay at the heart of the patient-specific philosophical misunderstandings. From this it follows that, the criterion for correctness is wholly decided by the person who, to his own regard, is cured from philosophical confusion. When *he* has acknowledged that his problems were merely based on a misleading aspect his form of representation had assumed and no longer feels the need to ask tormenting questions, the philosophical treatment has succeeded and, with that, is at an end. If the sufferer deems himself to be ‘philosophically at peace’, there is no room left for philosophical argument, since the only goal of philosophy is the enhancement of the individuals freedom of thought. Hacker argues that, although Wittgenstein did state that the criterion for correctness lies in acknowledgement, he also contended against theories of Russell and Frege by way of standard argumentative techniques, which were based on criteria of correctness not bound to the judgement of a particular afflicted subject.

The resolutions of the problems purport to possess a rational validity which, unlike the resolution of a psychoanalytic illness, is not patient-dependent. (*WUM p.287*)

In general Wittgenstein did not make use of talk-cures and did not wait on the consent of his opponents. Next to that, Hacker argues that Wittgenstein locates the source of our misunderstandings in our language and not in our own prejudices and dogma’s. Our investigation is not a psychoanalytic one, but a grammatical one (*PI §90*). Since our problems are directed at words, we need to talk about words (*PI §120*); their usage determines the criteria for correctness:

Describing the use of words [...] is a matter of specifying or stating how words are used in the practice of speaking the language. Usage sets the standard of correct use [*i.e.* the criterium for correctness]; so the investigation is a *normative* one. We must remind ourselves how we use the problematic expressions – that is to say, what *counts* in the practice of speaking our language as a correct use. (*WUM p.291*)

Fourthly, Baker\* holds that philosophy is principally concerned with disarming malignant pictures. Therefore, philosophical debate is more a matter of propaganda, than a matter of rational argument. The philosopher sets out to *persuade* the afflicted by providing alternative forms of representation. Consequently, the philosopher does not advance a certain position and never asserts anything, which he subsequently defends against counter arguments. Only showing us different ways of looking at things, the philosopher never contends how things actually are. According to Baker\*, Wittgenstein never attempts to tabulate grammatical facts in a perspicuous overview. On the contrary even, in stating *the* grammatical facts Wittgenstein would be liable to dogmatism; something which he tried to avoid at all costs. Hacker maintains however, that Wittgenstein’s philosophical method *is* generally based on rational argument and that combating *false* pictures only plays a minor role. Surely, there are instances where Wittgenstein avowed for substituting incorrect pictures with correct pictures by placing them side-by-side, yet this technique is not canonical for the rest of Wittgenstein’s investigations. It is one method, out of many other possible methods (*PI §133*). Furthermore, the source of our philosophical problems need not always stem from disquieting aspects in our forms of representation. Hacker asserts that Wittgenstein puts forward various roots for philosophical

confusions, *e.g.* our tendency to tackle philosophical problems in a scientific manner – ask for explanations, where descriptions are needed –, our propensity to neglect the different uses of words and to be fooled by their uniform appearances. The surface grammar of sentences like ‘I meant what I said.’ for instance, leads us into thinking that properties of the activity denoted by the verb ‘to say’ are similar to those of the verb ‘to mean’. Categorically confused, we are inclined to believe that we can *mean* something quickly, quietly, aggressively, *et cetera*, as we can *say* something quickly, quietly, aggressively, *et cetera*. This is, of course, an absurd inclination when we carefully scrutinize the depth grammar of concept of meaning, in light of its actual place in language; how the concept indeed functions in everyday talk (*PI §664*). According to Hacker, when we apply a – in some respects appropriate – picture wrongly, the problem is not solved by providing a new picture, but by giving an explanation why the former picture was applied incorrectly, by reminding ourselves of the *kinds of statements* we make about the phenomena (*PI §90*), and by arguing how we actually operate with words (*PI §1*). Augustines *conception* of language – naming comprises the essence of language – is proper in certain narrowly circumscribed regions, yet overly *mistaken* for the whole of which it claims to describe (*PI §3*). This misapplied approach then is combated, not with an alternative picture of ‘the meaning of a word’, but with an explanation of the grammar of the concept of meaning – the explanation of the meaning of a word is given by its use in language (*PI §43*) –, from which the argued conclusion follows that it is simply *incorrect* to assert that ostensive definition is the essential link between language and reality, *i.e.* word and object. The mistaken conception is disputed by describing the grammatical facts: we remind ourselves what actually does and does not make sense to say in everyday discourse. Furthermore, since we are not advancing new knowledge retrieved via experience, but merely describing and arranging what we always have known (*PI §109*), the fear of dogmatism is deemed unwarranted:

There is no dogmatism or any risk of dogmatism in citing mundane grammatical facts that any user of the language will recognize. After all, the worst that can happen is that someone may reply that *he* uses the word differently. So be it – then Wittgenstein will hear his explanation of how *he* uses the word, and pick up the argument from there. ([6] p.105)

The object of philosophy then is to analyze the depth grammar of problematic concepts and thus unearth the conceptual data for *a particular purpose*, namely to rearrange the grammatical facts concerning correct uses of our words in such a way that makes them surveyable. Such a perspicuous representation of our grammar will allow us to get clear of the entanglements in our rules, *i.e.* explain our grammatical wrongdoings, and serve as a *normative* guide against future mistaken conceptions and philosophical confusions.

