



# New Books

## REVIEW ARTICLE: WHOSE WITTGENSTEIN?

Phil Hutchinson and Rupert Read

### *Wittgenstein's Method: Neglected Aspects*

By Gordon Baker

Oxford: Blackwell, 2004 pp. 328. £40.00 HB. (Hereafter: BWM)

### *Wittgenstein's Copernican Revolution: The Question of Linguistic Idealism*

By Ilham Dilman

Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002. pp. 240. £52.50 HB. (Hereafter: DWCR)

### *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies*

By P. M. S. Hacker

Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2001 [pb 2004]). pp. 400. £45.00 HB; £19.99 PB. (Hereafter: HWCC)

### *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations: An Introduction*

By David G. Stern

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. pp. 224. £40.00 HB; £10.99 PB. (Hereafter: SWPI)

Since the publication of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* in 1953 there have appeared a huge number of secondary texts published on different aspects of his life, his work and his place in the philosophical canon. The sheer volume of texts alone might indicate to a non-philosopher (or at least to someone who does their philosophizing outside the universities of the UK and USA) that Wittgenstein was the pre-eminent philosopher of the twentieth century and the philosopher of that century that can be truly said to take up a place alongside the greats: Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant...etc. However, from those doing their philosophizing within the academy there is an increasingly apparent and contrasting sense that Wittgenstein is not only less significant than those philosophers who are usually considered as taking their place in the canon, but less significant than his twentieth century contemporaries: Frege, Russell, Carnap, Turing; and even than many of those who have been pre-eminent in the latter part of the century: Quine, Davidson, Kripke, (early) Putnam etc. It is common to hear young professional philosophers talking of Wittgenstein as if his contribution to our subject amounted to something akin to a statistical blip—that is, while appearing to many for a short period in the mid twentieth century to have done nothing less than transform our subject, he is now, with the perspective afforded by history, seen as bordering on the insignificant in light of the wider picture—of the progression of our subject—that we now have. Indeed, research grant applications do well to leave out the 'W' word. Young academics are advised to play down any interest in Wittgenstein when applying for jobs. And if one wants one's critique of a particular philosophical picture to be

treated on its merits alone one better not mention that critique's Wittgensteinian debts or heritage.<sup>1</sup>

So, how can this be? Think of the questions raised here. For instance, how can one of the most notoriously difficult-to-grasp philosophers of the twentieth century spawn a publishing industry of his own, an industry with its decidedly 'populist' end? An industry, that is, which ranges from books on 'Tractarian' logical form, written by logicians and impenetrable to all but those trained in formal logic, to books on a ten-minute 'argument', written by a couple of journalists, who acknowledge that no one present at the 'argument' (between Popper and Wittgenstein) really remembers what was said, a book marketed to the 'departure lounge' and the '3-for-2' book-buyer? In short, Wittgenstein's name sells books almost anywhere; but knowledge of and admiration for his philosophy does not necessarily help you to sell yourself as a philosopher, one bit.

We think the answer to the question posed at the head of the previous paragraph is to be found in that vast secondary literature, which spans the two extremes we invoked. We suspect that the interest in Wittgenstein that leads to publishers commissioning so many books indicates far more on the part of the book-buyers than a mere voyeuristic interest in a somewhat eccentric and domineering character; we think it also indicates that his interest as a philosopher lies in more than his contributions to the early-twentieth-century development of philosophical logic (narrowly construed). Furthermore, we argue that those who summarily dismiss Wittgenstein's lasting significance are generally found to be dismissing a straw Wittgenstein, though crucially a straw Wittgenstein often fashioned by 'friends' and foes alike.

In what follows we review four recent 'secondary' (academic) texts. All these are significant texts by leading contemporary Wittgenstein scholars and while two (HWCC & SWPI) of them contain some discussion of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* we shall focus our review, in the main, on issues in the later Wittgenstein, especially in *PI* exegesis.

Beginning in the early 1970s Peter Hacker's name has steadily become almost synonymous with Wittgenstein scholarship. With his early (later much revised) *Insight and Illusion* (1972 [1986]), through the magisterial four-volume *Analytical Commentary on the Philosophical Investigations* (the first two volumes were co-authored with Gordon Baker; volume one has recently undergone revision by Hacker alone) to his *Wittgenstein's Place in Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy* and the collection under review here. These texts alone would warrant great respect. However, one should add to these several more: the co-authored (with Gordon Baker) *Frege: Logical Excavations*, (1983) a book which subjected the German logician's work to critical reappraisal, suggesting that Frege's own philosophy lacked coherence and that modern interpretations of that philosophy misrepresent it; the book spawned an (entertaining) exchange with

<sup>1</sup> On these points, there is little doubt that we, Hacker and the 'Swansea Wittgensteinians' would very largely agree.

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Michael Dummett in *Philosophical Quarterly* that spanned five years (1984–1989, volumes 34, 37, 38 & 39). In *Language, Sense and Nonsense* (1984) Baker & Hacker launched a stinging—and typically polemical in tone—assault on prominent trends in contemporary linguistics and philosophy of language. The polemic was positively informed by their interpretation of Wittgenstein’s later work; and negatively so by the flaws they took to be inherent in Frege’s work and the influence they deemed the latter had exercised upon contemporary theoretical linguists and philosophers of language, such as Noam Chomsky and Michael Dummett, respectively.

In *Scepticism, Rules and Language* (1984) Baker & Hacker turned their attention to the treatment of rule-following in the contemporary philosophy of language and in particular the ‘reading’ of Wittgenstein advanced by Saul Kripke. Once again the style was certainly polemical, maybe caustic; it certainly upset the object of the polemic considerably. And while one may be inclined to lean towards Baker & Hacker (if one must lean, on such matters) regarding Wittgenstein’s rule-following remarks *when* the target of their criticism is Saul Kripke’s exegesis—given that the latter (notoriously) selectively reads Wittgenstein’s remarks in order to generate ‘Wittgenstein-the-rule-following-sceptic’ or ‘Kripkenstein’<sup>2</sup>—this does not blind one to the somewhat gung-ho and over-reaching approach adopted in that work nor to a recognition that there is in play therein an understanding of Wittgenstein on following a rule which, while avoiding the pit-falls of Kripke’s ‘reading’, saddles Wittgenstein with a substantive philosophy of questionable value.<sup>3</sup>

So where do we find Hacker at the start of the twenty-first century? And does he, as the most prominent Wittgenstein exegete writing today, make a cogent case for Wittgenstein’s continued philosophical relevance? It is with these thoughts in mind that we approach the collection under review here.

Hacker’s current collection contains papers spanning seventeen years. The two earliest papers in the collection are co-authored with Gordon Baker, Hacker’s regular co-author in the 1980s. The rest are authored by Hacker alone, with nine of the essays first appearing between 1999 and

<sup>2</sup> And thus we certainly cannot agree with the letter of Stern’s remark, on p. 3 of SWPI, that Kripke’s book ‘marked a decisive step forward in the literature on the *Philosophical Investigations*’. Given our opening (somewhat anecdotal) observations regarding the attitudes toward Wittgenstein’s (and Wittgensteinians’) work found among contemporary analytic philosophers it is pertinent to note here how this is made manifest in discussions of Kripke: it is far from uncommon to hear philosophers dismissing *entirely* the significance of Kripke’s blatant selectivity in his reading of Wittgenstein’s rule-following remarks.

<sup>3</sup> In very brief: there are moments in their critique of Kripke when, anxious to avoid the imputation of scepticism to Wittgenstein (*à la* Kripke), they instead saddle Wittgenstein with an implicit theory or even metaphysics or mythology of rules.

2001. Therefore, barring a few anomalies, this is Hacker's most up-to-date statement of his position on Wittgenstein. However, what of those anomalies? We find it somewhat odd that these early co-authored papers find a place in this collection. Not only are two of them substantially older than the other papers in the collection, by at least six years, but Gordon Baker, Hacker's co-author in these papers, had, from 1991 onwards, not only explicitly distanced himself from the Baker & Hacker reading of *Philosophical Investigations* but also frequently used 'Baker & Hacker' readings as a stalking horse for his own new reading (see BWM: p. 47, n. 4, 5, 6, 8, & 11; p. 48, n. 13; p. 49, n. 20; p. 50, n. 26; p. 51, n. 28; p. 105, n. 21; p. 259, n. 68; & p. 278, n.10;<sup>4</sup> in addition, critical references to Hacker alone are almost as numerous, as are those to Anthony Kenny, and Hans-Johann Glock). We find it odd that in HWCC—and in fact in the entire large volume of literature published by Hacker on these matters—he has never sought to seriously engage with Baker's post '90 'apostasy'.<sup>5</sup> Particularly so since Baker explicitly identifies continuities between his own (post Baker & Hacker) reading of *PI* and the readings advanced by Stanley Cavell, James Conant, Cora Diamond and Burton Dreben<sup>6</sup> (BWM: 104: n. 2; & Diamond alone at p. 222: n. 37). What is significant about Baker's change of mind is not that he did so: a change of mind does not necessitate progress. What is significant is the extent to which Baker's later work stands as a powerful critique of the reading propounded by he and Hacker in the 1980s, and by Hacker since.<sup>7</sup>

The details of the differences are many and we cannot do justice to them here. However, the crucial distinction between Baker & Hacker and Hacker on the one hand, and the later (post '90) Baker on the other, is in the understanding of Wittgenstein's 'method' (or views on / practices in the proper

<sup>4</sup> For brevity we note only the page references to notes here. It is in the notes where Baker explicitly—and frequently/repeatedly—identifies the reading he is juxtaposing to his own in the body of the text as that of Baker & Hacker. Therefore, the details of his departure from and the substance of his criticism of those readings are to be found in the text of the essays to which these are the notes.

