IT IS TWENTY-ONE YEARS this summer since Ludwig Wittgenstein gave his last lectures as Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge University. He died of cancer in April 1951 - seventeen years ago. For those of us who still vividly recall the classes of his two final, post-war years, it is hard to come to terms with the bald arithmetical facts. Yet they cannot be denied; nor can their implications. However much we may thrust the truth from us, Wittgenstein is already an "historical figure," and is taking his place in that continuing rational debate by which the history of philosophy is kept alive. Even now, _Wittgensteinlehre_ is threatening to become as much of an industry as _Kantlehre_ was 150 years ago. So, disagreeable though it may be, it is probably time for us to face the task of locating Wittgenstein - both as a man, and as a philosopher - within the history of ideas: in the double hope of helping the inevitable discussion of his doctrines, and their implications, to get started from the right point of departure and of recognising for ourselves the newer lines of thought which-thanks to him - we shall be having to explore in the decades ahead.

Up to now, that task has scarcely been easy. No classic in philosophy is less self-explanatory than Wittgenstein's _Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus_. Even before publication, its basic intention was already being misunderstood.

Bertrand Russell's long preface to the _Tractatus_ was so gravely misleading that (as we now know) Wittgenstein thought seriously of making this an excuse for withdrawing the book from
the publisher. Nevertheless, its immediate impact on philosophy was heavily influenced by Russell's interpretation, as taken up and developed by the positivists of the Vienna Circle, so that by the early 1930s Wittgenstein was disowning almost all its explicit teachings. Having once experienced the effects of disclosing his ideas prematurely, Wittgenstein never again during his lifetime allowed anything of his work to appear in print, on a scale to compare with the earlier book; while he had deep reservations even about the circulation of the type-script reports prepared by his students-and published recently as *The Blue and Brown Books*. As a result, until the appearance of his posthumous *Philosophical Investigations* in 1953, the content of his later teachings was known only on the basis of rumour and students' notes. Finally, his *Nachlass* passed into the hands of literary executors whose concern for their scholarly duties has resulted in his collected works appearing only one at a time, at considerable intervals: so much so, that others have begun to feel - perhaps unjustly - that the Wittgenstein they knew was being claimed as the intellectual property of a particular small group.

STILL: WITH THE PASSAGE of time all these obstacles are gradually becoming less formidable. By now, the authorised editions have covered enough ground for a consistent - if not a final-picture to be emerging.¹ Meanwhile, other editors have been issuing sets of notes reporting, in more or less direct speech, the content of Wittgenstein's conversations and classes at different stages of his career; though until now-with the publication of Friedrich Waismann's reports of conversations with Wittgenstein during the years 1922-32² - we have lacked anything about Wittgenstein to [58] compare in vividness and authenticity with Goethe's *Conversations with Eckermann* or Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. We possess, in addition, one of the notebooks Wittgenstein kept during the preparation of the *Tractatus*, though the rest were apparently destroyed. And now one further, invaluable document has appeared: a collection of 54 letters written by Wittgenstein to a man who was - as near as anyone could be - an intimate friend of his during the crucial years from 1916 to 1925. Along with these letters is printed a sensitive and revealing memoir by the recipient, a Viennese architect two years Wittgenstein's junior, who spent his last thirty years in Israel and died in Tel Aviv in 1965.³ If the resulting slim book is


² This highly-important collection is Friedrich Waismann, *Wittgenstein und der Weiner Kreis*, shorthand notes edited from Waismann's papers by B. F. McGuinness and published in German only (Blackwell, 1967, 45s.). A much slighter collection, dating from the last period of Wittgenstein's career, is L. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, edited by Cyril Barrett from notes taken by Y. Smithies, R. Rhees and J. Taylor (Blackwell, 1966, 12s. 6d.).

read with the serious attention it warrants, this could do as much as anything else to put Wittgenstein's purposes and ideas back into their true perspective.

WITH ALL THESE fresh documents in hand, what kind of a picture can we piece together of Wittgenstein's place in early 20th-century European thought? That is what I shall attempt to show in this essay. And, just because the chances of Wittgenstein's friendships and career were a fertile source of gossip and misinterpretation, I shall proceed in two stages.

First, I shall work my way downwards through the superimposed strata of Wittgenstein's public reputation, peeling these successively away like the layers of Peer Gynt's onion, until we arrive at the core of his position - which, as Paul Engelmann makes clear for the first time, was the core both of his philosophical position and also of his personal attitudes. Just how closely these two aspects of Wittgenstein’s thought were related had, I confess, eluded me until recently. In an earlier essay of mine, for instance, I find a statement –

In recollection, the extraordinary personality of Wittgenstein the man too easily distracts attention from the pure-spring-water clarity and transparency of the truths of which he saw himself as the bearer.

- which fails to take into account the extent to which Wittgenstein's very personality was the expression of a highly articulated, though largely unverbalisable, personal point of view.

That done, I shall attempt to reconstruct the development of Wittgenstein's ideas: showing how, for him, each of the intellectual skins which in turn surrounded his central vision of life grew out of, and on to, the one immediately before. For the constellations of ideas characteristic of the different phases in his thought were all of them temporal cross-sections in the intellectual growth of a passionately single-minded thinker. So, in the long run, an account of all these separate phases can carry conviction only if it displays the relations between successive phases in a way that makes psychological - not to say, rational - sense.

In attempting this reconstruction (let me add) I shall also be embarking on an excursion into autobiography. Having spent the years 1946-47 as a research student at Cambridge, I went on a long visit to Oxford in the spring of 1948, and moved there at the end of the same year, taking up a University Lectureship in January 1949. The transition from Wittgenstein's Cambridge classes and "At Homes," to the style of philosophical disputations then current at Oxford, was a shock. For all its ingenuity and discrimination, the "linguistic analysis" of Oxford in the 1950s seemed - by comparison with Wittgenstein - to lack any philosophical mainspring: it was like a nursery clock-face, equipped with all the necessary hands and figures, except that one was free
to move the hands around just as one pleased. There was at this time, of course, much talk about Wittgenstein and his ideas outside Cambridge, and his name became something for people to swear by (or swear at). But, to anyone who came straight from Wittgenstein's rooms at Trinity, both the Oxford philosophers who claimed him as a patron of linguistic philosophy and those opponents in London, like Karl Popper and Ernest Gellner, who belaboured him for trivialising philosophy seemed, equally, to be quarrelling over a lay figure. The real man, the real philosopher, had escaped them.

This deep sense that, ever since 1919, the name of Wittgenstein has been used more as a symbol, or trademark, than as the name of a genuine, individual philosopher - and human being - remains with me to this day. So, if only to repay a small part of my own intellectual debt to him, I shall try to do something here to redirect his readers' attention towards the deeper philosophical issues which (as I saw it in 1949, and still do) served as the continuing problems, themes, and sources of Wittgenstein's whole intellectual life and development.

