Subjectivity after Wittgenstein

Wittgenstein's embodied and embedded subject and the debate about the death of man

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Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen

voor mijn grootouders

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Abbreviated references

BB   *The Blue and the Brown Books*
      Second edition, 1998 reprint. Oxford: Blackwell.

BF   *Briefe an Ludwig von Ficker*
      1969. Ed. G.H. von Wright. Salzburg: Otto Müller Verlag.

CV   *Culture and Value*
      Paperback edition, 1984. Ed. G.H. von Wright, transl. P. Winch.
      Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

LE   "A Lecture on Ethics"
      1993. In *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951*, ed. J.C.
      Klagge & A. Nordmann, pp. 37-44. Indianapolis: Hackett.

LRB   "Lectures on Religious Belief"
      1997. In *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious
      Belief*, ed. C. Barrett, pp. 53-72. Berkeley: University of California
      Press.

LWi   *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume I*
      1990 reprint. Ed. G.H. von Wright & H. Nyman, transl. C.G.
      Luckhardt & M.A.E. Aue. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

LWii   *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume II*
      Paperback edition, 1993. Ed. G.H. von Wright & H. Nyman, transl.
      C.G. Luckhardt & M.A.E. Aue. Oxford: Blackwell.

NB   *Notebooks 1914-1916*,
      1969 edition. Ed. G.H. von Wright & G.E.M. Anscombe, transl.
      G.E.M. Anscombe. New York: Harper & Row.

OC   *On Certainty*
1972 edition. Ed. G.E.M. Anscombe & G.H. von Wright, transl. D. Paul & G.E.M. Anscombe. New York: Harper & Row.

PG   *Philosophical Grammar*
1974. Ed. R. Rhees, transl. A. Kenny. Oxford: Blackwell.

PI   *Philosophical Investigations*
Third edition, 1995 reprint. Transl. G.E.M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell.

PR   *Philosophical Remarks*
1975. Ed. R. Rhees, transl. R. Hargreaves and R. White. Oxford: Blackwell.

RFGB   "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*"
1993. In *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951*, ed. J.C. Klagge & A. Nordmann, pp. 118-155. Indianapolis: Hackett.

RPPi   *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume I*
1998 reprint. Ed. G.E.M. Anscombe & G.H. von Wright, transl. G.E.M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell.

RPPii   *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, Volume II*
1998 reprint. Ed. G.H. von Wright & H. Nyman, transl. C.G. Luckhardt & M.A.E. Aue. Oxford: Blackwell.

TLP   *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
1966 edition. Transl. D.F. Pears & B.F. McGuinness. London: Routledge.

References to LWi, OC, PI, RPPi, RPPii and TLP are to paragraphs (unless otherwise stated). References to NB are to notebook entries. References to BB, BF, CV, LE, LRB, LWii, PG, PI II, PR and RFGB are to page numbers.

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1

Introduction

Although the current study has one clear focal point, it in fact has a twofold goal. This dissertation not only aims to give a thorough analysis of Wittgenstein's view on human subjectivity, but also wants to evaluate the objections that are frequently raised against such non-Cartesian accounts.

In line with the dual nature of the explorations the follow, the current introduction has more than one goal as well. That is to say, in this chapter I will lay out my reasons for devoting a study to Wittgensteinian subjectivity and to the arguments against accounts of this kind, as well as describe how I more precisely plan to go about analyzing these matters, but before I can explain any of this, the meaning of the main terms I use needs to be clarified. "Subjectivity" is neither an uncontested nor an unequivocal term and "Wittgenstein" is, in a similar vein, not the label for one clearly definable and universally recognized philosophical position. Let me therefore start by expounding what both the word "subjectivity" and the name "Wittgenstein" are taken to mean in the current context. This explanation will then gradually evolve into an exposition of the rationale behind this study and of my plan of work, which form the other objectives of this introduction.

1.1 The many meanings of the term "subjectivity"

With regard to my use of the term "subjectivity" - but to already hint at my use of the name "Wittgenstein" as well - it should first of all be noted that this word does not exactly abound in ordinary everyday speech. When a situation does give rise to the employment of a term like "subjectivity" or "subjective", such terms are typically used to indicate, say, the partiality or relativity of a certain point of view, or of points of view in general. Yet while the relativity of viewpoints is certainly a topic of philosophical interest, this is not what philosophers by and large refer to when they use this word. And while Wittgenstein famously vowed to "bring words

back from their metaphysical to their everyday use,"[1] the relativity of viewpoints is not the topic of the following investigations either. One could say that this study explores "subjectivity" in the philosophical rather than the ordinary sense of the word.

That is not to say that there is one clear issue for which "subjectivity" in all philosophical discussions stands.[2] A treatise on subjectivity may concern several topics that, though not entirely unconnected, do not completely coincide either: topics like consciousness and self-consciousness, the phenomenality of experience, intentionality, personal identity, the relationship between mind and body or between mind and brain, and the so-called problem of other minds. In either of these guises, subjectivity has been a topic of philosophical concern for ages and has occupied thinkers on both sides of (what has become known as) the analytic-continental divide. In the course of the previous century, however, philosophical debate on subjectivity took a quite specific turn, primarily on account of thinkers that can be labelled "continental". This development has already been told and retold to the point of having become a philosophical myth of sorts, but it nonetheless needs to be recounted here, too, in order to delineate more clearly what "subjectivity" in the context of the current study means.

Though the emergence of anti-Cartesianism undoubtedly has its roots in developments (both philosophical and non-philosophical) dating from before that period, somewhere during the twentieth century many thinkers became imbued with the thought that the philosophical tradition, if not commencing from then certainly taking a giant leap forward with the work of Descartes, had succeeded in misunderstanding the nature of man in all possible ways and therefore needed to be amended or even broken down in its entirety. If one would be pressed to give a more specific date to indicate the beginning of what has itself become a philosophical tradition, one could with sufficient right name the year Heidegger's *Being and Time* appeared.[3] It has been pointed out that Heidegger's account of Western thought was not in all respects the most accurate one, to say the least,[4] but his claim that the history of philosophy up until then was a history of the forgetfulness of being and, not unimportantly, of the being of human being, has nonetheless struck many as being all too true. Heidegger argued that by speaking of

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[1] PI 116.

[2] Cf. Zahavi 2003, pp. 56-57. Zahavi observes that the renewed interest in subjectivity over the last decades led to a veritable upsurge in different - sometimes complementing, sometimes competing - notions of the self. As he points out, Niesser already distinguished 5 different conceptions of subjectivity in 1988, but by 1999 Strawson was able to list no less than 21 notions.

[3] Cf. e.g. Carr 1999, pp. 5-6; White 2000, p. 4.

[4] Both Carr 1999 and Sturma & Ameriks 1995 set out to paint a more nuanced picture of the history of subjectivity, in particular with regard to the German tradition. Seigel 2005 takes an even broader focus and aims to show that it is hard to find any modern Western thinker – including Descartes and Leibniz - subscribing to the black-and-white views on subjectivity often attributed to them by their critics. Let me also refer to Taylor 1989 here, trying to reconcile the advocates and critics of modern subjectivity by tracing the history of this notion.

"the *ego cogito* […], the subject, the "I","[5] his predecessors inevitably yet incorrectly presented human being as just an object among others, and he proposed to analyse the nature or being of human being in terms of *Dasein* instead.

Following Heidegger's example, it seems, terms like "subject" and "subjectivity" came to be used almost exclusively to refer to the worldless, Cartesian-style Ego:[6] to the idea that man can, on final analysis, be understood as a thinking substance whose inhabiting a (social) world and a body accordingly do not pertain to its essence. Following Heidegger's example, moreover, other attempts were made to show, not just that human being does not come in the form of an ethereal and monadic self, but that its embodiedness and embeddedness had been explained away only at great, great cost. Not seldom, Heidegger himself was criticized for insufficiently breaking with traditional conceptualizations (with the later Heidegger, of course, among those questioning the satisfactoriness of his earlier analysis).[7]

At this point, the story of the subject's vicissitudes can be relocated to another part of the continent, for the philosophers who most ardently appeared to want to finish what Heidegger had started, did not hail from German soil. Those who are in any case typically considered to have delivered the final blow to the Cartesian Ego are French thinkers like Derrida, Lyotard and Foucault.[8] By deconstructing the concept of subjectivity, writing it off as one grand narrative among others, or presenting the subject as a contingent product of power relations, each contributed to or even explicitly predicted the so-called "death of man".[9] With these thinkers – often collectively though not entirely correctly placed under the banner "postmodern" – the critique of subjectivity gained new momentum and became the indisputable starting point for much theorizing, both in- and outside philosophy. (And, it could be added, both in- and outside the continent, for postmodernism also found firm footing among American academics.)

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[5] Heidegger 2000, p. 44.

[6] Cf. Critchley 1996, pp. 13-15. As Critchley points out, Heidegger may take the term "subject" to always already designate the Cartesian Ego, it was not used in the English language in that sense before 1796, and one would in fact be hard pressed to find Descartes using the term "subject" in this way.

[7] Cf. Krell 1978, describing the development in Heidegger's thinking. And while his arguments are by no means the same as those of the later Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty can for instance also be counted among *Dasein*'s critics; cf. Carman & Hansen 2005.

[8] Cf. White 2000, p. 5l; Benhabib 1992, p. 3. Of course, Derrida, Foucault and Lyotard do not take their inspiration from exactly the same sources and it is moreover not only Heidegger to whom they are indebted. Indeed, as Descombes 1980 argues (see pp. 3-5), the development in French philosophy in the 1960's can be explained as a dethroning of those inspired by the three H's (Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger) by those inspired by the so-called masters of suspicion (Marx, Nietzsche and Freud).

[9] The death of man was famously proclaimed in Foucault 1973 (see p. 387); cf. Derrida 1969, pp. 39-40, pp. 54-55; Lyotard 1993a, pp. 20-21.

None of these developments, however, has so far made the philosophical use of terms like "subject" and "subjectivity" rare or even anachronistic. As soon as there was any talk of man being dead and buried, critics retorted that deconstructionism's, postmodernism's and/or post-structuralism's anti-humanism[10] might even be more objectionable than the position it was meant to undermine. It was argued that the Cartesian Ego, for all its faults and dangers, at least still offers a site for agency and autonomy as well as a bearer of rights and responsibility – I will come back to these criticisms shortly. Yet even apart from the voices contending that at least some concept of subjectivity should be preserved, the thinkers labelled "postmodern" arguably never made all talk of self and subject entirely obsolete.

That is to say, on my understanding of the specific turn that the debate on subjectivity took, those responsible for the demise of the traditional subject did not set out to eradicate each and every notion of human being. Rather, they tried to move away from a particular way of explaining (to put it in traditional terms) the nature of man. And to be sure, conceptualized differently human being may not look anything like the Cartesian Ego, but that does not mean that its critics leave one wholly empty-handed. Their undertakings can accordingly be described, if the proper provisos are kept in mind, as a rethinking rather than an "un-thinking" of human being. Recently, as a result, terms like "subject" and "subjectivity" are increasingly used, not exclusively as a label for the self in its Cartesian guise, but also to more generally refer to that specific type of being we call "human being," no matter how it is conceptualized.[11]

It is in the latter sense, to bring the first part of this terminological exposition to a close, that the current study concerns subjectivity as well. In what follows, "subjectivity" is used less as a shorthand for an outdated or detrimental philosophical figure than as a label for attempts, from the most one-sided to the most nuanced, to answer what Kant described as *the* philosophical question: "What is man?".[12] I will speak of anti-, non- or post-Cartesian subjectivity to distinguish the accounts that emerged during the previous century from the more traditional ones.[13] Now I realize that one might already conceive of this terminology as a concession - and a fatal one at that - to Cartesian-style explanations of what it

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[10] See Ferry & Renaut 1985, pp. 18-25.
[11] Cf. Nancy 1991, pp. 4-5; Nancy explicitly points to these two uses of the term, one more negative and one more positive. Also, cf. Critchley 1996, discussing the possibility of "post-deconstructive subjectivity"; Benhabib 1992, promoting the "situated self"; White 2000, making a case for the "sticky subject" of "weak ontology" (see p. 8), to give just a few examples.
[12] Kant 1992, p. 538.
[13] I am aware, as I already tried to put across, that traditional accounts of subjectivity are not always fairly represented, but it is not within the scope of this dissertation to paint a more nuanced picture thereof. Albeit with some reluctance, I will simply speak of "the philosophical tradition" and will also use the label "Cartesian" to characterize all traditional accounts of the nature of man. Again, see e.g. Seigel 2005 for an attempt to paint a more nuanced picture of the philosophical tradition.

means to be a human being, but here I take a Wittgensteinian stance. For while Wittgenstein was, no less than Heidegger, aware that one should be careful not to be misled by the words one uses, he did not conclude that one should therefore "aim to refine or complete […] the use of our words in unheard-of ways."[14] On his view, what matters is not so much *what* concepts one employs as *how* one employs them. Or to put it in the words of *Culture and Value*, assuming that what holds for a notion like "the Trinity" holds for a notion like "the subject" too: "Really what I should like to say is that here too what is important is not the words you use […] so much as the difference that they make at different points in your life."[15]

1.2 The many meanings of the name "Wittgenstein"

This brings me to the fact that this study does not concern subjectivity *tout court* but takes subjectivity according to or after *Wittgenstein* as the topic of its investigation. (And according to or after the *later* Wittgenstein, to be exact.) Even though Wittgenstein is not typically counted among the philosophers of a continental bend, he is frequently mentioned as one of the thinkers responsible for the anti- or non-Cartesian turn that the debate on subjectivity took.[16] This is not without right, for in spite of the fact that he never explicitly took part in the debate about the subject, many of Wittgenstein's remarks can be said to address the problems or puzzles surrounding subjectivity. In addition to demonstrating that meaning cannot be considered to be a mental object and that normativity is always already a public and practical affair, much of his writings - circa- as well as post-*Investigations* - consider what it means that we take thoughts and feelings to be inner, for instance, and explore the socio-linguistic preconditions for being able to talk about matters mental. What is more, Lyotard explicitly draws on Wittgenstein's notion of a language game in order to unmask the grand narratives such as those of modern subjectivity.[17]

However, while Wittgenstein can thus for several reasons be held co-responsible for the demise of the Cartesian Ego, a detailed account of his take on the nature or being of human being has so far not been at philosophy's disposal.

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[14] PI 133. Of course, Wittgenstein is talking of ordinary rather than philosophical language here, but as I already hinted at and will shortly explain in more detail, I do not take him to be the antidote or antithesis to philosophy and think that his adage can be applied to philosophical language too.

[15] CV 85d.

[16] See e.g. Carr 1999, p. 10; Nancy 1991, p. 5; Benhabib 1992, pp. 208-209.

[17] Cf. Lyotard 1993b, where he recounts his indebtedness to Wittgenstein. As Lyotard is the first to admit, it can be debated whether his reading of Wittgenstein is the most accurate one. I do not think it is, but I will not discuss this explicitly, primarily because Lyotard does not draw on the same material I use. Even so, the fifth chapter will touch upon issues related to the idea that each language game has its own standards of correctness that can never come up for discussion; a perspective on Wittgenstein I will argue to be incorrect.

To be sure, the anti-Cartesian character of his explorations has been extensively discussed, his insights have been compared to and combined with those of other rethinkers of the subject,[18] but no book aimed exclusively at drawing out Wittgenstein's alternative conception, consulting not only his anti-Cartesian remarks but other parts of his oeuvre as well, has as of yet appeared. The current study sets out to fill this gap. It is thus more exactly by presenting a Wittgensteinian account of the subject that my investigations hope to contribute to the debate about human subjectivity.

Simply mentioning the later oeuvre of this thinker, however, does not suffice to explain what it means that the following study is on subjectivity à la Wittgenstein. I have to be somewhat more specific about my use of the name "Wittgenstein" because to the extent that he is considered to contribute to philosophical discussions - be they about subjectivity or any other topic - he is often considered to add to such debates only by bringing out their nonsensicality. According to a widespread picture of Wittgenstein's method, he took questions about the nature of things to arise solely when our actual use of language is being ignored or distorted, and accordingly maintained that philosophical problems can literally be dissolved by reminding thinkers of their concept's humble roots - or, as the remark I quoted earlier has it, by bringing words like meaning and subjectivity "back from their metaphysical to their everyday use."[19] Even though there is no consensus among his commentators as to the exact aim and nature of the Wittgensteinian approach,[20] according to the prevailing picture of him, Wittgenstein does not provide yet another philosophical theory but offers a kind of therapy that should make all philosophical theory formation redundant.

Now while this may in fact go some way toward explaining the unavailability of a Wittgensteinian account of subjectivity, I feel that his contribution to philosophy consists of much more (or even essentially consists of something else) than the exposition of other philosophers' mistakes and the consequent dismantling of their discussions. My somewhat deviant understanding of Wittgenstein's involvement with philosophy is reflected in the way I use terms like "Wittgenstein" and "Wittgensteinian". That the current study is on subjectivity after Wittgenstein does not mean that I will take his remarks as a starting point for showing where thinkers

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[18] For some interesting examples thereof, see Cavell 1979, Glendinning 1998, Mulhall 1990, and Overgaard 2007.

[19] PI 116.

[20] The "New Wittgensteinians" for instance part ways with other commentators in taking (austere) nonsense to be a term of philosophical appraisal, for the early as well as the later Wittgenstein. On their view, both TLP and PI achieve their therapeutic aim when the reader comes to recognize the very nonsensicality of philosophical statements, including Wittgenstein's own. Crary & Reed 2000 brings together several interpreters supporting this view, as well as a dissenting voice. However, even though the collection has given rise to much debate after its publication, the overall non- or anti-philosophical character of Wittgenstein's writings does not seem to be disputed. Exceptions to this rule are commentators such as Hutto and Genova (see Hutto 2003 and Genova 1995). I will present my own constructive reading of Wittgenstein's method in the second chapter.

of the subject go wrong in trying to understand what kind of beings we are. It means - lest there be any misunderstanding - that I will investigate what positive account of subjectivity can be extracted from Wittgenstein's later work.[21]

1.3   A two-fold goal

As I already underscored at the beginning of this introduction, the following explorations do not only hope to improve the subjectivity debate by making one of the voices contributing thereto more explicit. This dissertation also tries to assess the objections that are frequently raised against non-Cartesian accounts of the nature of man. Now that I have covered the terminological part of this introduction, let me explain the two-fold goal of this study in more detail. As I mentioned in my description of the subject's vicissitudes, the post-Cartesian perspective offered by Wittgenstein and the thinkers labelled "postmodern" has been highly influential, but their outlook has received severe criticism too.[22] The severity here is not so much a matter of the number and variety of thinkers that have rallied against the anti-Cartesians – even though critique has come from various corners - as of the nature of the objections that have been made against them: their outlook is first and foremost rejected on ethical and political grounds.

Those critical of the anti-Cartesian turn in the debate on subjectivity for instance argue that the rejection of the notion that man is in essence a thinking substance - no matter how flawed that notion might be - amounts to a rejection of the very idea of a thinking and feeling human being to whom matters like rights, responsibilities, malicious intentions and moral sensibility can be ascribed. This, critics maintain, is an intolerable result, for it means that Wittgenstein and the postmodernists leave one without a centre or focal point for ethics.[23] Similarly, those challenging the demise of the Cartesian Ego maintain that with the rejection of the idea that man is a self-same and self-sufficient being - even if that idea is not entirely accurate - the reconceptualization of subjectivity becomes politically irrelevant or even outright harmful. By arguing that the subject is the product of its socio-political context, critics claim, Wittgenstein and the postmodernists

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[21] To be sure, the latter need not be completely at odds with the former, but to the extent that interpreters subscribe to the more prevalent reading of Wittgenstein's approach, they nonetheless seem unwilling to ascribe him a desire to formulate alternatives to the positions he contests. In the second chapter, I will go into this methodological issue in more detail.

[22] Let me point out here that I do not think that the alternatives Wittgenstein, Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard and others offer are wholly interchangeable. It is not within the scope of the current study to discuss this, but the fact that these thinkers all oppose a similar account of human being does not mean that there are no differences between the perspectives they offer in its stead. I will however collectively refer to them as the "rethinkers of Cartesianism" nonetheless.

[23] Cf. Frank 1989, p. 10; Frank 1995, pp. 30-31; Murdoch 1992, p. 152; I will discuss these criticisms more elaborately after having presented my reading of Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology in chapter 3.

effectively disintegrate each and every locus of agency and autonomy and consequently place even the most unjust political constellations beyond the reach of intervention.[24]

The accusations levelled against the rethinkers of Cartesianism are not exactly minor, then, and no discussion of one of the alternatives to traditional subjectivity can accordingly afford to ignore them. I, too, will consider the criticisms that the critics of Cartesianism in turn received, even though I have my doubts as to the validity of these arguments. For if Wittgenstein and the postmodernists have a point in claiming that subjectivity does not come in the form of a monadic and ethereal self, and if this is truly at odds with existing or prevalent conceptions of ethics and politics, is there any principled reason that one should refrain from developing a wholly different take on subjectivity rather than rethink one's ethico-political assumptions as well? Could it not just as well be argued that the significance of ethics and politics requires that one rethinks one's ethico-political assumptions over and over again? And to what extent do ethics and politics really allow one to make demands on a theory of subjectivity?

Indeed, I will discuss the objections raised against anti-Cartesianism only to point out that these arguments may not be as compelling as they seem. In this way, I hope to contribute to the subjectivity debate, not just by offering a detailed description of Wittgenstein's account of human being, but also by assessing the backlash that accounts such as these have received. Not because I hold that the post-Cartesians cannot be criticized, but because I think that the validity of the ethico-political objections to them is often taken for granted - which is more harmful to the clarity of the debate than the fact that Wittgenstein's voice therein has not yet been fully explicated.[25]

Yet there is more than this one side to the validity of the objections made to the proclamation of the death of man. As was already indicated by the fact that I needed to make certain provisos in formulating my doubts about the soundness of these claims, whether the arguments against anti-Cartesianism have true force depends not only on whether they really outweigh the contentions of Descartes' critics, it also depends on whether they actually present the anti-Cartesian outlook correctly.[26] For even if ethico-political considerations always already override

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[24] Cf. Frank 1989, p. 338; Benhabib 1992, p. 16, pp. 214-218; I will discuss these criticisms more elaborately before embarking on my reading of OC in chapter 5.

[25] It should be noted that the anti-Cartesian arguments of post-Cartesians are sometimes of a similar ethico-political nature. As I will accordingly argue in the concluding chapter, in so far as those responsible for the subject's demise also take the validity of ethico-political accusations for granted, they can similarly be said to do the debate more harm than good.

[26] I in fact made two provisos, explaining that the validity of these arguments also depends on whether post-Cartesianism is truly at odds with our ethico-political practices and/or suggests a different understanding thereof as well. Since this thesis is on conceptions of subjectivity rather than conceptions of the ethical and political, I will not explore this line of argument any further.

considerations as to the accuracy of an account of the nature of man,[27] and ethics and politics indeed require that the critique of Cartesianism is not followed through completely, the objections to anti-Cartesianism might still be declared null and void when those responsible for the demise of the Cartesian Ego do not or do not quite support the claims on which those objections are based. I will accordingly look at the exegetical validity of the backlash to post-Cartesianism as well.

What is more, I will look at this type of validity first of all, for although I doubt whether the objections mentioned make for proper counterarguments, I take them to point to an issue that is valid and interesting enough. They can be said to indicate that the consequences of the claim that the subject is always already embodied and embedded are not always already clear. Taking this claim seriously undoubtedly affects numerous assumptions we repeatedly make about human being - including those underlying our conceptions of the ethical and political - but the exact extent of this impact is not so easily determined. Does challenging the Cartesian inner-outer and self-other model for instance inevitably mean giving up each and every notion of privacy and of individuality? And if it does not necessarily have these consequences - as stated, Wittgenstein and others can be said to rethink rather than unthink subjectivity - what are the precise reasons that it does not result in a simple negation of the Cartesian take on the nature of man? Knowing that the declaration of the death of man need not be taken so literally, after all, does not automatically entail an insight into how it should be taken instead.

Hence, even though one might doubt the validity of the claim that (elements of) Cartesianism must be preserved in order for ethics and politics to be possible, one can grant those questioning post-Cartesianism that it is not self-evident what it means to embrace the latter position, while embracing it may have consequences beyond the theory of subjectivity.

As a result, I will not brush the arguments against the rethinkers of the subject aside but will take them as an incentive to have a closer look at the alternative offered by Wittgenstein. I will outline his version of the claim that the subject's materiality and sociality are essential to it only to probe his reorientation of the relationship between mind and body and the relationship between individual and community in more detail. The two objectives of this dissertation thus in fact go hand in hand. Investigating the interpretational validity of the objections to post-Cartesianism enables both a fuller understanding of the Wittgensteinian variety and a more thorough assessment of these ethico-political counterclaims. This combination of exegetical and systematic considerations will be reflected in the way the explorations that follow are set up. That is to say, the main chapters of this

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[27] This is not to say that an account of the nature of man can never be judged by its ethico-political consequences – far from it - yet as I will argue in the concluding chapter, the importance of ethics and politics should not lead one to reject certain perspectives on the subject out of hand - or to always already abstain from reinvestigating current conceptions of the ethical and political, for that matter.

thesis are of an exegetical nature, examining various parts of Wittgenstein's oeuvre in order to make his take on subjectivity fully explicit, but I will alternate these chapters with shorter sections (for which I will use the term "intermezzo") in which the larger systematic relevance of these exegetical efforts is brought to the fore. Let me lay out my precise plan of work.

1.4 Overview of the main argument and structure

Chapter 2: Wittgenstein and/as philosophy

Given that the later Wittgenstein is more famous for debunking than defending philosophical positions, I will start by expounding in more detail why he need not be considered to form the antidote or antithesis to philosophy. While Wittgenstein's anti-philosophical reputation has not stopped interpreters from presenting his insights as substantive contributions to philosophical debates - including, as I pointed out, to debates about subjectivity, to some extent - this does not alter the fact that his later writings contain some vehemently anti-philosophical statements with which any scholar hoping to use Wittgenstein positively or constructively accordingly needs to come to terms. Such is my aim in the chapter following this introduction.

This chapter presents a close reading of what can be considered to be the *Investigations'* discourse on method: §§ 89-133. These remarks are often taken to reject philosophy as highly susceptible to mistakes or even inherently mistaken, but I will argue that they identify a tension rather than a mistake inherent in theory formation, to wit, that between philosophy's craving for generality and the multifariousness that is of the essence of the phenomena it describes. This tension may explain why and how philosophical theory can go awry - namely, when the focus is on generality and univocality at the cost of all particularity and ambiguity – but it does not bring Wittgenstein to conclude that investigations into the nature of things must be brought to an end. On my reading, in any case, he incorporates this tension into the way he himself contributes to such undertakings.

I will accordingly point out that the later part of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* need not be considered to form an un- or anti-philosophical collection of observations, questions and examples. For on closer inspection, these writings combine specific observations with remarks of a more general nature, the latter making the former more perspicuous and the former preventing the latter from losing sight of their subject's complexity. Hence, placing the particular in a larger framework and inscribing the general with particularities at one and the same time, Wittgenstein accommodates the tension inherent in theory formation precisely by leaving it intact. And this means that he can be considered to be a philosopher among philosophers, even though he has his qualms about the devising of philosophical theories.

Chapter 3: Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology

Hoping to have removed doubts as to the possibility of a constructive Wittgensteinian account of subjectivity, I will then consult his so-called "philosophy of psychology" in order to sketch the outlines thereof. The writings published as the *Remarks on the philosophy of psychology* and the *Last writings on the philosophy of psychology*, as well as parts of the *Philosophical Investigations* (most notably Part II) constitute an excellent starting point for investigating Wittgenstein's view on human being. They examine some of Cartesianism's key assumptions about the nature of man and take issue with its specific understanding of that supposedly quintessentially human possession: the mind. I will discuss Wittgenstein's main arguments against the idea that psychological phenomena constitute objects and processes occurring in a literally inner realm, but the lion's share of this chapter is devoted to explaining how Wittgenstein also presents an alternative to the Cartesian account of the relationship between mind and body, as well as to its accompanying take on the way self and other relate.

By tracing the lines of thought developed in Wittgenstein's remarks on the human psyche – both those of a specific and those of a general nature - I will show that he takes mind and body to be intimately connected instead of almost accidentally related, and moreover maintains that the self, rather than requiring the help of others only to acquire labels for talking about pre-available thoughts and feelings, from day one depends upon its fellow men for developing its inner life beyond its infant state. According to Wittgenstein, I will argue, the outer can be said to be the locus of the inner, and can more specifically be said to be the locus of the inner against the background of the community of which someone is part. I will explain how this outlook neither amounts to a form of physicalism nor to a form of behaviourism, discuss the role of both nature and nurture in Wittgenstein's account, and reflect upon the meaning of the term "fellow (human) being" when it comes to the sociality of Wittgensteinian subjectivity.

In the final section I will try to bring these insights together by pointing to the similarities between Wittgenstein's ruminations on the psyche and his remarks on aspect perception or seeing-as. That is to say, I will argue that this latter concept can be used to capture the reality of psychological phenomena if they cannot be understood as objects or processes in a private interior realm - or to use the terminology developed in the third chapter, to capture the specific amalgam of ontology, epistemology and sociology with which Wittgenstein replaces the Cartesian account of the nature of man. For similar to his analysis of perceptions like that of the duck-rabbit, Wittgenstein contends that seeing a person grieving or rejoicing is neither a matter of coolly observing behavioural characteristics, nor of hypothesizing about a principally inaccessible state. On his view, one is able to see a person's pain or joy itself when one takes her (fine shades of) behaviour to be expressive of mind and places her doings and sayings in the context of a larger cultural or communal pattern. Hence, as a first step towards formulating a

Wittgensteinian account of subjectivity, I will suggest that on the basis of his later writings, psychological phenomena can be described as aspects of the human being. This succinctly conveys that he holds such phenomena to be located on the outside rather than the inside of the subject, or even in the interspace between a community of subjects.

Intermezzo I: Ethical arguments against non-Cartesian accounts

My formulations are intentionally tentative (their perhaps sounding somewhat elusive is in any case not merely due to their being presented here out of the context of my exegetical endeavours) because, as stated, I will give an outline of Wittgenstein's take on subjectivity only to further explore the main elements thereof, both in order to explicate his contribution to the subjectivity debate in full detail, and in order to assess the objections to similar contributions in more than one respect. To truly get this two-fold undertaking off the ground, I will briefly adjourn my interpretation of Wittgenstein's writings after having presented my reading of his philosophy of psychology in chapter 3. In the systematic intermezzo following this chapter, I will discuss one important strand of criticism that the rethinkers of the subject received, namely, criticisms as to their ethical deficit.

As I will explain, commentators such as Manfred Frank and Iris Murdoch maintain that Wittgenstein and the postmodernists, by dismantling the idea of a Cartesian inner, leave one without a subject to whom suffering, courage, malice and so on, can be ascribed, and thus without a self that can function as a moral centre or substance. According to Frank and Murdoch, as a result, the project of post-Cartesianism makes for a cynical and amoral enterprise, an enterprise that should be rejected for that very reason.

As I already mentioned and will point out in this intermezzo too, I doubt whether the fact that Wittgenstein and others reject Cartesianism warrants the conclusion that they spell the end of all possible ethics and should therefore be dismissed; with reference to Levinas, I will underscore that the opposite could also be argued. However, I will reserve assessing the overall validity of this claim for the concluding chapter - first, I will examine its exegetical validity, or to be precise, I will examine whether commentators such as Frank and Murdoch are correct in claiming that Wittgenstein jeopardizes the very idea of a thinking and feeling human being. For even though I do not think that the interpretation offered in chapter 3 gives much support for this claim, I take Frank's and Murdoch's concerns to be justified in that it is far from clear what the embodied and embedded account of human being – an account that undoubtedly affects numerous others, no less important matters - makes possible and what it might exclude. Indeed, as I will bring to attention in the first intermezzo, Wittgenstein himself suggests that there are serious limitations to the rethinking of the subject.

That is to say, in addition to investigating matters like mind and meaning, Wittgenstein has contemplated questions of a religious nature throughout his life,

and in contrast to his explanation of the psyche, his account of religious belief basically disregards the way this phenomenon finds expression in collective patterns and observable doings and sayings. He even goes so far as to describe the difference between the believer and the non-believer in term of the "the interplay of forces within."[28] One could take this to indicate that Wittgenstein, while vehemently criticizing Cartesianism in his psychological work, falls back on this very inner-outer model in his religious writings, and that his upsetting of Cartesian subjectivity thus goes too far even for Wittgenstein himself. It appears to conflict with his view on a topic that was even closer to his heart, namely, religious belief.

I will then explain that I choose not to jump to this conclusion, because the apparent conflict between Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology and his philosophy of religion can also be taken as an opportunity for exploring Wittgenstein's take on subjectivity - and thereby the exegetical validity of the objections thereto – more fully. By investigating whether and to what extent Wittgenstein's religious views are compatible with his psychological findings, it should be possible to make the implications and limitations of his embodied and embedded account somewhat more clear.

Chapter 4: Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion

Chapter 4 accordingly has a closer look at Wittgenstein writings on religious belief in order to see if he can be said to explain religiosity, like (other) psychological phenomena, as an aspect of the human being: to what extent he situates religious belief in a person's fine-grained and contextualized behaviour, taken as an instance of a larger communal pattern. These explorations will lead me, in contrast to the explorations in the other chapters of this study, through both earlier and later parts of Wittgenstein's oeuvre. In addition to the *Remarks on Frazer*, the *Lectures on Religious Belief* and *Culture and* Value, the fourth chapter discusses (parts of) the *Tractatus*, the *Notebooks* and the *Lecture on Ethics* as well. I take this to be legitimate, not only because there would otherwise be fairly little material to go by in tracing Wittgenstein's account of religious belief, but also because Wittgenstein's ideas on ethics[29] and religion do not seem to have changed fundamentally over the years. Indeed, as I will show, Wittgenstein consistently takes religious belief to be a matter of the way one lead one's life. In his earlier as well as his later work, he locates religiosity in the direction of the believer's existence.

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[28] CV 33a.

[29] As I will explain in the first intermezzo, the words "ethics" and "religion" can be used more or less interchangeably in a Wittgensteinian context, but I do not consult his ethico-religious writings because they offer hope of morality where his psychological writings fail to do so: I consult them in order to get the implications of his overturning of the Cartesian inner-outer model more clear. Moreover, as will become clear in the fourth chapter, even if Wittgenstein uses the words "ethics" and "religion" interchangeably, he should ultimately be said to be more interested in contributing to discussions about the meaning of life than in contributing to the conventional study of ethics.

So even though he at one point suggests that faith is a literally inner process, Wittgenstein does not maintain that the believer distinguishes himself from the non-believer by having something inside that the latter misses. The difference rather lies in the fact that whereas the non-believer's life constitutes a mere succession of events, the believer makes his or her life into a meaningful whole. Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion is thus consistent with his philosophy of psychology in that it situates religiosity in the direction of the believer's existence rather than in a private inner realm. However, as my discussion in chapter 4 will also make clear, these two parts of this oeuvre are not therefore compatible in all respects. Wittgenstein may locate religious belief on the outside rather than the inside of the subject, he also holds that it is the individual believer's existence in which religiosity should be situated, regardless of the way in which her fellow human beings make their lives into a meaningful whole. Whereas he maintains that a person can only be said to pretend or hope, for instance, when she is able to take part in pre-existing practices, he claims that the religious believer need not follow in her elders' footsteps at all . The choice is up to the believer herself.

Hence, in so far as Wittgenstein's religious writings suggest that the overturning of the Cartesian inner-outer model goes too far even for Wittgenstein himself, it is in fact his upsetting of the Cartesian self-other schema with which his philosophy of religion seems to be out of synch. And while this indicates that the qualms of post-Cartesianism's critics are unwarranted when it comes to Wittgenstein's holding the subject to essentially be embodied – that is to say, it indicates that the idea that Wittgensteinian subjectivity is ethically wanting is based on a misunderstanding of the consequences of his take on the mind-body relationship – the fourth chapter has not shown the worries of post-Cartesianism's critics to be unjustified when it comes to Wittgenstein's claiming that the subject is fundamentally embedded. Indeed, Wittgenstein's perspective on religion makes the question as to the consequences of his embedding the Ego all the more acute. For how can he on the one hand hold that the subject is in an important sense socially constituted, and on the other hand maintain that the believer can and should choose a direction in life wholly of her own accord? Does this not undermine his own undermining of Cartesianism after all?

Intermezzo II: Political arguments against non-Cartesian accounts
After discussing Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion, I will briefly suspend my exegetical endeavours again, for as I will point out in the second systematic intermezzo, the twentieth century upsetting of the Cartesian self-other schema forms another element of post-Cartesianism that has been vehemently criticized. Indeed, discussions on the death of man seem to centre primarily on the consequences, not so much of the claim that Descartes misunderstood the mind-body relationship, but of the claim that he erroneously thought human beings to be self-enclosed and self-sufficient entities. Critics take this to imply that post-

Cartesianism is also deficient from a political perspective.

Seyla Benhabib, for instance, maintains that a radical contextualization of subjectivity makes an emancipatory project à la feminism unthinkable. On her view, claiming that the subject is the product of pre-existing practices means doing away with notions such as agency and autonomy, and thus doing away with the possibility of changing the socio-political constellations in which one happens to find oneself, no matter how much they might call for reform. For the sake of politics, therefore, some elements of Cartesianism must be preserved.

Similar to my argument in the first intermezzo, I will point out that even if Wittgenstein and others can be said to present the subject as the product of the powers that be, it does not automatically follow that they undermine each and every conception of politics. The opposite could also be argued and has been argued, among others by Judith Butler. The second intermezzo will discuss her perspective on the post-Cartesian development as well - though not because I think that she is correct in claiming that it in fact has a greater liberating potential than its predecessor. For as I already explained earlier in this introduction, one of the aims of this thesis precisely is to argue that the ethico-political arguments in the debate about the death of man may not always be as valid as they seem - and as Butler's contentions go to show, such arguments are used by the rethinkers of the subject as well as by their critics.

However, as I will then explain, and similar to the course of action proposed in the first intermezzo, I do want to take the fact that post-Cartesianism has been greeted as both politically harmful and politically relevant *par excellence* as an incentive to have a closer look at Wittgenstein's version. For as the dispute between Butler and Benhabib makes clear, while post-Cartesianism is not necessarily a-political, qualms about this development are nonetheless understandable in that a renewed perspective the subject might also affect somewhat less theoretical issues. The implications of the claim that the subject always already finds itself in patterns and practices that are not of its own making, still wait to be explored, and it is for this reason that I will propose to examine the exegetical validity of the political objections to post-Cartesianism first.

But there is another reason that this can be said to be an informative next step. Investigating whether it is correct to say that Wittgenstein dissolves the subject in a multitude of pre-existing practices will also allow me to describe his contribution to the subjectivity debate in more detail, because it is precisely when it comes to the sociality of subjectivity that he may not seem to offer a wholly consistent account. According to conclusion drawn in chapter 4, after all, it is unclear how Wittgenstein's taking religious belief to be a pre-eminently personal affair squares with his situating psychological phenomena in the interspace between a community of subjects – if it can be made to square at all.

I will then bring the second intermezzo to a close by arguing that the interpretational validity of the political objections to post-Cartesianism and the consistency of Wittgenstein's account of subjectivity can be investigated simultaneously, because both depend the account of community with which the contextualization of the Ego is accompanied. If Wittgenstein maintains that the community in which the subject is embedded is a static and uniform totality to which all human affairs are ultimately subservient, the claim that Wittgensteinian subjectivity is politically inert might indeed be warranted, and his philosophy of religion could certainly said to undermine his philosophy of psychology. However, how Wittgenstein envisions community and socio-cultural membership needs to be investigated, and I will propose to investigate it by consulting *On Certainty*. Not because I hold that religious belief can be filed under the category of what Wittgenstein calls "certainty", as some of his interpreters maintain, but because this collection of remarks most carefully addresses the processes of in- and exclusion inherent in socio-cultural membership of all of Wittgenstein's writings.

Chapter 5: Wittgenstein on community in "On Certainty"

For as I will introduce my reading of *On Certainty* in chapter 5, Wittgenstein does not only extensively discuss the way children are prepared to become full-blown participants in the community's (epistemological) practices, he also describes what might happen when people who come from different backgrounds meet or collide. The fifth chapter will explore Wittgenstein's concept of community, both with regard to the processes by means of which infants are initiated into the community, and with regard to the room for difference and/or divergence this leaves.

I will immediately point out that *On Certainty*'s account of social in- and exclusion may at first sight seem utterly conservative. It observes that a person always already has to take numerous things for granted in order for practices to be able to get off the ground. Wittgenstein dubs these beliefs or assumptions "certainties", and explains that one does not subscribe to them after thorough investigation, but because one's elders have taught one to. Judging by Wittgenstein's description of the way certainties are conveyed from the one generation to the next, the reader could get the impression (and many readers have had the impression) that this is a matter of outright indoctrination, and that Wittgenstein, moreover, leaves full-blown members of a community with little reason to welcome changes in or deviations from their world view. At first sight, *On Certainty* seems to preclude difference and divergence out of hand.

However, as I will then explain, Wittgenstein's view on religion suggests that he did not condemn diverging from or breaking with pre-existing conventions point blank, and the fifth chapter therefore sets out to see how this is reflected in the account offered in *On Certainty*, regardless of the conservatism it might appear to display. But there is another part of Wittgenstein's oeuvre indicating that he did not take the subject to automatically and unthinkingly reproduce the customs of its

community, I will point out, namely, his perspective on philosophy itself. For whether one takes Wittgenstein to merely bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use, or to more constructively contribute to answering questions like "What is mind?", philosophy Wittgenstein-style requires making explicit what normally goes without saying and disentangling oneself from what the community always already takes to stand fast. Hence, both Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion and his view on philosophy suggest that *On Certainty* is not conservative or conformist all the way through, and I will announce to investigate Wittgenstein's account of what it means to become and be a member of a community with this in the back of my mind.

My reading of *On Certainty* proper then starts by discussing the way in which the child is prepared to become a full-blown participant in the community's practices, according to the analysis offered in these writings. I will point out that Wittgenstein takes a person's ability to doubt and question things to be dependent on and constrained by the certainties she acquires through a socialization process. However, as I will go on to show, he does not take the subject's worldview to be entirely socially construed. According to Wittgenstein, an infant almost automatically incorporate its elders' certainties but that is made possible by an instinctive trust that comes with its own basic presuppositions. This perspective gets refined and enhanced to correspond to the community's certainties, but the child's inborn capacities may prevent complete conformity from ever being reached. Wittgenstein's naturalism prevents him from holding that the subject is the mere and utter product of its upbringing.

Moreover, if no process of initiation ensures that it is the exact same things that the members of a community come to take for granted, the world picture that is conveyed to children need not make for a monolithic unity to begin with. According to the account offered in *On Certainty*, in other words, a community's world picture may not exactly form a clear and distinct whole, showing variations between the one member and the next. And, as I will argue, this also suggests how a person might come to take a step back from the certainties he or she inherited. The heterogeneity possibly present in a community provides opportunities for realizing that things could also be seen differently, thereby breaking the unquestionability of what one takes to stand fast. Wittgenstein may consider world pictures to largely be a matter of convention, he does not claim that the subject is unable to break with the customs and conventions it always already finds itself entangled in. Rather than comparing it to the way a machine is built up out of its components or a body is composed of its parts, the relationship between individual and community as it is at work in Wittgenstein's writings can be captured by means of the fibre-and-thread analogy he originally uses to explain the way our concepts are no fixed and rigid entities.

Chapter 6: Summary and conclusion

In the sixth and final chapter, I will bring this study to a close by concluding that the ethico-political objections to post-Cartesianism are exegetically invalid, at least when it comes to the Wittgensteinian variety. I will moreover argue that such objections - whether for or against the rethinking of the subject - are not exactly warranted in the first place, at least not when they come in the form of a demand. For even though ethico-political considerations are important and compelling, neither one's take on the subject nor one's conception of ethics and politics should be prevented from coming up for discussion beforehand. Yet that is precisely what ethico-political arguments, because of their compellingness, might go to prevent.

1.5 "After"

As this précis of the investigations to follow made no effort to conceal, my approach to Wittgenstein's writings is - like my understanding of his own philosophical approach - perhaps not the most conventional one, combining seemingly unrelated parts of his oeuvre while practically disregarding their chronology, for instance. This brings me to the fact that one more term occurring in this title's study has not yet been explained. I started this introduction specifying what it means the current study is on Wittgenstein and subjectivity, but according to its title, it is in fact devoted to examining subjectivity *after* Wittgenstein.[30] Let me bring this introductory chapter to a close by clarifying why and how I use this term.

That the word "after" occurs in the title rather than, say, "according to" or "as meticulously analyzed by", is first of all motivated by the fact that there is no ready-made account of subjectivity to be found in Wittgenstein's writings. Not only is his general strategy in exploring any topic or subtopic to oscillate between synoptic statements and particular observations rather than providing well-rounded treatises, Wittgenstein never personally or explicitly took part in the discussion about the Cartesian Ego and its demise. That is not to say, lest there be any misunderstanding, that Wittgenstein's writings contain nothing even resembling a systematic treatment of a philosophical topic, or that he is incorrectly held co-responsible for the specific turn that the debate on subjectivity took. It is to say, however, that anyone trying to formulate an account of subjectivity on the basis of his observations cannot always follow in Wittgenstein's exact footsteps. In what follows, therefore, I will occasionally fill in the blanks in Wittgenstein's writings, use terms that he himself did not employ, and bring out lines of thought that he may not have been aware of developing. For in order to describe what account of human being is present in Wittgenstein's later writings, an interpreter sometimes has go beyond the phrasings and arrangements of Wittgenstein himself.

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[30] My title takes its inspiration from Kerr 1986, exploring *theology* after Wittgenstein.

But the word "after" is of course primarily used to indicate a temporal order between events, and it is for this reason, too, that it occurs in the title I have given my thesis. For as I explained, the main aim of the current study is to make a contribution (and to make a contribution in no less than two respects) to a debate that has by no means subsided since Wittgenstein and others proposed to discard the Cartesian subject. I do not only want to explicate Wittgenstein's version of the claim that the subject is always already embodied and embedded, but also try to assess the backlash that the rethinkers of Cartesianism received. That I use the term "after" thus also serves as a reminder of my two-fold systematic goal.

This moreover points to another reason for not wanting to claim that the following explores subjectivity "according to" or "as meticulously analyzed by" Wittgenstein. That is to say, the current study combines exegetical and systematic explorations, but at the end of the day even my exegetical endeavours should be said to stand in the service a systematic objective. The interpretation of Wittgenstein may take up the larger part of this book, but I consult his remarks first and foremost to further the subjectivity debate, both because his voice therein has so far not been made fully explicit, and because these endeavours enable me to evaluate the objections that have been raised to post-Cartesianism in more detail. Put differently - and although I actually do not think that these things are mutually exclusive - I am more keen on contributing to investigations into subjectivity than in making a contribution to Wittgenstein scholarship.

Hence, when I fill in the blanks in Wittgenstein's writings or bring out lines of thought he did not explicitly defend, I certainly try to stay true to the spirit of his writings, but my doing so will be guided by systematic rather than exegetical considerations. This is also the reason - apart from the fact that most of the secondary literature does not examine the writings I examine with the same questions in mind - that I do not discuss other interpretations of Wittgenstein in much detail, and by and large reserve such discussion for the footnotes when I do. While I hope to give an accurate description of Wittgenstein's take on human being, I have no intention of arguing that it is the only way to read the remarks I consult. I fall back on some commentators and disagree with others, but I will make this explicit only when it helps me spell out what can be said about subjectivity on the basis of Wittgenstein's later work.

It is thus both because Wittgenstein does not offer a ready-made theory and because my main interest is in an ongoing systematic discussion that the word "after" occurs in this study's title. That this dissertation is on subjectivity after Wittgenstein means that the following explorations set out to present, if not exactly Wittgenstein's, then at least a Wittgensteinian account of human being, hoping to thereby make a dual contribution to debate about the Cartesian subject and its demise.

2

Wittgenstein and/as philosophy

2.1 Introduction

What exactly is the task of the philosopher and how can he or she most adequately fulfil this task? Many (if not all) philosophers have dwelled on these questions, in some (if not many) cases because they felt that philosophy thus far had not been able to live up to its task and must therefore be radically transformed or even be brought to a halt. Indeed, the twentieth century declaration of the death of man I discussed in the introductory chapter can be said to be part of a larger development, rejecting not just the Cartesian view on subjectivity but the entire philosophical tradition. In addition to the demise of the subject, the thinkers labelled "post-modern" envisioned the overcoming of metaphysics or the end of philosophy as well.[1] And just as the later Wittgenstein is held co-responsible for the anti-Cartesian turn that the debate on subjectivity took, he is regarded by both admirers and adversaries as one of the most anti-philosophical of twentieth century thinkers.[2]

Just as it is not without right that Wittgenstein is held co-responsible for the demise of the Cartesian Ego, it is not without ground that he is considered to be the antidote or antithesis to traditional philosophy. A host of remarks on the aim and nature of philosophy, scattered throughout his later work, support the view that Wittgenstein is the anti-philosopher *par excellence*. Take for instance this well-known entry from what is nowadays known as the *Investigations'* "discourse on method" (to wit, the remarks running from § 89 up until § 133):

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[1] See Baynes 1991 for a collection of essays (by Rorty, Lyotard, Derrida and Habermas, among others) representing and/or addressing this state of affairs.

[2] Both Lyotard and Badiou, for instance, take Wittgenstein to be the anti-philosopher *par excellence*, but they value this entirely differently: whereas the former expresses a profound love for Wittgenstein's refusal to have recourse to metaphysical entities (see Lyotard 1993b, p. 21), the latter dubs him the great modern sophist (see Badiou 1995, p. 116).

"When philosophers use a word —"knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition", "name"-- and try to grasp the *essence* of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home? -- What *we* do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use."[3]

This one remark can be used to convey Wittgenstein's entire meta- or anti-philosophy as it is often understood. Whereas philosophy concerns itself with the nature or essence of things, or so the reading typically goes, Wittgenstein will have nothing to do with this. In his view, questions about the nature of things solely arise when our actual use of language is being ignored or distorted, and as a result, philosophers occupy themselves with nothing less than "phantasm[s],"[4] "chimeras"[5] and "illusions."[6] Disappointing as this may sound, as the reading usually continues, philosophers should greet Wittgenstein's discovery with enthusiasm, because it only means that the solution to their problems is in fact as simple as it is effective. If philosophers have merely lost sight of the role words like "object" and "being" play in our everyday lives, their problems can literally be dissolved by bringing these words "back from their metaphysical to their everyday use."[7] Once one after the other philosophical "piece of plain nonsense"[8] is accordingly exposed, investigations into the nature of things ought to lose all appeal and urgency. Wittgenstein does not provide a theory to end all theories, but different "therapies"[9] that should make all theory formation redundant.

According to the prevailing picture of him, in short, Wittgenstein takes philosophy to be a confused activity and his distinctive method is designed to remove this confusion at its roots. However, clear and consistent as this picture may seem, it possibly raises more questions than it answers about the exact aim and nature of Wittgenstein's approach. Among Wittgenstein scholars, at any rate, these topics are hotly debated. While the non- or anti-philosophical character of Wittgenstein's writings is generally not disputed, there is no consensus among his commentators as to what, for instance, his appeal to ordinary language is meant to achieve,[10] what kind of nonsense he takes philosophical statements to express, and

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[3] PI 116.
[4] PI 108.
[5] PI 94.
[6] PI 96.
[7] PI 116.
[8] PI 119.
[9] PI 133.
[10] See e.g. Baker 2004, who explains that Wittgenstein does not present himself as the patron saint of ordinary language, and Cavell 1979 (see pp. 18-20), who points out that Wittgenstein's appeal to it is accordingly never meant to silence others but always already opens the way for discussion and dissent. Especially Cavell's reading sharply contrasts with the views of those who take Wittgenstein's method to be inherently dogmatic and undemocratic, like Gellner 1963 (see pp. 59-65) and Popper 1971 (see p. 20).

the continuity between his earlier and his later work in this respect.[11] The controversy sparked by the "New Wittgensteinians" is not the first and probably not the last to occupy Wittgenstein scholarship. For while it is clear that he has qualms about traditional theory formation, it is far from obvious what kind of philosophy is able to meet or ease his qualms – if they can be eased at all.

Yet even if most of the debate on Wittgenstein's method adds up to a collective effort to understand the anti-philosophical nature of his approach, there are also interpreters trying to show that Wittgenstein in fact has a positive or substantive contribution to make to philosophy.[12] According to these commentators, Wittgenstein may have had doubts about traditional philosophy, these did not bring him to conclude that one had better "[stop] doing philosophy" altogether.[13] Indeed, that there are anti-philosophical as well as positively philosophical readings of Wittgenstein is reflected in the way his insights are applied to non-methodological discussions. In addition to those who turn to Wittgenstein with the aim of exposing the confusions of other thinkers,[14] there are many scholars who take him to give a new and constructive answer to age-old philosophical questions. In spite of his anti-philosophical remarks, these thinkers consult Wittgenstein in an attempt to explain how political transformation can be brought about, or to understand the nature of normativity and of subjectivity, say, apparently deeming that the necessity to reflect on these matters outweigh the qualms one might have about such undertakings. [15]

As I already explained in the introduction to this study, I am among the scholars using Wittgenstein positively or constructively, and in the this chapter, I hope to contribute the methodological debate by showing that his approach can indeed be explained in terms more congenial to philosophical theory. Or to be precise, while I hope to contribute to a debate in Wittgenstein scholarship, I will not proceed by arguing which interpretations are right and which ones are wrong, but rather by having another look at Wittgenstein's discourse on method itself. For

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[11] The "New Wittgensteinians" for instance part ways with other commentators in taking (austere) nonsense to be a term of philosophical appraisal, for the early as well as the later Wittgenstein; on their view, both TLP and PI achieve their therapeutic aim when the reader comes to recognize the very nonsensicality of philosophical statements – including Wittgenstein's own. Crary & Reed 2000 brings together several interpreters (including Diamond and Conant) supporting this view, as well as a dissenting voice (namely Hacker's), but the collection has given rise to much more dissent after its publication; Proops 2001 is just one example thereof.

[12] See e.g. Geneva 1995; Hutto 2003; Stein 1997, pp.127-157.

[13] PI 133. It should be noted that Wittgenstein's formulation is in fact more modest than this way of quoting it suggests. He talks about the discovery that makes himself – not every philosopher – capable of quitting philosophy when he wants to – not once and for all. The questions he mentions as standing in need of (dis)solution, moreover, are those which bring philosophy into question – not necessarily inquiries about the nature of things. However, commentators do not always do justice to these subtleties when quoting or clarifying this remark; see e.g. Fogelin 1976, p. 127; Addis 2006, p. 77.

[14] Bennett & Hacker 2003 is a good example of this kind of application of Wittgenstein.

[15] See e.g. Norval 2007, Rietveld 2008, Overgaard 2007, to give just some recent examples.

I do not only think that it is not always informative to rehearse the readings that have already been give and keep on employing the terms in which a debate has so far been phrased – by re-reading his methodological remarks, I precisely hope to show that the contradiction or friction present in the debate about Wittgenstein's method and in Wittgenstein scholarship at large, replicates a friction present in Wittgenstein's own writings. I will argue that he identifies a risk or tension rather than a mistake inherent in theory formation, but that he incorporates this tension into the way himself contributes to philosophical theory. And this effectively means that, *pace* those who take Wittgenstein to be the antidote or antithesis to philosophy, he should be said to participate in, rather than oppose, time-honoured philosophical discussions.

The defence I will offer for this reading consists of three parts. By means of a close reading of (mainly though not exclusively) §§ 89-133 of the *Investigations*, I will first of all show that Wittgenstein does not categorically reject investigations into the nature or essence of things but rather engages in a debate on how to conceive of such undertakings. This exploration will take up the larger part of this chapter. I will then discuss the notion of grammatical investigations because the fact that Wittgenstein studies grammar or concepts rather than what these concepts stand for, may seem to undermine the suggestion that he wants to explore the nature of things no less than traditional philosophers. Last of all I will bring my interpretation of the discourse on method in connection with Wittgenstein's actual practice. I will argue that his numerous remarks on matters such as mind and meaning do not form an un- or anti-philosophical bulk of questions and observations, but precisely aim to convey the complex nature of these phenomena. For on my reading, Wittgenstein only objects to inquiries into the nature of things in so far as philosophers overlook that most matters do not have a pure and precise essence, and his distinctive approach to philosophical topics reflects this very insight.

2.2 Wittgenstein and philosophy

Whether one agrees or disagrees with such a reading, that Wittgenstein would oppose all philosophical enquiry can be supported by reference to plenty of remarks. Most notable in this respect, and thus a main focal point in the debate on Wittgenstein's method, is a fairly long and uninterrupted sequence of meta-philosophical statements running from § 89 up until § 133 in the *Philosophical Investigations*. The aim of the current section is to show that this methodological manifesto, in spite of the anti-philosophical entries it contains, does not reject philosophy as inherently confused but already participates in a thoroughly philosophical discussion. As I hope to demonstrate, in other words, Wittgenstein

can be considered to be a philosopher among philosophers, even in his most anti-philosophical of moods.

Let me start by pointing out that the dynamic Wittgenstein's discourse on method displays is not a purely negative one. Wittgenstein, that is, does not commence by setting himself apart from philosophy.[16] He frequently uses the pronouns "we" and "our" - not only to refer to his own particular way of doing philosophy, but also to denote philosophical practices in general. To be sure, in passages like § 116, quoted above, Wittgenstein clearly draws a contrast between himself and (other) philosophers; here, the "we" is even put in italics to emphasize the distinction between the way philosophers talk about essences and the way he deals with them.[17] However, in the passages leading up to the ones in which "we" and "our" are employed in this more exclusive manner,[18] Wittgenstein's use of these pronouns indicates that he thoroughly identifies with the trials and tribulations of other philosophers. He talks about the problems being investigated in philosophy,[19] as well as about the mistakes that can be made in this process,[20] not as "theirs" but as "ours".