<sup>5</sup> We understand that Hacker is—at long last—addressing the issue in his contribution to Kahane, G. Kanterian, E. Kuusela, O. (eds.) *Wittgenstein and his Interpreters: essays in memory of Gordon Baker*. Oxford: Blackwell.

<sup>6</sup> The significance of Baker's alignment of his reading with that of Cavell, Conant, Diamond and Dreben and Hacker's lack of comment upon that alignment is to be found in Hacker's numerous critical remarks regarding those same readers, e.g. in HWCC (p. xiii) and also in Hacker (2003) 'Wittgenstein, Carnap and the New American Wittgensteinians' *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 53, No. 210; pp. 1–23. Regarding what Hacker has to say in the latter about Conant and Diamond on TL-P one might also see Diamond's (2005) response 'Logical Syntax in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.' *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 55, No. 218; pp. 78–89.

<sup>7</sup> And his followers such as Hans-Johann Glock.

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task and practice of the activity of philosophy<sup>8</sup>). In short, Baker's post-1990 'position'—expounded throughout BWM—is that Wittgenstein's method is *radically therapeutic*: *therapeutic* in that the aim is to relieve mental cramps brought about by being faced with a seemingly intractable philosophical problem; *radically* so in that how this aim is achieved is person relative, occasion sensitive and context dependent. (See the following chapters of BWM: 1, 2 & 9; the latter of these appeared posthumously, and much shortened, in the pages of this journal.<sup>9</sup>)

A key indication of the difference can be gleaned from the understandings of the place of 'perspicuous (re-)presentation',<sup>10</sup> of which Wittgenstein writes in *PI* §122, that it 'is of fundamental importance for us'. For Baker 'perspicuous presentation' does not denote a class of representations as it is usually thought to do (in the work of Baker & Hacker for instance, though, to be sure, not only there). It rather denotes what works: what *achieves* the therapeutic aim. And that *this* form of representation does so *here*, now, for this person, etc. does not imply that it will do so again, (or) for someone else. Therapy is achieved by facilitating one's interlocutor's ((or) one's own) arrival at a position where they might freely acknowledge hitherto unnoticed aspects. Acknowledging new aspects helps free one from the grip of a philosophical picture that initially led to the seeming intractability of the philosophical problem. Any presentation which serves this purpose can therefore be said to have been perspicuous—for *that* person, at *that* time, *thereabouts*. Perspicuity, on this understanding, does not denote a property of a class of representations but is rather an achievement term: perspicuity is accorded to the presentation that achieves the bringing to light of new aspects which are freely accepted by one's philosophical interlocutor.

One consequence of the later Baker's rendition of 'perspicuous presentation' is that it allows one to reinterpret what 'our grammar' might be when we consider ourselves to be perspicuously presenting it (see BWM: chs. 1 & 2). For (later) Baker 'grammar' is best read as "our" grammar; while for Hacker, 'grammar' is to be read as *the* grammar'. So, for Hacker a perspicuous presentation comprises the clarification of the rules of (the) grammar (of the language), by making clear the similarities and dissimi-

<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Hacker confirms this in the *Preface* to the revised edition of volume one of the *Analytic Commentary on the Philosophical Investigations*.

<sup>9</sup> 'Friedrich Waismann: A Vision of Philosophy' in *Philosophy* 78 2003: pp. 163–79.

<sup>10</sup> There is some dispute over how best to translate *Übersichtliche Darstellung*; while it has traditionally been rendered, following Anscombe's translation, as perspicuous representation, a number of authors, such as Stanley Cavell (2001 [1996]) and Nigel Pleasants (1999), have argued (independently) that it should be better translated as perspicuous presentation. We favour the latter. (For more detail in respect of this segment of our argument, see our 'The significance of perspicuous presentations', forthcoming in Daniele Moyal-Sharrock's *Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology*.)

larities in our employment of words in our language. Hacker writes:

The main source of philosophical puzzlement and of misconceived philosophical theories is our failure to command a clear view of the uses of words. **The grammar of our language** is lacking in surveyability, for expressions with very different uses have similar surface grammars: 'I meant' looks akin to 'I pointed', 'I have a pain' to 'I have a pin', 'He is thinking' appears akin to 'he is talking', 'to have a mind' looks like 'to have a brain', '2 is greater than 1' seems akin to 'Jack is taller than Jill'. Hence we misconstrue the meanings of expressions in our philosophical reflections. We think of meaning something or someone as a mental act or activity of attaching signs to objects, take pain to be a type of object inalienably possessed by the sufferer, imagine the mind is identical with the brain, assume that statements of numerical inequalities are descriptions and so on. What is needed is a perspicuous representation of the segment of grammar that bears on the problem with which we are confronted. It enables us to see differences between concepts that are obscured by misleadingly similar grammatical forms of expressions. For this no new discoveries are necessary or possible—only the description of grammar, the clarification and arrangement of familiar rules for the use of words. We must *remind* ourselves of what we already know perfectly well—namely, how expressions, the use of which we have already mastered, are indeed used. [...] **Complementary to the conception of philosophy as the quest for a surveyable representation of segments of our language that give rise to conceptual perplexity and confusion is the conception of philosophy as therapeutic.**

(HWCC: 31. emboldened emphases ours)

There is much we can find pretty agreeable in the above passage. However, there is also much which does damage to Wittgenstein as the philosopher of significance we think him to be. For instance, is it really plausible that the errors of philosophers are of the crude type—of 'type-confusions'—made central in the early part of this quotation? Isn't this precisely the kind of crude criticism of philosophers—as little more than linguistic idiots who fail to notice the most elementary distinctions between different words etc.—that is likely to put people off, put readers' backs up? That is to say: *Not* persuade; *Not* dissolve delusions; *Not* lead the philosopher themselves to give up those claims which they are inclined to make?

We focus here on the claim that there are two complementary strands, clarificatory and therapeutic, in Wittgenstein's philosophy. We can find no evidence for these being discrete though complementary strands. Yet Hacker repeatedly asserts them to be so (in addition to HWCC: pp. 23, 31, 37; see also Hacker 1996: pp. 232–38 and 2001a: pp. 333–41). However, leaving the question of textual evidence aside, asserting them to be so certainly has unfortunate implications for Hacker's 'Wittgenstein'.

The unfortunate implications are: if elucidation and therapy (connective analysis, perspicuous presentation) are distinct endeavours, though both undertaken in *PI*, then what *motivates* the elucidations? It is

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difficult, without relating, i.e. subsuming, the practice of elucidating to the therapeutic thrust of *PI*, to understand why Wittgenstein would want to engage in such ‘clarifications of our language’. For if the clarification of our grammar is not occasion-sensitive—not carried out on a case-by-case basis with a particular interlocutor—then Wittgenstein, it seems, is embroiled in something of a performative contradiction. For if clarification *per se* is a goal then it presupposes a particular view of how language *must* be (*contra*, that is, *PI* §132). In clarifying language in this way Wittgenstein is taken to dissolve philosophical problems by showing us (clarifying, perspicuously representing) the rules of our grammar (linguistic facts). Again this raises the prospect of Wittgenstein, at a really quite basic level, contradicting his own metaphilosophical remarks in the very text in which he makes those remarks; a text, we should recall, that he laboured over for sixteen years. Indeed, it turns Wittgenstein into a closet metaphysician. This “problem of motivation” then presents further problems for Hacker; if he insists upon ‘connective analysis’ as separate and distinct from therapy, then this must (at the least) imply that Wittgenstein does have a picture (or a theory) of ‘language’; such that it enables us, as it were, to take up a stance external to that ‘language’ and survey it; and that these elucidations serve some non-person-relative and non-occasion-sensitive elucidatory purpose.

This is important because holding on to the idea that there is more than therapy hereabouts leads Hacker to saddle Wittgenstein with a form of conventionalism. Hacker seems not to realize why others find his form of ‘Wittgensteinianism’ easy to dismiss. But a glance at the following passage might indicate why it is.

**[D]espite his own pronouncements**[!], Wittgenstein’s philosophy also has a complementary **constructive aspect to it**, which he himself acknowledged[?]. Side by side with his demolition of philosophical illusion in logic, mathematics, and philosophy of psychology, **he gives us numerous overviews of the logical grammar of problematic concepts**, painstakingly tracing conceptual connections that we are all too prone to overlook. The conceptual geology of the *Tractatus* gave way to the **conceptual topography** of the *Investigations*. In place of the depth analysis envisaged by the *Tractatus*, he **now described the uses of expressions, the various forms of their context-dependence**, the manner in which they are integrated in behaviour, the point and presuppositions of their use, and their relations of implication, compatibility, or incompatibility with other expressions. Such a ‘connective analysis’ of philosophically problematic concepts that give rise to philosophical perplexity aims to give us an overview of the use of our words. ‘The concept of a perspicuous representation’, he wrote ‘is of fundamental significance for us’ (*PI* §122)—it produces precisely that understanding that consists in seeing connections, and enables us to find our way through the web of language, entanglement in which is characteristic of conceptual confusion and philosophical perplexity. Providing such a perspicuous representation of some segment of our language, elucidation of the conceptual forms and



structures of some domain of human thought that is philosophically problematic, is a positive, constructive achievement that is complementary to the critical and destructive task of shattering philosophical illusion, destroying philosophical mythology, and dispelling conceptual confusion.<sup>11</sup> (HWCC: 37. emboldened emphases ours)

‘Logical grammar’, ‘topography’; we are in Gilbert Ryle territory here. Some might not see that as a problem.<sup>12</sup> But we remind you of our concerns above. Let us look at what we generally take to be the purpose of maps. We don’t find it useful to talk of mapping the waves in the ocean. Nor do we generally consider it useful even to map the (local, transitory) sand dunes in the average desert. Maps rely, so that they might serve the purpose for which they are designed, on relatively static reference points holding around which the map-reader might orient themselves. The thought that mapping our language might serve a purpose (non-person relative, non-occasion sensitive) relies on the assumption that certain relatively static reference points obtain within that language. From what vantage point might we be able to discern which parts of our language are mountains, which sand dunes and which waves, and furthermore, where new conurbations might appear that might impact upon these? Indeed, how might we know that in language ‘mountains’ don’t become ‘waves’ before returning to being ‘mountains’? To put this a little less metaphorically: *What vantage point on language would one need to assume* so as to be able to discern that which would serve as (non-person-relative, non-occasion-sensitive) reference points?<sup>13</sup>

Hacker might appeal to one of two alternatives here, neither of which, we feel, help him. He might appeal to certain concepts as being central to human existence, after the fashion of Strawsonian descriptive metaphysics.