LET ME BEGIN by stating and defending - a series of negative theses. Public reputation has attributed to Wittgenstein half-a-dozen general doctrines, positions and philosophical attitudes which were not at all to his liking; and the first step towards recognising the true nature of his philosophical quest is to see past these false attributions. To summarise:

1. Wittgenstein was never a positivist;
2. He was never deeply concerned with epistemology;
3. He was not a "linguistic philosopher";
4. There were not "two Wittgensteins," having different philosophical questions and concerns - the author of the Tractatus, and the author of the Investigations;
5. There were not even two distinct Wittgensteins - one the technical philosopher, the other the "thinker."

Of these misconceptions, the first four were always (in my view) the result of shallow and hasty reading. However, it was more pardonable to overlook the complete unity of Wittgenstein's thought, both philosophical and "ethical." During the 1940s, for example, Wittgenstein himself drew a fairly sharp line between the professional, conceptual questions he discussed in his formal seminars and the deeper, more personal topics he used to raise during his "At Homes." The connections between the two aspects of his thought are fully apparent only now, thanks to the letters and memoir of Paul Engelmann. These resolve some residual puzzles within his formal philosophical writings, and help one to understand his sympathy for men like Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and St. Augustine - a sympathy which would have been surprising in the anti-metaphysical, positivistic "Ludwig Wittgenstein" of popular reputation.

1. Wittgenstein was never a positivist.
During the 1920s, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* was taken up by the members of the Vienna Circle, and became one of the founding documents of the philosophical movement known first as a "logical positivism" and later as "logical empiricism." In his book *Consciousness and Society* ([959]), H. Stuart Hughes has described the appeal of logical positivism to young Central European intellectuals growing up in the political and cultural wreckage of the Hapsburg Empire; and some 80% of the *Tractatus* could, without obvious misrepresentation, be used as a source of forthright, no-nonsense, positivist slogans. As these men read it, the book was a grand, highly professional and seemingly final denunciation of superstition (*Aberglaube*), and its closing motto

*Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen*

was inscribed on the banners of all high-minded young free-thinkers. True: the final pages of the book included some puzzling remarks about solipsism, transcendental values, and "the higher." But those were easily set aside as *obiter dicta*, having no organic connection with the central, uncompromising argument. Accordingly, the motto of the logical positivists ran: "Absage an die Metaphysik!" And, while one was engaged in sweeping the metaphysical rubbish out of the house, it seemed desirable to renounce *all* beliefs except those that could be meaningfully expressed in "fact-picturing propositions." Thus the road was opened which led from the *Tractatus*, through the views of the Vienna Circle, and onwards to A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936).

Once Wittgenstein had been labelled as a positivist, men found it hard to see him in any other light. So when, from 1929 on, he returned to philosophy and moved gradually into his second, contrasted phase of philosophising, his new style was not regarded as a rejection of positivism: rather, it was seen as a reconstruction of his earlier positivistic position on new and deeper foundations. Thus, in the late 1940s, Brian Farrell contributed an influential pair of articles to *Mind*, in which Wittgenstein's new position was characterised as "therapeutic positivism." Men were still (on this interpretation) to be talked out of superstitious, unverifiable and/or meaningless beliefs; but the arguments designed to produce this result were to have a new starting-point, and a new method. The idea that the realm of the significant could be demonstrated by an analysis of language in the symbolism of mathematical logic was now abandoned. Instead, philosophical theories were to be diagnosed as symptoms of misconceptions about our *everyday* language - "cerebroses" (so to say) comparable to the neuroses which spring from misconceptions about our affective relationships. They were accordingly to be "treated" by a philosophical therapy adapted to the specific intellectual cramps of the individual patient.

NOW, THERE WAS INDEED an anti-metaphysical strand in all of Wittgenstein's work; but this was in no way associated with *positivism*. Wittgenstein's opposition to metaphysics (as we shall
see) had a great deal in common with Schopenhauer's, and nothing at all with Comte's. For him, the word "metaphysics" was no blanket term of denunciation, to be used cavalierly to sweep aside whatever was not "meaningful," or "factually verifiable," as of no importance. Rather, he used the word in a highly specific sense - to designate the kind of philosophical discussion which "obliterates the distinction between [i.e., confuses] factual and conceptual investigations" (Zettel, 458) - and his condemnation of metaphysics extended no further than this. [60]

Far from equating the important with the verifiable, and dismissing the unverifiable as "unimportant because unsayable," Wittgenstein took exactly the opposite stand. In the concluding section of the Tractatus, and repeatedly thereafter, he kept insisting - though to deaf ears - that the unsayable alone has genuine value. We can (he tells us) discover "the higher" only in that which the propositions of our language are unfitted to capture; since no "fact," such as can be "picted" by a "proposition," has any intrinsic claim either on our moral submission, or on our aesthetic approval. So Wittgenstein's silence in the face of the "unutterable" was not a mocking, but a respectful silence. Having decided that only "value-neutral" facts can be expressed in regular propositional form, he exhorted his readers to turn their eyes away from factual propositions to the things of true value - which cannot be gesagt but only gezeigt. No wonder Wittgenstein himself saw the completion of his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus as a moment to give up doing philosophy, and set out to devote himself to more humanly important activities, such as school-teaching.

Paul Engelmann puts the point succinctly:

A whole generation of disciples was able to take Wittgenstein for a positivist because he has something of enormous importance in common with the positivists: he draws the line between what we can speak about and what we must be silent about just as they do. The difference is only that they have nothing to be silent about. Positivism holds - and this is its essence - that what we can speak about is all that matters in life. Whereas Wittgenstein passionately believes that all that really matters in human life is precisely what, in his view, we must be silent about. When he nevertheless takes immense pains to delimit the unimportant, it is not the coastline of that island which he is bent on surveying with such meticulous accuracy, but the boundary of the ocean.

2. Wittgenstein was not concerned with epistemology.

How did the real point of the Tractatus come to be overlooked? Here Bertrand Russell's preface played an influential part. For Russell's whole anti-metaphysical programme, dating back to his break with F. H. Bradley at the turn of the century, was indeed based on a positivistic desire to clear the nonsense out of philosophy - by sifting out, and restating in their true "logical forms." those beliefs which a rational man could regard as having a sound basis in "hard data." That
had been the philosophical programme of his Lowell Lectures at Harvard University, published under the title, *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914). What Russell called "the scientific method in philosophy" led him to place credence, and value, only in those things which *could* be meaningfully expressed in a "logically well-formed" language; and it was pardonable if he failed to realise that the deeper philosophical motives of his young friend and pupil, Ludwig Wittgenstein, were quite the opposite of his own.