## 2.2 Conceptual geography

As seen in the antecedent critique on Baker\*'s commentary, Hacker opts for the interpretation that philosophical problems arise through misguided language use. Moreover, it is not the case that our philosophical problems arise from individual cases of weaknesses of the will, *i.e.* compulsions, urges, prejudices, *et cetera*. Our problems arise because we fail to command a clear view of the aim and functioning of our words, not of our appetites. Since Hacker concurs to the fact that Wittgenstein's method is projected on the nature of philosophical problems, the proposed method to deal with these problems must therefore enable us to attain an insight into the workings of our language: a perspicuous representation produces just that kind of understanding. It introduces perspicuity in our grammar by demonstrating the formal connexions of the grammatical rules (*PI* §122), so Hacker argues.

To gain a better understanding of the fundamental features of Wittgenstein's philosophical method, Hacker proposes using a different comparison to that of the limited analogy of psychoanalysis. According to Hacker, we should place Wittgenstein's philosophical investigations in the same category as the conceptual explorations by G. Ryle in *The Concept of Mind*. Both philosophers regard it as the proper task of philosophy to get rid of bits of tenacious nonsense that have clouded our understanding. The roots of these bits of nonsense have their origin in *categorical mistakes* instigated by the deceptive uniform appearance of the surface grammar. To expose the categorical differences between the relevant concepts, their depth grammar must be made explicit via conceptual analysis. After which, the retrieved grammatical data is arranged in an overview, which exhibits the formal relations of the grammatical rules. It is the task of the philosopher to restore the know how, by reminding one of the salient grammatical rules which govern the problematic concepts, *i.e.* the knowledge that we use those concepts in such-and-such a way. Read in this sense, Wittgenstein is not a therapist, but a cartographer, who sets out to draw a map of the logical geography of the problematic conceptual field and provide a synoptic description of what he surveys.

A perspicuous representation of grammar read accordingly is not an object of comparison through which the workings of our language become perspicuous, but a comprehensible end result of a grammatical excavation *into* the workings of our language by means of which one can survey and track down the use of our words. According to Hacker, the proposed language-games, analogies, centers of variation, and objects of comparison, are mere tools of the conceptual excavator. They serve to delineate and make explicit the complex nature of the depth grammar. We fail to get struck by the grammatical facts due to their familiarity (*PI* §129); by making clever use of objects of comparison as instruments, we can shed light on the grammatical data, *i.e.* the facts of our language (*PI* §130), and consequently produce a charted record of the geography of the conceptual field, as to dissolve philosophical confusions.

I suspect that the simple language-games introduced as objects of comparison are designed [...] to clear the fog that envelops the landscape, and *then*, having an overview of the conceptual terrain, one may be able to give a perspicuous representation of the grammar of the problematic expression, geared to the solution or dissolution of the problems that beset one. (*WUM* p.329)

Hence, it is important to note that Hacker contends that objects of comparison cannot and do not fulfill Wittgenstein’s methodological requirement of *completely* dissolving philosophical problems (*PI* §133), since they only hint at certain grammatical features and therefore do not represent the full grammar of the troublesome concept: “[...] a glimpse of the landscape is not a *representation* of what is seen.” (*WUM* p.328) The grammar of the word ‘word’ is not *represented* or *described* by a quick comparison of uses of words with tools in a toolbox or handles in the cabin of a locomotive (*PI* §12/§14). The grammar of ‘sentence’ is equally not fully represented by juxtaposing its use with the move of a piece on a chessboard (*PI* §49). Comparing one game with another does not provide one with a surveyable overview of the rules of either of the two games – it merely hints on their similarities and dissimilarities. Objects of comparison, therefore, do not constitute perspicuous representations in themselves, but are seen as being auxiliary to the construction of a further insightful arrangement of grammatical data, which – if surveyable enough – does constitute a perspicuous representation.

Although the end of philosophical investigations is to attain an overview of the problematic conceptual field, Hacker admits that Wittgenstein hardly ever practices what he preaches. The color-octahedron in the *Philosophical Remarks* is probably the only example of a fully realized surveyable representation of grammatical rules, since it ‘wears the rules of grammar on its face’ (*PR* §221). However, Hacker argues that throughout the *PI* one can find many cases of grammatical propositions, *e.g.*:

Es ist das Natürlichste [...] wenn wir die Muster zu den Werkzeugen der Sprache rechnen. (*PI* §16), [...] eine Sprache vorstellen heißt, sich eine Lebensform vorstellen. (*PI* §19), [...] das Benennen ist etwas Ähnliches, wie, einem Ding ein Namentäfelchen anheften. Man kann das eine Vorbereitung zum Gebrauch eines Wortes nennen. (*PI* §26), Das Benennen ist doch gar kein Zug im Sprachspiel, —so wenig, wie das Aufstellen einer Schachfigur ein Zug im Schachspiel. (*PI* §49), “Ich präge sie mir ein” kann doch nur heißen: dieser Vorgang bewirkt, daß ich mich in Zukunft *richtig* an die Verbindung erinnere. Aber in unserm Falle habe ich ja kein Kriterium für die Richtigkeit. Man möchte hier sagen: richtig ist, was immer mir als richtig erscheinen wird. (*PI* §258)

These grammatical assertions can subsequently be amalgamated and arranged into a perspicuous representation. So, in this sense Wittgenstein should be regarded as the conceptual excavator who identifies conceptual problems, seeks to find all kinds of relevant grammatical facts and leaves the extensive task of tabulating his findings in a surveyable overview to other competent philosophers.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Hacker argues that Wittgenstein confessed in his lectures that he was not to be considered as a good guide (in the sense of ‘conceptual geography’). Instead of showing the main streets first, he would be led astray by little places of interest and dash down sides streets first. Nonetheless, “[...] scattered throughout his voluminous notes we often find numerous grammatical observations that can be used by the judicious cartographer who has the inclination to master the geography of concepts [...]” (*WUM*, p.334)