Judging by this particular choice of words, Wittgenstein nowhere dissociates himself from philosophy as such. He appears to use the plural pronoun in an exclusive manner mainly to contrast his method with that of others; when he uses "us" and "we" in an inclusive manner, he demonstrates that he actually shares the concerns of other philosophers. This suggests that §§ 89-133 pertain to method in the most straightforward sense of the word: they recommend a certain procedure as a more suitable means for reaching the same or a similar goal. This is further supported by the fact that Wittgenstein does not unequivocally dismiss philosophy's interest in essences. He may in the course of his manifest express his disapproval of certain approaches to the nature of things, he nevertheless immediately gives the impression of being just as interested in these matters as other thinkers are.[21] Initially he also uses the term "essence" to characterize this

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[16] It should be noted that the first part of PI 89-133 differs from the last part in this respect; I will pay attention to these more negative remarks shortly. However, the remarks in which Wittgenstein is truly and explicitly negative about philosophy as such do not seem to make up the majority of his manifesto. As Mulhall 2004 points out, the parapraphs from PI 108b onwards are not only uncharacteristically dogmatic but also stem from an earlier period than the remarks preceding them, and need therefore not be taken to be Wittgenstein's last word on method.

[17] In a similar way these pronouns are used in e.g. PI 122 (...the form of account we give...), PI 130 (Our clear and simple...) and PI 132 (...we shall constantly...).

[18] Roughly those from PI 109 onwards.

[19] This seems to be the case in e.g. PI 89 (…we had to hunt…), PI 92 (…our problem…) and PI 108 (…our whole examination…). In a lot of cases it is actually unclear whether the plural pronoun is used in- or exclusively; in PI 129 (…most important for us…) and PI 130 (…we want to…), for instance, the "us" and "we" may just as well include (all) other philosophers.

[20] There are plenty of examples for this application of the plural pronoun; see e.g. PI 101 (We want to say…), PI 103 (…on our nose…) and PI 105 (…we become dissatisfied…).

[21] Cf. Glendinning 1998, p. 83; Mulhall 2004, p. 76.

interest, but he goes on to question whether looking for essences will actually satisfy the philosopher's desire to understand what, say, mind or meaning is.

The methodological discussion quite appropriately starts with a question about the special status of philosophy (or logic, in the equivalent Wittgenstein uses here): "In what sense is logic something sublime?"[22] Philosophy after all appears to be superior to or more basic than the other sciences, dealing not with mere "facts of nature" but with the "basis, or essence, of everything empirical."[23] As his appraisal of certain conceptions of the ideal or sublime[24] indicates, Wittgenstein does not endorse the characterization of philosophy as a sublime activity. Not, however, because he takes it to occupy itself with the same questions as the sciences; quoting Augustine on (the elusiveness of) the nature of time, he precisely stresses the peculiarity of philosophical inquiry. His reason for not wanting to call philosophy sublime is accordingly neither its aiming to understand the nature of things *per se*. It is rather the tendency of some philosophers to think of the nature of things as something of "the purest crystal," immune to "empirical cloudiness,"[25] that makes Wittgenstein think logic is far from sublime.

This is already hinted at in § 89, where Wittgenstein claims that in order to understand the "essence of everything empirical" we don't have to "hunt out new facts," for what philosophy tries to understand "is already in plain view." What we seek in philosophizing is consequently something we "need to *remind* ourselves" of.[26] According to Wittgenstein, it seems, looking into the nature of things is far from objectionable as long as one realizes that "nothing out of the ordinary is involved"[27] in such an exploration.

In § 92 Wittgenstein is more explicit about the sense in which he shares philosophy's occupation with essences. One could say, he states, that "we too in these investigations are trying to understand the essence of [e.g.] language," namely its essence in terms of "its function, its structure."[28] But that is not always how philosophers understand their subject, "[for] they see in the essence, not something that already lies open to view and that becomes surveyable by a rearrangement, but something that lies *beneath* the surface."[29] If philosophy could solely concern itself

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[22] PI 89.

[23] Ibidem.

[24] This lengthy discussion runs roughly from PI 93 - 108; I will shortly look into it in more detail.

[25] PI 97.

[26] PI 89. Notice the use of the plural pronoun again, and also notice that the conception of essence put forward by Wittgenstein here (he uses the term "essence" himself), resurfaces in some of the anti-philosophical remarks to follow; see e.g. PI 109 (...what we have always known...), PI 126 (...everything lies open to view...) and PI 127 (...assembling reminders...). I will come back to this below.

[27] PI 94.

[28] PI 92.

[29] Ibidem. Here, Wittgenstein does draw a contrast between "us" and "them"; the contrast is however one between different conceptions of essence rather than between philosophy and anti-philosophical therapy. This remark incidentally foreshadows some of the later ones as well, see e.g. PI 109 (...but by arranging...) and PI 122 (...perspicuous representation...).

with essences in this purified sense of the word, Wittgenstein would be the last to call his investigations philosophical. As he himself suggests, however, there also is a different way of conceiving of the nature of things.

In § 108 - where the question about the special character of logic also crops up again - Wittgenstein contrasts two possible perspectives (his former and his current perspective, to be exact) on the nature of language in more detail: "We see that what we call ["language"] has not the formal unity that I imagined, but is a family of structures more or less related to one another."[30] Wittgenstein distinguishes language understood as one uniform and neatly formalizable whole from language understood as a more complicated cluster of relationships. This unmistakably echoes the observations made earlier in the *Investigations* about language as a family resemblance phenomenon.[31] It is these observations, I think, that form the key to understanding Wittgenstein's take on the nature of things, as well as his take on the proper philosophical practice.

Having argued for 64 paragraphs that language is not a uniform phenomenon but is actually used in highly diverse ways, Wittgenstein gives the floor to an interlocutor who voices the concern that, as an attempt to understand what language is, this completely misses the point. You keep giving examples of different uses of language, he or she objects, but nowhere explain "what the essence of [language] is," or "what is common to all these activities," whereas that used to be "the very part of the investigation that once gave you yourself the most headache."[32] The interlocutor also contrasts Wittgenstein's current outlook with his former one. She feels that whereas the *Tractatus* tried to capture the nature or essence of language, though it may not have done so satisfactorily, the *Investigations* does not even begin to touch upon this issue and still owes an explicit account of what language essentially is if it is to contribute to our understanding of this phenomenon.

Wittgenstein responds that the interlocutor is right in observing that his present approach differs from his earlier one, but wrong in assuming that this is a difference between probing the nature of language and simply evading the problem. Indeed, the *Investigations* does not "[produce] something common to all that we call language,"[33] but not because it does not attempt to enhance our insight into the workings of language. It is rather the interlocutor who does not foster or even hampers our understanding of language when she uses "nature" and "essence" interchangeably - when she equates "the nature of language" with "what is common to all these activities." For a phenomenon need not have such a core trait at all.

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[30] PI 108.
[31] See PI 65-74; the discussion can however be said to run from PI 65 right up to PI 89 – where the methodological discussion is usually taken to start.
[32] PI 65.
[33] Ibidem.

To illustrate his point, Wittgenstein urges the interlocutor to look at the different things we call games. If you do not assume beforehand that these proceedings "*must* [have] something in common," he claims, you will see that "card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on" do not share one fundamental characteristic but are connected through "similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that."[34] The activities we call games do not belong together because they have some one thing in common, it is rather because of "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing"[35] that we call them by the same name. Wittgenstein proposes to term the similarities that bind phenomena such as games together "family resemblances," and to think of the different games as "[forming] a family."[36] For like the members of a family, each game resembles the other games in one or more respects, but resembles every other game in a different way each time.

Something similar holds for the different kinds of numbers, Wittgenstein continues. We count a certain class among the numbers when its members resemble other things we denote with that term; through this relationship, they also become connected to kinds of numbers they may resemble in less obvious ways. This means that the family of numbers not only has many faces, but that its size and its borders, membership not being dependent on one particular pregiven trait, are not absolutely fixed: "[We] extend our concept of number as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres."[37]

Hence, Wittgenstein wants his interlocutor to see that in dealing with numbers or in dealing with language - in dealing with probably all the topics a philosopher could be interested in – one is not dealing with clearly circumscribable and homogeneous entities. The different kinds of numbers and the various uses of language rather form families of phenomena that share both similarities and differences and cannot always be clearly demarcated from other such groups.[38] This relational, heterogeneous and ambiguous nature has to be reflected in the way they are approached. To capture the nature of numbers or language means to sketch the structures or patterns that the things we call by these names collectively make up. It means to introduce different members of these families and to describe the different relationships between them, without wanting to set up an impenetrable wall between these families and other clans or clusters.[39] To insist that there must be one characteristic that makes all language use into language use and nothing else, is at best to fail to understand what language is – it is at worst to

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[34] PI 66.
[35] Ibidem.
[36] PI 67.
[37] Ibidem.
[38] See PI 68, PI 69.
[39] See PI 71, PI 88.

completely distort our perspective on this phenomenon. Paradoxical as it may sound, in other words, if one seeks to know the nature of a thing, one should not try to find its essence.

This is, on my reading, the debate that is played out between Wittgenstein and his interlocutor. He is not accusing her of mistakenly asking what language is, but is exposing and contrasting their views on what it is one asks for when one wants to know such a thing. Wittgenstein wants the interlocutor to see that she is dissatisfied[40] with the *Investigations* because she has different ideas about what an account of the nature of language should look like; ideas that are informed by different ideas about what this nature could be in the first place. But since the nature of a phenomenon like language does not come in the form of a pure and precise essence, the answer to a philosophical question cannot take the form of pure and precise theory. The degree of exactness that is required for an explanation after all depends on what one wants to describe or achieve by means of it. "If I tell someone "Stand roughly here" – may this explanation not work perfectly? And cannot every other one fail too?"[41] In the case of numbers and language, Wittgenstein suggests, an inexact explanation is actually the most viable or precise one, precisely because of their multifarious nature.

"These considerations," as Wittgenstein himself indicates, "bring us [back] to the problem: In what sense is logic something sublime?"[42]

After indicating in passages such as § 89 and § 92 that he shares philosophy's concern with the nature or essence of things in the sense expounded in §§ 65–67, Wittgenstein extensively discusses the sense in which he does not think philosophy deals with essences - which is also the sense in which he does not think philosophy is something sublime. These passages (roughly §§ 93–108) elaborate on the earlier dispute with the interlocutor; again, Wittgenstein's comments are informed by his view on the nature of things as "something that already lies open to view and that becomes surveyable by a rearrangement."[43] He finds philosophical endeavours objectionable if and to the extent in which they deviate from this very insight.

In §§ 93-108, too, the reasoning in or behind the *Tractatus* is given as an example of the way philosophy can go awry,[44] and here, too, this is considered to have its roots in a notion of exactness, or in a notion of the nature of things as something superbly exact. In the eyes of those who adhere to this notion, something vague or indefinite cannot be of interest to philosophy. "An indefinite sense," they would for instance say, "[would] really not be a sense *at all*," just as "[an] enclosure with a whole in it is as good as *none*."[45] Philosophy seeks to know

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[40] See PI 88, PI 105.
[41] PI 88.
[42] PI 89.
[43] PI 92.
[44] See PI 96, PI 97.
[45] PI 99; see also PI 68-71; in PI 100 the comparison with games also crops up again.

the nature of things, and its nature qua essence must be "*prior* to all experience," "no empirical cloudiness or uncertainty can be allowed to affect it."[46]

Hence, traditional thinkers "want to say that there can't be any vagueness in logic."[47] This, however, is the moment or movement where a philosopher - in so far as she can be said to be engaged in an erroneous activity - makes a fundamental mistake. "For the crystalline purity of logic was [not] a *result of investigation*: it was a requirement."[48] It is not a given that the nature of things takes the form of pure and sublime essences, and if it does, that should arise out of examination rather than be assumed beforehand. Wittgenstein extrapolates the advice given to the interlocutor in § 66,[49] not to take for granted that all games must have one clear thing in common, to the recommendation that philosophers had better take off the "pair of glasses"[50] that this general conception of the nature of things can be said to form.

His advice is not exactly gratuitous, for assuming that the nature of things must be "pure and clear-cut"[51] is not exactly innocent. It makes one overlook that certain phenomena belong together because of a network of similarities rather than because of one common trait, sending one "in pursuit of chimeras."[52] That is to say, in discussing something shared by all instances of a phenomenon, one may think "that one is tracing the outline of the thing's nature" whereas "one is merely tracing round the frame through which [one looks] at it."[53] Yet even if those held captive by the picture of nature-as-essence are aware of the multifaceted nature of the things we call "numbers" or "language", they "become dissatisfied with what [is] ordinarily called"[54] by that name. To Wittgenstein, such disappointment is completely understandable. For in so far as philosophers expect to see some crystalline core beneath or behind all language use, they are in fact blocking the path to understanding what language is: "We have got on slippery ice where there is no friction, so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk."[55]

Yet if philosophers fail to achieve what they set out to do precisely because they are looking for simple and sublime essences, there is a way out of the

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[46] PI 97.

[47] PI 101.

[48] PI 107.

[49] It should be noted that the discussion in PI 66 is about there not being an essence in the sense of one shared thing, whereas the discussion in PI 93-108 is rather about the nature of things not being simple and sublime. This can however be said to merely be a difference in focus; the discussions centre on two aspects of one and the same conception that neglects the relational, hence heterogeneous (as opposed to uniform) and vague (as opposed to clear-cut), nature of things.

[50] PI 103.

[51] PI 105.

[52] PI 94.

[53] PI 114.

[54] PI 105; see also PI 88.

[55] PI 107.

predicament. We want to know the nature of things, i.e. "[we] want to walk," hence, as Wittgenstein puts it, "we need *friction*"[56] or, in other words, we must look for nothing above or beyond the messy and fuzzy phenomena as we encounter them in everyday life. "The *preconceived idea* of crystalline purity" that, instead of being the result of investigation, guides our explorations in all directions except for the one we want to head, "can only be removed by turning our whole examination round,"[57] Wittgenstein claims. We need to see that if our "real need" is to understand the "the spatial and temporal phenomenon of [e.g.] language," we should not be telling stories about "some non-spatial, non-temporal phantasm."[58] Instead, we should be sketching the family of structures that our actual uses of language collectively make up.

In the last part of his methodological manifesto (running roughly from § 109 until § 133) Wittgenstein explains how the revolution that philosophy requires can be brought about. It is this part of the discourse on method that contains his most anti-philosophical of remarks.[59] This section however follows upon the section that discusses the sense in which philosophy does not deal with essences. Wittgenstein's negative remarks can be said to be informed by these insights, and can therefore also be read as rejecting only a specific take on the philosophical practice rather than philosophy *per se*. Moreover, some of the most eye-catching claims about the form philosophy should not take, draw on a contrast with the scientific practice rather than the traditional philosophical one.[60] They can accordingly be taken to explore the peculiarity of philosophical investigations rather than devising their demise.

The difference between philosophical and scientific practice needs to be explored some more[61] as Wittgenstein's continuous emphasizing that philosophy deals with nothing over and above the empirical should not bring one to conclude that the philosopher conducts the same investigations as the scientist. It should be clear that philosophical "considerations could not be scientific ones."[62] Science, namely, is concerned with "causal connexions,"[63] as Wittgenstein explained earlier. The scientist starts off from ordinary phenomena but goes on to look for the laws

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[56] Ibidem.

[57] PI 108.

[58] Ibidem.

[59] See in particular PI 118 and PI 119, though e.g. PI 109, PI 116 and PI 133 are often taken to categorically dismiss all constructive philosophy as well. PI 118 and PI 119 are perhaps difficult to align with my more positive reading, but again, cf. Mulhall 2004, pointing out that the dogmatic tone of these entries set them apart from the rest of the discourse on method.

[60] See most notably PI 109 and PI 126.

[61] This was already touched upon in PI 89. Notice, by the way, that Wittgenstein is already putting his methodological ideas into practice here. Capturing the nature of philosophy itself namely also involves describing the diverse activities that make up this practice, as well as indicating the similarities and differences with other practices - like the scientific one. Perhaps this is what Wittgenstein means when he claims that there is no "second-order philosophy" (PI 121).

[62] PI 109.

[63] PI 89.

or processes behind them, for elements that may not appear at the everyday empirical level but shape this level nonetheless. The philosopher, by contrast, seeks to sketch the relations of similarity and difference within and across families of spatio-temporal phenomena. His or her interest is in the family resemblances between different everyday phenomena, not in the connections between an everyday phenomenon and its causes.

Hence, Wittgenstein declares, "we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all *explanation* and description alone must take its place."[64] For unlike the scientist, the philosopher refrains from digging underneath the surface or beneath the ground.[65] She merely gives an account of the structures she finds on the everyday empirical level.

What is, in other words, peculiar to philosophical as opposed to scientific inquiry, is that the philosopher does not proceed "by giving new information" about the laws or processes behind ordinary phenomena, "but by arranging what we have always known."[66] To the extent that traditional philosophers feel that they, too, must look for things behind or beyond the messy and fuzzy phenomena of everyday life, this characteristic distinguishes the Wittgensteinian approach as much from the scientific as from the traditional philosophical one. For if our real need is to understand the nature of, say, language, and if this nature takes the form of family resemblances between the different things we call by that name, we should no more look for the essences that bind the everyday phenomena than for the processes that cause them. Contrary to both the scientist's and the traditional philosopher's (misconceived) concern, "what is hidden [is] of no interest to us."[67]

Yet there is a way, Wittgenstein admits, in which what is hidden is in fact of vital importance to philosophy. For the interrelations we seek to understand can also be said to be hidden, not in the sense of lying beneath or behind ordinary phenomena, but in the sense of being too familiar to even be observed: "One is unable to notice something – because it is always before one's eyes."[68] Our very familiarity with and "entanglement in"[69] the structures that numbers or language form, makes it difficult (but perhaps also creates the need) to grasp the nature of these things.[70] Even when the interrelations get noticed, this very familiarity makes

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[64] PI 109; see also PI 124, PI 126.

[65] See PI 92.

[66] PI 109.

[67] PI 126.

[68] PI 129.

[69] PI 125.

[70] This raises the question to what extent Wittgenstein think that the philosopher should step back from or even rise above everyday practices in order to get a "bird's eye view" (PR 52) of them. I doubt whether the latter is, in its literal sense, possible, and whether it is desirable even if it were possible, given that the philosophy Wittgenstein rejects is precisely the kind that is out of touch with the everyday. His aim rather seems to be to create a sort of clarity from within, though this can still be said to require an ability to (partly) step back from what one is always already immersed

the philosopher feel dissatisfied[71] with what she finds. Not realizing that the fuzzy family resemblances between everyday phenomena are philosophy's final destination, "we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful."[72]

To get a clear perspective on all too familiar relations between all too familiar phenomena is, by contrast, exactly what Wittgenstein's investigations can be taken to aim at.[73] The passages in which he indicates, not the path that philosophers should avoid, but the path that they had better take, suggest that his method is designed to capture nothing more and nothing less than the nature of things in this sense of the word.

While an account like the one desired by the interlocutor of § 65 inevitably violates the vagueness and multifacetedness of matters such as mind and meaning, Wittgenstein aims to keep their relational character intact. "To this end," he states, "we shall constantly be giving prominence to distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily make us overlook."[74] Philosophy Wittgenstein-style commits itself not only to look for what is common to numbers or language, but also to make the differences between the members of these families appear, as well as to explore the permeable border between these families and other groups. Wittgenstein's (in)famous language games are means to precisely this end. They are set up, he explains, "as *objects of comparison* which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities."[75] Language games thus form a worthy alternative to the "pre-conceived idea" of

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in (I will come back to this in chapter 5). The philosopher who wants to follow Wittgenstein's advise should probably try to obtain enough distance from everyday practices to get a clear view of them, while also constantly checking whether this same distance is not causing him to lose touch.

[71] See PI 88, PI 105.

[72] PI 129.

[73] I have all along been referring to "traditional philosophy" as if there was such a thing as one approach that has been followed by all philosophers without exception. Let me remark at this point that this use of words is to some extent purely rhetorical. Though many traditional philosophers may share certain convictions, both with regard to method and with regard to content, in one combination or other, it also seems characteristic of philosophy that no two philosophical texts are alike. Let me moreover add that, like there is no one "traditional" approach, alternatives to it have been presented by other thinkers as well. As I already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Wittgenstein can be said to be part of a larger development, rejecting not just the Cartesian take on the nature of man but the entire philosophical tradition. Comparisons have accordingly been made between Wittgenstein and Heidegger (see e.g. Gier 1981; Rorty 1991), and between Wittgenstein and Derrida (see e.g. Garver & Lee 1994; Glendinning 1998, pp. 76-92), among others. (Yet needless to say, to the extent that such comparisons (like Rorty's, most notably) are intended to show or informed by the idea that Wittgenstein embodies the antidote or antithesis to philosophy, I disagree with the reading of Wittgenstein on which they are based.)

[74] PI 132.

[75] PI 130.

crystalline purity "to which reality must correspond"[76] and that only makes for philosophical frustration.

But the concept that is most central to his approach, as Wittgenstein himself proclaims, is that of a "perspicuous representation."[77] That this type of representation, of which the defining characteristic is that it "produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing connexions'," is of "fundamental significance"[78] to him, should from the perspective I am developing not come as a surprise. For as I have argued, it is Wittgenstein's objective to understand the nature of things, which he takes to be most adequately captured by describing the (all too familiar yet not always transparent) relations of similarity and difference, both between the different members of a family of phenomena, and between interrelated families as a whole. If someone can from this perspective ever be said to grasp the nature of a thing, it would be when she succeeds in seeing such connections perspicuously.

At this point, however, a question as difficult as important arises. For if the nature of things comes in the form of family resemblance relations, how can someone ever provide a perspicuous representation of these connections? Given that the phenomena in which philosophers take an interest form open-ended clusters of heterogeneous structures, it seems downright impossible to capture their nature, let alone in a perspicuous way. § 122, not offering any details about the form a perspicuous representation should take, is of no avail in solving this puzzle. In fact, the sole (or the sole explicit) example Wittgenstein gives of a perspicuous representation is the colour octahedron discussed in *Philosophical Remarks*.[79] In a superbly lucid way, this diagram conveys the ways in which we take the different colours to be interrelated. Yet it remains to be seen whether such a neat diagram can be given to capture the nature of all phenomena a philosopher could be interested in. Indeed, Wittgenstein himself never provided a perspicuous representation of this specific type of the various psychological phenomena, nor of the numerous uses of language: two equally multifaceted subjects that have been of equally great importance to him throughout his life.

Yet that Wittgenstein never gave such a schematic account of two of his most central concerns does not mean that their relational nature cannot be captured perspicuously. The colour octahedron may be a very conspicuous type of perspicuous representation, such a diagram need not always be possible or even desirable. What kind of representation is most adequate after all depends on what one wants to achieve by means of it. When it comes to portraying the nature of things, as Wittgenstein puts it in one of his remarks on the human psyche, "[the]

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[76] PI 131.
[77] PI 122.
[78] Ibidem.
[79] See PR 51, PR 278.

greatest difficulty [is] to find a way of representing vagueness."[80] The difficulty lies, to be more precise, in combining perspicuity with indefiniteness; in giving a lucid and instructive description of matters that are by their very nature messy and fuzzy, sacrificing neither the informativeness of the account nor the vagueness of the phenomena. So how did Wittgenstein manage to solve this difficulty – if he managed to solve it at all?

2.3   Grammatical investigations

Yet before I can go on to answer this question, I have to deal with an important objection that may have been on the reader's mind from the very beginning and that seems to render any attempt at answering it entirely besides the point. For the question just posed presupposes, like entire the discussion so far, that Wittgenstein expected to be able to investigate something like the nature of things themselves. It could be objected that, although he uses a word like "essence" every now and then, one of his main accomplishments was to have demonstrated the sheer naïveté of such expectations. Did Wittgenstein not argue again and again that the only access we have to the world is through language and that, moreover, our language games do not serve to mirror some essential structure of reality? As far as the nature of things is concerned, he maintained that metaphysical statements seemingly depicting the world as it is, simply reflect the way we divide it up by means of our grammar.[81] That Wittgenstein dubbed his explorations "grammatical" should therefore be taken quite literally: they clarify the use of our words but, given that the rules that govern this use do not stand in a justificatory relation to reality, ultimately leave the things themselves untouched.

   This line of argument seems to find support in the discourse on method itself. Wittgenstein for instance states that his investigations are "grammatical" precisely for not being directed "towards phenomena" but for concerning only "*the kind of statement* that we make about phenomena."[82] However, to conclude from such remarks that the slogan "*Essence* is expressed by grammar"[83] effectively imprisons us within our linguistic structures, means working with a concept of grammar that I think is ultimately not Wittgenstein's. His claim that grammatical rules are neither true nor false does not yet imply that grammar tells us nothing about the world but only something about our conceptualization of it. That would perhaps follow on the added assumption that language and world are two separate entities entering only in a one-sided relationship, with language standing over and against the world

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[80] LW i 347.
[81] Cf. Arrington 1993, pp. 58-59, pp. 77-78; Baker & Hacker 1985, pp. 54-55, pp. 269-271, p. 320.
[82] PI 90.
[83] PI 371.

and imposing its reign without the world having any say. Yet that is not an assumption Wittgenstein seems to make.

In fact, it is exactly what he appears to deny further on in the manifesto. In response to an interlocutor protesting that his remarks have the wrong focus, as their point should not be words but what these words refer to, Wittgenstein explains that this only holds if one takes word and meaning to be opposing entities: "you think of the meaning as a thing of the same kind as the word, though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning. The money, and the cow that you can buy with it. But," he continues, "contrast: money, and its use."[84] In other words, don't take language as standing over and against the world, but as always already practically engaging us with the things around us. From that perspective, attention to words does not imply a disregard of the world - on the contrary.[85]

In other remarks, Wittgenstein points to a further reason why the relationship between world and language is not one of one-way traffic between two discrete items: in some cases, he explains, "the formation of our concepts can be explained by facts of nature."[86] Yet if the world has a say in the way our grammar takes shape, the same question about the focal point of Wittgenstein's writings crops up, for should he in that case not direct his attention to "that in nature which is the basis of grammar"[87] instead of to language itself? Again, Wittgenstein responds that his focus on words does not signify a lack of interest in facts of nature – on the contrary. He only denies that he is interested in these facts as the irreversible causes of our grammatical structures. That is to say, that the world has some influence one the formation of our concepts does not mean that it dictates exactly what our concepts should be. It merely means that the way we conceptualize the world is not entirely up to us; we cannot "choose" our concepts "at pleasure."[88]

I take such remarks to indicate that Wittgenstein did not conceive of language as a simple mirror image of reality, but neither took it to one-sidedly impose its structures on the world. The grammar-world relation as it is depicted in his later writings is not one between two separate poles, one active and one passive; the picture painted is rather thoroughly dynamic and interactive. Not only is Wittgenstein's repeated use of terms like "language game" and "practice" "meant to bring into prominence that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity,"[89] thus directly submerging us in our surroundings, he also suggests that grammar is a product of history. In his view, that is, *homo sapiens* did not enter the worldly stage

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[84] PI 120.

[85] Interestingly, a similar point is made in the remark that directly precedes the "Essence is expressed by grammar" slogan: "But that does not mean that I want to talk only about words." (PI 370)

[86] PI II § xii 230a; see also PI p. 56, RPPi 46-49, RPPi 78.

[87] Ibidem.

[88] Ibidem.

[89] PI 23.

with a fixed and rigid set of linguistic rules, but humans have developed, and will continue to develop, their language in a practical engagement with the world around them. Or as he put it in *On Certainty,* the remarks that perhaps most clearly stress the dynamic character of our conceptual configurations: "Language did not emerge from some kind of ratiocination."[90]

That our concepts or certainties can strictly speaking not be said to be true or false (and that emphatically stating that one knows that, say, "This is a hand" does not suffice to defeat the sceptic, as *On Certainty* explains) does not mean that statements like "Humans have a mind" and "Humans have a body" have no substantive role to play in philosophy. The point of a philosopher's investigating such "facts" need not be to prove that they are the case; one could also say that it is philosophy's goal to come to grips or come to terms with our concept of, say, mind in the first place. When it comes to possible goals, the choice the philosopher faces is after all not necessarily that between either taking stock of linguistic facts, or proving grammatical classifications to be objectively justified. And given Wittgenstein's view on the grammar-world relationship, trying to get a firmer grasp on our concepts can be said to be a way of coming to grips with the world as well. To insist that this is not the case is to adhere to a dichotomy he was trying to move away from. What is more, from this perspective, Wittgenstein's deeming philosophy such a precarious undertaking becomes all the more understandable. For if our concepts simultaneously shape and reflect the world around us, so to speak, it is not exactly immaterial how philosophers conceptualize things.

2.4   Wittgenstein as philosophy

Let me recapitulate the observations I made before embarking on this grammatical excursus. In his discourse on method Wittgenstein proves to be just as interested in the nature of things as other thinkers are, yet while they traditionally equate the nature with the essence of things, he takes it to come in the form of family resemblances. In contrast to the traditional approach, Wittgenstein's method is accordingly designed to leave the complicated nature of things intact by rendering the relevant resemblances perspicuous. Ironically, however, the methodological remarks provide no clear recipe for how to proceed and do not explain how the

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[90] OC 475. It should be noted that commentators stressing the autonomy of grammar often revert to PG: an older collection of remarks of which several ended up in the final version of PI – albeit not those about language being autonomous. To be sure, interpreters like Baker and Hacker also mention the general facts of (human) nature influencing the formation of concepts over time (cf. Baker & Hacker 1985, pp. 285, p. 318, pp. 333-334), but they nonetheless insist that a remark like "Grammar is not accountable to any reality" (PG 133) most adequately expresses Wittgenstein's ideas on the language-world relation. I prefer to trace the development of Wittgenstein's ideas all the way up to the later writings, which offer a more nuanced perspective on this relation and consequently tone down (if not disqualify) the older remarks about the autonomy of language. (As for the anti-philosophical statements that OC also contains, I will discuss them in chapter 5.)

families of structures *in casu* can be presented in a (more or less) perspicuous way. In this section I will try and fill in this gap by complementing my reading of the methodological manifesto with an analysis of the way Wittgenstein himself deals with multifaceted phenomena such as mind and meaning. The aim of the current section is thus to demonstrate how Wittgenstein's ideas about the nature of things are reflected in his distinctive style, the apparent disorder thereof not preventing it from being positively insightful.

The various collections of remarks Wittgenstein left behind – including those he thoroughly edited himself[91] - may at first sight strike one as utterly unsystematic bulks of observations, questions and examples. Wittgenstein's observations do not always follow each other in a logical way, many of the questions posed subsequently remain unanswered, and the examples given are often purely fictional ones - the difference with proper philosophical accounts could hardly be bigger. Indeed, Wittgenstein appears to be more interested in specifying how the essence of language, for instance, should *not* described, than in giving a description thereof himself. The remarks in which he confronts the views of specific thinkers (like Augustine and Frege) may not form the majority of his writings, his investigations seem largely aimed at showing some very common ideas about language and meaning - that all words function as labels for objects, to name just one - to be misconceived.

However, these characteristics need not be taken to consolidate Wittgenstein's reputation as one of the most anti-philosophical of thinkers. That Wittgenstein's writings abound with questions rather than assertions, first of all, does not mean that he only questions (sic) the endeavours of other philosophers. It should be noted that many of the questions he poses are outright rhetorical and do not allow for any other answer than the one Wittgenstein apparently has in mind. That he often opts for the interrogative rather than the assertive form does not imply that Wittgenstein is not working towards genuine philosophical insights.

That the observations Wittgenstein makes do not always follow each other in a clear and distinct order does not disqualify him as a positively philosophical thinker either. Indeed, this characteristic can be said to be informed by the insight that many phenomena do not have a pure and precise essence and do not take the form of a clearly circumscribable object. This after all implies that who wants to grasp what the mind or the inner is, for instance, is advised to give an overview of the many different things we take to be inner. Wittgenstein accordingly goes through lengths to describe cases of thinking, hoping, feeling sad, having pain, pretending to have pain, and so on. Far from lacking any rationale, the remarks on these diverse phenomena can be said to bring the relations of family resemblance between them to light.

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[91] Though PI was only published after Wittgenstein's death, he was preparing it (or at least the first part of it) for publication himself, and, as is perhaps less well-known, also continuously revised other manuscripts and typescripts.

The fact that many of the cases Wittgenstein describes are imaginary ones - a fact that distinguishes him from the scientist as well as from the traditional philosopher – similarly does not contradict the suggestion that he wants to investigate the nature of things in the form of all-too familiar relations between all-too familiar phenomena. While these fictional cases are no longer of an everyday empirical nature, they do not concern the phantasms Wittgenstein thinks traditional philosophers are occupied with either. They can rather be said to inspect the boundaries of our concepts. That is to say, by means of fictional examples Wittgenstein investigates when it would still and when it would no longer make sense to talk of rule following, say. These examples thus do not lead him away from the everyday phenomena philosophers (should) try to understand, but allow him to get a firmer grasp of the heart as well as the periphery of matters that are elusive precisely for being mundane.

Something similar holds for the fact that many of Wittgenstein's remarks indicate how *not* to conceive of normativity and subjectivity, among other things. For not only can a proper grasp of how the nature of a thing should *not* be described, foster understanding of what it *does* entail - if many phenomena lack a pure and precise essence and may share characteristics with other phenomena, without being indistinguishable from them, the philosopher is well advised to explore the similarities and differences between the topics that concern them and these other matters: between psychological phenomena and bodily processes, say, or between normative and mechanical proceedings. So when Wittgenstein argues that the mental is connected yet cannot be reduced to the behavioural, or that the bindingness of a rule may seem but is in fact not a mechanical matter, he is not or not only freeing other philosophers from confusion. He can also be said to gain a better understanding of the complex nature of these phenomena and of their connection to (seemingly or partly) related matters.

However, even if Wittgenstein's writings are thus not as un- or anti-philosophical as they might appear to be, the question I raised at the end of the second section is thereby not yet answered. Appropriate as it may be that Wittgenstein does not present his ideas in the form of a pure and precise theory, given his conception of the nature of things, his writings still not seem to make for much clarity and perspicuity. They may reflect the multifacetedness of matters such as mind and meaning, that is, but how can a patchwork of observations, questions and examples maintain the crucial balance between indefiniteness and perspicuity, rather than merely replicating the complex nature of the phenomena Wittgenstein investigates? To repeat my earlier question: How does do Wittgenstein's remarks succeed in giving an instructive description of matters that are essentially multifaceted, sacrificing neither the complexity of these phenomena nor the informativeness of the account?

With regard to the apparent lack of lucidity, it should first of all be noted that, in line with my reading of the methodological remarks, a collage of observations about the different things we do and do not take to be inner, say, is already highly informative. Such an "album" composed of numerous "sketches of landscapes"[92] by its very composition teaches us a valuable lesson about the multifaceted phenomenon we call "mind". Yet Wittgenstein - in contradiction, perhaps, to some remarks in the discourse on method - does not always rest content with describing specific cases. Once in a while he seems to summarize his findings and to make claims of a more general nature. Take for instance his "plan for the treatment of psychological concepts" laid out in § 63 of the second volume of the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, and the "continuation of the classification of psychological concepts" given in § 148 of that same collection.

In these passages, Wittgenstein makes a very general claim about the way we talk about other minds and the way we relate to our own mind (this being a matter of observation and expression, respectively); discusses specific subclasses of the psychological (sensations and emotions, among others); mentions characteristics all members of certain classes share (sensations, for instance, all have genuine duration); identifies characteristics that make for divisions within these subclasses (there are, for example, both directed and undirected emotions); and demarcates subclasses as a whole from each other (like emotions from sensations).

In these paragraphs, then, Wittgenstein is not tacitly showing but rather openly describing the relations of similarity and difference that characterize specific psychological phenomena, as well as some of the family resemblances that constitute the domain of the mental as a whole. In addition, he succinctly conveys an asymmetry (namely that between the first and the third person) that is to be located at the heart of the psychological. In other words, Wittgenstein can be said to achieve a balance between perspicuity and multifacetedness in these passages. He is after all making several structures pertaining to the psyche explicit and presenting them in a (more or less) surveyable way.

That is not to say that these two combined passages independently and entirely capture the nature of mind in all its multifariousness. While Wittgenstein does not refrain from making general claims in § 63 and § 148, he does not claim to have offered a complete classification of the psychological either. Given that family resemblance concepts like "mind" are heterogeneous as well as open-ended, this is neither a matter of modesty nor of inadequacy. Perspicuity does not and cannot require completeness when the object that is rendered perspicuous is not a clearly circumscribable one.

Most importantly, however, these passages do not serve to articulate Wittgenstein's take on the mental all by themselves: they seem to refer back to and anticipate other remarks about the human psyche. Wittgenstein's claiming in § 148, for instance, that behaviour is only expressive of a specific mental state if its

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[92] PI p. vii.

external circumstances are taken into account, has to be supplemented with the remarks pointing out that the psychological is not a purely behavioural matter.[93] To give another example, his § 63 claim about psychological verbs in the first and the third person recapitulates the observations about the difference between statements like "I am in pain" and "He is in pain", and thereby indicates why the inner is not (in all senses) something private, as other remarks investigate.[94]

This effectively means that there is another way in which passages such as § 63 en § 148 can be said to combine vagueness with perspicuity. They may not do so by portraying each and every family resemblance relation pertaining to the topic under investigation in one fell swoop, but they do create some order in what can still appear to be a chaos by connecting groups of remarks with each other, by highlighting certain trains of thoughts and by summing up the most important insights in which these result. By themselves these passages may not convey the multifariousness of a matter like mind in all respects, but that is made up for by the fact that they refer to other remarks that collectively cover more parts of this terrain in more detail. These other remarks, in turn, may by themselves lack the kind of perspicuity Wittgenstein claims to be aiming at, but that is made up for by the fact that they are reshuffled and recapitulated in the plan for the treatment of psychological concepts and its continuation.

The vital balance between multifariousness and perspicuity can accordingly be located, not or not only at the level of these particular passages, but also or even more so in the interaction between Wittgenstein's synoptic remarks and a host of more specific ones. Now if the remarks I just discussed were the only ones entering into this kind of dynamic, Wittgenstein's oeuvre would still not offer much perspicuity. However, his writings contains many more passages that are perhaps less obviously perspicuous but can be taken to be of a surveying nature as well. The way I read such remarks, they partake in a similar interaction with their surroundings as § 63 and § 148.

§ 43 of the *Investigations*, for instance, in which Wittgenstein famously claims that "For a *large* class of cases [...] the meaning of a word is its use in language,"[95] can be said to proceed from the many passages in which the flaws of the Augustinian picture are exposed to sketch the contours of an alternative conception. It brings together the main message of the numerous thought experiments showing Augustine's conception of meaning to be deficient, and simultaneously makes explicit what the *Investigations'* various enumerations of actual language use are pointing to.

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[93] See e.g. PI 307, RPPi 286, RPPi 287.
[94] See e.g. PI 246, PI II § xi 222a-c, RPPi 570.
[95] PI 43.

§ 154 of the same book, stating that "In the sense in which there are processes [...] which are characteristic of understanding, understanding is not a mental process,"[96] can be said to finally and decisively reject the suggestion made in § 138 to the effect that understanding meaning equals seeing something (a picture or formula, say) before one's inner eye. However, in so far as § 154 might give one the impression that Wittgenstein denies (linguistic) normativity, it has to be complemented with the subsequent discussion in which it is argued that what accounts for the bindingness of a rule is the existence of an institution or practice, culminating in § 202: "And hence also 'obeying a rule' is a practice. And to *think* one is obeying a rule is not to obey a rule."[97]

Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect perception, to give one last example, seems to find a finishing point or turning point in the claim that what we "perceive in the dawning of an aspect is not a property of the object, but an internal relation between it and other objects."[98] Explaining that in perceiving an aspect, we can indeed be said to see something, yet cannot be said to see something of a purely visual nature, this claim puts the preceding and following remarks describing the senses in which aspect perception both is and is not a matter of thinking, and both is and is not a matter of seeing, in a more perspicuous light.

In my view, Wittgenstein's writings can be understood as containing many perspicuous representations in the sense just described. Some more obviously perspicuous and some more wide-ranging than others, the remarks of a synoptic nature, in interaction with the remarks they synopsize, all illuminate certain parts of the landscape we cover with words like "mind" and "meaning". Though it might go too far to say that Wittgenstein's remarks on the philosophy of psychology, for instance, collectively make for one overarching *Darstellung* of the human psyche, they can nonetheless be said to collectively convey the relations of similarity and difference that are part and parcel of the domain of the mental. This may mean that the tension between the perspicuity Wittgenstein claims to be aiming at (in the previously discussed PI § 122), and the multifariousness that characterizes the nature of the things he investigates, is in the end not entirely reconciled.[99] On my reading, however, this belongs to the very essence of the Wittgensteinian approach. While Wittgenstein aspires to make matters like subjectivity and normativity more perspicuous, he does not strive for clarity at the cost of their very – multifaceted - nature.

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[96] PI 154.

[97] PI 202.

[98] PI II § xi 212.

[99] Cf. Mulhall 2004, claiming that, according to Wittgenstein, complete clarity can indeed be attained – with regard to individual, particular problems (see p. 82); and cf. Glendinning 1998, arguing that, in Wittgenstein's book, a certain looseness or inexactness can never be escaped (see p. 92).

2.5   Concluding remarks

Hence, even if Wittgenstein is part of a larger twentieth century development, challenging not just the Cartesian take on the nature of the subject but the traditional approach to philosophy as such, and even if his writings contain some vehemently anti-philosophical statements, he need not be considered to form the antidote or antithesis to philosophy. In contrast to the picture that prevails of him, as I hope to have shown, Wittgenstein can be said to fully - albeit cautiously - engage in time-honoured philosophical discussions, rather merely trying to oppose or undermine these debates.

For as I argued by means of a close reading of his discourse on method, an excursus on the concept of grammar, and an interpretation of his actual practice, Wittgenstein identifies a tension rather than a mistake inherent in philosophical theory formation. He demonstrates that a thinker always has to balance philosophy's striving or "craving for generality"[100] with the heterogeneity that is of the essence of the phenomena it describes. And while this tension explains why and how philosophical theory can go awry – namely, when it focuses on generality and univocality at the cost of all particularity and ambiguity - it does not bring Wittgenstein to conclude that all investigations into the nature of things must be brought to an end. Placing the particular in a larger framework and inscribing the general with particularities at one and the same time, he can be read as accommodating this seeming conflict precisely by leaving it intact.

The tension present in Wittgenstein's writings and reflected in Wittgenstein scholarship at large, to which I pointed at the beginning of this chapter, accordingly need not be considered to be problematic and something to be overcome or explained away. There is both a negative or suspicious and a positive or constructive side to Wittgenstein's method – even though I think that the negative should ultimately be said to stand in the service of the positive, and that it is precisely this combination that makes Wittgenstein into a full-blown philosopher (and a very interesting one at that). To be sure, Wittgenstein is very much aware of the dangers that come with devising philosophical theories, and part of his contribution to the subjectivity debate, for instance, precisely consists in explaining where and why Cartesianism breaks down. However, to therefore insist that he cannot be considered to be a philosopher in any traditional sense of the word means to ignore an equally - if not more - important strand in his thinking.

In the chapters to follow, at any rate, I will discuss Wittgenstein's arguments against the theories proposed by Descartes, Frazer and Moore, among others, but will first and foremost try to make his constructive contribution to debates about subjectivity and religiosity, among other things, explicit. This also means that to the extent Wittgenstein combines vagueness with perspicuity and generality with particularity, I will concentrate on his more general or wide-ranging insights. In so

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[100] BB 17-18.

far as the explorations to follow might accordingly strike one as not exactly being in the spirit of Wittgenstein, I ask one to keep the preceding exposition in mind. For on my reading, Wittgenstein's awareness of the dangers of philosophy's craving for generality did not prevent him from contributing to traditional philosophical inquiries. Quite the contrary.

3

Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology

3.1 Introduction

Even though it is only in his earlier writings that Wittgenstein explicitly contemplates the subject and its place (or non-place) in the world,[1] it is the later Wittgenstein who is counted among the twentieth-century rethinkers of subjectivity, for it is only in his later writings that he explores the consequences of de-emphasizing or underestimating man's embodiedness and embeddedness. These explorations are not confined to the best-known part of Wittgenstein's later work. In addition to many of the *Investigations'* entries, the numerous remarks written between 1946 and 1951 and posthumously published as the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* and the *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology* (some of which had already been added to the *Investigations* by its editors under the heading *Part II*) unrelentingly investigate how to understand specific psychological phenomena as well as the human psyche more generally. In this chapter, I will consult both the *Philosophical Investigations* and these collections of post-*Investigations*[2] remarks in order

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[1] See TLP 5.631, TLP 5.632, TLP 5.641, NB 2.8.16, NB 2.9.16. It will become clear in chapter 4 that there are similarities between Wittgenstein's earlier and his later view on the soul or inner. However, since it is not my objective to sketch the developments in his thinking on these matters (as is for instance the aim of Stern 1995), I do not want to make claims about the Cartesian or non-Cartesian character of Wittgenstein's earlier notion of the subject. As Stokhof 2002 explains, Wittgenstein's early conception of the self is to a large extent inspired by Schopenhauer (see pp. 191-210).

[2] Hence, I will consult both the "second" and what some consider to be the "third Wittgenstein" (cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004). Again, since it is not my aim to sketch the developments in Wittgenstein's thinking, I will not comment on the possible differences between his PI and his post-PI outlook. Suffice it to say that even if works like RPP and LW can be said to constitute a relatively new phase in Wittgenstein's thinking, they still contribute just as much as PI to a rethinking of the Cartesian take on the nature of man. Cf. also Van Gennip 2008, where it is argued that several lines of thought as found in OC have their roots in plenty of older manuscripts and typescripts.

to explicate Wittgenstein's contribution to the debate on the nature of man, and will use the label "philosophy of psychology" as a short-hand for all these sources.

Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology constitutes an excellent starting point for investigating his contribution to the subjectivity debate, for, contrary to what this label might suggest, these remarks do not provide, guidelines for conducting psychological research, say. Rather, they investigate a myriad of psychological concepts and try to get a firmer grasp of what it means to say that thoughts are private and feelings are inner, for instance. More often than not, moreover, the ideas about such privacy and interiority which Wittgenstein evaluates along the way have a distinctly Cartesian ring.[3] Now "Cartesianism" is not so much the name for one clear and distinct philosophical position as it is the label for a whole cluster of ontological and epistemological presuppositions, sometimes more and sometimes less overtly at work in philosophical as well as non-philosophical discourse, about the way mind and body and self and other (inter)relate. As a result, one rarely encounters Cartesianism in a pure and unadulterated form, but let me nonetheless briefly list the presuppositions for which this label has come to stand.

According to the customary rendering of the Cartesian view, it is the mind that makes the human being into the human being, and the human mind is unlike anything else one encounters in the world. Or to be more precise, Cartesianism understands the mind and mental matters on analogy with the physical world and material matters, but it takes the former to be composed out of entirely different stuff and to occupy its very own ontological domain. On the Cartesian view, the mind or inner constitutes a literally inner realm in which psychological phenomena such as thoughts and feelings reside or take place. These phenomena are thus understood as akin to physical or material objects and processes, with the distinction that they belong to one's private inner world instead of to the public outer one. Yet - lest there be any misunderstanding - Cartesianism does not merely distinguish psychological from physical or material phenomena by means of their location. Though it takes psychological phenomena to be object- and process-like,

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[3] Cf. Overgaard 2004, pp. 264-5; Thornton 1998, p. 14. Commentators like Budd and Schulte link Wittgenstein's discussion of specific psychological phenomena such as memory and emotion to the theories about these phenomena brought forward by thinkers like Plato, Locke and James (cf. Budd 1989, pp. 157-164; Schulte 1993, pp. 113-114, pp. 120-134), but these theories can also be labelled "Cartesian" since they express similar ideas about the mind as Descartes (allegedly) defended. (Also, this difference in framing Wittgenstein's psychological remarks can be said to reflect a difference in opinion about the starting point and goal of his writings more generally. Commentators like Budd and Schulte closely discuss Wittgenstein's remarks on specific psychological phenomena and relate these to specific theories as defended by other thinkers, maintaining that it was Wittgenstein's main ambition to dissolve such theories by giving an overview of the different ways in which words like "inner" are used, rather than giving an account of the nature of mind himself; see most notably Budd 1989, pp. 1-20. However, as I also argued in the previous chapter, Wittgenstein's discussing numerous concrete cases by no means prevented him from developing general ideas about e.g. subjectivity. Precisely by tracing these general ideas, I hope to continue fleshing out Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology where commentators like Budd and Schulte leave off.)

it emphatically takes them to be objects and processes of a non-material or non-physical kind, and thus to differ from ordinary objects and processes both in terms of their location and in terms of the substance they are made of.

In Cartesian accounts of mind, these ontological presuppositions are typically followed or accompanied - for perhaps it is not the ontological postulations that come first, and perhaps they do not logically enforce any other assumptions - by several epistemological ones. Occurring in a private inner realm, or so it is argued, psychological phenomena are only accessible to the one who has or undergoes them. More specifically, Cartesianism assumes that a person has immediate access to his or her own thoughts and feelings by means of introspection; barred from such access, however, any other has to make do with speculations based on what this person says or does. Given that the outer fences off the inner, true knowledge of someone's mental states is available to the first person alone.

On a Cartesian view, the first person also has a special status or privilege (though this no longer concerns a strictly epistemological privilege) in the sense that the role of other human beings is reduced to a bare minimum. Obviously, when it comes to someone's physical being, a person would not exist and continue to exist if it were not for others, but when it comes to one's existence as a mental being – and thus when it comes to the very essence of one's being – no outside input is required. On a Cartesian view, a person needs the help of others only to acquire the right terms for referring to her inner occurrences. Aside from being able to talk about it in a public language, she has possession of and access to a full repertoire of psychological phenomena from the day she was born.

In some way or other, presuppositions of this kind play a central role in the remarks comprising Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology. In line with my arguments in the previous chapter, Wittgenstein does not lay them bare order to show that all those labelled "Cartesian" are wrong for trying to understand the nature of man, or even in order to show that all of their intuitions about the subject are utterly mistaken. Just as Wittgenstein, on my reading of his discourse on method, proves to be just as interested in the nature of things as other philosophers are, his philosophy of psychology, on my understanding of these remarks, no less aims to give an account of subjectivity than a full-blown Cartesian treatise on this topic. Moreover, just as Wittgenstein's concept of family resemblance tries to capture the nature of essences more adequately than traditional philosophy, his psychological writings attempt to do more justice to the mind or inner than the Cartesians are able to do. He points out that while Cartesian-style depictions of matters mental may seem pre-eminently equipped for explicating what it means to call thoughts "private" and feelings "inner", they actually fail to account for the things they set out to explain and also fall short of capturing our day-to-day experiences with both our own and other minds. Sharing the Cartesian concern with subjectivity, Wittgenstein tries to develop an account that is both conceptually and phenomenologically more adequate.

In what follows, I will discuss a selection of Wittgenstein's remarks on both specific psychological phenomena and the domain of the mental more generally in an attempt to reconstruct the post-Cartesian trajectory he may be said to have travelled, as well as the outlook to where that trajectory can be said to have led.

3.2 Inner objects and processes

It is by no means merely in (allegedly) Cartesian theories that talk of inner objects and processes abounds; our everyday psychological language is filled with such phrasings, too. We talk about calculating in the head, for example, insist that we clearly see a situation before us when discussing a past event, and worry that while one of our friends looks perfectly happy on the outside, he is in fact terribly unhappy within. It is therefore not so much the fact that Cartesianism makes mention of inner occurrences that makes this position problematic, or even that it theorizes about the nature of such occurrences at all. According to Wittgenstein, the problem with Cartesianism rather is that it takes our talk of inner objects and processes too seriously – and that it thereby, on a different level, by far does not take them seriously enough. As several of his remarks make clear, portraying psychological phenomena such as thoughts and feelings as literally inner entities actually fails to capture what is essential about them.

Take for instance the phenomenon of memory and remembrance. Explained along Cartesian lines, and seemingly not without support from our day-to-day discourse, remembering constitutes "a seeing into the past."[4] When one remembers someone or something, or so the explanation could go, this someone or something is no longer actually present but is mentally represented again by means of an image. Memories are thus reproduced internal representations and remembering amounts to perceiving these with the inner eye. Straightforward as the analogy to seeing may seem, however, Wittgenstein points out that it does not hold.

When one wanders through one's former hometown, say, and runs into an old friend, memories of how this person used to look enable one to determine how much he has changed,[5] yet this cannot be accounted for by maintaining that the memories in question are old or retrieved images of one's friend. As Wittgenstein brings to the fore, even if images would appear before one's inner eye in such a case, it still remains to be explained how one is able to recognize them as representations of something past. Such recognition, namely, requires information that is not contained within the images themselves,[6] like an acquaintance with the

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[4] RPPii 592; see also RPPi 111, RPPi 159, RPPi 1050.

[5] See RPPi 1041.

[6] Which is not to say that such recognition requires an explicit process of interpretation in which additional knowledge is applied to an image; cf. Wittgenstein's arguments against taking seeing-as to be a form of interpretation, to be discussed in the sixth section of this chapter.

hairstyles of the previous decade and an awareness of the fact that people develop wrinkles as they grow old.[7] An image by itself, whether mental or not, does not yet reveal the date of its production, and talk of retrieved images thus fails to make sense of the very essence of remembering: its allowing us to revive or relive things past.[8] Indeed, Wittgenstein observes, instead of explaining what memory is, the Cartesian account simply falls back on this phenomenon. Remembering cannot be called a seeing into the past, he states, for "even if it showed scenes with hallucinatory clarity, still it takes remembering to tell us that this is past."[9]

A similar message is conveyed in some of Wittgenstein's more well-known remarks involving literally inner images. As he argues in §§139-142 of the *Investigations*, it cannot be maintained that understanding what, for instance, the word "cube" means, is a matter of mentally observing a picture of a cube. The only reason that this explanation may seem appropriate is that there already exists a convention to take 12 lines arranged in a particular manner as a picture of a cube, but nothing in this configuration itself forces one to see it like that: "we are," Wittgenstein explains, "at most under a psychological, not a logical, compulsion" here.[10] While these lines represent a cube given the conventional method of projection, one could just as well imagine a different method according to which the linear arrangement should be taken to symbolize, say, a prism.

Moreover, Wittgenstein adds, it is of no use to continue along Cartesian lines and suggest that, in addition to the mental image, the method of projection is internally represented, too. No less a static mental entity, Wittgenstein maintains that a cube+projection-picture simply shares the fate of the picture-cube.[11] A picture of a projection method might, logically speaking, also allow for different applications that the one we tend to think of first. And it is for a similar reasons, to come back to the phenomenon discussed a moment ago, that the inadequacy of explaining remembering as a seeing into the past cannot be countered by recourse to feelings that supposedly inform one of the pastness of the images perceived. Apart from the fact that particular feelings or experiences do not always seem to accompany our memories, and that it would also take remembering to recognize purported memory-feelings when they occur,[12] a feeling as such no more connects up to one specific time and place than an isolated image. Hence, just as talk of retrieved images and feelings of pastness does not succeed in capturing in a non-circular manner what is essential about remembering, reference to inner pictures

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[7] See LWi 837.

[8] Cf. Schulte 1993, pp. 96-97. As Schulte points out, Cartesian-style accounts of memory (or the accounts offered by James and Russell, to be precise), for this reason add that it is not just mental images but also special feelings that constitute remembering; I will come back to this shortly.

[9] RPPii 592; see also RPPi 1131, LWi 837.

[10] PI 140.

[11] Cf. Stein 1997, pp. 184-190.

[12] See PI II § xiii 231a-c, RPPi 112, RPPi 118, RPPi 120, RPPii 583; cf. Schulte 1993, pp. 105-08.

and projections presupposes rather than explains our understanding of words like "cube".[13]

Besides examining the explanatory power of Cartesian-style objects, Wittgenstein also explores what the postulation of mental processes ultimately entails and achieves, as several of his remarks on the phenomenon of thinking go to show. From a Cartesian perspective, thinking can be said to form a kind of speaking, but instead of constituting a public, audible form of speech, thinking concerns man's ability "to talk inaudibly, within [the privacy] of his mind."[14] Explained along Cartesian lines, thinking amounts to talking in the head. However, as Wittgenstein's analysis of this explanation makes clear, it cannot be considered to be satisfactory. For first of all, the fact that a sentence is supposedly uttered mentally or internally does not yet make this string of words into an instance of thinking. In so far as the only difference between such an inner monologue and an outer one lies in the former's privacy or inaudibility, a sentence spoken mentally need not be accompanied by any thought, just as sentences expressed audibly or publicly may simply serve to practice one's pronunciation, or be uttered "in a queer automatic way".[15] Wittgenstein's verdict on this purported inner process is akin to his verdict on the inner objects discussed above: like an image does not of its own accord convey when it was produced or what it represents, the mere uttering of words, whether mental or not, by itself does not equal being absorbed in thought.

What is more, Wittgenstein points out, given that it always takes a certain amount of time to utter the words that constitute a sentence, the analogy of thinking to talking does not hold at all. In contrast to a spoken string of words, it is not always possible to indicate the beginning and the end of a certain train of thought, nor does a train of thought necessarily develop in a similar, one-after-the-other fashion: "I cannot say, e.g., that this or that phase of the process occurred in *this* time segment. So I can *not* describe the thinking process as I can describe the speaking itself, for instance. That is why one can't very well call thinking a process."[16] Unlike speaking, thinking cannot be considered to be a specific process or activity, not even of an internal kind. And as Wittgenstein observes, this non-process-like character is in fact reflected in our day-to-day dealings with other minds. When we are looking at a person or even a chimpanzee undertaking certain complicated actions, and assert that she or it accompanies these actions with thinking, we are not referring to an "imaginary auxiliary activity; [an] invisible

[13] It should be noted that Wittgenstein's remarks about the meaning of "cube" do not only pertain to a Cartesian-style appeal to inner pictures, but more generally apply to attempts at explaining meaning in terms of strictly individual states; cf. Stein 1997, pp. 200-202. I will discuss Wittgenstein's arguments against a non-Cartesian individualistic view on the mental (namely physicalism) in section 4 and will explore the general non-individualistic character of his alternative account in section 5 of this chapter.

[14] RPPi 574; see also RPPii 7, RPPii 34, RPPii 193.

[15] RPPii 256; see also RPPi 180, RPPii 192; cf. Budd 1989, p. 128; Johnston 1993, pp. 68-69.

[16] RPPii 266; see also RPPi 210, RPPii 257.

stream"[17] underlying the external activities we perceive. Rather, when we say of a person that she's thinking, we mean to say something about the way in which her (external) activities are performed and distinguish them from actions of a purely mechanical kind.[18]

On Wittgenstein's view, one is ill-advised to insist that, faced with the inadequacy of the accounts just discussed, they need to by amended by recourse to even further internal entities, or that the inner objects and processes they invoke are of a special, self-explanatory kind. For Wittgenstein, it is no coincidence that the postulation of inner entities is of no avail in explaining both thinking, remembering and the understanding of meaning, for as becomes clear in the course of his private language argument, he considers the entire model at work in these explanations to be misconceived.