At any rate, both in Cambridge and in Vienna, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was initially read as elaborating the very same theory of "logical atomism" as had been stated in Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World*. (Rudolf Carnap has told us that it took quite a number of conversations with Wittgenstein before the members of the Vienna Circle discovered that-after all-he was not "one of us.") Russell's preface also led to the *Tractatus* being read as a contribution to epistemology; and many of Wittgenstein's readers have looked for corresponding epistemological doctrines in his later work as well. Once again, however, we should pay more attention to the differences between Wittgenstein and those who claimed him as an ally than to their resemblances. True: the term "atomic facts," which plays a central role in the *Tractatus*, had been introduced in Russell's Harvard Lectures, in part, for epistemological purposes - to explain how (in Russell's view) propositions about "material objects" could be "logically constructed" out of propositions about immediate "sense-experience." So Wittgenstein acted imprudently when he analysed the logical relationships between "atomic facts" and the propositions that "mirror" them, without distinguishing his own "atomic facts" from the "hard data of sense" of Russell's epistemology.

THE PHILOSOPHERS OF THE Vienna Circle immediately equated the two men's ideas, and treated them as a natural extension and clarification of the philosophical position earlier sketched in Ernst Mach's book, *The Analysis of Sensations* (1886). Thus, from the very beginning, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* was swept up into a debate about "how we know the external world," and about the relations between "sense-data" and "material objects." This done, it was not hard to read the *Philosophical Investigations* too in an epistemological sense. Epistemologists like Russell had treated Wittgenstein's "unit propositions" as units of *knowledge* as well as units of *language*; and there was therefore some justification for reading Wittgenstein's later polemic against the idea of a "private language" (whose terms would draw their meaning directly from "sensations") an epistemological critique of the theory that "sense-data" are the foundation of all our knowledge. [61]

Nevertheless, Wittgenstein's preoccupation was in the beginning, and remained throughout, less with the foundations of *knowledge* than with the nature and limits of *language*. He was above all (as we shall see) a "transcendental" philosopher, whose central question could be posed in the Kantian form, "How is a meaningful language possible at all?" The arguments of his *Tractatus* acquired significance for epistemology only if viewed through the spectacles of
Russell or Mach; for then - and only then - could Wittgenstein's problem about the limits of the "sayable" be seen as dovetailing with Russell's epistemological question, "Seeing how our language relates to the world, what foundation can we then find for our knowledge of that external world?"

3. Wittgenstein was not a "linguistic philosopher."

At first sight, this third thesis may appear to contradict what I have just said. One thing is certainly undeniable: throughout his career, Wittgenstein was concerned with language, and with the manner in which language operates within our lives. Yet he never saw language as the self-sufficient subject-matter of philosophy. The philosopher's task was not, in Wittgenstein's view, to instruct the ordinary man, by "analysing the meanings of words" - as he himself remarked, commenting on G. E. Moore, "Was für eine höllische Idee!" Nor was it a philosopher's business to classify the different ways of "doing things with words," by a kind of linguistic taxonomy. Though lexicography and linguistics were both perfectly reputable disciplines, neither of them was specially philosophical.

Wittgenstein was, thus, interested in language as an element in a larger inquiry. One might, like Carnap, build up an "ideal language" whose "logical syntax" could be formalised in mathematical symbolism; or work out schemes for classifying the different varieties of usages and "speech-acts," like J. L. Austin. But such linguistic investigations had implications for philosophy only when they were placed in a broader intellectual context. And, when we recognise the nature of Wittgenstein's deeper philosophical aims - to which his theories of language were subordinate - we shall find that he was no more of a "linguistic philosopher" than (say) Plato, or Kant, or Schopenhauer. Though all these men were interested in discovering how "thoughts" are related to "things," "language" to "facts," "judgments" to "things-in-themselves," or "representations" to "that-which-is-represented," none of them posed that question - any more than Wittgenstein did himself - merely as a problem in linguistics.

4. The Tractatus and the Investigations have the same subject-matter.

At first sight, two books could hardly be less alike than the Tractatus and the Philosophical Investigations. On the surface, the Tractatus is a contribution to symbolic logic, in the tradition of Wittgenstein's immediate philosophical teachers, Frege and Russell. By contrast, the Investigations presents an empirical-looking argument, designed to demonstrate the "prodigious diversity" of ways in which language is put to use in human life; and it continually seems to be verging, not into mathematical logic, but rather into anthropology and psychology. This surface contrast is, however, misleading. Waismann has recorded a conversation (Über Dogmatismus, 9 December 1931) in which Wittgenstein talked about his disillusionment with logical symbolism as an instrument for explaining the significance and scope of actual linguistic behaviour. Seven
months later (1 July 1932) he was telling Waismann:

Unklar im Tractat war mir die logische Analyse und die hinweisende Erklärung. Ich dachte damals dass es eine "Verbildung der Sproelle mit der Wirklichkeit" gibt.

In the Tractatus I was unclear about "logical analysis" and the clarification it suggests. At that time I thought that it provided a "connexion between Language and Reality."

From these and other passages, we can now demonstrate how - despite the obvious differences between them – Wittgenstein could see his two books as successive attacks, using different methods, on one and the same group of problems.

The nature of those problems is best indicated by following up the analogies between Wittgenstein and Kant. For Immanuel Kant, the central tasks of philosophy were (i) exploring the scope-and the intrinsic limits-of the reason; and (ii) demonstrating the consequences of our irrepressible tendency to run up against, and attempt to overleap, those unavoidable limits. In this way, he hoped both to circumvent the epistemological quandaries in which his empiricist predecessors had been trapped, and also to avoid falling into the dogmatism of the rationalists. Kant, for his part; never explicitly presented his "transcendental" inquiries into the scope of "pure reason" as concerned with the nature of language. Yet, in some respects, they were always implicitly linguistic: his "necessary forms of judgment," for instance, were always specified by presenting the grammatical forms in which judgments could legitimately be expressed. This linguistic element in Kant's philosophy became more nearly explicit [62] in his successor, Schopenhauer, who transformed Kant's two central questions about "pure reason" into questions about. “representation.” The scope and limits of the “reason” were, for Schopenhauer, the same as the scope and limits of “representation”; and the musician alone, freed from the restrictions of “representation,” was able to convey directly those insights (or should one say “insounds”?) that words or pictures – being “representational” – could never capture.

THE IDEAS OF SCHOPENHAUER were profoundly influential in the circles within which Ludwig Wittgenstein grew up; and one can regard Wittgenstein's own philosophical preoccupations as carrying further the variations on Kant already initiated by Schopenhauer. As a result, Kant's philosophical tasks were restated yet again: (i) exploring the scope - and the intrinsic limits - of language; and (ii) demonstrating the consequences of our irrepressible tendency to run up against, and attempt to overleap, those unavoidable limits. In composing the Tractatus, indeed, Wittgenstein still thought of language in very much the same way as Schopenhauer - i.e., as essentially "representational"-and he set out to analyse the resulting Verbindung der Sprache mit del' Wirklichkeit in the new logical notation of Frege and Russell. Putting Schopenhauercr's ideas on a formal basis: "unit propositions" represented "atomic facts,"
and the limits of the "sayable" were defined by exhausting the available "logical transformations" of these representations.