### 3 Kuusela's reading and a dogmatic trap

A central feature of Kuusela's reading concerns how Wittgenstein, throughout his philosophical career, envisions philosophy as an activity primarily characterized by clarification and that it, as opposed to science in general, has absolutely no business in advancing any kind of theses, theories or doctrines. Kuusela argues, that it is this non-dogmatic conception of philosophy that in the end causes Wittgenstein to abandon his systematic and metaphysical approach of the TLP for a case dependent and therapeutic approach of the PI. As to salvage his conception of philosophy as an activity founded solely on clarification, Wittgenstein undergoes a radical change in method stemming from a different notion of *the nature of a philosophical problem* and how one goes about dealing with such a problem.<sup>24</sup> Even though Wittgenstein remains within the field of language, Kuusela contends that the 'author of the TLP' assumes that all problems of philosophy are grounded on *one single* fundamental problem and can be solved by stating a *once-and-for-all* solution for that fundamental problem, whereas 'the author of the PI' holds, on the contrary, that there exist no one single grand philosophical problem, but many idiosyncratic problems, and therefore no such one single solution, but a *multitude* of problem specific remedies<sup>25</sup> (*PI §133*). As a direct result, Wittgenstein's notion of philosophy changes significantly. Denoted by Kuusela as *Wittgenstein's turn*<sup>26</sup>, it is this change of approach and its main aspiration, *i.e.* a non-theoretical conception of philosophy without the loss of rigor, that shed new light on the interpretation of the thoughts spelled out in the PI. Furthermore, Kuusela's commentary, not only builds heavily on Baker's reading, but also argues against Hacker's conception of Wittgenstein's philosophical method.

In this chapter my aim is to give an brief exposition of Kuusela's reading of Wittgenstein's method by discussing Wittgenstein's turn. I will start with a concise description of Kuusela's commentary of the TLP, without going into too much detail. From that, I will treat the transition from the TLP to the PI according to the reading of Kuusela, wherein the nature of a philosophical problem plays a vital role. In doing so, I will show that his reading is in line with Baker's interpretation of the PI and a perspicuous representation as an *object of comparison*. I will end with an attack on the commentary of Hacker by showing that it is not only fundamentally incorrect – in the sense that Wittgenstein did not envision a positive role for philosophy (at all) –, but also that the Wittgenstein whom Hacker wishes to portray ends up making the same crucial mistake as 'the author of the TLP', *i.e.* ends up falling pray to dogmatism by stating *the* grammatical facts.

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<sup>24</sup>Kuusela writes: "In both his early and later philosophy, Wittgenstein characterizes philosophical problems as arising from, or as the expressions of, misunderstandings concerning language. [...] To say that philosophical problems arise from misunderstandings, and require examination rather than answers, is to identify the task of philosophy as clarification. [...] In this sense, his **conception of philosophical problems** constitutes an essential part of his conception of philosophy [...]" (*SAD p.16*) [8]

<sup>25</sup>(*SAD, Chapter 1*) [8]

<sup>26</sup>(*SAD, Chapter 3*) [8]

### 3.1 Wittgenstein's Turn

At all times one must remain cautious in asserting differences and parallels between the TLP and the PI. Nevertheless, in coming to understand Wittgenstein's thoughts, many philosophers, including Wittgenstein himself, have stressed the importance of juxtaposing his later philosophy – the PI – with his earlier work – the TLP:

Vor vier Jahren aber hatte ich Veranlassung, mein erstes Buch (die "Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung" [TLP]) wieder zu lesen und seine Gedanken zu erklären. Da schien es mir plötzlich, daß ich jene alten Gedanken und die neuen zusammen veröffentlichen sollte: daß diese nur durch den Gegensatz und auf dem Hintergrund meiner ältern Denkweise ihre rechte Beleuchtung erhalten könnten. (*PI Preface*).

Next to the vast set of affirmed dissimilarities that have been pointed out between the TLP and the PI, there exists a thus far relatively overlooked, although rather significant, similarity between the two works. The likeness is found in Wittgenstein's recurrent conception of philosophy as a problem-dissolving *critique of language* [*Sprachkritik*] (*TLP 4.0031*), *i.e.* as an *activity* that brings into question the linguistic legitimacy of plaguing philosophical queries and aspires to make our language transparent by dissolving these ill-formed questions. He is persistent in the belief that it is basically not the final end of philosophy to establish a body of so-called *philosophical propositions* [*philosophische Sätze*], for such a concept would amount to a contradiction in terms. Rather, the object of philosophy is to describe our language with the intention of complete clarity:

Das Resultat der Philosophie sind nicht "philosophische Sätze", sondern das Klarwerden von Sätzen. (*TLP 4.112*)

Wir wollen nicht das Regelsystem für die Verwendung unserer Worte in unerhörter Weise [d.i. philosophische Sätze] verfeinern oder vervollständigen. Denn die Klarheit, die wir anstreben, ist allerdings eine *vollkommene*. (*PI §133*)

This is a striking correspondence between the two works. Although the TLP and the PI seem miles apart, it would be a severe mistake to designate the PI as being anti-parallel to the TLP. Furthermore, it follows from the above observation that Wittgenstein envisions philosophy as fundamentally being a non-theoretical, non-scientific enterprise. This is the main reason why he states:

Die Philosophie ist keine der Naturwissenschaften. (Das Wort "Philosophie" must etwas bedeuten, was über oder unter, aber nicht neben den Naturwissenschaften steht.) (*TLP 4.111*)

He reaffirms this critical notion when he reflects on the TLP in the PI:

Richtig war, daß unsere Betrachtungen nicht wissenschaftliche Betrachtungen sein durften. (*PI §109*)

#### 3.1.1 *Logical clarification*

Concentrating on the TLP, even though it may be transparent that Wittgenstein did not intend to formulate a thesis or doctrine in the scientific sense, it remains rather undecided what kind of considerations he eventually did (intend



to) proclaim. Getting to grips with the problem dissolving *method* of the TLP on one side and the *ambitions* of the TLP on the other, has been an arduous task; for there seems to be a large, probably unbridgeable, discrepancy between the two. Is it even possible, in light of Wittgenstein's non-theoretical aspirations, to read the TLP without attributing to it some kind of representational theory of meaning? In order to provide an adequate response I will have to look closer at the method of the TLP, *i.e.* how Wittgenstein aims to dissolve philosophical problems.

