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## TELEOLOGICAL METAPHILOSOPHY

**Abstract:** The paper addresses a problem regarding the nature of philosophy. How are we to think about the variety of philosophies and the disagreement among philosophers which goes along with it? After stating the problem and looking at an organic and teleological approach to solving it, a Wittgensteinian dissolution is sketched.

**Keywords:** Metaphilosophy, Teleology, Teleonomy, Method, Purpose-Means-Relation, Nonsense, Genesis of Problems, Kant, Hegel, Wittgenstein

(1) If it were not almost obvious, one could learn from Gilbert Ryle that the question of what philosophy and logic are and can do was at all times Wittgenstein's master-question.<sup>1</sup>

That this is *almost* obvious should not mean that it is not completely obvious, but rather that it is not completely *true*. Instead it is *very close* to the truth, and *obviously* so.

It is not completely true because there are other questions which might as well deserve the title »Wittgenstein's master question«. Here are some of those questions: What is the essence of the world? What does it mean for someone to mean something by something? What is good? - Now, the *more* such questions there are, or the more they make up a *whole*, the *less* one says if one calls them, or the whole, »Wittgenstein's master-question(s)«. In an ideal case, only *one* question out of several questions is a philosopher's master-question. For that is what that expression usually means.

However, there is a sense in which Ryle does indeed hit the nail on the head. For »Wittgenstein's master-question« is different from those other questions in an important way. If one calls those other questions »substantial questions«, then the first one is a »formal (or methodological) question«. But whatever has substance also has form. In other words, in philosophy, (the greater part of) content is reached by method. Now, suppose that »form«, or »method«, are anything but easily mastered concepts, or, to

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1 Cf. G. Ryle (1951), p. 19.

make the same claim the other way round, concepts which are difficult to master easily deceive one, then these concepts tend to do so with regard to those substantial questions (too). This turns questions of form, or method, into master-questions. For that is what that expression usually also means.

Ryle then says that what is most important about Wittgenstein is that he teaches us method(s).

(2) Being interested in method is hardly anything *new* in philosophy. To the contrary, it characterizes at least modern philosophy right from its start, given that it takes off with Descartes' *Discourse on Method*, goes through Kant who calls his *Critique of Pure Reason* »a treatise on the method, not a system of the science itself«(CPR B xxii), and leads up to – well, choose for yourself.

The title of Descartes' *Discourse* stands out from a background which he describes in the following words:

I shall not say anything about philosophy, but that seeing that it has been cultivated for many centuries by the best minds that have ever lived, and that nevertheless no single thing is to be found in it which is not subject of dispute, and in consequence which is not dubious, I had not enough presumption to hope to fare better there than other men had done.<sup>2</sup>

The best minds, learned people – and nevertheless *no* agreement? - History itself urges one to *ignore* it and to start anew by looking for a method by which true opinions can be reached.

Anyway, disagreement is no problem in *itself*. You prefer coffee over tea, I have the reverse preference? Well, what's the problem? Even regarding matters of *truth*, saying that *p* is not saying that *p* according to *N*. *Being true* is not *being taken to be true*. The fact that *N* said that *p* does not decide whether *p* is true or not. So, in looking for truth the fact that a view has been brought forward by *N*, and contradicted by *M*, is irrelevant. – Disagreement is not only no problem in *itself*, it is also none with regard to *philosophy*.

Or so it seems. For remember Descartes' words, according to which, »philosophy ... has been cultivated ... by the best minds ..., and ... nevertheless no single thing is to be found in it which is not subject of dispute ...«. Why »nevertheless«? – Compare this proposition:

Philosophy has been cultivated by the best minds, nevertheless it is raining.

The strangeness of this proposition shows that »nevertheless« is what might be called a »relevance operator«. Whatever is connected by it ought to stand in a *relevant relation* to one another. That *A* is relevant to *B* means, among other things, that if you know what »A« and »B« mean, you cannot seriously ask what they've got to do with

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2 Descartes, (1911). Contrast what follows with: Williams (1978).

one another (at all) as you might ask what philosophy has got to do (at all) with the weather. In this case, using the operator *misfired*. Now, it *should* also misfire in Descartes' case, *if* the fact that an opinion has been brought forward by *N* is irrelevant, for in this case whether there is agreement or not drops out too. Yet, what Descartes says rather sounds like a *principle*, or as if the following were analytically true:

Philosophy has been cultivated by the best minds, therefore there is agreement.