Leaving aside discussions as to what §§ 243-315 of the *Investigations* (where this argument is usually located) convey about the possibility of private ostensive definitions and the solitary following of rules - not to mention debates as to where the argument should be located or whether it can be considered to be an argument at all -[19] these remarks do not only show that even when it comes to psychological concepts, the *Investigations'* earlier observations about the necessity of pre-existing public practices apply. In delivering another blow the Augustinian account of meaning, Wittgenstein also lays bare the assumptions it makes and needs to make about the phenomena that psychological concepts supposedly label in order to

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[17] RPPii 228; see also RPPii 224, RPPii 226, RPPii 227, RPPii 229.

[18] Cf. Johnston 1993, pp. 86-87, p. 92.

[19] Among Wittgenstein scholars, the private language argument is hotly debated, both in terms of its main moral and in terms of its place in PI as a whole. I cannot give an overview of this debate here; suffice it to say that much of it has come to revolve around Kripke 1982. Kripke claims that the real argument against private language is to be found in the discussion on rule following reaching its conclusion long before PI 243 (namely in PI 202), and furthermore maintains that PI shows normativity to reside in the blind inclinations a language user has been brought to make her own as a member of a community. Many commentators have taken issue with Kripke's interpretation. Hacker 1990 (see pp. 18-21), to give just one example, contends that PI shows normativity only to exist, not so much in the context of a community, but in the context of a practice, whether communal or individual, and also argues that PI 243-315 do not constitute a special application of the rule following considerations but have traditional presuppositions about the human mind as their global target. (See also Stein 1997 for an in-depth examination of the main points raised by Kripke and an assessment of the standard objections levelled against his reading.) My discussion of PI 243-315 will focus on the insights it offers about the nature of mind, regardless of the place they occupy in PI more generally. As for the adequacy of Kripke's community account of rule following, I will address the relationship between the individual and the (linguistic) community in chapter 5, albeit from a very different perspective. In so far as Kripke takes community to be a mere conglomerate of by and large unthinkingly acting individuals, the account of community I will offer can be considered to be an amendment to his interpretation of Wittgenstein too. And, as for Kripke misunderstanding Wittgenstein for attributing him a plain old philosophical argument in the first place (see e.g. Stern 1995, pp. 175-186), the previous chapter should have made sufficiently clear that I do not consider that to be a valid reason for dismissing an interpretation of Wittgenstein.

avoid the criticisms he has already supplied. These assumptions turn out to be strikingly Cartesian and are moreover shown to have some ironic implications.[20]

In § 243, perhaps in anticipation of the qualms that readers might have about his persistent arguing that meaning is always already a public affair, Wittgenstein inquires about the possibility of a private language: a language for the employment of which no pre-existing public practices are required and the meaning of which is accessible to one and only one individual. Both these criteria need to be met in order for a language to be entitled to the epithet "private", for a language cannot be called truly private when it is merely applied in a solitary setting. To be sure, Wittgenstein observes, a person can use language privately in the sense of, say, encouraging himself or speaking in monologue, but such language games are still executed in ordinary public speech. More eligible for the label "private language" therefore appears to be the vocabulary we use to talk about our inner experiences. Referring to phenomena that can, or so it seems, only be known to the person who has or undergoes them, psychological language might truly be used and understood by the first person alone.

Wittgenstein immediately raises some questions about the way in which the word "private" is used here, and suggests that, judging by our day-to-day practices, psychological language cannot be said to be private either, at least not in the desired sense. After all, we talk about our thoughts and feelings on a daily basis and do so in a language that, while no guarantee against misunderstandings, is in principle available to anyone. Moreover, Wittgenstein remarks, it is on the basis of the natural or instinctive expressions of sensations like pain that a person acquires a psychological vocabulary to begin with, meaning that there is another sense in which this language cannot be said to be a wholly non-public matter: our "words for sensations are tied up with [the] natural expressions of sensation."[21] If psychological language is to be truly private, the connection of sensations to expressive behaviour would have to be an inessential one, and a person would - in contrast to the way words like "pain" are apparently taught – have to be able to identify these strictly inner occurrences entirely by herself.[22] So if psychological

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[20] Some commentators (see e.g. Pears 1988, pp. 328-360 and Monk 1999, p. 116) take the theory of sense data as expounded by Russell and others to be the direct target of Wittgenstein's private language argument, rather than a broader Cartesian take on the nature of mind. I feel that even when such phenomenalist ideas were the main impetus for Wittgenstein's remarks on private language, they can from a systematic point of view still be regarded as a critique on Cartesianism more generally. Like e.g. Overgaard 2005 (see pp. 252-253), I take these remarks, and most notably PI 293, to contain a *reductio ad absurdum* of Cartesian-style accounts of subjectivity. (And I hope that the current study goes towards fleshing out Wittgenstein's alternative account - a task which, as Overgaard concludes, still remains to be completed. Contrary to Overgaard's suggestion, however, I do not think that recourse to a comparison with Heidegger is needed. Indeed, given the latter's suspicion towards the everyday and the fact that his *Daseinsanalytik* comes with notions such as *Eigentlichkeit* and *Verfallenheit*, I doubt whether the comparison between Wittgenstein and Heidegger goes all the way.)

[21] PI 256; see also PI 244.

[22] See PI 256, PI 257.

language is to be an exception to the rule that meaning is always already public, not only would an inward ostension have to suffice for defining the meaning of psychological concepts, the Cartesian inner-outer model would have to hold as well.

In the course of §§ 243-315, Wittgenstein demonstrates that a private ostensive definition[23] - no less than a public one[24] - is by itself an idle ceremony that does not provide criteria for the proper employment of words, but he also takes apart the general account of mind that makes private ostensive definitions seem necessary and possible in the first place. As he explains, the idea that psychological phenomena are private inner entities that bear no fundamental relation to anything exterior, effectively boils down to the thought, not so much "that each person possesses his own exemplar [of e.g. pain], but that nobody knows whether other people also have *this* or something else."[25] By means of the beetle box analogy expounded in § 293, Wittgenstein argues that this idea is already thoroughly incoherent.

If phenomena like pain were private in this sense of the word, he spells out, one could compare pain to a thing - let's say a beetle - in a box; a box, moreover, that only its owner can look into. A boxed up beetle of this kind could be said to be truly private, for here it would be true to say that people only know by looking into their own box what a beetle is, or what the word "beetle" refers to. But then again, Wittgenstein observes, to talk about a referent of this word does not seem to be entirely appropriate. That is to say, if the beetle-box possessors really have a word for the content of their boxes, and use it unproblematically on numerous occasions, they cannot be said to use the word "beetle" as the name of a thing. For if the "thing" inside everyone's box is truly inaccessible to others yet consistently referred to as a "beetle", it is in fact entirely irrelevant what the content of a person's box is. This content need not be the same for all persons, or could change constantly – indeed, a person's box might even be empty. In other words, the boxed up beetle may be utterly and completely private, it for that very reason "cancels out, whatever it is."[26]

Applying the moral of the beetle box story to the relationship between psychological terms and psychological phenomena, Wittgenstein concludes that an Augustino-Cartesian outlook, according to which words like "pain" label hidden inner objects, effectively renders our thoughts and feelings completely insignificant: "if we construe the grammar of the expression of sensation on the model of 'object and designation' the object drops out of consideration as irrelevant."[27] No wonder, then, that the postulation of internal images and activities fails to capture what is essential about remembering and thinking. By cutting out everything even remotely

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[23] See most notably the thought experiment of the private diarist: PI 258-261, PI 270. For a more elaborate discussion of these remarks, see e.g. Hacker 1990, pp. 93- 146; Williams 1999, pp. 15-33.
[24] See PI 26-36.
[25] PI 272.
[26] PI 293.
[27] Ibidem; see also RPPi 1089.

suggesting that psychological phenomena may not be fully private entities – such as human behaviour and the circumstances in which these phenomena take place – Cartesianism unwittingly endangers the very reality of matters mental. With only the words we use to talk about them left in place, it is precisely our thoughts and feelings that drop out of the picture once it is assumed that psychological concepts serve to designate private objects.

Hence, as §§243-315 of the *Investigations* show, psychological language is no private language, not only in the sense that a private ostension is insufficient for establishing the use of psychological terms, but also in the sense that such terms do not refer to literally inner events and entities. As Wittgenstein hastens to add, this does not mean that he takes psychological phenomena to be unimportant or non-existent. In response to the Cartesian assumption that a word like "pain" stands for some concrete thing, he is not insisting that there is no such thing as pain: "The conclusion was only that a nothing would serve just as well as a something about which nothing could be said."[28]

His conclusion, moreover, contains an important proviso: it is only if and when the model of 'object and designation' is imposed on psychological concepts that our thoughts and feelings are rendered insignificant. Far from concluding they should be explained away on all accounts, Wittgenstein argues that the incongruous consequences of Cartesianism can be avoided when psychological phenomena are conceived of differently: "The paradox disappears only if we make a radical break with the idea that language always functions in one way,"[29] namely, as names or labels for objects. There is an alternative to the Cartesian view, capable of doing more justice to our thoughts and feelings than Cartesianism itself, and the outlines of this alternative come into view when it is realized that, as Wittgenstein has already observed, our ordinary psychological language is always already bound up with the socially informed, external expressions of the mental.

3.3   Psychological verbs in the first and the third person

Considering that Cartesianism already ignores or distorts certain important features of our psychological practices, Wittgenstein takes a closer look at our day-to-day dealings with both our own and other minds. One highly distinctive characteristic thereof is that while we sometimes fail to see what someone else is thinking or feeling, there can normally be no doubt as to the psychological state we ourselves are in. Whereas one may for instance misinterpret another person's pretence for genuine pain, or her pain for pretence, it is only in highly exceptional cases that we

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[28] PI 304.
[29] Ibidem.

hold a person to be mistaken about her own pain.[30] Cartesianism takes this first person certainty to be a matter of infallible knowledge, owing to a person's having direct access to his or her thoughts and feelings by means of introspection. From this perspective, first person utterances like "I hope she will come" and "I am in pain" should be considered to be knowledge claims based on inward observation, or reports of the things someone perceives inside. Our access to other minds, by contrast, is supposed to be indirect, and Cartesianism accordingly takes third person statements like "He is anxiously awaiting her coming" and "She is in pain" to amount to educated guesses at best. Based on an inventory of external clues rather than an inspection of a person's inner itself, third person statements can supposedly never shake off their speculative status.

By discussing concrete cases of when and why we talk about our own and other people's thoughts and feelings, Wittgenstein shows that within a Cartesian framework – no matter how well-equipped it seems for capturing the certainty distinctive of first and the uncertainty distinctive of third person utterances - both types of statements are misrepresented, both in terms of the kind of access purportedly enabling them, and in terms of the epistemological status granted to them. Yet far from merely undermining the Cartesian spin on our psychological practices, Wittgenstein also indicates how their asymmetry could be conceived of instead. In what may appear to be a complete reversal of Cartesianism, Wittgenstein claims: "Psychological verbs [are] characterized by the fact that the third person of the present is to be identified by observation, the first person not. Sentences in the third person of the present: information. In the first person present, expression."[31] Let me explain somewhat less concisely what findings this claim can be said to encapsulate.[32]

Consider initially Wittgenstein's observations about the way psychological statements in the first person come about. As several of his remarks make clear, he thinks that it is inaccurate to maintain that sentences like "I am hurt" and "I am overjoyed" are descriptions based on observation. When someone says he is in pain, or in ecstasy, this is normally not preceded by an examination of his psychological condition. Indeed, Wittgenstein asks, can we even make sense of observing our own thoughts and feelings Cartesian-style: "How can you look at your grief? [...] By not letting anything distract you from your grief? [...] And if you

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[30] See PI 288, PI II § xi 220g-221a. Exceptions to the rule that a person cannot be mistaken about his or her own psychological phenomena could be phantom pain, or confusing a yearning for attention with love. However, such exceptions do not alter the fact that a person is normally not in doubt as to what he is thinking or feeling. Moreover, is the case of phantom pain really best described by saying that someone who suffers from it erroneously believes to be in pain? And is the person who confuses a need for attention with love truly mistaken about his feelings, or perhaps letting himself be guided by - what are considered to be - the wrong motivations in romantic affairs?

[31] RPPii 63.

[32] But see Ter Hark 1990 (chapters 4 & 5) for a more detailed discussion of the presuppositions Wittgenstein confronts and the arguments he develops in order to expose them.

are holding every distraction at a distance, does that mean you are observing this condition? or the other one, in which you were before the observation?"[33] Being hurt and being engaged in a careful observation of one's pain seem, *pace* Cartesianism, mutually exclusive states.

Moreover, that an inspection of one's inner is not a precondition for first person statements is reflected in their role or function in our everyday practices. When someone says "I am hurt" or "I am overjoyed", giving a description of his inner life is in most cases not exactly what he has in mind: "Does someone crying out "Help!" want to describe how he is feeling? Nothing is further from his intentions."[34] Describing one's thoughts and feelings is something a person only does in quite specific circumstances, such as during psychotherapy, or when telling a friend about the ordeals suffered the day before.[35] This parenthetically explains why Wittgenstein is so careful to restrict his claim about the non-descriptive nature of first person utterances to those in the present tense. A statement of the form "I was afraid", namely, might indeed function as a description of a person's feelings – even though it was arguably not a Cartesian-style introspection that brought him to yell out "Help!" in the first place.

The realization that someone in pain or in fear may just as well scream "Ouch!" or "Help!" as say "I am hurt" or "I am frightened" also enables Wittgenstein to move away from the Augustinian or Cartesian assumption that psychological concepts simply serve to describe inner objects, and to develop a different account of first person utterances. For, he puts forward, "[p]erhaps this word "describe" tricks us here"[36] - perhaps we should not see such utterances as on a par with a description of, say, the things present in a particular room, but take seriously their proximity to the groan someone emits when hurting herself, or the cry someone utters when faced with something fearful. It is, for one thing, on the basis of cries and groans that one acquires a psychological vocabulary to begin with, as Wittgenstein already mentioned in discussing private language: "A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences."[37] We would not be inclined to call a child's crying a report of its feelings, and, Wittgenstein argues, "[if] a cry is not a description, then neither is the verbal expression that replaces it."[38]

Drawing on the continuity between a exclamation like "Ouch!" and a sentence like "I am in pain", therefore, Wittgenstein suggests that first person utterances form a signal rather than a description, or a manifestation instead of a report of a person's psychological phenomena.[39] On his view, "I am hurt" and "I am

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[33] RPPi 446; cf. RPPii 171 RPPii 725, LWi 39, LWi 407.
[34] LWi 48; see also RPPii 724.
[35] See LWi 27, RPPii 726.
[36] PI 290.
[37] PI 244.
[38] RPPii 728.
[39] See PI 180, PI 582, PI 585, RPPi 691, RPPi 313.

overjoyed" are not descriptions based on observation but unmediated expressions of someone's pain or joy. Rather than forming an optional, after-the-fact report of the mental matters one perceives inside, such (more or less) verbal behaviours are already part and parcel of the multifaceted phenomena we call "pain" and "joy".

Given that Wittgenstein holds a person's thoughts and feelings to be manifested or materialized rather than reported or described in first person utterances, it should come as no surprise that he also takes issue with the Cartesian account of third person statements. Cartesianism maintains that a person's doings and sayings are the only things observable from an outside perspective, and that our access to other minds is accordingly – assuming that these doings and sayings also bear no essential relation to what someone is thinking or feeling - wholly indirect. On this view, a sentence like "She is in pain" is uttered only after an inventory of a person's actions and reactions but can never amount to more than an estimation, no matter how carefully such external clues are registered; external clues are after all all they are. Wittgenstein finds this explanation just as phenomenologically incorrect as Cartesianism account of psychological verbs in the first person.

In our day-to day-dealings with other people, he observes, we do not first take stock of what they do and say and then speculate about what might, perhaps, be going on inside them: "In general I do not surmise fear in him--I see it. I do not feel that I am deducing the probable existence of something inside from something outside."[40] While it may be true that we sometimes fail to understand what someone else is feeling or thinking, we are not forced to fall back on conjectures every time we are faced with another human being. As Wittgenstein asks with some sense of drama: " "I can only guess at someone else's feelings" – does that really make sense when you see him badly wounded, for instance, and in dreadful pain?"[41] In such a case, as well as in numerous more mundane ones, another person's thoughts and feelings are there "as clearly as in your own breast."[42]

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[40] RPPii 170; see also RPPii 570, RPPii 719, LWi 767, PI 537.

[41] LWI 964; see also PI II § xi 223e.

[42] RPPi 927. Let me remark at this point that even though I am not explicitly or primarily placing Wittgenstein's remarks in this context, his observations about our day-to-day dealings with other people's thoughts and feelings can be said to defy other mind scepticism. For more elaborate discussions of Wittgenstein's remarks from this perspective, see Rudd 2003, Glendinning 1998 and Overgaard 2007. Cavell has also worked extensively on Wittgenstein and other minds, see e.g. Cavell 1979, pp. 329-496 and Cavell 2005, pp. 132-154 for a more succinct overview of the ways in which he has dealt with this topic. While there is no consensus as to the exact Wittgensteinian challenge to the other mind sceptic, Cavell perhaps most clearly stands out from other interpreters, maintaining that scepticism is not a theoretical problem that should be overcome but instead points to a very real possibility in our everyday dealings with other people, a possibility of which we must consequently always remain aware (see Cavell 1979, pp. 368-370; Cavell 2005, pp. 133-135, p. 138). With Overgaard 2006, however, I feel that to the extent Wittgenstein does not simply explain the problem of other minds away, he does not do so in the sense of feeling that there still remains work to be done in understanding our exact relationship to others. Put differently, Wittgenstein may deny that there is a sceptical problem but all the same maintains that there is an ontological problem of other minds.

Hence, Wittgenstein maintains that whereas we cannot be said to observe our own psychological phenomena - at least not in the Cartesian sense of the word - we can be said to observe another's – even though this does not take the form of a Cartesian-style introspection. His analysis of first and of third person statements go hand in hand. For if "I am overjoyed" is already part and parcel of a person's psychological condition, rather than a report she gives - and could also refuse to give – of what goes on inside, "She is over the moon" need not be considered to be an estimation. Instead of seeing mind and body as diametrically opposed or only contingently related, Wittgenstein takes them to be intrinsically connected, thereby blurring the distinction between inside and out. From such a perspective, what a person says and does need not be set aside as purely external clues, and a sentence like "She is over the moon" can accordingly be taken to genuinely describe the state that another human being is in.

Indeed, on Wittgenstein's account, one does not always need a first person report in order to tell what someone else is thinking or feeling. Elaborating fully on the continuity between groans and grimaces on the one hand, and sentences like "I am in pain" on the other, Wittgenstein takes verbal as well as non-verbal behaviour to be expressive of mind: "If one sees the behaviour of a living thing, one sees his soul."[43] This does not only include well-defined actions; as Wittgenstein for instance remarks about another person's being in fear, this may already be observed in - as opposed to inferred from - the widening of his eyes and twitching of his mouth: "the timidity does not seem to be merely associated, outwardly connected, with [such facial changes]; but fear is there, alive, in the features."[44]

Given that a person's thoughts and feelings are personified or present in her gestures and facial expressions, among other things, the accuracy of a statement like "She is in pain" does not always depend on a preceding first person avowal, and "She is hurt" therefore does not automatically make for an inferior version of the first person's saying "I am in pain." In Wittgenstein's book, third person statements are no conjectures but go to show that we are often able to immediately see someone else's psychological condition, owing to the fact that the bodily and behavioural are not supplementary or secondary to the mental, but instead constitute the very sphere where the latter comes to life or resides.

Explained along Wittgensteinian rather than Cartesian lines, then, it is not quite correct to hold that only the first person can know what he or she is thinking or feeling.[45] Wittgenstein does not only take issue with the idea that the asymmetry

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[43] PI 357; see also RPPi 595, RPPi 450. Cf. Schatzki 1996 (see pp. 41-53) on Wittgenstein on the expressiveness of the human body, and both Overgaard 2005 (see pp. 260-263) and Plant 2005 (see pp. 82-83) - who both point to a connection with Levinas in this respect - on Wittgenstein on the expressiveness of the human face. Cf. also Von Savigny 1996, who argues that linguistic utterances are simply more conspicuous than non-linguistic ones, and by no means the only means of expression (see pp. 183-186).

[44] PI 537; see also RPPii 570.

[45] See RPPi 564-573, PI II § xi 220-223.

between first and third person utterances should be explained in terms of direct versus indirect access, he also contests the accompanying notion that this difference is a matter of infallible knowledge versus inconclusive speculation. In this respect, too, he finds the Cartesian account of psychological asymmetry wanting. As Wittgenstein contends, not only is it indeed possible to come to know someone else's thoughts and feelings, it is in fact impossible to have knowledge of one's own: "It is correct to say "I know what you are thinking", and wrong to say "I know what I am thinking." "[46] Yet far from depriving the self of every privilege, Wittgenstein thinks that it is Cartesianism that runs the risk of explaining first person certainty away.

It would, namely, only be correct to say that one *knows* one is in pain or in ecstasy if "I am hurt" and "I am overjoyed" were observation statements for which proof could be demanded and that could then also be proved wrong.[47] Knowledge, as Wittgenstein most elaborately discusses in the remarks posthumously published as *On Certainty*, belongs to the same epistemological category as doubt and justification[48] - the suggestion that first person utterances are knowledge claims, no matter how well it seems to capture their distinctive certainty, therefore reintroduces the possibility of error and hesitation with regard to one's own psychological state. This possibility is in fact already brought in when it is declared that being in a certain state of mind is a matter of introspecting inner events or entities, for if a person could be said to observe his pain or joy, he could also be said to misinterpret or overlook it. To be sure, a committed Cartesian could counter this by claiming that introspection constitutes a very special, infallible kind of observation, and that statements like "I am in pain" accordingly belong to a group of extremely well-founded knowledge claims. On Wittgenstein's non-observational, non-descriptive account of first person utterances, however, the possibility of doubt and error does not crop up in the first place, and no such manoeuvres are required in order to preserve first person certainty.

If Wittgenstein denies first person expressions the status of knowledge claims precisely with the aim of accommodating their distinctive certainty, his claiming that it is, *pace* Cartesianism, certainly possible to know someone else's thoughts and feelings likewise does not amount to a denial of the uncertainty characterizing third

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[46] PI II § xi 222b; see also RPPi 573, LWi 228. Hence, that Wittgenstein does not do away with first person certainty does not mean that he holds on to the ideal of the self-present subject that is the target of much anti- or post-Cartesian philosophy, for his first person is not an observing or identifying Ego; cf. Glendinning 1998, pp. 145-147. (And let me add that the fact that Wittgenstein does not hold the first person to be an identifying Ego in turn does not mean that he belongs to the camp of those who, against Cartesianism, insist that the self is an essentially split subject. On my view, Wittgenstein typically operates between such extremes.)

[47] See RPPi 572, PI II § xi 221-222.

[48] See OC 32, OC 91, OC 178, OC 243, OC 504, OC 580. Cf. Van Gennip 2008, pp. 150-159. As Van Gennip explains, Wittgenstein's concern with concepts like certainty and knowledge was not limited to the remarks written in 1949-1951 and nowadays known as OC, but is also exhibited in plenty of older writings, including those on psychological asymmetry.

person statements. If a person's verbal and bodily behaviour is intrinsic rather than secondary to his psychological condition, as Wittgenstein holds, there is no ground for claiming that other minds are at best indirectly accessible, but it by no means implies that people are always already completely transparent to each other.[49] For even if someone's thoughts and feelings are in principle already present in what he says and does, an onlooker might still misapprehend or overlook them.

Apart from the fact that one might simply close one's eyes in the face of another's thoughts and feelings,[50] one reason that we sometimes fail to see or be certain about someone else's psychological state is that while her doings and sayings provide a basis for making observation statements of the form "She is in pain" and "She is overjoyed," it is her "fine shades of behaviour"[51] rather than any concrete activities to which these statements are due. That is to say, Wittgenstein explains, a person's psychological phenomena are often (and perhaps more often than not) manifested, not so much in *what* she says or does, but in *how* she says or does it: in what tone of voice and with what look in her eyes, for instance. It is in this respect that Wittgenstein calls the evidence we have for making third person statements "imponderable".[52] On his analysis, we do not lack grounds for making third person statements, but this evidence may fail to be decisive in the case of doubt or dispute about a person's psychological state. For while the look in someone's eyes may be blatantly obvious to the one observer, there need not be something clear and distinct for him to point to in order to convince another onlooker of the sadness in this third person's gaze.[53]

There are further reasons for calling the basis of third person statements imponderable or indeterminate. Not only are a person's fine shades of behaviour just as important as the more concrete things she says and does, there is also no list of necessary and sufficient characteristics that constitutes someone's being in pain or in ecstasy, no matter how many nuances one might include in such a list. Sadness, for example, does not always take the form of weeping and stammering, and a person weeping and stammering might also be in a condition other than grief.[54] This is partly because the way someone's feelings are materialized may

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[49] See PI II § xi 223f, RPPi 138, RPPii 560, LWii 70b.

[50] Cf. Cavell 1976, pp. 238-266. Cavell argues that other minds are not so much there to be known as to be acknowledged, and that this acknowledgment can also be withheld; on his view, therefore, we ourselves are the scandal of scepticism (see Cavell 2005, pp. 151). While Cavell here seems more concerned with drawing out the ethical implications of Wittgenstein's insights, rather than spelling out his non-Cartesian ontology, the qualms Cavell has about the appropriateness of the term "knowledge" in this context are not unjustified. I have been using terms like "knowledge" and "observation" to describe the third person perspective seemingly unreservedly up until now, mainly in order to bring out the contrast between the Wittgensteinian and the Cartesian view, but will qualify my use of these terms in the next section.

[51] PI II § xi 203b, 204, 207, LWii 65f.

[52] PI II § xi 228b-d, LWi 922-924, LWi 936, LWii 95a.

[53] See RPPii 168, RPPii 684, RPPii 688, LWi 937.

[54] Cf. Von Savigny 1996, p. 181; he explains that such elements are conspicuous rather than indispensable.

reflect her personal style and character, but also because the context of a person's (fine shades of) behaviour often needs to be taken into account in order to ascertain what state of mind she is in.[55] Tear-filled eyes and a trembling voice can after all be part and parcel of both gratitude and grief. Whether they are elements of the one or the other depends on whether they occur in the context of an award ceremony or in the context of a funeral, say. Or as Wittgenstein observes with regard to an apparent declaration of love: "it makes a difference whether someone says to me "I love her" because the words of a poem are going through his head or because he is saying it to make a confession to me of his love."[56] In the context of a play or poetry recital, such avowals do not automatically have the same significance as in off-stage life.

Speaking of (true) love, moreover, for such phenomena holds that their occurrence always already spans more than one specific time and place, which means that the context that needs to be taken into account in order to ascertain a person's psychological state may also include the doings and sayings preceding and following a person's (fine shades of) behaviour. Whereas some thoughts and feelings can occur in a flash or the space of one second, love, hate and depression, for instance, do not concern what a person says, does or experiences at one particular instant.[57] Statements like "She loves him" or "He is in deep despair", if they are to be accurate descriptions of someone's psychological state, are therefore only uttered after witnessing a person's actions and reactions over several occasions, and will moreover be retracted if someone's subsequent behaviour puts this previous conduct in a very different light. While one may for example be certain that a particular person only married a woman twice his age because of her money, one may have to conclude that he loved her after all when he stands by her even after her stocks have crashed. In contrast to a momentary sensation like pain, Wittgenstein explains, "[love] is put to the test."[58] That phenomena like love and despair only unfold over a longer period also means that one has to be quite close to a person in order to be able to witness enough of her behaviour and understand what psychological state they are part and parcel of.[59]

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[55] See PI 581, PI 583, RPPi 314, RPPi 1066, RPPii 148, RPPii 149, RPPii 150, LWi 861; cf. Mulhall 1993, pp. 63-64; Schatzki 1996, pp. 35-37, p. 53.

[56] RPPi 1135.

[57] Cf. Bennett & Hacker 2003, pp. 203-205 - but let me already remark here that while I think that their analysis of e.g. the concept of emotion is insightful, I disagree with their overall understanding of philosophy as conceptual analysis and of the way it relates to the scientific enterprise. I will come back to this in note 80 on page 67 of this chapter.

[58] RPPi 959; see also RPPii 152.

[59] It may, parenthetically, most notably be such extended psychological phenomena that form exceptions to the rule that a person cannot be mistaken about her own thoughts and feelings, or will as a rule not be confused or ignorant about these (see also the remark I made in note 30 of this chapter). In the case of love and depression, someone else may actually be in a better position to tell what state the first person is in, precisely because the latter lacks the distance to put his doings and undergoings in the proper light.

To the extent, then, that third person statements do not form unsubstantiated speculations, they are due to evidence of the most delicate, variable and dispersed kind. That mental matters are, on Wittgenstein's analysis, already present or personified in someone's contextualized (shades of) behaviour serves to explain why another's thoughts and feelings are often perfectly - and even painfully - clear, but it at the same time provides an explanation for the fact that we sometimes fail to see or be certain about someone else's psychological state. Psychological phenomena, namely, while no less real than physical or material ones, are no clear and distinct objects whose contours can be indicated with one simple finger movement.

Hence, just as Wittgenstein safeguards rather than denies first person certainty, he does not do away with third person uncertainty; he merely argues that this need not be taken to result from a person's thoughts and feelings being private objects hidden inside of her: "One could even say: The uncertainty about the inner is an uncertainty about something outer."[60] Indeed, on Wittgenstein's view, the postulation of a private inner realm is not even necessary in order to accommodate what is perhaps the main impetus behind it: the fact that we may on occasion not just fail to understand someone else's thoughts and feelings, but might in fact be actively misled about these.[61]

As Wittgenstein points out, pretending to be in pain, say, is never merely a matter of displaying pain behaviour on the outside without truly feeling pain within. A person might also exhibit pain behaviour unaccompanied by pain after having received a special kind of drug, for instance, in which case we would think twice before calling her a liar and impostor.[62] Something more is required if the label "liar" is to apply: "There must be a motive present for the simulation, hence a situation which is not quite simple to describe. Making oneself out sick and weak, in order then to attack those who help one."[63] So, far from being solely explicable in terms of the Cartesian inner-outer model, what holds for genuine psychological phenomena holds for the phenomenon of pretence too: there is evidence on the basis of which we can ascertain what someone else is (or is not) thinking or feeling, but this evidence is, to a bigger or lesser extent, ambiguous and diffuse.[64]

Let me end this section by reiterating that Wittgenstein speaks of "evidence" here in order to indicate the non-speculative nature of third person statements, and by no means wants to imply that a person's contextualized (shades of) behaviour are *mere* evidence, i.e., evidence in the sense of hints or clues as to what is really

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[60] LWii 88; see also LWi 197.

[61] See RPPi 565, RPPi 574, RPPii 563, RPPii 564.

[62] See RPPi 137.

[63] RPPi 824; see also LWi 262, LWii 56e, LWii 56f.

[64] In addition, see Ter Hark 1990, pp. 129-135. Ter Hark points out that Wittgenstein also shows pretending to be a highly specialized language game – which means that we can only call someone an impostor after she has already learned a lot - as well as that the need to hide or feign behaviour arises only because people are not always a mystery to each other in the first place.

going on inside someone. In Wittgenstein's book, the vagueness and multifariousness of psychological phenomena should not be taken to constitute a shortcoming and make one look for something that is less indeterminate and therefore, supposedly, more relevant or real.[65] Instead, it belongs to the very essence of our psychological practices that third person uncertainty exists.[66] Although one may be frustrated or dissatisfied with "our language-game which rests on 'imponderable evidence' and frequently leads to uncertainty," one would "exchange it for a more exact one"[67] only to alter our lives beyond recognition. For, Wittgenstein observes, "variability itself is a characteristic of behaviour without which behaviour would be to us as something completely different."[68] Thoughts and feelings, or at least the thoughts and feelings that play a part in *our* psychological practices, do not come in a pure and precise form.[69]

3.4 On the outside rather than the inside of the subject

On the basis of the preceding exposition of Wittgenstein's remarks on first and third person utterances, he can be said to replace the Cartesian account with a model that tries to bring out the asymmetry between these types of statements more adequately. And as the above exposition also made clear, this alternative model concerns not only the epistemology but also the ontology of matters mental.

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[65] Cf. Ter Hark 2000, pp. 204-217 and Ter Hark 2004, pp. 138-143. Ter Hark explains Wittgenstein's view on psychological indeterminacy by means of the latter's concept of "pattern". I by no means think this is uninformative but merely postpone introducing this concept myself because I think its social connotations are very important as well – a psychological pattern in Wittgenstein's sense, namely, is never a pattern one follows or displays individually – and will therefore only discuss it in the section on the sociality of subjectivity. Cf. also Von Savigny 1996, p. 155; Schatzki 1996, pp. 71-72.

[66] See RPPii 657, RPPii 682, LWi 888, LWii 30a.

[67] LWii 95; see also LWi 35, LWi 955.

[68] RPPii 627; see also RPPii 615, RPPii 622, RPPii 628, LWi 249, LWii 37e.

[69] Also, what holds for Wittgenstein's use of the word "evidence" holds for his much debated claim "An 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria" (PI 580) too. Here, Wittgenstein is not claiming that we need external criteria in order to make something invisible, namely, the real inner events, at least somewhat accessible - hence the scare quotes. On Wittgenstein's view, what someone thinks and feels has no existence separate from or prior to what she says and does. Cf. Overgaard 2004, pp. 268-269; Rudd 2003, pp.118-120; Ter Hark 2000, pp. 202-204. (In contrast to my reading, however, Ter Hark argues that one precisely misunderstands Wittgenstein's claims when one takes them to be of an ontological kind, but this points to a more basic difference of opinion as to the aim and nature of Wittgenstein's method; see also my arguments in chapter 2. A propos Wittgenstein's non-Cartesian ontology, Rudd still seems to hold on to Cartesian-style distinction between in- and outside, claiming that since pain and the expression of pain are not identical, we can never observe someone else's pain itself. Yet while the former is true, the latter does not follow; I will shortly say more, not only on the connection, but also on the distinction between e.g. pain and pain behaviour. For now, suffice it to say that "I am happy" can still be said to be an expression of joy rather than joy itself because this phenomenon cannot be reduced to either one of the doings and sayings that are part and parcel of it.)

If the Cartesian dual sphere ontology follows from a misinterpretation of the epistemological status of first and third person utterances, Wittgenstein accompanies or underpins his reorientation of the Cartesian epistemology with a different ontology of psychological phenomena and of the way inner and outer relate. In his book, what a person says and does, and how she says and does it, are not matters of her first observing her thoughts and feelings and then giving a description or a hint of them. Instead, such (fine shades of) behaviour are already part and parcel of a person's psychological state, and it is also because of this interconnectedness between inner and outer that we can be said to have proper (though by no means infallible) access to what other people think and feel.[70] Wittgenstein's epistemological account of psychological asymmetry cannot be separated from his embodied or enacted ontology.

As a first step towards formulating this Wittgensteinian account of subjectivity, let me summarize the insights obtained so far by saying that he situates psychological phenomena on the outside rather than the inside of the human being. According to Wittgenstein, that is, thoughts and feelings are not inner objects that exist separate from and prior to a person's doings and saying, but are less clear-cut, highly multifaceted phenomena that precisely have their life in someone's (fine shades of) behaviour on particular (more or less extended) occasions. From a Wittgensteinian perspective, the outer is not an inessential supplement to the inner but should be considered to be the very locus thereof.

I deliberately call this formulation tentative or provisional, not only because bringing out Wittgenstein's more general insights requires due care and caution, but mainly because several important qualifications need to be made. That is to say, contrary to what my claiming that he takes the outer to be the locus of the inner may suggest, Wittgenstein holds psychological phenomena to be neither a purely physiological nor a purely behavioural affair.[71] While he takes issue with the Cartesian account of the way mind and body (inter)relate, he does not embrace a reductionism to either one of these kinds instead.

Let me start with Wittgenstein's verdict on physicalism, or the idea that mind and brain can be said to be identical.[72] In contemporary philosophy of mind, the

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[70] Though to the extent that the term "access" suggests that something must be opened or unlocked in order for it to take effect, Wittgenstein may want to deny that we have "access" to other minds after all. He does not claim that our ability to see what state other people are in is a matter of literally being able to look inside their hearts and heads.

[71] Let me already make clear at this point that these are not the only qualifications to be made, for not only does Wittgenstein not reduce the inner to the outer in the behavioural or physiological sense of the word, much of his philosophy of psychology is moreover devoted to showing that the doings and sayings in which psychological phenomena have there life, are for an important part socially determined. I will discuss this element of Wittgensteinian subjectivity in the next section.

[72] Cf. Kim 1998, pp. 9-13, pp. 58-62; Stoljar 2001, pp. 9-13. They explain that physicalism actually comes in both reductive and non-reductive forms but is often regarded as a intrinsically reductive notion, with type physicalism as its most prototypical expression. According to Kim (see pp. 221-237), this is not entirely without right, because it is hard to formulate a non-reductive physicalism

mind-brain identity thesis is not unequivocal: it can stand either for so-called "type physicalism" or what is known as "token physicalism". "Type physicalism" is a shorthand for the thesis that mental occurrences and physical occurrences are events of the same kind - hence the epithet "type" - or that mental events simply are physical events. On this view, pain is for instance nothing over and above the C-fibre stimulations that neuroscience has shown to occur whenever a person has, say, a headache. Token physicalism is the competing notion that every particular event – hence the epithet "token" - that has a mental property also has a physical property, or that every specific mental event can also be considered to be a physical event.[73] On this view, a particular person's having a headache can be looked at as both an instance of C-fibre stimulation and an instance of pain. The main difference between type and token physicalism accordingly is that token physicalists are in fact not committed to a reduction of mind to brain; leaving the exact relationship between mental and physical events undecided, they merely hold that a psychological occurrence is always also a physiological one.[74]

In a couple of remarks that once more concern the phenomenon of remembering, Wittgenstein seems to address the topic of physicalism most directly. These are §§ 902-905 and § 220 of the first volume of the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*; I will discuss them in this order.In the first of these passages, reflecting on the idea that for every memory there is a trace in the nervous system that corresponds to it and causes it, Wittgenstein does not so much discuss a proposal to reduce memories to brain states - that is, an application of type physicalism - but should sooner be said to examine a form of token physicalism. However, the mere suggestion that every psychological occurrence needs to be accompanied – let alone explained away – by a physiological one, immediately seems to be brushed off by Wittgenstein. When one runs into an old acquaintance, recognizes him and remembers his name, Wittgenstein asks, "why does there have to be a cause of this remembering in my nervous system? [...] Why should there not be a psychological regularity to which no physiological regularity corresponds?"[75] Indeed, as far as he is concerned, physiological processes are entirely irrelevant to what a person remembers or thinks: "No supposition seems to me more natural than that there is no process in the brain correlated with associating or with thinking."[76]

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that is not either uninformative or effectively reductive too. My discussion of Wittgenstein and physicalism will address both a reductive and a non-reductive kind, but its main conclusion will be anti-reductive.

[73] I am following Kim's definition here (see Kim 1998, pp. 58-62), who mainly seems to have Davidson's "anomalous monism" in mind, but there are other version of token physicalism as well, such as psychofunctionalism (see Jacob 1997, p. 37). Thornton 1998 precisely applies the remarks I will also discuss to Davidson's philosophy of mind; Ter Hark 2000 brings Wittgenstein's insights to bear on physicalist ideas as expounded by Armstrong, Fodor and Churchland.

[74] According to Kim, token physicalism is therefore not much of a physicalism (see Kim 1998, pp. 60-61).

[75] RPPi 905.

[76] RPPi 903.

This may seem to conflict with Wittgenstein's taking Cartesianism to task for effectively disconnecting mind and body, but he is not claiming that what a person thinks or feels bears no relation whatsoever to what goes on in the brain. Wittgenstein immediately goes on to modify his statement, explaining that while he assumes that there is "a system of impulses going out from [the] brain" and underlying one's thoughts and memories, he doubts whether this system should necessarily "continue further in the direction of the centre."[77] In other words, Wittgenstein does not deny that physiological processes make psychological ones possible, but he does question the notion that what happens at the psychological level is a direct result and simple mirror image of what goes on in the brain, and that it would thus be possible to determine what state of mind someone is in simply by looking at his neural activity. To the extent that token physicalism as such does not yet prescribe one specific view of the relationship between mind and brain, Wittgenstein would dispute those versions that take physical and mental events to stand in a one-to-one, isomorphic relation. Such versions of token physicalism would also come quite close to the stronger thesis of type physicalism.

In an attempt to clarify his supposition about the way that the physical and the mental need not be considered to be related, Wittgenstein then imagines our thoughts and memories to be akin to certain kinds of plants, and their concurrent neural constellations to the seeds out of which this vegetation grows. The plants he has in mind multiply in such a way that an individual seed always brings forth a plant of the same kind that it sprouted from itself, but without the seed having any properties or structures that indicate what it will produce. In order to ascertain what type of vegetation will grow out of them, as a result, it is of no avail to examine these seeds themselves, no matter how thoroughly one proceeds; what they will bring forth can only be determined by taking a broader perspective and also taking their history into account. Wittgenstein sums up: "So an organism might come into being even out of something quite amorphous, as it were causelessly"[78]

This botanical thought experiment may not be the most convincing, to say the least, for it is hard to imagine how plants with such principally structureless seeds could actually reproduce, but Wittgenstein does not seem to be bothered by such qualms. If the possibility of something originating out of chaos, so to speak, is at odds with or "upsets our concepts of causality," he declares, "then it is high time they were upset."[79] And one could perhaps grant him that the way that the brain makes our thoughts and memories possible need not have the exact same structure as the causal processes behind the reproduction of plants.

But apart from the question as to whether there is any botanical truth to Wittgenstein's comparison, the upshot of his thought experiment is also not a foolproof argument against the idea that mind and brain are causally related -

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[77] Ibidem; see also RPPi 157.
[78] RPPi 903.
[79] RPPi 905; cf. Thornton 1998, pp. 194-196 on Wittgenstein's non-uniform view on causation.

assuming that he would want to deny such a relationship in the first place. The seed comparison only serves to indicate, in a somewhat roundabout way, that from the existence of a causal relation between physical and mental events, the containment of the mental within the physical does not yet follow, or that in order for the physiological to make the psychological possible, they need not have the exact same structure. Wittgenstein points out that the existence of a causal relation between physiological and psychological events by itself does even not preclude the possibility that there is no structural similarity between the physical and the mental whatsoever. On his view, our brains might thus turn out to lack each and every organization, without this disorder making our thoughts and memories any less structured (or, well, any more disorganized).[80] But this merely means that to the extent that a token physicalist would want to defend that physical and mental events to stand in a one-to-one, isomorphic relation, she would need some additional arguments or evidence. Neither token physicalism as such, nor the stronger thesis of type physicalism, are rejected by Wittgenstein's thought experiment.[81]

Judging by §§ 902-905 of the first volume of the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, then, Wittgenstein does not deny the possibility of a causal relationship between neurological and psychological processes, but he offers no account of the exact relationship between mind and brain himself. Yet as § 220 of this same volume goes to show, Wittgenstein is in fact not entirely agnostic when it comes to this relationship. He argues that even if there were a clear causal correspondence between certain psychological processes and certain physiological ones, it is still not by merely looking at a person's neural activity that his thoughts and feelings can be determined. Here it becomes clear that if Wittgenstein does not disapprove of all forms of token physicalism, he does take issue with physicalism of the reductionist or type variety.

Wittgenstein's argument against an explanation of remembering solely in terms of neurological occurrences actually proceeds along similar lines to his arguments against explanations of remembering solely in terms of internal images; on his view,

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[80] Here, Wittgenstein seems to leave the question to science, the exact organization of our brains not being something he feels able to discuss. However, this does not mean that he envisions a strict division or hierarchy between philosophy and science of the kind argued for in e.g. Baker & Hacker 1980 (see pp. 475-481) and especially Bennett & Hacker 2003 (see pp. 396-408). On my reading, Wittgenstein neither sees language and world as standing in a wholly one-sided relation, nor takes it to be philosophy's task to merely dissolve the mistakes that other people make (again, see my arguments in the previous chapter). For these reasons, I do not share Bennett & Hacker's understanding of philosophy as conceptual analysis in the sense of only demarcating what scientists can and cannot do, and not being able to learn anything from science itself. (Also, see RPPi 157, LWi 807.)

[81] Cf. Thornton 1998, pp. 180, pp. 203-204. Thornton takes RPPi 902-905 to deny physicalism as well as a causal theory of mind, and subsequently tries to put these claims, of which he acknowledges that they may be somewhat unconvincing, in a more compelling light. On my reading, however, these remarks contain an argument against neither physicalism nor physico-mental causation - although Wittgenstein may have wanted them to provide such arguments.

what applies to (purported) inner events and entities holds for (real or imagined) physiological processes too.[82] Just as a mental image is by itself a static entity that does not convey anything past, a trace left behind in the nervous system by something one witnessed before does not yet constitute a memory. For, Wittgenstein explains, when someone would then try to recall the incident, "he would have to *infer* it from this impression, this trace. Whatever the event does leave behind in the organism, *it* isn't the memory."[83] Far from explaining what remembering is, an appeal to neurological entities simply falls back on this phenomenon. Moreover, if memories were simply traces in the nervous system, we would also say of a dictaphone that it remembers things, whereas we only ascribe memories to living human beings. A memory does not yet occur on the neural level, it is something that only the subject in its entirety and historicity can be said to have or undergo.[84] According to Wittgenstein, physiological processes and psychological phenomena are in an entirely different league.

Hence, Wittgenstein may not be denying that the occurrence of a mental event always also implies the occurrence of a specific physical event – he may, in other words, not directly refute token physicalism – he does argue against the idea that psychological phenomena can be reduced to physiological processes: he categorically rejects type physicalism. That Wittgenstein situates mental matters on the outside rather than the inside of the subject should therefore not be taken to mean that he considers the mental to be a purely physical affair.

However, not only does he not hold our thoughts and feelings to be outer in this sense,[85] Wittgenstein does not take them to be wholly outer in a behaviouristic sense either. As he himself tries to remove any suspicions to the contrary: " "Are you not really a behaviourist in disguise? Aren't you at bottom really saying that everything except human behaviour is a fiction?" – If I do speak of a fiction, then it is of a grammatical one."[86] Put differently, while Wittgenstein argues that Cartesianism mistakenly portrays our thoughts and feelings as literally inner entities and unduly severs the ties between sensation and the expression of sensation, he does not thereby claim that behaviour is all there is to it when it comes to psychological affairs. But in order to bring this out properly, some distinctions again have to be made, for just as the mind-brain identity thesis in not unequivocal, the term "behaviourism" covers several related yet distinct perspectives on the

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[82] As I pointed out in note 13 of this chapter, Wittgenstein's remarks about the meaning of the word "cube" apply to attempts at explaining meaning in terms of individual states more generally, hence to physicalism as well as to Cartesianism. The non-individualistic character of Wittgenstein's account of subjectivity will, as I also already announced, be explored in the next section.

[83] RPPi 220; see also LWi 77, LWi 806.

[84] See RPPi 220, RPPi 280, RPPi 501, PI 570; cf. Bennett & Hacker 2003, pp. 68-88 on the mereological fallacy, pointing out that psychological predicates which apply only to humans or animals as wholes cannot be applied to any one of their parts, *in casu*, their brains.

[85] And perhaps physiological processes should actually also be said to be inner, albeit not in the Cartesian meaning of the term.

[86] PI 307; see also PI 244, PI 304, PI 308, LWi 406.

relationship between the mental and the behavioural, not all of them equally reductive.

In philosophical expositions of behaviourism, three kinds are usually distinguished, namely methodological, logical and ontological behaviourism.[87] Behaviourism of the methodological or epistemological variety merely concerns the way in which psychological research should be conducted. It states that psychology, if it is to be a truly scientific discipline, cannot rely on introspective reports and should only concern itself with publicly observable, behavioural data. It is informed by specific ideas about what knowledge and observability consist in, but is not automatically committed to any views on what our everyday psychological concepts mean or refer to.[88] Logical behaviourism, in contrast, *is* a thesis about the meaning of our ordinary psychological vocabulary. It holds that every psychological expression can be translated into a statement about behavioural occurrences, without this affecting the meaning of the expression at issue. Yet like methodological behaviourism, it officially refrains from making claims about the referents of these expressions, or about what psychological phenomena actually are; this, rather, is the province of ontological behaviourism. Ontological behaviourism is behaviourism in its most radical form, stating that psychological phenomena simply are behavioural phenomena. On this view, there is nothing to a person over and above her bodily and verbal actions and reactions. I will respectively address the second, the third and the first form of behaviourism.

There can be little doubt as to Wittgenstein's disagreeing with logical behaviourism, to start with. To the extent that it takes first person as well as third person expressions to be translatable into statements about objective behavioural facts, Wittgenstein cannot be said to subscribe to a behaviourism of this kind. As was explained in the previous section, there is a fundamental asymmetry characterizing our psychological vocabulary: Wittgenstein maintains that whereas a statement of the form "He is in ecstasy" can be considered to be a description, a statement like "I am overjoyed" cannot be said to describe anything at all. A first person expression can therefore not be translated into a statement reporting behavioural occurrences without changing its meaning beyond recognition.

[87] Cf. Kim 1998, pp. 29-44. As is argued in Day & Moore 1995 (see pp. 76-77), philosophical discussions of behaviourism do not always do justice to the views adopted by behaviourists; O'Donohue 1999 (see pp. 1-8) accordingly points out that "behaviourism" is more of a family resemblance concept than a uniform theory, and goes on to describes no less than 14 kinds. (Including a Wittgensteinian one - see pp. 329-360; the contribution is by Bloor - although that is argued to ultimately not be a form of behaviourism at all. According to Bloor, Wittgenstein should be considered to be a collectivist rather than a behaviourist; I will discuss Wittgenstein's collectivism in the penultimate chapter.) In the following discussion, I will stick to philosophical usage and only explain why Wittgenstein is not a methodological, logical or ontological behaviourist. See Overgaard 2004, pp. 272-280 for a somewhat more detailed discussion of the different versions of behaviourism that might and have been attributed to Wittgenstein, for instance (and most famously) by Chihara and Fodor.

[88] Cf. Moore 1999, pp. 51-54; he explains that many methodological behaviourists actually subscribed to a dualistic ontology.

Psychological verbs in the first person, being manifestations rather than descriptions of a person's mind, are no more about publicly observable activities than about private inner objects. And as Wittgenstein observes, this holds in ordinary, everyday contexts as well as in the context of psychological research: "The psychologist reports the utterances of the subject. But these utterances "I see...", "I hear...", "I feel" etc., are not about behaviour."[89] If Cartesianism misinterprets the asymmetry characterizing our psychological practices, logical behaviourism ignores it altogether.[90]

Yet whereas Wittgenstein's analysis of first person expressions unmistakably betrays his distance from logical behaviourism, his accompanying account of third person statements may seem to place him in the behaviourist camp nonetheless. As was also explained before, first person statements, rather than being about behaviour, are themselves pieces of fear or joy behaviour, and it is for this reason that third person statements need not be taken to be mere speculations. According to Wittgenstein, a person's doings and sayings form an intrinsic part of the psychological state she is in, and sentences like "She is in pain" can accordingly be said to genuinely describe other minds. But if third person statements are about other minds precisely because they report rather than speculate about behaviour, Wittgenstein's outlook may seem very close to behaviourism of the reductionist, ontological kind.

While there could be said to be some affinity between Wittgenstein and this form of behaviourism in that both, contrary to Cartesianism, acknowledge the strong relationship between sensation and the expression of sensation, Wittgenstein is eager to stress that this affinity does not go all the way. He asks: "When I report 'He was put out' am I reporting behaviour or a state of mind?" and immediately responds: "Both. But not side by side;"[91] such a statement is only "about the one *via* the other."[92] In other words, to the extent that third person statements are about behaviour, they are about something present in yet irreducible to that behaviour; they are not solely or simply about behaviour.

In order to fully understand what Wittgenstein means here, it is not enough to recall that, as discussed before, in addition to someone's discrete doings and saying, we always also take the fine shades and context of this behaviour into account. Though strict ontological behaviourists might deny that especially fine shades of

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[89] LWii 2; see also PI II § v 179b, RPPi 468, RPPi 703, RPPi 712, RPPii 166.

[90] A similar observation could parenthetically be made about Wittgenstein's distance from physicalism, for in so far as it takes to entire domain of the mental to be reducible to physiological occurrences, physicalism also fails to do justice to the asymmetry characterizing our psychological practices. The objection that it cannot accommodate the phenomenal quality of first person experience (or "qualia", in contemporary philosophy of mind terms) is often raised against reductive physicalism; cf. Kim 1998, pp. 64-67. If there is a Wittgensteinian contribution to this debate, it is probably his insistent emphasis on the difference between the first and the third person perspective.

[91] RPPi 288; cf. PI 421.

[92] LWii 2.

behaviour qualify as behaviour "in a narrower sense,"[93] a behaviourist need not automatically disregard the circumstances and way in which behaviour is performed.[94] These elements can after all also be said to be public or outer. If it is really the case that Wittgenstein does not reduce the inner to the outer behaviourist-style, as he himself suggests, the difference with ontological behaviourism should be of a qualitative rather than a quantitative kind.

That third person statements are, on Wittgenstein's view, not purely about behaviour, is accordingly not just because we take a whole constellation of external elements into account. It is rather because we immediately take such a constellation to be a plain instance of exasperation or ecstasy. When we claim "He was put out," we do not report an examination of another person's doings and sayings, even including circumstances and style; we indicate that we already see this contextualized and fine-grained behaviour as nothing less than annoyance. That the difference between Wittgenstein and reductive behaviourists is not merely quantitative is therefore as much a matter of ontology as of epistemology, or as much a matter of *what* he takes us to see when we make third person statements as of *how* he take us to see or deal with these things.[95] If Wittgenstein underpins his reorientation of Cartesian epistemology with a different account of the way inner and outer relate, the non-behaviourist character of his alternative ontology only comes out when we also consider how he begs to differ with behaviourism's epistemology.

In so far as methodological or epistemological behaviourism holds that all that is publicly observable are things like movements, shapes and sizes, and ontological behaviourism goes on to conclude that such things are all that is actually out there, Wittgenstein already refuses to take the very first step. Take the case of looking at a photograph, he recommends: "ask yourself whether you see only the distribution of darker and lighter patches, or the facial expression as well [...] and when you say of the face that it is smiling--is it easier to describe the corresponding lie and shape of the parts of the face, or to smile yourself?"[96] According to Wittgenstein, smiles and glances are no less visible than shapes and movements. But then again, he continues, "I contradict anyone who tells me I see the eye's glance 'just as' I see its form and colour."[97] For someone might be able to see and describe another

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[93] RPPi 314.

[94] Interpreters like Mulhall and Schatzki, first and foremost emphasizing the contextualized character of Wittgenstein's outlook, suggest that the difference with behaviourism already results from a focus on behaviour-in-context instead of on behaviour-in-isolation (see Mulhall 1993, pp. 62-65; Schatzki 1996, pp. 23, p. 61, pp. 79-80). That, however, does not seem to suffice to bring out the real disagreement between Wittgenstein and behaviourism; as Moore explains, methodological behaviourists, in any case, also count the environmental variables of past and present among admissible data (see Moore 1999, p. 23, p. 51).

[95] Cf. Rudd 2003, pp. 126-127; Glendinning 1998, p. 143. Both argue that Wittgenstein takes psychological phenomena to be manifest only to a creature that responds in the appropriate way.

[96] RPPi 1072; see also RPPi 267, RPPi 287.

[97] RPPi 1101; see also RPP1 1066, RPPi 1068, RPPi 1070, RPPi 1103.

person's face most accurately, without being able to identify the smile on her lips or the glance in her eyes. Wittgenstein concludes: "So if the ideal representation of what is seen is the photographically (metrically) exact reproduction in a picture, then one might want to say: "I see the movement, and somehow notice the joy." "[98]

Wittgenstein's conclusion should not be taken to mean that smiles and glances are not visible after all. His observation only implies that they are not visible in the same way as shapes and sizes are, or that two different concepts of seeing are at work here.[99] In the term Wittgenstein eventually reserves for this other kind of perception, one should distinguish between seeing *tout court* and *seeing-as*.[100] Though we ordinarily use the word "seeing" in both of these ways, there is a difference between seeing in the sense of observing quantifiable matters like size and movement, and seeing in the sense of recognizing a hesitant gesture or a smiling face. And this is a difference just as much in the objects of vision as in the way we approach them, or a difference just as much in ontological as in epistemological respect. Wittgenstein seems to hold that different kinds of phenomena require or go together with different kinds of perception.

This distinction, then, is of the utmost importance when it comes to psychological verbs in the third person. Sentences of the form "He is in pain" and "She is overjoyed" need not be considered to be purely about behaviour, or even a conglomerate of behavioural data, because they are uttered on the basis, not of seeing, but of seeing-as. According to Wittgenstein, far from treating someone else's behaviour simply as behaviour, we always already take it as expressive of mind and as part and parcel of the psychological state he is in. Or as he himself puts it: "My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul."[101] Assuming that difference between seeing and seeing-as concerns the objects of vision just as much as the way we approach them, this should not be taken to mean that, on Wittgenstein's view, psychological phenomena are simply projected onto other human beings and do not even exist apart from our attributing them. Quite the contrary - that we speak of other people's thought and feelings, or even of thoughts and feelings *überhaupt*, is not a matter of our merely believing or conjuring up something: "I am not of the *opinion* that he has a soul."[102] Instead of a calculation

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[98] RPPi 1070.

[99] See RPP 1068, RPPi 1071, RPPi 1102, LWi 431. Pursuing a different strategy, Wittgenstein also argues that seeing is actually not even a matter of taking in clearly circumscribed characteristics in the case of simple objects of vision; see RPPi 966, RPPi 1070, RPPi 1079, RPPi 1080.

[100] As is well-known, seeing-as is a topic recurring throughout Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology, with PI II § xi as its *locus classicus*; cf. Budd 1989, pp. 77-99; Mulhall 1993, pp. 6-34; Ter Hark 1990, pp. 106-186. My brief introduction of the concept of seeing-as here by no means does justice to all of Wittgenstein's insights on this topic, but I will discuss them (and defend my specific interpretation of them) more thoroughly in the final section of this chapter.

[101] PI II § iv 178d.