Wittgenstein writes in the preface that the sole purpose of the TLP is to deal with philosophical problems. These particular breed of problems arise due to misunderstandings concerning the logic of our language.

Das Buch behandelt die philosophischen Probleme und zeigt – wie ich glaube – daß die Fragestellung dieser Probleme auf dem Mißverständnis der Logik unserer Sprache beruht. (*TLP Preface*)<sup>27</sup>

Mistakes are made and philosophical questions arise as, in using our language, we often transgress the bounds of sense and wander into the realm of nonsensical expressions, where about our philosophical queries reside. Hence, philosophical problems – as apposed to problems of the natural sciences – have their roots in a symbolic bewilderment, stemming from a lack of linguistic prudence. Accordingly, it would be a serious error to try and tackle *these* problems as one would tackle scientific problems. This is to say, that the structure or nature of these problems demand a certain specific elucidatory method of attack, which differs entirely from an explanatory method of attack. Consequently, the method of the TLP is projected on the bases of logical clarification (*TLP 4.112*), with the ideal to

“...draw a limit to thinking, or rather – not to thinking, but to the expression of thoughts; for, in order to draw a limit to thinking we should have to be able to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought).” (*TLP Preface*) [17]

According to Kuusela, Wittgenstein wishes to realize this ideal by introducing a *concept-script* or *notation* which is solely governed by logical syntax and leaves no room for ambiguity. By using such a transparent notation, the limit to thought is *drawn in* language, since everything that can be thought *at all*, can be thought clearly, simply because everything that can be said, is said clearly (*TLP 4.116*). This language differs from everyday language only in that it leaves no room for syntactical errors, *i.e.* its grammar, as apposed to ordinary language, does not allow for the formulation of nonsensical expressions. The suggested notation can be said to be logically perspicuous: it is immediately clear what does and does not make sense to say. Accordingly, by the implementation of the concept-script all philosophical problems will be dissolved once and for all, since one is no longer in danger of transgressing the bounds of sense and, therefore, simply cannot ask ill-formed philosophical questions.

Note however, that the introduction of *a* notation, which strives to capture the unequivocal sense of expressions, does not necessarily amount to a thesis about the logic of language, for it only aids to express thoughts clearly.

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<sup>27</sup>This phrase reoccurs in the PI, although, with a crucial change. No longer do philosophical problems arise from misunderstandings concerning the *logic* of our language, but they arise from misunderstandings concerning the *forms* of our language. (See 3.1.2).

Problems arise, nonetheless, when Wittgenstein introduces a hierarchy into his method, by suggesting that there exist a most fundamental notation into which all expressions can be translated. It is, in the end, this crude *preconception* [*Vorurteil*] of the nature of language that causes Wittgenstein to relapse into metaphysics.

The outline of the concept-script, Kuusela argues, is given in Wittgenstein's conception that complex propositions are to be analyzed as truth functions of elementary propositions (*TLP* 5), which in turn are comprised out of simple names and picture contingent states of affairs. Through logical analysis Wittgenstein aims to capture the completely analyzed proposition, wherein all logical distinctions are apparent. Nevertheless, even though one could argue that Wittgenstein merely intends to introduce a notation without any explaining pretensions, his philosophical method, scheme, or preposed activity of clarification to realize that end is certainly not void of theoretical assertions concerning the nature of the logic of language. On the contrary, the basic affirmations that, language is the totality of propositions (*TLP* 4.001), that the essence of proposition is given by 'This is how things are' (*TLP* 4.5), and that all philosophical problems have been solved *in essentials* (*TLP Preface*) constitute preconceptions – or direct corollaries thereof – about the essence of language.

The method of the TLP fails to provide a non-theoretical, non-metaphysical basis for philosophy, because Wittgenstein adopts a certain preconception about the nature of language, to which, subsequently, reality *must* correspond. It is interesting to note that in writing the PI, instead of addressing all kinds of theoretical difficulties of the TLP that have been discussed ever since its publication, Wittgenstein deliberately sets out to scrutinize this crude pre-theoretical preconception.

### 3.1.2 *Reflecting on the Tractatus*

To solve philosophical problems, whilst avoiding relapses into dogmatism, Wittgenstein contends that we need turn our whole examination around (*PI* §108). This turn is instigated by Wittgenstein's considerations regarding the conception of the crystalline purity of logic: "In what sense is logic something sublime?" (*PI* §89) According to the 'author of the TLP', logic has the character of universal depth. It lay hidden at the bottom of all things. If one could just get clear of the logic underlying the phenomena, all else would follow instantly. Hence, the philosopher will be engaged in a unidirectional logical analysis, by translating the complex into its simples, moving towards the elementary propositions and a final state of complete exactness. This state is characterized by the completely analyzed proposition or the completely resolved form of expressions, which holds the once-and-for-all solution to every problem stemming from misunderstandings concerning the logic of our language (*PI* §91).

The problem is, however, that if one is to assert such a state, one needs a criterion of correctness which informs us when we have reached the desired concluding stage of our analysis. Subsequently, the quest for the criterion of correctness, which is required to be universally applicable, translates into a quest for the essence of the phenomena under consideration (*PI* §92): we have reached rock bottom, when we have stumbled upon the bare essentials. Our conception of the purity of logic demands of us, through the need for a criterion, to uncover what language, thought, and proposition *really are*. It seduces us into

thinking that these, previously regarded mundane, phenomena did something quite remarkable (*PI* 93) and require an equally unique theoretical explanation.