Kant subscribes to something similar with regard to method:

... if the various participants are unable to agree in any common plan of procedure, then we may rest assured that it is very far from having entered upon the secure path of science, and is indeed merely random groping. (CPR B vii)

This changes the situation quite dramatically. For now at least lack of agreement looks like a (kind of) warranty for untruth. So we are back at where we were before.

(3) A statement like

We ought to investigate, or discover, the »secure path of science« *first*, and then actually *go* that path in order to reach the Promised Land

is like a statement about a *means*, or *tool*, for a certain *end*, or *purpose*. But in order to say whether something is a tool for a certain purpose one has to know what the state in which the purpose is realised would look like. In order to say that something is a means one has to be able to *describe* the end, or at least the kind of end, for which it is supposed to be a means, or at least a kind of means. In *our* case, this simply means already to know the answers to the questions we are asking. If, however, we knew the answers why should we look for a method to find those answers? Similarly, to know whether or not one is on the secure path means to know how the Promised Land looks like, that is, in our case, having arrived at it.

To sum up, it seems as if investigating method first is either impossible or unnecessary.

(4) This problem is at the heart of »Hegel's philosophy of philosophy«, provided that one might use that name. The hesitation is in due order. For this »philosophy of philosophy« is mostly to be found in these long *Prefaces* and *Introductions* which Hegel declares to be *pre-philosophical*.<sup>3</sup> Should one then speak, instead, of »Hegel's pre- or metaphilosophy«? Well, these structural features of Hegel's text already belong to the solution.

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<sup>3</sup> This resembles the entrance of Mephisto in Goethe's *Faust*: in the *Prelude in Heaven*. Here Mephisto, the Devil, bets with God, setting the scene for the following play. The real play, as one might call it, begins after this *Prelude*. Yet, without the *Prelude* the play might easily be a different one. The *Untersuchungen*, its preface aside, start with a quotation from St. Augustine which some interpreters take to express a pre-philosophical picture of language. Cf. Goldfarb (1983).

The first step is to remember that, for instance, no one takes Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* to fail to be a *philosophical* work merely because Kant himself says that it does not give us the system of science (metaphysics) but only an investigation into its method. No one does so, *although* the *obvious* questions to be asked are: If philosophy *is* metaphysics, *what* is the investigation into (its) method supposed to be? For, if philosophy and metaphysics are *different*, why is it *important* to say that this is not yet the system of metaphysics?<sup>4</sup> One wouldn't say that of a book on how to grow red carrots, would one? But then, one wouldn't call *such* a book pre-philosophical either. What is pre-philosophical is, then, *essentially* linked with philosophy.

Seen in this light, the *obvious* tensions in the architecture of Hegel's writings make the meta-philosophical problem *visible*. There is simply no possibility of investigating the method of philosophy *before* philosophizing, which means: before already employing a method. Therefore, the dichotomies of means and end, tool and purpose, path and destination are to be rejected. As Hegel puts it in his *Waste books*: »With admiration, Kant is commended for teaching *how to philosophize*, not *philosophy*; as if one would teach someone how to be a cabinet maker, but not to make a table, chair, cabinet and so on.«<sup>5</sup> – Yet, in Hegel's case, this does *not* bring us back to the original problem.

(5) Before considering this case, let's have a glimpse at Wittgenstein. Here is earliest Wittgenstein:

Logic must take care of itself.<sup>6</sup>

That LOGIC MUST TAKE CARE OF ITSELF means different things. One of them is that there is no investigation or discovery of the foundations of logic *outside* logic itself.

*Why* is there no such »thing«? - Wrong question! - Right answer: Whatever there could be would have to be *logical*; or it would not be *articulated*; and nothing unarticulated can be an *investigation*. Therefore, the right question is this: What does it *mean* that LOGIC MUST TAKE CARE OF ITSELF? The answer can be found by asking what »investigation« means, namely, among other things, something *articulated*. This means ... something logical. Furthermore, when doing logic, it must be impossible to make mistakes or, if indeed there are such mistakes, they need to be of an entirely different kind than other mistakes. For if it were possible to make mistakes in logic, we

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4 Cf. Collingwood (1933), p. 21.