Later on, of course, Wittgenstein became convinced that the significance of ordinary, non-technical language could not, after all, be analysed in logical symbolism, and that some alternative way must be found to map the scope, and limits, of our language: the *Philosophical Investigations* was the result. But in this later book, as in the earlier one, Wittgenstein was still concerned with the "transcendental" tasks that he had inherited from Kant and Schopenhauer, even though he had now devised new methods for dealing with them.

5. *Wittgenstein the philosopher and Wittgenstein the "thinker" were one and the same.*

Throughout all his philosophical work, accordingly, Wittgenstein was attempting to delimit the scope of the "sayable" - exploring, in his own words, *die Grenze der Sprache.* And, just as Kant ended by recognising that the tendency of the reason to over-reach itself is a necessary and creative element in human thought, so too did Wittgenstein. Waismann reports a conversation at Moritz Schlick's house (30 December 1929) in which Wittgenstein brushed aside as over-intellectualistic the moral philosophy of G. E. Moore and his associates, and spoke with genuine respect of Heidegger:

> I can well understand what Heidegger means by *Sein* and *Angst.* Man has an impulse to run up against the boundaries of speech ... which Kierkegaard himself already recognized and characterized very similarly (as running up against the paradoxical). This running-up against the boundaries of speech is *Ethics.*

The allusion to Kierkegaard is significant. For though, as a *philosopher,* Wittgenstein was concerned to delimit the boundaries of language - *i.e.,* of what could literally be "stated" - his deeper *ethical* reason for drawing this boundary was not to confine men inside it (*die Sprache ist ja kein Käfig*); but rather to show that all the really important issues - about God and freedom, value and immortality - overlap the boundary and lie very largely in the realm of the unsayable. (Rephrase the point in terms of "reason," rather than "language," and this conclusion is reminiscent of Kant's own view.) So, if men were to talk about ethics or theology at all, this must be done in something other than a literal, fact-picturing mode of discourse. Kierkegaard had referred to the language of religious expression as "indirect discourse." Wittgenstein speculated, at times, that it might have something of the character of poetry. But he was certain of only one thing-such matters could not be discussed in any species of language whose function was "representational."

As for most philosophical arguments about ethics and philosophical theology: these wandered unwittingly to and fro across *die Grenze der Sprache,* and were continually muddling factual questions with conceptual ones.
I regard it as very important to put an end to all the twaddle about Ethics - whether it is a science, whether values exist, whether the good is definable etc. In ethics people are always trying to say something which the nature of things does not, and never will permit one to say.

A proper understanding of "representation" or "language" was the necessary preface if one was to come to terms with the intrinsic boundaries of articulatable human thought. Yet, since the exact location of these boundaries could be securely mapped only by moving outwards from within the region of the "representable" or "sayable," the task of delimiting them was a very delicate one. All one could hope to do was to show philosophers what risks they ran, if they insisted on using words in ways that disregarded their original significance, or if they attempted to capture, in literal or "representational" speech, the deepest ethical and religious issues that concern us as human beings.

SEEN IN THESE TERMS, the two sides of Wittgenstein's thought - philosophical and ethical - were evidently related. As a philosopher, he did what could be done to show men the boundary between the sayable and the unsayable, and to delimit what Peter Strawson calls "the bounds of sense." This was best done, in practice, by using examples concerned with comparatively "unimportant" topics: for instance, from philosophical psychology and the foundations of mathematics. But, in his "At Homes," Wittgenstein would let the discussion go much further afield - into aesthetics or literature, Freudian psycho-analysis or religious belief - so that, in Fr. Barrett's new collection, we find him discussing such matters as the extraordinary difficulty of saying anything meaningful about God. Religious language, he declares again and again, cannot offer us any kind of a "picture" or Gleichnis: otherwise, we should forever be lapsing into rubbish - "Are eyebrows going to be talked of, in connection with the Eye of God?" And all this Wittgenstein says, not in the spirit of an unbeliever, but rather in the tone of one whose sincere religious belief eludes all verbal expression. The continual impression Wittgenstein himself gave was that of a man struggling inarticulately to overcome the problems created by the limitations of literal discourse.

Perhaps poets might somehow possess the power Schopenhauer had claimed for musicians: namely, the power to convey insights which could never be literally uttered. (I recall his asking, on one occasion, "How on earth does A --- think he can understand Blake? Why, he doesn't even understand philosophy!") Perhaps the "ethical," though inexpressible in "direct discourse," could after all be hinted at in some less "representational" way. At any rate, he never gave up the attempt. Though, even in his last years, he still seemed to believe what he had said as early as the Tractatus - namely, that whatever belongs to the realm of "the higher," whatever has "value," lies outside the boundaries of the utterable – he continued, like Kierkegaard, to seek some alternative way of conveying what could not be stated. And, since he himself was a man of strong moral passions, it is not surprising to find that, away from the formal lecture-room, he
exemplified in his own person (however unwillingly) that human tendency gegen die Grenzen der Sprache anzurenennen which was, in his eyes, one manifestation of the fundamental ethico-religious impulse.

WE HAVE NOW stripped away the layers of Wittgenstein's public philosophical reputation. In this way, we have arrived at the "spiritual attitude" (the phrase is Engelmann's) that informed the whole of Wittgenstein's thought. Engelmann characterises it as a "word-less faith," having affinities not only in Kierkegaard, but also in Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Whatever exists in the world of facts, and can accordingly be "stated" or "represented" by the regular use of language, must on that account alone be dismissed as irrelevant to the deeper questions of ethics and religion. So, at this deepest level of all, the realm of facts and the realm of values were - for Wittgenstein - completely dissociated.

Is this as far as we can go? Or might we, perhaps, penetrate behind this absolute dichotomy of facts and values, to some yet deeper layer of thought? Rationally speaking (I believe) this is the end of the road; and I shall take this as my starting-point shortly, in reconstructing an account of Wittgenstein's intellectual development. Yet, particularly in the letters to Engelmann, there are hints that - for Wittgenstein personally - something else may have underlain that fundamental, irreducible dichotomy.

We could follow up these hints in either of two directions, psychological or sociological - by looking more closely either at Wittgenstein's own personal make-up, or at the historical setting within which his mind was formed. Psychologically speaking, one can certainly say this much: that, whether or no Wittgenstein could have offered any further justification in principle for dissociating the realm of facts from that of values, he did not succeed in his own life in creating any effective correspondence between them. In his letters to Engelmann, he several times reports thoughts of suicide. He writes repeatedly in tones of self-disgust about his own "lack of decency" (Unanständigkeit); and he hints at emotional pressures which it was equally difficult for him to suppress or to sublimate. On 11 October 1920, he writes:

At last I have become a primary-school teacher, and I am working in a beautiful and tiny place called Trattenbach .... I am happy in my work at school, and I do need it badly, or else all the devils in Hell break loose inside me. How much I should like to see you and talk to you !!!! A great deal has happened. I have carried out several operations which were very painful but went off well. I.e. I may miss a limb from time to time - but better have a few limbs less and the remaining ones sound.