Yet, how can this recidivation into metaphysics and dogmatism be averted? Surely not by introducing vagueness in our criterion or in the crystalline purity of logic – for the loss of rigor would inevitably mean the end of both (*PI* §108). Our problem is of a different nature. According to Wittgenstein, we misunderstand the *role* of the conception of logic in our language (*PI* §100), due to the form it has adopted (*PI* §93). Since it seems to impinge on every aspect of our investigation, we believe that the ideal, be it hidden, *must* be found in reality (*PI* §101). Eagerly trying to fix our gaze as to get the true nature of the matter in focus (*PI* §113), it never occurs to us that the reason why the ideal is so obtrusive, is because we have *required* it as our form of representation: “For the crystalline purity of logic was, of course, not a *result of investigation*: it was a requirement.” (*PI* §107) Turning our whole examination around then consists in realizing that the ideal is not a preconceived idea to which reality *must* correspond, but is rather set up as a mode of representation, *i.e.* an object of comparison, by means of which reality can be made intelligible – only then can the ever present risk of dogmatism in philosophy be averted (*PI* §131).

The fault of the ‘author of the TLP’ lay in the fact that he provides a metaphysical projection of his model. Due to its initial comparative success, the necessary properties of the mode of representation, are postulated as essential features of the objects of investigation (*PI* §104). The crystalline purity of logic and its rigor do, however, not depend on properties of actual language. It is as ludicrous as stating that every extended body is essentially composed out of meters; for a meter is a predefined necessary property of the measuring-rod, not of the object to be measured. This, of course, does not mean that all measuring-rods need to be discarded – the same goes for the crystalline purity of logic. Since the preconceived ideal should be regarded as an object of comparison, it simply cannot be mistaken – as one cannot be wrong in defining a unit of length. Rather, our mode of representation has taken on a disquieting aspect, which leads to *superstitions* [*Aberglaube*] such as “Language (or thought) is something unique”. (*PI* §110).

In Wittgenstein’s turn a vital role is played by the nature of a philosophical problem. The turn can be characterized as a shift from a fundamental problem, to many idiosyncratic problems. No longer, as in the case of the TLP, do philosophical problems stem from misunderstandings concerning the *logic* of language. Instead, according to the ‘author of the PI’, they arise due to misunderstandings concerning the *forms* of our language (*PI* §90/§111); of which the TLP is a canonical example. Since Wittgenstein projects his method onto the nature of a philosophical problem, this transition has major ramifications for the philosophical method spelled out in the PI.

According to the ‘author of the TLP’, all philosophical problems derive from one single fundamental problem, *i.e.* the widespread confusion of *the* single correct logic of language. Then, by providing a once-and-for-all solution for that fundamental problem – in the form of a logically perspicuous notation, founded on a universally applicable criterion – all philosophical problems can be solved in essentials (*TLP Preface*). The philosophical problems of the PI, however, are not derivative of a single fundamental problem. There exist no hierarchies in the forms of our language: one possible mode of representation is not more or less fundamental than the next. These problems, therefore, cannot be system-

atically traced back to misunderstandings concerning *the* fundamental mode of representation – whatever that may be. Subsequently, due to the lack of a fundamental ground, the criterion of correctness is no longer based on a universal principle, founded on the essence of meaning, language, thought, proposition, *et cetera*.<sup>28</sup> Instead, every philosophical problem stands on its own, in the sense that the criterion of success depends on the *respective* misinterpreted mode of representation. Whether one gets clear of the role the troubling mode of representation has in language, does not depend on a more fundamental mode of representation. Rather, the success of a clarifying philosophical account depends on whether it succeeds in neutralizing the particular disquieting aspect that besets one. This is why there does not exist *one* method in philosophy, but a multitude of problem-specific therapies (*PI* §133). Moreover, since there is no such thing as *the* correct mode of representation, there is no way of safeguarding oneself against future misunderstandings. The necessary properties of every mode of representation can potentially be projected on the objects of investigation. Hence, every particular mode of representation can act as a possible source for a grammatical illusion. In the end, *we* are responsible for (mis)understanding the role of the object of comparison in our language.

### 3.2 A final attack on Hacker’s position

Before addressing the flaws in Hackers commentary I will briefly comment on Hacker’s interpretation of Baker’s therapeutic reading. In short, Baker\* is a caricature of Baker. According to Hacker, Baker’s Wittgenstein solves philosophical problems by leaving everything up for negotiation. Wittgenstein merely provides a couple of pictures, of which the patient can, subsequently, take his pick – as he so pleases ([6], *p.116*). Yet, this is a gross oversimplification of the vital role the sufferer has in the dissolution of the problem and the criterion of success regarding a perspicuous representation. The patient suffers, *because* he cannot get outside the disquieting aspect his form of representation has adopted, for outside he cannot breath (*PI* §103). Moreover, one does not simply let go of an ideal, which has proven its worth in the past. Adopting a whole new way of looking at things is not a trivial matter: our forms of representation are deeply routed into the fabric of our language and constitute vital part of our form of life (*PI* §19). A choice – if one could call it a choice at all – is made out of necessity, driven by the will to be free of philosophical torment. Nevertheless, if a proposed form of representation does not provide clarity in the use of his words, it must not be regarded as perspicuous representation.