5 My translation of: »Kant wird mit Bewunderung angeführt, dass er *Philosophieren*, nicht *Philosophie* lehre; als ob jemand das Tischlern lehrte, aber nicht, einen Tisch, Stuhl, Schrank usf. zu machen.« (Hegel (1803-06), p. 559)

6 Wittgenstein's *Notebooks*, entry from 22.8.14. In the *LPA* we read: »Logic must look after itself.« (5.473, transl. Pears and McGuinness). For Frege, it is »ein sicheres Anzeichen eines Fehlers, wenn die Logik die Metaphysik oder Psychologie nöthig hat, Wissenschaften, die selber der logischen Grundsätze bedürfen.« Frege (1893), p. XIXf. Frege continues: »Wo ist denn hier der eigentliche Urboden, auf dem Alles ruht? Oder ist es wie bei Münchhausen, der sich am eignen Schopf aus dem Sumpfe zog?« However, Frege does not answer this question. Cf. Also Frege (1884), p. 43f.

could not rely on logic when looking for mistakes elsewhere, as in fact we do. This leads in turn to the idea that, in logic, everything must be *perspicuous*.<sup>7</sup>

If so, then, at bottom, there is *no* difference between logic and philosophy like that between, say, logic and geography. If philosophy is the search for the *essence of the world*<sup>8</sup>, logic *is* philosophy. How could logic then *not* be in a position to have to take care of itself? Similarly, if philosophy is supposed to be *absolute* knowledge, then there is no *possibility* for a philosophy of method above, or underneath, the »rest« of philosophy.<sup>9</sup>

There is, then, no distinction between philosophizing and its products such that one might *first* investigate how to philosophize, this itself not being philosophizing, and *then* do it. The picture of first finding the right path and then going along this path does not make sense here.

(6) But back to Hegel. His next step is to point out that there is indeed a variety of conflicting philosophical opinions, but that this is *not all* there is. There is also unity *within* the variety, agreement *underlying* the disagreement, or perhaps rather *co-existing* with it, *expressed* in it.

First, remember that there are different kinds of differences. Music and red carrots are different things since they are not the same. But, again, to say this is in one sense strange. From which point of view are they supposed to be different? That is the same as asking from which point of view they *could be* the same. On the other hand, there is nothing strange in that sense about the variety of philosophical opinions. So this variety is of a different kind than the variety of music, red carrots ... numbers? ... suburbs? To say that two philosophical opinions are *different* from one another means to use another concept of »different« than in the case in which one says that this philosophical opinion is different from this piece of wood. Some differences are *relevant* ones, others are not; »relevant« in a sense similar to that explained above. *Contradiction* is a relevant difference. Conflicting philosophies are *relevantly* different. The fact that there are such conflicts proves that there is *both* difference *and* unity.

The next step consists in transforming the means-ends, path-destination dichotomies as expressed in the slogan »Method first!« If, in order to judge and criticize (philo-

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7 A logical mistake would be like a false mathematical proposition. But, in an important sense, there is no such thing as a wrong mathematical proposition. If, on the other hand, whatever humans do they run the risk of making a mistake, humans could not do logic. So, if there is logic, it is nothing *done*. Rather, it is something which *happens*. Of course, it happens *to us*, so we are back in the game. However, is there any possibility for me making a mistake when being hit by a fir cone? If so, then, it seems, only in so far as I am at the wrong place at the wrong time. But being there ... This throws an interesting light on the following remark in Wittgenstein's *Lecture on Ethics*: »I at once see clearly, as it were in a flash of light, not only that no description that I can think of would do to describe what I mean by absolute value, but that I would reject every significant description that anybody could possibly suggest, *an initio*, on the ground of its significance.« (p. 54). That is, everything said before in that *Lecture* has no real argumentative weight, it only serves to make the one who follows it receptive to the *flashlight*. Cf. also Nordmann (2005), pp. 55ff.

8 In his early Notebooks Wittgenstein writes: »Ja, meine Arbeit hat sich ausgedehnt von den Grundlagen der Logik zum Wesen der Welt.« (2.8.16) This did not lead Wittgenstein away from logic. Instead it became more and more clear that »the foundations« of logic are the essence of the world.