[102] Ibidem; see also RPPi 268, RPPi 917, LWi 354; cf. Ter Hark 1980, pp. 139-140. Ter Hark explains that the Wittgensteinian framework accordingly leaves no room for something like the traditional argument from analogy. To the extent that one nonetheless feels that Wittgenstein does not sufficiently do justice to the otherness of the other, cf. Overgaard 2005, arguing (by

we time and again perform, or a conviction we have decided to entertain, the attitude Wittgenstein mentions is not anything we actively or deliberately adopt. It rather refers to something we normally do not do, namely, treat other people as soulless beings, as objects or automata, say.[103]

Indeed, that this our normal attitude towards others perhaps only comes out when we realize that people sometimes have or take a different perspective; a realization that may make one feel, Wittgenstein expects, "a little uncanny."[104] If someone's thoughts and feelings only come to life or reside in her doings and sayings, but at the same time cannot be reduced thereto, a person may ignore or fail to see other people's psychological phenomena when she only sees or focuses on other people's behaviour in terms of measurable actions and reactions. A person who has or takes such a perspective may be called "soul blind", just as Wittgenstein calls a person who is unable to treat pictures like anything but blueprints, or who would be unable to hear the plaint in a certain melody, "aspect blind".[105] Far from being better able than the average onlooker to see what is truly out there – the succession of movements, the geometrics of the face, even if their circumstances are also taken into account – we would feel that a person who lacks the soul attitude misses out on something that is all too relevant and real.[106] This is precisely why the term "blind" is appropriate here, and why the realization that such blindness is possible, will probably make one feel somewhat ill at ease. The soul blind person is incapable of seeing the very subjectivity or humanity of her fellow beings.

As is the case with his discussion of Cartesianism, Wittgenstein's differing from behaviourism is a matter of both ontology and epistemology, or of ontology and epistemology combined. And as it turns out, Cartesianism and behaviourism are

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combining Wittgenstein and Levinas) that expressive behaviour qua expressive behaviour always reveals an alien source of meaning that is extremely present while not passively awaiting to be inspected or absorbed.

[103] See PI 420, PI II § iv 178a-d, LWii 66b-g; that others have a mind or a soul can accordingly be said to be one of the unspoken certainties that make up our world picture; cf. my exposition of OC in chapter 5. (Also, to the extent that certainties can be said to form the subject matter of philosophy, as I will suggest (see p. 160 of this study), the other mind certainty makes for a very good example; cf. my earlier reference in note 42 to Overgaard 2006, arguing that Wittgenstein acknowledges not a sceptical but still an ontological problem of other minds.)

[104] PI 420.

[105] See PI II § xi 210a, PI II § xi 213f, RPPii 478, LWi 763, LWi 781, LWii 61a; cf. Cavell 1979, pp. 378-380; Mulhall 1993, pp. 78-90; Rudd 2003, pp. 127-131. As an example of soul blind persons, one could think of severe autists or sociopaths, who are not so much unable to see the behaviour that other people display but do lack the ability to take that behaviour as expressive of e.g. pain or joy. Indeed, what sets such persons apart is the fact that they have to make a (normally speaking) unnatural inference in order to make third person statements at all - as Mulhall points out, the behaviour of the aspect blind is accordingly just as mechanic as he takes the behaviour of others to be; cf. Mulhall 1993, see p. 89. See also RPPi 198.

[106] What is more, as I will mention in the next section, there is such a thing as expert judgment about other minds; we take such experts, not the soul blind, to be better able to see what is truly out there.

actually quite similar in both these respects. Although behaviourism will have no truck with Cartesian-style introspection when it comes to the issue of epistemology, both behaviourists and Cartesians maintain that all that is publicly available are things like movements, shapes and sizes. In contrast to both these positions, Wittgenstein holds that psychological phenomena are no less visible than such quantifiable matters, provided that one has or takes the appropriate attitude. As a result, Wittgenstein's alternative to the Cartesian claim that third person statements are mere conjectures does not amount to cool and detached observation à la behaviourism - a nuance which might have been missed in above given formulations. Wittgenstein precisely explains that we will inevitably fail to see what someone else is thinking or feeling when we take the perspective of an outside observer rather than that of a fellow human being.

This also points to the ontological assumptions that Cartesians and behaviourists share, for while they have widely diverging views on the reality of mind, they have like perspectives on the human body. Both Cartesianism and behaviourism presuppose that a person's doings and sayings belong to the category of measurable things and therefore automatically and completely fall outside the scope of the mental. In other words, both consider behaviour to be mere behaviour or to be nothing but behaviour, the difference being that Cartesians subsequently posit psychological phenomena inside the subject, whereas radical behaviourists claim that if a person's thoughts and feelings cannot be said to be identical to his doings and saying, they cannot be said to be anything at all. Wittgenstein rejects the assumption that makes this all-or-nothing decision seem necessary in the first place. Refusing to defend that all that is out there must take a pure and precise, quantifiable form, or can partake in one and only one, clearly definable category, he maintains that human behaviour is always already filled or overflown with soul – even though it takes the right kind of seeing to recognize that fact.

Hence, to summarize the findings of this section: that Wittgenstein takes the outer to be the locus of the inner does not mean that he considers thoughts and feelings to be purely physiological or purely behavioural affairs. As he himself declares: "Am I saying something like, "and the soul itself is merely something about the body"? No. (I am not that hard up for categories.)"[107] What is more, rather than situating mental matters on the outside of the subject, Wittgenstein should be said to locate them in between subjects. In his account, after all, epistemology is part and parcel of ontology. A person's doings and saying only come to life as instances of, say, fear or joy to those who take this behaviour as expressive of mind. According to Wittgenstein, then, psychological phenomena have their existence, not so much on the outside of the human being, but in the interspace between the subject and its fellow men.

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[107] RPPii 690.

But there is another sense in which the notion of an in-between or interspace is appropriate here, and this has got do with the fact that there is another respect in which Wittgenstein's outlook differs from that of both Cartesianism, physicalism and behaviourism. For regardless of their respective differences, these accounts of the (un)reality of mental matters all focus first and foremost on the isolated, individual subject, or even only on one specific part or feature thereof.[108] Yet as Wittgenstein remarks: "The behaviour of humans includes of course not only what they do without ever having learned the behaviour, but also what they do [and say] after having received a training."[109] On his view, the manifestation of psychological phenomena should often (and perhaps more often than not) be seen against the background of someone's upbringing within a particular community. As I will explain in the next section, Wittgenstein takes much expressive behaviour, as well as the ability to understand these expressions, to be socially informed accomplishments rather than pre-given facts.

3.5   In the interspace between a community of subjects

When Wittgenstein is mentioned as one of the thinkers responsible for the specific turn that the debate on subjectivity took, it is in fact more often his embedding than his embodying the subject to which this is due.[110] This is by no means unjustified, since Wittgenstein's rethinking of Cartesianism concerns the relationship between the self and it social surroundings as well as, and even at the same time as, the relationship between mind and body. Indeed, even though I did not make it explicit when discussing them, that Wittgenstein takes subjectivity to be intrinsically social already becomes clear in the *Investigations'* remarks leading op to the beetle box paragraph that dismantles the idea that mental matters are private inner objects.

As Wittgenstein points out in § 244, the thesis that psychological language is a truly private language can only appear to make sense if one completely disregards the way in which the meaning of words like "pain" are usually taught: "words are connected with the primitive, the natural, expressions of the sensation and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain-behaviour."[111] Hence, not only is the relation between sensation and the expression of sensation – a topic extensively discussed in the previous sections – essential from day one, the way in which a person's doings and sayings make for instances of fear

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[108] Cf. notes 13 and 82 of this chapter, in which I pointed out that both mental pictures and neurological traces are by themselves inert entities that lack each and every meaning, the problem being not so much that they are (in one sense or other) inner objects as that they are supposed to do their work outside of each and every public practice.

[109] RPPi 131.

[110] Cf. Carr 1999, p. 10; Nancy 1991, p. 5; Benhabib 1992, pp. 208-209.

[111] PI 244.

or joy are also to a large extent the result of his upbringing. *Pace* Cartesianism, Wittgenstein maintains that the inner is not just always already outer, but is always already social too.

That is to say, an important proviso immediately needs to be made, for as Wittgenstein's remark about the origin of first person statements makes clear, it is only on the basis of the natural or instinctive expressions of a phenomenon like pain that the child is taught more sophisticated forms of expressive behaviour. It is thus only on the basis of certain natural facts about infant life that the social formation of mental matters takes place. But this distinguishes Wittgenstein's view on human development from the Cartesian outlook nonetheless.[112] To the extent that Cartesianism assumes that a child comes into this world with a full-blown repertoire of psychological phenomena and only needs to learn how to label and communicate these correctly, Wittgenstein underscores that an infant is born with a limited range of possible sensations that are, however, always already manifested in very natural and recognizable ways.[113]

These basic expressions are not learned and neither is their connection to pain or joy established only after a process of explanation or experimentation. Indeed, Wittgenstein suggests, not only would the teaching and learning of how words like "pain" are used become an even more impressive task without the natural manifestedness of such basic sensations - involving almost superhuman insight or a great deal of luck on both sides of the parent-infant relation - he even suspects that the reverse situation (in which children could first be taught what pain is and subsequently explained how such a thing can be expressed) would be downright inconceivable: "Suppose someone knew, guessed, that a child had sensations but no expression of any kind for them. And now he wanted to teach the child to express the sensations. How must he connect an action with a sensation, so that it becomes the expression of the sensation? Can he teach the child: "Look, this is how one expresses something--this, for example, is an expression of this--and now you express your pain!" "[114] In Wittgenstein's book, as becomes clear once more, expressions are not supplementary or secondary to the mental, but this connection is in place from the very first day.[115]

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[112] See my description in the first section of the presuppositions about human development that are usually associated with the term Cartesianism, p. 47 of this chapter.

[113] Cf. Schatzki 1996, pp. 58-63. Though to the extent that Schatzki wonders whether the infant's reactions are already real expressions and is not prepared to attribute it much mind (see p. 60), my reading of Wittgenstein's remarks differs from his. On my view, Wittgenstein takes the child's reactions to always already belong to the sphere of the mental, if only to a very basic subset thereof.

[114] RPPi 309-310; see also RPPi 308, PI 257.

[115] I thus take Wittgenstein's dubbing these expressions "primitive" to mean, not just that a language-game is based on them (see RPPi 916), but that they are innate. Such a reading, however, by no means makes Wittgenstein into a defender of, say, the innateness of grammar, as Rhees seems to fear (see Rhees 2003, p. 98), for it only takes reactions, not anything sophisticated and intellectualist, to be inborn. (I will argue in chapter 5 that the infant can also be ascribed certain basic beliefs (as well as an even more fundamental instinctive trust), yet that concerns beliefs in

The instinctive expressions of certain basic sensations, then, form the basis for the infant's interaction with its caretakers and are as such fundamental, not just to its bare bodily survival, but also to its subsequent psychological development, according to Wittgenstein. In the course of the child's upbringing, as the *Investigations* remark on the origin of first person expressions also already indicates, it obtains ever more refined expressions for the sensations it has or undergoes. It learns to replace crying with statements such as "I am in pain", but is also made aware of the difference between pains and itches, say, as well as between dull, throbbing and stifling pains. The infant can furthermore be said to be informed of when and how it is appropriate - if at all - to give voice to a particular psychological phenomenon. Depending on the circumstances, its age and its gender, for instance, a child's crying will after all not always receive exactly the same response. (And far from proving that the relation between the inner and its outer manifestations is not intrinsic after all, this merely highlights their intertwinement again: in contrast to the Cartesian notion that thoughts and feelings are always already hidden, it shows that people have to learn to keep these to themselves.)

But on Wittgenstein's analysis, the child's upbringing is not merely a matter of refining the way it manifests its basic sensations, it is also a matter of enhancing the reservoir of psychological phenomena it can be said to have or undergo. The Wittgensteinian view on human development thus not only differs from Cartesianism in what it considers to be the basis for the infant's initiation, it also differs from the Cartesian view in what it takes to be the subject of this process. Whereas Cartesianism maintains that it is only the means to communicate one's inner occurrences that have to be acquired, Wittgenstein holds that it's a person's psychological life itself that develops over the years. He observes: "One does not say that a suckling hopes that...,"[116] and "[neither] is the newborn child capable of being malicious, friendly, or thankful,"[117] yet "bit by bit daily life becomes such that there is a place for hope [etc.] in it."[118]

Moreover, regardless of what the latter quote may suggest, that life becomes such is not a purely passive or automatic affair. It is a result of the infant's being shown how to participate in its community' psychological practices, or in the perhaps more salient term that Wittgenstein comes to use in this context, it is a result of the infant's being shown how to exhibit recognizable expressive patterns:

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the sense of certainties, hence not necessarily something sophisticated and intellectualist either.) Rhees is arguing against Malcolm 1995 here, whose reading of Wittgenstein's use of "instinctive" and "primitive" is also criticized by Dromm 2003. While I agree with Dromm that it might go too far to claim that Wittgenstein takes all of our language games to spring from instinctive behaviour (such is also not the topic of this section), I disagree with his critique in so far as Dromm argues that the offering of even the outlines of an account of language acquisition goes against Wittgenstein's intentions, as he only aims to highlight features of our grammar in order to counteract the theories developed by other thinkers (see Dromm 2003, p. 683, pp. 688-690).

[116] RPPii 15.

[117] LWi 942.

[118] RPPii 15; see also RPPii 151, LWi 940.

"[The child] has to learn a complicated pattern of behaviour before he can pretend or be sincere."[119] Wittgenstein not merely maintains that a person's psychological life stands to be developed, he more precisely holds that this development occurs as a result of a socialization process.[120] This can be brought out more clearly by having a closer look at the patterns of which he claims that infants have to make them their own, for that Wittgenstein takes psychological development to occur in a socialization process is a corollary to his taking mental matters, or at least certain non-basic ones, to reside or have their life in socially informed and recurring constellations of expressive behaviour.

What we call pretending, hoping and rejoicing is, to paraphrase one of Wittgenstein's remarks on rule following, not something that "only *one* man" can do or experience and can do or experience "only *once*".[121] Although psychological phenomena do not come in a pure and precise form - residing in a person's (fine shades) of contextualized behaviour, as those with the appropriate attitude can tell – this does not mean that there is no unity whatsoever to the delicate and dispersed components that make up an instance of ecstasy or hope, and that similar kinds of unity cannot came about on other occasions. It is with the aim of capturing this unity in diversity and variability that Wittgenstein speaks of psychological patterns.[122] A pattern, namely, does not constitute one clear and distinct object but is composed of various elements that are combined and repeated, though this repetition need not concern every single detail in order for one to be able to recognize it as one and the same.

The indefiniteness of mental matters has been discussed extensively in the previous sections; what accounts for the unity or recognizability that nonetheless exists when it comes to (non-basic) psychological phenomena - or for the fact that, say, two constellations of contextualized behaviour both form instances of gratitude, even though only in one case a "Thank you" is uttered and the other case even involves more tears than smiles – is the fact that the persons *in casu*, as full-fledged members of a particular community, share an understanding of what gratitude is and of what one can be grateful for, and have been attuned to respond in certain ways to such thankworthy phenomena.[123] Given this shared background, different behaviour can be expressive of the same psychological state, for although one person may more verbose and the other more prone to tears, both find themselves in circumstances that are usually considered to call for gratitude. But

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[119] LWi 869; see also PI II § i 174a-b, PI II § i 228f-229a-b, RPPii 624, RPPii 651, LWi 365, LWi 862, LWii 40a-b, LWii 55b-c.
[120] I will shortly modify this statements somewhat, pointing out that Wittgenstein grants nature as well as nurture a role in psychological development.
[121] PI 199.
[122] Cf. Ter Hark 2004, arguing that the concept of pattern precisely aims to accommodate the vagueness of psychological concepts rather than explain it away, as referentialistic models of mind do.
[123] Cf. Schatzki 1996, pp. 71-72; Von Savigny 1996, p. 155.

this shared background also places limits on what can count as a manifestation of gratefulness. Although the persons *in casu* have not been taught to react in one specific way to thankworthy occurrences, neither of them is grinding their teeth and clenching their fists, say, and if one of them were to act like that on a thankworthy occasion, we would be perhaps be surprised or perturbed but would not think of calling his behaviour an instance of gratitude.

Wittgenstein's notion of a psychological pattern picks out this incorporated understanding and broad reactive prefiguration that might still manifest itself differently each time: " "Grief" describes a pattern which recurs, with different variations, in the weave of our life."[124] Such a pattern is carried by the attuned members of a particular community and is subsequently passed on to the next generation when they are shown what can be said and done on what occasions. Combining a complex and variable array of behavioural and contextual elements, a psychological pattern is also something that a person can only partake in after having been initiated into the customs of its community. And as a result, infants raised in more or less diverging cultures will come to possess more or less diverging mental repertoires.

Hence, while Wittgenstein holds that an infant comes into this world with fairly basic psychological phenomena manifested in fairly basic ways, he observes that there are many thoughts and feelings that a person can only have or undergo after having made a certain pattern his own: "It is only if someone *can do*, has learnt, is master of, such-and-such, that it makes sense to say that he has had *this* experience."[125] Given that a child's primitive manifestations form the basis for the acquisition of more complex expressive patterns, there may not be a sharp distinction between basic and sophisticated mental matters, but this does not alter the fact that, on Wittgenstein's view, a large part of one's psychological repertoire is obtained rather than innate. He states: "And if the play of *expressions* develops, then indeed I can say that a soul, something *inner* is developing. But now the inner is no longer the cause of the expression."[126] In other words, Wittgenstein not only argues that the outer is, *pace* Cartesianism, not secondary to the inner, he even claims that the inner itself is in some respects an acquired phenomenon, issuing from the upbringing that a person has received.

This has ramifications for the third person perspective as well. In order for an onlooker to recognize a specific constellation of behavioural and contextual elements as an instance of gratitude or grief, she has to be able to take this behaviour – in addition to taking it as expressive of mind in the first place – as an instance of these larger communal patterns. And the familiarity with such patterns, Wittgenstein suggests, is the kind of thing one learns "only through long

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[124] PI II § i 174b; see also LWi 406.
[125] PI II § xi 209a, LWi 734.
[126] LWi 947.

experience and not from a course in school."[127] It is something that a person has to acquire and only acquires by participating in the relevant psychological practices: "How could you explain the meaning of 'simulating pain', 'acting as if in pain'? [...] One is inclined to say: "Just live among us for a while and then you'll come to understand." "[128] No less than the first person perspective, Wittgenstein takes the third person perspective to be obtained in a socialization process rather than at someone's disposal from the start.

Yet perhaps a proviso should be made here as well, for just as it is only on the basis of certain primitive manifestations that first person expressions are taught, instinctive behaviour could be said to lie at the basis of the ability to make third person statements too. As Wittgenstein observes: "Believing that someone else is in pain, doubting whether he is, are so many natural kinds of behaviour towards other human beings; and our language is but an auxiliary to and extension of this behaviour."[129] To the extent that one needs to learn to recognize expressive patterns, this does not necessarily proceed from scratch, and our propensity to take other human being as other human beings rather than soulless automata is perhaps one of those things that always already comes naturally.[130] That is to say, in so far as the acquisition of a full-blown third person perspective does not proceed from scratch, the natural or biological basis for it need not be exactly the same for all individuals. While the one person may for instance be born without the ability to see behaviour as expressive of mind at all – or be born soul blind, in the term used in the previous section – the other may, conversely, be capable of developing a much better eye for other people's thoughts and feelings than the average onlooker – or come to possess " 'expert judgment' about the genuineness of expressions of feeling,"[131] in Wittgenstein's words.

This can be said to hold for the first person perspective too, for not all individuals may be equally able to make expressive patterns their own.[132] Certain mental matters have their life only in highly specialized doings, sayings and contexts (like confidence in one's athletic skills or confidence in the financial markets), which means that persons who are for some reason unable to exhibit such behaviour and/or partake in such contexts are also unable to have or undergo these phenomena.

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[127] LWi 925; see also LWi 918.

[128] RPPii 630; see also RPPii 29; cf. Mulhall 1993, p. 75; Schatzki 1996, pp. 76-77.

[129] RPPi 131; see also LWi 874.

[130] Cf. the discussion on sense of self and others in newborns in chapter 5 (pp. 166-167).

[131] PI II § xi 227h; see also LWi 915, LWi 916. To the extent that a naturally soul blind person might come to learn how to infer the occurrence of thoughts and feelings from the behaviour of other people, she can still be called soul blind, for the normal soul attitude consists precisely in not having to make any inferences. Also, to the extent that expert judgment about other minds is always acquired on the basis of experience rather than innate, some people may never be able to develop such a keen eye.

[132] Cf. Schatzki 1996, pp. 65-67.

On Wittgenstein's view, moreover, the ability to manifest sophisticated expressive patterns does not only distinguish individual human beings from each other, it also marks a difference between human beings on the one hand and non-human animals on the other. As he puts it: "A dog can't pretend to be in pain, because his life is too simple for that."[133] Wittgenstein however does not think that this makes for a categorical distinction, for as he also points out, we would not necessarily refrain from saying of animals that they have basic sensations such as fear and joy, even though we would think twice before attributing non-human animals complex emotions such as remorse. Or, while we would be hesitant to ascribe a fly, say, beliefs of any kind, we are not unwilling to say of a dog that it thinks its master is at the door.[134] As is the case with the difference between individual humans, it is a matter of degree (and therefore in many cases possibly also a matter of debate) what kind of life is complex enough to accommodate certain mental matters and what kind of life is not. Wittgenstein observes: "We don't say of a table and chair that they think; neither do we say this of a plant, a fish, and hardly of a dog; only of human beings. And not even of all human beings."[135]

Having characterised the process in which the child develops its mental repertoire as a social one, but also having pointed out the biological preconditions and restrictions to this process, some remarks about the much discussed relationship between nature and nurture are in order here. Judging by the preceding exposition of Wittgenstein's remarks on psychological development, he can in fact be said to consider the child's upbringing not only a matter of a person being attuned to its social surroundings, but also of a biological organism growing into maturity. For even if a person can partake in an expressive pattern only after initiation into the customs of her community, she cannot be shown what to do and what to say on which occasions if the condition of her brain and body so far simply prevents her from doing and saying these things.[136] The natural facts on the

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[133] LWi 862; see also PI 250, RPPii 16. In other remarks, Wittgenstein suggests that there is a more specific criterion for the ascription and exhibition of sophisticated patterns: the possession of language; see PI II § i 174a, RPPii 308, RPPii 310. Here, however, he is arguably using a *pars pro toto*, referring to the intricate and multifaceted phenomenon that is the human form of life by singling out one salient characteristic. If one underscores that psychological refinement is first and foremost a linguistic matter, as e.g. Mulhall does (see Mulhall 1993, pp. 65-66), one runs the risk of underexposing that the patterns *in casu* form complex constellations of both verbal and non-verbal behaviour in specific circumstances. (Though in Wittgenstein, of course, the linguistic by no means excludes the behavioural and contextual).

[134] See also PI 650, PI II § i 174a, RPPii 308, RPPii 310, LWi 360; cf. Glendinning 1998, who argues that non-human animals can be attributed a third as well as a first person perspective (though he only mentions dogs and does not touch upon the differences that may exist among the many different kinds of non-human animals).

[135] RPPii 192; see also LWii 41g-i.

[136] Von Savigny's claim that it is a purely conventional matter that infants cannot pretend (see Von Savigny 1996, pp. 141-155) accordingly seems to be too strong: this inability is also a matter of their bodily and cognitive capacities not yet allowing them to participate in the pattern of pretence.

basis of which the social formation of mental matters takes place thus not merely concerns the infant's first and primitive reactions, but also includes the subsequent growth of its cognitive and bodily capacities.

This raises the question as to what the exact contribution of nature and nurture are in the child's mental development, or to what extent the latter might be an autonomous process that the infant's social environment perhaps influences but by no means determines. Research in developmental psychology suggests that the ability to attribute thoughts and feelings to both oneself and others (or acquisition of a theory of mind, in the unfortunate term commonly used in this context) evolves more or less automatically, barring abnormalities in the infant's biological make-up. At around 9-12 months, for instance, infants will generally start to participate in what is called "joint attention" interaction, tuning in to the behaviour of adults toward outside objects and getting adults to tune in to their own interest in these objects. Around the age of four years, children normally pass the so-called "false belief task", indicating their ability to understand the epistemological state of another person and distinguish it from their own.[137]

Such data, however, do not contradict the Wittgensteinian notion that an infant enlarges it psychological repertoire partly or even primarily as a result of a socialization process.[138] They may point to a natural development that makes the ongoing social formation of mental matters possible, and might even suggest that certain psychological phenomena emerge all but automatically - thereby also placing limits on the possible differences between persons from different social backgrounds - but they do not imply that children will always already come to exhibit the expressive patterns Wittgenstein describes, regardless of the context they grow up in.[139] Reflecting the norms and values of a particular culture or community, a psychological pattern is essentially something one can only learn to participate in "by living with [these] people."[140] Even though a biological development may underlie this learning process.

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[137] For research on joint attention, see e.g. Liszkowski & Tomasello 2004, Moore & Dunham 1995; for research on the false belief task, see e.g. Wellman 2001; for research on a-typically developing children, see e.g. Baron-Cohen 1985 and Happé 1994.

[138] Indeed, they do not show mental development to be an entirely natural or autonomous process because of the simple fact that the children studied do not live outside each and every social context.

[139] I will come back to the topic of cultural differences shortly. With regard to the natural process making psychological refinement possible, Tomasello precisely argues that the "leaps" that children display at around 1 and 4 years of age (and especially the first leap) underlie their ability to participate in complex social institutions (see Tomasello & Rakoczy 2003). These leaps not being exhibited (or not in the same way) by non-human animals, Tomasello also claim that this explains the (what he takes to be) striking difference between human beings and even their closest primate relatives.

[140] RPPii 29.

Leaving this topic behind for now,[141] one more consequence of Wittgenstein's remarks on the sociality of subjectivity deserves attention here. For if both the first and the third person perspective are to some extent acquired, and a person is only able to exhibit as well as recognize certain expressive patterns after initiation in the relevant social practices, there is a further non-Cartesian explanation for the uncertainty of third person statements, other reasons for which were discussed in section 2.[142] What might also account for someone's being at a complete and utter loss as to what is going on inside another, as now becomes clear, is the fact that the pattern of which this contextualized behaviour is an instance, is entirely unknown or foreign to him. In such a case, "the only way to understand someone else would be to go through the same upbringing as his -- which is impossible." And, Wittgenstein points out, "there it is --an external fact:"[143] this uncertainty can be explained wholly in terms of a public pattern one happens to be unfamiliar with, rather than in terms of a closed-off realm one is always already prevented from accessing. Instead of being unable to look inside a stranger's head, we simply "cannot find our feet with [her]" [144]

Hence, according to Wittgenstein, we might be unable to understand instances of a pattern that is foreign to us, exhibited by the members of an entirely different (sub)culture or even of a wholly different species. However, just as there is no hard and fast rule as to what kind of life is complex enough to accommodate which mental matters, it cannot be stated beforehand what form of life is similar enough to one's own in order to be able to understand the patterns that recur in its weave; "here, of course, there are degrees"[145] as well. While we might be unable to get our heads around the finer things that possibly occupy lions, say - even if they were able to talk about these things to us[146] - their pain, for instance, need not remain beyond our grasp. Yet whereas we fully understand the occurrence of such basic sensations in our fellow mammals, the life of spiders and bacteria seems so different from ours that we do not even know whether such phenomena have a place in their existence.[147]

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[141] I will look into the notion that Wittgenstein explains the subject as the product of a socialization process in more detail in chapter 5. Similar to the foregoing observations, pointing out that Wittgenstein takes both natural and social factors to play a role in child development, I will argue that he does not present the subject as socially constituted all the way through.

[142] And let me remark that the fact that the first person perspective is in some respects acquired too, does not diminish the certainty of expressions such as "I hope she will come" that was also discussed in that section. This acquisition, namely, is a matter of incorporating certain behaviour and understanding, which does not automatically reintroduce a distance between a person and her thoughts and feelings of the kind Cartesianism always already assumes.

[143] RPPii 568.

[144] PI II § xi 223f; see also RPPii 700.

[145] RPPii 30.

[146] See PI II § xi 223h, LWi 190.

[147] A seemingly self-evident way to settle the question about animals and pain, say, is to investigate whether their underlying neurology is similar to that of humans in pain; models for animal pain are accordingly developed by empirical scientists (though often with the aim, not of answering the

When it comes to our fellow human beings, as was just indicated, an upbringing in an entirely different social context may prevent us from comprehending the patterns that others manifest, but this does not mean that everything a person from a different background thinks or feels is always already unfathomable.[148] Also leading a human life, albeit in a somewhat different form, many of her thoughts and feelings, from stomach aches to financial worries, may in fact be perfectly evident. This may thus concern both basic sensations and more sophisticated phenomena; it is after all not merely infant lives that can be said to bear resemblance to each other. Indeed, assuming that psychological patterns are acquired on the basis of the same biological process, the possible differences between specific cultural patterns may in fact be limited. And even if one encounters a radically different pattern nonetheless, the fact that strangers are human beings too could also make the most outlandish practices somewhat less impenetrable. The "common behaviour of mankind,"[149] Wittgenstein suggests, provides a foothold for unravelling foreign manifestations of the mental. However, given that the familiarity with psychological patterns is not a thing one easily obtains, and similar concerns can also be expressed in diametrically opposing ways,[150] there is no guarantee that this common frame of reference will lead to a mutual (or even one-way) understanding.

Hence, to come back to my suggestion at the end of the previous section, Wittgenstein can be said to situate the inner not so much on the outside of the

demarcative question, but of improving the means to measure the pain inflicted to animals in clinical drug tests; cf. Walker 1999). Yet as Allen 2004 argues (see pp. 622-624, p. 637), empirical data do not suffice to settle the question, for not only has research been restricted to a limited group of vertebrates (perhaps by and large to those used in drug tests), it is also the case that for every similarity between human and animal neurology there is a dissimilarity that can be used to argue against the ascription of pain, resulting from the fact that human and animal neurology are not identical. The usefulness of empirical data in ascertaining whether/which animals feel pain is also undermined by the multiple realization argument (cf. Kim 1998, pp. 69-70), pointing out that similar phenomenal experiences might spring from very different physiological bases. Regardless of the biological (dis)similarities that may exist between humans and animals, moreover, Wittgenstein's arguments concerning human neurology apply to animal neurology too: a physiological occurrence does not yet make for pain or joy since we only ascribe these phenomena to entire, embedded living beings. And the lives of e.g. invertebrates are so different from ours that we would at best be at a loss about their ability to have pain, but would probably not be prepared to extend our concept of pain to these creatures when pushed on the question, though we might be willing to ascribe them a different form of pain. From this perspective, the demarcative question thus calls for a conceptual decision rather than empirical research.

[148] As Ekman argues (see Ekman 1977 and Ekman 1999), there are in fact universal psychological phenomena whose manifestations are not culturally determined. He identifies six basic emotions (sadness, happiness, anger, fear, disgust, surprise) that are displayed across cultures (and, to some extent, across species) and whose expressions, especially in the face, are universally recognized.

[149] PI 206; since I do not take this to mean that there is a specific set of behavioural dispositions that occurs in all human communities and also distinguishes human from non-human forms of life, my reading does not make for a version of the interpretation contested by Von Savigny (see Von Savigny 1996, pp. 74-93).

[150] See RFGB 127a.

subject as in the interspace between subjects, and he can be said to do so, not only in the sense that epistemology is part and parcel of his ontology – mental matters being manifest only to those with the appropriate perspective – but also in the sense that it is only in the context of a recurring social pattern that a person's doings and sayings make for, and can be taken as, instances of psychological phenomena such as hope or grief.

On Wittgenstein's view, much of a person's psychological life only develops in the course of her upbringing; her manifestations of the mental, or at least the more sophisticated ones, are variations on the expressions of her fellow men. As a result, an onlooker has to recognize or learn to recognize a person's doings and sayings as an instance of this larger pattern; otherwise, he will not be able to understand them as expressive, not just of mind, but of the specific phenomena they are manifestations of. The pattern in question may be more or less prevalent among humans and other animals but needs to be recognized nonetheless. Wittgenstein states: "Not what one man is doing now, but the whole hurly-burly [of the actions of a variety of humans] is the background against which we see an action, and it determines our judgment, our concepts, and our reactions."[151]

3.6   Aspects of the human being

In the course of the preceding explorations leading up to the conclusion that it is, according to Wittgenstein, in between a community of subjects that psychological phenomena have their place, the concept of seeing-as has already been mentioned, namely, in the segment on the distinction between Wittgenstein and behaviourism. In the current and final section of this chapter, I will return to Wittgenstein's comments on this phenomenon - also known as aspect perception - in somewhat more detail in order to bring my reading of his philosophy of psychology to a close. There are a number of interesting parallels between his remarks on our thoughts and feelings on the one hand and his remarks on seeing-as on the other, not all of which have been properly addressed so far, but several of which can be used to summarize Wittgenstein's views on the reality of mind and all matters mental. He himself also hints at the possibility of putting the aspect analysis to work in this way, for as he explains in one of his *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, in contrast to the Cartesian notion that psychological concepts refer to private inner objects, "I would like to say: Psychology deals with certain *aspects* of human life".[152]

Put differently, Wittgenstein's account of mental matters does not only converge with his account of aspects and their perception when it comes to the kind of perspective involved, as was already pointed out - the parallel also holds with regard to the kind of phenomena at issue, as I will now have the chance to

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[151] RPPii 629.
[152] RPPii 35.

fully explain. My specific rationale for returning to the topic of seeing-as accordingly brings a somewhat restricted focus with it. The following discussion of what is in fact a fascinating psychological phenomena in its own right will not cover Wittgenstein's treatment of aspect perception in its entirety, nor reflect on the overall importance of the topic that concerned him remarkably consistently throughout his later work.[153] I will confine myself to those elements that contribute to a firmer grasp of the Wittgensteinian alternative to the Cartesian account of the nature of man.[154]

In Wittgenstein's numerous remarks on this topic, aspect perception does not emerge as a strictly uniform phenomenon. He not only wonders how to describe what is the case when one suddenly sees a duck (or a rabbit) in the well-known duck/rabbit figure;[155] under the heading "seeing-as", he also discusses noticing the likeness between two faces, recognizing a hesitant posture, taking a two-dimensional picture to represent something three-dimensional, and even pretending that a chest is a house, as children might do. Despite their differences, however, these cases confront one with a similar paradox or puzzle.

What is puzzling about these cases is not so much that what one observes "has not changed; and yet I see it differently."[156] Whereas this is the form that the paradox may assume in the case of suddenly seeing a duck in the duck/rabbit, most notably, it does not capture what is intriguing about the recognition of a hesitant posture, say, which does not involve a similar change in perception.[157] The question

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[153] Again, for more extensive discussions of the remarks on seeing-as, see Budd 1989, pp. 77-99; Ter Hark 1990, pp. 160-186; Mulhall 1993, pp. 6-34. They respectively argue that the topic of aspect perception was of importance to Wittgenstein because of its connection to the topic of seeing *tout court*, because of its connection to the meaning-as-use thesis, and because seeing-as constitutes our primary relation to the world. While I will focus on the parallels between aspects and mental matters, I do not want to suggest that they form the only or main reason for Wittgenstein's interest in seeing-as; the adequacy of the following account does not depend on whether that was or was not the case either.

[154] Cf. Cavell 1979, p. 368 ff; Johnston 1993, pp. 182-184; Mulhall 1993, pp. 53-90. These commentators also put the parallels between Wittgenstein's account of seeing-as and his account of the inner to work; I will point to some differences between these readings and mine later on.

[155] The duck/rabbit puzzle was first explicated by the psychologist Jastrow; see PI II § xi 194b. As Ter Hark points out, Wittgenstein's account of seeing-as can be said to combine his critique of Köhler's *Gestalt* theory with his critique of James' theory of perception (to which Köhler's was an alternative), avoiding the vices of both theories whilst accommodating their respective virtues (see Ter Hark 1990, pp. 165-186).

[156] PI II § xi 193c.

[157] It could be stated that this is a difference between what Wittgenstein calls aspect dawning and continuous aspect perception; see PI II § xi 194c. Baz 2000 criticizes interpreters like Johnston and Mulhall for not properly distinguishing between these forms of aspect perception; he even argues that it makes no sense to speak of continuously seeing something as something at all (see pp. 120-121). While I do not think that Baz's reading of Wittgenstein is entirely incorrect, I do feel that it is a bit one-sided. There are for instance certainly remarks that support his point against the importance or even possibility of continuous aspect perception (e.g. PI II § xi 210d, RPPi 1028), but there are also remarks that speak against it (e.g. RPPi 358, LWi 776). Moreover, Baz's argument to the effect that psychological concepts are not aspect concepts because grammar tells

with which the phenomenon of aspect perception confronts one rather is: "Is it seeing? [Or] is it thinking?"[158] For when a person suddenly sees a duck in the duck/rabbit, notices the similarity between two faces or recognizes a posture as a hesitant one, she each time observes something that is right in front of her eyes yet at the same time cannot point to anything clear and distinct in order to explain what it is that she perceives. Or, while aspect perception is not beyond description or justification, a person seeing a duck in the duck/rabbit cannot draw on unambiguous information to describe or justify what she sees. This raises the question as to whether seeing-as still belongs to the category of seeing or ultimately belongs to the category of thinking, or to what extent seeing-as is a matter of perceiving objective facts and to what extent it is a matter of subjectively interpreting the facts. In many remarks on the topic of aspect perception, Wittgenstein explores both of these options.

Let me discuss his findings on the possibility of explaining seeing-as in terms of seeing first. When a person takes the duck/rabbit to be a duck or two faces to be similar, Wittgenstein claims, she can certainly be said to see the duck and the similarity. If she were to close her eyes or lose her eyesight, both the duck and the similarity would cease to be present to her; judging by her verbal and non-verbal actions and reactions, also, "perception" is the right term to describe her current relation to these things. When she suddenly sees a duck in the duck/rabbit, for instance, she "*describe*[s] the alteration like that of a perception; quite as if the object had altered before [her] eyes,"[159] and goes on to treat the figure as nothing but a picture-duck. This can even be said of a child pretending a chest to be a house: "He quite forgets that it is a chest; for him it actually is a house."[160] Wholly absorbed in play, one arguably fails to capture the child's experience when one denies that it sees a farm or a manor, say.

To be sure, Wittgenstein continues, what a person sees when she takes the duck/rabbit to be a duck or two faces to resemble each other cannot be described in purely spatial terms. She need not be able to explain her duck perception to another onlooker by merely tracing the outlines of the duck/rabbit, for these same lines can also be taken to represent a rabbit, and she might similarly be unable to convince a third person of the resemblance between two faces by producing even the most accurate drawing.[161] Yet on Wittgenstein's view, one unduly restricts or

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us exactly what e.g. sadness is (see pp. 119-120), wholly disregards Wittgenstein's remarks on the indeterminacy characterizing our psychological practices (see my discussion in section 3). I will come back to the difference between aspect dawning and continuous aspect perception at the end of this section; for now suffice it to say that while Wittgenstein indeed and with reason distinguishes between these two forms, he also distinguishes them both from seeing *tout court* for presenting one with a similar paradox or puzzle.

[158] RPPii 544; see also PI II § xi 204d, RPPi 1, RPPii 369, RPPii 546, LWi 179, LWi 595, LWi 641.

[159] PI II § xi 195i, LW 476; see also PI II § xi 194d, PI II § xi 204a-b.

[160] PI II § xi 206f, LWi 689; see also RPPi 874.

[161] See PI II § xi 193b, RPPi 919, RPPi 954, RPPi 991, RPPii 556, LWi 180, LWi 439. Such remarks can also be taken to contain a Wittgensteinian argument against explaining seeing-as or

distorts the use of the verb "to see" if one insists that this only applies when one faces something photographically or metrically exact. As he points out, and as was also discussed in section four, there is more than one concept of seeing, or there is more than one type of things we count among the objects of vision. "The question "What do you see?" gets [a variety of answers],"[162] ranging from clear and distinct shapes and sizes to the most delicate nuances and shades. One may not be able to convey the similarity between two faces or the timidity of a posture by means of an exact copy of these faces or posture, but this does not mean that one cannot be said to see these things. Wittgenstein declares: " "That *is* what it *is* to see something - " I should like to say. And that's really the way it is: the situation is exactly like that in which the word is used elsewhere; - except the technique is somewhat different here."[163]

However, emphasizing that seeing-as is a kind of seeing, too, does not yet remove the puzzlement that befalls one when reflecting on this phenomenon, as it does not yet make clear how it is that a person can see things like similarity and timidity - or in the terminology of the previous quote, what the exact technique is that one employs in a such case.[164] It is at this point that the connection of aspect perception, not to seeing, but to thinking, begs to be explored. For as Wittgenstein brings to the fore, what could be said to account for one's seeing the similarity between a person's face and that of his father, say, is that one brings certain memories to bear on what one perceives; similarly, what appears to be a precondition for one's recognizing a hesitant posture is that one possesses the concept of hesitancy and applies it to this case.[165] In other words, in so far as seeing-as is a kind of seeing, this seems to be due to one's performing an intellectual act in addition to passively taking things in with the eye: "It is as if one had brought a concept to what one sees, and one now sees the concept along with the thing. It is itself hardly visible, and yet spreads its ordering veil over the objects."[166] From this perspective, seeing-as actually seems closer to interpreting than to seeing.

Be that as it may, Wittgenstein observes, that aspect perception contains a cognitive component does not mean that it can automatically be filed under the category of interpretation. "The cases in which we interpret what we see are easily recognized," he explains: "When we interpret we put forth a hypothesis which may

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even seeing *tout court* in terms of observing internal impressions; see LWi 619; cf. Budd 1989, p. 86; Ter Hark 1990, p. 176; Mulhall 1993, pp. 14-15. And this argument proceeds along the same lines as the cube argument as well: placing a certain picture inside the head merely relocates the problem and does not answer it.

[162] RPPi 964; see also PI II § xi 193a & 200a, RPPi 981, RPPi 965, RPPi 1068, RPPi 1102, LWi 431.

[163] RPPii 371.

[164] Similar to my earlier observation in footnote 99, it should be noted that Wittgenstein wonders whether seeing is ever a straightforward affair, thereby already making seeing-as less paradoxical, or at least not much more puzzling than seeing in general; see also RPPi 963, RPPi 966.

[165] See PI II § xi 198e, RPPi 71, RPPi 518, RPPi 1030, LWi 564 LWi 731, LWi 737, LWi 741.

[166] RPPi 961.

turn out to be wrong."[167] This, however, is far from the case when seeing-as is concerned. When a person takes the duck/rabbit to be a duck or a posture to be hesitant, she is not speculating about what could possibly be said about this figure or posture - she is making a statement about what she sees before her. The point is not so much that she could not turn out to be mistaken about the posture, or that one could not see the duck/rabbit differently. The point rather is that when she exclaims "It's a duck!" or jumps in to help someone (re)gain confidence, this is not the response that she deems most accurate after reflecting on the situation, but an immediate reaction indicating that she experiences what she faces as a picture-duck or a case of hesitancy. So even though the "aspect seems to vanish"[168] if one tries to unthink or exclude everything non-perceptual from an instance of seeing-as, it cannot be said to be a matter of subjectively interpreting the facts, Wittgenstein finds. Aspect perception concerns a direct and receptive relation between subject and object, not one mediated by a process of reflection. And precisely this immediacy suggests that seeing-as is closer to seeing than to thinking after all.

Judging by these observations, then, Wittgenstein simply seems to leave the aspect paradox intact, or only brings it out more accurately. According to what can be said to be his final diagnosis: "The question whether what is involved is seeing or an act of interpreting arises because an interpretation becomes an expression of experience. And the interpretation is not an indirect description; no, it is the primary expression of the experience."[169] That is to say, when a person sees the duck/rabbit and exclaims "It's a duck!", she does not observe something purely visual, yet her perception, which accordingly seems to be more of an interpretation than a perception, does not result from an interpretative process either. On Wittgenstein's view, however, this only makes for a paradox if one presumes that seeing-as is either a matter of pure and passive observation or a matter of strong and active interpretation but cannot be anything in between. His investigations precisely show that aspect perception contains a perceptual as well as a cognitive component and cannot be reduced to either of them. According to Wittgenstein, seeing-as is seeing and thinking at the very same time: it is "half-visual experience, half thought" or forms "an amalgam of the two,"[170] he suggests.

Hence, Wittgenstein does not leave the aspect puzzle intact but removes the puzzlement by demonstrating that seeing-as is a combination of seeing and thinking or occurs at the intersection of the objective and the subjective. When a person sees a duck in the duck/rabbit, she does not see something purely visual but is therefore not automatically performing an interpretative act. What she perceives may not be "a property of the object,"[171] Wittgenstein explains, but hers is a perception

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[167] RPPii 547; see also PI II § xi 204c, PI II § xi 212e, RPPi 8, RPPii 515, RPPii 516.
[168] LWi 564.
[169] RPPi 20; see also RPPi 1025, LWi 553.
[170] PI II § xi 197d&h; see also RPPi 33, RPPi 531, RPPii 378, RPPii 390, LWi 542, LWi 554, LWi 710.
[171] PI II § xi 212a.

nonetheless; she can be said to perceive "an internal relation between it and other objects."[172] In other words, when she sees a duck, she does not take in one clearly definable characteristic of the figure considered in isolation but connects the entire picture to a specific group of animals or objects (namely, ducks or picture-ducks) and instantly takes it to belong to that class. Her seeing the duck/rabbit, not in isolation, but against the background or in the context of other (picture-)ducks accounts for the subjective or cognitive component of aspect perception, yet does not make it into a speculation mediated by reflection; it also accounts for what she actually sees.

To come back to the main topic, not just of this section, but of this chapter in its entirety, let me now explicate in more detail how Wittgenstein's suggestion that psychology deals with certain aspects of human life can be said to encapsulate his entire non-Cartesian outlook on psychological phenomena. While his remarks on seeing-as may seem to be of a purely epistemological nature, they can be applied to his analysis of mental matters in order to convey the specific combination of epistemology, ontology and sociology, so to speak, that Wittgenstein offers as an alternative to the Cartesian account of human subjectivity. Putting the aspect analysis to work in this way accordingly allows me to recapitulate virtually all the insights that have been accumulated in the previous sections.

After discussing Wittgenstein's arguments against the possibility of explaining thoughts and feelings as literally inner entities in section 2, my explorations of the positive Wittgensteinian alternative to Cartesianism took off in section 3 with a reading of his remarks on psychological asymmetry. As I explained, Wittgenstein maintains that first person expressions such as "I am overjoyed" are not descriptions based on inward observation but immediate expressions that are already part and parcel of the psychological state someone is in. Indeed, on Wittgenstein's view, this goes for what a person says as well as what he does; it is someone's (subtle and contextualized) behaviour that is always already expressive of mind. And far from doing away with the certainty distinctive of the first person perspective, this non-descriptive, non-observational account accommodates first person certainty without further ado. As I concluded section 3, Wittgenstein does not hold the outer to be an inessential consequence of the inner but takes it to be the very locus thereof.

However, as I then pointed out in section 4, this does not mean that Wittgenstein reduces the inner to the outer in either a physicalist or a behaviourist sense of the word. After describing the various positions that can be referred to

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[172] Ibidem; see also RPPi 868, RPPi 960, LWi 516, LWi 706, LWi 733. Both Budd and Ter Hark only mention this remark to indicate that seeing as is both related to and distinct from interpreting (see Budd 1989, p. 95; Ter Hark 1990, pp. 182-183), but I think that this remarks precisely captures how seeing is a combination of both seeing and thinking, without being reducible to either of these. But e.g. Budd also only takes Wittgenstein's solution to the aspect puzzle to be that is a kind of seeing yet at the same time not a kind of seeing, in an attempt to undermine traditional and one-sided theories of seeing (see Budd 1989, pp. 97-99).

with the labels "physicalism" and "behaviourism", I argued that Wittgenstein cannot be said to subscribe to any of them. While the difference between his account and reductive behaviourism, most notably, may not seem that big, the latter in fact shares some important characteristics with the Cartesian outlook so consistently contested by Wittgenstein. Both Cartesianism and behaviourism, that is, assume that the public world only houses material or measurable things, the difference being that Cartesians subsequently posit psychological phenomena inside the subject, whereas behaviourists claim that if a person's thoughts and feelings cannot be pinpointed in the outer world, they cannot be said to exist at all. Wittgenstein, in contrast, refuses to defend that all that is out there must take a quantifiable form or can partake in only one, clearly definable category. On his view, I concluded section 4, behaviour is always already filled or overflown with soul. Having had a closer look at Wittgenstein's remarks on seeing-as,[173] another way of conveying his embodied or enacted ontology in a non-reductive way now suggests itself: it is not the outer *tout court* but aspects of the outer in which the inner comes to life or resides.

But Wittgenstein's remarks on aspect perception clearly resonate with his observations on the third person perspective as well. As I also explained in section 3, Wittgenstein's reorientation of the Cartesian account of first person expressions goes hand in hand with his alternative account of third person statements, according to which these are descriptions rather than conjectures. For if one holds inner and outer to be intrinsically connected instead of only contingently related, what a person says and does need not be set aside as purely external clues, and a sentence like "She is over the moon" can be taken to genuinely describe the state that another person is in. In our day-to-day dealings with other minds, Wittgenstein observes, this is also how third person statements are generally used. Now just as the interrelatedness between inner and outer can be captured by means of the notion of aspect, Wittgenstein's account of the third person perspective can be explained in terms of seeing-as. Indeed, given that Cartesians hold sentences like "He is in pain" to be speculations based on a prior inventory of someone's doings and sayings, Wittgenstein's arguments against taking aspect perception to ultimately be a matter of interpreting can be said to be arguments against this element of Cartesianism too. Just as the exclamation "It's a duck!" is not mediated by a reflection on what the duck/rabbit could possibly represent, "He is in pain" signals someone's immediately taking another person's behaviour to be a plain instance of agony. Both sentences are not hypotheses but report what a person actually sees before his or her eyes.

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[173] The concept of seeing-as also played a vital role in my explanation of the difference between Wittgenstein and behaviourism; as I claimed, the difference is one of ontology and epistemology combined. I will come back to this shortly.

However, as I also discussed in section 3, this does not mean that Wittgenstein explains the uncertainty distinctive of third person utterances away. Just as his denying that "It's a duck!" is a hypothesis does not mean that the duck/rabbit could not also be seen differently, Wittgenstein's denying that "She is overjoyed" is a speculation does not imply that one can never be mistaken or misled about another person's thoughts and feelings. On Wittgenstein's view, there is evidence on the basis of which we can ascertain what someone else is thinking or feeling but this evidence is, to a bigger or smaller extent, ambiguous and diffuse. It is after all not just someone's concrete doings and sayings, but also the fine shades and contexts thereof that one takes or has to take into account. In other words, third person statements report the perception of aspects, not the clear and distinct objects that may be the most conspicuous but are certainly not the only objects of sight.[174]

This brings me to the findings of section 5, in which I explored the Wittgensteinian insight that the inner is not merely always already outer but is always already social too. In contrast to Cartesianism, I pointed out, Wittgenstein maintains that a person's psychological life stands to be developed, and more precisely holds that this development occurs as a result of a socialization process. That is to say, Wittgenstein identifies certain biological facts – from the infant's primitive reactions to the subsequent growth of its cognitive and bodily capacities - that make the social formation of mental matters possible, but even so observes that there are many thoughts and feelings a person can only have or undergo after having made a communal expressive pattern her own.

This notion of pattern, I suggested, serves to bring across, not just the vagueness and multifariousness of mental matters, but also the unity or recognizability that nonetheless exists when it comes to (non-basic) psychological phenomena. Two different constellations of behavioural and contextual elements can for instance both be manifestations of gratefulness because the persons *in casu* have incorporated the same reactive prefiguration to what they have learned to be thankworthy occasions. This accordingly has ramifications for the third person perspective as well. In order for someone to recognize a behavioural complex as an instance of gratitude, she has to be able to take it as an instance of this larger communal pattern. And this ability, Wittgenstein maintains, is also something one only develops in the course of a socialization process.

Returning to the parallel with his analysis of aspect perception, Wittgenstein's remarks on seeing as can even be used to recap his observations about the sociality of subjectivity. For similar to a person's seeing the duck/rabbit, not in isolation, but against the background of other (picture-)ducks accounts for her having a duck perception, an onlooker is able to see gratitude or grief in someone's contextualized shades of behaviour because she instantly takes it to be a manifestation of the larger

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[174] Which is of course not to say that mistakes and deception is not possible when it comes to the perception that is not of the seeing-as kind - it is merely to try and bring out how aspect perception itself can be described.

expressive pattern that the first person has made his own. In Wittgenstein's words: "We combine diverse elements into a 'Gestalt' (pattern), for example, into one of deceit."[175] Moreover, that this delicate and dispersed evidence has to be taken together and brought under a concept - and may therefore not be accessible to just anyone - does not make gratitude or grief into something imaginary, just as the fact that noticing a duck is not a matter of taking in unambiguous information does not yet make it into a matter of subjectively interpreting the facts. That psychological phenomena are aspects of the human being also captures that thoughts and feelings can be said to have their life, not so much on the outside of the individual subject, as in the interspace between the subject and its fellow men.

Yet, I claimed, there is more than one sense in which the notion of an interspace is appropriate when it comes to mental matters, and this brings me back to my initial reason for introducing the concept of seeing-as. For in order for an onlooker to be able to see a third person's hope or grief, she need not only recognize someone's doings and saying as an instance of a larger expressive pattern; she also has to take these doings and saying as expressive of mind in the first place. As I argued in section 4, this always already taking another person's actions and reactions to be more than mere behaviour is a matter, not of seeing *tout court*, but of seeing-as. In the preceding pages, it should have become sufficiently clear what this attitude towards other human or living beings implies, but there is in fact one element of Wittgenstein's aspect analysis I have not yet addressed; an element that can however not be left out if one wants to use the aspect analysis to summarize Wittgenstein's view on mind and mental matters in its entirety.

In his reflections on seeing-as, Wittgenstein remarks that there is an important distinction to be made: "I must distinguish between the 'continuous seeing' of an aspect and the 'dawning' of an aspect."[176] While both the suddenly seeing a duck in the duck/rabbit, say, and the taking a two-dimensional picture to represent something three-dimensional, may make one wonder whether it is seeing or interpreting that is the case, there seems to be a difference between such a momentary and such an uninterrupted kind of seeing-as. Wherein exactly this

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[175] RPPii 651. Let me use this opportunity to point out that my working out the similarities between Wittgenstein's analysis of aspect perception and his analysis of mental matters differs slightly from the way in which e.g. Johnston and Mulhall put this parallel to work. In addition to Johnston (see Johnston 1993, p. 183), I do not only think that these analyses converge when it comes to the directness of the perception involved and the vagueness of the phenomena at issue; as my reading brings out, the parallel also holds because the ambiguous information that is observed has to be brought under a *Gestalt*. This is also mentioned by Mulhall (see Mulhall 1993, p. 77), but in addition to his reading, I take this *Gestalt* or pattern to be a social affair and thus use this element of the aspect analysis to bring across the sociality of subjectivity (which is by no means denied by Mulhall but not described in the same manner). For the difference between my applying the aspect analysis and Cavell's, who is perhaps most famous for pointing to these similarities, see my remark in footnote 50 of this chapter, explaining that Cavell is more interested in drawing out the ethical implications of Wittgenstein's account of (other) mind(s) than in spelling out what Wittgenstein's non-Cartesian ontology amounts to.
[176] PI II § xi 194c.

difference lies is unclear; it can for instance be debated whether continuous aspect perception is a prolonged form of the sudden noticing of an aspect or an experience of a different kind - if it can be said to be an experience at all.[177] Wittgenstein himself nowhere gives an unambiguous description of the distinction between continuous and suddenly seeing-as.[178] A similar distinction, however, can clearly be said to be at work in his account of mind. For on his view, as was just recapitulated, a person is only able to see someone else's thoughts and feelings - or notice these aspects of her being – if she takes these doings and saying to more than just behaviour – or always already sees it as expressive of mind. Even if it is unclear wherein the exact difference between continuous and sudden aspect perception lies, Wittgenstein's analysis of mental matters mirrors his analysis of seeing-as in this respect too. In both senses, psychological phenomena can be said to be aspects of human life or human being.

This, then, is what I take to be Wittgenstein's alternative to the Cartesian view on the nature of man. The notion of aspect can be used, as I hope to have shown, to succinctly convey that Wittgenstein locates psychological phenomena on the outside rather than the inside of the subject, or even in the interspace between a community of subjects. Dubbing psychological phenomena aspects of the human being thus brings out both the embodiedness and the embeddedness that distinguishes Wittgensteinian from Cartesian subjectivity. For when Wittgenstein states that "The human being is the best picture of the human soul,"[179] he obviously does not have a *homunculus* in mind, but he is not thinking of the isolated individual subject either. He is thinking of a person living amongst her fellow men.

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[177] See my earlier remarks in footnote 157 on Baz's 2000 arguments against the use that many interpreters make of Wittgenstein's concept of continuous aspect perception.

[178] Compare for instance PI II § xi 210c-d and RPPi 1028 with RPPi 358 and LWi 776.

[179] RPPi 281. According to the remark included in PI II (§ iv 178g), it is the human *body* that is the best picture of the human soul. There are four versions of this remark to be found in Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*, and only the one of the latest date uses "human body" rather than "human being". Yet even though this could indicate that Wittgenstein considered it to be a better formulation, I prefer to avoid its behaviourist connotations and use RPPi 281 instead.

Intermezzo I

Ethical arguments against non-Cartesian accounts

On my reading of his philosophy of psychology, Wittgenstein aims to provide an account of subjectivity that captures the nature or being of human being more adequately than Cartesianism is able to do. According to the analysis laid out in the previous chapter, Cartesianism not only unduly focuses on just one element or feature of the human subject – to wit, its being endowed with mind – but moreover gives an explanation thereof that should be said to be wanting, no matter how well equipped Cartesianism may seem for shedding light on the nature of the mental. Describing psychological phenomena as literally inner entities fails to account for thoughts and feelings as we know them from our everyday practices, and a model that does not exclude everything remotely suggesting that mental matters are not utterly and completely private - such as the expression of sensation and the socio-cultural background thereof - also leads to a less one-sided perspective on the kind of beings we are. In Wittgenstein's book, psychological phenomena are aspects of the human being rather than inner objects or processes. Far from taking them to be subsidiary characteristics that might just as well be explained away, Wittgenstein shows that the subject's materiality and sociality pertain to its very essence.

