

Toward a Perspicuous Presentation of “Perspicuous Presentation”¹

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The concept of a perspicuous presentation is of **fundamental significance** for us.

(Wittgenstein 1958, §122; our emphasis)²

I

1a. The history of Wittgenstein scholarship can be mapped in various ways. One profitable way would track the attention paid and emphasis accorded to Wittgenstein’s use of modal terms. So, for example, while some take him to have propounded a use-theory of meaning,³ others point to the actual wording of *PI* §43: “For a **large class of cases** – though **not for all** – in which we employ the word “meaning” it **can** be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.” What is at stake here? First, Wittgenstein limits the scope: a definition in terms of use will not apply to all cases in which we employ the word “meaning.” Indeed, we are not, it seems, *obliged* to define meaning in terms of use even in a “large class of cases,” we merely “can” for *our*

1. We would like to thank Katherine Morris and Daniele Moyal-Sharrock for comments on an earlier version.

2. Throughout this paper, following Baker (2004, 224–259), we **embolden** for emphasis within quotes so as not to interfere with Wittgenstein’s use of single quotation marks and italics in *PI*.

3. Many implicitly do so (as we shall see); while those who explicitly predicate of Wittgenstein in *PI* a use theory/doctrine of meaning include for instance the following: Alston (1964), Apel (1980, 1), Avramides (1997, 62), Davies (2003, 125) and Habermas (1984, 115; 1995, 58, 62–64), Horwich (1995, 260–261, *passim*; 1998a[1990], 69–71, 93–94; 1998b, *passim*), Strawson (1971, 172), Von Savigny (1993[1969], 72, 3rd edition).

purposes. The remark is better heard as an orientation to an aspect, or a *suggestion of how to act*, than as a definition, let alone a statement of fact.⁴

1b. That much Wittgenstein scholarship glosses the wording of *PI* §43 and thereby ignores the elementary points we have made earlier, is, we think, telling; it suggests the (strength of the) impulse towards the extracting of theories, or at the least some positive philosophical project (non-occasion sensitive, non-contextual, non-person-relative), from Wittgenstein's *PI*, despite his explicit protestations to the contrary. While some are candid regarding such an endeavour, many others are less forthcoming and less explicit in their willingness to saddle Wittgenstein with a theory.

1c. Well, and what of Wittgenstein's protestations? Take *PI* §109: "We **must** do away with **all explanation**. And description **alone must** take its place. . . . The problems are solved, **not** by giving new information, but by arranging what we have **always** known. Philosophy **is** the battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language." And further, at §126: "Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces **anything**. – Since **everything** lies open to view there is **nothing** to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of **no** interest to us. . . . One might give the name "philosophy" to what is possible *before all new* discoveries and inventions." (One "might" best give this name to that activity, because it could helpfully illuminate – it would perspicuously present – what *we* do.) Again §128, "If one tried to advance *theses* in philosophy, it would **never** be **possible** to debate them, because **everyone** would agree to them." We submit that *these* modal terms are not used lightly by the later Wittgenstein. 'Positive pronouncements' on subjects, such as meaning, are presented with care so as to clearly guard against our seeing them as anything other than reminders for a particular purpose. Remarks about his method of philosophy are stated in a manner that clearly projects (*and* clearly delimits) its scope: we *do not* advance (controversial philo-

4. A particularly stark example of the kind of misreading – or "non-reading" – of Wittgenstein that we are meaning to put into question in this paragraph is to be found in the very first sentence of the Preface of Harre and Tisaw's (2005) *Wittgenstein and Psychology* (London: Ashgate): they cite *PI* §244, but *simply ignore/omit* the modal "Here is one possibility" that crucially infects the opening of Wittgenstein's 'private language' considerations.

sophical) theses, there are *no* philosophical discoveries – *within* the scope of his/our method. This is *Our Method*⁵ of philosophy.

1d. Resistance to the suggestions we expressed earlier, to (if you like) the ‘programme’ of reading (taking Wittgenstein at his word) that we recommend, is widespread. It is starkly evident in the writing of those who one might term ‘doctrinal readers.’ Doctrinal readers of *PI* claim that, in *PI*, Wittgenstein advances (putatively non-metaphysical) doctrines such as the use-theory of meaning and a raft of doctrines in the philosophy of psychology: e.g. notably a logical-behaviourist theory of the mind and a concomitant *refutation* of the possibility of a logically private language.