9 Cf. Hegel (unter Mitwirkung von F. W. J. Schelling, 1970), p. 171ff.

sophical) opinions, one must have a *measure* as a basis of judgement, then there is the same »logical multiplicity« in both cases: means and ends, path and destination vs. measure and what is measured. But, and this is the decisive move now, the measure is a *paradigm*, an *Urbild*, of philosophy, and as such it is one which is both present in real philosophizing *and* in the process of developing itself within it. If indeed »everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject*« (1806, p. 10), and if being a subject means changing, then only the *form* of the substance can alter. Any other change would mean that there is (now) another Substance. So, if there is no philosophy of method *above*, or *underneath*, substantial philosophy, why should one even *expect* there to be agreement about method, given that there is none about content, or substance? However, the fact that there is no agreement does not mean that there is simply a random groping. Rather there is a (possibility of a) *non-random transformation*.

In one sense, the point is simple. In philosophizing, as in cabinet making, we follow an ideal by which to measure what we actually do. Yet, that ideal might change while adhering to it, as the ideal of cabinet making changed with(in) the *practice* of cabinet making. To use two expressions of Hegel's time, notably used by Herder, we are both *corruptible* and *perfectible*. Our *corruptibility* enables us to be initiated into (the science of) philosophy, whereas our *perfectibility* enables us to develop further what we acquired from our predecessors. This kind of historicity means, for instance, that two carpenters doing the same at different times might not do the same thing. That is, there is a sense in which a cabinet made in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is not the same as one made in the 21<sup>st</sup> century even if no one could say which one is made when.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, history is anything but dispensable; it is *essential*.

However, the fact that, for Hegel, there is *absolute* knowledge means that, in philosophy, this development has to have an *end*. This does not simply mean that it *will* end. Everything will end, but not everything will end with *its* end, to put it that way. For instance, the life of humans is structured by the sequence »(birth-)childhood-youth-adulthood-seniority(-death)«. Sadly, some people die before their end has come, whereas others survive it. It is not only difficult to live up to one's ideal, but also to die up to it. More soberly, as in the cases of »variety« and »difference«, there are at least two notions of »end«, an *external* and an *internal* one. An external end is not part of the concept of the thing in question, except in the sense that it *might* have such an end. The internal sense of an end is the *relevant* one. Here is Hegel's leading metaphor, given in his own impressive wording:

The bud disappears in the bursting-forth of the blossom, and one might say that the former is refuted by the latter; similarly, when the fruit appears, the blossom is shown up in its turn as a false manifestation of the plant, and the fruit now emerges as the truth of it instead. These forms are not just distinguished from one another, they also supplant one another as mutually incompatible. Yet at the same time their

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<sup>10</sup> In this way Menard's chapters of *Don Quixote* are different from those of Cervantes' *Quixote*, although they are word by word the same. Cf. Borges (1998).

fluid nature makes them moments of an organic unity in which they not only do not conflict, but in which each is as necessary as the other; and this mutual necessity alone constitutes the life of the whole. (1807, p. 2.)

This exemplifies the *teleological transformation* of the means-purpose conception, or that of path and destination.

(7) The last quotation comes from the *Phenomenology's* »Preface: On Scientific Cognition«, and in virtue of this it does not really belong to philosophy. Yet its subject is surely philosophical. So, two things happen here at the same time: Hegel says what he wants to say – by *saying it* here – and does not say it – by saying it *here*. Sure, this technique does *not* give a philosophically innocent criterion for deciding between different philosophical opinions. Instead, this *Preface* serves as a kind of *hermeneutical advice* to help those who are not already Hegelians to reach a standpoint which allows them to become »Hegelians«.<sup>11</sup>

So, rather than trying to give what cannot be given, Hegel transforms the expression of what might be taken to be a perfectly reasonable temptation. The idea(I) is a *system* in which every possible philosophical view – at least possible for us, which is anyway all we need, and later generations having to take care for themselves – so every possible view finds an expression. By seeing how one can say what one wants to say not only without having at the same time to deny what others say, one's original position will, by being *contradicted in the right way*, even be *strengthened*. The same is true if one sees how what one wants to say somehow *presupposes* what others want to say. The *system itself* becomes the criterion of true philosophy as much as it becomes convincing just by incorporating every possible position.<sup>12</sup>

However, there is a double irony here. The first is that one's position ceases to be one's *own* position, for there is no longer any possible *counterpart*. Therefore, there is a sense in which there is no way to be a Hegelian at all. This sense is the sense in which all (true) philosophers are already Hegelians, only every one in his way, as it were. This, in turn, gives one of the most esoteric philosophies a most exoteric pretension. Put another way, there is, *by definition*, no *possible* counterpart to the *Absolute*, and the Absolute is represented in *each* of us.