Hackers misinterpretation of Baker’s commentary is most prominent in Baker\*’s notion of the target audience and the influence of the considerations put forward in the PI. According to Hacker, Baker advocates the position that the PI is written to serve or contend against only a few individuals suffering from philosophical problems, instead of entire schools of thought and grand philosophical traditions. Hacker draws this conclusion from Baker’s stance that philosophical problems are basically person-relative and, therefore, simply do not apply to groups of people. What Hacker does not realize, however, is that it is perfectly possible for a collective to share a picture or way of looking at things. Subsequently, they may all be simultaneously, yet individually, under

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<sup>28</sup>More on the criterion for correctness will be treated in the next section.

the spell of the same misleading form of representation. The Augustian picture of language is such a misleading form of representation, which besides Augustine many others have shared. Other examples are the preconceived ideal of the crystalline purity of logic, the picture of the inner visual room, the notion that experiencing pain is equivalent to knowing that one is in pain, *et cetera*. These disquieting forms of representation can be and have indeed been shared by many individuals of various philosophical traditions. Furthermore, according to Baker, Wittgenstein contends that the primitive urge that drives one to formulate metaphysical theories resides in us all – it is, as it were, our original (philosophical) sin [7]. As frequent language users we must resist certain temptations – like the craving for generality – that cause us to be misled by our forms of representation. Philosophical problems are, therefore, not reserved just for a few prominent philosophers. Since we are all potential sufferers of philosophical torment, the considerations and methods put forward in the PI can prove useful for each and everyone of us. It is therefore unwarranted to propose that, because philosophical problems are presumed to be primarily person-relative, the proposed solutions are held to be only relevant for a handful of tormented minds.

### 3.2.1 *Misunderstanding the nature of the problem*

Hacker’s commentary of Wittgenstein’s philosophy and method goes wrong at the very beginning. The initiation of Wittgenstein’s philosophical investigations is placed at the emergence of a philosophical problem. Hacker advocates the notion that a philosophical problem is characterized by ‘I don’t know my way about’, *i.e.* a conceptual confusion, regarding the intricate network of grammatical rules and induced by a multitude of various causes. These causes are to be found in misleading features of the grammar of our language, in the scientific mentality of our culture, in the inclinations stemming from our own nature, *et cetera*.<sup>29</sup> The solution then, in general, is equally straightforward: find and articulate the relevant grammatical rules and arrange them in a perspicuous whole. Problem solved. The question is, however, whether the philosophical problems have been solved completely, since the causes are left virtually untouched. Hacker simply presumes that, having a comprehensible representation of the relevant concepts allows one to safeguard oneself against threats from the aforementioned causes. Nonetheless, Hacker fails to realize that the suggested various causes for philosophical problems have a common denominator. To uproot a problem completely, means to neutralize its main cause as well, otherwise one is merely addressing its symptoms. The true source of a philosophical problem is, therefore, found at a deeper, *i.e.* pre-theoretical, level; a level where our crude inclinations and prejudices reside and where localized arrangements of grammatical rules hardly make any impressions.

Our *craving* for generality (BB, p.17 [15]), why we are *seduced* into thinking that something unique must be achieved by language (PI §93), why we feel that we *must* find an order (PI §105), and why we have an *urge* to misunderstand the

<sup>29</sup>According to Hacker, pictures – correct or incorrect – can also cause conceptual confusions. They do so, he argues, by obscuring the relevant grammatical differences. (*WUM*, p.279) Therefore, Hacker maintains that, even though misleading pictures can be the cause of a problem, the problem is still characterized by a confusion regarding the relevant grammatical rules.

workings of our language (*PI §109*) can be made intelligible by considering their common cause, *i.e.* the true source of our troubles: the explanatory *success* of an object of comparison tempts us to confuse its role in language and to treat its necessary properties as essential features of the object of investigation. It is simply because objects of comparison are initially useful – they serve a purpose and are a part of our form of life. However, their applicability can turn on us and tempt us to postulate its a priori properties onto the world. That is why we are bent on generality (*PI §104*), are seduced into thinking that our phenomena under consideration have extraordinary properties, feel that there *must* be an order to be found – for it already seems to be present in reality (*PI §101*) –, and have an urge to misunderstand the workings of our language, *i.e.* the role of the object of comparison in our language.

Since Wittgenstein’s method is modeled upon the nature of a philosophical problem, this misinterpretation sends large ripples throughout Hacker’s entire commentary. The interpretation of a perspicuous representation, which functions as the proposed solution for a philosophical problem, is directly dependent on the reading of the nature of a philosophical problem. Accordingly, Hacker assumes that the chief purpose of a perspicuous representation is to restore an order into our grammatical rules, which constitutes a positive role for philosophy.

Everything that does not introduce such a comprehensible order, or merely hints on certain uses of words – such as objects of comparison or centers of variation –, does not constitute a perspicuous representation of grammar. A particular oddity concerning this reading resides in the fact that Wittgenstein never actually produces a comprehensive representation of grammatical data. Hacker openly concurs to this fact. Nonetheless, since Wittgenstein regards a perspicuous representation to be the hallmark of his investigations, what then should Hacker make of Wittgenstein’s ambition to achieve *complete* clarity by solving philosophical problems completely. Hacker must conclude that according to his reading, Wittgenstein never even solves a single philosophical problem completely, since he only provides sketches, *i.e.* glimpses, of the conceptual landscape (*PI Preface*) and never produces a fully realized map of the relevant grammar. If, on the other hand, Hacker would deny this conclusion, he must acknowledge that philosophical problems are solved *before* one fabricates, and *without* the use of, a surveyable arrangement of grammatical rules. But if this is the case, then the ‘fundamentally significant’ concept of perspicuous representation (*PI §122*) is entirely redundant!