1e. If one then identifies doctrinal readers as those who attribute to *PI* a use-theory of meaning, one might be tempted to juxtapose to such readings those offered by Anthony Kenny (1984) and P. M. S. Hacker (1986); and those offered by the latter’s followers such as Hans-Johann Glock (1989) and Severin Schroeder (2001). These readers resist the temptation to explicitly attribute theories (of meaning, etc.) to Wittgenstein. Instead, they claim that Wittgenstein practices therapy *and* elucidates the grammar of our language. We shall call these readers ‘elucidatory readers.’

1f. What characterises an ‘elucidatory’ reading of *PI* is an emphasis on providing an overview of language and the importance of ‘mapping’ that language as something that serves a purpose distinct from the therapeutic purpose. Anthony Kenny (1984) writes, following his quoting of *PI* §109, of reconciling Wittgenstein’s “**overview theory of philosophy**” with his “therapeutic theory of philosophy” (p. 45). Hacker (1986, 151, 177–178)⁶ writes of two distinct tasks being undertaken in *PI*, (the negative task of) therapy and (the positive, constructive task of) connective analysis; the latter being achieved by surveying the rules of grammar.

1g. While it therefore seems natural to juxtapose/contrast doctrinal and elucidatory readers, we shall submit that elucidatory readers find themselves committing Wittgenstein to *the very same position* on language to which doctrinal readers commit him. While elucidatory

5. “Our Method” is the therapeutic method of philosophy. For a detailed discussion of the therapeutic method in the work of Friedrich Waismann and Wittgenstein see Gordon Baker’s (2004) “A Vision of Philosophy” (chapter 9) in his *Wittgenstein’s Method: Neglected Aspects*.

6. See also: Hacker, 1996, 232–238; 2001a, 23, 31, 37; 2001b, 333–341.

readers pay lip service to the metaphilosophy in *PI*, they imply certain presuppositions regarding language no different to those implied by talking of a “use-theory of meaning.” In its philosophical implications, the elucidatory interpretation transpires to be only nominally different to the doctrinal.

1h. The reason is this. Doctrinal readers, we noted, attribute to Wittgenstein a number of controversial philosophical theses, chief among them being the use-theory of meaning and structurally similar doctrines in the philosophy of psychology. This is *contra* Wittgenstein’s explicit remarks about theses in philosophy and plays somewhat “fast-and-loose” with the wording of his remarks about meaning and use (e.g. *PI* §43). And it rests above all upon an assumption *that one can take up a position ‘outside of language’* so as to view that language. This final point is the one that really matters – for it has some quite unfortunate philosophical implications.

1i. Recall the opening of the *Blue Book*. There, Wittgenstein points out that philosophers are oft led astray by assuming that a substantive must refer to some *thing*, that *thing* being its meaning. Philosophers are apt to head off in search of this ‘*thing*.’ One should keep all this in mind when pondering the substantive, “language”. It makes little sense to think of an “entity” to which the word “language” refers. What could such an “entity” possibly look like? One might better think of “language” as picking out the communicative-linguistic aspects of our practices/interactions.

1j. Consider: *What* might language look like from a vantage point outside of it? Well, we might answer with further questions: how could one *possibly* attain such a vantage point?⁷ Where, from what vantage point, would one *expect* to view “language”? Why *should* one (be “able to” do this)? Indeed, one might well find it helpful to climb a mountain so as to view the whole city, or a whole wood. But, to ‘view the whole language,’ or even to see as from outside a whole language-game: ask yourself, what does/might *this* mean; what is *this* ‘viewing’? If language ‘is’ a city, is it a city that it is *meaningful* to speak of exiting so as to look down on it (as) from above?

1k. Well, neither doctrinal nor elucidatory readers of Wittgenstein tend to *claim* that one can view language in such a way. Our contention is: they nevertheless imply such an ability. Their claims regarding the

7. Note: This is – emphatically – not the same as asserting that the world is constitutively dependent upon/internal to our language (linguistic idealism).

positive philosophical method in *PI* entail such an ability to view language thus. For example, claiming that one can provide a use-theory of meaning, as do doctrinal readers, commits one to the thought that one can provide a theory of meaning, which will hold in *all* cases. How might they know? . . . Similarly, claiming that one can map our language in a somewhat Rylean – non-purpose-relative, non-context-sensitive manner – as do elucidatory readers (cf. §1f), implies a background (deep) knowledge of the nature of language. Consider what Hacker has to say, in this regard, in the following quote:

[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* (Hacker 2001a, 37; emphasis ours).