(8) It was said above (§ 6) that, in this perspective, history is essential. Yet, in the light of the Absolute this is true only in a certain sense, i.e. not true in another sense.

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11 The (vicious) circle involved here comes out nicely in Bishop Berkeley's following remark: »In order to prepare the mind of the reader for the easier conceiving what follows, it is proper to premise somewhat, by way of Introduction, concerning the nature and abuse of Language. But the unravelling this matter leads me in some measure to anticipate my design, ...« (Berkeley (1965), p. 46f.) Of course, if we need an Introduction in order to be prepared to understand that what it serves to introduce, then, if the Introduction anticipates what it is supposed to introduce, how can we understand the Introduction? Yet, that Berkeley uses the word »but« (as Descartes uses »nevertheless«) makes it clear that he knew about the problem. Why then did he say it in the first place? Well, because there is no empty space for a philosophically innocent philosophy of philosophy and, yet, there is a reasonable temptation to look for one.

12 Cf. Hegel (1807), pp. 9, 16.

In one sense an organic unity is simply a structure of a certain type such that every part is (partly) defined by its relation(s) to all other parts. Time plays no role here or, if it does, it does so in the sense that whatever might *happen* does not concern the identity of the whole as such.

In another sense, organic unities are structures such that they develop in a way which might lead to new kinds of those very structures. Here time either plays a role at all or a more substantial one.

The picture of seed and plant might exemplify both senses. Somehow the plant is in the seed, and together they make up a whole of a life-cycle, which, in its turn, might repeat itself over and over again. Yet, within the cycles of seed-plant-seed-plant... something might come into being which was not there in such a cycle some generations ago: something *really new*. Therefore, the procedure is open-ended; it has *no* internal end.

It should be obvious now in which sense the Absolute has to do with *time* and *history*, and in which sense not. It has to do with time in the sense in which one life-cycle is a time-structure, but it has nothing to do with time in the sense in which the succession of such cycles is such a structure as well. If there is teleology, then it is with regard to a single life-cycle. But whether there is teleology with regard to the succession of life-cycles is quite another question. No teleology without internal end! <sup>13</sup>

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13 For the first point compare Schopenhauer, for the second Frege. For Schopenhauer, (his) philosophy is a unity by virtue of being *one single thought* such that »every part supports as much the whole as it is supported by the whole, none is the first and none the last, the whole thought gains through every part in perspicuity and even the smallest part cannot be completely understood without the whole having been understood before.« (My translation of: »... wo jeder Teil ebenso sehr das Ganze erhält, als er vom Ganzen gehalten wird, keiner der erste und keiner der letzte ist, der ganze Gedanke durch jeden Teil an Deutlichkeit gewinnt und auch der kleinste Teil nicht völlig verstanden werden kann, ohne dass schon das Ganze vorher verstanden sei.«) (Schopenhauer (1818), p 7f.) Here, time in the sense above is not even *mentioned*. The whole is a structure of a certain type which Schopenhauer calls an *organic* unity. This organic unity does not involve *time*. This is somehow different in Frege. His problem is that »the really fruitful definitions in mathematics« are not characterized by »a number of adjunctive attributes«, but rather by »... a more intimate, I want to say more organic connection of the attributes. One might illustrate the difference with a geometrical picture. If one represents the concepts (or their extensions) by a district in a plane, then the concept which is defined by adjunctive attributes corresponds to that district which is common to all the districts of the attributes; it is enclosed by parts of their boundaries. With regard to such a definition the task is, to stay with the picture, to use the already given lines in a new way for demarcating a district. But nothing essentially new comes out of this. The fruitful definitions draw boundaries which had not yet been given. What might be drawn from them cannot be seen in advance; one does not simply take out of the box what one had put into it. These conclusions enlarge our knowledge, and one should therefore, according to *Kant*, take them to be synthetic; yet they might be proven purely logical and are, therefore, analytic. They are indeed contained within the definitions, but like the plant in the seed, not like the beam in the house.« (My translation of: »Wir haben da nicht eine Reihe beigeordneter Merkmale, sondern eine innigere, ich möchte sagen organischere Verbindung der Bestimmungen. Man kann sich den Unterschied durch ein geometrisches Bild anschaulich machen. Wenn man die Begriffe (oder ihre Umfänge) durch Bezirke einer Ebene darstellt, so entspricht dem durch beigeordnete Merkmale definierten Begriffe der Bezirk, welcher allen Bezirken der Merkmale gemeinsam ist; er wird durch Teile von deren Begrenzungen umschlossen. Bei einer solchen Definition handelt es sich also – im Bilde zu sprechen – darum, die schon gegebenen Linien in neuer Weise zur Abgrenzung eines Bezirks zu verwenden. Aber dabei kommt nichts wesentlich Neues zum Vorschein. Die fruchtbaren Begriffsbestimmungen ziehen Grenzlinien, die noch gar nicht gegeben waren. Was sich aus ihnen schließen lasse, ist nicht von vornherein zu übersehen; man holt dabei nicht einfach aus dem Kasten wieder heraus, was man hineingelegt hatte. Diese Folgerungen erweitern unsere Kenntnisse, und man sollte sie daher *Kant* zufolge für synthetisch halten; dennoch können sie rein