However, in spite of the fact that Wittgenstein can be said to try and save Cartesianism from itself, so to speak, he has been accused of effectively undermining each and every notion of subjectivity. His situating mental matters on the outside rather than the inside of the subject has led commentators to claim that Wittgenstein does away with psychological life in its entirety. His more precisely explaining this outer in terms of an interspace between a community of subjects has led critics to state that the subject is, on Wittgenstein's view, a mere cog or bolt in a larger social machinery and accordingly has no existence in its own right. But it is not only Wittgensteinian subjectivity about which such things have been said: similar observations or accusations have been made with regard to other rethinkers

of Cartesianism.[1] What is more, as I explained in the introductory chapter, critics take this to mean that the post-Cartesian perspective is both ethically and politically inadequate, if not outright irresponsible. Given that this dissertation wants to contribute to the subjectivity debate, not only by making one of the voices therein more explicit, but also by evaluating the backlash that the dismantling of the Cartesian Ego has received, let me have a closer look at these criticisms. In this intermezzo, I will discuss the arguments as to the ethical deficit of post-Cartesianism.

While the twentieth century attempt to remove or reinvent the Cartesian Ego has been highly influential, it has met with much disapproval too. Thinkers critical of the anti-Cartesian turn that the debate on subjectivity took, maintain that the postmodernists (to once more use this label as a shorthand for positions that are in fact not entirely equivalent) may be correct in some of their arguments against Cartesianism but have taken their anti-Cartesianism much too far. The critics of post-Cartesianism for instance contend that the rethinkers of the subject end up jeopardizing the very idea of a human being to whom thoughts and feelings, from the most mundane to the most profound ones, can be ascribed.

Manfred Frank brings this to attention by pointing to particular psychological phenomena that post- or anti-Cartesianism seems to rule out. He observes that Heidegger's *Dasein* has an "incapacity for sorrow"[2] and argues that the "dead subject emits no more cries of pain."[3] Iris Murdoch straightforwardly claims that the twentieth century rethinkers of the subject discard "private coherent mental activity [and] mental reality"[4] in its entirety. She unreservedly attributes this position to Wittgenstein as well. Though Murdoch feels that the postmodernists overturned Cartesian interiority "with greater panache,"[5] she maintains that Wittgenstein no less undermined "the whole multifarious mixed-up business of our inner [...] experiences."[6] Frank, in turn, holds that Wittgenstein made "an unusually valuable contribution to the proper understanding of subjectivity"[7] but ultimately sides with Murdoch's appraisal of the Wittgensteinian enterprise, claiming that it only facilitated the construction of the myth that self-consciousness is not a pre-linguistic phenomenon in its own right.

According to commentators such as Frank and Murdoch, this mythology is not something to be applauded, and they give several reasons as to why the Wittgensteinian and/or postmodern subversion of subjectivity should be criticized. Murdoch for instance holds that the upsetting of the Cartesian inner-outer model

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[1] In the remainder of this intermezzo as well as in the second intermezzo, I will discuss the arguments that have been levelled against Wittgenstein and post-Cartesianism in more detail.
[2] Frank 1989, p. 5.
[3] Idem, p. 10.
[4] Murdoch 1992, p. 152.
[5] Ibidem.
[6] Idem, p. 279.
[7] Frank 1995, p. 32.

fails to do justice to our everyday experience of both our own and other minds, prompting her to ask (rhetorically, no doubt): "Can this be a full philosophical account of human life?"[8] Frank furthermore points out that when critics of Cartesianism discuss the pain and suffering possibly resulting from the community's rule over the individual, they show themselves to be wholly inconsistent. If there is no pre-linguistic or pre-existing subject, he remarks in response to Deleuze and Guattari's writings, there is also no one to "suffer under the coercion of language" or to "perceive the theft of its freedom by 'grammar' as a loss."[9]

For both Murdoch and Frank, however, it is neither phenomenological considerations nor observations as to the consistency of postmodernism that form the main impetus behind their rejection. At the end of the day, these critics hold that the Wittgensteinian and/or postmodern perspective should be condemned on ethical grounds. The fact that the rethinkers of Cartesianism can no longer speak of a suffering subject not only makes their writings contradictory in places, Frank maintains: this lack of a locus for compassion and engagement makes their entire project into a cynical and amoral enterprise.[10] Murdoch similarly feels that the subversion of Cartesian subjectivity undermines the very basis of morality. What disturbs her most about Wittgenstein and the postmodernists is that their denial of the inner life leaves no more room for matters such as moral sensibility and malicious thoughts, thereby undercutting "the common sense conception of the individual self as a moral centre or substance."[11]

Hence, according to their critics, those responsible for the demise of the Cartesian Ego undermine the very possibility of ethics. This is no small objection, to say the least, and in what follows, I will investigate to what extent commentators are justified in making this claim. As I already explained in the introduction to this dissertation, I strongly doubt whether it makes for a valid counterargument. Even apart from the fact that the reading of post-Cartesianism on which it is based may not be entirely correct, it can be debated whether ethics really requires that we do not follow through with the critique of Cartesianism completely. For if there is a conflict between our moral practices and a renewed perspective on the subject, is there any principled reason that we should retain (part of) the traditional notion of subjectivity rather than rethink these practices as well? And is the anti- or post-Cartesian perspective truly at odds with each and every conception of ethics in the first place? The opposite could also be argued and has been argued, perhaps most emphatically by Emmanuel Levinas. He contends that is only through the self conceived of as always already exposed to and interrogated by the other "that there

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[8] Idem, p. 273.

[9] Frank 1989, p. 338.

[10] Cf. Frank 1989, p. 10; Frank 1995, pp. 30-31. The critique of anti-Cartesianism is often formulated in political terms as well, and Frank's arguments already point in that direction. I will come back to this in the second intermezzo.

[11] Murdoch 1992, p. 152.

can be in the world pity, compassion, pardon and proximity – even the little there is, even the simple "After you, sir." "[12] Far from insisting that we must hold on to the Cartesian model, Levinas claims that we can only begin to understand what ethics is when this schema is overturned.

However, I have not quoted the words of Levinas because I think that he has the sole correct position in the debate as to whether ethics requires that the Cartesian Ego is rejected or retained. Rather than intervening in this discussion about the conditions of possibility of ethics, I want to reflect on the fact that many of the arguments in the subjectivity debate are put in ethical terms to begin with - and, as the example of Levinas makes clear, this holds for arguments for as well as against the rethinking of Cartesianism. Even so, and as I already explained in the introduction to this thesis, I will suspend commenting on the ethico-political nature of much of the debate until the concluding chapter. First, I will investigate the exegetical validity of the objections to the critique of Cartesianism. While I do not think that my reading of Wittgenstein in the previous chapter supports the claim that he jeopardizes the idea of the thinking and feeling human being, I do want to take the fact that the critique of Cartesianism gives rise to such diverging appraisals as an incentive to have a closer look his account.

For as my brief rehearsal of the arguments pro and contra non-Cartesian subjectivity makes clear, this topic is unmistakeably interwoven with many other, highly important issues, yet its exact ramifications are far from self-evident. Even if the undertakings of Wittgenstein and the postmodernists can be described as a rethinking rather than an unthinking of the subject, their project might still affect numerous assumptions we repeatedly make about human being - including those underlying existing conceptions of the ethical – and the extent to which it overturns and/or retains such all-too common assumptions is not yet given with the assurance that post-Cartesianism does not make all talk of self and subjectivity entirely obsolete. So while one might doubt the claim that ethics does not survive the turn that the debate on subjectivity took, one can grant critics like Frank and Murdoch that it is not in all respects clear what it means to embrace the post-Cartesian perspective. I will in any case not let the fact that I question whether ethical considerations always override observations as to the accuracy of an account of the nature of man, prevent me from looking into the interpretational validity of the objections to post-Cartesianism, and investigate some of the implications of this particular take on subjectivity.

Indeed, this will not only enable me to assess the backlash to anti- or post-Cartesianism in more detail in the end, it also enables me to make Wittgenstein's contribution to the subjectivity debate more fully explicit. In the next chapter, I will return to Wittgenstein as one of the main representatives of the post-Cartesian development in order to examine whether commentators are justified in stating that the rethinkers of subjectivity, by turning the Cartesian Ego upside-down and

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[12] Levinas 1981, p. 117.

inside-out, leave one without a locus for our inmost thoughts and feelings. I will investigate whether "the density and real existence of 'inner life' "[13] is truly up for grabs in non-Cartesian accounts of the subject, or at least in Wittgenstein's non-Cartesian account.

Yet in order to do so, it does not suffice to go over the findings of the previous chapter again, since it is precisely these finding that have to be put to the test. There is however another part of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* that can be consulted for this very purpose, namely, his remarks on religious belief. This topic was not only of the utmost importance to Wittgenstein throughout his life, his philosophy of religion[14] also forms a very instructive point of contrast with his philosophy of psychology. This contrast – lest there be any misunderstanding – does not lie in Wittgenstein's religious writings offering hope of morality where his psychological writings fail to do so. While the words "ethics" and "religion" certainly seem to be equivalent in a Wittgensteinian context, I do not consult this part of his oeuvre in order to see whether it makes up for the (alleged) ethical deficit of his philosophy of psychology. As stated, I want to leave discussions about the (im)morality of post-Cartesianism aside and merely take the fact that the implications of this outlook are up for debate as an incentive to have a closer look at it. Wittgenstein's writings on religion are instructive in that respect because the latter, in contrast to his psychological writings, basically disregard the way this phenomenon finds expression in collective patterns and observable doing and sayings.

Judging by his scattered yet recurring contemplations on religious belief,[15] Wittgenstein subscribes to the view that religion is ultimately a matter between the believer and God only. In *Culture and Value* he for instance suggests that being religious cannot amount to merely reiterating established doctrines or phrases: "A theology which insists on the use of *certain particular* words and phrases, and outlaws others, does not make anything clearer."[16] Wittgenstein also holds that the performance of rituals does not form an essential part of belief, even going so far as to state: "Everything ritualistic (everything that, as it were, smacks of the high priest) must be strictly avoided, because it immediately turns rotten."[17]

Now the view that true religiosity does not reside in such externalities does not make for a Wittgensteinian idiosyncrasy: it is endorsed by others as well, perhaps

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[13] Murdoch 1992, p. 279.

[14] The term "philosophy of religion" should be used with some caution when it comes to Wittgenstein. Apart from the fact that none of his philosophy takes a very traditional form, his thoughts on the topic of religion seem to be of a less systematic and perhaps more personal nature than his thoughts on, say, language and meaning, which makes it (even) harder to ascribe him a clear and distinct outlook on this issue. I will however use the term "philosophy of religion" as shorthand for his writings on religion nonetheless.

[15] Wittgenstein's writings on religion include TLP, NB, LE, RFGB, LRB and CV. I will introduce these works or collections of remarks in more detail in the next chapter.

[16] CV 85d.

[17] CV 8a.

most famously by protestant thinkers.[18] What however makes it noteworthy in Wittgenstein's case is that his philosophy of psychology does not allow him to subsequently explain belief as a literally inner process, which after all seems to be a plausible corollary to this conception of religious belief.[19] Yet as another *Culture and Value* remark describes the difference between the believer and the non-believer, the former may "look the same" as the latter in all outward respects, "the interplay of forces within him is nevertheless quite different."[20] This suggests that Wittgenstein situates belief inside the subject and thus falls back on the Cartesian inner-outer model when it comes to religious belief.

A commentator could draw on this remark to argue that Wittgenstein's religious writings contradict or undermine his own undermining of Cartesianism, more or less along the lines of Frank, who observes an internal inconsistency in the project of postmodernism. Apparently, one could argue, his upsetting of the Cartesian Ego goes too far even for Wittgenstein himself. I however think that it is more instructive to take a different route. For in so far as his psychological writings leave one wondering what Wittgenstein makes of our inmost thoughts and feelings, his writings on religion clearly indicate that his locating psychological phenomena in the interspace between a community of subjects did not bring him to deny the possibility of this pre-eminently personal matter or present it as a purely external and conventional affair. Hence, Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion provides an excellent opportunity for putting his embodied and embedded account of the subject to the test, precisely because of the apparent inconsistency with his philosophy of psychology. By investigating to what extent his religious views are compatible with his psychological findings, his claim that the subject's materiality and sociality are essential to it can be further explored, thereby (also) determining the exegetical validity of the ethical counterarguments to post-Cartesianism - at least when it comes to the Wittgensteinian variety.

So, rather than jumping to the conclusion that Wittgenstein's account of the psyche stands in an outright contradiction to his take on a topic that was perhaps even closer to his heart, the next chapter will discuss both convergences and divergences between Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion and his philosophy of psychology. Assuming that Wittgenstein was not suddenly oblivious of his psychological insights when contemplating religious belief, and assuming that there are also non-Cartesian ways of explaining how religiosity does not reside in

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[18] The protestant thinker Kierkegaard seems to have been an important source of inspiration for Wittgenstein's views on religion. He mentions Kierkegaard several times in CV; see CV 31d, CV 32a, CV 38a, CV 53e. Drury 1981a (see pp. 102-104) also recounts Wittgenstein's admiration of Kierkegaard. See Creegan 1989 and Schönbaumsfeld 2007 for comparisons of Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard that also address their respective philosophies of religion.

[19] Let me emphasize that I do not mean to suggest that all thinkers who subscribe to this view necessarily fall back on the Cartesian inner-outer model in their ontology of religious belief.

[20] CV 33a; cf. Schönbaumsfeld 2007, pp. 141-142. Schönbaumsfeld claims that Wittgenstein (as well as Kierkegaard) relegate ethics and religion to the inner.

externalities or superficialities, I will set out to see if Wittgenstein's describing the difference between the believer and the non-believer in terms of a process within can perhaps be seen as a slip of the tongue or a figure of speech. Let me however emphasize that this is not with the aim of saving Wittgenstein from each and every inconsistency. Quite the contrary; it will turn out that his philosophy of psychology and philosophy of religion can indeed not be said to be wholly compatible - albeit not because Wittgenstein explains religiosity as a literally inner process. Rather than showing that Wittgenstein can never be caught contradicting himself, the aim of the next chapter is to remove, if not all the worries of post-Cartesianism's critics, then least some of the unclarities surrounding this development.

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Wittgenstein's philosophy
of religion

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4.1   Introduction

Born into a family of assimilated Jews and given a Catholic burial on the initiative of his friends, Wittgenstein himself was never a practicing believer of any persuasion.[1] Judging by the recollections of those who knew him from up close, however, as well as by the more personal remarks in his notebooks, it is evident that Wittgenstein was occupied with questions of a religious nature throughout his life. He did not consider these to be of a purely private import but deemed a reflection on what it means to believe in the Last Judgement or to perform rituals, say, to be philosophically interesting as well. These topics are at any rate examined in a number of the texts that are part of his philosophical legacy, such as the *Remarks on Frazer's "Golden Bough"* and the *Lectures on Religious Belief*. Yet as Wittgenstein indicated at several occasions, even the writings that do not explicitly deal with religious affairs can be said to have a religious purport or angle. He explained that the *Tractatus* ultimately does not concern logic or language but rather those matters that the treatise rules out from being talked about – namely, ethics and religion –[2] and stated at the time of writing the *Investigations*: "I am not a religious man but cannot help seeing every problem from a religious point of view."[3]

As a result, much has been written on this subject after steady publication of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* gradually brought his religious interest to light. Commentators have discussed Wittgenstein's religious views in their own right as well as in relation to his philosophy as a whole, hinted at but by no means clarified in the remark quoted just now. Let me immediately point out that the following

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[1] More details about Wittgenstein's personal life can be found in McGuinness 1988, Monk 1990 and Waugh 2008 (the latter recounting the vicissitudes of the entire Wittgenstein family).

[2] See BF 35-36.

[3] Drury 1981b, p. 94.

chapter does not contribute to these undertakings.[4] That is to say, I will discuss Wittgenstein's writings on religion not so much for their own sake as for the light they may shed on his account of the mental, so to the extent that I connect his religious views to his philosophy more broadly, it is with regard to Wittgensteinian subjectivity rather than Wittgensteinian methodology.[5] In what follows, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, I will look at his philosophy of religion from a psychological point of view.[6] For as I explained in the preceding intermezzo, Wittgenstein's writings on religiosity provide an excellent opportunity for exploring the implications of the claim that the subject's sociality and materiality are essential to it, as Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology time and again underscores.

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[4] One of the most heated debates about Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion concerns his (purported) fideism. This debate was instigated by Kai Nielsen, who argued in a 1967 paper that Wittgensteinian philosophers of religion (with D.Z. Philips as the main representative) present religion as an isolated language game that needs no justification and can certainly not be criticized by anyone not participating in it; an intolerable perspective. Phillips et al. subsequently tried to show that they never made the claims Nielsen attributed to them, and most importantly argued that there is an even more basic reason why Wittgensteinians cannot be accused of fideism: they do not support theories of any kind, whether fideistic or not. For an overview of the main contributions to this debate as well as further reflection thereon, see Nielsen & Phillips 2005; for a critical evaluation of the debate see Amesbury 2003. Although the fideism debate touches on a number of issue I also explore, in this as well as in other chapters, I will not discuss it any further here because it does not add to my investigation into the compatibility of Wittgenstein's view on religion and his thoughts on the psyche. As should be clear from my exposition in chapter 2, I think that Phillips c.s. are incorrect in claiming that Wittgenstein can be ascribed no substantive accounts whatsoever. However (and although I reject the apparent premise that Wittgenstein's account of religious belief can be considered to be on a par with his account of certainty - more on that in the second intermezzo) I think that Nielsen is wrong to attribute Wittgenstein the claim that once a person has made a certain conviction his own, it can never again come up for discussion; I will develop an argument along these lines in chapter 5.

[5] For writings on the parallels between Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion and his general philosophical method, see e.g. Malcolm 1993, Shields 1993, McCutcheon 2001. Needless to say, to the extent that these commentators take Wittgenstein to undermine rather than participate in philosophical discussions, I cannot wholly agree with their interpretations, even if their readings of Wittgenstein's religious writings resemble mine. Let me however point out that I do not take Wittgensteinian philosophy of religion to be entirely unrelated to Wittgensteinian methodology. That is to say, I will argue later on (see pp. 159-161 of this study) that Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion raises a similar question as his approach to philosophy, namely: How is it possible for the subject to break or suspend the conventions of its community in order to choose its own outlook on life and/or philosophically explore the concepts and certainties it has inherited? (Note that the latter question results from my specific interpretation of Wittgenstein's method and reflects my somewhat divergent understanding thereof - even though I think that a more therapeutic reading should come to terms with it as well; see pp. 161-162 of this study.) I will take up these questions in the fifth and final chapter.

[6] Kerr 1986 also brings Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion in connection with Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology. He points out that idea of a private ego is also a religious myth (see Kerr 1986, p. 43) and explains that just as Wittgenstein criticizes the model of object and designation when it comes to mental matters, he rejects the idea that theological concepts must refer to a metaphysical reality (see pp. 151-156). While these parallels certainly hold, I bring Wittgenstein's view on religion and his thoughts on the psyche together in a different way, discussing religious belief as a psychological phenomenon.

My findings of the previous chapter will accordingly guide me in the current chapter too. I will look at Wittgenstein's remarks on religious belief with basically two questions in mind, derived from my conclusion that Wittgenstein situates psychological phenomena on the outside rather than the inside of the subject, or even in the interspace between a community of subjects. First of all, I will investigate to what extent Wittgenstein holds that religious belief comes to life or resides in a person's verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Disregarding the *Culture and Value* remark quoted in the preceding intermezzo, in which Wittgenstein apparently describes the difference between the believer and the non-believer in terms of something literally inner,[7] I will examine whether a non-Cartesian perspective on the mind-body relation is by and large at work in his philosophy of religion too. The first question to be answered will thus be: Does Wittgenstein maintain that (the contextualized shades of) somebody's doings and sayings form the locus of his or her belief?

That Wittgenstein situates mental matters on the outside rather the inside of the subject (without thereby reducing the inner to the outer) formed an important motivation for my summarizing my findings by means of the notion of seeing-as, but as I explained, the parallel with aspect perception is also instructive when it comes to capturing the sociality of Wittgensteinian subjectivity. For just as a person's duck perception can be explained by her seeing the duck/rabbit, not in isolation, but against the background of other (picture-)ducks, an onlooker is able to see gratitude or grief in someone's contextualized shades of behaviour because she instantly takes it to be an instance of a larger communal pattern. In addition to exploring the inner-outer model at work in his religious writings, I will therefore investigate to what extent Wittgenstein grants the community a similar role when it come to religious belief. The second question to be explored will accordingly be: Does Wittgenstein claim that someone can only be called a religious believer when he has made a particular expressive pattern his own and is able to participate in pre-existing religious practices? When the latter question has been answered as well, it should be sufficiently clear to what extent Wittgenstein's account of religiosity is compatible with his philosophy of psychology.

However, in my attempt to determine this compatibility, I will not answer these two questions one by one. That is to say, instead of dividing the following chapter into two sections, the one devoted to the exteriority of religiosity and the other to the sociality thereof, I will consecutively discuss the main writings that are part of Wittgenstein's religious *Nachlass*. To be sure, I will discuss these works with the questions just formulated in the back of my mind, but I will only make up the final balance after an overview of Wittgenstein's contemplations on religious belief has been given. Hence, in contrast to the other parts of this dissertation, the following chapter will have a chronological rather than a systematic structure – even though

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[7] See CV 33a; cf. pp. 99-100 of the preceding intermezzo.

it is with the aim of answering two systematic questions that I discuss them in the first place.

Several of Wittgenstein's writings can be consulted in an attempt to answer the questions about religious belief as a psychological phenomenon. There are, first of all, the remarks on ethics and religion in the *Tractatus* and the *Notebooks*, a collection of notes written between 1914 and 1916 that can be considered a preliminary to Wittgenstein's groundbreaking first (and only) book. The *Lecture on Ethics*, which Wittgenstein delivered in 1929, also forms a valuable source of information for making some of the views expounded in these early writings more explicit. I will discuss the *Tractatus*, the *Notebooks* and the *Lecture on Ethics* collectively in the first section devoted to Wittgenstein's religious views proper, which is the second section of this chapter. The third section will discuss the *Remarks on Frazer's "Golden Bough"*: a series of comments, written partly before 1931 and partly after 1948, on an at the time highly influential anthropological study of various indigenous rituals. The fourth section, furthermore, examines the *Lectures on Religious Belief*. This collection of remarks consists of the notes that Wittgenstein's students took down during a number of lectures he gave in 1938 and in which he explored the meaning and status of religious statements and concepts. In the fifth and final section exploring Wittgenstein's religious works, I will look at a selection of remarks written between 1914 and 1951 (thus spanning most of Wittgenstein's adult life), which were scattered through the manuscripts he left behind yet do not seem to be part of his "regular" philosophical work. Many of these remarks, nowadays known under the title *Culture and Value*, concern faith and religion. At several points in the sections to come, last of all, I will refer to the recollections of those who got to know Wittgenstein personally, of whom Maurice O'Drury is probably most important in this context. Drury made Wittgenstein's acquaintance in 1929 and discussed religious affairs with him on a regular basis until Wittgenstein's death in 1951, at which Drury also was present.

Two further, not entirely unrelated things need to be pointed out before I embark upon my reading of these writings. As should be clear from the above outline, firstly, the following explorations will lead me through both earlier and later parts of Wittgenstein's oeuvre. While Wittgenstein suggested that a religious perspective informed his every thought, his *Nachlass* contains less remarks that explicitly deal with religion than remarks on, say, mind or meaning, and it would be imprudent to exclude a specific subset of an already limited group of comments beforehand. What is more, regardless of the discontinuity that may exist between his earlier and later thoughts on a topic like language, Wittgenstein's views on religious belief do not seem to have changed fundamentally over the years.[8] From

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[8] Cf. Barrett 1991, pp. xii-xiii; Clack 1999, p. 38; Hughes 2001, p. 85. Rhees argues that there *is* a discontinuity between Wittgenstein's earlier and later thoughts on ethics (see Rhees 1965, p. 21). However, he contends that the development in question follows or runs parallel to transformations as regards Wittgenstein's method (see pp. 24-25), even going so far as to suggest

the *Tractatus* and the *Notebooks* placing religion firmly on the value side of the fact-value dichotomy, to the *Remarks on Frazer* arguing that rituals do not stem from a proto-scientific theory, and the *Lectures on Religious Belief* stating that a dispute about the Last Judgement cannot be settled by pointing to empirical facts – quite a consistent picture emerges from Wittgenstein's writings on religion, both early and late. From this perspective, there is not much reason to leave the *Tractatus*, the *Notebooks* and the *Lecture on Ethics* undiscussed.

That is not to say that there is no difference whatsoever between Wittgenstein's earlier and Wittgenstein's later contemplations on religious matters, and this brings me to the second point that needs to be made in advance of the explorations to come. To the extent that writings such as the *Tractatus* and the *Notebooks* differ from writings such as the *Remarks on Frazer* and the *Lectures on Religious Belief*, it seems that the former, much more than the latter, do not only or primarily concern the status or structure of religious belief, but also give expression to Wittgenstein's own ethico-religious convictions.[9] However, even if form and content can never be neatly separated, it is not so much Wittgenstein's personal beliefs that I am interested in, as his description of what belief is in the first place. In what follows, put differently, I will investigate Wittgenstein's ontology of faith and religion (or his combined ontology, epistemology and sociology thereof, to use the terminology of the previous chapter) rather than his individual views on God and the meaning of life. And when it comes to exploring the former, some of the *Tractatus* and *Notebooks* entries, apart from expressing Wittgenstein's personal convictions, explicitly address the relationship between belief and behaviour[10] - which is the topic of one of the questions I have just laid out. Let me get around to answering them.

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that this methodological development enabled the later Wittgenstein to express ethical views that were already implied yet not made explicit in the early writings (see p. 19). Rhees's wordings thus do not seem to be fully in line with his actual argument: his claim effectively is that there is a difference between Wittgenstein's earlier and later views on what philosophy can and cannot do or say, not that there is a discontinuity between Wittgenstein's earlier and views on ethics. And in so far as Rhees's argument concerns the expressibility of Wittgensteinian ethics rather than Wittgensteinian ethics as such, it is irrelevant to my undertakings. (Also, let me remark that I have my doubts, not only about Rhees's strong anti-essentialist reading of Wittgenstein's later method, but also about his highly relativistic reading of Wittgensteinian ethics. That, however, is something to be debated on another occasion; I will touch upon such issues in the fifth chapter, discussing socio-cultural membership.)

[9] It should be noted that this is perhaps due to a difference in focus rather than to a difference in age or maturity; some of the older CV remarks after all express Wittgenstein's personal convictions as well.

[10] That is to say, they discuss the relationship between willing and acting, but as I will shortly explain, Wittgenstein takes the will to be the bearer of ethico-religious value.

4.2 "One cannot will without doing"

As one of the Tractarian theses states, it is the task of philosophy to "set limits to what can be thought; and, in doing so, to what cannot be thought."[11] One of the things the *Tractatus* argues to be unthinkable and unspeakable (for it takes the limits of the thinkable and the speakable to coincide) is ethics and religion.[12] Wittgenstein however does not argue that one should remain silent about these matters because he wishes to dispose of the ethico-religious in its entirety, as the logical-positivists for instance thought when they first read the book.[13] By consigning ethics and religion to the realm of the unspeakable, Wittgenstein hopes to give them a much firmer place in the Tractarian system in the end. Needless to say, several manoeuvres are required in order to reach this goal; the steps taken by Wittgenstein can be traced in the *Tractatus* as well as the *Notebooks* and the *Lecture on Ethics*.

According to the ontology expounded in the *Tractatus*, the world is a place of accident and arbitrariness. None of the facts that make up the world exist out of

[11] TLP 4.114. It should be noted that the exact aim and method of TLP, which makes an impressive amount of claims only to retract them in TLP 6.54, is far from clear and much debated. The New Wittgensteinians (Cora Diamond and James Conant, among others) defend what is possibly the most radical interpretation, arguing that TLP does not convey any insights, ineffable or otherwise, but is designed to make its readers realize the utter nonsensicality of philosophy. (See Crary 2000 for a collection of papers defending this view; it comes with a specific reading of the later method – I accordingly mentioned it in chapter two as well - but originates in a renewed perspective on TLP, which is the focus of the second part of Crary 2000.) Now if this would be the only correct way to read TLP, the following exposition could be rejected beforehand. For not only does it read the TLP theses non-ironically, it also concerns some of the things that, on a less radical reading of TLP, cannot be said but still show themselves. In other words, as becomes clear in the context of a discussion of Wittgenstein's ethics, the New Wittgensteinians not only make it hard to understand why the later Wittgenstein consistently criticized his earlier views (see e.g. PI p. ix, PI 23, PI 97, PI 144, RPPi 38, OC 321 - why would these explicitly mention TLP insights if it expressed none in the first place?), this radical reading also makes it hard to account for the immense importance Wittgenstein apparently attached to the ineffable (see e.g. BF 35-36, NB 7.7.16, NB 30.7.16, LE 44). In what follows, however, I will not give my own interpretation of TLP's aim and method; for rejections of the New Wittgenstein reading, see Hacker 2000; Proops 2001; Schönbaumsfeld 2007, pp. 84-118; and Stokhof 2002, pp. 274-276.

[12] It should be noted that Wittgenstein tends to address these matters primarily under the label of ethics, but uses this label in a quite specific (if not idiosyncratic) way (cf. Barrett 1991, p. 33, p. 58; Hughes 2001, pp. 71-72). He uses it for reflections, not on what should be done on particular occasions, but on the meaning of life more generally - which explains why he is not unwilling to employ religious terms as well. In what follows, I will use "ethics" and "religion" alternately, often using "ethico-religious" to indicate their interchangeability in a Wittgensteinian context (and what is more, I will conclude this section by arguing that it the ethical part of Wittgenstein's early writings offer an exploration of religious belief rather than a contribution to the conventional study of ethics). Also, even though this is an interesting question, I will not discuss how the ethico-religious relates to other matters Wittgenstein claims to be unspeakable, such as logic and philosophy.

[13] Cf. Clack 1999, pp. 29-34; Hughes 2001, pp. 73-74.

necessity, and all that is might just as well have been different.[14] To be sure, the world as we know it exhibits certain law-like regularities, but these in turn depend on the accidental make-up of the actual world, which is only one of many possible worlds. Causal connections can therefore not be said to be necessary in the most fundamental sense of the word; according to Wittgenstein, only the logical laws that form the scaffolding of the world are entitled to that description: "outside logic everything is accidental."[15] In addition, Wittgenstein makes a strict distinction between fact and contingency on the one hand, and value and necessity on the other, maintaining that nothing of true ethico-religious import can be found among the worldly states of affairs.[16] Similar to his view that the law-like regularities our world exhibits are not necessary in any fundamental way, Wittgenstein distinguishes between value in a relative and value in an absolute sense, and argues that worldly happenings can, as worldly happenings, only be called good or bad in the relative meaning of the word.

This perspective is expounded in the *Lecture on Ethics*. When we say that someone is a good piano player or that it is important not to catch a cold, Wittgenstein points out, we say this with a specific standard or goal in mind. We call a person a first-rate pianist when she "can play pieces of a certain degree of difficulty with a certain degree of dexterity," and appreciate not catching a cold because a cold "produces certain describable disturbances in [one's] life."[17] Wittgenstein dubs these kind of statements judgments of relative value because they only describe someone or something as good relative to a specific goal. As a result, Wittgenstein continues, these judgements can also be formulated in purely factual terms. The sentence "This is the right way to Amsterdam" can for example be rephrased as: "This is the road to take if you want to get to Amsterdam in the shortest time."

When it comes to judgements of absolute or ethical value, on the other hand, no such rephrasing is possible. A statement about the morally good or bad could not involve an "if", for whereas we would find it perfectly acceptable for someone to reply to a claim about the right way to Amsterdam that he wants to take the scenic rather than the shortest route, or that he does not want to go to Amsterdam at all, we would not accept a person informed of the indecency of his behaviour to retort: "I know I behave badly, but then I don't want to behave any better."[18] Wittgenstein takes the morally good to be unconditionally good. For the same reason, he holds that a statement about the absolutely valuable could, unlike a statement of relative value, not be about any specific state of affairs. Wittgenstein contends that nothing that occurs in the worldly realm is intrinsically valuable.

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[14] See TLP 5.135-5.136, TLP 5.634, TLP 6.3, TLP 6.3631-6.36311, TLP 6.37, TLP 6.41, TB 12.8.16.

[15] TLP 6.3.

[16] See TLP 6.41, TB 24.7.16, TB 30.7.16, TB 2.8.16, TB 12.10.16, LE 39-40, LE 43-44.

[17] LE 38.

[18] LE 39.

What we would for instance call a murder - her finger pulling the trigger, the bullet piercing his heart – is in reality nothing but a specific constellation of facts, nothing in and of these happenings themselves is either good or bad: "The murder will be on exactly the same level as any other event, for instance the falling of a stone."[19] According to Wittgenstein, all that happens in the world occurs on the same factual level, and while these happenings can be ascribed relative value, as purely worldly events they are neither good nor bad but ethically neutral.[20]

The example Wittgenstein uses to support his view may not be the most convincing, to say the least, especially since he is speaking of a murder here himself – "murder" is, after all, an evaluative rather than a descriptive term.[21] However, as this Freudian slip already indicates, Wittgenstein does not mean to say that there is nothing unethical whatsoever about the wilful taking of another's life. He means to say that in so far as such an event is immoral, it does not reside in anything factual, in anything clear and distinct we can point to and call its murderousness, so to speak. This non-factual character of ethico-religious value also explains why Wittgenstein, though he initially introduces the distinction between relative and absolute value as a distinction between types of statements, ultimately claims that the morally good and bad belong to those matters we cannot speak about. As the *Lecture on Ethics* continues: "Ethics, if it is anything, is supernatural, and our words will only express facts; as a teacup will only hold a teacup full of water [even] if I were to pour out a gallon over it."[22] Given the Tractarian theory of meaning, according to which language serves and only serves to picture specific states of affairs, ethics' ineffability automatically follows from its non-factuality.

It should furthermore be noted that Wittgenstein does not simply take this non-factuality and ineffability for a fact: he is adamant that it need not be deplored. For if something of ethico-religious value were to be found in the world, the *Tractatus* explains, it would, by virtue of its being just a fact among others, no longer be of true significance: "*in* [the world] no value exists – and if it did exist, it would have no value. If there is any value that does have value, it must lie outside the whole sphere of what happens and is the case."[23] The non-factuality of ethics and religion thus safeguards that these have worth and significance at all, according to Wittgenstein.[24] What is more, that the ethico-religious does not belong to the

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[19] LE 40.

[20] As I will explain shortly, worldly happening can be ascribe ethical value when one looks at them from a different, non-factual point of view.

[21] Cf. Hughes 2001, p. 83. Hughes maintains that Wittgenstein's claim here is untenable. In the remainder of this section, I will come back to Wittgenstein's claim several times and gradually hope to make his reasons for holding it more clear. (Though that obviously does not mean that his analysis of the murder example thereby also necessarily becomes more convincing.)

[22] LE 40; see also TLP 6.4, TLP 6.42, TLP 6.421.

[23] TLP 6.41.

[24] It should also safeguard the ethico-religious from what Wittgenstein considers to be the wrong kind of treatment: he maintains that one should not conceive of it as something that can be discussed and investigated empirically; see TLP 6.52, LE 43-44. As will become clear in the

domain of the factual does not mean that it has no bearing on worldly affairs at all. As Wittgenstein states in the *Notebooks*, at any rate, it is the human subject that guarantees the connection between ethics and the world: "Good and evil only enter through the subject."[25]

In the context of Wittgenstein's early writings, however, "subject" is not an unequivocal term - the human being cannot be appointed the bearer of ethics without further ado. Wittgenstein distinguishes several notions of subjectivity, and in order to understand in what sense he takes it to be the source of ethico-religious worth, we need to a have look at what he more generally does and does not hold the subject to be, as well as what kind or feature of subjectivity he explicitly denies of having any ethico-religious import.[26]

When it comes to the basic ontology of the subjectivity, first of all, the early Wittgenstein - not unlike the later one[27] - takes issue with the Cartesian account of the nature of man. Indeed, the *Tractatus* emphatically states that "there is no such thing as the soul – the subject, etc. – as it is conceived in the superficial psychology of the present day."[28] That is to say, Wittgenstein does not deny that the individual or psychological human being (to use the terminology he himself employs) exists, but points out that in so far as the subject is part of the world, it can only be explained in contingent and factual terms. And this holds just as much for a person's thoughts and feelings as for her body and behaviour. According to the Tractarian ontology, after all, everything we can encounter or experience in the world is, by virtue of its being a worldly affair, of the same factual nature. Moreover, the concept of a pre-given and unchanging bearer of psychological phenomena, such as the one postulated by Cartesianism, becomes highly suspect once it is assumed that the only necessity there is, is logical necessity. On the early Wittgenstein's view, thoughts and feelings simply are events in and of the world; the postulation of a Cartesian realm in order to account for them is neither

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remainder of this chapter, this is a recurring topic in Wittgenstein's thoughts on religion, both early and late.
[25] NB 1.8.16.
[26] The following exposition draws on the interpretation given in Stokhof 2002, explaining that Wittgenstein in fact makes two pairs of distinctions when it comes to subjectivity (see pp. 191-210): first between the individual/psychological and the metaphysical subject, and in addition between the knowing subject and the willing subject. According to Stokhof, these distinctions are by and large orthogonal, though it might be somewhat misleading to distinguish them in a very rigid way. In what follows, I will accordingly not introduce all four Tractarian notions of subjectivity equally explicitly, and will also leave some of the discussions in which they figure untouched. For a more detailed exposition of the younger Wittgenstein's view on the subject, that also traces Schopenhauer's influence thereupon, I refer to Stokhof's book.
[27] As I will explain, the early Wittgenstein maintains that psychological phenomena are simply factual events among others, which is not exactly in line with Wittgenstein's later views on the mental. Even so, there can be said to be a continuity in the sense that both the early and the later Wittgenstein argue against the existence of a Cartesian private realm. I will come back to this shortly.
[28] TLP 5.5421.

acceptable nor necessary: "All experience is world and does not need the subject."[29]

The early Wittgenstein, in other words, supports a Humean account of human being.[30] What he calls the individual or psychological subject consists of nothing over and above a contingent cluster of experiences. This "thin" conception of subjectivity is subsequently supplemented or contrasted with another one, for as Wittgenstein continues, we can also talk about the self as something other than a mere bundle of thoughts and feelings. However, it follows from the Tractarian ontology that in so far as we want to say that the human being is a special kind of being or is unlike anything else we encounter in the world, it cannot be part thereof. The early Wittgenstein therefore contrasts the psychological subject with the so-called metaphysical subject, which concerns the human being, not as a fact among others, but as a limit to the factual realm: "The philosophical I is not the human being, not the human body or the human soul with the psychological properties, but the metaphysical subject, the boundary (not a part) of the world."[31]

It is with regard to this form of subjectivity that Wittgenstein holds solipsism to be both true and coincident with realism, as some of the more notorious Tractarian theses hold.[32] These conclusions follows from Wittgenstein's assumption that logic, being necessary in the most fundamental sense of the word, only comes in one form. Given that it is this one logic that makes up the skeleton or scaffold of the world, there should be said to be only one world form – and if there is only one world form, there is also only one subject to constitute the limit of the world. Wittgenstein however also holds that the metaphysical subject is in turn dependent on the world it delimits, meaning that the kind of solipsism he takes to be true, is ultimately not very substantial. But since the theses about the metaphysical subject do not deal with the subject as the bearer of ethics, there is no need to discuss them any further here.

Wittgenstein, on the other hand, does discuss the status of the psychological subject in ethico-religious affairs.[33] Given the strict distinction he makes between

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[29] NB 9.11.16; see also TLP 5.541-5.5421.

[30] Cf. Stokhof 2002, p. 193.

[31] NB 2.9.16; see also TLP 5.632-5.633, TLP 5.641.

[32] See TLP 5.62, TLP 5.64; cf. Stokhof 2002. pp. 196-203.

[33] Or perhaps this should read: Wittgenstein discusses the status of the individual *thinking* subject in ethico-religious affair. As I pointed out in note 26 with reference to Stokhof 2002, Wittgenstein makes two pairs of distinctions when it comes to subjectivity: in addition two his distinction between the individual and the metaphysical subject, he distinguishes between the knowing and the willing subject. I think that the latter distinction can be explained in terms of two different perspectives that are possible on the former two types of subjectivity: one can approach both the individual and the metaphysical subject from a knowing as well as from a willing perspective. To put this somewhat more elaborately, according to Wittgenstein (who clearly follows Schopenhauer here) one can look at individual and metaphysical subjectivity as being (or not being) part of the world as we discuss it in both science and everyday life, and one look at them from an atemporal, nonfactual ethical perspective. My exposition thus far concerns the individual and the

the factual and the (absolutely) valuable, it should come as no surprise that he denies this form or facet of subjectivity any moral import. Conceived of as a cluster of thoughts and feelings and doings and sayings, the human being cannot be the bearer of ethics, because worldly events as such are ethically neutral. In the *Lecture on Ethics,* to come back to the example discussed a moment ago, Wittgenstein accordingly holds that the thoughts and intentions of the person pulling the trigger do not account for the immorality of a murder: "a state of mind, so far as we mean by that a fact which we can describe, is in no ethical sense good or bad."[34]

This also reflects Wittgenstein's identifying the valuable with the necessary on the one hand, and the factual with the contingent on the other. As I already explained the Tractarian worldview, the only connections that can properly be called necessary are logical ones, which means that there never is a (truly) necessary connection between a person's intentions and the events that do or do not follow them. Given Wittgenstein's assumption that the ethico-religious belongs to the non-accidental sphere, this in turn implies that it is not someone's concrete intentions that make worldly events morally good or bad. The consequences of a person's actions are similarly ruled out from having any impact on the (im)morality thereof,[35] as can be made clear by means of the murder example as well. If someone dies as a result of another's shooting at him, this still belongs to the accidental rather than the necessary domain and is therefore irrelevant when it comes to absolute or ethical value. According to the theory laid out in Wittgenstein's early work, neither the intentions that precede a person's doings and sayings nor the effects that follow from them make any moral difference in the world.

Hence, when Wittgenstein declares that good and evil only enter through the subject, he does not have the individual in mind, conceived of as a contingent cluster of doings and undergoings.[36] However, this does not mean that there is, in the context of the Tractarian system, nothing about human beings that can ever be called morally good or bad. While Wittgenstein's downgrading the importance of intentions and consequences may go against our everyday concept of morality, he does not go so far as to state that human beings or human behaviour is never of an (im)moral nature. According to Wittgenstein, the individual subject turns out to be just a fact among others when one looks at it from a logical point of view, but

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metaphysical subject as part of (respectively limit to) the world, hence from a knowing perspective. I will change to the willing perspective shortly.

[34] LE 39.

[35] See TLP 6.422.

[36] And as a result, in so far as Wittgenstein's claim that ethics requires subjectivity bears resemblance to the arguments that commentator such as Frank and Murdoch levelled against the rethinkers of Cartesianism (see intermezzo I), the concept of subjectivity he employs differs significantly from theirs. Murdoch's claim that in the transition from TLP to PI, something inner is lost (see Murdoch 1992, p. 49) does not seem entirely correct, not only from the perspective of the later work but also from the perspective of the early work.

there is also a different perspective one can take. Indeed, one can conceive of the entire world as a specific constellation of facts, but it is also possible to conceive of it as something in which, despite or beyond its factuality, the absolutely valuable manifests itself.[37] From this perspective, the individual subject appears in a wholly different light, and it is subjectivity in this particular guise that Wittgenstein appoints the bearer of ethico-religious worth. In order to bring out the difference with the individual taken as a bundle of thoughts and feelings, Wittgenstein reserves a different label for it and it and dubs it the willing subject: "I will call "will" first and foremost the bearer of good and evil."[38]

In so far as Wittgenstein's remark about the intentions of a murderer is at odds with the way we might ordinarily come to accuse someone of murder – instead of of manslaughter, say – his concept of the will is in line with what we normally judge to be good or evil in so far as he takes the will to be intrinsically connected to an individual's behaviour. It is, after all, first and foremost human conduct to which our moral concepts apply. However, and in spite of the fact that Wittgenstein uses a seemingly everyday term for the source of ethico-religious value, this is also where the correspondence to ordinary morality breaks down again. To the extent that our doings and sayings are concrete worldly events, Wittgenstein cannot hold them to be good or evil without further ado. Moreover, for the same reason that he is forced to deny a person's intentions any moral import and cannot locate such import in the consequences of someone's actions either, Wittgenstein is prevented from taking the ethical will to relate to behaviour as the phenomenon we normally call by that name.

Normally we say that a person's will precedes his doings and sayings and that he performs these activities as a result of his willing them or in order to bring another desired state of affairs about. Now if this is the way the ethical will enters into the empirical domain, Wittgenstein argues, it would make ethico-religious worth into a wholly arbitrary affair. According to the ontology expounded in the *Tractatus*, to once more repeat my earlier exposition, only logical connections can be called truly necessary and non-accidental. From this perspective, it is simply a matter of luck when a desired state of affairs comes to pass subsequent to one's performing certain activities – indeed, it is simply a matter of luck when one's arm moves subsequent to one's willing it to raise. "Even if everything that we want were to happen," Wittgenstein states, "this would still only be, so to speak, a grace of fate."[39] That is to say, there may be causal connections that explain why a certain event did or did not follow my wanting to bring it about, but these

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[37] I will shortly say more on the exact difference between these two perspectives.

[38] NB 21.7.16; see also NB 11.6.16, NB 5.8.16, NB 15.10.16. Though perhaps my formulation should run: Wittgenstein dubs it the *individual* willing subject - for he also distinguishes a *metaphysical* will. (And here, too, Wittgenstein follows the example of Schopenhauer; cf. Stokhof 2002, pp. 203-210.)

[39] NB 5.7.16; see also TLP 6.374, NB 29.7.16, NB 20.10.16.

connections are dependent on the way the world happens to be and are therefore not necessary in any fundamental way.

In combination with the strict dichotomy Wittgenstein supports between fact and contingency on the one hand, and value and necessity on the other, this means that in so far as human behaviour is connected to willing in the ethical sense, it cannot be the effect or instrument of the will. Wittgenstein is accordingly keen to distinguish the ethical from the ordinary will, and reserves the term "wish" for the latter.[40] It is the not will, he contends, but the wish that precedes our acting and whose outcome is dependent on chance. But the wish is also a contingent phenomenon in another respect: in addition to its being related to its objects in a non-necessary way, it is also always directed at concrete worldly events. In an attempt to prevent ethics from turning out to be an arbitrary affair, Wittgenstein defines the ethical will by means of its contrast to the everyday wish and distinguishes the former from the latter in both respects just mentioned. He claims: "The act of the will is not the cause of the action but is the action itself. One cannot will without acting," and declares: "If the will has to have an object in the world, the object can be the intended action itself."[41] Wittgenstein thus suggests that the ethico-religious will concurs or coincides with our actions, both in the sense of not preceding them and in the sense of not being directed at anything else.

This move may not seem to be of much avail in preventing ethics from becoming an arbitrary affair, for if willing wholly coincides with acting, it should ultimately be said to be as much a contingent fact as our doings and sayings and everything else we encounter in the world. As Wittgenstein however also proclaims: "The will is an attitude of the subject to the world."[42] By means of this statement, it can be made clear how the ethico-religious will is neither itself of a factual nature, nor directed at any purely factual things.

At this point, another distinction needs to be introduced first. Similar to his distinguishing between an individual and a metaphysical subject when it comes to the basic ontology of subjectivity, Wittgenstein maintains that there is both an individual and a metaphysical will.[43] For according to Wittgenstein, as stated, one can perceive, not just of the individual subject, but of the entire world as something in which the absolutely valuable manifests itself. That is to say, it is possible to look at the world as a specific constellation of facts – this is the perspective we take in both everyday and scientific discourse - but one can also look beyond the temporal appearance of the world as it happens to be and conceive of it "*sub specie aeternitatis.*"[44] This is the perspective we take when we

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[40] See NB 21.7.16, NB 29.7.16, NB 20.10.16, NB 4.11.16; cf. Stokhof 2002, pp. 206-207.
[41] NB 4.11.16; see also TLP 6.422, NB 30.7.16.
[42] Ibidem.
[43] Cf. Stokhof 2002, pp. 215-216.
[44] See TLP 6.45, NB 7.10.16, NB 8.10.16.

contemplate the very meaning of life and the world, for instance in aesthetic or religious contexts.

Now when one takes this perspective, Wittgenstein continues, one can see "that the facts of the world are not the end of the matter"[45] - indeed, one can see that what matters is not *how* the world happens to be but *that* it exists in the first place: "the miracle is that the world exists."[46] Put differently, according to the early Wittgenstein, that there is a world - not just this world but any world at all - is of unconditional and absolute value. Given that the existence of the world does not constitute a specific fact but forms a precondition for any fact to occur, it can after all be said to be of more than just relative worth. Quite traditionally, furthermore, Wittgenstein associate the existence of the world with the existence of God: "How things stand is God. God is, how things stand."[47] The metaphysical will can thus be said to concern the world in its entirety, conceived of as a manifestation of God's will.

To come back to the kind of will Wittgenstein considers to be the source of value in the factual world, namely, the individual will, this first and foremost owes its ethical relevance to its standing over and against the metaphysical will. As the *Notebooks* explain: "The world is given me, i.e. my will enters into the world completely from outside as into something that is already there. [...] That is why we have the feeling of being dependent on an alien will [...] and what we are dependent on, we can call God."[48] According to the picture evoked by Wittgenstein, the human being always already finds itself in a world that is not of its own making, not responsible for how it happens to be yet not able to change the state of the world to any relevant degree either. In combination with the assumption that the existence of the world is inherently valuable, this means that the individual subject, ethically speaking, faces one fundamental choice: she can either accept the world as it is given to her or resist that it is the way that it is. In other words, good and evil enter the worldly realm when the individual willing subject obeys, respectively defies, the will of God. The morally commendable person – or, in Wittgenstein's words, the happy man – exists in complete harmony with the world, whereas the morally lamentable individual – or the unhappy man – refuses to live in peace with whatever tragedies and amenities life throws his way.[49]

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[45] NB 8.7.16.

[46] NB 20.10.16; see also TLP 6.44, LE 41-42.

[47] NB 1.8.16; see also TLP 6.432, NB 11.6.16, NB 8.7.16. It should however be noted that Wittgenstein's conception of God is not traditional in the sense that he does not conceive of God as a creator or transcendent being, for instance.

[48] NB 8.7.16; see also NB 6.7.16, NB 11.6.16.

[49] See NB 5.7.16, NB 6.7.16, NB 8.7.16, NB 29.7.16, NB 30.7.16, NB 13.8.16, TLP 6.43; cf. Stokhof 2002, pp. 216-220. As Stokhof explains (see p. 218), Wittgenstein thus presents life itself as the ultimate ethical task, which explains his rejection of suicide as the elementary sin; see NB 10.1.17.

It can now be clarified how the individual will, which Wittgenstein takes to concur or coincide with our doings and sayings, both for not preceding them and for not being directed at anything else, is neither of the same factual nature as human behaviour, nor directed at contingent worldly things – both of which would fly in the face of his trying to explain ethical willing as an absolutely valuable rather than a wholly arbitrary affair.

That the individual will is not directed at anything factual follows from Wittgenstein's taking ethics to consist, at the most fundamental level, of either conformity or opposition to the will of God as it is manifested in the existence of the world. Or to be more precise, its not being directed at anything factual is what distinguishes the good or happy from the bad or unhappy will. For if being ethical is a matter of accepting the world as it is, the key to the good life is precisely to renounce all desires and attachment to particular things – to end the ongoing struggle to bring this or that state of affairs about and prevent this or that from happening. Wittgenstein observes: "I cannot bend the happenings of the world to my will: I am completely powerless. I can only make myself independent of the world – and so in a certain sense master it – by renouncing any influence on happenings."[50] Only when one no longer wishes for anything, no matter how agreeable or disagreeable, one can genuinely say: "I am doing the will of God."[51]

That the good will does not concern particular facts is also reflected in the difference it makes in the life of the happy person as opposed to that of the unhappy man. Good willing, not being directed at anything factual, does not change the facts of the world, Wittgenstein explains, it only affects how the world in its totality appears to the individual human being: "If good or evil willing affects the world it can only affect the boundaries of the world, not the facts. […] The world must, so to speak, wax or wane as a whole. As if by accession or loss of meaning."[52] The happy person, in other words, is able to see the world as a meaningful whole, whereas the life of the unhappy man lacks this ethico-religious quality, no matter how – or precisely because – he struggles to come to terms with the world in which he finds himself. According to Wittgenstein, leading a happy life means being in awe of the world in its entirety, or admiring existence in whatever form it comes.

Moreover, in line with his taking the relationship between cause and effect to be of a non-necessary nature, Wittgenstein holds that happiness is not a specific state of affairs that results from abiding by the will of God, but maintains that it consists of nothing more and nothing less than a life in harmony with the world: "In order to live happily I must be in agreement with the world. And that is what "being happy" means."[53] Hence, in so far as the individual will has no other object

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[50] NB 11.6.16; see also NB 6.7.16, NB 8.7.16, NB 29.7.16, NB 13.8.16.
[51] NB 8.7.16.
[52] NB 5.7.16.
[53] NB 8.7.16.

in the world than the actions it concurs with, it is not directed at concrete worldly activities but concerns an entire way of leading one's life, which does not serve to bring yet another thing about but is a goal in itself. In this respect too, the ethical will does not have particular facts or things as its aim, no matter what Wittgenstein's equating willing with acting may seem to suggest.

This brings me to the fact that even though Wittgenstein claims that the individual will concurs or coincides with human behaviour, it is not of the same factual and contingent nature as concrete and distinct doings and sayings. For as I just explained, Wittgenstein does not just maintain that the will is an attitude of the subject to the world as a whole rather than to particular facts, he also takes ethical willing to be an attitude of the subject to the world in the sense of concerning an individual's entire way of life. This means that when Wittgenstein identifies willing with acting, he does not have isolated activities in mind but is thinking of someone's doings and sayings in so far as these testify of her general outlook on life and the world. Whether a particular action is good or bad thus depends on the kind of life it is part and parcel of, and the ethical will can, conversely, be said to be an intrinsic part of everything a person says and does. Instead of being fact-like itself, the individual will rather forms the ethico-religious dimension of human behaviour.

To recapitulate my reading so far, being (im)moral is, on Wittgenstein's view, thus a matter of the way in which someone leads her life, which explains why he situates the bearer of ethico-religious worth - the individual ethical will - in human behaviour. And as a result, Wittgenstein is justified in claiming that good and evil have a place in the world, even though he maintains that worldly events as such are ethically neutral. He after all takes good and evil to be inherently connected to our doings and sayings, that take place in the worldly realm. The strict distinction he supports between fact and value however also forbids Wittgenstein from identifying willing and acting all the way through. He accordingly does not equate the will with any concrete doings and sayings but takes it to be the ethical dimension of human conduct: a quality that only becomes apparent when one looks at a particular activity from the perspective of someone's entire life and when one moreover conceives of this life as a testament to the will of God rather than a concrete succession of facts. This is how Wittgenstein explains how willing pertains to the world without being of the world.

Hence, to come back again to the example discussed several times already, while Wittgenstein cannot account for the immorality of a murder by pointing to a person's intentions or the consequences of her acts, he does not lack the means to explain what is wrong about the wilful taking of another's life. According to the account laid out in his early writings, such an act would testify of an outlook on life that does not respect existence in whatever form it comes, as a morally good person would. However, while Wittgenstein is thus able to accommodate the immorality of a murder – and even apart from the fact that one might still disagree

with his exact explanation – the account of ethics he offers does not seem to provide much guidance in situations that are not a matter of life or death. After all, cases concerning someone's or something's existence as such do not exhaust the instances that call for an ethical choice or evaluation; a moral dilemma might also concern the quality of a life, for instance. In so far as Wittgenstein has anything to say about such cases, he explicitly advises to live in peace with whatever conditions one finds oneself in. He is likewise silent at best and perhaps dismissive in fact about any duty we might have towards the wellbeing of others; his plea not to try and bend the world to one's needs and desires seems to hold just as must for the needs and desires of other men.[54] It could be asked whether an account that does not treat some of the most vital and complex ethical issues, and takes an unduly general and rigid view to the extent that it does treat thereof, still counts as viable theory of ethics.

The answer to that question should probably be "No" – yet while a scholar in moral theory will most likely be unsettled by such criticism, it is unlikely to upset the early Wittgenstein. It should be noted that the famous final statement of the *Tractatus* can be read, not as ruling out all talk and reflection on subjects like ethics whatsoever, but as more specifically warning against the theorizing about these things.[55] Wittgenstein maintains that ethics and related affairs, not being of a factual nature, do not lend themselves to such technical treatment. He consigns the ethico-religious to the domain of the unspeakable to safeguard it from what he takes to be a dangerous and disrespectful approach, and will therefore consider the claim that he does not offer a viable ethical theory to be praise rather than critique. Moreover, the possible unsatisfactoriness of his account might also have to do with the fact that Wittgenstein is not so much interested in providing a measuring rod for assessing the morality of particular events, as in exploring what it means to be concerned with the meaning of life more generally. Rather than contribution to the customary study of ethics, Wittgenstein's investigations take up questions pertaining to the topic of religious belief.

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[54] See NB 29.7.16. Cf. Stokhof 2002, pp. 232-234. Stokhof tries to ease the worries that Wittgenstein's outlook leads to a fatalistic attitude with no room for active involvement with others. As he explains, Wittgenstein holds that the distinction between individual selves should, on the fundamental ethical level, be abandoned, which implies that one's liberation from the world is necessarily tied to the liberation of others. However, a dissolvement in the metaphysical will will only be experienced as a liberation by those who share the early Wittgenstein's ideas about life and the world. In so far as a person is unimpressed by them, this is also where engagement à la Wittgenstein comes to a halt again.

[55] This is also how Wittgenstein explained his verdict vis-à-vis ethical theory to *Wiener Kreis* member Friedrich Waismann; cf. Waismann 1984, pp. 116-117; cf. Stokhof 2002, pp. 211-212. That (scientific) theorizing is antithetical to the ethico-religious is an insight that can be encountered in all of Wittgenstein's religious writings, as will become clear in the sections to follow.

Put differently, it can be argued that Wittgenstein is not only not intent on offering a *theory* of ethics, he can also be said not to be concerned with what conventionally goes by the name of ethics at all. And as an exploration of religiosity rather than a theory of morality, Wittgenstein's remarks are perhaps less susceptible to reservations such as those I have expressed just now. Most importantly, however – and to come back to my reason for consulting Wittgenstein's religious thoughts in the first place - the account of religiosity that can be formulated on the basis of his early writings does not seem to be at odds with the critique of Cartesianism formulated in his philosophy of psychology.