Notice the overt analogy with mapping a landscape in the employment of the term “topography” – in juxtaposition to “geology”. Indeed, in all Hacker's writing on *übersichten*, he identifies them with giving an overview of a terrain “in the sense in which one can survey a scene from the heights of a mountain” (Baker and Hacker's (1980[2005], 234) ACPI-i). Or he talks of **mapping** the logical **geography** of (the grammar of) language. At first glance, one is inclined to take this in an unproblematic way; if that is, one was to think of such overviews in a purely purpose-relative sense, and as serving the therapeutic task. However, as we have seen (§1f), Hacker takes therapy and connective analysis to be distinct endeavours. Furthermore, note the phrase “problematic concepts”; is there not something . . . *problematic* about the very phrase “problematic concepts” (hereabouts . . .)?! Surely, it is rather the use of certain words on certain occasions, or in particular contexts, which might *be shown* (agreed) to be problematic.

11. What one has, then, in elucidatory accounts of Wittgenstein's method, is two allegedly “complementary strands”: therapeutic (negative) and elucidatory (constructive, positive).⁸ It is the constructive

8. It is perhaps instructive to note that very little is actually said by such readers about the therapeutic strand. An exception is Anthony Kenny's (2004) recent article, “Philosophy Only States What Everyone Admits”, in Ammereller and Fischer (2004,

strand, this mapping of grammatical rules, which we consider problematic. A ‘knowing one’s way about,’ a learning how to avoid mythological misunderstandings and wrong turnings: fine; but that, *contra* Hacker, does *not* amount to a positive mapping of ‘how things are’.

1m. Or again: if the maps are local maps, quite patently for specific purposes, then that too *might* be considered to be fine, but elucidatory readers take ‘Wittgensteinian maps’ to have intrinsic worth (cf. §1f), as we have seen. The ability to draw up maps of our language, which have intrinsic worth, implies that they are maps that will be valid indefinitely, far beyond their context of production.⁹ For the term “map”, one might say, is a family resemblance term, like “game”. There is no thing essential to all maps. They are of course merely modes of presentation and representation for particular purposes. And this is the problem we identify with elucidatory readers’ invocation of the term. As *they* invoke – as they *use* – the word “map” it is taken in the topographical sense of the cartographer mapping the landscape; the analogy is not taken to be with the many different uses of the word “map”, but with one particular (‘stereotypical’) use: that of mapping a landscape. It is that restriction that leads to the unfortunate consequences we here essay.

1n. Mapping *a terrain* and mapping *language* do not hold up to full scrutiny as yielding a reliable analogy: in some cases, one can map a terrain pretty much once and for all – for instance, one does not map molehills, or the people crossing a landscape, in most cases; but, a ‘map’ of a language? One is inclined to think that such a map would have to be thoroughlygoingly utterly time-sensitive, person-relative, occasion- and context-sensitive; and *such* a ‘map,’ if it could be produced at all, could not be used predictively: consider metaphor and poetic invention; consider Wittgenstein’s (1975) own remarks at *On Certainty* §§96–99, etc. *However*, we submit that in fact, such a ‘map’ would likely be a map only *at most* in the kind of extended sense that one can ‘map’

173–182), wherein Kenny seems to find the therapeutic and elucidatory strands if anything more *in conflict* than complementary.

9. This is *contra* what we could reasonably call the *essential* purpose-relativity of maps; think for instance of the map of the Underground in London, far more useful for most of the purposes for which it was intended *because* it is grossly – topographically – inaccurate. If elucidatory readers were to follow *this* route in their use of the map metaphor, then the dispute between us and them would dwindle.

psychological concepts.¹⁰ Our language, we might venture, has a kind of flexibility and open-texturedness that terrains do not have; though even this way of putting the matter implies, misleadingly, some *thing* that has the property of flexibility. Rather one should keep in mind that our language is *our* language, and not separable from our open-ended lives with it in any sense which lends credence to the topography analogy, as it is invoked by elucidatory readers (cf. §1k).