Now remember that our starting point was the fact that philosophy is characterized by disagreement, and that disagreement appears to be a *problem*, even a *threat*. Trying to solve the problem, or remove the threat, by investigating method first in order to find a secure basis for »the real thing« is doomed to fail for lack of difference between this investigation and »the real thing« itself. Hegel's great idea is to look at conflicting philosophical opinions as »moments of an organic unity«. Yet, this unity has to have an end towards which its unfolding strives if every possible philosophical position is to be represented in it.

The interesting point here is that even if one does *not* think that there is indeed such an end, this does not mean that one is back at the beginning. Rather some of Hegel's insights might be taken to survive *via* an ongoing transformation in Wittgenstein's philosophy.

(9) Coming back to early Wittgenstein as the starting point, there appear to be further rather obvious similarities. As Wittgenstein puts it in its preface, perhaps his *Abhandlung* will »be understood only by someone who has himself already had the thoughts that are expressed in it – or at least similar thoughts.« (LPA p. 3) – Furthermore, Wittgenstein claims essentially to have solved the (philosophical) problems. If so, then he satisfies a condition which is imposed on philosophy by its organic conception according to which unless you have (basically) solved them *all*, you haven't solved *any*. You've got to have the *whole*, in order for you to have a *moment* of it. – If you connect both claims, you get the idea that his book will perhaps only be understood by those who have also solved the problems of philosophy.<sup>14</sup> Now, if this is not to say that perhaps *no one* will understand the book, since the philosophical problems cannot be solved several times, but only once, then it must mean something like this: Every original philosophy is a solution of the philosophical problems. That is actually what their originality consists in. This is a variation of the idea of an *Urbild* of philosophy which goes through all of its history constantly changing its form, yet not its substance. However, Wittgenstein's disclaimer of being interested in any connection of his thoughts with those of others before him prevents him from making a *historical* claim. (Cf. LPA p. 4) It's a *formal* claim, if it is a claim at all.

These similarities do not simply *disappear* when Wittgenstein finally declares that the right philosophical method consists in saying nothing but what can be said (that is scientific propositions, which have nothing to do with philosophy) and showing that whenever someone wants to say something metaphysical, he has given no meaning to some of the signs in his propositions (cf. 6.53). The same holds for the fact that Wit-

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logisch bewiesen werden und sind also analytisch. Sie sind in der Tat in den Definitionen enthalten, aber wie die Pflanze im Samen, nicht wie der Balken im Hause.«) (Frege (1987), pp. 120f.) Although a logical proof is *timeless*, nothing could *enlarge* our knowledge *outside* of time. The connection between seed and plant is close to entailment, since it is *internal*. Yet it is only close, so it allows for time, and therefore for something *new*. Somehow the plant is in the seed and somehow it is not. Regarding the concept of time, there is similar problem in »Der Gedanke«. A thought, as something either true or false, is timeless, but still needs somehow to be located in time in order to be able to be grasped (by us or other thinking beings).

14 Note that Wittgenstein does *not* say that perhaps only those *philosophers* will understand who ..., but that *those* who ...!

tgenstein calls his own propositions nonsense, a ladder which has to be thrown away once the reader has climbed upon it. (cf. 6.54). Yet, although the similarities with Hegel's views do not disappear that way, the differences start to come into focus.<sup>15</sup> They point towards an element of the whole story which has so far not even been mentioned: the *origin*, or *nature*, of philosophical problems. But before looking at this element more closely, let's see what later happens to the elements mentioned so far.