<sup>11</sup> Not incidentally, we question this tendentious rendering of what therapy would amount to. These episodes of ‘shattering’ etc. do not sound like any therapy with which we are familiar.

<sup>12</sup> For some specifically Ryle-related reasons to believe that it *is* the problem we take it to be—and in agreeing at least that Ryle’s philosophy of ‘category mistakes’ etc. is mistaken, we find ourselves for once broadly in accord with the received wisdom in contemporary English-speaking philosophy—see Anthony Palmer (1988) *Concept and Object* (London: Routledge). For critiques of Rylean and Hackerian approaches to philosophy, see also James Conant’s work, e.g. ‘Wittgenstein on Meaning and Use’ *Philosophical Investigations* 21 (1998), 222–50, and Lars Hertzberg’s ‘The Sense is Where You Find It’ (chapter 3 of McCarthy and Stidd (eds.) (2001) *Wittgenstein in America* (Oxford: OUP).

<sup>13</sup> For more on the in-effect static character attributed to language by Hacker, see Guetti and Read (1995) ‘Acting from Rules: ‘Internal Relations’ versus “Logical Existentialism”’ (*International Studies in Philosophy*. Vol. XXVIII, no. 2. pp. 43–62) and (1999) ‘Meaningful Consequences’ (*Philosophical Forum*. Vol. XXX, no. 4. pp. 289–315). Compare also the discussion of the ‘riverbed’ etc. in *On Certainty*.

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However, he seems to rule out following this approach in HWCC chapter 13 ‘On Strawson’s Rehabilitation of Metaphysics’. We suggest, however, that, if one goes back to *ACPI-i*, that which (putatively) gave language its ability to be fruitfully mapped was its categorial nature, or as Baker & Hacker put it the fact that ‘words belonged to a type of use’. Here ‘types’ can be taken as virtually a synonym of Rylean ‘categories’. Language can be parsed according the type of use to which a word belongs. In commenting upon the trip to the grocer in *PI* §1 Baker & Hacker wrote that the grocer example is an ‘illustration of different types of words.’ That it shows simply that

‘Five’, ‘red’, and ‘apple’ are words **each one of which belongs to a type the use of which is fundamentally different from the use of words of the other types**. To say that ‘apple’ is the name of a fruit, ‘red’ the name of a colour, and five the name of a number would mask deep differences beneath superficial similarities. Again, one might think ‘apple’ involves correlation with an object, ‘red’ with a colour,<sup>14</sup> and ‘five’ with counting objects of a type, so all words involve correlation with *something*. The web of deception is readily woven.<sup>15</sup>

(*ACPI-i*: 63. emboldened emphasis ours)<sup>16</sup>

Baker & Hacker claim that what Wittgenstein sought to demonstrate with his example of the trip to the grocer in *PI* §1 was merely<sup>17</sup> that words belong to types which are individuated by the use to which they are put. Is it, we wonder, these ‘types of use’ which comprise the reference points required for Hacker’s mapping of our grammar? Put another way: are these ‘types of use’ the building blocks from which he might ‘construct’

<sup>14</sup> There’s an interesting point to be made here regarding Chomsky’s famous example of ‘Colourless green ideas sleep[ing] furiously.’ Do we need to understand ‘green’ as a colour term? Might we not understand it better as denoting a lack of experience, or a naïveté, giving rise to our dull or prosaic ideas which we struggle to put to sleep (keep at bay). Chomsky’s example, in order that it do the work he expects it to, implies a categorial semantics (which is troubling enough; though less troubling perhaps than his actual—even stronger—claim: that it implies a *syntactically*-structured ‘generative grammar’).

<sup>15</sup> For a more extended discussion of Baker & Hacker’s ‘web’ see our ‘*Memento*: A Philosophical Investigation’ (2005).

<sup>16</sup> In the revised edition, which appeared very shortly before we went to press, Hacker makes the point even clearer by explicitly claiming that Wittgenstein is concerned here to demonstrate the **categorial** nature of these words.

<sup>17</sup> Hacker in effect *emphasises* this ‘merely’ in the second ed. of *ACPI-i*: see Stern *SWPI*: p. 85. It is striking that Hacker does not seem to *consider* the possibility that the *outlandishness* of the scenario Wittgenstein constructs in *PI* §1 is itself of any philosophical moment; see n. 26, below, for more on this.

our 'Wittgensteinian' map?

How does claiming that each word belongs to a type of use get us further than appealing to correlations with things, or words as names of things? All one has in fact done is exchange 'things' for a 'type of use'.

In sum: Words do not '*belong* to types of use'. We *put* them to use.

The mistake here then is (Baker &) Hacker's thought that what is problematic for Wittgenstein—what he wants to critique in the opening remarks quoted from Augustine—is that words name things or correspond to objects, with the emphasis laid on the *nature* of what is on the other side of the word-V<sup>18</sup> relationship. Rather, we contend that what is problematic in this picture is that words *must* be **relational** at all—whether as names to the named, words to objects, or 'words' belonging to a 'type of use.'<sup>19</sup> It is the necessarily **relational** character of 'the Augustinian picture' which is apt to lead one astray; Baker & Hacker, in missing this, ultimately replace it with a picture that retains the relational character, only recast. There is no such thing as a word outside of some particular use; but that is a different claim from saying, with Baker & Hacker, that words *belong to a type of use*. For a word *to be* is for a word *to be used*. Language does not exist external to its use by us in the world. Language cannot,<sup>20</sup> in John McDowell's phrase, be viewed from sideways on.<sup>21</sup>

On balance, then, we do not find Hacker's work as helpful an addition to the secondary literature on Wittgenstein as many will perhaps have hoped that it would be. But we still hold to our suggestion earlier in this review essay: that the nature of the 'secondary literature' on Wittgenstein gives (on balance) an essential and hopeful clue to his philosophy.

<sup>18</sup> This is 'standard' philosophical notation for whatever is supposed to be there on the other side of the relation.

<sup>19</sup> It is important to note the 'must' here. Of course words often refer to things in a trivial non-controversial sense; it is just that this is not a condition of their having meaning.

Also, we take it as unproblematic that 'belonging' is a form of relationship. 'Belonging' denotes a relationship holding between the possessor and possessed; certain words, on this account, are therefore possessed by certain types of use.

<sup>20</sup> This 'cannot' should not, however, be read as limiting us from anything, or compromising our abilities, as it does in the revisionism central to Anti-Realisms. For argument as to why, see Cray and Read's *The New Wittgenstein* (London: Routledge, 2000), *passim*, though particularly pp. 308–9 of Carbone's paper therein.

<sup>21</sup> One does well here to think of the substantive 'language' in light of Wittgenstein's remarks about substantives on page one of the *Blue Book*. Do not assume there is some *thing* (discrete item), language, which can be referred to; separable, that is, from its place in the lives of human animals and its use by them in their social practices and as aspects of those lives and practices. This, we take it, is centrally implicit in Dilman's DWCR (see below).

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Wittgenstein is more than a philosopher's philosopher, and far more than what most English-speaking philosophers want or take him to be. David Stern's impressive new book, *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations: An Introduction*, seems to be onto this. Certainly, Stern takes the secondary literature in its breadth very seriously, and makes some 'connections' beyond English-speaking philosophy. And this book is unusual among introductions to Wittgenstein in taking the stances available in the secondary literature *as a central means of understanding the primary literature*. This is partly because Stern believes, we think rightly, that any adequate rendition of Wittgenstein's philosophy must *explain* how it can be that Wittgenstein has been interpreted *so* diversely; why have so many *different* philosophies taken much or all of their philosophy to be implicit in Wittgenstein's work? (See especially SWPI p. 7) There must be something about the character of this work—*PI*—that leaves it open to such (over-)interpretation.

The essence of Stern's answer, supported with incremental and intelligent textual work in the progress of his book, is that most philosophers do not take Wittgenstein's dialogical format seriously enough. This point has at least a double significance: firstly, Stern urges that Wittgenstein's 'narrator' be distinguished not only from Wittgenstein's 'interlocutor(s)', but also from his 'commentator'. The 'narrator' and the 'interlocutory voice(s)' engage in disputation almost throughout the book; Stern's helpful suggestion is that many philosophers have (mis-)identified the narrator *with Wittgenstein himself*. Such a practice licenses the attribution of views to Wittgenstein, and the extraction from the text of what the 'narrator' believes. The 'interlocutor' then looks like nothing more than a rhetorical/presentational device.<sup>22</sup> Wittgenstein's text is then 'obscure', 'literary' etc., but these features of it are inessential to its philosophical purpose and lessons, which can be extracted from it...