1o. There is a question, therefore, regarding the background knowledge which one presupposes in taking a terrain as mappable. As mentioned in §1n: ordinary cartographers, making typical maps, know not to map people crossing the landscape being mapped, not to map snowdrifts, not to map the waves in the ocean, etc. Additionally: geographers know which sections of coastline are more prone to erosion than others, and which rivers more likely to change course – for instance, a porous limestone riverbed is liable to relatively rapid erosion (or ‘sinkage’), while a basalt riverbed is much less so; and shale coastlines can retreat or move on a relatively regular basis. It is not so much that we have yet to avail ourselves of such background knowledge regarding language, but rather that there is no such thing as a way of knowing (in an analogous sense) which parts of our language are basalt, which are porous limestone, which are shale coastline, which are people crossing the landscape, and which are snowdrifts. Recall Hacker’s discussion on “conceptual **topography**” (cf. the quote in §1k); now, even were we to identify some part of our language that we took to have the resilience (hardness, stability) of basalt: how would we then know that it would not (as it were) become shale before our eyes, before becoming granite or returning to lava? Maps often invoke geological knowledge to topographical ends. This brings to the fore problems with Hacker’s depiction in the quotation. Hacker claims there is progress in Wittgenstein’s work from (conceptual) geology to topography. We question the perspicuity of the distinction. Topography

10. Regarding reading too much into Wittgenstein’s “genealogical tree of psychological phenomena” and taking it as support for a Hackerian mapping, it is worth paying attention to the precise wording of Wittgenstein’s (1980) RPP-i: §895: “The genealogical tree of psychological phenomena: I strive, *not for exactness*, but for perspicuity”; Wittgenstein is careful to *stress* that he does not seek “exactness” but “perspicuity” (“Übersichtlichkeit”; we have emended the translation – see also section 6, below, on this.). Also compare the following remark: “In giving all these examples I am **not** aiming at some kind of completeness, some classification of all psychological concepts. **They are only meant to enable the reader to shift for himself when he encounters conceptual difficulties**” (LWPP-i: §686).

implies geological background knowledge. If Wittgenstein has rejected the conceptual geology (allegedly of *TL-P*) in favour of conceptual topography, he has – to follow the analogy through – seemingly rejected the very background knowledge required by cartographers. One might say: there is not only an open-endedness but also a *reflexivity* and an always-open possibility of *creative change* in language; these features are not present in the geological or topographical landscape *itself*. But it would perhaps be better still (so as to avoid seeming to make positive substantive pronouncements about language) simply to say: we do not even know what would *count* as having the kind of knowledge of language,¹¹ which is relevantly analogous to knowledge of a landscape.

1p. So there is a further point which should be made here: the very desire to ‘map’ language speaks from a place that desires to minimise the significance of human agency – a distinctly odd result for Hacker, especially, a would-be defender of the human against the imperial reach of social and cognitive ‘sciences.’ The wish to understand human activity / language as through and through rule-governed, the wish to understand language as mappable and surveyable, in elucidatory readings (a wish which, we submit, is not Wittgenstein’s), *is a wish to do away with human being*. Avner Baz (2003) states this point with clarity in a recent article in *Inquiry*:

In Cavell’s Wittgenstein, the philosophical work of leading words back to their everyday uses is a constant struggle against the temptation to think, or fantasise, that the words might somehow *speak for us*, over our heads as it were, independently of **our investing them with meaning**. Cavell describes that fantasy as **the idea that ‘I must empty out my contribution to words, so that language itself, as if beyond me, exclusively takes over responsibility for meaning’** [Cavell 1989, 57]. This human tendency to renounce our responsibility to the meaningfulness of our words, which is the tendency to reject *conditions* under which our words can be meaningful – and hence, in particular, be in touch with reality – Cavell

11. To speak thus is surely however not to *deny* the ‘background stability’ that *enables* language, the kind of stability involved in, for instance, pieces of cheese not randomly appearing and disappearing, becoming lighter and heavier, etc. The point to be certain of is the following: The open-textured and reflexive nature of language – that is the fact that language only makes sense if living makes sense (to coin a phrase of Rush Rhees’s) and that living is an ongoing, open-textured and ever-evolving activity – means that referring to ‘background stability’ and a ‘stock of uses’ (grammar) cannot ‘win’ philosophical disputes (see note 21 for amplification of this important point).

often presents as (an allegory for) the human tendency to renounce, or reject, the human [see Cavell 1979, 109, 207, 355].

(Baz 2003, 483–484)

We would add here that there is every reason to drop the qualification “Cavell’s” in the opening sentence; “In Wittgenstein” would have been more accurate (Cavell is, of course, one thinker who has been foremost in bringing out this aspect of Wittgenstein).

1q. A reading of *PI*, which holds on to Wittgenstein doing more than practising therapy ultimately leaves ‘Wittgenstein’ committed to the very commitments of which he was trying to relieve us (and himself). For, even when a map is allegedly ‘perfect,’ it still does not *police* anything. There remains available an ‘open question’ argument about its *application*. ‘Perspicuous presentations’ (§2) are just devices to facilitate one’s going on. They do not go on *for* you; *you* have to go on. The way you go on is never governed by rules, if “governed” means determined.