Indeed, even if the Tractarian claim that thoughts and feelings are worldly events among others stands in contrast to his later being "not that hard up for categories"[56] when it comes to accommodating the mental, there is a continuity in Wittgenstein's thinking about mind in so far as both his earlier and his later writings dismiss the need for a private Cartesian realm in order to account for psychological phenomena. According to the Tractarian ontology, as stated, the postulation of an unchanging Cartesian-style container for thoughts and feelings is neither acceptable nor necessary; the soul in that sense does not exist. In line with these principles, the early Wittgenstein does not situate religious belief in an inner space that only the believer has access to. On my reading of the *Tractatus*, the *Notebooks* and the *Lecture on Ethics*, he takes religiosity to be a matter of a person's outlook on life as it is manifested in her worldly activities. In complete resonance with the later Wittgenstein's explaining mental matters in terms of aspects of the human being, the early Wittgenstein holds that a person's ethico-religious views have their life as a specific aspect or dimension of her conduct.

Hence, even though Wittgenstein at one point describes the difference between the believer and the non-believer in terms of "the interplay of forces within,"[57] his writings on religion so far do not conflict with his embodied and embedded account of subjectivity. That is to say, his early writings on religion are compatible with his later writings on the nature of man in that the former locate religiosity on the outside rather than the inside of the subject. In contrast to his psychological writings, however, Wittgenstein's religious remarks do not just take belief to be manifested in a certain conglomerate of (contextualized shades of) behaviour - they present religiosity as a dimension of *everything* a person says and does. Moreover, while his philosophy of psychology argues that a person's (contextualized shades of) behaviour only makes for manifestations of hope or grief when it is taken to be an instance of a larger cultural pattern, in the context of the early Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion it is the *individual* believer's life that forms the background against which her particular doings and sayings should be seen. In other words,

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[56] RPPii 690; cf. p. 74 of this study. But then again, the Tractarian ontology does not imply that all worldly events are of the same *empirical* nature; that it holds psychological phenomena to be worldly events among others therefore does not automatically amount to a form of reductionism.
[57] CV 33a.

although the term "aspect" can be used to explain both Wittgenstein's later account of subjectivity and his early account of religiosity, not all elements of the latter seem to have a counterpart in the former.

However - and apart from the fact that this need not mean that Wittgenstein's writings on religion stand in an outright contradiction to his thoughts on subjectivity - final conclusions as to the compatibility of these two parts of his oeuvre cannot be drawn before other remarks belonging to Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion have been consulted as well. In the next section, I will investigate what account of religiosity can be extracted from the observations nowadays known as the *Remarks on Frazer's "Golden Bough"*. These remarks are of a much later date than the *Notebooks* and the *Tractatus* - though the first part was written only two years after the *Lecture on Ethics* - and, in contrast to the early writings, do not so much discuss religious belief as it is manifested in a person's entire way of life but investigate specific, supra-individual religious activities, namely, the rituals that human beings perform all over the world and have performed throughout the ages. Consulting the *Remarks on Frazer* can thus only deepen one's understanding of Wittgenstein's view on religiosity.

4.3 "Such actions may be called Instinct-actions"

While Sir James George Frazer was considered to be the embodiment of the way anthropology should *not* be conducted by the time he died in 1941, the classicist-turned-anthropologist was highly influential in an earlier stage of his career, and not just among academics.[58] A lifelong fellow of the same Cambridge college Wittgenstein was affiliated with, Frazer owed his fame and notoriety primarily to a study called *The Golden Bough*. This book starts out as an attempt to understand a ritual concerning priesthood that used to take place in the grove of Diana near Nemi, a village not far from Rome. Its title derives from a Turner painting depicting a scene from the *Aeneid*, in which Aeneas is told that the offering of a golden bough will guarantee him safe passage through the underworld - and according to Frazer, Turner sets it in that very grove. Yet while Turner presents "a dream-like vision" of the Nemi surroundings, Frazer explains, "In antiquity this sylvan landscape was the scene of a strange and recurring tragedy."[59] For according to the rule of the Diana sanctuary, "A candidate for the priesthood could only succeed to office by slaying the priest, and having slain him, he retained office till he was himself slain by a stronger or a craftier."[60]

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[58] The following exposition on Frazer and *The Golden Bough* draws mainly on Ackerman 1994. What made Frazer's work outdated was that he did not do any field work himself; his descriptions relied on the accounts of others, from classical authors to missionaries he specifically consulted. Gradually, this type of "library anthropology" came to be regarded as inappropriate.

[59] Frazer 1994, p. 2.

[60] Ibidem.

The Golden Bough however does not only deal with this particular rite. Frazer's desire to comprehend the why and wherefore of such a "barbarous custom"[61] lead him to recount numerous other rituals, including those that were practiced in Europe's rural areas in Frazer's own days. As a result, *The Golden Bough* continuously expanded. It consisted of two volumes when it was first published in 1890 but grew to three volumes in 1900 and to no less than twelve in 1911-14. This did not make Frazer's study any less popular (though the appearance of an abbreviated, one-volume edition in 1923 may have helped). Readers delighted in its description of both more and less exotic customs, but what attracted – and/or appalled - people most was the message that, though nowhere made explicit, made itself felt throughout the book. For while Frazer only discussed ancient and pagan rituals, it was clear that he meant his analysis to apply to the Christian religion too. He maintained that both pre-Christian magic and Christianity constitute attempts to understand the workings of the world. With the advancement of modern science, however, a much better way to explain these has become available. Hence, Frazer suggests, just as Christianity by and large replaced its heathen predecessors, it will itself be superseded by science, which offers by far superior means to understand and influence the world. What begins as an investigation into Nemi priesthood thus ends as a theory about the evolution of mankind.[62]

As his friend and pupil Maurice O'Drury recalls, Wittgenstein had long wanted to read *The Golden Bough*; in 1931, he asked Drury to get hold of a copy in order to be able to go through the book together.[63] Drury borrowed the first volume of Frazer's work from the library and discussed it with Wittgenstein over the course of several weeks. The first part of the *Remarks on Frazer* stems from this period. The second part of the remarks probably dates back to 1948 and is based on the abbreviated edition of *The Golden Bough*, of which Wittgenstein received a copy in 1936.[64] This second encounter does not seem to have brought Wittgenstein to change his mind about Frazer, but that does not mean that the collective remarks on the latter's book form one coherent whole. That is to say, *The Golden Bough* prompted Wittgenstein to raise a number of issues and the *Remarks on Frazer* accordingly encompass several strands of thought. Even though it is – characteristically - not always possible to sharply distinguish between the questions he addresses, Wittgenstein can for instance be said to ask: What is so fascinating about the rituals that Frazer describes and what is the best way to come to terms with that fascination?[65] To what extent are examinations into the historical origins of a rite relevant to the understanding thereof and might a non-causal explanation

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[61] Idem, p. 3.
[62] Cf. Ackerman 1994, pp. ix-xi.
[63] Drury 1981b, p. 119.
[64] Cf. Klagge & Nordmann 1993, p. 115.
[65] This is the main focus of Cioffi 1998.

in the form of a perspicuous representation not be at least as informative?[66] What does the occurrence of rituals all over the world and throughout the ages tell us about the human form of life?

In what follows, I will not discuss the answers that Wittgenstein develops to these particular question but will confine myself to one other question that Frazer's study prompted him to ask, namely: Should we really perceive of primitive magic as a form of science, and a bad form of science at that? For not unlike many readers of *The Golden Bough*, Wittgenstein primarily had his doubts about the book because of its portrayal of religion as both on a par with and wholly replaceable by scientific activity.

According to Frazer, to explain his account of rites and religion in a little more detail, some of the seemingly irrational and even outright disturbing behaviour of pre-secular man – such as the sprinkling of water on the ground in times of great drought and the sticking of pins in a doll made in the image of his enemy – becomes more intelligible once one realizes that the primitive, unacquainted with the blessings of modern science, is at the mercy of nature's whims.[67] In order to make his life not too uncomfortable or stay alive in the first place, pre-modern man has to find a way to control the forces confronting him. He accordingly postulates several basic principles by means of which he tries to understand the workings of the world, and subsequently applies these to the problems he encounters. Putting to work the law of similarity, for instance, according to which "any effect may be produced by imitating it,"[68] he scatters drops of water on the dried-out soil, assuming that it will cause the rain to fall. Nowadays we know, Frazer continues, that such attempts are wholly futile, but pre-secular man has not yet acquired the same understanding of the world. And looked at as a form of proto-scientific activity, we can at least begin to understand why human beings have engaged (and sometimes still engage) in ritualistic behaviour: it is not entirely irrational but simply constitutes a misguided attempt to understand and control the world around us.

The Golden Bough thus explains religious belief as a system of false hypotheses about the workings of nature, put into practice through rites and rituals. According to Frazer, in other words, rituals originate from a proto- or quasi-scientific theory and form the instruments by means of which pre-modern man vainly tries to manipulate the world. Judging by the *Notebooks'* and *Tractatus'* claims that human conduct may be the instrument of the wish but not of the ethico-religious will, and that religion does not lend itself to theoretical treatment, it should come as no surprise that the *Remarks on Frazer* take issue with Frazer's account of religious

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[66] Cf. Baker & Hacker 2005, pp. 261-262. They cite RFGB 133a as the origin of PI 122 - though it could thus be very interesting to see if RFGB can shed more light on the exact aim and nature of the Wittgensteinian approach, I will only consult it for the light it may shed on Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion.
[67] Cf. Clack 1999, pp. 58-61; Clack 2001, pp. 13-14.
[68] Frazer 1994, p. 9.

belief and ritualistic behaviour. Wittgenstein holds that Frazer's view is highly unsatisfactory, stating: "it will never be plausible to say that mankind does all that out of sheer stupidity."[69] He tries to bring out the implausibility of Frazer's explanation by pointing to two oversights that can be attributed to the latter.

In claiming that the primitive performs rituals as a result of a false theory of nature, as Wittgenstein first of all brings to attention, Frazer seems to have left a large part of pre-secular life out of consideration. That is to say, if his study would have included descriptions of (so-called) primitive behaviour on normal, non-ceremonial occasions, Frazer might not have drawn the same conclusions. For the same person who puts pins in an image of his enemy, seemingly with the intention of killing him, does not cobble together a miniature house assuming that this will eventually yield him a home, and tribes who pray to a Rain King only do so right before the rain period, never in the months "in which the land is "a parched and arid desert"."[70] On Wittgenstein's view, this goes to show that voodoo rituals and rain making ceremonies, among others, are not a matter of misguided science put into practice, or a matter of science put into practice *tout court*. For if ritual behaviour would result from a theory about the workings of the world, one would expect this theory to underlie all of a person's worldly dealings.[71] That this is not the case means that it is Frazer, rather than pre-modern man, to whom a false view can be attributed – a false view of rituals and religion, that is. According to Wittgenstein, and *pace* Frazer: "the characteristic feature of ritualistic action is not at all a view, an opinion, whether true or false."[72]

But there is another oversight that can be attributed to Frazer, the correction of which similarly shows his conclusions about the instrumental and theoretical character of rites and religion to be mistaken. For in claiming that the primitive performs rituals as a result of a false theory of nature, Frazer also seems to have overlooked the similarities between pre-secular and modern life. Many of the activities we (so- called) moderns perform can after all be said to be of a ritualistic or ceremonial nature too. Wittgenstein himself, in any case, sometimes beats the ground with his walking stick when he is mad, or compresses his lips when a person in his company laughs too much, he confesses.[73] However, he never does so because he assumes that such actions will have an effect on the things he is upset or annoyed about. Similarly, a person who kisses the picture of an absent lover does not do so on the basis of a theory about the relationship between pictures and lovers. Hence, even if clear-cut church ceremonies, for instance, no

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[69] RFGB 119d.
[70] RFGB 137b; see also RFGB 121b, RFGB 125a.
[71] Cf. Clack 1999, p. 62; Clack 2001, p. 14; Phillips 1976, pp. 32-35.
[72] RFGB 129b; see also RFGB 199d, RFGB 123g&j.
[73] See RFGB 137c, RFGB 141a.

longer play an important role in modern-day existence,[74] our lives cannot be said to be wholly devoid of rituals, yet we would not for a moment think of saying that the (bigger or smaller) rituals we perform have their roots in theoretical contemplation. Why should this be any different for the primitive who puts pins in an image of his enemy or sprinkles water over dried-out soil?[75] Again, Wittgenstein's conclusions contradict *The Golden Bough*'s: "Burning in effigy. Kissing the picture of one's beloved. That is *obviously not* based on the belief that it will have some specific effect on the object which the picture represents."[76]

According to Wittgenstein, then, Frazer takes a too narrow perspective on the ritualistic behaviour of pre-secular man, failing to take both the connection to the rest of primitive existence and the connection to the life of modern man into account. A broader, less prejudiced view might have prevented him from describing rites and rituals as manifestations of quasi- or proto-science and thus from suggesting that all religious activity is performed out of stupidity. For particular doings and sayings are only eligible for qualifications such as "correct" and "erroneous" or "accurate" and "mistaken" when they are part of a theory purporting to explain the way the world is, Wittgenstein states. Not originating from such empirical speculation, rituals cannot be said to be misguided either: "No *opinion* serves as the foundation for a religious symbol. And only an opinion can involve an error."[77] Frazer is wrong to describe rituals and religion as a flawed and expendable form of science because he is wrong to describe it as a form of science to begin with.

Still determined to safeguard religious belief from what he takes to be an unsuitable and disrespectful approach, there is a clear continuity between Wittgenstein's arguments in the *Remarks on Frazer* and his claims in the *Notebooks*, *Tractatus* and *Lecture on Ethics*; a strict distinction between fact and value seems to inform all of these writings. Similar to the early Wittgenstein's stating that in so far as behaviour is the site of the absolutely valuable, it cannot stand in a causal or instrumental relation to the ethico-religious will, he argues against Frazer's explaining rituals as the means through which primitive man hopes to manipulate the course of nature. And similar to the Tractarian claim that one must not attempt to theorize about matters that do not belong to the factual domain, Wittgenstein takes Frazer to task for describing religious belief as a system of hypotheses about the workings of the world. It may however be wondered whether the continuity between the early writings and the *Remarks on Frazer* goes all the way. That is to say, whereas the early Wittgenstein maintains that the (im)morality of human conduct

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[74] And whether this is true depends on one's definition of "modern". That is to say, contrary to claims that we now live in a wholly secular age, religion is far from absent from many people's lives, including those living in so-called secular countries.

[75] Cf. Clack 1999, pp. 62-63; Clack 2001, p. 15.

[76] RFGB 123j.

[77] RFGB 123g; see also RFGB 119c, RFGB 125e, RFGB 129b. Note that Wittgenstein's objections to O'Hara in LRB rest on the same premise; I will discuss them in the next section.

depends on the outlook on life it is part and parcel of, some of his objections to Frazer suggest that he came to consider religious behaviour as not being based on anything at all.

In response to *The Golden Bough*'s overly intellectualistic interpretation of ritualistic behaviour, Wittgenstein explores what reasons people might have for the performance of rituals if such behaviour cannot be said to spring from an attempt to understand and control nature. And as he observes, when a person kisses the picture of her beloved or sprinkles water over dried-out soil, she does not seem to have any reason or goal in mind; someone engaged in ritualistic behaviour perhaps simply gives vent to the feelings that human existence and the circle of life give rise to.[78] A person sprinkling water over dried-out soil can be said to manifest, not a theory of nature, but human hope or despair, and a person kissing a picture of her beloved can similarly be said to express love or yearning, nothing more and nothing less. Hence, Wittgenstein suggests that rituals have no other goal than the channelling of emotions, if that can be called an (intentional) goal in the first place: "It aims at satisfaction and achieves it. Or rather: it *aims* at nothing at all; we just behave this way and then we feel satisfied."[79] Instead of claiming that rituals have their roots in a theory of nature, Wittgenstein continues, "Such actions may be called Instinct-actions."[80]

Given Wittgenstein's objections to Frazer, this alternative formulation makes perfect sense, since it overcomes both flaws of the latter's account. It not only underscores the non-theoretical nature of rites and rituals but also places them in a much more plausible or favourable light: conceived of as expressions of basic human emotions or celebrations of the course of life, one would think twice before suggesting that rituals are performed out of sheer stupidity. However, if this expressivist account of ritualistic behaviour would be the final analysis Wittgenstein places over and against that of Frazer, the *Remarks on Frazer* would also contradict his own earlier work, no matter what continuities may otherwise exist. For such an expressivistic account implies that when a person engages in rites and rituals, she simply acts for the sake of acting; the *Notebooks* and *Tractatus*,

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[78] See RFGB 123j, RFGB 153e; cf. Phillips 1976, pp. 35-36; cf. Cioffi 1998, pp. 155-128 and Clack 2001, explaining how RFGB may seem to defend an expressivist account of rituals but also arguing why such an account cannot be attributed to Wittgenstein. (And see Ashdown 2004 and Phillips 2003 for a refutation of Clack's claims, at least of his claim that most Wittgensteinian philosophers of religion came to uphold an expressivist account. I have my doubt about Clack's analysis as well, not because he ascribes Wittgenstein a theory of rites and rituals where Wittgenstein cannot be ascribed theories in the first place, as Ashdown and Phillips maintain, but because I wonder whether the alternative explanation he gives of ritualistic behaviour lives up to his own expectations, namely, the avoidance of the dangers of the expressivist account. For while he opposes the latter idea for presenting religion as a language game "neither requiring justification nor susceptible to criticism" (p. 12), he concludes that rituals, like much of human behaviour, cannot be explained or understood and that "these more sinister elements of our ritual history" (p. 26) can only be looked upon in awe.)

[79] RFGB 123j.

[80] RFGB 137c.

by contrast, emphatically claim that willing cannot completely coincide with acting. Whereas some of the *Remarks on Frazer* suggest that rituals do not serve any higher purpose than the venting of all-too human emotions, the earlier writings maintain that a person's doings and sayings are always already indicative of her general outlook on life. Or, perhaps it would be too strong to say that Wittgenstein's discussion of *The Golden Bough* contradicts his early work. Depending on what emotions they channel in response to what events or states of affairs, rituals may after all manifest the very perspective the *Notebooks*, *Tractatus* and *Lecture on Ethics* describe. Even so, the *Remarks on Frazer* nowhere argue that particular doings and saying only qualify as religious behaviour when they are part and parcel of a particular perspective on human existence or existence as such.

To be sure, if there is a difference or discrepancy between his earlier and his subsequent work, this may simply mean that Wittgenstein gradually distanced himself from his initial ideas on religion, but there are also other *Remarks on Frazer* indicating that the claim that ritualistic actions are instinct actions, need not be taken to sum up the complete and final account offered there. Wittgenstein for instance observes, as stated, that "the characteristic feature of ritualistic action is not at all a view, an opinion," but he immediately continues "although an opinion – a belief – can itself be ritualistic or part of a rite."[81] Similarly, in response to Frazer's explanation of why the Nemi priest must be killed by a stronger and craftier successor, Wittgenstein does not simply object that rituals have no cognitive component whatsoever, but less uncompromisingly states: "where that practice and these views occur together, the practice does not spring from the view, but they are both just there."[82] Rather than claiming that ritualistic behaviour cannot have anything to do with views or attitudes, these remarks take issue with Frazer's prioritizing thinking over acting when it comes to religious belief – and a specific type of thinking at that.

Judging by the entries just quoted, it seems that even though Wittgenstein fundamentally disagrees with Frazer's analysis of rites and religion, he does not therefore embrace an account that is the polar opposite thereof. After all, that rituals do not spring from a theory of nature does not mean that they cannot manifest anything but the feelings a person once in a while needs to get off her chest. This suggests that the claim that ritualistic actions are instinct actions should be read, not as constituting the end-point of Wittgenstein's discussion, but as one of the possibilities he explores in his attempt to show Frazer wrong.[83] Or, instead of summing up what the *Remarks on Frazer* unambiguously take to be the essence of religious behaviour, the instinct remark can be said to emphasize how rites and rituals should, according to Wittgenstein, under no condition be explained. That

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[81] RFGB 129b.
[82] RFGB 119d.
[83] Cioffi even calls this remark hyperbolic (see Cioffi 1998, p. 156), suggesting that Wittgenstein may have let his disagreement with Frazer get the better of him at this point.

would place it optimally in line with both the earlier writings on religion and other *Remarks on Frazer's "Golden Bough"*.[84] Being the main candidate for a slogan-like illustration of Wittgenstein's alternative view, it would also mean that the discussion of Frazer is primarily aimed at understanding what is wrong about the idea that rites have their roots in empirical theory - not at developing a different account of the relationship between religious belief and religious behaviour.

Hence, to summarize my reading of Wittgenstein's religious writings up to this point, the *Remarks on Frazer* give a similar negative characterization of religious belief and religious behaviour as the *Notebooks*, the *Tractatus* and the *Lecture on Ethics*, denying that believers subscribe to a theory about empirical facts they put into practice with the aim of manipulating the world around them. Unlike the earlier writings, however, the *Remarks on Frazer* do not contain a clear account of how religiosity should be conceived of instead.

On the face of it, then, his discussion of *The Golden Bough* neither refutes nor confirms whether Wittgenstein explains religious belief, like (other) psychological phenomena, as an aspect of the human being. But then again, the *Remarks on Frazer* could also be said to indeed be consistent with Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology in that it – unlike the earlier writings - takes rituals to form recognizable patterns of behaviour, even if it is not made explicit in the text. Many of Wittgenstein's objections to Frazer are after all based on the assumption that we are able (or should at least be able) to identify specific pre-secular doings and sayings as ritualistic actions, distinguish them from other kinds of pre-secular activity and compare them to distinctive behaviour displayed by modern man. This suggests that Wittgenstein, at least at the time of reading *The Golden Bough*, holds religious belief to be manifested in certain broad reactive prefigurations, just like psychological phenomena such as gratitude and grief.

From this perspective, the *Remarks on Frazer* actually add to and modify our understanding of the compatibility between Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology and his philosophy of religion, rather than remaining silent on that matter. For according to the interpretation offered in the previous section, it is the single believer's entire life that forms the background against which her doings and saying must be seen, which does not seem to be wholly in line with Wittgenstein's later account of the mental. The *Remarks on Frazer* on the other hand suggest that Wittgenstein came to locate religious belief – like psychological phenomena in general – in supra-individual patterns of behaviour. On such an account, there are

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[84] Hence, while I agree with other interpreters that Wittgenstein cannot be ascribed an expressivist account of ritualistic behaviour, I have other reasons for denying this. Unlike Cioffi, for instance, I do not think that it is only a certain discrepancy within RFGB that should make us wary of saying it defends an expressivist view (see Cioffi 1998, pp. 155-182); unlike Clack, I do not think that the main contradiction to be avoided is that between Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion and his philosophy of language (see Clack 2001, pp. 19-21); and unlike Philips and Ashdown, I do not think that Wittgenstein cannot be attributed an expressivist account because he never offers constructive accounts to begin with (see Philips 2003, pp. 195-200; Ashdown 2004, pp. 145-151).

specific activities by means of which the believer can be distinguished from the non-believer, and the background against which they become visible is not a strictly individual one.

Again, however, it is too early to draw final conclusions. Even apart from the fact that the *Remarks on Frazer* do not explicitly claim that religious belief should be situated in the interspace between a community of subjects, other of his religious writings wait to be discussed, and I will have a look at the *Lectures on Religious Belief* in the next section. And indeed, whereas the *Remarks on Frazer* apparently offer an account of religiosity that is closer to Wittgenstein's later account of the psyche than the account of religiosity given in the early work, the *Lectures on Religious Belief* return to the Tractarian idea of religion as an outlook on life again. Whereas some of the *Remarks on Frazer* seem to deny that religious behaviour has any cognitive component, the *Lectures on Religious Belief* unambiguously investigate the epistemology of religious doings and sayings.

4.4. "Suppose I say: 'The man used a picture' "

In contrast to the sources I have discussed so far, the *Lectures on Religious Belief* were not written by Wittgenstein himself: they consist of a collection of notes taken down by his Cambridge students during three lectures he gave on the topic of religious belief. (The course was given in 1938, so seven years after the first part of the *Remarks on Frazer* was written and ten years before Wittgenstein wrote the second part thereof.) The *Lectures* do not follow a clearly laid-out trajectory - perhaps because his students did not give a verbatim report of the meetings, perhaps because Wittgenstein did not discuss the topic in a very structured way, and probably because a combination of both. Be that as it may, there is one question that seems to have been on Wittgenstein's mind during all three meetings: How should we understand the specific and special character, not of belief in general, but of religious belief? His main strategy in answering this question is to contrast religious belief with non- or a-religious beliefs and statements, and to describe the exact differences between them. Similar to his arguing against Frazer that religion cannot be explained as a theory about the workings of nature, the *Lectures* take on science as one of the main domains or discourses from which religion should be distinguished.

One of the key differences between the religious believer and the scientist, as Wittgenstein indicates at several points, lies in the evidence the former gives – or rather refrains from giving - for the convictions she entertains. The believer will appeal to very different grounds than the scientist, if she will appeals to grounds at all. As an example, Wittgenstein discusses the case of a person who is convinced that there will be a Last Judgement, whose belief therein is unshakable and who

would be willing to risk or forgo everything on account of it.[85] Normally, one would expect that a person who is *that* certain of something's being or becoming the case, has extraordinarily good grounds for believing what she does. That is far from the case when it comes to religious belief, Wittgenstein observes. While the religious person takes the coming of the Last Judgement to be more true than anything in the world, she may not be able to give reasons for her belief or may rely on evidence that is, by scientific or even everyday standards, "exceedingly flimsy"[86] and "extremely slender."[87] She could for instance say that a dream informed her about the when and how of Judgement Day, yet "If you compare it with anything in Science which we call evidence," Wittgenstein points out, a dream is not evidence at all; "you can't credit that anyone could soberly argue: "Well, I had this dream... therefore... Last Judgement"."[88]

This should not be taken to mean, as Wittgenstein is quick to explain to his students, that the religious believer is mistaken or not yet entitled to her conviction, that she should look for further evidence and give up her belief should she find none. Rather than judging religion by scientific standards, one should take it for a fact that religious persons base enormous things on the slightest grounds. It simply means that evidence and experimentation do not play the same role in the religious as in the scientific sphere, if it plays a role in the former sphere at all. When the believer talks about evidence or says that she knows that there will be a Last Judgement, the words "evidence" and "know" have a very different meaning than when they are used in a scientific context: "One talks of believing and at the same time one doesn't use 'believe' as one does ordinarily."[89] Indeed, when a religious person does approach his convictions scientifically, he misunderstands his own beliefs or mistakenly holds himself for a (truly) religious believer, as Wittgenstein for instance says of Father O'Hara: "I would say, if this is religious

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[85] See LRB 53, LRB 54.

[86] LRB 58.

[87] LRB 61.

[88] Idem; see also LRB 54, LRB 60; cf. Clack 1999, pp. 67-68.

[89] LRB 59; see also LRB 54, LRB 56, LRB 57. This is of course reminiscent of the observations in OC, where Wittgenstein repeatedly points out that we do not always use the word "know" in the sense of "confirmed after elaborate examination of evidence for and against". However, even though both OC and LRB subsequently argue that it is not for nothing that certainty and religious belief, respectively, are not based on (scientific) grounds, Wittgenstein appears to give different arguments in both cases. For whereas OC maintains that certainties cannot not be proven because they form the precondition for knowing and investigating things in the first place (see chapter 5 for a more elaborate exposition), LRB states that proving religious convictions is detrimental thereto since they do not concern factual or empirical matters. Schönbaumsfeld uses both arguments in her discussion of LRB (see Schönbaumsfeld 2007, pp. 159-175) - I think that when she states that Wittgenstein (and Kierkegaard) take a scientific approach to religious belief to indicate a "category mistake" or "confusion of the spheres", she portrays LRB most accurately. This suggests that Wittgenstein did not consider certainties and religious beliefs to be the same kind of thing, yet even if that is true, it is hard to say exactly wherein the difference lies. I will try to say more about this in the second intermezzo.

belief, then it's all superstition."[90] Far from making it into an (even) more venerable affair, people like O'Hara, who think that evidence for the existence of God or the coming of the Last Judgement can and should be given, violate the very nature of religious belief and can accordingly even be accused of blasphemy.[91]

Moreover, that giving scientific grounds and providing empirical tests is antithetical to religious belief does not mean that religion is an irrational affair and that believers are unreasonable. That is to say, it obviously means that religious belief is not a rational matter in the way science is or purports to be, but it cannot for that reason be called irrational either. Anyone claiming that religion is irrational - rather than a-rational - treats it as something that should be based on evidence and experimentation yet refuses to meet these requirements. In other words, she treats it "as a matter of reasonability,"[92] whereas that is precisely the stance that true believers do *not* take towards their convictions, as Wittgenstein is trying to bring to attention. In fact, anyone calling religion irrational is making the same mistake as the (so-called) religious believer who feels that the existence of God or the coming of the Last Judgement should be defended by means of empirical proof: "What seems to me ludicrous about O'Hara is his making it appear to be *reasonable*."[93] Instead of having a place on either side of the rational-irrational divide, religious belief transcends these qualifications.[94]

This raises the question as to what it is about religious belief that excludes it from being called either rational or irrational, and here it is informative to have a look at another contrast Wittgenstein discusses: not that between the religious believer and the scientist, but that between the religious believer and the atheist or agnostic. Wittgenstein invites his students to imagine a conversation in which the one person declares that there will be a Last Judgement, and the other responds by stating "Well, I'm not so sure. Possibly."[95]

We would say, he explains, that these people fundamentally differ in opinion, if we would call it a difference in opinion in the first place: we would probably use other terms to describe the difference between them and the sheer magnitude thereof, for instance by saying that they are separated by "an enormous gulf."[96] That is remarkable, Wittgenstein observes, because if these persons would be discussing whether the aeroplane overhead is of French or German manufacture, say, we would not take them to be that far apart, even if the one would be denying the other's sure conviction that the aeroplane is German, instead of less resolutely responding "I don't know. Possibly." For in such a case disagreement or uncertainty is, in principle, quite easy to resolve. The discussants know which

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[90] LRB 59; see also LRB 56, LRB 61.
[91] Cf. Putnam 1992, pp. 149-150; Schönbaumsfeld 2007, pp. 172-173.
[92] LRB 58.
[93] Ibidem.
[94] See LRB 57-58, LRB 58.
[95] LRB 53; see also LRB 56.
[96] Ibidem.

object is under consideration and only need to have a closer look at it in order to determine whether it is or is not of German making.

As Wittgenstein then goes on to point out, two persons discussing whether there will be a Last Judgement have no such thing to fall back on. For when one person claims that he knows or beliefs that there will be a Day of Judgement, and the other replies that he does not know or does not think so, the discussants cannot be said to be speaking of the same object or state of affairs. Wittgenstein imagines: "[I] give an explanation: 'I don't believe in…', but then the religious person never believes what I describe."[97] Put differently, the religious believer does not affirm the existence of a state of affairs of which the atheist in turn denies that it exists. According to Wittgenstein, as a result, the debate between the believer and the non-believer cannot be characterized by saying that the latter contradicts the former, or that the latter believes the opposite to the former.[98] And this is not due to there being unclarity as to what event is under consideration, or about the exact meaning of the words being used: "In one sense, I understand all he says - the English words "God" [etc.] I understand. I could say: I don't believe in this," and this would be true, meaning that I haven't got these thoughts or anything that hangs together with them. But not that I could contradict the thing."[99] The atheist or agnostic literally has no-thing to contradict: his exchange with the religious believer it not about things or events at all, Wittgenstein maintains.[100]

Similar to his claims in the other writings I have discussed, both early and late, the *Lectures* contend that religious belief is not an empirical or factual affair.[101] This explains why Wittgenstein repeatedly tells his students - as he for instance also argues against Frazer - that religion cannot be judged by scientific standards and must not be considered to be something that can be proven right or wrong. The difference between the religious believer and the non-believer, namely, is not a difference in opinion about a certain state of affairs, the existence or nature of which can be determined by means of empirical investigation. Instead, it is a difference between a person who always has the idea of Judgement Day in the back (or even front) of her mind, and a person who simply never has such

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[97] LRB 55.

[98] See LRB 53, LRB 55; cf. Putnam 1992, p. 143.

[99] LRB 55; cf. Putnam 1992, pp. 151-152.

[100] Wittgenstein makes the same point in discussing the specific way we approach paintings or pictures of e.g. God; see LRB 59, LRB 63. As Wittgenstein observes, we do not take "The creation of Adam", say – in contrast to pictures of aunts and uncles - to depict real persons or person-like entities. Cf. Clack 1999, pp. 66-67; Putnam 1992, pp. 154-156.

[101] Cf. Schönbaumsfeld 2007, pp. 159-168. Schönbaumsfeld explains that (both Kierkegaard and) Wittgenstein argue that God is not some super-empirical object, merely quantitatively differing from ordinary objects. (She also explains that statements like "There is a God" are on a par with statements like "There are physical objects" – hence the kind of statements Wittgenstein dubs "certainties". As stated, I doubt whether religious belief and certainty can be equated. Let me point out here that if one rephrases "There is a God" as "All there is was created by God", one might be less inclined to call it a certainty; "All there is was created by God" after all presupposes "There are physical objects" itself.)

thoughts. Wittgenstein explains: "Here believing obviously plays much more this role: […] a certain picture might play the role of constantly admonishing me, or I always think of it. Here, an enormous difference would be between those people for whom the picture is constantly in the foreground, and the others who just didn't use it at all."[102] Hence, a person making a statement about the Last Judgement is not referring to specific facts or events; she is declaring something about the thoughts or pictures that inspire or haunt her.

To come back to my introductory remarks about the *Lectures* at the end of the previous section, the difference with the analysis or emphasis in the *Remarks on Frazer* is unmistakable. That is to say, both collections argue against a scientific interpretation of religion, but whereas the *Remarks* emphatically underscore the unreflective nature of ritualistic behaviour (at some points a bit too forcefully, perhaps) the *Lectures* precisely explain religious belief in terms of thoughts and pictures. However, just as Wittgenstein should be said to argue against Frazer's prioritizing (a certain kind of) thinking over acting, rather than his associating rituals with views or opinions per se, the *Lectures* cannot be said to present religious belief as a strictly intellectual matter. This becomes clear when we have a closer look at the use Wittgenstein more generally came to make of the term "picture".

Examining his later writings, one may get the impression that Wittgenstein, while building an elaborate theory of meaning around the notion of picturing in the *Tractatus*, came to regard pictures as useless or even harmful to philosophy. He for instance repeatedly argues, as was also discussed in chapter 3, that phenomena like remembering and understanding meaning cannot be explained by claiming that the person *in casu* sees a picture before his mental eye. A picture is by itself an inert item that does not convey what it represents or when it was produced. Even the *Lectures on Religious Belief* contain an excursus on the futility of appealing to pictures in order to account for certain mental matters.[103] On a different level, moreover, Wittgenstein warns against the philosophical use of pictures, not as intra-theoretical entities, but as models that shape a philosopher's entire way of looking at certain things. He famously claims about his Tractarian theory of meaning: "A *picture* held us captive,"[104] and blames the "*preconceived idea* of crystalline purity"[105] for much philosophical frustration and - worse still - distortion, as I explicated in chapter 2. Apparently, Wittgenstein wants philosophy to rid itself from pictures entirely.

Be that as it may, he does not only speak with disapproval of the use of pictures, at least not in the latter sense. Discussing the Cartesian notion that humans have souls and that this is the locus of all matters mental, Wittgenstein for instance states: "The picture is there. And I am not disputing its validity in any

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[102] LRB 56; see also LRB 54, LRB 55, LRB 71.
[103] See LRB 66-68.
[104] PI 115.
[105] PI 108; see also PI 131.

particular case. – Only I also want to understand the application of the picture."[106] Elsewhere he even suggests that pictures can be used to prevent philosophical distortion: "I wanted to put that picture before him, and his *acceptance* of the picture consists in his now being inclined to regard a given case differently. [...] I have changed his *way of looking at things*."[107] Leaving aside what further opportunities this offers for reading Wittgenstein as a constructive rather than an outright anti-philosophical thinker,[108] remarks such these indicate that he considered the employment of pictures to be a fundamental characteristic of the way human beings think, for better or worse. But then what exactly does he take pictures in this sense to be?

Obviously, when Wittgenstein remarks that philosophers or other people use a particular picture, he does not mean to say that they see a certain image before their mental eye. Indeed, in a Wittgensteinian context, pictures should be distinguished from concrete visual items such as images at all times, be they of a mental or of a more tangible kind.[109] For in the way he uses the term, a picture is not a concrete item that a person perceives or sees before her. Rather than being a particular representation someone passively takes in, a Wittgensteinian picture is a *form* of representation, a mould or paradigm that influences or determines how a person conceives of a phenomenon in its entirety.[110] Hence, when Wittgenstein observes that somebody is (mis)guided by a picture, he means to say that the person in question is inclined to think and speak of certain things in a particular way – to think and speak of all linguistic utterances as descriptions, say. In such a case, in other words, Wittgenstein uses the term picture, not in order to attribute someone a concrete (mental) image in isolation from her doings and sayings, but in order to underscore that there is a specific structure or unity in all her dealings with a particular category of things. It is in a similar way, to round off this excursus, that Wittgenstein speaks of pictures in the *Lectures on Religious Belief*.[111]

As I pointed out before discussing the later Wittgenstein's more general use of the term "picture", he describes the difference between a person who does and a person who does not believe that there will be a Last Judgement as a difference between someone who always has this idea in the back – or even front - of her

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[106] PI 423.

[107] PI 144.

[108] E.g. Genova and Stein precisely try to place Wittgenstein's method in a more positive light by means of his concept of "picture" (see Genova 1995, pp. 64-74; Stein 1997, pp. 139-157). Genova also explicitly brings this into connection with Wittgenstein's notion of a perspicuous representation; cf. Genova 1995, pp. 31-36, p. 124.

[109] Cf. Stein 1997, pp. 140-141.

[110] Idem, pp. 142-143.

[111] Cf. Putnam 1992, pp. 156-175. Putnam remarks that precisely LRB show that Wittgenstein was not against pictures as such. It should parenthetically be noted that LRB also mentions concrete religious pictures, not just pictures in the paradigmatic sense of the word; see LRB 59, LRB 63. I will however only discuss how pictures as forms of representation (rather than particular representations) play a role in LRB's account of religiosity.

mind, and a person who simply never has such thoughts. An attempt to explain more clearly what this means can now be made. On Wittgenstein's view, the believer does not distinguish herself from the non-believer by constantly seeing an image of the Last Judgement before her inner eye, or by continuously thinking of the coming of this event. Rather, the notion of Judgement Day functions as a paradigm or guideline that shapes the believer's entire approach to a particular phenomenon. Wittgenstein uses the term "picture" to indicate that there is a specific unity or structure in her dealings with certain things; a structure that cannot be observed in the atheist's or agnostic's approach thereto.

This does not yet fully explain Wittgenstein's account of religious belief in the *Lectures*. It should also be made clear what phenomenon or category of things he takes the picture of Judgment Day to guide or shape. On the basis of the insights already obtained in discussing both the *Lectures* and Wittgenstein's other writings on religion, this can however be explicated without much digression. For Wittgenstein is remarkably consistent in arguing that religious belief does not concern specific facts or things. In line with the *Tractatus* and *Notebooks* as well as the *Remarks on Frazer*, the *Lectures* maintain that religion is, in contrast to science, not a factual affair. Rather than shaping a person's attitude to a specific worldly phenomenon, Wittgenstein accordingly holds that the picture of Judgement Day influences or determines the believer's existence as such. Reminiscent of the account given in the earliest writings, the *Lectures* argue that the religious believer makes the Last Judgement into a "guidance for his life."[112] Hence, by speaking of a picture, Wittgenstein means to say that believer's existence does not form a mere succession of events but displays a distinctive unity or structure. The idea of there being a Last Judgement, say, places everything he does and undergoes in a specific light and consequently makes his life into a meaningful whole.

The contrast between the *Lectures* and the *Remarks on Frazer*, then, is not as big as their respective emphases may suggest. For even though the *Lectures* explain religious belief in terms of thoughts and pictures, whereas the *Remarks* precisely explore the unreflective nature of religious behaviour, the former collection of remarks does not present religiosity as a strictly intellectual matter. Applying the later Wittgenstein's concept of picture to the *Lectures on Religious Belief*, it becomes clear that he takes the person declaring her belief in Judgement Day to make a statement, not about certain isolated reflections or considerations, but about the very way she leads her life. On Wittgenstein's analysis, the believer and the non-believer do not differ in opinion about the nature or existence of a certain state of affairs, they differ in the shape or form they give their lives.[113] So in so far as one wants to describe the exchange between a person saying that there will be a Last Judgement and another replying "No" or "I don't know" as a discussion, it is a discussion of a very different kind than a debate about the origin of a crossing

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[112] LRB 53; see also LRB 54.
[113] Cf. Clack 1999, p. 69; Putnam 1992, p. 154; Schönbaumsfeld 2007, pp. 173-174.

aeroplane, say. It could even be argued that a person engaged in a religious discussion, as opposed to someone involved in a regular debate, most accurately expresses her opinion or view by showing what life he is leading, not by issuing a statement that another can subsequently affirm or deny.

In situating religious belief in the form or shape of a person's existence, the *Lectures* indicate, like the *Notebooks* and the *Tractatus*, that Wittgenstein does not take religious belief to be a literally inner event or process. Yet as I explained in the introduction to this chapter, it is not just the exteriority of Wittgensteinian religiosity that needs to be investigated in order to determine the compatibility of his thoughts on religion with his view on the psyche; the sociality of religiosity needs to be examined as well. And when it comes to this element of his account, the *Lectures* diverge from Wittgenstein's later philosophy of psychology in the same way as the early writings, for here, too, it is the individual believer's life as a whole that forms the background against which her doings and sayings should be seen. The *Remarks on Frazer* may implicitly suggest that Wittgenstein came to take religious belief, like mental matters more generally, to be manifested in communal patterns of behaviour, judging by the *Lectures*, Wittgenstein's later account of religiosity no less differs from his explanation of psychological phenomena than his earlier account of religious belief.

But there is one more collection of remarks that needs be consulted in order to get a full overview of Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion, namely, *Culture and Value*. And some of these remarks explicitly discuss the role of the (religious) community, unlike the other writings consulted so far. *Culture and Value* can accordingly settle the question as to the sociality of Wittgensteinian religiosity and the compatibility with his philosophy of psychology in this respect.

4.5 "A way of living, or a way of assessing life"

Whereas the other writings consulted up to this point can be said to concern a (relatively) clear topic or have a (relatively) clear motive, *Culture and Value* consists of a selection of remarks of which perhaps the only common trait is that they where scattered throughout the manuscripts Wittgenstein left behind yet do not seem to be part of his "regular" philosophical work. (Indeed, unlike the other sources discussed so far, the remarks collected in *Culture and Value* were written between 1914 and 1951 and thus span most of Wittgenstein's adult life.) In addition to subjects like music, writing and the spirit of his times, however, quite a number of Wittgenstein's contemplations in *Culture and Value* concern faith and religion, and it is therefore instructive to have a look at these writings too.

Not surprisingly given that *Culture and Value* runs parallel to Wittgenstein's regular work and covers almost four decades, several of the topics or *topoi* that were discussed with regard to his other religious writings, both early and late,

appear in this collection well. Claims as to the categorical difference between science and religion, for instance – a topic that perhaps forms the most consistent factor in Wittgenstein's religious work – can also be found among the remarks in *Culture and Value*. Here, too, Wittgenstein underscores that religion cannot be considered to be an empirical theory, and argues that since religious believers base enormous things on the slightest grounds, evidence and experimentation cannot be said to play the same role in the religious as in the scientific sphere. He states: "If someone who believes in God looks around and asks: [...] "Where does all this come from?", he is *not* craving for a (causal) explanation,"[114] and observes: "An honest religious thinker is like a tightrope walker. [...] His support is the slenderest imaginable. And yet it is really possible to walk on it."[115]

What is more, in addition to once more bringing the anti-theoretical strand in Wittgenstein's religious thinking to attention, *Culture and Value* confirms my provisional conclusions about the exteriority of Wittgensteinian religiosity – in spite of the fact that the remark quoted in the preceding intermezzo, in which Wittgenstein describes the difference between the believer and the non-believer in terms of "the interplay of forces within,"[116] belongs to this very collection of contemplations. For other *Culture and Value* entries situate religious belief, like the remarks in the *Notebooks*, the *Tractatus* and the *Lectures*, in the believer's existence rather than a private inner realm. As Wittgenstein explains: "It strikes me that a religious belief could only be something like a passionate commitment to a system of reference. Hence, although it's *belief*, it's really a way of living, or a way of assessing life."[117] This reaffirms that Wittgenstein takes religiosity to reside in the unity or structure observable in the believer's doings and sayings.

Indeed, in *Culture and Value*, too, it is the notion of religious belief as a matter of the form or shape one gives one's existence that informs Wittgenstein's anti-theoretical outlook. He declares: "I believe that one of the things Christianity says is that sound doctrines are all useless. That you have to change our *life*. (Or the *direction* of your life.)"[118] As remarks such as these make clear, it is not merely because religious belief does not concern specific facts or things that it cannot be explained in theoretical terms. Wittgenstein conversely holds that a theory does not come close to a religious conviction because it does not have the same ethical or existential impact: "The point is that a sound doctrine need not *take hold* of you; you can follow it as you would a doctor's prescription. – But here you need something to move you and turn you in a new direction."[119] No doctrine or theory, Wittgenstein maintains, accounts for the believer's willingness to lead his entire life in the light of the Last Judgement, say.

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[114] CV 85d; see also CV 28a, CV 30a, CV 53c, CV 53e, CV 63g, CV 72a, CV 81a.
[115] CV 73e; see also CV 29b, CV 31d, CV 32c, CV 32e, CV 85e, CV 86a.
[116] CV 33a; cf. pp. 99-100 of this study.
[117] CV 64d; see also CV 32c, CV 61c; cf. Clack 1999, p. 55.
[118] CV 53c; see also CV 53d, CV 53e, CV 56f, CV 81a.
[119] Ibidem; cf. Clack 1999, p. 53.

Culture and Value thus reaffirms that Wittgensteinian religiosity is neither a theoretical nor a literally inner affair. Like the other works discussed so far, it shows that Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion does not contradict his situating psychological phenomena on the outside rather than the inside of the subject. However, it also confirms the conclusion that suggested itself after reading the *Tractatus*, *Notebooks* and *Lecture on Ethics*, namely, that Wittgenstein does not more precisely locate religiosity in the interspace between a community of subjects. *Culture and Value*, too, indicates that when it comes to the sociality of religious belief, the compatibility between Wittgenstein's thoughts on religion and his view on the psyche no longer holds - in spite of what his discussion of *The Golden Bough* may suggest. For while the *Remarks on Frazer* seem to draw on the analysis of psychological phenomena as located in supra-individual patterns of behaviour, albeit in an implicit way, *Culture and Value* flatly appears to deny that religiosity is ever a matter of mirroring and echoing the doings and sayings of other human beings. Or, like the *Remarks on Frazer* it acknowledges the existence of broad reactive prefigurations of a religious nature, but whereas the former collection aims to safeguard such patterns from theoretical (over)interpretation, several of the *Culture and Value* entries state that in so far as religiosity resides in a person's verbal and non-verbal behaviour, her being a true believer can under no circumstances be equated to her taking part in pre-existing religious practices.

Indeed, according to a 1930 entry, "Everything ritualistic (everything that, as it were, smacks of the high priest) must be strictly avoided, because it immediately turns rotten."[120] That is to say, as Wittgenstein immediately qualifies this bold statement, rituals are not objectionable as such, but only ritualistic behaviour that is sincere rather than empty and automatic can be said to be acceptable. Or to put it in the terminology of his religion-as-a-way-of-life account, only when rituals genuinely mark the direction of a person's existence can they be taken to be expressions of religious belief. Considered in isolation, therefore, ritualistic behaviour does not yet give insight into a person's being or not being religious. Moreover, since Wittgenstein takes religiosity to reside in the unity or structure of a life in its entirety rather than specific doings and sayings, it follows from his analysis that a person does not need to perform any rituals in order to be eligible for the epithet "believer".

The same holds for strictly verbal expressions of belief, according to Wittgenstein. As he contends in a remark from 1950, it is not just those making use of customary religious words and phrases who can be called religious believers. Religiosity is not so much a matter of the words a person uses on particular occasions as of "the difference they make at various points in your life,"[121] Wittgenstein explains. What a person means when he says that he believes in God or the Trinity depends on how he forms or shapes his life around these notions - if

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[120] CV 8a.
[121] CV 85d; cf. Drury 1981b, p. 129.

he forms or shapes his life around them at all. Hence, using the same terms as people who are usually considered (or consider themselves) to be pre-eminently religious, does not yet make someone into a religious believer. And a result, Wittgenstein observes, "A theology which insist on the use of *certain particular* words and phrases, and outlaws others, does not make anything clearer."[122] Theologians thinking that they can place such demands on the believer misunderstand the nature of religion just as much as those who try to justify their religious convictions by means of empirical proof.

Now to be sure, that there is no list of necessary and sufficient conditions a person has to meet before she can be called a religious believer, and that more than just concrete doings and sayings have to be taken into account before her religiosity (or lack thereof) can be discerned, does not yet mean that Wittgenstein's analysis of religious belief is at odds with analysis of the mental in general. Far from it, for as I explained in chapter 3, he takes the same to hold for psychological phenomena such as gratitude and grief.[123] Even so, *Culture and Value's* account of religious belief does not exactly fit the framework Wittgenstein develops in his philosophy of psychology.

With regard to religiosity, Wittgenstein does not just claim that people may manifest the same phenomenon by means of somewhat different conglomerates of (contextualized shades of) behaviour, he seems to hold that believers need not share any doings and sayings whatsoever. That is to say, given that religious belief concerns the way in which a person leads her life, an onlooker is by no means prevented from ever recognizing believers and distinguishing them from non-believers – Wittgenstein in any case feels that he is perfectly able to make such distinctions himself. However, it seems that he takes evidence for the ascription of religiosity to be even more ambiguous and dispersed than evidence for the ascription of ordinary mental matters. When it comes to religious belief, the third person may not only lack familiar patterns to fall back on, he also needs to take a person's entire way of living into account. In this respect, too, Wittgenstein's explanation of religiosity differs from his explanation of the psyche, for even though he also claims that it depends on the context which phenomena are expressed by what words and deeds, and "context" is and open-ended term, in his philosophy of psychology he does not use it in the sense of "a person's entire life". Yet that is precisely what the term "context" appears to mean when it comes to the background against which the believer's doings and sayings must be seen.

The contrast between Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology and his philosophy of religion becomes even clearer when we consult the remarks that address the upbringing of the religious believer. Indeed, Wittgenstein's religious contemplations already differ from his psychological writings – or his later writings as such, for that matter - in that they hardly pay attention to the way children are

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[122] Ibidem.
[123] Cf. pp. 60-61 of this study.

trained to use certain words and display certain behaviour. Of the sources discussed thus far, only the *Lectures on Religious Belief* mention what children are taught (and forbidden) regarding the religious sphere. Wittgenstein explains that he learned to use religious images very differently from pictures of relatives, as well as that adults did not allow him to question the existence of God - whereas questions about the existence of other facts or things were not greeted with such disapproval, and he was never given proof for there being a Deity either.[124] Yet while these observations serve to underscore once more that religion does not concern facts or things and cannot be judged by scientific standards, the *Lectures* do not trace the influence of a person's upbringing on the eventual direction of her life, like Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology does for a person's manifestations of gratitude or grief, say.

Some of the remarks collected in *Culture and Value* do examine the connection between a person's upbringing and the way she ends up giving meaning to her life, and judging by these entries, the lack of attention for scenes and processes of instruction signals a qualitative rather than a quantitative difference between Wittgenstein's religious writings and his psychological work. For whereas the latter argue that it is, for a large part of one's psychological repertoire, indispensable to learn to take part in pre-existing practices, *Culture and Value* states that the religious believer need not make anything concerning her elders' convictions her own.

That is to say, Wittgenstein maintains that to the extent religious belief is passed on from the one generation to the next, this does not proceed in an automatic fashion and has no predetermined outcome.[125] All instructors can and should do is describe what direction they give their lives, what paradigm they use and why. This would have to result, Wittgenstein explains, "in the pupil himself, of his own accord, passionately taking hold of the system of reference."[126] A religious upbringing should thus be aimed at the novice's voluntarily and wholeheartedly choosing to embrace a particular system or structure. However, given that the main criterion for a proper religious instruction is, according to Wittgenstein, the pupil's making her own unreserved choice, an upbringing of this kind cannot be said to have failed when she chooses to embrace a different system of reference. Contrary to a child learning to participate in her community's psychological practices, the choice is up to the individual herself. Indeed, Wittgenstein suggests that no special guidance is needed for a person to become a religious believer to begin with: "Life can educate one to a belief in God."[127]

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[124] See LRB 59-60.

[125] As will become clear in chapter 5, this can in fact also be said to hold for the passing on of pre-existing practices in general. That is to say, I will argue that while the conveyance of certainties does proceed in a more or less automatic fashion, the outcome of this process is not given in advance either.

[126] CV 64d; see also CV 81a.

[127] CV 86a.

4.6   Concluding remarks

I consulted Wittgenstein's religious writings with the aim of investigating to what extent critics are correct in claiming that its rethinkers reformulate Cartesianism in such a way that they leave us with no coherent account of the thinking and feeling human being whatsoever. As I explained in the intermezzo preceding this chapter, commentators like Frank and Murdoch take this to be the upshot of the critique of Cartesianism, and moreover take this to mean that it spells the end of all possible ethics. I argued that this conclusion does not automatically follow, even if the underlying reading of post-Cartesianism is correct, but I proposed to first investigate its exegetical validity nonetheless because it also provides an opportunity for fleshing out the ramifications of the claim that the subject's materiality and sociality are essential to it. And as I pointed out, Wittgenstein's religious writing constitute excellent testing ground because they clearly indicate - arguing that religious belief is not manifested in supra-individual patterns and even suggesting that it should be located within - that Wittgenstein did not "unthink" our innermost thoughts and feelings. Hence, the implications of his non-Cartesian account and the exegetical validity of the objections thereto can be more fully explored by inspecting the compatibility of Wittgenstein's thoughts on religion and his take on the psyche.

I accordingly examined Wittgenstein's religious writings with basically two questions in mind, derived from my conclusion that situates psychological phenomena in a person's (contextualized shades of) behaviour, taken as an instance of a broad reactive pre-figuration: Does Wittgenstein, first of all, maintain that a person's doings and sayings form the locus of her belief, and does he, secondly, hold that these doings and sayings only qualify as manifestations of religiosity against the background of a larger, supra-individual pattern?

My exploration of the answers that the *Notebooks*, the *Tractatus* and the *Lecture on Ethics* offer to these questions took up the greater part of this chapter, primarily because several details concerning the Tractarian system needed to be spelled out as well. As I explained, the early Wittgenstein takes the so-called individual will to be the bearer of ethico-religious worth in a world that is as such ethically neutral but the bare existence of which is nonetheless of absolute value. Every individual therefore faces the choice to either live her life in acceptance and respect of the world as it happens to be, or make her life into a struggle – as futile as it is disrespectful - to bend the worldly happenings to her needs and desires. Wittgenstein, in other words, presents life itself as the pre-eminent ethical task. He accordingly locates the ethico-religious will in a person's doings and sayings, yet even though he claims that willing coincides or concurs with acting, he does not equate willing with acting all the way through. In line with the strict distinction he supports between fact and value, Wittgenstein maintains that the will is an attitude of the subject to the world as it is manifested in the way she leads her life. Whether

an action is morally good or bad thus depends on the kind of life it is part and parcel of, and the ethical will can, conversely, be said to be an intrinsic part of everything a person says and does. The individual will, I concluded, forms the ethico-religious dimension of human conduct.

Needless to say, and as I already remarked, this is consistent with Wittgenstein's later philosophy of psychology in that it situates a person's ethico-religious outlook in her doings and sayings, without thereby reducing it to mere behaviour. Similar to the later Wittgenstein's account of the mental, the early Wittgenstein takes religiosity to be an aspect of what a person says and does. However, to also repeat the other observation I made when wrapping up my discussion of the *Notebooks*, *Tractatus* and *Lecture on Ethics*, the early Wittgenstein more precisely takes religiosity to be an aspect of *everything* a person says and does, which points to a contrast between his philosophy of psychology and his philosophy of religion. According to Wittgenstein, religious belief concerns the way in which a person leads his life in its entirety, and it therefore seems that the background against which a person's doings and sayings have to be seen is not a supra-individual pattern of behaviour, but the existence of an individual human being. So while the early writings are compatible with Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology when it comes to the exteriority of belief, they do not seem to be wholly compatible when it comes to the sociality thereof.

I then turned to the *Remarks on Frazer's "Golden Bough"*, suggesting that since these contemplations concern concrete and collective or recurring religious behaviour – namely, rites and rituals – they might show that Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion, or at least his later philosophy of religion, follows the example of his philosophy of psychology after all. I observed that the *Remarks on Frazer*, while at some points seeming to deny that religion has anything to do with views or opinions – including a *Tractatus*-style outlook on life and the world – should ultimately be said to simply give a similar negative characterization of religious belief as the early writings. *Pace* Frazer, Wittgenstein argues that believers do not subscribe to a theory about empirical facts they put into practice with the aim of manipulating the world around them. Frazer is wrong to describe rituals as a flawed and expendable form of scientific activity because he is wrong to interpret it as a form of scientific activity in the first place. Yet I also explained that although the *Remarks on Frazer* do not offer an explicit alternative account of the relationship between religious belief and religious behaviour, like the early writings do, in the assumptions it makes the *Remarks* suggest that Wittgenstein came to locate religious belief – like psychological phenomena in general – in supra-individual patterns of behaviour. Judging by these observations, I argued, his later philosophy of religion is in line with his later philosophy of psychology in both respects indeed.

Judging by the *Lectures on Religious Belief*, however, as I pointed out in the fourth section, that conclusion was premature; the same assumptions about the sociality of religiosity are not at work in all later writings. The *Lectures* do not only have a

different emphasis from the *Remarks* in explicitly investigating the epistemology of religious belief - rather than at some points denying it has any cognitive component - the former collection also situates religiosity in the individual believer's entire existence, just as the early writings do. To be sure, the *Lectures* are of a kind with the *Remarks on Frazer* for taking on science as one of the main discourses from which religion should be distinguished, and its explaining religious belief in terms of thoughts and pictures does not make for an outright contradiction with the anti-intellectualistic arguments against Frazer, but Wittgenstein's use of the word "picture" here nonetheless indicates that he did not abandon his initial individualistic conception of religiosity, regardless of what the comments on *The Golden Bough* suggest.