Stern holds, by contrast, that the 'narrator' is, roughly, a *character* in Wittgenstein's dialogue. It is the 'commentator' figure who is most present in moments, like those that tend to predominate in *PI* §§120–33, where rather than the 'trenchant and provocative theses advocated by the narrator', one finds 'the commentator's rejection of all philosophical theses.' (SWPI: p. 23)<sup>23</sup> The failure to differentiate between 'narrator' and 'commentator' has brought with it a frequent tendency to find Wittgenstein in tension with himself. Well sure, one can call it a tension within himself / within oneself, but hardly an unknowing or unknown one: the point of the differentiation between 'narrator' and 'commentator' is to make a feasible way of defusing the tension aspectually prominent.

The second sense in which one needs to think of the book as dialogical,

<sup>22</sup> As we shall see below, Peter Hacker and the early Gordon Baker are among the foremost of such readers, according to Stern.

<sup>23</sup> Though see *PI* §128: Wittgenstein's 'commentator' does *not* actually reject all philosophical theses: he rejects only *controversial* theses, what Wittgenstein elsewhere in his corpus calls 'opinions'.

according to Stern, is this: it is not as if *these 3 voices* in the text can be easily or ever *definitively* identified. One's reading and re-reading of Wittgenstein's book involves one not only identifying oneself with different voices to different degrees at different times, but also coming to identify the voices themselves variously. The text thus remains *alive*.

However, we are not sure that the two senses in which *PI* is dialogical are, as *Stern presents the text of PI*, entirely compatible: we think that, unless one takes very great care not to attach oneself to or identify with Wittgenstein's 'narrator' or Wittgenstein's 'commentator', one risks falling away from the insight that *PI* does not cease to be a dialogue once one has understood it.<sup>24</sup> We think that Stern sometimes does not stay close enough to the (groundbreaking) insight of Cavell's with which he begins: that it is the *struggle* between the interlocutor(s) and the narrator, a struggle without end, and the reader's *internalisation* of that struggle,<sup>25</sup> that most enlightens the reader of *PI*. Observing this struggle without attaching oneself to either side of that struggle results in one learning, and really *thinking*. As Waismann (or later Baker) would put it, perhaps: it *fre*es one.

To substantiate this worry, we begin by suggesting that Stern tends at times to over-identify with Wittgenstein's *commentator*. Consider the following passage:

'[I]f Wittgenstein is correct, the accounts offered by **all** the participants in his dialogues are nonsense, and so cannot, in the end, be true or false. Ultimately, Wittgenstein's view is that the proto-philosophical accounts of meaning and mind that his interlocutor proposes and that his narrator opposes cannot be understood...'

(SWPI: p. 25. our emphasis)

Is the 'commentator' included in Stern's 'all'? Or not? We would suggest that he should be; but the second sentence of the quoted passage suggests that Stern thinks otherwise. But so to think is arguably still to fail to do justice to the 'non-linear' character of Wittgenstein's text. Has one really gained very much if, rejecting the 'cut-and-paste' view of those who would take the 'narrator's' words out of their contexts and turn them into a plainly statable set of philosophical opinions and arguments, one *accepts*

<sup>24</sup> We say this with no sense of smugness: we ourselves feel quite intensely sometimes the tendency simply to identify oneself, for instance with Wittgenstein's commentator, as perhaps also does Baker. It is very hard to work through it. When subject to this tendency/temptation, it is necessary to remind oneself that one is unlikely to attain philosophical peace simply by presupposing a controversial conception of philosophy, opinions about what philosophy is. One needs to regard one's 'metaphilosophy' too as only transitionally one's *resource*, as ultimately too part of one's *topic*: not as a philosophy of philosophy, but as something in need of 'philosophical *treatment*' (cf. *PI* §254).

<sup>25</sup> The dialogue must be felt as one that is *tête-à-tête* with oneself, as Wittgenstein once remarked.

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such a view for the ‘commentator’?<sup>26</sup>

A central theme in Stern’s book is the questioning of overtly or covertly ‘dogmatic’ readings of *PI*: readings, that is, which in effect take Wittgenstein to be committed to various controversial theses. Pre-eminent among such (non-dialogic) readings, of course, is Peter Hacker’s, and Stern has a good deal of sport showing the numerous ways in which Hacker’s Wittgenstein is actually a purveyor of just such theses: see e.g. SWPI pp. 114–6, for an excoriating treatment of Baker & Hacker on rules, and p. 130, for a powerful critique of their take on a pivotal paragraph in the progress of the *Investigations*, *PI* §89.

As opposed for instance to Hacker’s rendition of Wittgenstein as arguing against ‘the Augustinian picture’ of language, as arguing for ‘the autonomy of grammar’, and so on, a central feature of Stern’s book is his accessible exposition of Wittgenstein as employing centrally a deflationary 3-fold argument-schema:

- (1) the statement of a philosophical ‘intuition’, such as “Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands” (*PI* §1);
- (2) ‘The description of a quite specific set of circumstances in which that position is appropriate’, as is imagined in *PI* §2 (SWPI p. 10); and
- (3) ‘The deflationary observation that the circumstances in question are quite limited, and that once we move beyond them, the position becomes inappropriate.’ (SWPI p. 10).

There is a further move, however, in Cavell, Goldfarb and Conant, that Stern does not make here, of which we have failed to locate mention in his book, and that we would attempt to sum up as follows: When it looks as if

<sup>26</sup> Compare and contrast p. 36 of Stern’s text with this thought of our’s: Warren Goldfarb and Juliet Floyd advocate (what Goldfarb has characterized as) a ‘Jacobin’ reading of the *Tractatus*, as opposed to the merely ‘Girondin’ reading evident in the most recent work of Conant and Diamond (2004). A ‘Jacobin’ reading of the *Tractatus* implies that one does not attach even to the ‘frame’ of the book, that one overcomes *that*, too. *Similarly here*: Wittgenstein’s ‘commentator’ is as it were the very last rung on the ladder that is *PI*. The last temptation of the Wittgensteinian is to think that one at least has a solid *view* on and of *the nature of philosophy*. The genuinely Pyrrhonian (Jacobin) step here is to suggest rather that the commentator too is just... a figure, a character in what *remains* enduringly a dialogue. Stern does not consider this possibility—a possibility that throws into question continuing (as Stern does) to speak of ‘Wittgenstein’s view’ *at all*—despite the fact that he does implicitly recognise the importance of this possibility *for debates around the Tractatus*: see SWPI pp. 45–6. In short, we should be resolute in our reading of the *Investigations*, as we ‘Jacobins’ are in our reading of the *Tractatus*. The commentator is the equivalent of the frame—it is the framing voice. But the frame too has to be ‘overcome’.

Wittgenstein invites one to (e.g.) conceive of something as a complete primitive language, then one should look out! The apparent orders which, let us recall, Wittgenstein's *narrator* issues, ('*Conceive* this as...' cf. *PI* §2) are perhaps no more to be *relied* upon than are that narrator's provisional conclusions as the text proceeds. That an order is apparently issued does not imply that an order has actually been issued. That an order has apparently been given does not imply that one can succeed in obeying it.

We think that Wittgenstein invites one to look at the scenarios, the activities that he apparently proposes (the 'grocer's shop', the 'builders', the 'woodsellers' etc.) as if they were real, as if they were languages that one could speak, or at least understand, and then gradually one comes to see that they are not—to be precise, that they are not *what one wanted them to be*. So much of Wittgenstein's writing, especially in the last 15 years or so of his life, crucially involves scenarios that are subtly (or in some cases fairly obviously) highly-bizarre or 'mad'. This is a *vital* aspect of his method. (Stern recognizes this, of the 'grocer's' in *PI* §1, but shies away from the consequences of such recognition as concerns the 'builders' of *PI* §2.) Much Wittgenstein scholarship has occluded or domesticated this 'madness', to its cost<sup>27</sup>. Wittgenstein has then come to seem more assimilable with the philosophical tradition than he actually is: his 'arguments' have been brought to bear against those of more traditional philosophic voices—and have (rightly) been found wanting. One can only understand Wittgenstein's real point (and significance) if his texts are allowed to 'self-deconstruct' on one, and if this is understood to be *the point* of them, not an argument against them! Otherwise, 'Wittgenstein' will always lose the argument with those who take themselves to have an argument with him.

In short, we would suggest that Stern has omitted to consider the possibility that 'the builders' (and somewhat likewise, 'the woodsellers'<sup>28</sup>) do not really succeed in giving us even stage (2) of the 'argument-scheme' that Stern finds paradigmatically in *PI* §2 (SWPI p. 11), and again and again in the rest of the book: for 'they' will probably not amount in the end to being judged as having a *language*, at all. In effect, Stern's stance tends, on such occasions in his text, to be less far from (identifying with)

<sup>27</sup> Stern reports (p. 85) that he has had correspondence with Hacker in which the latter has indicated that he explicitly meets this challenge in the second edition of *ACPI-i*: the challenge that has already been posed for instance by Hacker's distinguished former pupil, Stephen Mulhall (2001). Hacker dismisses it summarily. He simply writes, without arguing the point, that the bizarre nature of the trip to the grocer (the person making the trip is mute, having to hand over a note), the grocer's strange behaviour (his muteness, his need for colour charts to discern redness) and peculiar nature of the grocery shop (colour charts, apples kept in drawers etc.) are 'unimportant' for Wittgenstein's (alleged) purpose.