II

2a. In 1991, Gordon Baker published a paper called “*Philosophical Investigations* §122: Neglected Aspects.” Baker’s new reading, first advanced in that paper, emphasised what he termed the ‘radically therapeutic nature’ of Wittgenstein’s method. Baker deepened this new account of Wittgenstein *via* papers published over the next 13 years (and brought together in a collection in 2004).¹²

2b. The therapeutic reading of *PI* sees Wittgenstein as attempting to break us free of the impulse to metaphysics by engaging the reader in a dialogue with a diverse and dialectically structured range of philosophical impulses. These impulses are presented as the voice of Wittgenstein’s imaginary interlocutor(s) in *PI*. Wittgenstein presents one with different aspects of our language-use, customs and practices with the intention of helping one to free *oneself* from the grip of a particular, entrenched, picture or its lure. This then frees one of the thought-restricting tendencies (mental cramps) fostered by one’s being

12. See Hutchinson and Read (2005) “Whose Wittgenstein?: A Review Article of Baker, Dilman, Hacker, and Stern,” in *Philosophy* (*op. cit.*), for a discussion of this collection of Baker’s.

held in thrall by a particular picture to the exclusion of other equally viable ones. What is fundamental to this reading of Wittgenstein's method is (the centrality of) aspect-seeing: this concept is, Baker holds, *at the heart of Wittgenstein's entire philosophic method*. Baker suggests that when Wittgenstein writes in *PI* §122 that a perspicuous presentation is of fundamental significance for us, what he means by perspicuous presentation is a presentation which effects in us an aspect switch, or dawn. So, for example, when someone comes to see that we

might see this  as a rabbit, as well as a duck – of which,

say, she had hitherto assumed it was *exclusively* a picture – she is liberated from the thought-constraining grip of her blindness to all but the duck-aspect.

2c. So, for example, if we are struggling with a philosophical problem, it may be because we are not alive to other – neglected – aspects of a particular term – say “mind”; here, we might be thinking overly in terms of “mind” as modelled on the brain and located in the head. In order that we see that we are not *obliged* to see the mind in this way, we could place other possible pictures of the mind alongside this one: other aspects of mind. We might, for instance, place the picture of mind found in Aristotle, and revived by authors such as (recent) Putnam (1994a) and McDowell, alongside this, in the hope that our interlocutor would see its viability. Once our interlocutor accepts these new aspects as viable, she will no longer be in thrall to one way of seeing things, and no longer *driven* to philosophical problems which are rooted in the old – and hitherto seemingly compulsory – way of seeing things.

2d. This ‘picture’ of the grammar of perspicuous presentation differs significantly from the grammar of that term found in Hacker *et al.* Baker (1991 [2004]) identified several key respects in which the two readings differed; we attempt here literally to place the two pictures of the grammar of perspicuous presentation side-by-side, in hope that our readers will no longer be held in thrall by the standard – elucidatory – picture.¹³ Table 1 might significantly contribute towards a (we hope) *perspicuous* presentation of “perspicuous presentation.”

13. We are not *insisting* that that picture be rejected, nor claiming that it is *false*. We are urging that it be recognised as a picture, as non-compulsory – as having to stand, if at all, on *its merits*, if such it has.

Table 1.

	Elucidatory Reading of the Grammar of Perspicuous Representations	Therapeutic Reading of the Grammar of Perspicuous Presentation
i	A perspicuous representation is an ordering or arrangement of our grammatical rules. The analogy employed is with that of mapping of a landscape.	A perspicuous presentation is a presentation of something, which makes what is presented <i>perspicuous</i> (or <i>orderly</i>) to someone to whom it is given.
ii	A perspicuous representation represents the employment of symbols in our language.	The components of a perspicuous presentation of 'the grammar of our language' need not be <i>descriptions</i> of the employment of the symbols of 'our language'; they may in fact be highly various, non-linguistic, etc.
iii	What makes a representation perspicuous is a property of a particular arrangement of grammatical rules. (See, for example, Hacker 1996, 109 on "pin" and "pain")	The adjective 'perspicuous' in the phrase 'perspicuous presentation' is not used attributively; i.e. perspicuity is not/cannot be reduced to a property, nor to the sum of the properties of, the presentation.
iv	One representation of grammar cannot be 'more (or less) perspicuous' than another any more than one axiom of geometry can be more (or less) self-evident than another.	One presentation of 'the use of our words' might be more comprehensive than another though not <i>necessarily</i> more perspicuous. <i>Some</i> actual presentations will surely be more perspicuous than others (see viii).
v	If there are different perspicuous representations of a single domain of grammar, they differ merely in the selection and arrangement of grammatical rules.	It makes sense to speak of ways of seeing 'our language,' 'our grammar,' or language-games (actual or imaginary). The 'our' here need not be as in 'our language' (e.g. English), but rather as in 'our approach' (e.g. we therapeutic practitioners of philosophy).