Whatever the cause, he was still struggling in 1922. He wrote again in 1926, "Anyway, I am not happy, and not because my rottenness [64] troubles me, but within my rottenness." And, even in 1937. he is writing from Trinity College, Cambridge, "God knows what will become of
Still: to grope after a source for Wittgenstein's deepest intellectual attitudes in his own personal temperament or make-up would probably betray us into unprofitable and irrelevant speculations. (As he says to Engelmann in a letter written from England, in the summer of 1925: "How could I expect you to understand me when I barely understand myself!") In any event, one can find many parallels to Wittgenstein's fundamental positions among his Viennese predecessors and contemporaries. Some of these precedents Erich Heller has already touched on in his essay in ENCOUNT 1 1 September 1959), and in his book, The Disinherited Mind (1959). Others are coming to light, as scholars begin to turn their attention to the Vienna of the 1890s and 1900s.

The extensive connections and analogies linking Wittgenstein's thought to that of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Karl Kraus, Weininger and Mauthner, Hertz and Boltzmann (to mention only a few) are a subject about which I have learned much from conversations with Mr. Allen Janik; but they would demand another complete essay - and one by an intellectual historian at that. So let me, at this point, set aside all questions of psychology and sociology, and embark instead on the second half of my original task: attempting to reconstruct the development of Wittgenstein's thought from the inside out. Let us accept the "wordless faith" of which Engelmann writes, as the central, original strand around which everything else grew. What sense can we then make of the stages through which Wittgenstein passed, in the development both of his philosophy and of his broader ethical ideas?

PUTTING ALL our new pieces together, what picture will emerge of Wittgenstein's intellectual development? To begin at the beginning: it is the picture of a young man born, not into the Austro-Hungarian nobility, but into the haute bourgeoisie - specifically, into one of the leading musical and intellectual families of Vienna.4 He grew up in a circle of men among whom the literary and philosophical concerns of the time were commonplaces. For Viennese intellectuals of the 1890s and 1900s, the ideas of Schopenhauer played the same sort of role that those of Sartre did in the Paris of the late 1940s and '50s: even if there had not been frequent allusions to Schopenhauer in Wittgenstein's writings one could, for this reason, guess at The World as Will and Representation as one likely starting-point for his thought.

It is the picture, also, of a young man of severe intellectual tastes and deep reserve, struggling

4 The conductor Bruno Walter (as Allen Janik has pointed out to me) speaks in his autobiography of the Wittgenstein household as having been the outstanding social focus, in the Vienna of his time, for cultural and intellectual discussion. Philosophical topics entered very actively into these discussions: notably those associated with the names of Kant and Schopenhauer. For instance, Bruno Walter reports having had conversations with Gustav Mahler, in which he expressed admiration for Kant's Critique of Pure Reason; and this led Mahler to give Walter the complete works of Schopenhauer as a present for Christmas 1894!
to maintain his personal integrity in the face of obstacles, both within himself and in a
disintegrating society. The feeling that the world of facts is inherently valueless was one element
in the widespread pessimism of the time - it recurs, for example, in the philosophy of Karl
Jaspers and other Existentialists. In Wittgenstein's case, that feeling became something of an
obsession: if values were not "out there," in the world of facts - he concluded - then they could
not be "representable," or "sayable." In this way, he restored to the facts/values dichotomy
something of the purity it had had in the writings of Kierkegaard.

(To many English-speaking philosophers, this element of "Post-Kantian Existentialism" in
Ludwig Wittgenstein comes as a surprise. Yet, in many respects, he was a true child of the
culture within which he grew up. If we consider him too much against his later, Cambridge
background - comparing his views, e.g., with those of G. E. Moore and Russell - we risk over-
looking this fact. For Russell, Frege and Moore exerted their influence on an intensely serious
young man whose intellectual preoccupations had already been largely formed in the Vienna of
his youth. Only if this is understood at the outset does his subsequent development come into
focus.)

Wittgenstein was formally educated as a physicist and applied mathematician. This training did
nothing to distract him from his fundamental philosophical interests. Instead, it sharpened his
analytical skills, and showed him a way of putting Schopenhauer's basic insights on a stricter
and more formal basis. The period from 1890 to 1910 was a phase in the history of science
during which theoretical physicists had the problem of "representation" in the centre of their
minds. It was the period of Duhem, Poincaré, and Mach; and above all - for an understanding of
Wittgenstein's development - it was the time of Heinrich Hertz and Ludwig Boltzmann. In his
book, The Principles of Mechanics (1894), Hertz [65] had faced again the same basic question
that bad perplexed Immanuel Kant a hundred years earlier: "How is a formal, axiomatic theory
of nature (such as Newton's dynamics) possible at all?" His answer had consisted in showing
how the language of Newtonian dynamics is first articulated into a system, and then put to use
as an instrument for "representing" the motions of material bodies. Boltzmann extended this
account to the whole of physics. From a scientific point of view, all that could meaningfully be
asserted were linguistic "representations" of the relevant physical phenomena: for the physicist,
the "values" we attach to these phenomen[a] play no part in their "representation."

Wittgenstein was deeply familiar with these views. Boltzmann's suicide frustrated Wittgenstein's
hope of studying with him, but the pages of the Tractatus echo with phrases - "logical spaces."
comprising "ensembles of possibilities" etc. - which have roots in Boltzmann's generalised
thermodynamics. So, by the time Wittgenstein encountered the new symbolic logic of Russell
and Frege, he was already well on his way to restating the "transcendental" problem of Kant
and Schopenhauer, using the more formal terms made possible by Hertz and Boltzmann. His
evident purpose was to extend their analysis, yet again, to embrace language-as-a-whole; and
so to demonstrate, in an exact form, what Schopenhauer had characterised less formally: \textit{viz.} the limits to the scope of "linguistic representation."

THIS TASK DEMANDED a new intellectual instrument, which would demonstrate, in general terms, the relationship of which Hertz and Boltzmann's "representation" was a special case. (This general relationship would be the \textit{Verbindung der Sprache mit der Wirklichkeit} referred to in Wittgenstein’s later conversation with Waismann.) He found his instrument in the symbolism of the "first-order logical calculus," as developed by Russell and Frege; and he used it, not simply to improve formal logic for its own sake, but as a means of tackling the language "transcendental" problem. The formal symbolism of mathematical logic was to be the means of demonstrating how, by "making for ourselves pictures of facts," we discover the \textit{Verbindung} between language and reality.

Looking back at the \textit{Tractatus} with the eyes of historians, accordingly, we may describe its fundamental programme as follows: it was to solve the "transcendental" problem, by using the symbolism of the new "propositional calculus" to extend Hertz and Boltzmann’s analysis of scientific language, and apply it to language-as-a-whole.\(^5\) Seen from this point of view, the writing of the \textit{Tractatus} completed, in an apparently final way, the central philosophical task with which Wittgenstein had been preoccupied. After this, he could no more go on working at philosophy than Hugo von Hofmannsthal could go on writing lyric poetry.\(^6\) And, for the next eight years, we find him working as a gardener, a schoolmaster, an architect ... as anything but philosopher.