<sup>28</sup> In Wittgenstein's *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, and as discussed for instance by Cavell, Conant, Cray and Cerbone.



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Wittgenstein's narrator's than he claims it is.

The part of Wittgenstein's method that is most crucially evident in and around *PI* §2 is ultimately not then (to our mind) Stern's 'argument-schema', but rather an encouragement to the reader to adopt a perspective or an idea, and then to see whether it really does / yields what she wants from it; or whether it collapses on one as one attempts to work it through. The therapeutic hope is that the reader might learn from that, from having as it turns out *merely imagined that one could imagine* such and such. When one really sees that the 'specific set of circumstances in which that position is appropriate'" (SWPI p. 10) is as *mad* or as 'alien' as it often is, one will rightly wonder about whether one has actually intelligibly described *any* circumstances in which 'that position' is appropriate. And then, *the very idea that one had succeeded in enunciating or entertaining a position in the first place* will start to dissolve on one. This applies therapy to the very roots of philosophical delusion, as Stern rightly wishes to. This, we think, is the therapy, deeper even than that which Stern attributes to Wittgenstein's method, that is in play over and over again in *PI*.<sup>29</sup>

To evaluate whether our take on Stern—and on Wittgenstein—is right or not would require an extensive exegetical research, including a detailed reading of Stern's subtle, scholarly and intelligent text. By now, however, the reader has then probably realized that there is a problem of audience, in relation to Stern's book: this is hardly an *introduction* to Wittgenstein's *PI*. By which we mean that someone—an average 3<sup>rd</sup> year undergraduate, say—who read Stern's book by themselves and before reading anything else on Wittgenstein would be plunged into exegetical disputes and philosophic sophistications probably way beyond the resources available to them. Stern's book would we think make an excellent *companion* to reading *PI*: only *provided* that one was simultaneously at least either reading a bunch of the other secondary literature that Stern discusses, or being taught an in-depth class on later Wittgenstein which covered much the same, or (and preferably) both.

Such a reading programme or class should include attention to Hacker's 'school', and to the 'therapeutic' readers of Wittgenstein to whom Stern is evidently much closer in his sympathies—those who Hacker has dubbed the 'New American Wittgensteinians', and whose fellow-travellers in

<sup>29</sup> There are a number of moments when Stern seems to be on the same track as us here: e.g. p. 83, p. 97. And we would endorse this summary, on p. 165: 'The text of the Investigations is best read, I believe, as a Pyrrhonian dialogue that includes both a voice that is tempted by [Quineian] theoretical holism and a narrator who corrects the first voice by advocating a form of practical wholism, rather than as unequivocally endorsing either of these views.' But we do not find Stern's renditions of 'the argument of *PI* §2', which are essential to the book, and which occur again and again, to encompass these insights. And this deficit infects for instance his important claims concerning how to read *PI*, on SWPI p. 132.



Britain include the late Gordon Baker. But here Stern's book becomes a less reliable guide: inexperienced philosophers would likely come away from SWPI with the impression that Stern is actually not very closely in sympathy with Diamond, Conant, etc., because of the comments he explicitly makes to roughly that effect, at a number of points.

This then is perhaps our final worry about Stern's fine book (a worry closely connected with our first worry, above): that Stern does not do justice to those whose voices in the debates around Wittgenstein he is in fact closest to. When Stern explicitly discusses Wittgenstein's 'resolute'/'therapeutic' readers, who have become prominent in recent years, he somehow loses his footing. For example, 'Pyrrhonian' readers of Wittgenstein such as 'resolute' readers are said by Stern (p. 37) to see Wittgenstein as an 'anti-philosopher'; and (p. 47) Diamond is said to use 'the image of throwing away the ladder'<sup>30</sup> as the basis of her attribution of an 'anti-philosophical method' to Wittgenstein; but all this talk of 'anti-philosophy' is hardly helpful. It leads to Stern's (mis-)identification of Diamond's approach with Richard Rorty's (p. 51), which then makes the former much easier to attack or dismiss, and harder to understand.<sup>31</sup>

Do not be misled by the criticisms we have essayed here: we have not commented on the large proportion of Stern's book which is just unproblematically good (take for instance his really sparkling rendition of the so-called 'Private Language Argument', which overcomes the deep

<sup>30</sup> Stern's discussion of throwing away the ladder (pp. 47–8) simply assumes/attribution to Wittgenstein a non-therapeutic rendering of the ladder metaphor, invoking Wittgenstein's later abandonment of the metaphor as decisive support for that attribution. We suggest this is unfair to Diamond, and unhelpful to the project of getting Wittgenstein right. And Stern seems belatedly—at least implicitly—to realise this on p. 170, when he writes the following, himself employing the ladder metaphor, '[Wittgenstein] regards the [rule-following] argument as a ladder that we should throw away after we have drawn the Pyrrhonian moral.'

<sup>31</sup> See also SWPI, p. 50, reading *Zettel* §452: 'On Diamond's therapeutic reading, the philosophical knots in the text are there only to be untangled. In that case, the voice that asks the question ["How does it come about that philosophy is so complicated a structure?"] is Wittgenstein's "interlocutor", the standard name for the un-Wittgensteinian "fall guy", and the final sentence ["Philosophy unties knots in our thinking; hence its result must be simple, but philosophising has to be as complicated as the knots it unties"] states Wittgenstein's own considered view.' Stern wishes rather to praise 'the unresolved struggle between these voices'; but why think that Diamond thinks any different? Why think that therapeutic readers of Wittgenstein make the error of thinking, as possibly Rorty thinks, that philosophy can simply come to an end, in Wittgenstein? Why not rather think that Diamond *et al* would, roughly, see the last voice here as that of Wittgenstein's *commentator*—and would rightly refuse to *identify* overly with that, either?

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dubiety of that ‘argument’s’ presentation in Strawson, Malcolm, Pears, Hacker, Kenny, Glock, Schroeder<sup>32</sup> &c.), and we believe Stern’s book to be on balance an excellent post-introduction to *PI*; indeed, we believe Stern to be close to a dead-on understanding of what Wittgenstein is about, considerably closer than he was in his earlier work.<sup>33</sup> Stern’s is a genuine contribution both to Wittgenstein pedagogy and to Wittgenstein scholarship—that is an all-too-rare combination.

Turning to Ilham Dilman’s last book one finds again a subtle and distinctive reading of Wittgenstein’s later work. Dilman tackles head-on the concerns we flagged early on in this review essay, those concerns we identified at the outset as contributing to the widespread understanding of Wittgenstein’s work as of little significance to contemporary philosophy. While earlier on we paid attention to the ‘friendly fire’ we take Wittgenstein to have been subject to in the writings of Peter Hacker, Dilman, importantly, takes issue with Bernard Williams’ influential claim that Wittgenstein was a linguistic idealist. He does so to devastating effect.<sup>34</sup> Dilman writes in the tradition of ‘Swansea Wittgensteinianism’. This school of Wittgensteinianism stems initially from the writings and influence (as teacher and colleague) of the late Rush Rhees (1998) and has been continued in the writings of D. Z. Phillips (1999). Phillips has termed this reading ‘contemplative’. Here the idea is that Wittgenstein was preoccupied with questions of logic, early and late. His method is contemplative in that he takes the task of the philosopher to be the understanding of reality without meddling with it.

Dilman’s book is an attempt to enunciate what conception of reality is in play in Wittgenstein’s later work. Wittgenstein, we are told, sought a conception of language and reality which neither embraced nor implied metaphysical realism nor linguistic idealism, both of which commit the philosopher to untenable philosophical positions. Of his book Dilman writes:

The book puts forward an anti-realist account of the relation between

<sup>32</sup> Which given our comments about Baker should be noted is very close indeed to later Baker’s reading of these sections of *PI*.

<sup>33</sup> A crucial difference here is that Stern does not do as much in *SWPI* what he did in his earlier work: overly relying on the history of remarks in Wittgenstein, tracing them back to their origins in earlier versions thereof and reading those earlier versions as ‘clearer’ versions of what was later ‘cryptic’. In fact, Stern now specifically rejects this ‘etymological’ approach—see e.g. p. 124, and p. 180 n. 6. Regrettably, that does not prevent him from occasionally still employing it—see *SWPI* pp. 52–3, for instance.