Table 1. *Continued*

	Elucidatory Reading of the Grammar of Perspicuous Representations	Therapeutic Reading of the Grammar of Perspicuous Presentation
vi	Perspicuous representations are roughly additive. We can, by adding them together, piece together a 'bird's-eye-view' of our grammar.	Perspicuous presentations need not be additive; they do not necessarily lead, when put together, to (e.g.) anything like a 'bird's-eye-view'.
vii	The criteria of identity for perspicuous representations have an indeterminacy. There is no clear answer to the question 'how many perspicuous representations are there in <i>PI</i> '.	'Perspicuous presentation' is a count noun, whose use (very roughly) parallels the use of "landmark" or "point of reference".
viii	There is equally no clear criterion for the success of a perspicuous representation. Perspicuous representations may be correct or incorrect; their effects on their readers/hearers/users is entirely another matter.	The criteria of success in giving perspicuous presentations are real, albeit <i>strictly relative to particular situations, people, etc.</i> One achieves a perspicuous presentation when what one is doing <i>works</i> (see §§4c and 5d).

III

3a. What we have provided are a number of reasons (§§1h–1p) to think of the elucidatory reading of Wittgenstein as unsatisfactory – chiefly, that it ignores Wittgenstein's phrasing (i.e. it ignores Wittgenstein's *words*) and commits Wittgenstein to some (deeply problematic) philosophical views. Furthermore, such a reading is no more than optional, as we have shown (§§2a–2d) by placing alongside the elucidatory reading an alternative way of seeing the grammar of perspicuous presentation offered by Gordon Baker. The textual rationale for Baker's reading can be found in the remark that precedes *PI* §122 in earlier versions of the typescript (TS). Prior to this remark taking its place in *PI*, it appeared in several manuscripts (MS) and TS. The TS, which directly precedes what became *PI*, is TS220; in it the remark we know as *PI* §122 (TS220, §100) was preceded by TS220, §99:

We then change the aspect by placing side-by-side with *one* system of expression other systems of expression. – The bondage in which one analogy holds us can be broken by placing another [analogy] alongside which we acknowledge to be equally well justified.

3b. Two questions are now apt to arise: (i) Why was this remark omitted from what we know as *PI?* and (ii) How ought we understand the grammar of aspects? Turning to Wittgenstein's very last writings, we find much which will serve as support for our answer(s) to these (we submit, *closely* related) questions.

3c. First, the notion of aspect-seeing has its roots in, and was suggested to Wittgenstein by his reading of, Gestalt psychology.¹⁴ It is important for Wittgenstein's purposes that his employment of the notion is *not* taken by the reader to be *at one with* its rendering in Gestalt psychology. Wittgenstein invokes no background psychological theory in his discussions and uses of the notion. Second, Wittgenstein's de-psychologising of aspect-seeing goes all the way down. He dispenses with the psychological baggage, which the notion might carry with it from Gestalt psychology, and also pre-empts a philosophical predilection to psychologise the notion: i.e. reading aspect-seeing and perception of secondary qualities (virtually) synonymously.¹⁵ This provides an answer to our first question (§3b) by providing a rationale for Wittgenstein's deferring his introduction of aspect-seeing until a point at which he was able to treat the phenomenon in enough detail so as to make it clear that he was *not* gesturing in the direction of Gestalt psychology; indeed, to make it clear that he was not implying any background psychological theory in employing the notion. Much groundwork – breaking the grip of hitherto (exclusively) dominant pictures of meaning – needed to be done. In addition, Wittgenstein needed time to work through his own thoughts on the notion.¹⁶ Bringing into view the non-psychologistic nature of Wittgenstein's

14. For details, see Monk (1991, chapter 24, 508–509, 512–515); particularly (regarding his engagement with Köhler's thought). References in Wittgenstein's published work are numerous, though scattered; see Wittgenstein's (1980, RPP-ii, §§224, 334; 1982, LWPP-i, §645.