(10) One of the main reasons, if not *the* main reason, why Wittgenstein wrote a second book at all is, as he admits, that there were grave errors in the earlier one. Now, if the solution of *any* problem presupposes that of all *other* problems, then, if only one of the problems is not really solved, neither are the others. On the other hand, there being grave errors in a book is not even a possibility in an all-or-nothing-situation; for speaking of grave errors usually does not mean that *everything* is false.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, admitting that there were grave mistakes already signals a change in the understanding of what »philosophy and logic are and can do«.

The change is perhaps most obvious in the fact that there is no esoteric stance any more, as one might put it. Contrary to restricting one's readership to those who already have similar thoughts, the floor is opened for literally everyone. This goes along with the intention to write a book in which the thoughts proceed in a natural and unbroken way from one subject to the next. As any reader knows, this is not exactly what the *Untersuchungen* look like. (Cf. the remarks in § 7.) One reason for this is that the (nature of the) investigation forces one to travel through a wide field of thoughts far and wide, in all directions. (To the extent to which this is true, any systematic philosophy is probably distorted.) – This lets one see how it might appear that philosophy is something *organic*. (See below.)

How, then, about the idea of there being an end to philosophizing? Well, here it is:

It is not our aim to refine or complete the system of rules for the use of our words in unheard-of ways.

For the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed *complete* clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear.

The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to. – The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring *itself* in question. – Instead, we now demonstrate a method, by examples; and the series of examples can be broken off. – Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a *single* problem.

There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies. (PI 133)

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15 According to some interpreters, one might say that the above-mentioned features of Hegel's text find an echo both in the *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung* and in the *Philosophische Untersuchungen*. With regard to the *Abhandlung* the echo consists in there being a distinction between frame and body of the text, with the frame as pre-philosophical by the *Abhandlung*-standard for »philosophical«.

16 As Wittgenstein later says, the *Abhandlung* was not a heap of scrap, pretending to be a watch, but rather a watch which does not give the right time.

The envisaged end still bears the name »complete clarity«.<sup>17</sup> However, what is meant in both cases is not the same. According to the earlier version, »the question, ›What do we actually use this word for?‹ repeatedly leads to valuable insights.« (6.211, cf. also 3.326.) That is, this question is a *heuristic* tool. But as such it might also lead one astray. Why, then, should one start a book with a description which is as natural as it gets, instead of saying that the world is ... whatever?

To be sure, asking the use-question *can* be a tool, because »all the propositions of our everyday language, just as they stand, are in perfect logical order.« (5.5563) Yet, they are so in such a way that Russell could »perform the service of showing that the apparent logical form of a proposition need not be its real one.« (LPA 4.0031) Asking for the use of a word or sentence might *lead* to valuable insights, but whether an insight is valuable is finally decided on *other* grounds.

Instead of simply declaring the apparent logical form to be the real one, in Wittgenstein's late philosophy the early picture of what the real logical form amounts to also undergoes a transformation. Logic is no longer something hidden, which, although perspicuous in itself, appears only now and then at the surface. Instead, it is something open to view. Yet, although open to view, it is hardly seen. For it is difficult not to think but to look and our grammar lacks perspicuity (cf. PI 66, 122).

Here we come across a third reason for beginning the *Untersuchungen* with something ordinary. As Malcolm reports, Wittgenstein did not choose a description from St. Augustine »because he could not find the conception expressed in that quotation stated as well by other philosophers, but because the conception must be important if so great a mind held it.« (Malcolm (1962), p. 71) Wittgenstein himself makes clear what this is supposed to mean when, in 1931, he writes that »what Augustine says ... is important for us since it is the view of a naturally clear thinking man who is far away from us in time and does surely not belong to our particular circle of ideas.«<sup>18</sup> This throws a new light on Descartes' remark according to which even the greatest minds do not agree about the answers to the philosophical questions. Even if one does not take sides with those who say that truth is anyway nothing but what the best minds agree about, there is a sense in which making the distinction between being true and taking to be true is irrelevant: we can hardly do more than take something to be true; and if even those who are »naturally clear thinking« people, do not agree, then there is indeed a problem. However, the real force of the just quoted remarks is that Descartes' worry comes *too late*, as it were. For the trouble does not begin with trying to *solve* the problems, it starts with their *genesis*.