<sup>34</sup> One can really only wonder as to how a philosopher of Dilman’s ability, wit, learning and quality was and is read so little, while Williams’ popularity and breadth of readership seemed and seems to know no bounds. We can find nothing intrinsic to their abilities as philosophers that should allow for such a discrepancy.

language and reality, but one which I hope is ‘realistic’ in the sense in which Wittgenstein meant this when he spoke of ‘realism without empiricism’ in philosophy as being one of the hardest things. It is hard because of the inclination towards abstract thinking which is endemic to philosophy. In this sense Wittgenstein was ‘realistic’ in his anti-realism, that is in his rejection of metaphysical realism, of which empiricism in philosophy, the book argues, is a variety or example. (DWCR: 17)

There is little more than this that one can say in summary of Dilman’s book. It really needs to be read, from cover to cover; the learning one can gain from Dilman is really in the warp and weft of his deeply thoughtful engagement with the authors and ideas he contemplates in this text. What he provides one with could be described as a detailed Wittgensteinian working through of the realism/idealism dichotomy; showing how one need not accept either. Indeed close attention to our lives with words shows that we need not accept the dichotomy at all. Our concepts do not stand in external relationship to an unconceptualized (given) world. Rather, as we avail ourselves of concepts so we avail ourselves of our world in an ever richer and deeper way. Language and world are internally related.<sup>35</sup> However, this is not to say that no world exists outside our conceptualization of that world, only that *that* would not be what we mean when we talk of physical reality. As Dilman puts the matter:

We are pulled in two opposite directions between the idea that what we call ‘reality’ is independent of us and its opposite, namely that it is the creation of language—‘linguistic idealism’. I pointed out that by ‘reality’ we may mean the things, facts and phenomena we meet and come to know in our life. These certainly exist independent of us and independently of what we say and think in our language. If this was not so, we could not say or think what is false, and if not, neither could we say or think what is true. However in philosophy we speak of the existence and reality of physical objects as such, of the physical world, and again of the reality of the past, of the future, of time and space, of numbers, of values, etc. These are the focal points where philosophical problems arise and it is here where metaphysical realism and linguistic idealism clash. Here the reality of physical objects as such, for instance, means something different from the reality of the water I see in the distance while travelling in the desert. What I see in such a case is real as opposed to illusory when what I see is a mirage. What is illusory here is the appearance of water, a physical thing, and so the judgement that what I see is an illusion presupposes the reality of physical objects as such, in short physical reality. It is the appearance of a physical reality that is an illusion.

(DWCR: 217)

Again there is much with which we can agree; each chapter is a detailed

<sup>35</sup> Internal relations, are of course, not in any real sense relations at all. To say that something is internally related to something else is merely to say that ‘these ‘things’ are aspects of the same thing.

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working through of these thoughts with reference to other authors. Dilman's discussion of Cora Diamond and the recent work of Hilary Putnam is delicate and frequently illuminating. Indeed, while we described above some misgivings about Stern's treatment of Diamond, contrastingly Dilman's is (on the whole) on-the-mark. However, if we have a worry about Dilman's book it is one with which Stern might well concur, as, we believe, would have Gordon Baker. For while Dilman does an *exemplary* job of practicing Wittgensteinian philosophy—showing how one can, and ought, reject both metaphysical realism and linguistic idealism—he does leave one with the thought that Wittgenstein might well have been seeking all along to provide us with an account of language which neither takes 'reality' as constitutively independent of that language nor as constitutively dependent on that language. Consider the wording of Dilman's own summary of his book:

The life we live is a life of the language we speak; and the world in which we live is a world of that life—the life of our language. The structures inherent to its dimensions of reality reflect the grammatical forms of our language—'grammar' in the sense in which Wittgenstein uses the term. That language has evolved in the course of men's adaptation to and engagement with their environment; and that environment itself, in turn, comes to be increasingly permeated by the forms of significance originating in the course of the evolution of their language. It is in this sense that the human world, the world in which we live, is the world of the life we live with language.

(DWCR pp. 218–9)

There is a sense in which one can take this in a way which is unproblematic; there is equally a way, taken alone, in which it might well mislead. Talk of "structures inherent to its (the world's) dimensions of reality reflect[ing] the grammatical forms of our language" sounds to us vaguely Hackerian; these words might well lead one to think that one can, in Wittgenstein's name, offer such an account of language, in a nutshell, as it were. This then is our key worry concerning Dilman's book: in the absence of any discussion of Wittgenstein's 'metaphilosophy' (very present in BWM and SWPI), Dilman can still be taken as providing, in Wittgenstein's name, an *account* of language and how it relates to the world. To be sure one can read this passage more charitably; indeed one can read it in an unproblematically 'therapeutic' manner, but then where Dilman speaks of an 'account', one should rather speak of a 'picture'—and be clear that such pictures are precisely not to be 'attached' to. However, in the absence of a discussion of Wittgenstein's philosophical methods, this passage in Dilman tends to give the fatal impression that one can simply say how the structure of language reflects the structure of the world.

This is where 'contemplative' (Swansea) readings of *PI* and more therapeutic (BWM, SWPI) readings might diverge. For the purpose of philosophical practice is, on the therapeutic reading, to free the mind of mental cramps brought about by being faced with a seemingly intractable philo-

sophical problem. Such readers, such philosophical practitioners, are likely to find the contemplative account, in the end, as being *just one more account*, no more likely to free one from metaphysical delusion and entanglement than more traditional types of account. In other words, seen as something more than a *reminder*—a ‘reminder’ that reminds one of no fact or super-fact<sup>36</sup>—there is a genuine danger of Dilman’s ‘account’ being taken as just one more theory of reality from which traditional philosophers might choose. To guard against such an unfortunate possibility one might read Dilman’s book alongside a number of key papers on method from BWM. Then one will be able to read Dilman as practising therapy *par excellence*, rather than providing another, albeit on occasion sophisticated, theory of language. For Dilman is aware of the danger here. The last two quotes we cite above come from the Conclusion to his book. A little earlier, in the opening line of that Conclusion he wrote:

To speak of conclusion in philosophy is always dangerous. For the clarity and depth of understanding we reach in philosophy is through the kind of work which is peculiar to philosophy: discussion, consideration of objections, criticism, clarification.

(DWCR: 217)

As we noted above, one really does need to read this book. Dilman ‘grasped the nettle’ and drew his conclusion, despite noting the problems inherent to such concluding remarks in philosophy; we wish he had not done so, and that he had instead embraced the therapeutic ‘metaphilosophy’ authors such as Gordon Baker show to be at the core of Wittgenstein’s writings. Dilman and Baker, who died around the same time, would surely have mutually benefited from the ‘discussion’ that Dilman refers to here; and it might have led Dilman to cast his approach more in a therapeutic than a contemplative mode.

It is on this note we move very briefly to our last author. Readers will by now not be surprised to hear that we are fans of Baker’s book. It did not originally feature in the list of books to be reviewed in this essay. Only in the writing of the piece did we find ourselves drawing upon it, referring to it, and thinking about it constantly. It was only right then that it should be one of the texts under review here. We have already summarized Gordon Baker’s work—it has entered explicitly and been much more present implicitly in our discussions of each of Hacker (particularly), Stern and Dilman.

BWM collects together nearly all the as-yet published papers of ‘the later Baker’—of Baker from the time when his break with Hacker occurred. We regret somewhat that the collection does not include his ‘Quotation-marks in *Philosophical Investigations* Part I’; but Katherine Morris has done a wonderful job in bringing together these papers accessibly, without repetition of content, and in writing an Introduction which

<sup>36</sup> In other words, we take the use of the term, ‘reminder’ in Wittgenstein to (deliberately) court paradox.

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serves much better as such than any brief words we could write here to Baker's later work.

We have already noted certain important points made by Baker regarding how one might take Wittgenstein's 'metaphilosophy', in contradistinction to how it has been 'standardly' taken in the work of Baker & Hacker, and latterly Hacker, for example. In addition then we will mention here just two of the key things that the later Baker powerfully adds to the already existing work of Cavell, Diamond *et al*, two things which Baker brings to the reading of Wittgenstein which have in fact been virtually entirely neglected in the secondary literature on Wittgenstein, which omission has led to numerous (disastrous) misreadings. We are referring to what might strike some readers initially as an obscure, quaint or boring focus of a number of Baker's papers: their intense interest first in Wittgenstein's use of typographical devices and second in his quite particular employment of terms which it is natural to take as key to his philosophy. First then: Baker argues convincingly, for example, that Wittgenstein uses *italics* in an intricate and systematic manner (ch. 11), that is to say not always and only in order to lay stress on a term; indeed where *italics* are employed as means of stressing a term, one should be alive to the significantly different ways in which one might *lay* that stress. What at first might well strike one as no more than pedantic transpires to be crucially important to an understanding of Wittgenstein's philosophy; in a similar—and as important a—manner to recognising that which Stern emphasizes: the 3-fold 'argument'-schema.<sup>37</sup> And second: Baker argues, in 'Some Remarks on "Language" and "Grammar"' (ch. 2),<sup>38</sup> that 'language' and "grammar", should be taken not as referring to (quasi-)entities but really as *characteristic of 'our method'*, i.e. of the radically therapeutic method. This means that the word 'language' in Wittgenstein should be taken as what *we say in language* rather than as any kind of discrete item, and that the word 'grammar' in Wittgenstein, far from meaning what Hacker (and the early D. Z. Phillips, and possibly, at moments, Dilman) takes it to mean, is intended as *our grammar*, as *indexed* to the person or persons employing it, in such a way that an appeal to "the" grammar' cannot be used to *settle* philosophical disputes, but only as a way of facilitating a person's knowing how they are actually using a term and how that relates (or does not) to

<sup>37</sup> It is for this reason that we were sorry not to see here his (2002) 'Quotation-marks in *Philosophical Investigations* Part I'. While the two papers do overlap—and presumably the excluded paper was left out *because* the methodological point central to its teaching is much as the same as that centrally present in the paper on italics—we think the overlap would have been acceptable in light of the gains. For those interested the paper is in *Language and Communication*, 22: 37–68.

<sup>38</sup> Papers in BWM which pursue a similar exegetical strategy by focusing on key terms—thus offering a radically new understanding of them and therefore of Wittgenstein's philosophy—are: 'Wittgenstein's Depth Grammar'; 'Wittgenstein on Metaphysical/Everyday Use' and—crucially—'Wittgenstein: Concepts or Conceptions'.

how they want to use it.