MEANWHILE, the \textit{Tractatus} fell into the hands of the \textit{Wiener Kreis}, and rapidly became a "classic" of positivism. For Moritz Schlick and his associates had very different concerns from Wittgenstein. They were influenced less by the Kantianism of Hertz, and the transcendental theories of Schopenhauer, than by the critical empiricism of Mach and Avenarius. Their misreading of the \textit{Tractatus} was a pardonable misunderstanding, reflecting the very different philosophical attitudes with which they themselves had approached Russell and Frege’s new logical symbolism. It was not until 1927 that - after several years of frustration - Schlick finally succeeded in organising a series of meetings with Wittgenstein; and only then was it apparent just how radically Wittgenstein himself opposed the new "logical positivism."

\(^5\) I have discussed the relationship between Hertz and Wittgenstein in greater detail in a paper called "From Logical Analysis to Conceptual History," included in a forthcoming collection of papers on \textit{The Legacy of Logical Positivism for the Philosophy of Science} (ed. Stephen Barker and Peter Achinstein, Johns Hopkins Press).

\(^6\) I am once again indebted to Mr. Janik, who has drawn my attention to the importance of Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s \textit{Chandos Letter} (1902) - another explicit statement of the intrinsic limitations of language – for an understanding of the background of the \textit{Tractatus}. 
There is a touch of irony about their first encounters. After the initial meeting with Schlick, Wittgenstein reported to Paul Engelmann, "Each of us must have thought that the other was crazy." At subsequent meetings, Wittgenstein was unwilling to discuss philosophy, and insisted on reading poetry to the members of the Circle: especially the poems of Rabindranath Tagore. Only gradually did he gain enough confidence to engage in philosophical discussions on frank and equal terms. Even so, he found this much easier with Schlick and Waismann than with Carnap and the more fervently positivistic members.

The differences separating them were, after all, real enough. Within the philosophy of mathematics, conversations could proceed in a reasonably constructive spirit, and most of the discussions Waismann reports were in this general area. Once they went further afield, disagreements arose. For instance, we see Schlick pressing an empiricist point of view about perception, in the tradition of Locke, Hume, and Mach:

> You say that the colours form a system. By that, do you mean something logical, or something empirical? Suppose, for instance, that someone spent his whole life shut up in a red room, and could only see red .... Could he then say, "I see only red, but there must be other colours also?"

Wittgenstein's reply echoes Kant's earlier reply to Hume, *viz.* that all perception involves the formation of a judgment:

> I do not see red, rather I see *that that azalea is red*. In this sense I also see, that it is not blue .... Either there is a state of affairs, which can be described, in which case the colour *red* presupposes a system of colours, or alternatively "red" means something quite else, in which case there is no sense in calling it a colour.

The deeper source of these disagreements soon became apparent to Wittgenstein. Although the logical symbolism of the "propositional calculus" had been well-adapted for discussing mathematics, its successes there had distracted attention from the difficulties which arise when one attempts to apply it to the remainder of language. As he remarked on 22 December 1929:

> In constructing symbolic logic, Frege, Peano and Russell always had their eye on its application to mathematics alone, and they never gave any thought to the representarion (*Darstellung*) of real states-of-affairs (*Sachverhalte*).

In the *Tractatus*, for instance, he himself had been too readily satisfied with a formal analysis of *language-as-representation*, and had paid too little attention to the ways in which formalised representations are *put to use* in real-life linguistic behaviour. Even in physics (as Hertz had shown) a mathematical system can be applied to problems in the real world, only if we assume also definite procedures for relating mathematical symbols with empirical measurements. So it
had been an error to take the existence of some self-explanatory and universal Verbindung der Sprache und der Wirklichkeit for granted. On the contrary, the crucial problem now became, "By what procedures do men establish links between language and the real world?"

TO ARRIVE AT A "language" suitable for the expression of "propositions," accordingly, we must do more than "make for ourselves pictures of facts." In the last resort, our language acquires its meaning from the procedures by which we give our utterances definite uses in our dealings with the world: not from their inner articulation alone, nor from any essentially "pictorial" character in the utterances themselves. So the writing of the Tractatus had not completed Wittgenstein's task. His earlier solution of the "transcendental" problem - his earlier account of the scope and limits of language - had been given in terms of a "picturing" relation which (as he saw now all too clearly) had been at best a helpful metaphor. Now, he was faced with the complementary task, of showing how any linguistic expression - whether "pictorial" or not - acquires a linguistic significance, by being given a use in human life.

THIS WAS the starting-point for the characteristic investigations of Wittgenstein's later period. His concern was no longer with the formal "structure" of language, or with any supposed similarity of structure between "propositions" and "facts." In physics, there might be special reasons for giving a direct, "pictorial" representation of phenomena; but elsewhere there is less reason to regard the "propositions" of our language as "pictures" of "facts." From now on, Wittgenstein focused his attention instead, on language-as-behaviour - on the pragmatic rules that govern the uses of different expressions; on the "language-games" within which those rules are operative; and on the broader "forms of life" which ultimately give those language-games their significance.

The heart of the "transcendental" problem thus ceased (for Wittgenstein) to lie in the formal character of linguistic representations: instead, it became an element in "the natural history of man." Unlike Kant, who forever resisted any move that threatened to turn the discussion of philosophy into "mere anthropology," Wittgenstein came to see the philosophical task as one of human self-understanding - as he used to say, "Language is our language." Yet, for all this shift of focus, the deeper preoccupation of his later years remained the same as that of his youth: to complete the task begun by Kant and Schopenhauer. He still saw his central tasks as being (i) to delimit, from within, the boundaries of linguistic expression; and (ii) to show how the human tendency an die Grenze der Sprache anzurenennen can lead one, either - as in Moore - into a philosophical Geschwätz which confuses conceptual issues and empirical ones, or alternatively - as with Heidegger - into a religious attempt to articulate [67] the essentially unverbalisable. I recall his remarking at one of his "At Homes":

Sometimes, we go into a man's study and find his books and papers all over the place, and can say without hesitation: "What a mess! We really must clear this room up." Yet, at
other times, we may go into a room which looks very like the first; but after looking round we decide that we must leave it just as it is, recognising that, in this case, *even the dust has its place*.

So that same humane and cultivated Viennese who had begun, as a youth, by mastering the mechanics of Hertz and the thermodynamics of Boltzmann; who had gone on, in his twenties, to play a leading part in the development of symbolic logic; who had abandoned philosophy at the age of 30, in favour of other, humanly-more-valuable occupations - that same man found himself, at 50, exhorting his hearers to reflect more carefully on the ways in which children do learn (or might alternatively learn) the standard patterns of behaviour within which our language has a practical function, and on the metaphysical confusions that can flow from any failure to keep these practical functions of our language clearly in mind. Yet, for all its seeming changes, his long intellectual Odyssey had been directed along a single, constant compass-bearing. A man could obey the Socratic injunction, *Know thyself*, only if he came to understand the scope and limits of his own understanding; and this meant - first and foremost - understanding the scope and limits of language, which is the prime instrument of human understanding.