Contrary to the sparsity of surveyable arrangements of grammatical rules, the PI is teeming with an abundant quantity of objects of comparison; in all shapes and sizes, *e.g.* language games, centers of variation, analogies, *et cetera*. According to Hacker, these do not constitute perspicuous representations in themselves. Rather, they should be regarded as auxiliary to a further construction of a perspicuous arrangement of grammatical data. Wittgenstein, however states the following:

Unsere klaren und einfachen Sprachspiele sind nicht Vorstudien zu einer künftigen Reglementierung der Sprache, — gleichsam erste Annäherungen, ohne Berücksichtigung der Reibung und des Luftwiderstands. (*PI §130*)

Accordingly, we should not regard the objects of comparison to be supplementary to a further artificial arrangement of grammatical rules. Since objects

of comparison have the ability to replace misleading forms of representation entirely, they are able to neutralize the true cause of our troubles totally. Philosophical problems are, thus, solved completely, *only* by making use of objects of comparison as perspicuous representations. Operations subsequent to the dissolution of a philosophical problem are of no interest for Wittgenstein’s investigations, since the aim of complete clarity has already been achieved. Therefore, Hacker’s aspired *positive* role for philosophy is wholly superfluous and, hence, has no place in Wittgenstein’s method and philosophy.

### 3.2.2 A relapse into dogmatism

A map of the relevant conceptual terrain can only serve as a normative guide if it describes the grammar correctly. Since Hacker’s notion of a perspicuous representation requires the formulation of *the* correct grammatical rules, he needs to provide a criterion, which determines conclusively whether a certain grammatical rule deserves or does not deserve the predicate ‘correct’. Under the preconceived notion that meaningful language use *must* be rule-governed, Hacker contends that the criterion for *the* correct rules of grammar is to be found in actual language use – “Usage sets the standard for correct use.” (*WUM p.291*).<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, Hacker interprets Wittgenstein’s instruction, that we should turn our whole examination around, as being a turn away from the metaphysical ideal of logic and towards descriptions of *actual* everyday language. The question is, however, what Wittgenstein meant by *descriptions* of language use.

Hacker seems to be ignorant of the ambiguity in the use of the word ‘description’<sup>31</sup>. For example, a game can be described by stating facts about the *actual* game, yet it can also be described by defining its rules. These rules, however, are wholly independent of whether the game is actually ever played in reality, since they do not amount to statements of fact. The statement of a rule in this sense is quite similar to the definition of a unit of measurement or the adoption of a certain form of representation – their logical role is not that of an assertion, but of an object of comparison. As there exist no criterion which determines beforehand the *correct* length of a unit of measurement – the length is determined by definition –, there exist no criterion which determines *the* correct forms of our grammar. No truth-values can be assigned to *such* descriptions. When Wittgenstein contends that, “Alle *Erklärung* muß fort, und nur Beschreibung [description] an ihre Stelle treten.” (*PI §109*), Hacker interprets ‘description’ as statements of fact: we need to determine how words are *actually* used to find out what makes sense to say. However, by turning his attention towards determining the depth grammar, *i.e.* *the* grammatical rules underlying actual language use, Hacker makes – in essence – the same crucial mistake as ‘the author of the TLP’. Were ‘the author of the TLP’ misunderstood the *role* of the crystalline purity of logic in our language, Hacker misunderstands the roles of the newly introduced forms of representation ‘Meaning is use’ and ‘Language is

<sup>30</sup>It is quite peculiar that Hacker avows for a **universal** criterion for correctness based on the assertion that meaning is given by its use in language, when Wittgenstein openly states that this explanation of the meaning for a word holds for a *large* class of cases, **though not for all**. Moreover, Wittgenstein immediately adds an exception: the *meaning* of a name is sometimes explained by pointing to its *bearer* (*PI §43*).

<sup>31</sup>*SAD*, p.113-6 [8].

rule-governd'. These proposed models lead Hacker to predicate of the thing, by stating *the* grammatical facts of actual language use, what lies in the method of representing it.

Du deutest die neue Auffassung als das Sehen eines neuen Gegenstands.  
Du deutest eine grammatische Bewegung, die du gemacht hast: als quasi-physikalische Erscheinung, die du beobachtest. (Denk z.B. an die Frage "Sind Sinnesdaten der Baustoff des Universums?") (PI §401)

Both 'the author of the TLP' and Hacker, are guilty of misunderstanding the forms of our language, in the sense that they interpret a (new) way of looking at the phenomena, as a (new) discovery *about* the phenomena. They are held captive by the initial explanatory potential of the mode of representation and believe that the order *must* be found in reality. The problem is that Hacker is convinced that he is merely asserting grammatical conventions (*WUM*, p.264), and, therefore, does not succumb to dogmatism. What he fails to comprehend, however, is that, by citing grammatical rules, he is not asserting anything about language at all, but is merely tracing around the frame through which he is looking at it (PI §114). Ironically, if Hacker would persist in tabulating *the* supposed grammatical facts of our actual language use, soon he himself will be ripe for philosophical treatment.

He needs to realize that these models, grammatical rules, and grammatical propositions are set up by Wittgenstein as objects of comparison and not as preconceived ideals to which actual language needs to correspond. The use of our words is *described*, not by stating grammatical facts, but by introducing new forms of representation – by finding and inventing *intermediate cases* [*Zwischengliedern*] (PI §122) Note that, in this case, reminders of actual language use can perfectly serve as elucidatory objects of comparison, as long as they are in accordance with the criterion of success, *i.e.* produce that kind of understanding which consists in seeing connexions. Furthermore, if one regards these – or indeed other – models, rules, and propositions as objects of comparison, the fear of falling prey to dogmatism is completely removed, since hitherto nothing whatever has been asserted to be either the case or not the case, true or false. One has simply introduced a change in aspect.



## 4 Conclusion

In this thesis I have discussed two fundamentally distinct readings of the concept of a *perspicuous representation* (PI §122): a perspicuous representation as (i) a surveyable arrangement of grammatical rules (held by Hacker) and as (ii) an object of comparison (held by Baker and Kuusela).