We have suggested that Hacker's summatory *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies*, for all that it captures a likely and perhaps-necessary dialectical moment<sup>39</sup> in the reading of Wittgenstein, tells one in the end rather less about Wittgenstein than about a narrow 'Oxford philosophy' which misses the richness and breadth of Wittgenstein's work and appeal. The books by Dilman and Stern under review here are much more useful, and point to the enduring interest of the 'Swansea school' and the growing influence of genuinely 'therapeutic'/Pyrrhonian readings/uses of Wittgenstein.

It is in the later Baker's writing and in much of Stern's book that we find the most promising trends of all in contemporary Wittgenstein scholarship. (Their work continues or complements the work which began in the writing of Stanley Cavell.<sup>40</sup>) The piquancy of Baker's break from Hacker is then rather exquisite: later Baker systematically overturns the very orthodoxy in Wittgenstein interpretation that he helped to foment. BWM is the most powerful antidote available to HWCC—and cognate readings such as are found in Kenny, Glock and Schroeder.

We think that Stern's book would profit from a little less of an anxiety regarding aligning himself with Cavell, Conant, Diamond *et al*; we think that Stern is actually very close to them. Where Stern and Dilman are at their weakest is when they insist on their having something to say which goes beyond the remit of a therapeutic 'metaphilosophy', as is found for

<sup>39</sup> This is related to another concern we have, with how Stern concludes his book; we find an interpretively-relativistic tendency. While he spends much time critiquing Hacker's (and Baker & Hacker's) readings he seems to conclude the book by claiming that each reading of *PI* is in some sense equally valid. While we would want to agree that Hacker captures (is) an aspect of the text, we argue that there is a *dialectic through* these aspects—this is crucially what Stern misses at the top of p.132 and again in conclusion at p. 186. The truth is that some of these interpretations can *comprehend* non-Pyrrhonian interpretations as *stages* in their own, whereas the reverse is not true. Perhaps this accounts for some of the antipathy of Hackerians towards the 'New' Wittgensteinians: for the New-ies, Hacker *is* onto a temptation in Wittgenstein, only he *falls* for it and thus occludes Wittgenstein's ultimate mode of teaching and learning; whereas for Hacker, Cavell and Conant and later Baker etc. are simply wrong; simply, disastrously, turning Wittgenstein into some kind of post-modernist prankster. Thus while resolute readers of Wittgenstein can incorporate Hacker's school into their understanding of the text, the converse does not hold.

<sup>40</sup> Cavell's influence has also been in rich evidence in the work of the 'New Wittgensteinians' such as Conant, Diamond, Burton Dreben and Juliet Floyd. And is clearly allied in many ways to the recent work of Gavin Kitching, Denis McManus, John McDowell, Stephen Mulhall, Hilary Putnam and Peter Winch among others.



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instance in Baker.

We do however think that Stern (see SWPI, pp. 128–9) might have identified a pertinent worry concerning Baker’s approach: that Baker is perhaps not as attuned as Cavell and Stern are to the *enduringly dialogical* nature of the text. A Bakerian response—and perhaps this would be a wholly adequate response—might be to say that these voices are acknowledged in Baker’s reading, albeit in a slightly different manner, as the ways in which Wittgenstein presents us with different ‘pictures’, i.e. alternative ways of looking at things. So while Cavell and Stern emphasize the voices, Baker emphasizes the content of that which the voices present us and their ‘modality’. All then might ultimately agree that what is presented are alternative aspects.

If there is hope for Wittgenstein’s serious survival into the canon of Philosophy and more generally of our culture, then it must lie, not in the domestications of Wittgenstein found in those who render him as having (non-Pyrrhonian) arguments, positions, views, and opinions, on philosophical matters, but in those who, like recent Stern and the later Baker, find metaphors such as ‘therapy’ and ‘dialogue’ enduringly central to their experience of Wittgenstein’s writings. If Wittgenstein lives on, but only as domesticated into ‘Analytic Philosophy’ and as the subject of speculative journalism, then he might as well not have lived. But three out of the four books under review here give us hope, that Wittgenstein’s work might yet prove to be sustainably *inheritable*.<sup>41</sup>

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*Creation out of Nothing, A Biblical, Philosophical, and Scientific Exploration*

By Paul Copan and William Lane Craig  
Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004, 277pp.

The argument of this book is to the conclusion that the doctrine of creation ex nihilo is best understood as stating that the physical universe does not merely depend on the God of classical theism for its continuing existence, but was caused by Him to come into existence, out of nothing, a finite time ago; this understanding is implicit in the Bible; and believing that the doctrine so understood is true is preferable on philosophical and scientific grounds to any alternative. As such, *Creation out of Nothing* is

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intended to constitute not merely an exploration in the sense of articulation, but also a defence, of its eponymous doctrine. *Creation out of Nothing* is not in itself a creation out of nothing. (It is largely a bringing-together of material that pre-existed it in numerous articles and, perhaps most significantly, the book Craig co-authored with Quentin Smith, *Theism, Atheism, and Big Bang Cosmology* (OUP, 1993).) However, even if this newly-created whole is not a great deal more than the sum of its largely pre-existent parts, it is a clear and sensible rearrangement of them, one which could be read with understanding and interest by anyone from the undergraduate level upwards.

The first two-thirds or so of the book seek to show that the Old and New Testaments contain the doctrine of creation ex nihilo, albeit implicitly rather than explicitly. Copan and Craig are keen to distance their claim that the doctrine is in these writings only implicitly from any claim that it is in them only ambiguously. When Ian Hislop said, 'If that's justice, then I'm a banana', his claim that it wasn't justice was implicit, but one would struggle to find what he said at all ambiguous. Similarly, Copan and Craig tell us that, 'While the *words* "creation out of nothing" may not be articulated in Scripture or by the early church fathers, the *concept* of creation out of nothing undergirds their assertions' (page 12). And they boldly 'affirm, "Either creatio ex nihilo is true, or God did not create everything. But the Scripture says 'That God created everything.'" When the Bible declares that God created everything, it implicitly affirms that creatio ex nihilo is true; the issue is not ambiguous' (page 90).

One thought that one might have about the internal logic of this is that all sorts of things Copan and Craig are committed to thinking false may be detected as implicit in the Bible by the same methodology that leads Copan and Craig to detect their understanding of the doctrine of creation ex nihilo there, for example, a literalism about the seven days of creation and a temporalist understanding of the eternity of God. Both of these Copan and Craig reject in *Creation out of Nothing*—the first, implicitly; the second, explicitly. Copan and Craig implicitly reject the first as they are committed to a more modern cosmology than the biblical authors in order to be able to draw on its findings, as they do, to provide reasons to favour the Big Bang Theory rather than the Steady State Theory. They explicitly reject temporalism about divine eternity, because, in parallel with their scientific arguments, they advance two philosophical arguments against the universe being of infinite age. At least one of these arguments, they encourage us to think, works against the real possibility of any actual infinities; and it certainly needs to work against any temporal actual infinities in order to support their conclusion that we must see the universe as of finite age. Thus, according to Copan and Craig, God needs to be outside time. Of course, on models other than that of Copan and Craig, there would be more scope to harmonize the testimony of the biblical authors: God's inside time and everlasting; as a matter of fact, he created the universe in seven days out of no pre-existent matter; and so on. These models though are ruled out by Copan and Craig on philosophical

grounds, e.g. that they presuppose actual infinities (some elements they would of course rule out on scientific grounds too). This reveals then something that will be heartening to readers of this journal: despite their devoting the majority of their book to arguing that their understanding of creation *ex nihilo* is biblical, in Copan and Craig's minds, it is definitely Philosophy that is in the driving seat; the biblical authors speak to the driver from the back seat; the driver may disregard them when deciding in which direction to travel.

Having established that their understanding has these 'biblical credentials', Copan and Craig tell us that, '*creatio ex nihilo* [so understood] entails an A-theory of time. A robust doctrine of creation involves the dual affirmations that God brought the universe into being out of nothing at some moment in the finite past and the affirmation that he thereafter sustains it in being moment by moment. But the B-theorist cannot seriously make the first affirmation. On a B-theory of time, God is the Creator of the universe in the sense that the whole block universe and everything in it depends on God for its existence. God by a single timeless act makes it exist. By the same act he causes all events to happen and things to exist at their tenseless temporal locations' (page 161). The inadequacy of the B-theory to reflect fully the biblical view (as it has, by this stage, been established) is then advanced by Copan and Craig as a reason for those who believe in the Bible to reject the B-theory. (Of course, it's not the only reason that Craig thinks people have to reject the B-theory; they have the reasons given in his *The Tensed Theory of Time: A Critical Examination* and his *The Tenseless Theory of Time: A Critical Examination* (both Kluwer, 2000).) But, as we have just seen, the logic of Copan and Craig's own position commits them to thinking that a theory's being incompatible with a biblical view cannot be much of a reason for rejecting the theory, *even for those who believe in the Bible in the way that Copan and Craig do*, for believing in the Bible in Copan and Craig's sense is quite compatible with rejecting the claims implicitly made by its authors when they conflict with one's philosophy.