THAT DEEPER CONTINUITY in Wittgenstein's thought is reflected in the loyalty and admiration he retained, throughout his whole career, for Heinrich Hertz. It was from Hertz's example that he first learned how progress might be made in solving the "transcendental" problem. It was to Hertz he would return, in the late 1940s, for the classic description of philosophical perplexity: *viz.* to the passage in the Introduction to Hertz's *Principles of Mechanics*, where he diagnoses the confusions underlying the nineteenth-century debates about the nature of *force or electricity*:

> Why is it that people never in this way ask what is the nature of gold, or "what is the nature of velocity? Is the nature of gold better known to us than that of force? Can we by our conceptions, by our words, completely represent the nature of any thing? Certainly not. I fancy the difference must lie in this. With the terms "velocity" and "gold" we connect a large number of relations to other terms; and between all these relations we find no contradictions which offend us. We are therefore satisfied and ask no further questions. But we have accumulated around the terms “force” and "electricity" more relations than can be completely reconciled amongst themselves. We have an obscure feeling of this and want to have things cleared up. Our confused wish finds expression in the confused question as to the nature of force and electricity. But the answer which we want is not really an answer to this question. It is not by finding out more and fresh relations and connections that it can be answered; but by removing the contradictions existing between those already known, and thus perhaps by reducing their number. *When these painful contradictions are removed, the question as to the nature of force will not have been answered; but our minds, no longer vexed, will cease to ask illegitimate questions.*
There we can leave our historical analysis of Wittgenstein's intellectual development. A more balanced and technical account of his philosophy would, of course, have paid far closer attention to his detailed arguments: for instance, to his method of "truth-tables," his generalised theory of "propositional functions," and his treatment of necessary propositions as "tautologies"; and likewise to his later analysis of meaning as "use," his polemic against "private languages," and his views about the relation of "language-games" to "forms of life." But my aim here has been to give not a balanced account of Wittgenstein's thought, so much as a connected one. I have tried to show that, in his eyes, these detailed, technical investigations were not isolated, separate, self-sufficient exercises in symbolic logic or behavioural semantics, but rather so many natural consequences of a single, deeper, continuing argument.

To say this is not to label Wittgenstein, baldly and without qualifications, as a post-Kantian existentialist. To do that would be as grotesque a caricature as labelling him - without further qualification - a mathematical logician, a logical positivist or a linguistic analyst. For the man was all of these things in part, and none of them in his entirety. Being a Compleat Philosopher, he resists pigeon-holing in the intellectual slots that men of narrower, Procrustean minds devise for categorising their fellow-academics. Even at its shortest, a fair summary of Wittgenstein's position must reflect not only his separate, technical contributions to philosophy, but also the interrelations which explain why those contributions were significant for him.

One might, in this way, arrive at some such summary as the following. Ludwig Wittgenstein entered philosophy with both intellectual and ethico-religious preoccupations: the former derived from the transcendental enquiries of Kant and Schopenhauer, the latter inherited from Kierkegaard and kept alive by Tolstoy. The two groups of preoccupations together focused his attention on the scope and limits of linguistic expression; and his concern with this problem took four successive forms.

First, as a young student of applied mathematics, he hoped to solve this "transcendental" problem by generalising the ideas of Hertz and Boltzmann. Next, he found in the new logic of Frege and Russell an instrument - and a symbolism - with the help of which (he believed) one could demonstrate the scope and limits of language-in-general. The outcome of this attempt was his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

Returning to philosophy after a break of some years, Wittgenstein had second thoughts about the *Tractatus*. Even in mathematics (he now saw) the deeper problems require one to consider not the inner articulations of mathematical calculi, but rather the rule-conforming behaviour by which such calculi acquire some external relevance. (This is the burden of the conversations with Waismann and Schlick.) Finally, at Cambridge, in a philosophical situation dominated by G. E. Moore, he generalised his analysis yet again, with the aim of demonstrating how the meaning, scope, and limits of any symbolic representation - linguistic as much as mathematical
depend on the relations by which men link it to a wider behavioural context.

The "meaning" of any utterance was thus determined, for the later Wittgenstein, by the rule-conforming symbolic activities ("language-games") within which the expressions in question are conventionally used; and these symbolic activities in turn drew their significance from the broader patterns of activities (or "forms of life") of which they were a constituent element. The final solution of Wittgenstein's initial, transcendental problem then consisted in coming to recognise all the multifarious ways in which "forms of life" create a context for "language-games," and how these in turn delimit the scope and boundaries of the sayable.

SUCH A SUMMARY has one main virtue: it emphasises the continuity in Wittgenstein's thought, from the conversations in his father's drawing-room back in the 1890s, right up to the last Cambridge lectures and "At Homes" in 1946 and 1947. Yet it also raises two further questions, one historical, the other philosophical. Let me pose the philosophical problem first.

1. At the very outset, I argued, Wittgenstein's two main philosophical preoccupations - "representation," and the problem of "the ethical" - were related, yet distinguishable. The conclusions of the Tractatus had the apparent merit of satisfying both preoccupations at the same time; for the symbolic mapping of die Grenze der Sprache which the Tractatus provided effectively thrust the whole of ethics, values, and "the higher" outside the boundaries of the sayable, and so reinforced his original Kierkegaardian attitude. From 1930 on, we find him still taking up the same ethical standpoint, yet in a new philosophical context; and it is not clear that his new account of language will continue to support his ethical point of view.

He criticises Schlick's Fragen der Ethik, for instance, as follows (17 December 1930):

   Schlick says that theological ethics has two approaches to the Nature of the Good. According to the shallower interpretation, the Good is good, because God wills it; according to the deeper interpretation, God wills the Good, because it is good. In my view, it is the first approach which is the deeper: good is, what God commands. For this blocks the way to any explanation of "why" it is good; while the second approach is the shallow, rationalised one, which operates "as if" that which is good could be given some further intellectual basis. The first approach declares clearly, that the Nature of the Good has nothing to do with the facts, and so cannot be explained by any proposition.

Wittgenstein goes on to ask, "Does speech play an essential part in religion?" In answering this question, he seems at first glance to be anticipating his later general account of "language-as-behaviour":

   I can well imagine a religion in which there are no doctrines, so that nothing is spoken. Clearly, then, the essence of religion can have nothing to do with what is said - or rather:
if anything is said, then that itself is an element *(Bestandteil)* in religious behaviour *(Handlung)*, and not a theory ....

"Ah, yes!", we are tempted to say, "the 'language-games' of religion derive their meaning from the religious 'forms of life' in which they are elements."