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17 The words »allerdings« and »sondern« in PI 133 refer to the *Abhandlung*. They might be understood along the lines of section 109: »Richtig war, dass unsere Betrachtungen nicht wissenschaftliche Betrachtungen sein durften. Die Erfahrung, ›dass sich das oder das denken lasse, entgegen unserm Vorurteil‹ – was immer das heißen mag – konnte uns nicht interessieren.« In both cases, however, the understanding of that what was right is different. Compare the following with Kenny (1984), p. 43, and Suter (1989), p. 8f.; also Sluga (1996), pp. 143f., Hilmy (1987), p. 4.

18 My translation of: »(...) was Augustinus sagt ist für uns wichtig, weil es die Auffassung eines natürlich-klar denkenden Mannes ist, der von uns zeitlich weit entfernt, gewiss nicht zu unserem besonderen Gedankenkreis gehört.« (1993, vol. 4, p. 10)

An element of that genesis is that conflicting views might, in a sense, both be right and wrong. This is so when some attack the usual forms of expression as if they were attacking a thesis, while others defend them as if they were ascertaining facts which no reasonable person could deny (cf. PI 402). This reminds one of the dialectics connected with the teleological picture.

(11) So, the *end* of philosophy consists in seeing the *origin* of its problems. The real difficulty is not one of finding the right method to solve always already existing problems, handed over and transformed from one generation to the other. The difficulty is to look and see how they arise in the first place. Since they result from misunderstandings of our grammar, understanding grammar *means* removing them by bringing »words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use« (PI 116, my emphasis).

It might even amount to a *Weltanschauung*, for it results in a »perspicuous representation« (PI 122) of our grammar – and essence is expressed in grammar (cf. PI 371). However, it does not amount to a *theory*. There is nothing *hypothetical* in it and it does not *explain* anything; instead it is purely *descriptive* (cf. PI 109). Although these descriptions receive their light from »the philosophical problems«, and therefore come to an end wherever the descriptions are such that it becomes obvious how what appeared to be a real problem could arise, the fact that many »problems« are connected with many other »problems« in many different »ways« – our everyday language is a kind of hyper-complex organic unity – makes up for a pretty broad picture. Again, this lets one see how it might appear that philosophy ought to be a *system* (in which the thoughts could proceed naturally ... from one subject to the other).

Therefore, it is not just that philosophical problems are *parasitic* upon the everyday use of language. As such, the common language is that in which indeed all philosophers agree despite their disagreements. But the coming into being of philosophical problems is also as *pathological* a form of language-use as nonsense is a pathological form of sense. That is, philosophizing is not simply a practice in the sense in which cabinet-making is one. However, realizing *that* might turn it into something for which there *are* philosophical methods, such that it becomes more than just random groping.

(12) Nothing is said here about an internal end of philosophizing in general. Indeed, things unheard of and unseen by any ear and eye may come into being and with them new »philosophical problems«. There is, to take William James's stance, only our form(s) of life which might change. In this sense, this view is *non-teleological*. But it is historical in a way. Wittgenstein:

What we are supplying are really remarks on the natural history of human beings; we are not contributing curiosities, however, but observations which no one has doubted, but which have escaped remark only because they are always before our eyes. (PI 415, cf. 25, RFM I, 142)

This is a claim both substantial and formal in the sense introduced above. It concerns the form of the investigation, and as such it is part of an answer to what Ryle

called 'Wittgenstein's master-question'. Yet, it also is a substantial one. Indeed, the less truth there is in philosophy, the more method itself becomes substantial<sup>19</sup>.

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#### TELEOLOŠKA METAFILOZOFIJA

**Sažetak:** Članak se bavi problemom koji se tiče prirode filozofije. Kako ćemo razmišljati o mnoštvu filozofija i neslaganju među filozofima koje ide uporedo s njim? Posle prikazivanja problema i osvrtnja na organski i teleološki pristup njegovom rešavanju, skiciraće se njegovo vitgenštajnovsko razrešenje.

**Ključne reči:** metafizika, teleologija, teleonomija, metod, odnos svrhe i sredstava, besmisao, geneza problema, Kant, Hegel, Vitgenštajn