For as I explained after a short digression on the way the later Wittgenstein more generally employs this term, by speaking of a religious picture he means to say that the believer's existence displays a distinctive unity or structure. The idea of the Last Judgement, say, places everything he does and undergoes in a specific light and consequently makes his life into a meaningful whole. And this implies, I observed, that according to *Lectures on Religious Belief* - similar to the account offered in the *Notebooks*, the *Tractatus* and the *Lecture on Ethics* – someone's religiosity only comes into view when one looks at his doings and sayings against the background of his specific life as a whole, rather than against the background of a supra-individual pattern. Such an account may be in line with Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology when it comes to the exteriority of belief, it diverges from the latter when it comes to the sociality thereof.

The last collection of remarks I consulted, *Culture and Value*, confirmed this conclusion about the (not-quite-perfect) compatibility of Wittgenstein's thoughts on the psyche and his view on religion. Indeed, it reaffirmed a key topic that emerged from all writings consulted up to that point, for although Wittgenstein does not emphasize the exact same things each and every time, he is strikingly consistent in presenting religiosity as a non-factual affair that cannot be judged by scientific standards. *Culture and Value*, too, argues that the existential impact of religion cannot be explained in terms of theories or doctrines. More explicitly than the *Remarks on Frazer*, moreover, it discusses the rule of the religious community and of collective or recurring religious behaviour. However, whereas the *Remarks on Frazer* try to safeguard ritualistic patterns from theoretical (over)interpretation, some of the *Culture and Value* entries boldly state that someone's being a true believer can never be equated to her participating in pre-existing religious practices, no matter how adequately and non-theoretically these practices are understood. Wittgenstein argues that a truly religious person need not do and say the same things as people who are usually considered to be pre-eminently pious, as well as that those who do display conventionally religious behaviour may not be eligible for the epithet "believer" after all, depending the form or shape they give their lives.

I immediately remarked that this is not wholly contradictory to Wittgenstein's account of the psyche, given that he also argues that there are no hard an fast rules for what counts as an instance of a certain psychological phenomenon, as well as that it depends on the larger context exactly what state of mind is expressed by what doings and sayings. In the case of religious belief, however, Wittgenstein may not claim that there is no behaviour whatsoever that distinguishes believers from non-believers, he nonetheless maintains that evidence for the ascription of religiosity is even more ambiguous and dispersed that in the case of other or ordinary mental matters. When it comes to religious belief, the third person needs to take a person's entire way of living into account and may lack familiar patterns to fall back on.

The main difference between Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology and his philosophy of religion accordingly seems to lie, not in the fact that Wittgenstein holds religiosity to be a literally inner process, or even in the fact that he takes it to come in different forms, but in the fact that he considers it to be a highly individual affair. And this becomes even clearer when the *Culture and Value* remarks addressing the upbringing of the religious believer are taken into account as well. For whereas Wittgenstein maintains that it is, for a large part of one's psychological repertoire, indispensable to learn to partake in pre-existing practices, he claims that the religious believer need not make anything concerning her elders' convictions her own. In contrast to the infant learning to participate in her community's psychological practices, the choice is up to the individual believer herself. Or as Wittgenstein urged his friend O'Drury: "Make sure that your religion is a matter between you and God only."[128]

This, then, is the account of religious belief to be found in Wittgenstein's writings, both early and late. On his view, religiosity concerns the direction one give one's life. It amounts to "a way of living, or a way of assessing life,"[129] to once more use the words of *Culture and Value*. Now this account may not be the most groundbreaking one – indeed, Wittgenstein's initial thoughts on religion are to a large extent indebted to Schopenhauer, while the influence of Kierkegaard is unmistakeably present in the later work[130] – but that does not mean that no arguments can be raised against it. It could for instance be objected that Wittgenstein may have offered an account of something resembling religious belief but not of religious belief as such, because he provides no means for distinguishing the believer from the atheist, or from the dedicated hobbyist, for that matter. According to the account spelled out above, after all, the main criterion for someone's' being a believer is *that* she makes her life into a meaningful whole, not *how* she proceeds in doing so or *what* pictures and paradigms she uses to that end.

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[128] Drury 1981b, p. 117.
[129] CV 64d; see also CV 32c, CV 61c; cf. Clack 1999, p. 55.
[130] Cf. note 18 on page 100, note 33 on page 112 and note 38 on page 114 of this study.

Yet neither a life organized around the idea of there being no God, nor one placed in the service of model trains, say, would normally be called religious.

To an objection along these lines, Wittgenstein would first of all respond by stating that the atheist – whether she likes it or not – might lead just as much a religious life as the person who uses more traditional pictures or paradigms (and is at any rate more religious than the person who thinks that believing in God means believing in a being for the existence of which proof can and should be given). In Wittgenstein's book, the relevant distinction is not that between persons who are biblically or theistically inspired and those who get their inspiration somewhere else. The relevant distinction is that between persons who are concerned with the meaning of life and those who go through life thoughtlessly.

Moreover, that religious belief in essence concerns a perspective on life and the world also means that on Wittgenstein's account, too, the model train collector is ruled out from being called a religious believer. For that the believer organizes his life around a picture does not mean that just any picture will do; Wittgenstein's account implies that the picture in question should have sufficient existential impact and can provide a foothold for coming to grips with human existence or existence as such. But then again, what pictures do and what pictures do not possess these qualities should be said to differ from person to person. According to Wittgenstein, in any case, the choice is up to the individual believer herself, and she might also give her life a highly unorthodox form or shape.

This brings me to another objection that might be raised against Wittgenstein's explanation of religious belief, namely, that even though the believer ultimately faces God all by himself, so to speak, the social nature of religion cannot for that reason be downplayed or disparaged. For many - if not most - religious persons, after all, sharing their outlook with others and collectively trying to give their existence a certain shape or structure forms a vital element of their way of life. Is Wittgenstein therefore not plain wrong to present religiosity as a wholly individual affair? What is more, does this account not violate his own precept to "don't think, but look!"[131] - to simply describe (religious) practices as they are rather than impose one's own hopes and desires?

When it comes to an objection of this kind, it should first be noted that Wittgenstein does not deny that believers might organize their lives in the same way and around the same pictures as others. He however does maintain that this is not part and parcel of being religious, and in this sense his account is, indeed, not so much a description of customary religious practices as an expression of his own deepest convictions as to what it means to be a believer. Given that the descriptive is not necessarily devoid of each and every evaluative component, this need not be taken to form a full-blown violation of Wittgenstein's descriptive approach. But then again, it can be doubted whether the question as to the nature of religious belief lends itself to a descriptive treatment at all. For even if a clear distinction

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[131] PI 66.

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between the normative and the descriptive cannot always be made, should this question not be placed firmly on the normative side of the normative-descriptive scale? Wittgenstein, at any rate, clearly takes an evaluative approach to religiosity. Even if his account implies that many who are usually considered religious are ruled out from being called true believers, he is adamant that religion should be a matter between the individual believer and God only.

And to come back to my reason for consulting Wittgenstein's religious writings in the first place, this is also precisely the point at which his philosophy of religion diverges from his philosophy of psychology. Even though one of his remarks describes the difference between the believer and the non-believer in terms of "the interplay of forces within,"[132] his view on religiosity is consistent with his account of the psyche in locating it in the direction of the believer's existence rather than a private inner realm. Yet for the very reason that his philosophy of religion is compatible with his philosophy of psychology when it comes to the exteriority of belief, his account of religiosity does not follow his portrayal of the psyche when it comes to the sociality thereof. It is after all the individual believer's existence in which religiosity should be situated, regardless of the way in which his fellow human beings make their lives into a meaningful whole.

Or to be precise, Wittgenstein does not hold that faith is so idiosyncratic a matter that a believer can never be recognized and that she can moreover never share a direction in life with other believers. However, he does maintain that when the believer makes her life into a meaningful whole by partaking in readily recognizable pre-existing patterns, this should be based on her own individual choice. Even if Wittgenstein does not claim that there is one clear and distinct way of expressing mental matters such as gratitude and grief, this makes for a difference with his philosophy of psychology where there is no such talk of having to make a decision.

Hence, there is a non-quite-perfect compatibility between Wittgenstein's thoughts on religion and his take on the psyche, with some interesting consequences as a result. The preceding discussion has shown that the reading of post-Cartesianism (or of Wittgenstein's version of post-Cartesianism) on which the ethical objections of commentators such as Frank and Murdoch are based, is not entirely correct. That is to say, and leaving aside what this may mean for the morality of his perspective, this chapter made clear that Wittgenstein's rethinking of the Cartesian inner-outer model does not entail a denial of our inmost thoughts and feelings in the sense that it does not condemn him to locate religious belief in externalities or superficialities. Yet the explorations in this chapter have not shown that post-Cartesianism's critics have no reason to be sceptical whatsoever. While Wittgenstein's account of human being as essentially *embodied* forms no obstacle to his view on religiosity, the question as to how it can be reconciled with his account of human being as essentially *embedded* becomes all the more acute. For how can he

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[132] CV 33a; cf. pp. 99-100 of this study.

on the one hand hold that the subject is to an important extent the product of its upbringing, and on the other hand claim that the believer can and should choose a direction in life wholly of his own accord? Does this not demonstrate that Wittgenstein undermines his own undermining of Cartesianism after all? Needless to say, in the remainder of this study I will have a closer look at Wittgenstein's rethinking of the Cartesian self-other model. Not only because of its apparent inconsistency with his philosophy of religion, but also because it forms another element of post-Cartesianism that has been severely criticized.

Intermezzo II

Political arguments against non-Cartesian accounts

In the previous chapter I investigated to what extent Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion is compatible with his philosophy of psychology, for this provides a means, as I explained in the earlier intermezzo, both of fleshing out the Wittgensteinian account of subjectivity more fully, and of assessing the exegetical validity of the ethical objections that have been raised against such accounts. The preceding explorations have shown that, even though Wittgenstein at one point describes the difference between the believer and the non-believer in terms of "the interplay of forces within,"[1] his view on religiosity does not stand in an outright contradiction to his view on the psyche. Wittgenstein may take issue with Cartesianism, this does not compel him to deny the possibility of this pre-eminently personal matter or present it as a purely external or superficial affair. Hence, and in so far as the chapter on psychology left one wondering what Wittgenstein makes of our inmost thoughts and feelings, the previous chapter demonstrated that the interpretation of post-Cartesianism on which the arguments of critics like Frank and Murdoch are based, is not the most complete or correct one. The claim that Wittgenstein does away with "private coherent mental activity"[2] in its entirety, overstates the consequences of his denial that psychological phenomena reside in a literally inner realm – or at least in one respect.

For while the preceding explorations have established that Wittgenstein's taking the subject to be *embodied* does not contradict his view on religiosity, they have also shown that it is unclear how his taking the subject to be *embedded* squares with his explanation of religious belief. Indeed, it is for the very reason that Wittgenstein's thoughts on religion are compatible with his view on the subject's embodiedness that they should be said to diverge from his view on the embeddedness thereof: Wittgenstein situates religiosity in the direction of a person's life rather than inside the believer, but he also maintains that the believer can and should choose the

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[1] CV 33a; cf. pp. 99-100 of this study.
[2] Murdoch 1992, p. 152.

pictures to guide her all by herself, regardless of how others make their lives into a meaningful whole. Or to put this more carefully, Wittgenstein does not claim that the truly religious person is prevented from following age-old communal patterns, he is nonetheless adamant that the believer should choose for herself which pattern to follow.

Now one might grant that directions of life are not in the same way prefigured as psychological phenomena. That is to say, when someone's fine-grained and contextualized behaviour fundamentally deviates from that of his fellow men in similar situations, we would simply not take it to be expressions of the same phenomenon. When a person on the other hand breaks all existential conventions, we might denounce his way of living but cannot for that reason say that he is not making his life into (what he takes to be) a meaningful whole. Even so, Wittgenstein's individualistic conception of religion raises the question how it can be reconciled with his claim that the subject is essentially social. For how can he argue that it depends on one's socio-cultural context how one's subjectivity develops, and at the same time maintain that the subject should choose a direction in life wholly of her own accord?

This does not only point to an element of Wittgensteinian subjectivity that needs to be explored in more detail. As I already mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, post-Cartesianism's overturning of the self-other model has been as severely criticized as its overturning of the Cartesian take on the way inner and outer (inter)relate. Indeed, and even though rethinking the inner-outer relationship and the self-other relationship go hand in hand, discussions on the death of man seem to centre primarily on the suggestion that the self, far from being a fully self-sufficient entity, owes its existence or identity (for a large part) to the community of which it is part. Let me use this intermezzo to look at the debate sparked by the claim that there is no subjectivity without community. Above all, it concerns the (purported) political consequences of a non-Cartesian view on the nature of man.

When the philosophy of subjectivity took an anti-Cartesian turn, many greeted this as a welcome development. It was argued that by exposing the processes preconditioning subjectivity, the rethinkers of Cartesianism had not only shown that the self does not come in a monadic form, but also made clear that man could be conceptualized like that only at the cost of excluding other forms of selfhood. This appraisal, however, was not universally shared. Thinkers critical of the turn in the subjectivity debate maintained that the liberating potential of post-Cartesianism is not as big as it may seem – far from it. In the previous intermezzo, I already mentioned Frank's observation to the effect that Deleuze and Guattari's denial of a pre-existing subject renders their talk of man's suffering "under the coercion of language" utterly vacuous: if there is no pre-linguistic subject, Frank states, there is also no one to "perceive the theft of its freedom by 'grammar' as a loss."[3] Yet doubts about the liberating potential of a non-Cartesian account have perhaps most

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[3] Frank 1989, p. 338.

pertinently been expressed by feminist theorists. While acknowledging that post-Cartesianism or postmodernism allows other narratives than that of the white male heterosexual subject to be heard, feminist thinkers nonetheless question the value of the postmodern outlook for their emancipatory project.

Seyla Benhabib for instance argues against the possibility of a thoroughgoing alliance between feminism and postmodernism, precisely because of the radical contextualization for which the latter has come to stand. Benhabib maintains that to the extent that postmodernism not merely situates the subject but dissolves it into a multitude of power relations, feminist appropriations thereof "can only lead to self-incoherence."[4] Once the doer behind or beyond the deed is eliminated, any call for emancipation will necessarily be futile, as the means to act upon it will have been abolished too. If feminism has the slightest validity, traditional notions such as those of selfhood and agency can – *pace* postmodernism - not be disposed of completely. Many postmodern insights can be wholeheartedly embraced but "we must still argue that we are not merely extensions of our histories, that vis-à-vis our own stories we are in the position of author and character at once."[5]

According to Benhabib, then, Cartesianism may have its flaws but the outlook that its rethinkers recommend instead might be just as harmful. By explaining the subject as the product of its socio-political context, post-Cartesians risk disintegrating the very locus of agency and autonomy, and thus risk presenting social arrangements as being beyond the reach of intervention, no matter how much they may call for reform. This means that even if anti-Cartesians have a point in claiming that the subject is essentially social, we must not do away with everything that the Ego represents.

As I explained in the introductory chapter, and in line with my remarks about the ethical objections to the overturning of the Cartesian inner, I have my doubts about the arguments Benhabib offers. I do not know if we *need* to hold on to (elements of) Cartesianism in order for agency and autonomy to be imaginable, and that we *must* retain part of what the Ego represents. I wonder whether one can counter observations as to what the nature of man might be with the insistence it had better not be so, and I doubt whether (a form of) Cartesianism provides the only means of explaining the possibility of an emancipatory project. The opposite could also be argued and has been argued, by thinkers no less concerned with the feminist cause.

Judith Butler for instance, though reluctant to use the label "postmodern" herself, holds that it is rather Benhabib's demand for a form of subjectivity prior to power relations that renders feminism powerless. Whereas postmodernism acknowledges the need to "interrogate what [such a theoretical move] *authorizes*, and what precisely it excludes,"[6] taking selfhood to be given precludes all

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[4] Benhabib 1995, p. 21.
[5] Ibidem.
[6] Butler 1995, p. 39.

discussions about the supposed universality and neutrality thereof. Moreover, by investigating the processes constituting subjectivity, postmodernists do not dispose of agency - they present the subject as "a permanent possibility of [a] resignifying process."[7] Showing how resistance and reform are possible in the first place, postmodernism should be considered to be feminism's closest friend rather than its enemy.

Let me stress, at the risk of repeating myself, that I have not mentioned Butler's defence of postmodernism because I think that her's is the sole correct perspective on the implications of the twentieth century anti-Cartesian turn. Rather than taking the side of either Butler or Benhabib, I want to leave the discussion about the liberating potential of this development behind at this point - not just because the possibility of feminism is not the main concern of this study, but also because I think that phrasing the subjectivity debate solely in political terms may do it more harm than good, as I will explain in the concluding chapter. However, I do want to take the fact that the overturning of the Cartesian self-other model gives rise to such diverging appraisals as an incentive to have a closer look at it. For as my brief rehearsal of the "feminism and/or postmodernism" dispute makes clear, the rethinking of the subject is not a merely theoretical matter. Benhabib's qualms about postmodernism go to show that a renewed perspective on human being may affect issues pertaining to the brute reality of many people's lives. Yet as Butler's response indicates, the reading of post-Cartesianism informing such qualms is perhaps not quite complete or correct. Stating that the subject is socially constituted need not equal stating it is the passive product of its socio-political context.

Hence, in spite of the fact that I doubt whether it is warranted to claim that only those preserving elements of Cartesianism are politically responsible – as I doubt whether the claim to the contrary is warranted - I will postpone discussing this type of validity and will investigate the exegetical validity of these objections first. This will not merely allow me to assess the backlash to post-Cartesianism more thoroughly in the concluding chapter, it will also enable me to spell out Wittgenstein's contribution to this development in more detail. For clarity as to what it means that the subject's sociality is essential to it does not only further the debate about the death of man in general. It can also establish how Wittgenstein's describing religiosity, if not as something literally inner then still as something highly individualistic, relates to his situating the mental in the interspace between a community of subjects.

These matters can be investigated simultaneously because whether Wittgenstein's account of religiosity contradicts his account of the psyche and whether embedding the subject implies rendering it inert, both depend on how community and socio-cultural membership are subsequently explained. Both could indeed be said to be the case when the claim that the subject is essentially social is

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[7] Idem, p 47.

complemented with the claim that community is a static and uniform totality to which all human affairs are ultimately subservient, leaving no room for deviation and dissent. In other words, and to put it more neutrally, both the tenability of Wittgensteinian subjectivity and the validity of the claim that the post-Cartesian subject is inert can be determined by exploring the concept of the social accompanying the contextualization of the Ego. In the next chapter, I will return to Wittgenstein as one of the main representatives of the post-Cartesian development and examine how he explains what it means to become and be a member of a community.

My further exploring Wittgenstein's take on the relationship between individual and community will lead me, like my further exploring his take on the relationship between inner and outer, to look beyond the writings on the philosophy of psychology. The next chapter will be devoted to Wittgenstein's (very last) collection of remarks, the writings nowadays known as *On Certainty*. Primarily known for their epistemological considerations, these remarks can also be said to contain the most instructive indications as to Wittgenstein's social ontology.

This is due to the fact that what Wittgenstein call "certainties" are not purely individual possessions or accomplishments. As I will explain more fully in the introduction to the next chapter, he underscores that a person always already takes certain things for granted, yet this taking for granted is not based on thoroughgoing research on the individual's part. Rather, what stands fast for someone stems from her upbringing within a given community, and as a result, what one does and does not take to stand fast serves to distinguish those belonging from those not belonging to this particular group. Wittgenstein argues that certainties are acquired on the basis of a socialization process and points out that a person may be unwilling to even take someone who has inherited different certainties seriously.[8] Hence, his remarks on the psyche suggest that a person can only be said to pretend or hope when she has been initiated into a certain form of life, but the processes of in- and exclusion pertaining to socio-cultural membership are more explicitly addressed in the writings known as *On Certainty*. I will examine its description of both these processes in the chapter to come.

Yet before I turn to yet another part of his oeuvre, let me make clear that while I consult *On Certainty* in order to answer a question Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion all the more pertinently brought to the fore, this is not because I think that religious belief can be filed under the category of certainty, as several of Wittgenstein's interpreters suggest.[9] To be sure, there are interesting parallels between Wittgenstein's account of religiosity and the account offered in *On*

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[8] See e.g. OC 94, OC 144, OC 159, OC 279, OC 472; OC 155, OC 220, OC 252, OC 325, OC 611.

[9] This is for instance argued in Kober 1993 and Schönbaumsfeld 2007; see also my earlier comments on Schönbaumsfeld's equating religious belief and certainty in note 89 on page 130 and in note 101 on page 132 of the preceding chapter.

Certainty. He for instance holds that both when one declares "I know there is a God" and when one states "I know the world exists," the verb "to know" is not used in its ordinary sense, and explains that in the former as well as in the latter case, the statement is not based on grounds in the way a scientific statement is (or is at least supposed to be).[10] Even so, I do not think that Wittgenstein identifies religious belief and certainty all the way through.[11]

He may for instance distinguish both confessions of faith and certainties from ordinary knowledge claims, but the arguments he offers are not the same in each case. Whereas Wittgenstein claims that certainties cannot be proven right or wrong because they form the preconditions for doubt and knowledge in the first place, he maintains that religious belief does not lend itself to empirical testing because its object matter is not of a factual nature.[12] According to Wittgenstein, religion concerns the direction a person gives his existence. As a result, and in sharp contrast to the certainties one entertains, the pictures that guide the religious believer are very often in the front rather than the back of his mind.[13] Moreover, and as Wittgenstein was all too familiar with himself, even when one has committed oneself to a precept in a way unrivalled by one's beliefs in seemingly more well-established matters, this does not mean that one's religious conviction is always already exempt from doubt. The question whether one is truly acting in conformity with it might arise at any point.[14]

It is hard to say exactly where Wittgenstein's account of religious belief and his account of certainty part ways, but the differences I have just described suggest that he does not take certainties to be responses to the ethico-existential task that is human existence, which forms the very essence of Wittgensteinian religiosity. Wittgenstein, in other words, does not seem to assign religious belief and certainty exactly the same role. Whereas certainties enable a practical coping with the world in which one finds oneself, religious belief constitutes an attempt to take on the duty to lead a meaningful life. To be sure, practical coping and existential coping, so to speak, are no unrelated matters, and the exposition of *On Certainty* in the next chapter may accordingly not be completely devoid of ethico-existential terms. That, however, does not mean that religious belief can be filed under the category of certainty after all. It rather means that in some cases one's certainties are part of or can become involved in an attempt to respond to the task that comes with being a human being.

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[10] Cf. e.g. LRB 59, LRB 54, LRB 56, LRB 57, OC 84, OC 103, OC 138, OC 205.

[11] See CV 73f.

[12] See my exposition on page 131-132 of the previous chapter and cf. e.g. OC 105, OC 115, OC 308, OC 509.

[13] See my exposition on page of 133-135 the previous chapter and cf. e.g. OC 87, OC 103, OC 147, OC 159.

[14] See e.g. CV 26b, CV 56a, CV 57e, CV 86d.

One other remark needs to be made before I embark upon my reading of *On Certainty*. I consult these writings with the aim of clarifying what Wittgenstein takes the word "community" to mean, yet there are several things for which this term can stand: from neighbourhoods to online networks and nation states or assemblies of states. Let me point out that the next chapter concerns the concept of community in a somewhat more restricted sense. That is to say, in the debate on the sociality of subjectivity, "community" does not so much refer to a group or club a person can choose to join at one point as to the socio-cultural context in which one always already finds oneself. This does not necessarily single out a very clear subclass yet, but it is to communities in this sense of the word that the next chapter is devoted. That is not to say that communities in this sense come in one pure and precise form or never overlap and criss-cross, both with each other and with other "things" we call communities. Indeed, I will conclude that Wittgenstein does not consider community to be a fixed and rigid entity, and I ask the reader to keep this in mind when my phrasing in what follows nonetheless suggests otherwise.

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Wittgenstein on community in *On Certainty*

5.1 Introduction

In *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein can be said to try and come to terms with the fact that while he sympathizes with G.E. Moore's opposition to the sceptic, he takes Moore's arguments to be all wrong, or more precisely considers his wanting to give a knock-down anti-sceptical argument at all to be wholly misguided.[1] Moore hoped to prove scepticism wrong by means of assertions such as "(I know) this is a hand," and Wittgenstein devotes most of *On Certainty* to investigating the particularity of statements of this kind. Throughout the work he is struggling to find the right words to describe such statements,[2] but they seem adequately referred to with the term "certainty".[3] One of Wittgenstein's key insights concerning certainties is that, though they may seem to form a special class of superbly well-founded knowledge claims, they are in fact what makes ordinary or proper knowledge claims possible to begin with and should for that very reason be considered to be categorically distinct from these.

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[1] Much of the interpretational debate about OC revolves around understanding Wittgenstein's exact position vis-à-vis the sceptic. As can be gathered from the above formulation, I take him to want to show scepticism wrong just as much as Moore does, but also take him to develop an entirely different strategy, such that "showing wrong" here no longer means "disproving" in the ordinary sense of the word. However, since I am consulting OC for its social ontological rather than its epistemological insights, I will not discuss my understanding its of challenge to the sceptic any further here. For more thorough discussions of Wittgenstein and scepticism, see e.g. McGinn 1989, McManus 2004 and Moyal-Sharrock 2004. (Also, cf. note 42 on page 57 on passing over the debate on Wittgenstein's position vis-à-vis a very specific kind of scepticism, namely, other mind scepticism.)

[2] Cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 89.

[3] Though the word "statement" is not completely appropriate when it comes to describing the nature of certainties; qua certainties, after all, certainties typically go unexpressed. Cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 93, p. 97. She explains that verbalized certainties should accordingly be said to be the linguistic twins or *doppelgänger* of certainties.

Certainties for instance differ from knowledge claims in being exempt from doubt and disagreement, while the latter are in principle always open to dispute. This does not signal "hastiness or superficiality,"[4] Wittgenstein explains, because our practices could not get off the ground without numerous things being taken for granted. Moore's argument draws precisely on this "unconcerted consensus"[5] characterizing certainty: "The truths which Moore says he knows, are such as, roughly speaking, all of us know, if he knows them."[6] We would even consider it a "piece of unreason"[7] to doubt the truths Moore asserts (though normally we would doubt the sanity of someone feeling the need to make such assertions at all).

However, certainties are not exempt from disagreement because they have been (or can be) proven to be true beyond the shadow of a doubt. This is why Moore's appeal to them ultimately fails to defeat the sceptic.[8] While certainties form the very basis on which the justification of statements can take place, they are themselves unjustified, or in any case emerge from very different grounds than those that can be adduced to support knowledge proper. According to Wittgenstein: "I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself of its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false."[9]

On my reading of *On Certainty*'s main arguments, it addresses at least two issues pertaining to socio-cultural membership, reflecting the two senses in which Wittgenstein finds that certainties are not purely individual possessions or accomplishments. Certainties, first of all, play the role that they do because they stand fast, not just for the individual, but for the entire community. As a result, they serve to distinguish those belonging from those not belonging to the community. Someone not taking the same things for granted may even not be considered to be "one of us" in the sense of not being considered eligible for participating in the community's practices. Moreover, the individual can be said not just to share its certainties with other members of the community, but also to owe them to its fellow men. What stands fast for someone is the result of his or her upbringing within a particular culture and thus by no means a matter of individual achievement or choice.

The remainder of my reading of *On Certainty* will discuss Wittgenstein's social ontology in these two respects: first, the processes by means of which the child is initiated into the community, and, secondly, the kind of unity in which Wittgenstein takes these processes to result. For as I explained in the preceding intermezzo, I want to investigate what account of the social accompanies the contextualization of Cartesianism in Wittgenstein's case, both in order to make his

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[4] OC 358.
[5] Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 114.
[6] OC 100.
[7] OC 325; see also OC 155, OC 220, OC 252, OC 611.
[8] Cf. McGinn 1989, p. 123, pp. 144-146.
[9] OC 94; see also OC 144, OC 159, OC 279, OC 472.

voice in the subjectivity debate more fully explicit, and in order to examine the exegetical validity of the political objections to the post-Cartesian development. Indeed, not unlike the thinkers labelled "postmodern", Wittgenstein's non-Cartesian view has been said to have highly conservative consequences, and of all his writings it is perhaps *On Certainty* that appears to offer most ground for claiming that Wittgenstein places social arrangements beyond the reach of intervention. While he also has been charged with conservatism on the basis of certain socio-biographical facts and his descriptive philosophical method,[10] *On Certainty* most firmly seem to guarantee his place among conservative thinkers, apparently portraying human life itself as conformist to the core.[11]

As some remarks suggest, that is, certainties are transmitted to the novice by a process of indoctrination, leaving full-fledged members of the community with little reason to welcome changes in or deviations from their worldview. Wittgenstein depicts the child as having to "swallow" its elder's certainties "down"[12] without further ado, describes certainties in general as being "there – like our life,"[13] and unapologetically explains that, were we to meet someone not sharing some of our certainties, "we should not just not share his opinion: we should regard him as demented."[14] One could take such remarks to indicate that the main message of *On Certainty* is a conservative one, and that the political objections to post-Cartesianism, whether or not they are based on solid interpretations of other rethinkers of the subject, should be said to apply to the Wittgensteinian variety in any case.

However, even if *On Certainty* suggests that Wittgenstein embeds the subject to such an extent that it becomes predestined to carry on the customs and conventions of its community, his writings on religion indicate that he by no means wants to deny the subject's possibility to break with them. For as I concluded in chapter 4, Wittgenstein subscribes to a highly individualistic view on

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[10] See Gellner 1963, pp. 59-65 and Marcuse 1964, pp. 170-199 for an exposition of (what they take to be) the conservative implications of Wittgenstein's method. (I will argue shortly that precisely because what I take to be the Wittgensteinian approach, it is unlikely that OC can solely be read conservatively.)

[11] E.g. Nyíri and Bloor draw on several aspects of Wittgenstein's life and work to argue for his conservatism, but in both their analyses insights such as those expressed in *On Certainty* play a central role (see Nyíri 1982, pp. 44-68; Bloor 1983, pp. 160-168). According to Nyíri, Wittgenstein holds that "all criticism presupposes [...] a tradition of agreement" and that as a result, "traditions cannot be judged" (Nyíri 1982, p. 59). According to Bloor, Wittgenstein time and again "develops the characteristic themes of conservative thinkers," for instance when he encourages us "to cherish what we normally take for granted." (Bloor 1983, p. 161) Let me remark at this point that taking things for granted as such is not yet conservative – that is to say, one could also take highly progressive things to stand fast – and this chapter, moreover, is meant to show that Wittgenstein's observation that (most of) one's certainties are inherited, is not accompanied by the claim that what one inherits can never be questioned. For other commentators arguing that Wittgenstein was not a conservative thinker, see Crary 2000 and Robinson 2006.

[12] OC 143.

[13] OC 559.

[14] OC 155.

religious belief. While he does not claim that believers can never be guided by the same stories or pictures, he insists that the person who makes her life into an unorthodox whole cannot for that reason be called unreligious, and at any rate holds that the believer should choose a direction in life wholly of her own accord. With these conclusions in the back of my mind, I will investigate whether and to what extent *On Certainty* truly presents the subject as having no option but to continue the patterns and practices in which it always already finds itself. For once again, I take the apparent inconsistency between different parts of Wittgenstein's oeuvre to present an excellent opportunity for spelling out his exact contribution to the subjectivity debate. Rather than jumping to the conclusion that his take on religion stands in an outright contradiction to his writings in *On Certainty*, I will set out to see whether – and if so, how - these accounts can be reconciled.

But there is a different (though not wholly unrelated) reason for wanting to see whether *On Certainty* is perhaps not conformist all the way through, and this has got to do with Wittgenstein's view on philosophy as I described it in chapter 2. In discussing the *Investigations'* discourse on method, I argued that when it comes to determining philosophy's goal, the choice a thinker faces is not necessarily that between either taking stock of linguistic facts or proving our grammar to classify the world correctly. Referring also to *On Certainty*, I suggested that Wittgenstein considers it to be the philosopher's task to come to terms with our concepts or certainties in the first place.[15] I did not elaborate on that suggestion any further, but Wittgenstein's project (or his project in my understanding of it) can accordingly be explained in the terms used in *On Certainty* as well.

The question as to what, for instance, the mind or inner is, can after all be said to be a question about our world picture, or about of one of the things that always already stand fast for us.[16] Trying to answer such a question then means looking into the many ways in which this certainty is manifested in our everyday lives, and bringing these observations together in a way that is perspicuous yet does not violate their multifariousness. Such an investigation need not lead to a rejection of what the community takes for granted, but it may still bring about a change in the way we look at certain things, for instance by explaining that the body does not have to be seen as a barrier between minds, or by showing that the comparison between a body and a machine does not hold.

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[15] Cf. page 37 of this study.

[16] And to repeat one of my claims from chapter 2: this does not mean that such a question only concerns our certainties or concepts in strict distinction to what they refer to, so that philosophy cannot be said to deal with the world or with things themselves. Moreover, let me add that it also does not mean that philosophy is nonsensical for addressing things that normally go without saying. One could take the metaphilosophical entries that OC contains to argue for the latter, but I will shortly explain in more detail why these remarks – like the methodological remarks in PI – do not automatically support the reading that Wittgenstein is the antidote or antithesis to philosophy. For now, suffice it to say that addressing things that normally go without saying is not necessarily meaningless because our very familiarity with something might also be the cause of our failing to get a clear grasp thereof; cf. pp. 32-33 of this study; PI 129.

Now if Wittgensteinian philosophy can be explained as an exploration of certainties, and if *On Certainty* can solely be read along conservative lines, these writings would contradict his view on philosophy just as much as his take on religion. For in order to survey the many ways in which a certainty is manifested in everyday life, let alone consider alternatives to what one takes to stand fast – indeed, in order to raise a question about the things one takes for granted in the first place - a philosopher has to break or at least temporarily suspend the unconcerted consensus characterizing certainty. Philosophically exploring a world picture Wittgenstein-style (or Wittgenstein-style in my understanding thereof) entails disentangling oneself from what the community takes for granted, or of acknowledging that one, too, subscribes to these certainties while at the same time not fully identifying with them. Like his insisting that the true believer makes her own choice, this suggests that Wittgenstein does not take the subject to inevitably and unthinkingly reproduce the framework of its elders.

Hence, when it comes to the consequences of contextualizing Cartesianism, both Wittgenstein's view on religion and his take on philosophy indicate that he does not embed the subject in such a way that it becomes unable to breach or bracket the conventions of its community. In this chapter, I will investigate how this can be said to be reflected in *On Certainty*, regardless of the conservatism it may appear to display.

One more thing needs to be explained, however, before I examine this more closely, because when it comes to Wittgenstein's view on philosophy, it could be objected that nothing in *On Certainty* stands in the slightest contradiction to the ideas expressed in the discourse on method. That is to say, in so far as one takes Wittgenstein to contribute to philosophical discussions by showing them to be confused and by dissolving rather than answering philosophical questions, *On Certainty* only confirms that there are, on Wittgenstein's view, certain things that cannot and need not be questioned. What is more, he precisely points out that Moore's attempt to refute the sceptic rests on a misuse of language and repeatedly underscores the nonsensicality that results when philosophers try to make certainties explicit: "I am sitting with a philosopher in the garden; he says again and again "I know that that's a tree", pointing to a tree that is near us. Someone else arrives and hears this, and I tell him: "This fellow isn't insane. We are only doing philosophy." "[17]

At the risk of repeating myself, I do not think that Wittgenstein's anti-philosophical remarks, including those in *On Certainty*, necessitate the reading that he has no substantive contribution to make to philosophy. As I argued in chapter 2, Wittgenstein can be said to identify a tension rather than a mistake inherent in the attempt to answer philosophical questions, and incorporates this tension into the way he himself responds to them. My suggestion that he can be said to explore the things that always already stand fast for us in an attempt to answer questions

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[17] OC 467; see also OC 31, OC 347.

such as "What is the inner?" is not refuted by his taking Moore to task for infelicitously making some of our certainties explicit. The upshot thereof merely is that emphatically stating "I know this is a hand" does not refute the sceptic, and that it cannot be philosophy's task to prove certainties to be true or false. Yet that philosophy is not in the business of corroborating world pictures does not mean that the philosopher cannot explore certainties and is prevented from trying to understand what it means that we always already take humans to be endowed with mind, say.

Moreover, even if one maintains that Wittgenstein is first and foremost intent on bringing words such as "knowledge", "being", "object" and "I" "back from their metaphysical to their everyday use,"[18] some critical distance between the Wittgensteinian thinker and our concepts or certainties is required. For in order to see when and how the philosophical use of such words goes astray from everyday employment, one has to be able to make the things that normally go without saying explicit as well.[19] Hence, seeing whether Wittgenstein allows for the possibility to disentangle oneself from a system of certainties is important even when one supports a less substantive reading of his approach. That said, let us have a closer look at the account *On Certainty* offers of what it means to become or be a member of a community – or the account that can in any case be extracted from Wittgenstein's very last writings.

5.2 Initiation into the community

In the attention it devotes to scenes and processes of instruction, *On Certainty* forms no exception to Wittgenstein's later work. And as is the case in, say, the *Investigations*' assessment of Augustine's recollections,[20] many of its remarks can be said to oppose an overly individualistic and intellectualistic account of the child's initiation into the (linguistic) community. As Wittgenstein points out, things come to stand fast for the infant, not by testing a host of quasi-scientific hypotheses or even by learning explicit rules,[21] but by being "handed on" an unarticulated "body of knowledge":[22] "This system is something that a human being acquires by means of observation and instruction. I intentionally do not say "learns"."[23]

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[18] PI 116.

[19] Cf. my earlier reflections on the kind of distance an overview of grammar requires, n. 70, p. 33.

[20] See PI 1, PI 32.

[21] See OC 140, OC 152, OC 159, OC 167, OC 472.

[22] OC 288. Obviously, Wittgenstein contradicts himself here by using the word "knowledge", and my using "unarticulated" may not fully suffice to counter this inconsistency, as certainty is distinct from knowledge of any kind. Yet as stated, OC forms an ongoing struggle to come to grips with what certainties are, and formulations such as these can be said to be indicative thereof.

[23] OC 279.

Wittgenstein is unwilling to speak of learning or education in this context, since none of the certainties that the child acquires need ever be taught to him or her explicitly. Not surprisingly given that certainties "simply [get] assumed as a truism, never called into question, perhaps not even formulated"[24] by the adults themselves, their instruction mostly takes place in an implicit manner that rules out questions of truth and justification. "Children" for instance "do not learn that books exist [...] - they learn to fetch books"[25] and thereby come to take the former for granted. Indeed, if children were to raise questions as to whether such objects exist or endure at all, their inquisitiveness could only be greeted with impatience.[26] Not yet initiated into the community's practices of questioning and answering, the child still has to learn what questions can legitimately be raised to begin with.

Hence, on Wittgenstein's view, infants acquire a world picture by gradually being led, not always expressly but not therefore any less forcefully, to incorporate the certainties of their elders.[27] As he himself explains his reluctance to use the word "learning": "After [the child] has seen this and this and heard that and that, he is not in a position to doubt whether...,"[28] say, the earth already existed before his birth. Even though (or perhaps precisely because) caretakers do not deliberately and systematically convey their particular picture of the world, children more or less automatically make the community's certainties their own.

Moreover, Wittgenstein is adamant that the fact that the child does not undertake proto-scientific investigations and is unable to question what its caretakers impart, need not be deplored. Doubt and justification have no place in the process of initiation because they presuppose beliefs of precisely the kind that instructors are in the process of conveying.[29] According to the analysis offered in *On Certainty*, and paradoxical as it may sound, by basically imposing their picture of the world parents and teachers enable the infant to develop its critical capacities rather than forever holding it back from employing them. For only by acquiring their system of certainties can the child become a full-blown participant in the community's practices of debate and critique.

However, this also means that in so far as Wittgenstein points to the preconditions for the child's ability to raise doubts and questions, rather than its inability to ever engage in such activities, *On Certainty* argues that the evaluative powers the child is enabled to develop are fundamentally dependent on and

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[24] OC 87.

[25] OC 476.

[26] See OC 310-317.

[27] Cf. Medina 2004, pp. 82-84; he argues that communal norms become second nature to the child because it internalizes them. Cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 106; she points out that the fact that certainties are acquired does not make them no less automatic and thus no less instinctive in that sense of the word. (It should be noted that both Medina and Moyal-Sharrock explain that some certainties are not acquired or are only acquired on the basis of other instinctive behaviour; I will discuss this shortly.)

[28] OC 280; see also OC 128, OC 143, OC 206, OC 288.

[29] See OC 105, OC 115, OC 150, OC 343, OC 375, OC 392.

constrained by the frame of reference it inherits. By conveying a world picture caretakers enable the infant to eventually put up numerous things for discussion but at the same time inevitably safeguard a host of other, not exactly trivial matters from similarly being discussed. Wittgenstein seems to explain the subject's certainties and critical capacities to be the product of a socialization process - which would not only make him susceptible to the objections raised by thinkers such as Frank and Benhabib, but would also mean that *On Certainty* conflicts with both his view on religiosity and his perspective on philosophy. For both in order to choose one's own direction in life and in order to explore what is always already taken for granted, a person must be able to disentangle herself from the framework she has inherited. Yet that seems to be precluded beforehand because of the way she is prepared to participate in pre-existing practices.

Put differently, by making the subject's evaluative powers dependent on a process of socialization, Wittgenstein appears to presents us with an impasse. To the extent that other parts of his oeuvre indicate that the subject is not predestined to unthinkingly carry on the conventions of its community, the account of the infant's initiation in *On Certainty* seems to rule out the possibility of breaching or bracketing what one, as a full-fledged member of a community, has come to take to stand fast. In the next section I will say more on the prospects for difference and divergence when it comes to full-blown certainties. For now it should be noted that - regardless of the opportunities one thinks such a perspective offers, or the dangers one feels it presents - the claim that the subject is a social construction cannot be ascribed to Wittgenstein without reserve.[30] According the account offered in *On Certainty*, infants inherit their certainties from their elders, but this inheritance does not proceed from scratch and is itself facilitated by factors that are not of a socio-cultural kind. In the chapter on his philosophy of psychology I already pointed out that Wittgenstein takes a natural process to underlie the acquisition of communal patterns of behaviour.[31] In the context of *On Certainty* it is similarly because of his naturalism that Wittgenstein cannot be said to explain the subject as socially constituted all the way through.[32]

The later Wittgenstein's interest in scenes and processes of instruction is noticeably accompanied by an interest in natural, instinctive or primitive behaviour,

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[30] This is for instance suggested at several points in Schatzki 1996; see e.g. p. 70, p. 83, pp. 86-87. While his account is not diametrically opposed to the one I am developing, and Schatzki for instance also points to the importance of primitive reactions (see pp. 52-53), he nonetheless chooses to describe the Wittgensteinian subject as socially constituted, which I do not think is wholly correct.

[31] Cf. p. 76 of this study.

[32] Cf. Medina 2004. Dromm 2003 on the other hand contends that Wittgenstein cannot be attributed a naturalistic view on the child's (linguistic) development. However, he does so on the basis of an understanding of Wittgenstein's method from which I have already distanced myself in chapter 2.

both in infants and instructors.[33] Wittgenstein for instance argues, as was discussed in chapter 2, that adults render the child capable of both refining and enhancing its repertoire of psychological phenomena, precisely on the basis of "the primitive, the natural, expressions"[34] of sensations such as pain. In *On Certainty* Wittgenstein can be said to identify, in addition to such specific natural reactions, an another type of instinctive behaviour, one that enables the acquisition, not just of particular psychological verbs, but of language or of world pictures more generally. For he not only points out that doubt is logically excluded from the conveyance of certainties, he also observes that children as a matter of fact do not question the instructions of their elders: "As children we learn facts; e.g. that every human being has a brain, and we take them on trust. [...] The child learns by believing the adult."[35]

According to Wittgenstein, in other words, it comes natural for the infant to believe or trust its parents and teachers.[36] This trust can be said to be basic in the sense of being unacquired or instinctive, but also in the sense of not concerning anything specific. That is to say, while certainties can themselves be characterized as a kind of trusting[37] - a trusting that 2 + 2 = 4, or that my name is CB, for instance - the trust that children display cannot be specified in that manner. It amounts to a readiness to partake in and go along with whatever their parents and teachers do and say. If it were not for this instinctive and unrestricted[38] openness, instructors would be unable to teach infants that every human being has a brain, or what the word "pain" means - indeed, if infants were indisposed to go along with them, instructors would be unable to impart anything whatsoever.

The inheritance of a world picture as Wittgenstein describes it, then, starts from the infant's unconditional readiness to go along with its caretakers and results in a more sophisticated but no less unhesitating being-at-home in the world at large. To the extent that full-blown certainties form an inherited kind of trusting, they form an extension of a more basic type of trust naturally present in infants.[39] To be sure, children cannot be said (to be willing) to trust in the exact same sense that adults can, but Wittgenstein does not rule out the ascription of basic psychological phenomena to infants, as witnessed by his remarks on pain. Moreover, although

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[33] Cf. Malcolm 1995, pp. 66-75. In the remainder of the paper Malcolm argues that certainties are just as instinctive as, say, crying when in pain. Here, however, he can be said to fail to distinguish between instinctive and acquired (but therefore not less automatic) certainties (cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004, pp. 104-107) or between first and second nature (cf. Medina 2004, pp. 82-84). This possibly explains Rhees' reluctance to grant Malcolm the instinctive nature of certainties (see Rhees 2003).

[34] PI 244.

[35] OC 159-160; see also OC 34, OC 161, OC 170, OC 263.

[36] Cf. Plant 2005, p. 47; cf. Cavell 1979, p. 178. Elena Ponzoni first of all taught me about the importance of trust in Wittgenstein's account of cognitive development.

[37] Cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004, pp. 193-198; she also argues that some certainties are instinctive (see pp. 107-108), but I want to distinguish the child's instinctive trust from certainties as such, whether acquired or innate.

[38] As I will explain shortly, the infant's trust can in fact not be said to be entirely unrestricted.

[39] Cf. Plant 2005, p. 50; Moyal-Sharrock 2004, pp. 185-186; Medina 2004, pp. 84-86.

this instinctive trust does not have the same natural expressivity as a sensation like pain, we do grant infants trust, which perhaps comes out most clearly when we notice their reluctance or refusal to interact with people they are unfamiliar with. That this absence of trust strikes us goes to show that we take their trusting attitude to be default.[40]

It should also be noted that Wittgenstein's appeal to basic trust does not contradict his criticism of Augustine's overly intellectualistic and individualistic take on the infant's initiation. [41] Whereas Augustine presupposes too much of the child in effectively ascribing it a fully developed innate language,[42] Wittgenstein merely attributes it an unrestricted responsiveness that does not proceed from any deliberation. And while this responsiveness is to be ascribed to none other than the child itself, it does not make the infant into a self-enclosed and self-sufficient entity. Quite the contrary, for its instinctive trust is always already directed towards its caretakers, on whom it moreover still depends for developing this natural, outward orientation beyond its basic state.

However, that infants basically follow their elder's every lead does not mean that they are the passive and infinitely malleable recipients of their caretakers' certainties, which would effectively still mean that Wittgenstein takes the individual to be entirely socially produced, in spite of his naturalistic observations. Indeed, in so far as he thinks children are predisposed to go along with whatever their caretakers do and say, Wittgenstein cannot be said to take their trust to be wholly unrestricted or to have no content whatsoever, and my preceding claims need to be modified accordingly. For although *On Certainty* does not mention this explicitly, certain restrictions follow from the fact that infants always already put trust in their caretakers. Augustine may presuppose too much of the child in ascribing it a full-blown innate language, he seems to be right in the sense that the child can be attributed some very basic certainties.

In their following their elders' every lead, namely, infants can be said to already show their acceptance, in however minimal sense of the word, of the existence of (these specific) others as at the same time distinct from and similar to themselves.[43]

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[40] Cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 197.

[41] Cf. Lagerspetz 1998, pp. 96-102. Lagerspetz argues (against Hertzberg) that it makes no sense to ask whether or not trust is innate because the ability to trust is not a faculty. However, saying that it comes natural for the child to trust its caretakers does not amount to ascribing it a complex mental state; Lagerspetz seems to be objecting to a more intellectualistic notion of basic trust than the one I am using.

[42] See PI 32.

[43] Cf. Gallagher 2005, pp. 65-85. Gallagher agues that neonate imitation behaviour (as documented by the experimental psychologists Meltzoff and Moore) implies at least a pre-reflective awareness of one's own body, a differentiation between self and other and a recognition that the other is of the same sort as the self. Similarly, Rochat & Hespos, observing that newborns respond differently to self-stimulation and to stimulation by others, contend that there is an innate sense of self as a differentiated and situated entity (see Rochat & Hespos 1997). Decety & Sommerville even argue that the fact that social interaction requires both an ability to identify with and an ability to distinguish oneself from others, is reflected at brain level, observing a partial overlap between the

Their trusting behaviour perhaps points to the possession of other beliefs as well,[44] but it minimally implies that children take for granted that there are others to go along with in the first place, and that the infant thus always already distinguishes self from other and other from self. Without such differentiation, no going along could get off the ground, for were the child to live in a state of undifferentiated confusion, it would be unable to engage in any imitating or following behaviour. However, it is also essential to the infant's basic attitude that the others it puts its faith in, lead a full-blown human life of precisely the kind the infant is in the process of developing. The resemblance it bears to its caretakers explain why they are the object of the child's instinctive trust; without such identification, the infant's going along would not get off the ground either. At the same time as the child can be said to distinguish self from other, it can be said to presuppose basic similarities between them as well. Its unrestricted openness requires both identification with and differentiation from its caretakers.[45]

Hence, the infant's instinctive trust entails that it takes the existence of self and other as both similar and different to be non-negotiable from the very start, even if it cannot be said to possess a fully developed world picture and even if all the other things it will come to take for granted are adopted from its caretakers without further ado. In addition to or as a prerequisite for their natural willingness to go along, children already possess a rudimentary sense of self as well as of other. They can accordingly not be said to owe all their certainties to their elders.

For other reasons, too, caretakers cannot be said to be the sole and unbridled source of the infant's world picture. Apart from the fact that the child already possesses some basic certainties, the "general facts of nature"[46] Wittgenstein mentions elsewhere can be said to place restrictions on the certainties that elders are able to impart on the basis thereof. As I argued in chapter 2, albeit for different reasons, Wittgenstein's pointing out that the world does not enforce one particular grammar or world picture does not yet imply that he thinks concepts or certainties can be imposed on the world at will. On his view, a world picture is rather something human beings develop in practical interaction with the world around them, and the latter can accordingly be said to have a say in the way world pictures take shape. Brought to bear on the conveyance of certainties, this means that it is

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regions involved in self-processing and those involved the processing of others; they moreover maintain that the right hemisphere plays a predominant role in this respect, which is also more active in children than the left hemisphere from the very start (see Decety & Sommerville 2003)

[44] The infant's basic trust possibly also implies that it already has an ability to a distinguishing people from non-human entities or objects, for instance, or that it already takes for granted that its caretakers continue to exist while being out of sight. Moyal-Sharrock counts the latter among the natural or instinctive certainties (see Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 104).

[45] One might object that this does not sufficiently do justice to the otherness of the other, but I choose to leave that debate aside. Zahavi argues that it is precisely the notion of a minimal self that is able to accommodate the transcendence of the other: the other is an other because she also occupies her own irreplaceable first-person perspective (see Zahavi 2007, pp. 194-201).

[46] PI 230; see also PI p. 56, RPPi 46-49, RPPi 78, OC 617.

not entirely up to their elders what children will come to take for granted, simply because human beings cannot randomly choose their world picture at all.

But facts of nature can also be said to play a restricting role in the conveyance of certainties in another sense. Such facts namely include man's own biological make-up and the different (dis)inclinations and (in)abilities that are part and parcel thereof. These not only put general constraints on possible world pictures like facts about non-human nature do, to the extent that certain dispositions and capabilities may differ from person to person from the very start, they influence the handing on of world pictures with every single child.

Though it is by no means impossible to expand and improve upon the various abilities with which one is born – indeed, each process of instruction is premised on that possibility – certain differences in bodily, mental and social skills, for instance, may never be overcome. Such differences are likely to affect the manner and pace in which a world picture is conveyed to a particular child, but they might also have an effect on the exact certainties it will eventually incorporate. A naturally blind person, to give one very conspicuous example, may after all come to possess a different world picture from that of a person with normal eyesight. The way and degree in which variations in these and other capacities affect what infants end up taking for granted, probably varies with the capacity and degree of divergence at issue, but in this sense, too, Wittgenstein's naturalism appears to prevent him from maintaining that the subject is socially constituted all the way through.

To recapitulate my reading of *On Certainty* so far, the conveyance of certainties as it portrayed in these writings crucially depends on the child's instinctive willingness to follow its caretakers' every lead. Wittgenstein may therefore make the subject's critical capacities conditional upon a socialization process, he makes this process itself conditional upon factors that are of a natural rather than of a socio-cultural kind. Moreover, that Wittgenstein takes the child to basically go along with whatever its caretakers do and say, does not mean that he takes it to be malleable by its elders without constraint. The infant's basic trust implies that it takes the existence of self and other to be non-negotiable from the very start. In addition, general facts of nature restrict what one can come to take for granted in the first place, the conveyance of which is also influenced by natural facts in the sense of the different skills and capacities with which persons are born.

This has important consequences for Wittgenstein's version of the claim that the individual and its critical capacities are the product of a socialization process. Given that both general facts of nature and his or her own biological make-up affect what a person can come to take for granted, the subject cannot be said to be the mere effect of its upbringing in the sense that this upbringing does not have the only word. Moreover, given that full-blown certainties form an extension of a more basic type of trust that comes with it its own basic presuppositions, the subject cannot be considered to be the simple product of its rearing in the sense that this rearing does not proceed from scratch. Indeed, since the child's innate

trust already requires a rudimentary sense of self, subjectivity can, at least in this minimal sense of the word, not be said to be produced at all.[47]

What follows from Wittgenstein's naturalism is therefore not so much that the obtaining of a world picture cannot be said to be a social affair. According to my reading of *On Certainty*, a basic sense of self is always already given, but the infant's directedness to and dependence on others is thereby not ruled out[48] - that is, on the contrary, precisely explained and safeguarded by the child's basic subjectivity. The implication of Wittgenstein's naturalism accordingly rather is that the process by means of which the child is initiated into the community, is not (or not entirely) one of construction or production. For instead of being created *ex nihilo*, each child comes with its own perspective from the very start. Rather than owing all its certainties to its elders, the infant always already takes some things for granted. Thanks to its otherwise unconditional openness, these basic beliefs can be refined and enhanced to correspond with the community's certainties, but the child's inborn capacities may prevent complete conformity from ever being reached.[49] Handing on a world picture is, in other words, more a matter of enhancement and attunement that occurs within certain bounds than a matter of unbridled construction or production.[50]

5.3 Certainty, unity and divergence

This brings me to the second aspect of socio-cultural membership I announced to investigate when introducing *On Certainty*. As I explained, these writings do not only explore the processes by means of which certainties are conveyed, they also point out that the possession of particular certainties serves to distinguish those belonging from those not belonging to the community. Or in Wittgenstein's less exclusionary terms: " 'We are quite sure of it' does not mean just that every single person is certain of it, but that we belong to a community which is bound together by science and education."[51] In the context of *On Certainty*, in other words, it is by taking the same things for granted that a particular group of people makes up a socio-cultural unity.[52] It is the nature of this unity to which I will now turn.

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[47] Cf. Zahavi 2007, pp. 185-194. He argues (though he does not put this in ontogenetic terms) that the narrative construction of individuals presupposes the notion of a minimal self.

[48] Wittgenstein can accordingly only be ascribed a version of naturalism that does not prevent him from considering humans to be social by their very nature; cf. Medina 2004, p. 86. Medina explains that Wittgenstein blurs the distinction between nature and culture.

[49] As I will argue below, a community's world picture need not make for a uniform whole and there accordingly need not be a rigid and fixed standard for members to conform to to begin with.

[50] Cf. Luntley 2003, p. 168.

[51] OC 298.

[52] Cf. Schatzki 1996, pp. 208-209. He defines the notion of "being one of us" in terms of participation in the same set of practices.

The nature or rigidity of the unity that certainties create still waits to be explored because my findings in the previous section have not yet made clear whether *On Certainty* accommodates the possibility of disentangling oneself from an inherited frame of reference - and thus whether it is consistent with both a Wittgensteinian take on religiosity and a Wittgensteinian view of what philosophy can do. By pointing to the naturalism underlying the account in *On Certainty*, I argued that Wittgenstein does not take the subject and its certainties to be entirely socially produced, but that does not alter the fact that, on his view, the greater part of one's world picture is acquired rather than innate, and that this world picture is, moreover - as that which makes debate and critique possible in the first place - itself excluded from being questioned or discussed. That Wittgenstein does not present the subject as the simple product of its upbringing by itself does not imply that he allows for the possibility of breaching or bracketing what one, as a full-fledged member of a community, has come to take for granted.

What is more, several remarks in *On Certainty* suggest that after being initiated into a particular community, one not only unthinkingly takes numerous things to stand fast but can also only respond with rejection to the suggestion that things could also be seen differently. On Wittgenstein's account, those who raise questions or doubts about the community's world picture may appear to be silenced beforehand. He for instance observes: "When we say that we *know* that such and such..., we mean that any reasonable person in our position would also know it, that it would be a piece of unreason to doubt it."[53] Pointing out that one's world picture determines what one considers to be normal or sensible in the first place, Wittgenstein seems to give one little reason to even take someone endorsing a different outlook seriously: "One might simply say "O, rubbish" to someone who wanted to make objections to the propositions that are beyond doubt. That is, not to reply to him but to admonish him."[54]

Indeed, that dissent and even divergence is precluded in advance is the main conclusion of the conservative readings of *On Certainty* I mentioned earlier. On these readings, Wittgenstein holds that "while one can very well imagine" societies or tribes with different certainties, one cannot "entertain a liberal attitude as regards irregularities in [one's] own society,"[55] thus providing a theoretical justification for "[deploring] any movement away from the order and organic unity"[56] that a community is supposed to form.

However, in spite of the entries suggesting that being a member of a community means subscribing to a fixed and rigid set of certainties, *On Certainty* does not conclude that what men consider reasonable is immune to change, or that

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[53] OC 325; see also OC 93, OC 108, OC 155, OC 254.
[54] OC 495. It should already be noted that Wittgenstein presents this as a possible but not as a necessary reaction. I will come back to this below.
[55] Nyíri 1982, p. 61.
[56] Bloor 1983, p. 161.

people can never be brought to look at the world differently. Wittgenstein famously compares certainties to a river-bed, part of which "may change back into a state of flux,"[57] and according to this metaphor, moreover, it is precisely because of movements in the water, or changes at the level of the knowledge claims people make, that certainties might shift.[58] This points to the possibility, not just of passive change, but of active intervention in an inherited frame of reference too.