Furthermore, I have provided an exposition of Baker's late interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophical method. I have shown that, according to the *therapeutic approach*, Wittgenstein's philosophy is nothing but the dissolution of philosophical problems and that the method involved is much akin to the practice of psychoanalysis. Philosophical problems are solved by making explicit bits of repressed nonsense, caused by misleading pictures, and getting the afflicted to look at things differently, *i.e.* turning the sufferers attention to other transparent and equally applicable forms of representation. A perspicuous representation read as an object of comparison has the ability to replace a disquieting form of representation entirely and, therefore, dissolve a philosophical problem completely. The criterion of success depends on the acknowledgement of the patient and whether he has a clear view of the aim and functioning of his words. Therefore, the therapeutic reading of the PI validates the interpretation of a perspicuous representation as an object of comparison.

Consequently, I have treated Hacker's reaction to Baker's late interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophical method and provided Hacker's reasons for regarding a perspicuous representation as a surveyable arrangement of grammatical rules. According to Hacker, Baker takes the therapeutic reading of the PI much too far. Rather, he argues that, Wittgenstein's philosophical method should be compared to conceptual geography in the Rylean fashion. Philosophical problems are characterized by conceptual confusions, *i.e.* that we no longer know our way about the rules that govern our grammar. The intricate network of grammatical rules, which determine the correct uses of words, have been obscured by the uniform appearance of the surface grammar. A perspicuous representation interpreted as a surveyable arrangement of these rules exhibits their formal connexions clearly and, thus, introduces perspicuity in our grammar. In this sense a perspicuous representation fulfills the role of a map, which serves as a normative guide through the problematic conceptual terrain. According to Hacker, Wittgenstein should be regarded as a conceptual cartographer and not as a conceptual therapist, mainly because the criterion for the correct grammatical rules is not bound to the judgement of a particular individual, but is determined by the actual use of our words.

Next, I have discussed Kuusela's reading of the PI by concentrating on Wittgenstein's non-dogmatic aspirations for philosophy and *Wittgenstein's turn*. According to Kuusela, Wittgenstein undergoes a radical change in philosophical method in order to avoid a relapse into dogmatism, whilst still being able to solve philosophical problems. This turn is characterized by a transition from a notion of philosophy as a preconception to which reality *must* correspond (TLP), to a philosophical method which makes use of objects of comparison as to render these damaging preconceptions harmless (PI). The preconceived ideal of the crystalline purity of logic served as a notable example, whereby Wittgenstein misinterpreted the role of this preconception in our language and predicated of the object of investigation what lay in the method of representing it. His troubles were dissolved when he realized that they were merely based on

a disquieting aspect his form of representation had adopted and that his preconceived model could be replaced by an equally applicable object of comparison.

Finally, I have argued against the interpretation of Hacker. I have briefly shown that he misrepresents Baker's late interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophical method. The charge that Baker reduces Wittgenstein to a philosopher of minor significance is grossly unwarranted. The primitive urge to resort to metaphysics resides in us all and, therefore, we are all liable to misuse our forms of representation. Consequently, Baker holds that the reflections put forward in the PI are relevant for everyone and not just a few tormented philosophers. Moreover, I have argued that Hacker misunderstands the nature of a philosophical problem and, subsequently, provides the wrong solution for those kind of problems. According to Hacker a philosophical problem is characterized by a loss of overview of the grammatical rules, which direct meaningful language use. Accordingly, a perspicuous representation needs to restore the order by presenting the relevant grammatical rules in a surveyable manner. Yet, Wittgenstein does not construct any of such arrangements of grammatical rules. This brings Hacker in the awkward position of claiming that either Wittgenstein never solved a single philosophical problem completely, or that philosophical problems are solved *before* one needs a perspicuous representation. I have contended that, since objects of comparison have the ability to replace a harmful form of representation entirely, they can solve philosophical problems completely, without the use of a further arrangement of grammatical rules. Furthermore, I have argued that Hacker – in essence – makes the same mistake as 'the author of the TLP'. According to Hacker the criterion for the correct grammatical rules is to be found in *actual* language use. Subsequently, he misinterprets 'descriptions of language use' as being statements of grammatical facts about actual language use. He misuses the objects of comparison 'Meaning is use' and 'Language is rule-governed' and predicates their properties onto his object of investigation, *i.e.* language. In doing so, Hacker succumbs to dogmatism – a fate Wittgenstein deliberately set out to avoid when turning his examination around.

I will conclude by answering the three questions which I presented in the Introduction: 'What is, according to Wittgenstein, (not) the final end of philosophy?', 'How do we reach that end?', and 'Does philosophy have a positive role to play?' — According to Wittgenstein, the final end of philosophy is not a body of philosophical propositions or an arrangement of grammatical data. The final end of philosophy is the realization that one is philosophically at peace, *i.e.* that one is no longer plagued by tormenting questions and that one's philosophical problems have been dissolved completely.<sup>32</sup> We reach that end by making clever use of simple language games, centers of variation, analogies, *et cetera*, as objects of comparison. Only then, can we command a clear view of the uses of our words and realize that our problems were merely caused by a disquieting aspect our forms of representation had adopted. Since objects of comparison can substitute malignant forms of representation entirely, our philosophical problems can be solved completely. This is done without the use of a further regimentation of language or grammatical data. Therefore, according to Wittgenstein's philosophical method, there is no positive role to play for philosophy.

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<sup>32</sup>This does, of course, not mean that one is safe from philosophical problems or deceptive philosophical temptations in the future. It simply means that, hitherto, the philosophical problems that beset one, have been dissolved completely.

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