15. It is tempting in trying to understand Wittgenstein to draw analogies with other philosophers or schools of philosophy. This tendency is realised in John McDowell's (1998a) paper "Values and Secondary Qualities." Aspect-seeing is aligned with the perception of secondary qualities, as discussed by the British empiricists, such as Locke and Hume.

16. Monk (*op. cit.*) documents how central the phenomenon was to Wittgenstein's thinking in 1948–49.

discussion of aspect-seeing also provides an answer to our second question (§3b) by doing the same for aspect-seeing as he/we did earlier for perspicuous presentation. One does not need to conceive aspect-seeing on the model of the perception of secondary qualities any more than one need see grammatical propositions on the model of analytical propositions, nor perspicuous (re-)presentation on the model of a Rylean mapping of logical grammar.

3d. In his final writings, Wittgenstein spent considerable time exploring 'aspect-seeing.' Some of this work was published as part II of *PI*. More, however, is to be found in volume I of Wittgenstein's (1982) *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology* (LWPP-i).¹⁷ Here, Wittgenstein explores the relationship between perception and aspect-seeing, bringing out the ways in which our talk of visual perception might differ from our talk of the dawning of an aspect.¹⁸ For example, the paradigm case of secondary quality perception is the perception of colour and a paradigm case of primary quality perception is perception of shape. Consider what Wittgenstein writes here:

[t]he colour in the visual impression corresponds to the colour of the object (this blotting paper looks pink to me, and is pink) – the shape in the visual impression to the shape of the object (it looks rectangular to me, and is rectangular) – but what I perceive in the dawning of an aspect is not a property of the object, but an internal relation between it and other objects (LWPP-i, §516).

A number of things can be gleaned from this. Wittgenstein gives the paradigm examples of primary and secondary quality perception: shape perception and colour perception, respectively; however, in doing so, he chooses not to draw 'the philosophical distinction' between them; he just notes what we would ordinarily say, i.e. that the object *appears and is* pink/rectangular. When it comes to how we ordinarily talk about objects, one rarely, if *ever*, feels the need to invoke the primary/secondary quality distinction; and knowing that something is a paradigm case of secondary quality x does not mean that one balks at saying that the object is x .

3e. An aspect of an object is something different. When an aspect dawns, one would not be willing to talk the same way, or, if one does approximate such talk, it differs in *significant* respects, i.e. we talk that

17. This volume is based on the second half of MS137 and almost all of MS138 written in 1948–49.

18. See LWPP-i §§171–180, 448–521, 533–569, 690–706, 729–755, 757, 767–784.

way but with a tone of surprise – *now* it is a rabbit! For if “duckness” was a property of the object, how could “rabbithood” be so too? Recall earlier discussions – and one’s own experience of aspect-seeing: one does not see both aspects at once; rather one sees now one, then the other; but one is seeing the same object under the same (material) conditions. So, in experiencing meaning, in seeing the dawning of a new aspect, we perceive not (the qualities (properties) of) the ‘object’ but an ‘internal relation’ between the ‘object’ and other ‘objects’ – rabbits and ducks, in the famous example.

3f. Therapy works by tracing one’s interlocutor’s philosophical problem to their being held in thrall to a particular picture of, say, how the mind must be. What one seeks is a perspicuous way of presenting matters so that one might facilitate one’s interlocutor’s acknowledgment of aspects hitherto unnoticed. Another way of putting this might be: one is trying to facilitate in them the perception of other internal relations, between the meaning of our concept “mind” and other concepts: we might well *see* the mind *as* the brain; *as* clockwork; *as* computer software; we might also *see* it *as* a structured set of object-oriented practical abilities. In a similar manner, one might try to facilitate in someone perception of the internal relation between the concept of philosophy-as-a-practice and literature; that is to say, *see* philosophy *as* art, or film *as* philosophy, etc.¹⁹ in a similar way in which many seem to perceive philosophy as a theoretical discipline, internally related to the (empirical) natural sciences.²⁰

IV

4a. We can now begin to sum up the problems that the ‘elucidatory’ approach to perspicuous (re-)presentations brings. In talking of “over-viewing language” or “surveying the rules of grammar” as practices that have intrinsic worth, as not being purpose-relative/serving the therapeutic goal, one implies that there exists *something*, some bounded entity: ‘language.’ This ‘language’ must have a discernable form, which is static enough (i.e. not in flux) to survey and map according to certain criteria (those provided by our conception of (relatively stable) grammatical rules). And not only that, but this

19. See the essays in Read and Goodenough (2005) in this respect.

20. For example, see Griffiths (1997).

reading requires that such a mapping will serve a philosophical purpose in the future. In advocating a method for discerning the rules in accord with which one must act so that one might know one's way about and not 'transgress' on pain of uttering nonsense and/or lapsing into metaphysics, this view precludes poetic (or linguistically facilitated scientific) innovation. The elucidatory view, therefore, implies (i) what John McDowell (1998b, 207) has termed the (fantasised) ability to "view language from sideways on" and (ii) linguistic conservatism.