What is more, *On Certainty* itself can be said to show that unconcerted consensus characterizing certainty can be breached or at least temporarily bracketed. Wittgenstein's remarks demonstrate that even though philosophical explications of certainties sometimes go awry, it is possible to stop and meaningfully think about statements such as "I have a hand" nonetheless. For as one of the remarks on certainty explains, one may not "explicitly learn the propositions that stand fast," one can still "*discover* them subsequently like the axis around which a body rotates."[59] And as *On Certainty* indicates, such a discovery can subsequently lead to an exploration of one's world picture (or, in this case, of world pictures more generally) that might eventually even bring about a change in the way in which we look at certain things (such as, in this case, certainties themselves).

Hence, in *On Certainty*, similar to in his philosophy of religion and his discourse on method, Wittgenstein can be said to hold that the subject is able to disentangle itself from the world picture it has inherited. The question is: How does this chime with the remarks claiming that as a full-blown member of a community, one has incorporated a world picture that rules out questions from being asked about it and divergence from being welcomed? In order to answer this question, it is instructive to first of all return to the findings of the previous section, for that the infant's initiation is more a matter of attunement than of production also has consequences for the world picture of the community as a whole, or for the kind of unity in which this upbringing results.

According to the account offered in *On Certainty*, as I explained, an infant without a fully developed world picture but with a rudimentary sense of self is invested with the certainties that the full-blown members of a community already share. Yet precisely because this process proceeds on the basis of a minimal form of subjectivity, the child's upbringing can, from the perspective of the community itself, be said to be as much a matter of modification as it is of confirmation. Not unlike the child expands its basic trust by (quite literally) incorporating the community's certainties, the community can be said to incorporate the (rudimentary yet ineliminable) perspective of this new-found member, and thus to

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[57] OC 97; see also OC 96, 98-99, OC 211, OC 256, OC 336.

[58] Hence, that Wittgenstein employs a "natural" metaphor does not mean that he takes change to occur only naturally or without human intervention; cf. Nyíri, according to whom Wittgenstein maintains that "new rules would have to emerge from the old ones organically" (Nyíri 1982, p. 61). I will shortly discuss the possibility of a deliberate distancing.

[59] OC 152.

undergo a certain transformation in the process too. Moreover, given that children may be born with different bodily, mental or social skills, as I pointed out, it is by no means guaranteed that all of them will come to hold exactly the same certainties that their elders subscribe to. Differences in inborn abilities may eventually be reflected in the things infants come to take for granted. Put differently, with the conveyance and reinvestment of a world picture, the possibility of divergence is always already present too. [60]

What is more, if the way in which children are initiated cannot rule out that they grow up to possess (somewhat) different world views, the world picture that is conveyed to them by full-blown members of the community need not make for a homogeneous unity to begin with. These full-blown members need not have come to incorporate exactly the same certainties themselves, be it knowingly or accidentally.[61] This only reinforces the possibility of transformation inherent in the conveyance of certainties. For as Wittgenstein observes, what stands fast for someone not only concerns numerous and highly diverse things - from mathematical to biological to historical facts - the sources through which one acquires them are likewise numerous and diverse: *On Certainty* mentions implicit as well as explicit instructions, by both parents and teachers, and refers to text books as well as one's own observations[62] - the list can probably be expanded. If the senior members an infant encounters on its way to full-blown membership do not automatically share the exact same certainties, and no child, moreover, has the exact same mentors to guide the way, this may also have (somewhat) diverging world pictures as a result. The possibility of divergence inherent in the process of initiation, and the possible differences already present among the members of a community, both explain and reinforce each other.

So while some of *On Certainty*'s entries suggest that deviation from the community's world picture is precluded in advance, Wittgenstein does not presuppose that there is a rigid and homogeneous unity to conform to or diverge from in the first place. A system of certainties has to be reconfirmed with every new member, and every instance of reinvestment brings the possibility of transformation with it, partly due to and possibly reflected in (bigger or smaller) differences in the things that full-blown members take for granted. Undergoing a process of sedimentation as well as modification at all times, a community's frame of reference should be considered to make for an open and dynamic rather than an inflexible and monolithic whole. When Wittgenstein states that "Our 'empirical propositions' do not form a homogeneous mass,"[63] he can accordingly be said to underscore, not just that certainties concern many different things, but also that

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[60] Cf. Medina 2006, pp. 27-28, p. 45, p. 49, pp. 70-71.

[61] I will shortly say more on the possibility of knowingly distancing oneself from what other members of the community take for granted. And as I will point out, this is not wholly unrelated to the fact that differences in certainties may arise naturally or accidentally.

[62] See e.g. OC 138, OC 161, OC 162, OC 263, OC 275, OC 281, OC 310-315, OC 600.

[63] OC 213.

the world picture of a community may show variations between one member and the next.[64]

Indeed, this also means that it may be difficult to say precisely where one world picture ends and another begins. If the members of a community do not necessarily take exactly the same things for granted, the difference between members and non-members may not always already be clear either. Rather than excluding divergence in advance, Wittgenstein's analysis in effect implies that it cannot be stated beforehand where the line between "same" and "different" or "normal" and "abnormal" should be drawn.[65]

Yet even though the fact that *On Certainty* allows for such conclusions already alleviates the conservatism it may appear to display, and a full-blown conformism seems to contradict Wittgenstein's views on religiosity and philosophy in any event, my explorations have still not made clear how *On Certainty* accommodates the possibility of disentangling oneself from the frame of reference one inherited. The foregoing may have shown that the possibility of transformation is inherent in the process by means of which certainties are conveyed, but it has only shown that divergence can occur naturally or accidentally; how the subject might consciously come to suspend, let alone leave behind, what it and its community take to stand fast, is thereby not explained. What is more, the claim that *On Certainty* explains world pictures as in principle open and dynamic rather than fixed and rigid may sound quite vacuous in the light of the entries describing how divergence from certainties is dealt with in practice. According to Wittgenstein, it seems, the mere thought that there are alternatives to one's frame of reference can only be greeted with rebuke. Let me deal with these points one by one, starting with the latter.

For it should be noted that, regardless of what the remark I quoted earlier might suggest, Wittgenstein does not maintain that the only right response to a question about one's world picture or to a person who sees things differently is "O, rubbish."[66] He does not take rebuke to be the only possible or warranted response, for if one's fundamental attitudes are contradicted one might simply, as he states elsewhere, "have to put up with it."[67] Moreover, to the extent that Wittgenstein considers it appropriate to admonish a diverging voice, he does so because he feels that it would be incorrect to try and provide grounds or evidence in support of one's outlook.[68] "Where two principles really do meet which cannot

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[64] Cf. Kober 1993, p. 372. He points out that inconsistencies within a world picture are possible. This can be said to hold for a community's as well as an individual's world picture: given that someone may have been exposed to very different and sometimes even opposing certainties on the way to full-blown membership, the frame of reference she comes to rely upon may also contain incongruities. This is a possibility Moyal-Sharrock does not seem to acknowledge (see Moyal-Sharrock 2004, pp. 111-112), yet a system of beliefs need arguably not be entirely consistent in order to function as such.

[65] Cf. Cavell 1979, p. 22, p. 27.

[66] OC 495.

[67] OC 238.

[68] See OC 498, OC 611-612.

be reconciled with one another"[69] the problem precisely is that there is no (or not enough) shared ground on the basis of which the truth or falsity of these principles can be determined. Indeed, delineating what (and how) things can be proven to be true in the first place, certainties cannot be said to be true or false themselves,[70] and it is for this very reason that it might actually be more fitting to respond to a diverging voice with admonishment rather than with arguments. It is crucial, Wittgenstein maintains, "to realize the groundlessness of our believing."[71]

Yet if there are strictly speaking no grounds for belief and no grounds for subscribing to one world picture instead of to another, there are no grounds for rebuking someone questioning one's certainties either.[72] In case of conflict one might, as stated, just as well decide to just put up with it – but one might also try and come to see things the way the other person does.[73] For if one cannot be faulted for holding fast to one's belief in the face of other possibilities,[74] one cannot be faulted for letting go of it either. The groundlessness of our believing means that it cannot be stated beforehand how to deal with diverging certainties, when such differences can and when such differences cannot be overcome.[75] Similar to *On Certainty*'s implying that it cannot be stated beforehand where the line between "normal" and "abnormal" is to be drawn, Wittgenstein should be said to underscore that it is undecided how difference and divergence are to be greeted.

This brings me to the point that earlier in this chapter only the possibility of natural or accidental divergence from a community's world picture was discussed, leaving the prospects for knowingly distancing oneself from inherited certainties yet to be established. The preceding observations go to show that *On Certainty*'s allowing for accidental variation among the certainties of fellow subjects in fact already points to the possibility of conscious divergence too. For as I explained, an encounter with a person subscribing to (somewhat) different certainties might bring about a change in the way one looks at things, or might at least lead to the awareness that things could also be seen differently. This is not altered by the fact that one might also respond with "O, rubbish," for the appropriateness of admonishment over arguments is precisely due to the fact that a confrontation with a different framework is at the same time a confrontation with the groundlessness of one's own certainties, or with the groundlessness of holding fast to one thing instead of to another. Encountering persons with a (slightly) different set of certainties might accordingly bring one to conclude that, perhaps, one's own frame of reference is not that self-evident after all, and thus to breach or at least bracket what one has come to take for granted.

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[69] OC 611.
[70] See OC 94, OC 199, OC 205, OC 403.
[71] OC 166.
[72] See OC 610.
[73] Cf. Plant 2005, p. 64, p. 98.
[74] See e.g. OC 497, OC 512, OC 619.
[75] See OC 257, OC 326, OC 420, OC 642.

Hence, that *On Certainty* explains world pictures as open and dynamic does not only mean that it allows for difference and divergence to occur naturally and accidentally - it also indicates what opportunities there are for knowingly disentangling oneself, if only temporarily, from the world picture one inherited. Given that variation can also occur among the members of the same community, a person might be confronted with diverging certainties quite close to home.[76]

But it is not only an encounter with someone holding different certainties that might lead to an insight into the relative groundlessness of one's world picture. This can be brought about in other ways as well. Given that certainties are historically variable, as Wittgenstein emphasizes on several occasions,[77] one could also come to realize that things can be seen differently by noticing that the certainties of one's community have changed over time. In addition, Wittgenstein points out that it is possible for "certain events" to put one "in a position in which [one can] no longer go on with the old language game."[78] Recurring unexpected and inexplicable results of scientific investigation might put one in such a position,[79] but so could, say, suddenly being struck by the predicament of a group of people that is commonly accepted without a thought.[80]

Put differently, what ultimately accounts for the possibility of disentanglement in *On Certainty* is not so much that one might encounter different certainties, as that one might be confronted with the fact that it is to some extent arbitrary what one takes to stand fast. According to Wittgenstein, a world view is always already mine but at the same time never entirely mine – one has, after all, inherited it on the basis of a pre-existing trust – and this means that the unconcerted consensus characterizing certainty can, in principle, always be broken or suspended. It belongs to the very essence of world pictures that they are man-made[81] and invested in people, rather than god-given and set in stone, and though this basic characteristic may usually go unnoticed, it need not always remain unseen, with the possibility to stop and think about or even try and change the things one takes for granted as a result.

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[76] Not to mention the fact that a person does not necessarily belong to only one group or community, as well as that one's society might accommodate several communities or groups.

[77] See OC 96-99, OC 211, OC 256, OC 336 (though remarks like OC 117, OC 226 and OC 286 unwittingly demonstrate this too).

[78] OC 617; see also OC 517. Elsewhere Wittgenstein claims that no matter what one is confronted with, no matter how "much the facts bucked," one *could* always "stay in the saddle". (OC 616; see also OC 497, OC 512, OC 657). Yet that one *could* stay in the saddle does not mean that one *must*. Moreover, see OC 368 and OC 641, explaining that when evidence faces evidence, it is a matter of decision what is to give way, and that the choice to stay in the saddle is not an irreversible one.

[79] Cf. Kuhn's 1996 description of the transition from normal science to crisis and the emergence of new paradigms (as well as his explanation in the Postscript of why this perspective on science does not amount to full-blown relativism, as both critics and enthusiasts have argued).

[80] Cf. Plant 2005, p. 98 (and his subsequent fleshing out of this point with Levinas and Derrida).

[81] Man-made only to an extent, though. As I mentioned earlier, Wittgenstein takes world pictures to be constrained by general facts of nature; on his view, human beings do not one-sidedly impose their certainties on their surroundings. I will come back to this point in the concluding section.

5.4   Concluding remarks

In this chapter I turned to *On Certainty* to investigate with what account of community Wittgenstein accompanies his rethinking of subjectivity. As I explained in the preceding intermezzo, commentators such as Frank and Benhabib take the claim that the subject is always already contextualized to jeopardize notions such as agency and autonomy, and thereby to jeopardize the possibility of changing pre-existing political arrangements. I argued that this conclusion does not follow automatically, even if the underlying reading of post-Cartesianism is correct, but I proposed to investigate whether it is exegetically warranted nonetheless because the question as to what the embedded subject can and can no longer do, is valid and interesting enough. Moreover, examining the implications of the claim that the subject is essentially social is also vital if one wants to make Wittgenstein's contribution to the subjectivity debate fully explicit: I pointed out that Wittgenstein's take on religiosity, as well as his approach to philosophy, may seem to be at odds with that particular insight. Or to be precise, they would be at odds with that insight if it would be accompanied by the claim that community is a static and uniform totality to which all human affairs are effectively subservient, leaving no room for divergence or disentanglement. The preceding explorations have shown that Wittgenstein does not subscribe to such a view on the relationship between individual and community, in spite of the remarks that seem to warrant an outright conservative reading of *On Certainty*.

That is to say, conservative interpretations of these writings have a point in that Wittgenstein shows a person's evaluative powers to be dependent on and constrained by the certainties she acquires through a socialization process in which critical activities have no place. However, such readings are wrong in that Wittgenstein does not take the subject's world view to be entirely socially construed: he holds that natural factors underlie this socialization process. An infant is only able to swallow its elders' certainties down on the basis of an instinctive trust that comes with its own basic presuppositions. Each child thus brings in its own perspective from the very start. In the process of initiation, this perspective gets refined and enhanced to correspond to the community's certainties, but Wittgenstein's naturalism also implies that the child's inborn capacities may prevent complete conformity from being attained. Conformist interpretations of *On Certainty* are therefore inaccurate, too, in the sense that while it has a naturalistic outlook – indeed, precisely because it has a naturalistic outlook – it does not deplore irregularities in a society. The possibility of transformation is inherent in the process by means of which certainties are conveyed, which also means that the world picture that is conveyed to children need not make for a homogeneous unity to begin with.

What is more, that Wittgenstein allows for such natural or accidental variation also indicates how a person might knowingly come to breach or bracket inherited certainties: it provides (one kind of) opportunity for realizing that other perspectives on the world are possible. For while conservative readings of *On Certainty* correctly observe that Wittgenstein holds neutral or rational grounds to be lacking when confronted with a diverging world view, they miss the mark in concluding the he feels one should always hold fast to one's framework for lack of such grounds. On Wittgenstein's view, a confrontation with a different outlook is at the same time a confrontation with the groundlessness of what one takes to stand fast. So while *On Certainty* considers world pictures to largely be a matter of convention – indeed, precisely because it considers them to largely be a matter of convention – it does not claim that the subject is unable to suspend or shed the customs and conventions it always already finds itself entangled in.

That is not to say, to be sure, that certainties can be subscribed to or discarded at will, nor that if and when one realizes that other perspectives are possible, there is a clear and simple choice to make - if it can be called a choice in the ordinary sense of the word at all. When a person takes a step back from what he or she has come to take for granted, she precisely suspends the criteria she normally employs in making a choice. More akin to a leap of faith than to a rational decision, Wittgenstein likens a change in one's certainties to a process of conversion.[82] The world picture a person has come to incorporate over the years, moreover, is not something she disposes of and replaces like she would an old and worn-out coat. One cannot completely step outside of one's frame of reference to begin with, and some of one's certainties may be so firmly entrenched that they can never be abandoned at all.[83] Whether it is possible to leave a certainty behind and how radical a change that entails, should be said to depend on the certainty in question. And even if (part of) one's world picture can be altered or abandoned, a true change of perspective can arguably not be accomplished overnight. Like acquiring a full-blown world picture in the first place, incorporating new or different certainties is a process that will take time and the exact consequences of which cannot be known in advance.

But there is another sense in which a person is not able to pick and choose what certainties to subscribe to. As I already mentioned, human beings cannot randomly choose their world view at all because the world can be said to have a say in the way world pictures take shape. General facts of nature – including basic facts about human life - place restrictions on the certainties that are available to man, and world pictures can consequently not be said to be entirely arbitrary. That a

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[82] OC 92, OC 612; see also OC 578; cf. my earlier remarks on pp. 153-154 on the difference between religious belief and certainty – judging by this comparison, Wittgenstein should be said to file certainty under the category of belief instead of the other way around.

[83] Cf. Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 100, p. 106. She explains that while some certainties are "giveuppable", others are "ungiveuppable".

person bleeds when cut or stabbed, for instance, or needs food and shelter in order to survive, cannot be left unaccounted for in any frame of reference.

However, that human beings cannot unreservedly impose just any system of certainties on the natural and human world does not mean that there is, on Wittgenstein's analysis, a neutral ground for making a choice (or quasi-choice) between world pictures after all. While natural facts have a say in the way world pictures take shape, they can make their way into a frame of reference in very different manners. The actual existence of different world pictures testify to this fact, as do the historical changes that existing world pictures have gone through. Moreover, what one person considers to be a natural fact – that men are made to rule over women, say, or that love can occur between people from the same as well as between people from the opposite sex - need not be taken for a fact by another person at all. Wittgenstein's naturalism, therefore, may suggest what a person could highlight or appeal to in the case certainties clash, it does not provide a fix-all, cure-all solution that will solve any perspectival gridlock with one simple spell.

Even so, Wittgenstein's suggestion that human beings develop their world pictures in interaction with their surroundings, rather than one-sidedly imposing certainties thereon, does set his account apart from straightforwardly constructivistic or relativistic ones. Contrary to the idea that the natural and human world only come into being with one's frame of reference, so to speak, Wittgenstein's account implies that it is not entirely immaterial what frame of reference one subscribes to. For if there is something outside of or preceding our conceptualizations, there is also always the chance that one's certainties can from a certain perspective be said to distort, simplify, inflate or downplay these things, even if there is not one correct way of representing them. According to Wittgenstein, as I also argued in chapter 2, our concepts or certainties simultaneously shape and reflect the world around us. Indeed, if this implies that it matters what frame of reference one subscribes to, even if different perspectives on the natural and human world are possible, Wittgenstein could even be said to identify a necessity or desirability to sometimes step back from what one takes to stand fast. In *On Certainty*, at any rate, he does not claim that the subject is predestined to leave the frame of reference it inherited forever unquestioned. Wittgenstein's outlook is neither outright relativistic nor thoroughly deterministic.

This brings me back to my main reason for consulting *On Certainty*. Contrary to the worries expressed by post-Cartesianism's critics, and in line with what is suggested in other parts of his *Nachlass*, Wittgenstein does not dispel or dissolve the subject by embedding it. This can be said to be due to the fact that he does not take the relationship between individual and community to be one in which the latter fabricates the former as a mere cog or bolt in a virtually self-perpetuating machinery, or to use a more organic metaphor, in which the subject is to the community as a limb or cell is to the human body, owing its existence solely to its function in this larger entity. For on Wittgenstein's view, as became clear in the

previous sections, becoming a member of a community is only possible on the basis of a rudimentary, pre-given form of subjectivity and does not require complete conformity to the world picture of full-blown members, who need not be bound together the exact same frame of reference to begin with.

Put differently - and at the risk of seeming to use this concept as a panacea for all the puzzles Wittgenstein is dealing with - the world pictures of the members of a community stand in a relation of family resemblance to each other. Just as Wittgenstein argues that the different things we call games do not have some one thing in common but hang together through "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing,"[84] he can be said to show that what fellow subjects share is not a clear and distinct whole. The certainties of one person resemble those of the other subjects but possibly resemble them in a different way each time. This also points to a different metaphor that can be used to convey how Wittgenstein envisions the relationship between individual and community if he cannot be said to consider it akin to the way a machine is built up out of its components or a body is composed of its parts. In the family resemblance passages, Wittgenstein describes the flexibility of our concepts by means of the fibre and the thread analogy, but this analogy can also be used to explain how he embeds the subject without dispersing it.[85] I already mentioned the remark about fibres and threads in chapter 2, but let me rehearse it here as well.

In response to an interlocutor complaining that the *Investigations* nowhere explain what the essence of language is, Wittgenstein does not only point out that many of our concepts do not refer to phenomena with a pure and precise essence, but also contends that the fact that most words have fuzzy edges is exactly what makes them fit for use. In order to illustrate this point, Wittgenstein compares the use we make of concepts such as "game" to the spinning of a thread: "[We] extend our concept […] as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres."[86] To be sure, Wittgenstein adds, although a concept like "game" is not "closed by a frontier" prior to all use, "[you] can *draw* one"[87] at any point. That is, however, always a choice one makes for a specific purpose. It is at any rate not enforced by one essential characteristic that defines what a game is once and for all.

This same analogy can be said to express how *On Certainty* takes individual and community to interrelate. For just as a thread does not consist of one single fibre but derives its strength from the overlapping of many fibres, individual subjects contribute to the community's world picture, not by dissolving into a fixed and

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[84] PI 66.
[85] Others have used Wittgenstein's concept of family resemblance to develop a non-essentialist notion of (personal and collective) identity as well (see Medina 2006, pp. 84-100; Munro 2006), but these commentators do not draw on the fibre and thread analogy.
[86] PI 67.
[87] PI 68.

rigid whole but by bringing in their own perspective that may be both like and unlike that of other members in several respects. Moreover, just as one can extend a thread by twisting fibre on fibre, it cannot be stated beforehand which persons with what certainties belong to a particular community and which ones do not. To be sure, a frontier can always be established but drawing a line must to some extent always remain arbitrary. That a community's world picture does not make for a static and homogeneous unity means that, on Wittgenstein's view, change and divergence is by no means precluded out of hand.

This in turn means, to bring my investigations in this chapter to a close, that Wittgenstein's embedded account of subjectivity neither conflicts with his perspective on philosophy nor with his take on religious belief. To the extent that my explorations in chapter 4 raised the question how Wittgenstein's religious perspective can be reconciled with his overturning of the Cartesian self-other schema, my reading of *On Certainty* has shown that it need not be reconciled at all. For if the claim that there is no subjectivity without community does not imply it is impossible to diverge from the customs and conventions one always already finds oneself entangled in, there is nothing contradictory in maintaining, both that subjectivity is essentially social, and that the religious believer should choose a direction in life irrespective of his fellow men. Moreover, given that establishing the (in)compatibility of these different parts of Wittgenstein's oeuvre is also a way of establishing the exegetical validity of the arguments levelled against the rethinking of Cartesianism, both the ethical and the political objections of commentators such as Murdoch and Benhabib can now be said to be unwarranted when it comes to Wittgenstein.

6

Summary and conclusion

Wittgensteinian subjectivity and the debate about the death of man

After arguing in chapter 2 that Wittgenstein need not be considered to be the antidote or antithesis to philosophy, this study set out to examine what positive or constructive account of human subjectivity can be formulated on the basis of his later writings. The general outlines of this account were given in chapter 3, discussing Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology. These writings, I explained, do not merely dismantle the Cartesian take on the nature of man but also develop an alternative way of conceptualizing human being.

Hence, the third chapter described how Wittgenstein simultaneously rethinks the Cartesian inner-outer and the Cartesian self-other schema. In Wittgenstein's book, mind and body are intrinsically connected instead of almost accidentally related, and the self, far from being a self-enclosed and self-sufficient entity, from day one depends upon its fellow men to develop its inner life beyond its basic state. I argued that the specific amalgam of ontology, epistemology and sociology with which Wittgenstein replaces Cartesianism can be captured by means of his concept of aspect perception or seeing-as. For similar to his explanation of a duck perception in the ambiguous duck/rabbit figure, he maintains that we are able to see a person's pain or joy itself when we takes her (contextualized shades of) behaviour to be expressive of mind and place her doings and sayings in the context of a larger communal pattern. On a Wittgensteinian view, therefore, psychological phenomena can be said to be aspects of the human being rather than inner events and entities. In other words, he situates mental matters on the outside rather than the inside of the subject, and in the interspace between a community of subjects, to be precise.

The intermezzo following the third chapter served to remind that this study does not only want to make one of the voices in the subjectivity debate more explicit, but also hopes to add to this debate by examining the criticisms levelled against non-Cartesian accounts of the nature of man. I repeated the observation

made in the introductory chapter that twentieth century attempts to remove or reinvent the Ego have met which much disapproval, and that this disapproval first and foremost concerns the (purported) ethical and political consequences of the post-Cartesian development. In the first intermezzo, I addressed the claim that those responsible for the demise of the Ego undermine the possibility of ethics. According to commentators such as Frank and Murdoch, turning Cartesianism upside-down and inside-out means leaving one without a subject to whom matters like suffering, malicious intentions, and so on can be ascribed, and thus without a moral substance or centre. In short, critics of post-Cartesianism hold that this development is wanting from an ethical perspective and should be dismissed for that very reason.

I remarked that even if it is correct to say that the post-Cartesians "un-think" rather than rethink subjectivity, doing away with Cartesianism does not necessarily spell the end of all possible ethics. In spite of these qualms, however, I proposed to investigate the exegetical validity of this claim first - and to investigate it by consulting Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion, to be exact. Wittgenstein's religious writings, I explained, may appear to contradict his remarks on the psyche: they basically disregard the way religiosity finds expression in recurring patterns of behaviour and at one point even suggest that it should be located inside the believer. I claimed that this part of Wittgenstein's oeuvre accordingly provides an excellent opportunity, both for assessing the interpretational validity of the ethical objections to post-Cartesianism, and for fleshing out Wittgenstein's version of the claim that the subject's materiality and sociality are essential to it. As a next step towards making this dual contribution to the subjectivity debate, I proposed to examine whether Wittgenstein's describing thoughts and feelings as aspects of the human being is necessarily at odds with his taking religious belief to be a pre-eminently private and personal affair.

Such was the aim of chapter 4. I investigated Wittgenstein's religious writings with two questions in mind, derived from my conclusions in chapter 3: Does Wittgenstein maintain that religious belief should be located in a person's fine-grained and contextualized behaviour, and does he moreover hold that these doings and sayings only qualify as manifestations of religiosity against the background of a larger, supra-individual pattern of behaviour? My reading of Wittgenstein's earlier as well as later remarks on religion made clear that his philosophy of religion should indeed be said to be somewhat out of synch with his philosophy of psychology, albeit not for situating faith inside the believer.

According to Wittgenstein, I argued, religiosity concerns the direction a person gives to her existence. The religious believer distinguishes herself from the non-believer by making her life into a meaningful whole. Hence, Wittgenstein's take on religion is consistent with his account of the psyche in locating it in the form or shape of a person's existence rather than in a private inner realm. However, it is also at this point that his explanation of religiosity and his description of the mental

should nonetheless be said to part ways. On Wittgenstein's view, after all, it is the individual believer's existence in which religiosity should be situated, regardless of the way in which others make their lives into a meaningful whole. Wittgenstein may not claim that believers can never be guided by the same pictures or that a third person will never be able to recognize someone else's belief, he does maintain that the choice for a particular direction in life is up to the believer herself and should be made wholly of her own accord.

So, as I concluded the fourth chapter, in so far as one might get the impression (like Murdoch and Frank) that Wittgenstein does away with our inmost thoughts and feelings, his religious writings go to show that this is not due to his overturning the Cartesian inner-outer model. Yet my reading of his philosophy of religion also indicated that the qualms of post-Cartesianism's critics may still be justified when it comes to Wittgenstein's upsetting the Cartesian self-other schema. That is to say, in so far as it is unclear how his individualistic conception of religious belief squares with his taking the subject to be essentially social, it is unclear whether critics may not be correct in claiming that he denies "private coherent mental activity"[88] after all. This can only be disproved in full by showing that there is no contradiction between holding that someone's subjectivity is formed or shaped by her socio-cultural context, and maintaining that in religious affairs, the subject should single-handedly choose a direction in life. Put differently, it needs to be investigated in more detail what Wittgenstein means when he underscores that the self does not come in a monadic or isolated form.

As I then explained in the second systematic intermezzo, this does not only point to an element of Wittgensteinian subjectivity that needs to be explored in more detail: the upsetting of the self-other schema also forms what is perhaps the most severely criticized strand of the post-Cartesian development. Commentators such as Frank and Benhabib take it to mean that rethinkers of the subject are politically irresponsible, and I took a moment to recount the line of argument leading up to this conclusion. Benhabib for instance holds that by presenting the subject as the passive product of the powers that be, those responsible for the demise of the Cartesian Ego risk disintegrating the very locus of agency and autonomy – and thus risk presenting political arrangements as being beyond the reach of intervention, no matter how unjust these might be. According those sceptical of the anti-Cartesian turn, the critique of Cartesianism should not be followed though completely because that would undermine the possibility of politics no less than that of ethics.

Like in the first intermezzo, I remarked that even if it were correct to say that post-Cartesianism describes man as socially constituted through and through, taking issue with the Cartesian account of the self-other relationship does not necessarily imply making the subject politically inert. Even so, and similar to the order suggested in the first intermezzo, I proposed to investigate the

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[88] Murdoch 1992, p. 152.

interpretational validity of this claim first, for as I explained, clarity as to what the sociality of subjectivity implies is not only important when it comes to the debate about the death of man in general - it can also establish how Wittgenstein's highly individualistic conception of religiosity relates to his holding the subject to always already be embedded. I argued that both the validity of the claim that the post-Cartesian self is politically wanting and the tenability of Wittgenstein's account of subjectivity can be examined by exploring the concept of the social that accompanies the contextualization of the Cartesian Ego. And the remarks published as *On Certainty*, I claimed, are the best place to look for a better understanding of Wittgenstein's view on what it means to become and be a member of a community. These writings, namely, make the processes of social in- and exclusion more explicit than any other part of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*.

I started my reading of *On Certainty* by remarking that these deliberation may seem to preclude difference and divergence at the level of certainties out of hand – thus suggesting that Wittgenstein takes the subject to be a mere cog or bolt in a larger social machinery - but that Wittgenstein's philosophy of religion as well as his view on philosophy as such indicate that he certainly allows for the possibility of disentangling oneself from the customs and conventions of one's community. With this in mind, I investigated *On Certainty*'s account of the processes by means of which the child is initiated into the community, as well as of the kind of unity in which it takes this upbringing to result.

With regard to the former, I pointed out that Wittgenstein may hold a person's ability to doubt and question things to be dependent on the certainties she acquires through a socialization process, but that he makes this process itself conditional upon factors that are of a natural rather than a socio-cultural kind. On his view, it is only on the basis of an instinctive trust that certainties can be conveyed, and this naturalism implies, I argued, both that the child already takes some things for granted itself, and that it need not come to incorporate the exact same certainties as its elders. According to the account offered in *On Certainty*, handing on a world picture is a process of attunement rather than of construction. The claim that the subject is the mere product of its upbringing can accordingly not be attributed to Wittgenstein.

I then argued that this also has consequences for the possibility of divergence or disentanglement when it comes to full-blown members of a community. If no process of initiation ensures that people come to take the very same things for granted, a community's picture world need not have a strictly uniform content, and such variation – in addition to, among other things, the fact that the certainties of one's community may have changed over time - provides opportunities for realizing that things could also be seen differently. For *On Certainty* may claim that admonishment is more appropriate than arguments in the case world views conflict, this does not mean that one can never take a person with a different outlook seriously. It rather means that a confrontation with a different outlook is at

the same time a confrontation with the groundlessness of one's own beliefs. Precisely because it is to some extent arbitrary what frame of reference one subscribes to, the possibility to step back from the certainties one has inherited can never be ruled out.

In other words, as I concluded my reading of *On Certainty*, Wittgenstein does not take the subject to be a mere cog or bolt in a larger social machinery or a limb or cell in some supra-individual organism. The relationship between individual and community as it is at work in his later writings is more adequately captured by means of his fibre and thread analogy. In contrast to what critics might think, Wittgenstein does not embed the subject in a static and uniform whole to which all human affairs are ultimately subordinate.

My endeavours in the chapters just recapitulated were not meant to show – lest there be any misunderstanding – that his account of subjectivity is not as morally and politically objectionable as critics suspect the entire post-Cartesian development to be. To be sure, the preceding chapters were not meant to show the opposite either: as I repeatedly underscored, I merely took the fact that the attempt to reinvent the Cartesian Ego has received highly divergent appraisals as an incentive to have a closer look at Wittgenstein's version. Indeed, in line with the two-fold goal of this dissertation, I took up the question as to the interpretational validity of these objections in order to make Wittgenstein's voice in the subjectivity debate more fully explicit, but this study also hopes to show that the line of argument offered by commentators such as Murdoch, Frank and Benhabib may not be wholly warranted in the first place. For as I pointed out in each of this study's systematic sections, a non-Cartesian account of the nature of man is not necessarily at odds with every conception of ethics and politics, and phrasing the debate solely in ethico-political terms, moreover, may do investigations into subjectivity more harm than good. I will shortly – and at long last – expound my ideas on these matters, but let me spell out my conclusions as to the exegetical validity of the objections to post-Cartesianism first.

Even though the chapters further exploring Wittgenstein's account of subjectivity tried to steer clear from the ethico-political nature of much of the debate about the death of man, they did add to the discussion by demonstrating that the interpretation of post-Cartesianism on which the arguments of Frank, Benhabib and others are based, is not the most complete or correct one – or not when it comes to the Wittgensteinian variety, in any case. My reading Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology together with his philosophy of religion made clear that in so far as critics are justified in wondering what Wittgenstein makes if our inmost thoughts and feelings, his overturning the traditional inner-outer model should not be the main cause of their concern. Wittgenstein's situating psychological phenomena on the outside rather than the inside of the subject does not prevent him from explaining religious belief as a pre-eminently personal affair.

Moreover, to the extent that this did not show the objections to Wittgenstein's post-Cartesianism to be unwarranted when it comes to his upsetting the Cartesian self-other schema, my reading of *On Certainty* demonstrated that Wittgenstein's individualistic conception of religious belief does not conflict with his locating mental matters in the interspace between a community of subjects. For according to the interpretation offered in chapter 5, Wittgenstein's claim that the subject is essentially social does not imply that it is predestined to unthinkingly carry on the customs and conventions of its community. He does not place all matters subjective in the service of the supra-individual or communal.

Hence, and regardless of what this means for the ethico-political value of his position, Wittgenstein's embodied and embedded account of subjectivity does not amount to a simple reversal or negation of the Cartesian take on the nature of man, as the critics of post-Cartesianism seem to assume. Their ethico-political arguments therefore do not apply to the account offered by Wittgenstein. My explorations should have illustrated in sufficient detail that a rethinking of Cartesianism need not amount to a complete "un-thinking" of the subject.

However, an important proviso needs to be made as to what this means for the exegetical validity of the objections to the post-Cartesian development as a whole. While Wittgenstein's alternative to Cartesianism in fact preserves several of the things that the Ego represents, this need not hold for other rethinkers of the subject, or need not hold for other rethinkers in exactly the same way. As became clear in the chapter on *On Certainty*, for instance, it is primarily on account of the naturalism at work in Wittgenstein's writings that he cannot be said to present the subject as the mere and utter product of its upbringing - yet such naturalism is not shared by all those trying to remove or reinvent the Ego. Butler for one, as I already mentioned in the second intermezzo, maintains that taking selfhood to be given in such a way precludes all discussions about the supposed neutrality thereof. She first and foremost values the Foucauldian approach because it acknowledges the need to "interrogate what [such a theoretical move] *authorizes*, and what precisely it excludes."[89]

Indeed, the Wittgensteinian subject as I have presented it is susceptible to Butler's rather than Benhabib's objections. Benhabib after all argues that feminists can unreservedly embrace the weak version of postmodernism: the version that "*situates* the subject in the context of various social, linguistic, and discursive practices"[90] but refrains from *dissolving* it into this multitude. On my reading, this is precisely what Wittgenstein's embodied and embedded account of human being accomplishes. Yet that does not mean that I think it is somehow obliged to come in this form. Let me get around to discussing the overall validity of the line of reasoning bringing Benhabib and others to make this demand.

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[89] Butler 1995, p. 39
[90] Benhabib 1995, p. 20. (The emphasis is mine.)

And let me start by emphasizing that while I doubt whether the ethico-political objections to post-Cartesianism are warranted, I do not hold that an account of subjectivity may never be probed for its consequences in the ethical and political domain. The point I wish to make, and I sincerely hope to avoid any impression to the contrary, is not that ethical and political discussions can and should be kept completely separate from investigations into the nature of man. As I pointed out in each of this study's systematic sections, the philosophy of subjectivity is inevitably interwoven with many other highly important issues, and examining the implications of the claim that the subject's materiality and sociality are essential to it, is accordingly no mere academic *Spielerei*. By further exploring Wittgenstein's take on the mind-body and the individual-community relationship, I hope to have done my (admittedly humble) part in clarifying what the rethinking of subjectivity may and may not imply.

Yet I have not done so because I think that Murdoch and others have ethics and politics on their side, for it could also be argued that the burden of disproving the ethico-political deficit of their outlook is on these critics themselves. That is to say, as I underscored on several occasions, the rethinking of the subject is often accompanied or even inspired by the idea that it is Cartesianism rather than its overturning that should be said to be morally and politically wanting. Levinas for instance holds that is only through the self conceived of as always already exposed to the other "that there can be in the world pity, compassion, pardon and proximity - [...] even the simple "After you, sir." "[91] Butler similarly contends that by presenting the subject as "a permanent possibility of [a] resignifying process,"[92] postmodernism shows how resistance and reform are possible in the first place. Hence, ethico-political objections can go both ways.

What is more, even apart from the fact that post-Cartesianism has also been said to be more responsible than its predecessor, should one's judging ethics and politics to be of fundamental importance, in combination with one's conceding that the self does not come in a Cartesian form, not sooner lead to a reconsideration of one's ethico-political conceptions when they are premised on a Cartesian-style take on the nature of man? Or to put it more generally, should the significance of ethics and politics not encourage rather than prevent a continuous thinking and rethinking of how they should be conceptualized? It could be argued that a true commitment to the good and the just shows itself in the willingness to reconsider one's ideas about these matters in the face of indications that other ideas are possible and perhaps even necessary.

However, valid as these observations might be from an ethico-political perspective, I should refrain from phrasing my arguments wholly or solely in such terms, for the point I wish to make precisely is, not that a theory of subjectivity may never be probed for its ethical and political consequences, but that these are not the

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[91] Levinas 1981, p. 117.
[92] Butler 1995, p 47.

only things at stake in such explorations. Even apart from the fact that ethico-political considerations might lead one to preserve as well as reject elements of Cartesianism – which indicates that it is not always already clear what an appeal to ethics and politics implies - why should a (purported) conflict between existing or prevalent conceptions of the ethico-political one the one hand, and ontological or phenomenological considerations about the nature of man on the other, at all times be settled in favour of the former? As I repeatedly claimed, there does not seem to be a principled reason to place restrictions on the post-Cartesian development rather than rethink ethics and politics as well in the case these are at odds with a new perspective on the subject.

That is not to say that ethico-political and phenomenological deliberations can and should always be clearly distinguished, or that considerations about what "is" should invariably be given priority over those about what "ought". Rather, what I am saying is that if the normative and descriptive are always already interwoven, this does not mean that the normative is all there is. That a case can be made against the fact-value dichotomy does not give one a licence to choose one's ontology at will - it should bring one to try and combine the normative and descriptive in one's explorations. For might a theory of ethics or politics that relies on a highly contested take on human being not be just as objectionable as a philosophy of subjectivity that cannot account for matters such as rights and responsibility? Rather than insisting, contra post-Cartesianism's critics, that the descriptive always already overrules the normative instead of the other way around, I want to argue that a whole conglomerate of considerations needs to be taken into account and that neither one's ontological nor one's ethico-political assumptions should be safeguarded from coming up for discussion beforehand. (And note that putting things up for discussion need not lead to a wholesale or even partial rejection thereof.)

Now to be sure, ethical and political considerations are of vital importance and very compelling indeed. After all, who wants to present an account of subjectivity that is morally and/or politically harmful? This brings me to another reason for having reservations about the use of ethico-political arguments, for precisely because invoking the notions of ethics and politics has such a strong impact, an appeal of this kind runs the risk of hampering rather than fostering investigations. Declaring a position to be unethical or apolitical can be a very effective means of discrediting the outlook one is questioning while at the same time ensuring that one's own perspective becomes the go-to incontestable alternative, even if one is not intentionally pursuing this strategy. For if there is a choice between an outlook that is supposedly detrimental to all things valuable, and a perspective that is not only free from these faults but also manages to bring the dangers of the opposite position to light, the decision does not seem to be a difficult one. Yet as I already argued, an account of subjectivity that does not meet a particular ethico-political standard is not therefore at odds with every conception of ethics and politics.

Examining whether the latter is or is not the case, however, requires putting one's ethico-political assumptions up for discussion or at least temporarily on hold – and that is what branding one's opponent "unethical" or "apolitical" might very well prevent.

Note that I have phrased the preceding observations in fairly general terms. I have not specifically presented them as an analysis of the line of reasoning followed by post-Cartesianism's critics because they are not the only thinkers whose invoking the notions of ethics and politics runs the risk of hampering rather than fostering the debate. Indeed, it is perhaps most notably in the writings of those challenging Cartesianism that labels such as "ethics," "politics," and their opposites go on to function in such a manner. When the Ego is criticized, after all - and even apart from the fact that it is only a small step from "Ego" to "egoism" and "egoistic" – there is often not simply talk of the Cartesian subject, but more specifically of the self-absorbed, imperialistic and totalitarian subject.[93] What is more, as I mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, in some contexts the word "subject" itself serves to designate an inherently corrupt philosophical figure, with terms such as "fragmentation" and "heterogeneity" having nothing but positive connotations. In so far as the validity of the ethico-political objections to post-Cartesianism voiced by critics such as Murdoch, Frank and Benhabib can be questioned, the thinkers they criticize may be no less guilty of questionable reasoning of this kind.[94]

In the case of those responsible for the death of man, therefore, the same observations may apply. Labelling the position of one's opponent "totalitarian" does not mean that one's own outlook is always already the most responsible one and that one's ethico-political assumptions need never be discussed. (Mis)using the notions of ethics and politics could prevent one from seeing that a non-Cartesian outlook might just as well have unwelcome consequences, in spite of one's attempt to ethically and politically outdo Cartesianism.[95]

But here too, most importantly, I would say that it is not just worries about the ethico-political import of a perspective on the subject but a whole conglomerate of considerations that needs to be taken into account. To be sure, there are dangers to presenting the self as the centre of the universe, so to speak, but that does not mean that the distinct character of the first person perspective is not a factor to be

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[93] See e.g. Lacan, who contends that only when one does not "regard the ego as centred on the perception-consciousness system" one is able to avoid "a consciousness of the other that can be satisfied only by Hegelian murder" (Lacan 1980, p. 6); Levinas, who claims that "hetero-affection" divests "the ego of its imperialism" (Levinas 1981, p. 121); Lyotard, who states that a postmodern "recognition of the heteromorphous nature of language" implies a "renunciation of terror" (Lyotard 1991, p. 89); and Nancy, who argues that the traditional idea of the individual is another "figure or immanence" or "totalitarianism" (Nancy 2001, p. 3).

[94] Cf. Benhabib 1992, p. 16. She explains that her qualms about postmodernism precisely result from its light-hearted celebration of values such as diversity and eccentricity.

[95] Badiou for instance argues that after the "disasters of the [twentieth] century" (Badiou 1999, p. 135) the postmodern undermining of notions such as truth and subjectivity must now itself be undermined. (Though, needless to say, in so far as Badiou's labelling his opponents "apolitical" or "unethical" serves to safeguard his own position from being questioned, I do not think his strategy is warranted either.)

taken into account, for instance. Similarly, that reified notions of human coexistence can have devastating consequences does not mean that community should be thought of solely in terms of incompletion and lack, thereby risking to deflate the embeddedness of the subject again.[96] What holds for the arguments of the critics of post-Cartesianism holds for post-Cartesian explorations too: ethico-political considerations do not automatically overrule ontological or phenomenological ones.

My qualms about the fact that much of the debate about the death of man is of an ethico-political nature, then, boil down to my holding that it deserves a thorough and multi-faceted approach. Neither one's take on the subject nor one's conception of ethics and politics should be prevented from coming up for debate because both might turn out to be not quite satisfactory - whether from an ethical, phenomenological or yet another perspective. And this brings me to conclude that the ethico-political objections to post-Cartesianism are warranted indeed, even though I have continuously questioned their validity in the foregoing. For the arguments I have just offered do not lead to the conclusion that ethical and political objections can never me made. They only imply that such objections should not come in the form of a demand.

My arguments in this section also imply that my explorations in the preceding chapters can only be said to be part of the story. That is to say, I have argued that investigations into the nature of man cannot and need not be separated from ethico-political inquiries, but I have first and foremost focused on giving a Wittgensteinian account of human being myself. To the extent that a thorough and multifaceted approach to this topic requires spelling out what notions of ethics and politics a particular position entails, I have only met this requirement by showing that Wittgenstein's take on the subject is not at odds with what Frank and others take ethics and politics to be. Explaining in more detail what conceptions of the ethico-political Wittgenstein's perspective makes possible and/or excludes, waits to be done on another occasion. Though one proviso can made beforehand, because what holds for the account of subjectivity I have offered in this study holds for a more fleshed out account of Wittgensteinian ethics and politics too. That it does not necessarily contradict the hopes and desires of post-Cartesianism's critics does not mean that it is beyond each and every objection.

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[96] Cf. Nancy, who maintains that a substantive notion of community is just as much a figure of totalitarianism as a substantive notion of subjectivity; on his view, members of a community should be said to have at most "a lack of identity" (Nancy 2001, p. xxxviii) in common. Cf. May, who argues that Nancy cannot do justice to the "phenomenology of community" (May 1997, p. 47) in this way.

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Samenvatting

Subjectviteit na Wittgenstein

Het doel van dit proefschrift in feite tweeledig. Het wil in de eerste plaats een grondige analyse geven van Wittgensteins mens- of subjectbegrip, en tracht in de tweede plaats - naar aanleiding van en met het oog op deze analyse – de bezwaren te evalueren die vaak tegen een dergelijke visie op het menszijn worden ingebracht.

Zoals in de inleiding tot deze dissertatie wordt uitgelegd, heeft zich in de vorige eeuw een duidelijke ontwikkeling voorgedaan in de (continentale) filosofie. Nadat Heidegger de vraag naar het wezen van de mens weer bovenaan de wijsgerige agenda plaatste en met zijn *Daseinsanalytik* een alternatief bood voor de traditionele uitleg van de mens als in de kern een denkend ding, werd het Cartesiaanse subject ten tijde van het postmodernisme voorgoed ten grave gedragen. Filosofen betoogden redelijk eensgezind dat de mens niet als een van anderen en van het lichaam onafhankelijke substantie begrepen kan worden, maar juist als een wezenlijk belichaamd en sociaal bepaald zijnde moet worden gezien.

Naast Heidegger zijn het met name denkers als Derrida, Foucault en Lyotard die voor deze wijsgerige ontwikkeling verantwoordelijk worden gehouden, maar ook (de late) Wittgenstein wordt er vaak mee in verband gebracht. Dat is niet ten onrechte, want hoewel Wittgenstein vooral bekend staat als taalfilosoof, hebben veel van zijn overdenkingen eveneens betrekking op het thema subjectiviteit. Zo onderzoekt hij wat het betekent om te zeggen dat de geest iets innerlijks is, en laat hij zien dat de uitdrukking van zelfs de meest persoonlijke gedachten en gevoelens, afhankelijk is van iemands sociaal-culturele achtergrond. Het mag dan ook opmerkelijk heten dat er tot op heden geen gedetailleerde studie van Wittgensteins visie op het menszijn is verschenen. Wittgensteins argumenten *tegen* het traditionele subjectbegrip zijn weliswaar uitgebreid geanalyseerd, zijn inzichten zijn ook vergeleken met die van andere herdenkers van subjectiviteit, maar een grondige bespreking van zijn eigen, positieve alternatief ontbrak vooralsnog.

Deze dissertatie wil in dat hiaat voorzien, en daartoe geeft het allereerst een lezing van Wittgensteins methodologische opvattingen. Wat het ontbreken van een

studie naar zijn alternatieve mensbeeld namelijk ten dele kan verklaren, is dat Wittgenstein vooral te boek staat als een denker die, in plaats van constructieve bijdrages te leveren aan filosofische discussies, een einde hoopt te maken aan ieder wijsgerig debat. In het tweede hoofdstuk van dit proefschrift wordt betoogd dat dit beeld niet geheel recht doet aan Wittgensteins visie op wat de filosofie kan en vermag. Hij wijst weliswaar op een zeker risico dat gepaard gaat met wijsgerige theorievorming maar concludeert daaruit niet dat we beter kunnen stoppen met filosoferen. Zijns inziens loopt de filosofie het gevaar om in haar streven naar algemene inzichten het particuliere onrecht aan te doen, maar hij incorporeert dit besef in de wijze waarop hij zelf filosofie bedrijft.

Na Wittgensteins werkwijze aldus in een wat constructiever daglicht te hebben geplaatst, wordt in het derde hoofdstuk een eerste schets van zijn alternatieve subjectbegrip gegeven. Daartoe wordt zijn zogenaamde filosofie van de psychologie geraadpleegd: een postuum verschenen verzameling overdenkingen die, direct of indirect, de verhouding tussen lichaam en geest tot onderwerp hebben. Volgens het beeld dat uit deze overdenkingen naar voren komt, kunnen gedachten en gevoelens niet begrepen worden als letterlijk innerlijke objecten die aan de uitdrukking ervan voorafgaan, maar zijn innerlijk en uiterlijk altijd al intrinsiek verbonden. In Wittgensteins optiek is het subject bovendien niet alleen voor het verwerven van psychologische expressies, maar ook voor de ontwikkeling van zijn geestelijk leven zelf, afhankelijk van de mensen om hem heen. Zoals Wittgensteins analyse kan worden samengevat, lokaliseert hij psychologische verschijnselen niet in de mens maar aan de mens of zelfs in de betrekking tussen mensen. Het Wittgensteinaanse subject is met andere woorden wezenlijk belichaamd en sociaal.

De studie "Subjectiviteit na Wittgenstein" wil echter niet volstaan met deze uitleg van Wittgensteins mensbeeld; het tracht ook op een andere wijze een bijdrage te leveren aan het debat dat is losgebarsten rond het thema subjectiviteit. Hoewel de inzichten van Wittgenstein en de postmodernisten namelijk veel bijval hebben gekregen, hebben hun ideeën ook tot ongemeen scherpe veroordelingen geleid. Deze kritiek betreft vooral de consequenties die hun visie op het menszijn zou hebben, en wel op twee belangrijke terreinen: de ethiek en de politiek.

Volgens critici die hun pijlen richten op de consequenties van de eerste soort zou de verwerping van het idee dat de mens vooraleerst een denkend ding is - hoe discutabel dat idee ook moge zijn - leiden tot het verdwijnen van een duidelijke *locus* voor het toeschrijven van zaken als kwaadaardige intenties en morele verantwoordelijkheid, hetgeen uiteindelijk vele malen ernstiger is: Wittgenstein en de postmodernisten zouden ons daarmee elk centrum of focuspunt voor de ethiek ontnemen. Critici die zich richten op de consequenties van de tweede soort betogen op vergelijkbare wijze dat met de ondergraving van het idee dat de mens een volkomen autonoom wezen is – hoeveel er ook op dat idee valt aan te merken – de heroriëntatie van subjectiviteit politiek irrelevant of zelfs ronduit gevaarlijk

wordt. Door te stellen dat het subject het lijdzame product is van zijn sociaal-politieke context zouden Wittgenstein en de postmodernisten elke *locus* van verandering en verzet doen verdwijnen en zo zelfs de meest onrechtvaardige politieke constellaties buiten het bereik van interventie plaatsen.

Deze argumenten tegen het postmodernisme of post-Cartesianisme worden besproken in twee thematische tussenhoofdstukken waarmee de exegese van Wittgensteins teksten in de eigenlijke hoofdstukken afgewisseld wordt. In beide intermezzo's worden evenwel direct vraagtekens geplaatst bij de validiteit van deze tegenwerpingen. Zoals wordt opgemerkt is de vraag naar het wezen van de mens niet zonder ethisch-politieke lading, maar staat het geenszins vast dat alleen een (gedeeltelijk) Cartesiaanse uitleg van subjectiviteit ethisch en politiek verantwoord is. Het tegengestelde zou namelijk ook betoogd kunnen worden, en vormt juist vaak een belangrijke motivatie voor het bekritiseren van de Cartesiaanse model.

Verdere reflectie op de waarde van de ethisch-politieke argumenten tegen het post-Cartesianisme wordt echter uitgesteld tot de conclusie. Uitgelegd wordt dat de validiteit ervan ook een kwestie is van de lezing van het post-Cartesianisme waarop de tegenargumenten zijn gebaseerd. Want zelfs als ethiek en politiek alleen binnen een Cartesiaans kader denkbaar zijn, gaan de objecties tegen de herdenkers van subjectiviteit alleen op wanneer zij daadwerkelijk het tegengestelde van het Cartesianisme voorstaan. In eerste instantie worden de verwijten aan het adres van de post-Cartesianisten dan ook opgevat als een uitnodiging om (in elk geval) Wittgensteins alternatieve uitleg van de lichaam-geest en zelf-ander verhouding nader te bestuderen. Op deze wijze is het, in lijn met het tweeledig doel van deze studie, niet alleen mogelijk om de geldigheid van de argumenten tegen het post-Cartesianisme in alle facetten te onderzoeken, maar kan ook Wittgensteins bijdrage aan deze filosofische ontwikkeling in meer detail worden gekarakteriseerd.

Om te onderzoeken of Wittgenstein het Cartesianisme zodanig herformuleert dat hij van het innerlijk niets meer overlaat (en dus het vermeende centrum van de ethiek zou doen verdwijnen) worden in het vierde hoofdstuk zijn overdenkingen over het religieus geloof geraadpleegd - een thema waar hij zich zijn hele leven intensief mee beziggehouden heeft. Wittgensteins filosofie van de religie wordt niet bestudeerd omdat hij daarin een theorie van de ethiek formuleert, maar omdat hij in deze overdenkingen het religieus geloof beschrijft als een bij uitstek persoonlijke aangelegenheid. Dit lijkt in sterk contrast te staan met de nadruk die hij in zijn filosofie van de psychologie legt op de publieke expressie van mentale fenomenen, en biedt daarmee een duidelijke aanwijzing dat Wittgenstein wel degelijk ruimte laat voor het toeschrijven van bijvoorbeeld intenties en overtuigingen aan een individu, of deze nu van ethische, religieuze of andere aard zijn.

Uitgelegd wordt dat Wittgenstein het persoonlijke karakter van het religieus geloof weliswaar niet in termen van innerlijkheid kan uitleggen maar het wel op een andere wijze verdisconteert: hij lokaliseert het geloof in de rode draad die door iemands leven loopt of in de richting die iemand aan zijn bestaan geeft. Opgemerkt

wordt echter ook dat daarmee niet elk contrast tussen Wittgensteins filosofie van de psychologie en zijn filosofie van de religie is opgelost. Waar hij namelijk stelt dat het subject slecht bepaalde gedachten en gevoelens kunnen worden toegeschreven wanneer het zich bepaalde gemeenschappelijke uitdrukkingspatronen heeft eigen gemaakt, betoogt hij dat het wat religie betreft aan de gelovige zelf is hoe hij zijn geloof vorm geeft. Wittgensteins filosofie van de religie mag in harmonie zijn met zijn met zijn non-Cartesiaanse uitleg van de lichaam-geest verhouding, het is nog onduidelijk hoe deze visie zich verdraagt met zijn alternatieve uitleg van de verhouding tussen individu en gemeenschap.

Nadat in het tweede tussenhoofdstuk wordt beschreven hoe het ook met name de ondermijning van het Cartesiaanse zelf-ander schema is dat de politieke argumenten tegen het post-Cartesianisme informeert, wordt in het vijfde hoofdstuk bestudeerd met welk concept van gemeenschap Wittgensteins heroriëntatie van het Cartesianisme gepaard gaat. Uitgelegd wordt dat op deze wijze zowel de exegetische geldigheid van de politieke bezwaren tegen het post-Cartesianisme, als het resterende contrast tussen Wittgensteins psychologische en Wittgensteins religieuze overdenkingen, nader onderzocht kunnen worden. En het is *On Certainty* dat met dit tweeledige doel geraadpleegd wordt.

Deze verkenningen, geschreven in de laatste jaren voor Wittgensteins dood, zijn vooral bekend vanwege hun kentheoretische inzichten, maar ze onderzoeken ook expliciet de processen waarmee kinderen tot volwaardige deelnemers aan sociale praktijken worden gemaakt. Hoewel de conclusies die Wittgenstein daaraan verbindt op het eerste gezicht uiterst conservatief lijken, wordt betoogd dat hij noch meent dat het subject geheel en al het product is van zijn opvoeding, noch meent dat deze opvoeding het later onmogelijk maakt om afstand te nemen van wat de gemeenschap gewoon of vanzelfsprekend vindt. Wittgensteins analyse bevat namelijk een sterke naturalistische component, die evenwel niet tot een organische opvatting van gemeenschap leidt waarin voor afwijking of afstand geen enkele ruimte is. Zijn naturalisme leidt niet tot organicisme en zijn conventionalisme leidt niet tot determinisme

Na een recapitulatie van de vergaarde inzichten aangaande Wittgensteins subjectbegrip eindigt deze studie dan ook met de conclusie dat noch de ethische noch de politieke verwijten aan het adres van de herdenkers van subjectiviteit exegetisch geldig zijn, in ieder geval wat Wittgenstein betreft. Bovendien wordt betoogd dat dergelijke argumenten, of ze nu voor of tegen het Cartesianisme worden ingezet - ook post-Cartesianisten argumenteren immers vaak in ethisch-politieke termen - überhaupt niet wenselijk zijn, althans niet wanneer ze in de vorm van een onvoorwaardelijke eis komen. Hoewel ethische en politieke overwegingen namelijk belangrijk en overtuigend zijn, is het zaak om noch een bepaalde visie op het menszijn, noch een bepaalde visie op ethiek en politiek bij voorbaat te vrijwaren van discussie. Dat is echter precies wat ethisch-politieke argumenten, vanwege hun gewicht en gezag, onverhoopt tot gevolg kunnen hebben.

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