Suppose then that one was a theist who had, unlike Copan and Craig, become convinced of the B-theory of time. One would be reasonable, Copan and Craig would have to admit, in running the majority of their philosophical arguments in *Creation out of Nothing* in reverse, finding that the biblical authors were just wrong in—implicitly—proposing that there was the sort of difference between creation and conservation on the analysis of which Copan and Craig expend their energies during the latter third or so of their book. On the B-theory, one might then admit without blushes that, as Copan and Craig argue, claiming that God is creator of the universe merely adds to the claim that he is its conserver 'the finitude of time in the *earlier than* direction' (page 162). And when Copan and Craig go on to say, 'Such a doctrine would be a pale shadow of the biblical doctrine of creation' (*ibid.*), one would be likely to remain unmoved: after all, one would think, Copan and Craig are committed to pale shadows of the biblical view of a changeable, indeed volatile, God. In fact, Copan and

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Craig contend that, as ‘the account of temporal persistence [of an object, *e*] given by the B-theory of time does not involve the notion of *e*’s enduring from one moment to another at all’ (page 163), as the space-time worms of four-dimensionalism don’t endure through time precisely because time is one of their internal dimensions, so the word ‘conserve’ shouldn’t be used by the B-theorist either. Theistically minded B-theorists are offered the terminology of ‘static creation’, ‘*creatio stans*’, or ‘sustenance’ instead. But, especially once one’s adopted the ‘Let one’s philosophy guide one about whether to take it or leave it’ attitude to the Bible that Copan and Craig (implicitly) endorse, taking on this new terminology in deference to their linguistic sensitivities is not going to worry one’s theology either.

The theological importance of creation, according to Copan and Craig, is that it ‘reinforces the idea of God’s *aseity* or necessary existence ...underlines the doctrine of divine *freedom* ... [and] exhibits God’s *omnipotence*’ (page 25). However, ‘reinforces’, ‘underlines’, and ‘exhibits’, aren’t strong words; it’s not, Copan and Craig seem to admit, theologically essential that their view be right. All parties to this debate will agree that being creator (if it’s a property He has) is an accidental property of God, not an essential one: one has to say this in order to preserve His essential property of perfect freedom; He didn’t need to create any universe, so it’s contingent that He did (if He did). If one accepts Copan and Craig’s new terminology and, due to one’s subscription to the B-theory, thus says that instead of having the accidental property of creator and sustainer, God has merely the accidental property of sustainer, what has one’s theology lost? At most a bit of reinforcing, underlining and exhibiting of the fact, which remains on one’s theory just as it was on Copan and Craig’s, that everything other than God depends absolutely for its existence and nature on God.

The final chapter of *Creation out of Nothing* promises to move beyond mere exploration of how the doctrine that the universe was created out of nothing may be best understood to establishing that, so understood, we have good reason to believe that it is true. It examines ‘naturalistic attempts to stave off the inference to a transcendent, personal Creator of the cosmos... [and tries to show that these] attempts are desperate and reveal that the best explanation of the universe is that God created the universe out of nothing’ (page 28). This chapter fails in this reader’s mind to make good on this promise; if anything, it is Copan and Craig’s arguments here that end up appearing desperate: e.g.: ‘the personhood of the cause of the universe is implied by its timelessness and immateriality, since the only entities we know of that can possess such properties are either minds or abstract objects, and abstract objects do not stand in causal relations’ (page 253). Is it so obvious that minds can possess the properties of timelessness and immateriality that we need no argument for it? This is not to deny that arguments are advanced along the lines sketched in the last chapter of *Creation out of Nothing* or to deny that Craig is someone who advances them as well as anyone—e.g. in his ‘Divine Timelessness and

Personhood', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 43 (1998) and 'Must the Beginning of the Universe Have a Personal Caused?', *Faith and Philosophy* 19 (2002)—but one searches this particular text in vain for these arguments. Their absence from the last chapter of *Creation out of Nothing* leaves one finishing the book with something of a philosophically unpleasant aftertaste (that one can of course remove by looking to these other texts). At the end of *Creation out of Nothing*, in moving beyond exploring how the theistic doctrine of creation ex nihilo is best understood to trying to establish that the doctrine so understood and the classical theism in which it finds its home should commend themselves to any thinker, Copan and Craig have ceased being propelled forwards by any adequate substance in their premises and started being pulled along by the attractiveness in their minds of their preferred conclusion, the truth of the doctrine that they have hitherto been merely explicating.

The arguments that occupy Copan and Craig for the first two-thirds or so of *Creation out of Nothing*, for the claim that their understanding of the doctrine of creation ex nihilo is biblical, should seem somewhat otiose to those convinced of their (implicit) attitude to the authority of the Bible. The arguments in the last chapter of *Creation out of Nothing*, for the truth of the doctrine as they understand it, are wanting. The philosophical and scientific arguments that are wedged in between—for the superiority of Copan and Craig's understanding of the doctrine over its alternatives—should commend themselves to all (but only) those already convinced of their premises.

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### *Wittgenstein on Freud and Frazer*

By Frank Cioffi

Cambridge University Press, 1998. £40.00; £14.95. pp. 304.

The sources of puzzlement are many. 'Why does this happen?', and like questions, call for, and receive, all kinds of answers. Wittgenstein saw this; and he also saw how we may get confused about what answers are appropriate in a given case. His main, and most discussed, criticisms of the anthropological work of James Frazer and of the psychoanalytical work of Sigmund Freud are to the effect that they both put forward empirical (causal) explanations as answers to questions or puzzles where such explanations are out of place. In *The Golden Bough*, Frazer, among other things, discussed the ritual at Nemi whereby the asylum-seeking runaway slave who could kill the priest-king in mortal combat became his successor; and he proposed that the ritual was a survival from a time when it was believed that the replacing of the old priest-king by a stronger and healthier one would enhance the agricultural welfare of the community. Freud, on the other hand, proposed various hypotheses concerning infantile experience as explaining people's feelings and behaviour in later life.

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Wittgenstein thought the theories of both writers to be misconceived. But if such theories are out of place, in what way are they out of place?

Frank Cioffi perceives two importantly different ways in which an answer to a question or puzzle of the sort at issue could be out of place. First: a putative causal explanation could be given which is not really an explanation at all, since the phenomenon in question (under a certain description) simply cannot be explained in this manner. Second: though the phenomenon in question (under the description in question) *could* be given a causal explanation; such an explanation would not address the nub of the matter, i.e. the aspect of the phenomenon which really puzzles or troubles us. Wittgenstein's criticisms of Freud and Frazer invoked both kinds of 'inappropriateness'. In the twelve essays in this book, Cioffi explores this distinction in application to Freud and Frazer, and to other thinkers, and concludes that Wittgenstein was wrong to think that the first kind of inappropriateness could be alleged of the theories he attacked. The second kind of inappropriateness, however, is more difficult to assess. For some people, it may really be true that what they are looking for is some kind of causal or historical account: if they are persuaded by such an account, their puzzlement is assuaged—and genuinely so. But for others, it may be that clarification, rather than explanation, is what is wanted. Clarification will typically come about through further description of the phenomenon, whereby the phenomenon now 'makes sense', in itself and in relation to other phenomena. The puzzlement of those seeking clarification is different in kind from that of those seeking explanation.

'However those of us in whom Wittgenstein's remarks on the desirability of an *Übersicht* of our feelings and thoughts [a putative form of clarification] with respect to human sacrifice, produces the realization that this is what we 'really wanted', must not fall into the error of erecting our receptiveness into a standard. It should not be our aim to transform explainers into clarifiers'. (p. 263)

Of course the warning applies both ways: explainers should not quite generally be aiming to convert clarifiers into one of them, nor seeking to impose empirical explanation as the only way with difficult questions. It was undoubtedly this son of intellectual imperialism that Wittgenstein detected in the scientific ethos of our times, and to which he took such exception. And that ethos is still alive and well. Cioffi quotes Richard Dawkins:

'...the deep and universal questions of existence and the meaning of life [including 'Who am I?' and 'What am I for?'] are scientific matters which should properly be dealt with in science classes'. (*The Independent*, September 1993)

As Cioffi remarks, 'pretty overweening stuff'. But the opposite error is worth pointing out also. A number of writers have cast a suspicious glance at the philosopher's use of 'we' and 'us', as in 'what really troubles us is...', and it is true that there should be no complacency about one's constituency in such contexts. (Maybe in his writings on ethics

Wittgenstein was prone to mistake 'I' for 'we'.) But this use of the first person plural does have its role, and Cioffi goes into the question of what that role is with sensitive thoroughness.

Wittgenstein himself once or twice describes possible historical scenarios, which a reader might be tempted to construe as genuine hypotheses, e.g. about language learning. A well-known case is where he says, of 'I am in pain', that it can be seen as having replaced groaning and the like in the behavioural repertoire of the child (*Philosophical Investigations*, para. 244). Wittgenstein does preface this remark with the words 'Here is one possibility', and it is pretty clear that the philosophical point is meant to hold whether or not 'I am in pain' is or was ever taught as a groan-replacement. A more recent example is Bernard Williams's use of the notion of 'genealogy', in his *Truth and Truthfulness* (Princeton 2002). Williams presents what can look like historical hypotheses, about the development of the concepts of truth, truthfulness, knowledge, etc., in a 'state of nature', while insisting that the appearance is deceptive: the State of Nature is not the Pleistocene, as he puts it. Clearly the questions as to when causal-historical explanations are appropriate, and when an explanation may be taken as causal-historical, are pressing ones.

Through the course of Cioffi's book there are discussions, not only of the main protagonists, but of Shakespeare, Dr. Johnson, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Proust, William (and Henry) James, David Riesman, John Updike ... and a host of others, including, I should add, quite a few actual philosophers. Sometimes the allusions can almost overwhelm, and I do think that the book could have been shorter, on the whole. But as an extended discussion of questions central to philosophy and bearing crucially on the relationship between philosophy, science, anthropology and psychology, this volume is a subtle and often insightful contribution.

**Roger Teichmann**