4b. These are severe limitations. The best way to avoid such drastic consequences is surely to understand recourse to grammar as being in the person-relative sense.²¹ The terms 'language' and 'grammar' in *PI* ought not to be read as referring to some literally surveyable 'entities' that are, in principle, separable from our practices and our lives in the world but as 'what **we** say' and 'what **we** are happy to acknowledge as the rules **we** act in accordance with' respectively.²² One can quasi-topographically 'map' or indeed stipulate the rules of grammar if one really wants to . . . but only if one wishes to accept the metaphysical / conservative implications of so doing, which are not easily wedded to Wittgenstein's 'metaphilosophical' remarks.

4c. The way out of the exegetical conundrum, which prompts the abortive efforts of Hacker *et al.*, is then to see that if anything akin to 'connective analysis' is in play in *PI*, it is so *only* in order to serve the therapeutic goal of the text. This puts a different 'spin' on how one interprets the elucidations / clarifications – i.e. the perspicuous presentations. The clarifications offered are, when read through the

21. This is *of course* not to imply that such consideration of grammar is merely subjective or that there will not often be widespread success in efforts to make relatively *widely cast* therapeutic moves, especially in a relatively restricted cultural context, etc. The point is this: one cannot *assume* – as Hacker apparently does – that the philosopher's work is exhausted by the policing of 'the' grammar. One's default assumption should rather be that the work of the philosopher may always have to reckon on proceeding person by person, dialogue by dialogue. Compare the following remark from (Baker, 2003): "[I]t is always best to state only characteristic features of the use of a word, for example, of the word 'rule.' The following is such a feature: one can determine the grammar of a language **with the consent of a speaker**, but not the orbit of the stars with the consent of the stars. The rule for a sign, then, is the rule which the speaker *commits himself to*." (p. 105). We are *not* rejecting the idea of a 'stock of uses,' only the idea that without the consent of the speaker, appeal to such a 'stock of uses' can do any philosophical work.

22. Gordon Baker makes this point well in his paper "Some Remarks on Language and Grammar" (Baker 2004, chapter 2). Baker provides ample – indeed, compelling – textual and contextual evidence for such a reading of Wittgenstein.

hermeneutic of therapy, *clarifications in the achievement sense*. That is to say, they only serve as clarifications if our interlocutor recognises them as such, and thus, they lead him to see other pictures as equally valid as the one that has hitherto held him in thrall and led him to his seemingly insurmountable philosophical problem.

V

5. Gordon Baker moved on from an ‘elucidatory’ interpretation of Wittgenstein; Hacker has not. That he continues – both in practice and (usually) quite explicitly – to insist on the independent virtue of connective analysis and on attaining “bird’s eye views” of terrains, we fear, reduces the likelihood of people perceiving and *practicing* Wittgenstein’s lasting significance.

VI

6. In RPP-i §895, Wittgenstein remarks, “The genealogical tree of psychological phenomena: I strive, *not for exactness*, but for perspicuity [Übersichtlichkeit]”.²³ The way we have brought out the meaning – the fundamental significance – of “perspicuous presentation” can fully comprehend Wittgenstein’s use of – and indeed *italicisation*²⁴ of – the phrase “not for exactness”; the same *is not true* of the reading of “perspicuous (re-)presentation” that we have challenged. Someone looking down – in Greek-god-like fashion – from a mountaintop with an *accurate and detailed representational* map in hand and/or an *accurate and powerful* telescope strives for exactness. Such analysis or mapping or scientific-seeing of exactly *how things are* is the scientific ideal and is precisely *not* what the Wittgensteinian philosopher is after. It is surprising, unfortunate and ironic that Hacker *et al* fail to see this; *their rendering of perspicuous presentation renders philosophy as (closely akin to)*

23. We have emended the translation, which uses the unfortunate term “a view of the whole” to render “Übersichtlichkeit,” thus prejudicing the unwary reader in favour of an elucidatory reading.

24. Such notational devices are of utmost significance for Wittgenstein (see Baker 2004, *passim*).

science. Precisely the result that these ‘Oxford Wittgensteinians’ had wanted to set themselves, *above all*, against.

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