At this point, the basic difficulty begins to emerge. For Wittgenstein immediately goes on:

Further, no question accordingly arises, whether the words used are true or false or meaningless. Religious utterances are no sort of likeness *(Gleichnis)*; otherwise one would have to express them also in prose.

Here, the use of the word *Gleichnis* looks backward to a "representational" view of language, rather than onward to the behavioural semantics of the *Philosophical Investigations*. [69]

Later on, Wittgenstein will warn us against assuming that *anything* in language derives its truth, falsity, or meaningfulness merely from being a *Gleichnis*; and will show us, rather, that all language is meaningful, on account of being *ein Bestandteil der Handlung*. By the time the final transition is complete, he will have abandoned entirely the contrast between literal, descriptive utterances (language-as-Gleichnis) and ritual, performative speech (language-as-Handlung); yet, by this final step, he will have dismantled also the very criterion for distinguishing the "sayable," which language can encompass, from the "transcendental," which the nature of things renders inexpressible.

To state the resulting problem:

In this second phase, Wittgenstein apparently implied that ethics and religion have "forms of life" of their own, within which ethical and religious "language-games" become - in their own ways - as verbalisable, as meaningful, and even as true-or-false, as any others. So was he not compelled, by his own later arguments, to abandon the dichotomy between the expressible (or factual) and the transcendental (or ethical)?

From the conversations on religious belief included in Fr. Barrett’s collection, it is clear that, to the end, Wittgenstein remained as puzzled as ever about the character of religious discourse. Yet the formal writings of his later years touch on this subject only isolated aphorisms – odd parenthetical phrases such as "(Theology as grammar)". They give no explicit answer to the central question, whether religious discourse, too, comprises a legitimate system of meaningful language-games. Meanwhile, plenty of modernist theologians today are happy and ready to use Wittgenstein's later method as the basis for a theological counter-attack, and to analyse religious discourse as *ein Bestandteil der religiösen Handlung*.

SO MUCH for the chief philosophical question left unanswered in these latest Wittgenstein
books.

2. My final, historical question has to do with the sources from which Wittgenstein drew the material for his later philosophical teachings. How, I would ask, did he arrive at his later view of semantics, as part of "the natural history of man"?

One might be inclined to retort: "Why should he have had to get the material from anywhere? Why should he not have thought it up for himself? After all, his experience as a schoolmaster in the 1920S would naturally have redirected his attention to language-learning as a fruitful source of philosophical examples; so did he need any further outside source of ideas and illustrations? This reply is fair enough, so far as it goes. Yet, when we recall how much can be learned by putting the Tractatus back into its historical context, we must surely keep and open minde, and be on the lookout for possible historical sources of the material used in Zettel and the Philosophical Investigations.

In any event, Wittgenstein's later trains of thought were not without contemporary parallels. I myself, for instance, happened to read his newly published Zettel in alternation with L. S. Vygotsky's book, Thought and Language - originally published in Moscow in 1934 - and the experience of turning between one book and the other set my head ringing with intellectual echoes. In so many ways, the theoretical parallels, the similarities in general intellectual attitude, even the tones of voice of the two men [70] were too close to be entirely independent. Yet Vygotsky's book was written in Russia in the early 1930s, by a pupil of Pavlov who could scarcely have known, or been known to, Wittgenstein personally. So let me just end this essay by drawing attention to one curious unremarked coincidence, which may turn out to have some historical significance at just this point.

ON THAT DAY in the spring of 1927 when Wittgenstein's sister Margaret (Mrs. Stonborough) finally brought Schlick and Wittgenstein together, two other guests were also present. As the editor of Engelmann's memoir and Waismann's notes, Brian McGuiness mentions them in passing; but he evidently did not think them worth inquiring about, nor did he find a place for their names in his index. There they remain, embalmed in the text-like the anonymous "person from Porlock," who interrupted Coleridge's poetic fantasy about Xanadu -referred to (in deprecating parentheses) as "Professor Bühler, the psychologist, and Mrs. Bühler."

---

7 See the English translation: L. S. Vygotsky, Thought and Language (M.I.T. Press, (962). Vygotsky's discussion of the relation between thought and inner speech finds a close parallel in Wittgenstein's remarks on the same topic in Zettel paras. 100ff. Some of Vygotsky's aphorisms also have a strongly Wittgensteinian tone: e.g., "A word is a microcosm of human consciousness;" and "A thought may be compared to a cloud shedding a shower of words."
Who, then, were the Bühlers? A full answer to that question would be another essay in itself. For Karl Bühler was not just one academic psychologist among others. On the contrary, he was one of the chief founders of the modern tradition in development psychology: that tradition of research on language and intellectual development, of which Vygotsky and Jean Piaget have been distinguished later exponents. (Vygotsky refers extensively to Karl Bühler's book, Die geistige Entwicklung des Kindes, which was published in 1927.) Still less was Charlotte Bühler a mere Frau Professor. She was an original psychologist in her own right, and some people considered her the more formidable intellect of the two. (Her own book, Soziologische und psychologiscle Studien über das erste Lebensjahr, was also published in 1927.) On top of all this, Karl Bühler was a major contributor to modern linguistic theory: in his Sprachtheorie (1934), for instance, he analysed the process of linguistic communication with great sublety and discrimination.

To anyone interested in historical origins of Wittgenstein's later ideas, I would therefore say: "Don't overlook the Bühlers." For anyone living in Vienna in 1927 who was interested in "the natural history of man" - and, particularly, in the roles of language within broader human "forms of life" - could hardly avoid considering the psychological and linguistic ideas at Karl and Charlotte Bühler. And, although it remains possible that Wittgenstein arrived at the positions presented in his Philosophical Investigations and Zettel, without any knowledge of the work being done at this very time by his sister's friends, the resulting coincidences would surely be rather remarkable. Given all this, one may ask, was the Bühlers' presence at Margaret Wittgenstein-Stonborough's house, on that day in 1927, a simple coincidence? Or did Ludwig Wittgenstein himself also know the Bühlers personally, study their work, and - like Vygotsky - learn something of importance for his own later work from their contributions to developmental psychology and linguistic theory?

8 Professor Theodore Mischel of Colgate University has confirmed, in conversation, the significance of Karl Bühler's work for an understanding of the later Wittgenstein. The whole controversy over so-called "imageless thoughts," in which psychologists of the Würzburg school were involved just before and after World War I, led Bühler to concentrate on precisely those topics - language as the bearer of intentionality, meaning as consciousness of rules rather than images, etc. - that Wittgenstein later put to such good use in philosophy.

In picking on Bühler for emphasis here, I am of course taking for granted - as being already well established - the reference to the later Wittgenstein of Jastraw, Koffka, and Spranger. As Robert Vogelin of Yale has pointed out, Eduard Spranger actually published in 1914 a highly successful book, in the neo-Kantian tradition of "characterology," with the title of Lebensformen - i.e., Forms of Life! By 1930, this book had reached the 7th edition and sold some 28,000 copies; so that Wittgenstein can hardly have been unaware of its existence when he borrowed the title for his own purposes.